

A SURVEY ON THE PROGRESS OF E-GOVERNANCE IN TELANGANA

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Abstract:

There is always a new thinking about how the Government engages and communicates with its citizens in their governmental functions. e-Governance is the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to deliver government services, exchanging information, conducting transactions, and integrating previously existing services and information portals. The Government of Telangana's Mission e-Governance, with Digitalization, has undergone a paradigm shift till 2023. Telangana has undertaken various initiatives over the years in promoting e-Governance holistically to improve the distribution of public services to its citizens. Its main pillars have been people itself, the digital process (technology) and resources. While applying e-governance, there can be certain challenges, like, its adoption, acceptance, and awareness among the citizens and staff of the concerned departments. Since, some of the emerging technologies have not yet been implemented on a large scale, like, m-governance, the associated cost can be high. This study attempts to analyse the progress of e-Governance in the state of Telangana, the opinion of public on e-governance in the State. Quantitative method has been adopted. The sample size is 150 with the data source as general public.

Keywords: E-governance, Telangana, Citizens, Digitalisation, ICT.

Introduction:

The term 'governance' is more comprehensive than the word 'Government'. Governance encompasses the processes by which the organisations are directed, monitored, controlled and in giving the services to the citizens. It includes the authority, accountability, leadership, direction, awareness, and control exercised in an organisation. Good governance can be achieved with the principles, protocols and when the best practices are applied all over in the whole organisation and that is how we can achieve the set goals. On the other side, the term 'E-governance' is simply electronic governance.

E-Governance originated in India during the 1970s with a focus on in-house government applications in the areas of defence, economic monitoring, planning and deployment of ICT to manage data intensive functions related to elections, census, tax administration etc.¹ E-

governance is about using the information and communication technologies i.e., ICTs at the different levels of the governance and also in the public sector that helps in enhancing the governance. With the application of ICTs- efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and accountability are possible towards the good governance.

Objectives of E-governance include better service delivery to citizens, ushering in transparency and accountability, Empowering people through information, improve efficiency within Government i.e., between centre-state or inter-states, improve interface with business and industry.² Projects and services related to the E-governance rely on the four pillars- people, process, technology, and resource (PPTR)³. To achieve the good results, each component has to be addressed strategically.

Features of E Governance:

It has been proven from the concept of e-governance that it is a powerful means of public service in the present era. Some of its features can be found by observing the functioning of e-governance.

1. **De bureaucratization:** Due to e-governance, the gap between the people and the government in all the services of the government is narrowing and the dependence of the people on the bureaucracy is also greatly reduced.
2. **E-Services:** Its main feature is the provision of services through the Internet. As a result, we get G2C, G2B, G2E, etc. services. This is already discussed in the section of ‘types of governance’.
3. **International Services:** through e-governance, all the essential services can be delivered to the citizens who are living outside of their country for job purposes or any other reasons.
4. It enhances the **right to express** to the citizens. Using the means of e-governance anyone can share their views with the government on any bill or act or decision taken by the government.
5. **Economic Development:** With the introduction of e-governance, various information like import-export, registration of companies, investment situations, etc. are available through the internet. As a result, time is saved, procrastination decreases, and economic dynamism increases.
6. **Reduce inequality:** using e-governance tools everyone can gather information and empower themselves. In this globalized world, knowledge is power, and means of e-governance empower us by providing relevant information at minimal cost, effort, and time.⁴ (Avijit Biswas, 2022)

Literature Review:

Raghuraj Khullar. (2023). “E-GOVERNANCE IN INDIA: PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS”

This paper talks about the increase usage of E-governance in the process of the governance in India. The study identified many problems in the effective implementation of E-governance that

include the digital divide, lack of awareness, cost factor, language problem, lack of literacy, data privacy and security, lack of integrated services, resistance to change, and lack of user-friendliness of government websites, inadequate coverage & upgradation, lack of trained staff. The researcher has suggested the solutions as to have the availability of internet, create awareness among public, training of government staff, ease of access, integration of e-governance services, content in local languages and data protection.

