



The Role of Journalism in Enhancing E-Governance Administration: A Study on North Haryana

Dr. Anuj Kumar

Assistant Professor, Department of Media & Mass Communication NIILM University, Kaithal

Manish Saini

Research Scholar, Department of Media & Mass Communication NIILM University, Kaithal

Abstract

This study investigates the role of journalism in enhancing the administration of e-governance in North Haryana, India. This study delves into the complex interplay between media coverage and the efficacy of e-governance initiatives. It emphasizes how media reporting influences the formulation of policies, ensuring they are both comprehensive and responsive to public needs. Additionally, the research examines how citizen satisfaction is impacted by media portrayals of e-governance, highlighting the importance of accurate and engaging reporting in shaping public perceptions. Furthermore, the study investigates the role of media scrutiny in enhancing transparency and accountability within government operations. By holding officials accountable and exposing inefficiencies or malpractices, media coverage serves as a critical watchdog, promoting more effective and responsible governance practices. The study reveals that journalism significantly influences policy changes, increases public awareness, and encourages citizen engagement with e-governance services. However, it also identifies challenges faced by journalists, such as limited access to information and political pressures. The findings underscore the necessity of a free and proactive media landscape to support the digital transformation of public administration. The study concludes with recommendations for policymakers to enhance the role of journalism in e-governance, including policy support, capacity building, and the establishment of collaborative platforms.

1490

Keywords: Public, Awareness, Encourages, Citizen, E-governance

DOI Number: 10.48047/NQ.2022.20.21.NQ99157

Neuroquantology 2022; 20(21):1490-1498

1. Introduction

E-governance, the application of information and communication technologies (ICT) to enhance the activities of public sector organizations, has become a cornerstone of modern administrative practices worldwide. By digitizing governmental processes, e-governance aims to increase efficiency, improve service delivery, and foster greater transparency and accountability. In India, various regions, including North Haryana, have embarked on ambitious e-governance initiatives to streamline operations and engage more effectively with citizens. Journalism plays a critical role in the success of e-governance initiatives. As the fourth pillar of democracy, journalism holds the power to inform, educate, and influence

public opinion. By investigating, reporting, and analyzing government activities, journalists help to ensure that public officials are held accountable for their actions. This watchdog function is essential in promoting transparency and reducing corruption, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of e-governance. North Haryana has witnessed significant advancements in e-governance, driven by both governmental efforts and media scrutiny. The region's media landscape, characterized by active journalism, has played a crucial role in highlighting the successes and shortcomings of e-governance projects. This study examines the impact of journalism on the administration of e-governance in North Haryana, exploring how media coverage



influences policy formulation, citizen satisfaction, and overall governance quality.

The objectives of this study are to analyze the role of journalism in shaping e-governance policies, assess the impact of media coverage on the implementation and effectiveness of e-governance initiatives, and examine the relationship between media scrutiny and citizen satisfaction with e-governance services. Additionally, the study aims to evaluate the challenges faced by journalists in covering e-

governance topics and their implications for policy and practice. By investigating these aspects, this research seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the symbiotic relationship between journalism and e-governance. It highlights the necessity for a free and proactive media landscape to support the digital transformation of public administration, ultimately leading to more effective and accountable governance in North Haryana.

Figure 1: AADHAAR seva under E-Governance



1491

2.Literature Review

The literature review explores the existing body of research on the interplay between journalism and e-governance, emphasizing the potential of media to enhance transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement in governance. This review is organized into three main sections: the role of journalism in governance, the impact of e-governance, and the intersection of journalism and e-governance.

Journalism has long been recognized as a crucial component of democratic governance. According to McNair (2009), journalism serves as a watchdog, a public informer, and a platform for public discourse. The watchdog role involves scrutinizing government actions and exposing malfeasance, thereby holding officials accountable. This function is essential for ensuring transparency and reducing corruption (Stapenhurst, 2000). Research by Norris (2006)

highlights the importance of a free and independent media in fostering democratic governance. Media freedom is positively correlated with lower levels of corruption and higher levels of government accountability. The presence of an active and independent press encourages public officials to act in the public interest, knowing their actions are subject to scrutiny and public reporting.

