ABSTRACT

E-Governance or ‘electronic governance’ is an attempt to bring about Simple, Moral, Accountable, Responsive and Transparent (SMART) Governance with the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for the functioning of Government processes. It involves decisional processes and uses ICT for wider participation of citizens in Governmental decision-making regarding public affairs. It has a potential to provide all Governmental information and services online to the public as well as private sectors. E-Governance initiatives ensure a more democratic, transparent and accountable system that includes quick accessibility and security of information which is exchanged between Government and citizens.

The main objective of e-Governance is to provide a friendly, efficient and affordable interface between Government and its people resulting in cost-effective and high-quality public service delivery.

The study of literature on the subject brings out that use of e-Governance decreases the processing cost of many activities in comparison to the manual handling of the operations. It contributes to the elimination of mistakes inherent in manual procedures, reduces the required time for transaction, and enables faster decision-making.

Expansion of e-Governance on vast scale in different states of India is a recent development to improve process of service delivery. The e-Governance projects have been implemented with great deal of commitment in different states to improve service delivery to citizens belonging to different sections of society. Still the citizens are not
much satisfied; and the Government is not getting the desired results. Hence, considerable empirical research efforts are required to find out the gaps and factors responsible for the same. In view of the above observations, there is a need to study the present impact of e-Governance and to suggest the ways for improving e-Governance in future, especially in the State of Punjab.

This study is focused mainly on measuring the level of satisfaction amongst citizens and Government agencies towards e-governance initiatives particularly SUWIDHA (Single User-Friendly Window Disposal Helpline for Applicants) in the State of Punjab. It provides different types of services to the citizens such as registration of marriage certificate, issuing of ration cards, driving licenses, passports, registration certificates of the vehicles, arms licenses, SC/ST/BC category certificates, birth certificates, etc. It is based on the Single entry point, defining a specified delivery date depending upon the type of service and accepting cash at the counter itself.

This study has been conducted with a view to improve the service delivery and increase reachability of benefits to every section of the society. Keeping it in view the objectives were formulated. The first four objectives of the study have focused on the current practices, scenario and important prospectus. The fifth objective of the study investigates the prevailing practices and experiences of the citizens and employees working with Suwidha Centres.

To fulfil these objectives, a detailed study on the citizen’s and employees has been conducted using questionnaire-cum-interview method. The observations of citizens and employees were recorded using five point likert scale. In order to study the differences in opinion statistical tools have been deployed. Besides, principal component factor analysis has been applied objective-wise in order to reduce the number of factors and to pin point the most important factors involved. Finally, all these
identified factors form the basis for the e-Governance model applicable to the services being offered by Suwidha Centres in the state of Punjab. The findings and recommendations of the study will be helpful in the e-Governance development and in improving the public service delivery system. The study concludes that e-Governance serves with better efficiency, reduced costs and have bright future with more satisfied citizens and Suwidha employees.