Mallika V.V. (2022). “Effectiveness of e-Governance Initiatives in Telangana—A Study of Citizen Services Monitoring System (CSMS)”

The study focussed on the importance of the public service and its deliveries of E-governance highlighting different issues like awareness, efficiency, transparency, responsiveness, participation, and accountability. Further, the paper looked into the parameters of E-governance of the CSMS (Citizen Services Monitoring System) in the urban areas of the Telangana state. The researcher has given important policy suggestions according to the results.

Mohammad Abdul Salam. (2013). “e-Governance for good Governance through Public Service Delivery”

The paper focussed in accessing the efficiency and implications of the district e-service centres (DESC) of Bangladesh and in validation of good E-governance as a tool. The results showed that the DESC provide efficient public services, that e-service delivery has good positive impact in the public’s satisfaction and also the initiatives taken on E-governance has led to good governance. The study also mentioned about the limitations and has given the suggestions for additional research that leads to better progress in governance.

Soumitra Mondal. (2019). “E-Governance in India: Prospects, Status and Challenges”

The study talked about the various opportunities and the challenges in the implementation of E-governance. This research work tried uplifting the scholars, writers and educators in exploring the E-governance services as a medium and communicate on conceptualising theories, ideological spheres as a pattern as a focus of postmodern and internationalised outlook. The study also talked about the use of ICT (information and communication technology) in strengthening the existing structure of governance and further in providing the better services to the public.

J. Sridevi. Et al. (2017). “E-Governance in India: Opportunities and Challenges”

The study revealed that the Indian government spending a lot of money on E-governance projects and still those projects are not much successful in every part of the country. The reasons could be the lack of awareness among the public, content might be available in local languages only, perception of threat of privacy of personal data etc. These are considered as main challenges which limited the effective E-governance in India. The researcher mentioned that much more efforts are required in delivering projects on E-governance and the successful implementation of E-services.

Aim:

The aim of the study is to examine the progress, extent, perception, effect, and scope of e-Governance of Government of Telangana in the state among general public across diverse backgrounds, for which the following objectives were undertaken:

Objectives:

1. To investigate the awareness, access mode and adoption of e-Governance among general public across diverse backgrounds in Telangana.
2. To find out the perception of users, envisaged benefits, and preferred method of availing Governmental services among general public across diverse backgrounds in the State.
3. To study the services being availed by the users through e-Governance, the quality and fitness for services being offered, and ease of transactions among general public across diverse backgrounds in the State.
4. To explore the scope and future of e-Governance for additional services to offer.

Research Methodology:

The present study is **quantitative** in nature. An online survey was conducted with a self-administered questionnaire, which was circulated to the respondents, with the help of Google forms to collect data for the study. The target population for this study were the general public who are the users of e-services provided by the Government of Telangana. Total 150 users responded to the survey from all over Telangana.

Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion

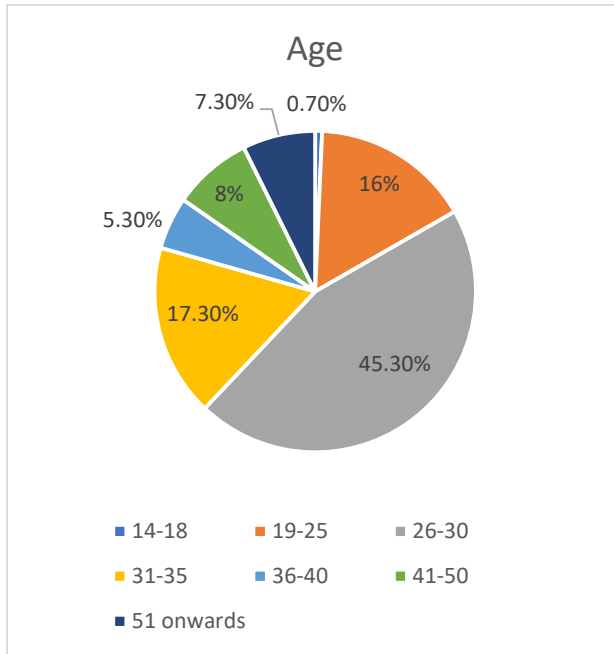
To achieve the set objectives, questions were framed for the purpose of data collection and subsequent data analysis was carried out. In this section, the data obtained from the survey is presented. Opinions of the sample are put into graphs and pie chart in order to facilitate better understanding and to derive the conclusion about the progress, extent, perception, effect, and scope of e-Governance in the State of Telangana.