E-governance initiatives aim to leverage ICT to improve government operations and service delivery. According to Heeks (2001), e-governance can enhance efficiency, transparency, and citizen participation. By digitizing administrative processes, governments can reduce bureaucratic delays, increase access to information, and provide more responsive services. Studies by Bhatnagar (2004) and Ndou (2004) have shown that e-governance can significantly improve the quality of public

services. For instance, the implementation of e-governance projects in India, such as the Digital India initiative, has led to improved access to government services, greater transparency in government operations, and increased citizen engagement (Madon, 2009). However, the success of e-governance initiatives depends on several factors, including political will, infrastructure, and citizen awareness (Gupta, Dasgupta, & Gupta, 2008). Without adequate infrastructure and public awareness, e-governance projects may fail to achieve their intended outcomes.

The interaction between journalism and e-governance is a relatively underexplored area. However, emerging research indicates that journalism plays a critical role in the success of e-governance initiatives. According to Bertot, Jaeger, and Grimes (2010), media coverage can enhance the transparency and accountability of e-governance projects by bringing attention to their successes and failures. Journalistic scrutiny can highlight issues such as inefficiencies, corruption, and lack of transparency in e-governance initiatives, prompting corrective actions from government officials. For example, studies by Meijer (2003) and Bannister and Connolly (2014) have shown that media reporting on e-governance projects can lead to policy changes and improvements in service delivery.

While journalism significantly impacts e-governance, journalists often face challenges that hinder their ability to effectively cover e-governance topics. According to Coronel (2010), these challenges include limited access to information, political pressure, and resource constraints. In many cases, journalists struggle to obtain accurate and timely information about government activities, making it difficult to hold officials accountable. Political pressure is another significant challenge, as journalists may face threats or intimidation from powerful individuals seeking to suppress unfavorable coverage. Resource constraints, such as limited funding and lack of training, also impact the quality of journalism on e-governance topics.

3. Journalism and E-Governance

Journalism is the practice of gathering, assessing, creating, and presenting news and information to inform the public about events, issues, and trends. It serves multiple functions: informing the public, holding power accountable by

investigating and reporting abuses, providing a platform for public discourse, educating and entertaining through various types of content, and serving the public interest by reporting significant and relevant news. Journalism encompasses various types, including investigative, news, feature, opinion, broadcast, photojournalism, sports, business, and science and technology journalism. Core principles of journalism are truth and accuracy, independence, fairness and impartiality, humanity, and accountability. However, the field faces challenges such as misinformation, financial pressures, political and legal threats, and rapid technological changes. Journalistic ethics emphasize truthfulness, accuracy, objectivity, impartiality, fairness, and public accountability to maintain credibility. With the rise of digital platforms, journalism has evolved to include online news websites, social media, citizen journalism, and multimedia journalism. Despite these changes, journalism remains a cornerstone of democracy, essential for information flow, transparency, and an informed and engaged public.

E-Governance (Electronic Governance) refers to the use of digital technologies, particularly the internet, to improve the functioning and delivery of government services to citizens, businesses, and other government entities. It aims to enhance transparency, efficiency, and accountability in government operations. By leveraging digital tools and platforms, e-governance seeks to streamline processes, reduce bureaucratic inefficiencies, and provide seamless access to information and services. This approach not only facilitates better interaction between the government and its stakeholders but also fosters greater public trust and engagement by making governance more open and responsive. The key objectives of E-Governance include improving service delivery, enhancing transparency, promoting citizen participation, reducing costs, and managing resources efficiently. In India, notable E-Governance schemes include Digital India, Aadhaar, National e-Governance Plan (NeGP), Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN), Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), UMANG, e-Procurement, e-Courts, National Land Records Modernization Programme (NLRMP), and Passport Seva Project. These initiatives aim to provide secure digital storage, online healthcare

access, electronic signatures, high-speed internet connectivity, direct benefit transfers, financial inclusion, access to government services via

mobile apps, transparent procurement processes, digitized judiciary services, accessible land records, and streamlined passport services.

Figure 2: E-Governance schemes



The benefits of E-Governance include increased efficiency, enhanced accessibility, greater transparency, citizen empowerment, and cost savings. However, challenges such as the digital divide, cybersecurity concerns, infrastructure development, capacity building, and interoperability need to be addressed. E-Governance is a transformative approach to modernizing government operations, making them more efficient, transparent, and citizen-centric. Through continued investment in technology and infrastructure, it has the potential to significantly enhance the relationship between governments and their citizens.

3.1 Digital India

Digital India is an ambitious initiative launched by the Government of India in 2015 to transform the country into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy. This program aims to ensure that government services are made available to citizens electronically by improving online infrastructure and increasing internet connectivity. Digital India focuses on three core

components: digital infrastructure as a utility for every citizen, governance and services on demand, and digital empowerment of citizens. Through initiatives like expanding broadband highways, establishing public internet access points, and promoting digital literacy, the program seeks to bridge the digital divide and provide universal access to the internet. Additionally, it includes efforts to reform government services using technology, such as implementing e-governance projects, promoting electronic manufacturing, and providing IT training to create job opportunities. By leveraging digital tools and platforms, Digital India aims to streamline processes, reduce bureaucratic inefficiencies, and foster greater public trust and engagement. This comprehensive approach is designed to promote inclusive growth, improve service delivery, and enhance transparency and accountability in government operations, ultimately driving the country towards sustainable and inclusive development.

Figure 3: Digital India



1494

3.2 National e-Governance Plan (NeGP)

The National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) is an overarching initiative launched by the Government of India to make all government services accessible to the common man through electronic means. The plan aims to enhance the efficiency, transparency, and reliability of such services at affordable costs. NeGP comprises numerous Mission Mode Projects (MMPs) and core infrastructure components designed to deliver critical public services electronically. By focusing on key areas such as agriculture, health, education, and public distribution systems, NeGP aims to streamline processes, reduce bureaucratic hurdles, and improve the quality of governance. It also emphasizes the importance of citizen-centric services, encouraging the participation of the private sector and the development of partnerships to foster innovation and scalability. Through the creation of Common Service Centers (CSCs) and the implementation of state-wide area networks, data centers, and the National Service Delivery Gateway, NeGP strives to create a robust infrastructure that supports the seamless delivery of e-services across various levels of government. This comprehensive approach not only aims to bridge the digital divide but also to empower citizens by providing them with easy and efficient access to essential government services.

3.3 Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN)

The Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN) is a unique and pivotal entity established to provide the IT infrastructure and services necessary for implementing the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in India. GSTN was created to ensure a seamless and efficient tax administration system that simplifies the indirect tax structure and integrates various state and central tax departments. By acting as a shared digital interface for taxpayers, tax authorities, and other stakeholders, GSTN aims to enhance transparency, reduce tax evasion, and improve compliance. GSTN provides a comprehensive online platform for taxpayers to register, file returns, make payments, and claim refunds, significantly reducing the need for physical interactions with tax authorities. The network also facilitates the matching of invoices between buyers and sellers, ensuring accurate tax credit claims and minimizing discrepancies. Additionally, GSTN enables real-time data sharing between the central and state governments, fostering better coordination and efficient tax administration. With its robust IT infrastructure, GSTN plays a crucial role in supporting the implementation of the GST regime, simplifying tax processes, and contributing to the broader goal of creating a more transparent and efficient tax system in India.

Figure 4:Goods and Services Tax Network



1495

4. Policy Support

Effective policy support is crucial to enhancing the role of journalism in e-governance. Policies must ensure that journalists have the freedom, resources, and protection needed to report on government activities accurately and without fear of repercussions. This section outlines key policy recommendations to support journalism in the context of e-governance in North Haryana. One of the primary challenges journalists face is limited access to information. Policies should mandate transparency and open access to government data, enabling journalists to obtain the information necessary for investigative reporting. Simplify and expedite the RTI application process to ensure timely responses to journalists' queries. Government agencies should proactively disclose information related to e-governance initiatives on their official websites, reducing the need for RTI requests. Train government officials on the importance of transparency and their responsibilities under the RTI Act to foster a culture of openness. Journalists often face political pressure and intimidation when reporting on sensitive issues. Implement and enforce laws that protect journalists from harassment, intimidation, and violence. Establish clear penalties for those who threaten or harm journalists. Provide robust protections for whistleblowers who provide information to journalists, ensuring they are not subject to

retaliation. Establish independent bodies to oversee and address complaints of harassment and intimidation against journalists.