General Profile of the Sample

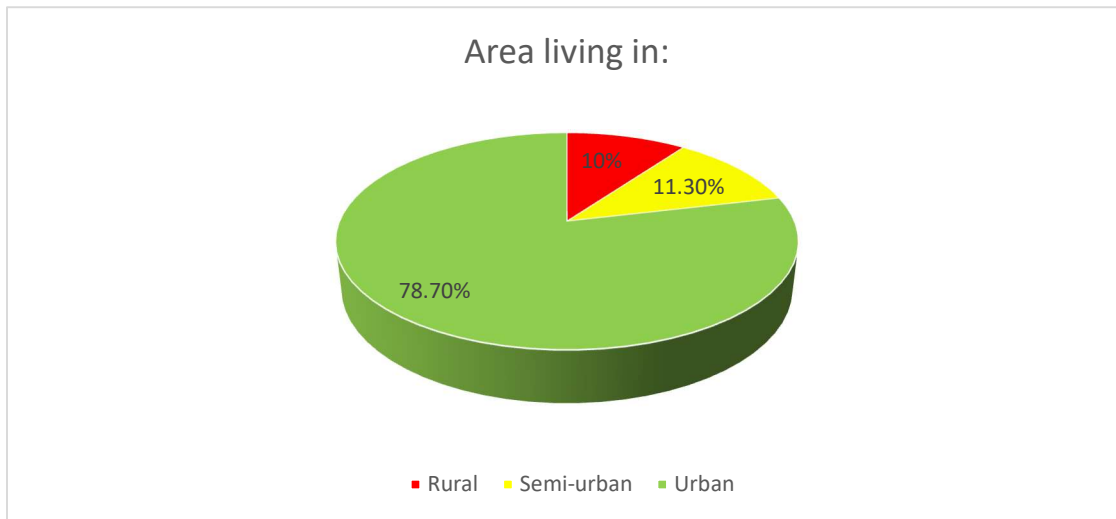
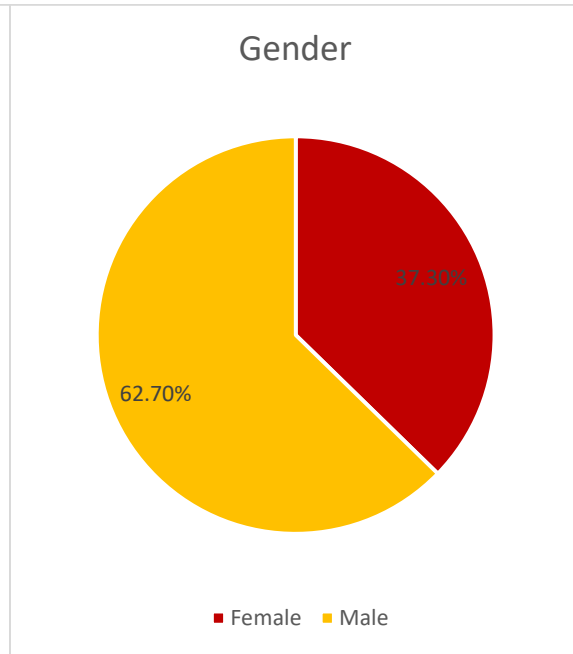
- Chart (1.1) indicates that around half of the respondents (45.3%) are between the age group of 26-30.
- Also in the same chart 1.1, some (17.3%) are between the age group of 31 to 35 and (16%) few more are of the respondents belong to the age group of 19 to 25.
- Chart (1.2) indicates that majority of the respondents (62.7%) are men whereas few (37.3%) of the respondents are women.

- Chart (1.3) indicates that majority of the respondents (78.7%) are from the urban areas while 11.3% of the respondents are from semi-urban areas and the remaining 10% of the respondents are from rural areas.

(Chart No. 1.1)

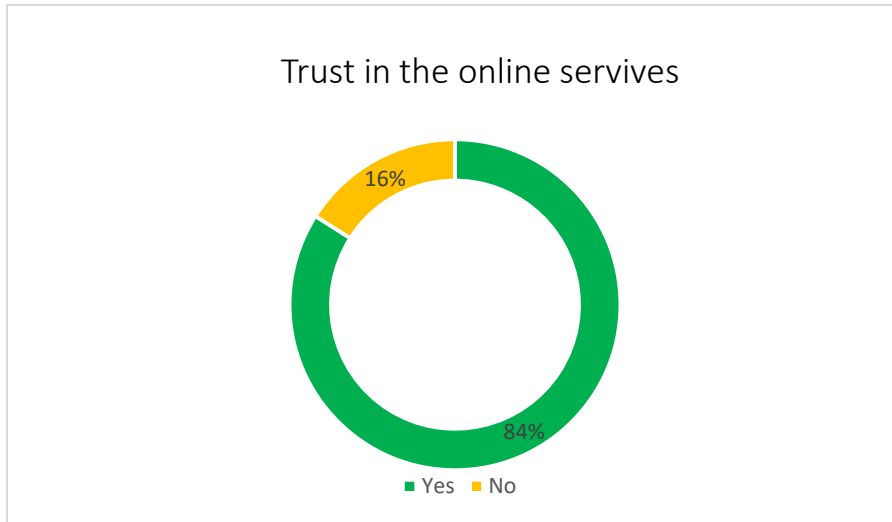


(Chart No. 1.2)



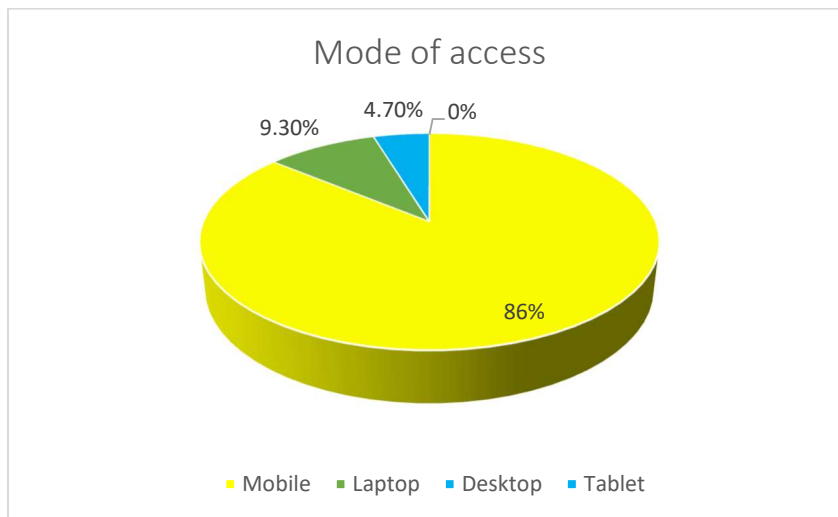
(Chart No. 1.3)

Below chart (1.4) indicates the trust level among users for the online services provided by the Government. 84% of the respondents have shown trust in the online services whereas 16% of the respondents do not trust it.