Provide funding and grants for investigative journalism projects focused on e-governance. Encourage public and private sector partnerships to support journalistic endeavors. Offer training programs on e-governance, data journalism, and investigative techniques. Collaborate with media organizations, universities, and NGOs to provide continuous professional development opportunities. Ensure journalists have access to the latest technological tools and resources needed for data analysis, reporting, and dissemination of information. Organize regular briefings and workshops where government officials provide updates on e-governance initiatives and address journalists' questions and concerns. Facilitate public forums and town hall meetings where journalists, officials, and citizens can discuss e-governance issues, share feedback, and collaboratively identify solutions. Develop online portals that allow journalists to access real-time information about e-governance projects, submit queries, and engage with government representatives.

Conduct regular audits of government transparency and access to information practices. Evaluate the responsiveness of government agencies to RTI requests and media inquiries. Perform impact assessments of

journalistic reporting on e-governance initiatives. Measure changes in public awareness, policy adjustments, and improvements in service delivery resulting from media coverage. Establish feedback mechanisms where journalists can report challenges and suggest improvements to policies supporting their work. Use this feedback to make necessary policy adjustments. Supporting journalism through robust policies is vital for the successful administration of e-governance in North Haryana. Ensuring access to information, protecting journalists from political pressure, enhancing resources and training, encouraging collaborative platforms, and implementing effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are key steps towards this goal. By fostering an environment where journalists can operate freely and effectively, policymakers can enhance transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement in e-governance, ultimately leading to more effective and accountable governance. Enhancing the capacity of journalists to cover e-governance issues effectively is essential for ensuring comprehensive and accurate reporting. Organize regular workshops and seminars focused on e-governance concepts, implementation strategies, and best practices. These events should cover topics such as the basics of e-governance, digital tools, data management, and the legal framework governing e-governance. Collaborate with academic institutions and professional organizations to offer certificate courses in e-governance journalism. These courses should provide in-depth knowledge and skills required to report on e-governance issues comprehensively. Building the capacity of journalists through targeted training programs and the provision of necessary resources is crucial for enhancing their ability to cover e-governance issues effectively. By equipping journalists with the skills, knowledge, and tools they need, we can ensure more comprehensive, accurate, and impactful reporting on e-governance. This, in turn, will contribute to greater transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement in governance, ultimately leading to more effective and responsive public administration in North Haryana. Creating collaborative platforms for regular interaction between journalists, government officials, and citizens is essential for fostering mutual understanding and cooperation. These forums can enhance the quality of

journalism, improve government transparency, and increase citizen engagement in e-governance initiatives. This section outlines key strategies for establishing and maintaining effective collaborative platforms. Organize regular briefings where government officials provide updates on e-governance initiatives, upcoming projects, and policy changes.

5. Monitor the Impact of Journalism on E-Governance

Ongoing research and monitoring are essential for understanding the impact of journalism on e-governance and identifying areas for improvement. By systematically studying the interactions between media and e-governance, stakeholders can make informed decisions to enhance governance practices, promote transparency, and increase public engagement. This section outlines key strategies for conducting effective research and monitoring. Investigate how media coverage influences the formulation and implementation of e-governance policies. This includes studying changes in policy decisions, administrative reforms, and the introduction of new initiatives prompted by journalistic reporting. Conduct case studies of specific e-governance projects that received significant media attention. Analyze the role of journalism in shaping these projects and the resulting policy outcomes. Partner with universities and research institutions to conduct in-depth studies on the impact of journalism on e-governance. These collaborations can provide access to expertise, resources, and analytical tools. Collaborate with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that focus on media freedom, transparency, and governance. NGOs can offer valuable insights, data, and support for research initiatives. Develop a framework for regular monitoring and reporting on the state of journalism and e-governance. This includes publishing periodic reports that highlight key findings, trends, and recommendations. Establish clear performance indicators to track the effectiveness of journalism in promoting e-governance. Indicators should cover aspects such as policy changes, public engagement, transparency improvements, and accountability measures. Utilize digital tools and platforms for data collection, analysis, and dissemination. This includes online surveys, data visualization software, and content analysis tools to study media coverage.



6. Conclusion

Journalism plays a pivotal role in enhancing the administration of e-governance by promoting transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement. This study has explored the multifaceted relationship between journalism and e-governance in North Haryana, highlighting how media coverage influences policy formulation, implementation, and public perception of e-governance initiatives. Key findings demonstrate that journalism significantly impacts e-governance by holding government officials accountable, informing the public about governance processes, and fostering a culture of transparency. However, journalists face numerous challenges, including limited access to information, political pressure, and resource constraints, which can hinder their ability to report effectively on e-governance issues. Strengthening legal protections for journalists, ensuring access to information, and fostering a culture of transparency within government agencies are essential steps for supporting journalistic efforts. Providing targeted training programs and resources to journalists will enhance their ability to cover e-governance issues comprehensively and accurately. Establishing forums for regular interaction between journalists, government officials, and citizens will foster mutual understanding and cooperation, leading to more effective governance practices. By implementing these strategies, policymakers, media organizations, and other stakeholders can create an environment where journalism thrives and contributes meaningfully to the success of e-governance initiatives. This collaborative approach will ultimately lead to more effective, transparent, and accountable governance, benefiting the citizens of North Haryana.

References

- A framework and programme for research. *Government Information Quarterly*, 31(1), 119-128.
- Bertot, J. C., Jaeger, P. T., & Grimes, J. M. (2010). Using ICTs to create a culture of transparency: E-government and social media as openness and anti-corruption tools for societies. *Government Information Quarterly*, 27(3), 264-271.
- Bhatnagar, S. (2004). E-government: From vision to implementation—A

practical guide with case studies. SAGE Publications India.

- Coronel, S. S. (2010). Corruption and the watchdog role of the news media. *Public Sentinel: News Media & Governance Reform*, 111-136.
- Dawes, S. S. (2008). The evolution and continuing challenges of e-governance. *Public Administration Review*, 68(s1), S86-S102.
- Fung, A., Graham, M., & Weil, D. (2007). *Full disclosure: The perils and promise of transparency*. Cambridge University Press.
- Gupta, M. P., Dasgupta, S., & Gupta, R. K. (2008). Adoption of ICT in a government organization in a developing country: An empirical study. *Journal of Strategic Information Systems*, 17(2), 140-154.
- Heeks, R. (2001). *Understanding e-governance for development*. iGovernment Working Paper Series, 11.
- Jaeger, P. T., & Thompson, K. M. (2003). E-government around the world: Lessons, challenges, and future directions. *Government Information Quarterly*, 20(4), 389-394.
- Luna-Reyes, L. F., & Gil-Garcia, J. R. (2011). Using institutional theory and dynamic simulation to understand complex e-government phenomena. *Government Information Quarterly*, 28(3), 329-345.
- Madon, S. (2009). *E-governance for development: A focus on rural India*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Margetts, H. Z., & Dunleavy, P. (2013). The second wave of digital-era governance: A quasi-paradigm for government on the Web. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society A: Mathematical, Physical and Engineering Sciences*, 371(1987), 20120382.
- McNair, B. (2009). *Journalism and democracy: An evaluation of the political public sphere*. Routledge.
- Meijer, A. J. (2003). Trust this document! ICTs, authentic records and accountability. *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 16(3), 203-216.



- Moon, M. J. (2002). The evolution of e-government among municipalities: Rhetoric or reality? *Public Administration Review*, 62(4), 424-433.
- Ndou, V. (2004). E-government for developing countries: Opportunities and challenges. *The Electronic Journal of Information Systems in Developing Countries*, 18(1), 1-24.
- Norris, P. (2006). The role of the free press in promoting democratization, good governance, and human development. In *The Human Development Report*, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- Staphenurst, R. (2000). The media's role in curbing corruption. World Bank Institute.
- West, D. M. (2004). E-government and the transformation of service delivery and citizen attitudes. *Public Administration Review*, 64(1), 15-27.
- Yang, T. M., & Maxwell, T. A. (2011). Information-sharing in public organizations: A literature review of interpersonal, intra-organizational and inter-organizational success factors. *Government Information Quarterly*, 28(2), 164-175.
- Zhang, J., & Liao, Z. (2011). Factors influencing the success of e-government in developing countries: A case study of China. *Electronic Journal of Information Systems in Developing*