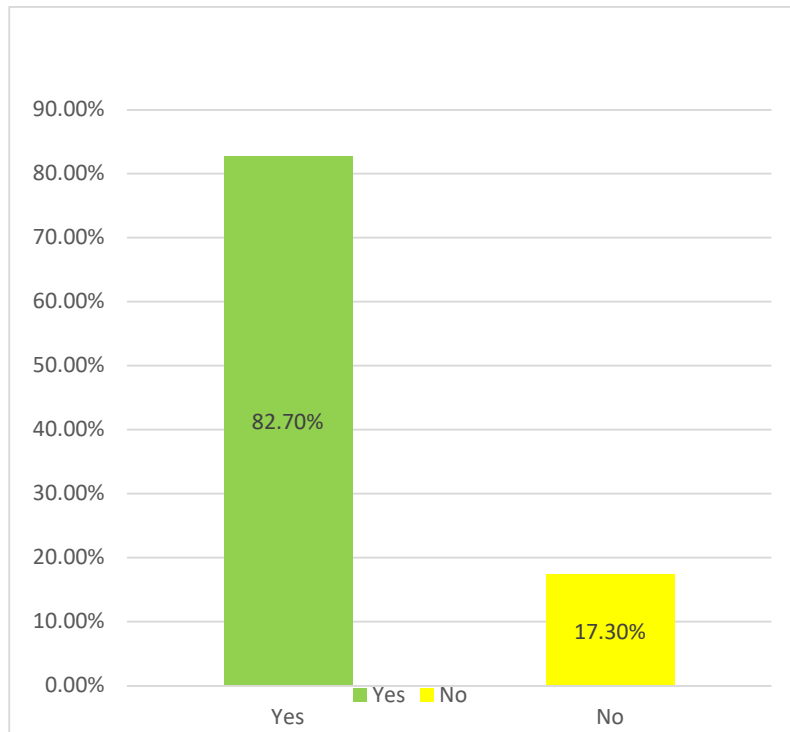
(Chart No. 1.4)

Below chart (1.5) indicates the mode of access of e-Governance services. Majority of the respondents (86%) access these services through mobile while 9% of the respondents access through laptops and remaining 5% through desktops.



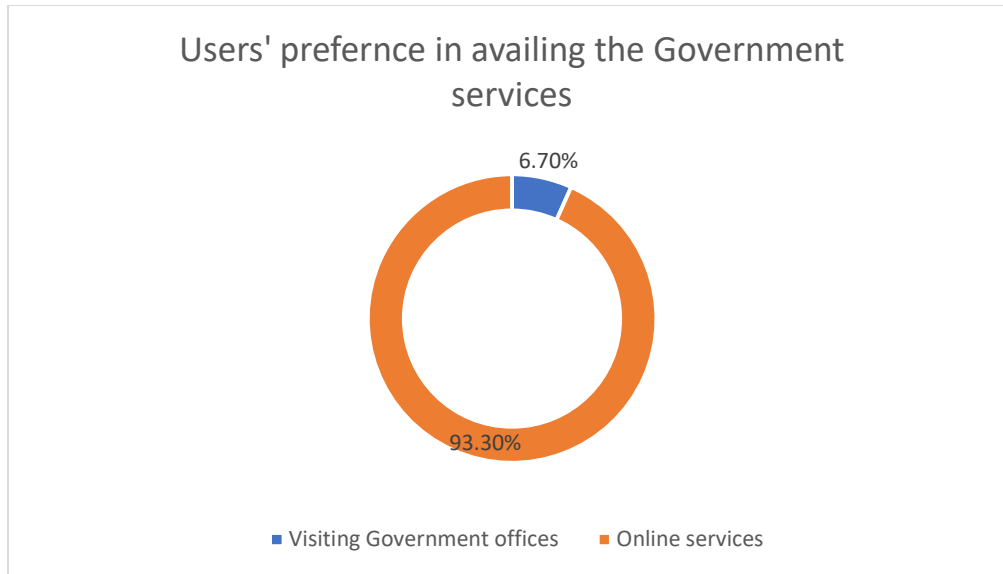
(Chart No. 1.5)

Below chart (1.6) indicates the awareness about the online services provided by the Telangana Government. Majority of the respondents (82.7%) are aware of the online services while 17.3% of the respondents admitted that they have no knowledge about the same.



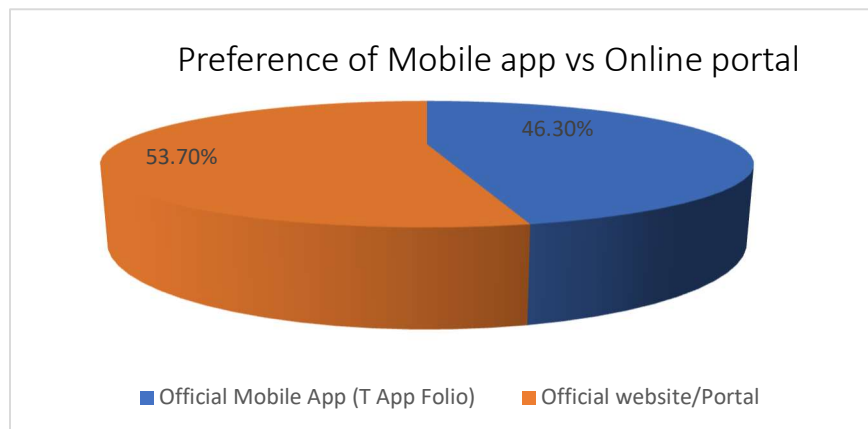
(Chart No. 1.6)

Below chart (1.7) indicates the users' preference in availing the Government services online. Majority of the respondents, i.e., 93.3% of them, prefer the online services provided by the Telangana government while 6.7% of the respondents prefer visiting the Government offices to avail Government services.



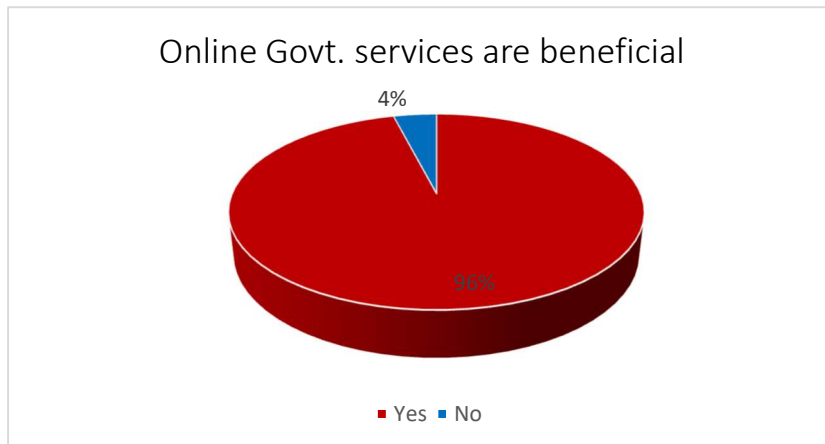
(Chart No. 1.7)

Below chart (1.8) indicates the users’ preference in availing the online services provided by the Government of Telangana. More than half of the respondents, i.e., 53% of them, prefer to access the Official website or portal to avail any service provided by the Government while 46.3% of the respondents prefer to use Mobile app introduced by the Government of Telangana.



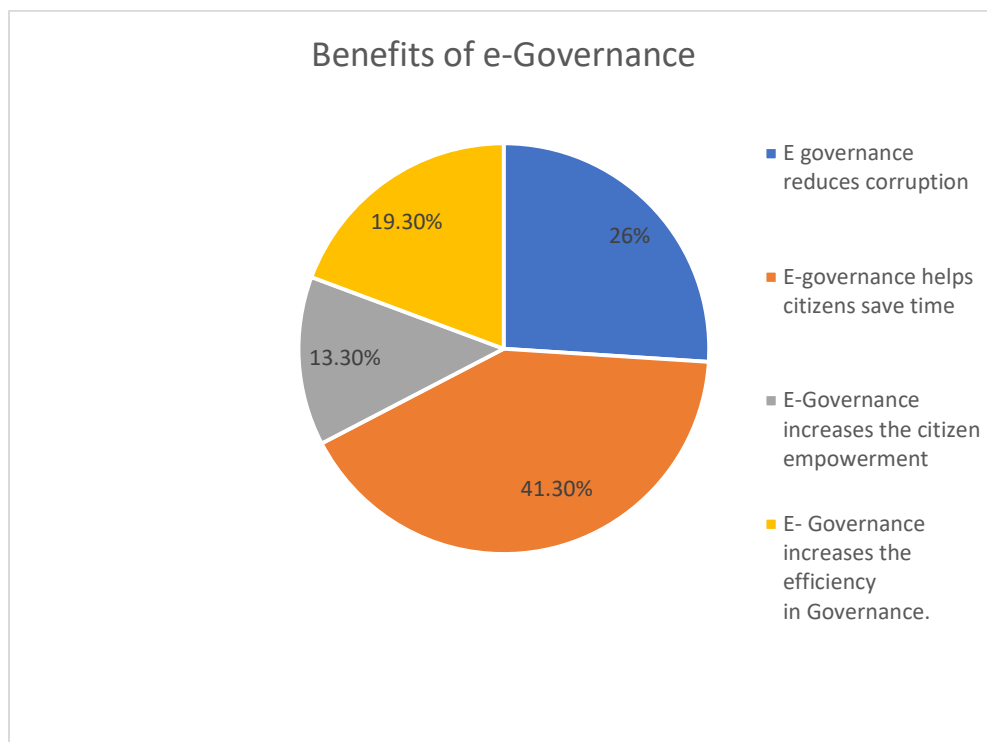
(Chart No. 1.8)

Chart (1.9) indicates the respondents’ perception of envisaged benefits of online Government services. Majority of them, i.e., 96% of them opined that the citizens will be benefited if Government services are available through electronic medium while 4% of them opined that it does not benefit them.



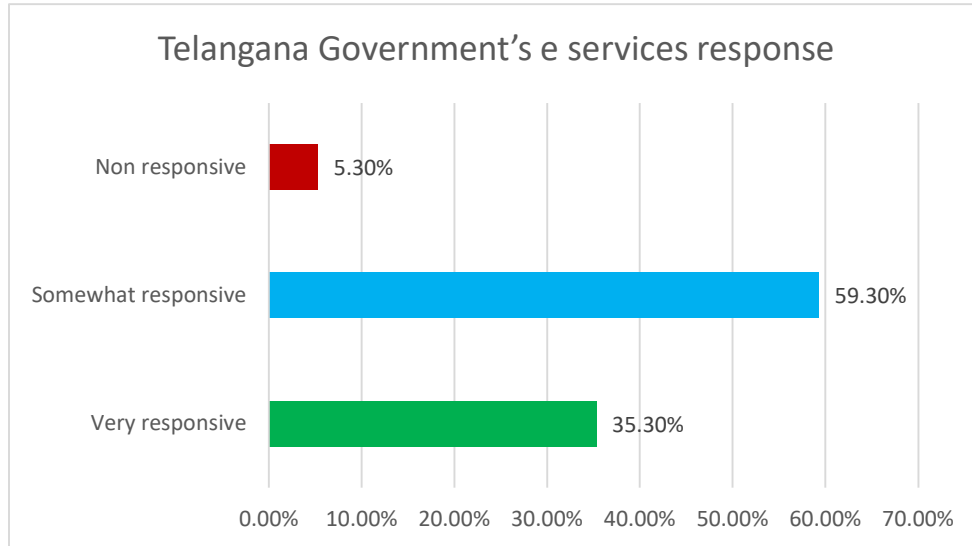
(Chart No. 1.9)

Below chart (1.10) indicates the most important benefit perceived by the respondents arising out of e-Governance. 41.3% of the respondents opined that e-Governance helps citizens save time while 26% of them felt e-Governance reduces corruption whereas 19.3% of the respondents opined that its more efficient and 13.3% felt that it empowers the citizens.



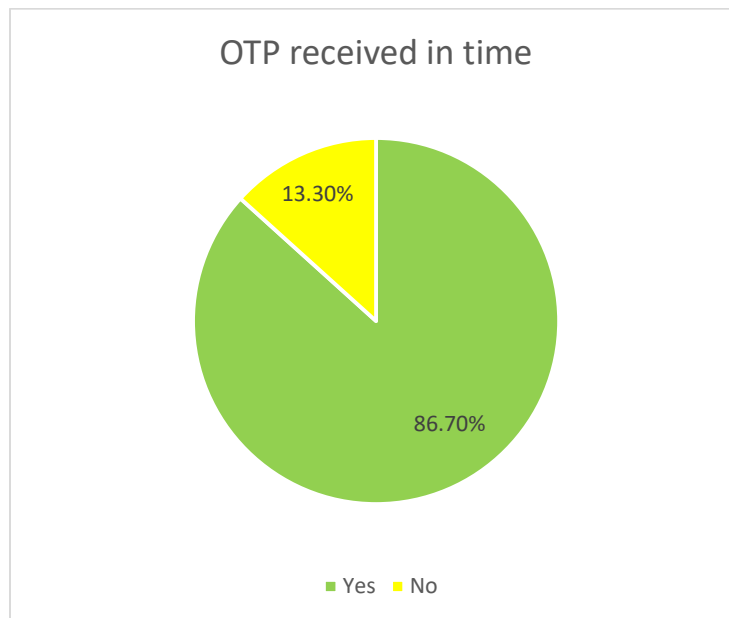
(Chart No. 1.10)

The below chart (1.11) indicates the perception of users about the responsiveness of the online services provided by the Government of Telangana. More than half of the respondents, i.e., 59.3% opined as somewhat responsive while 35.3% of them felt very responsive and the remaining felt non-responsive.



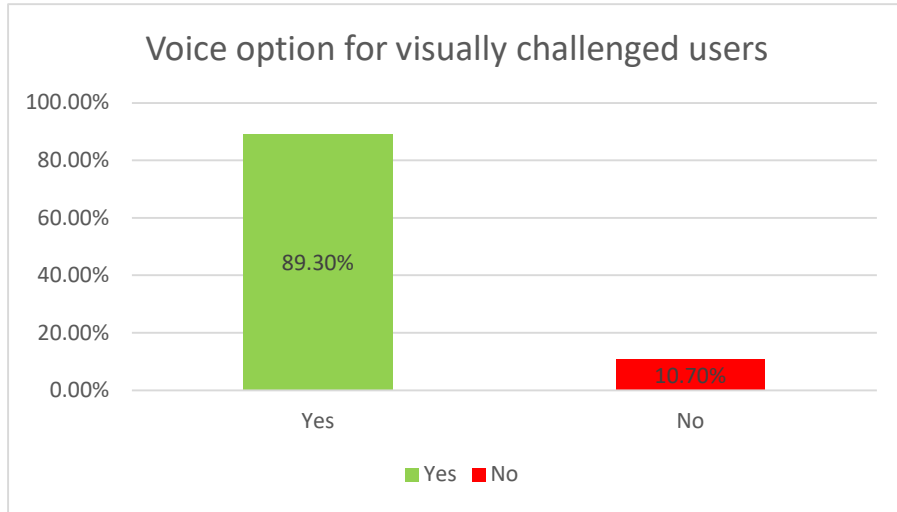
(Chart No. 1.11)

Below chart (1.12) indicates the timely receipt of one-time password (OTP) among the online services users. Majority of the respondents (86.7%) agreed that they get OTP in time while the remaining 13.3% of the respondents expressed that they do not receive the OTP in time.



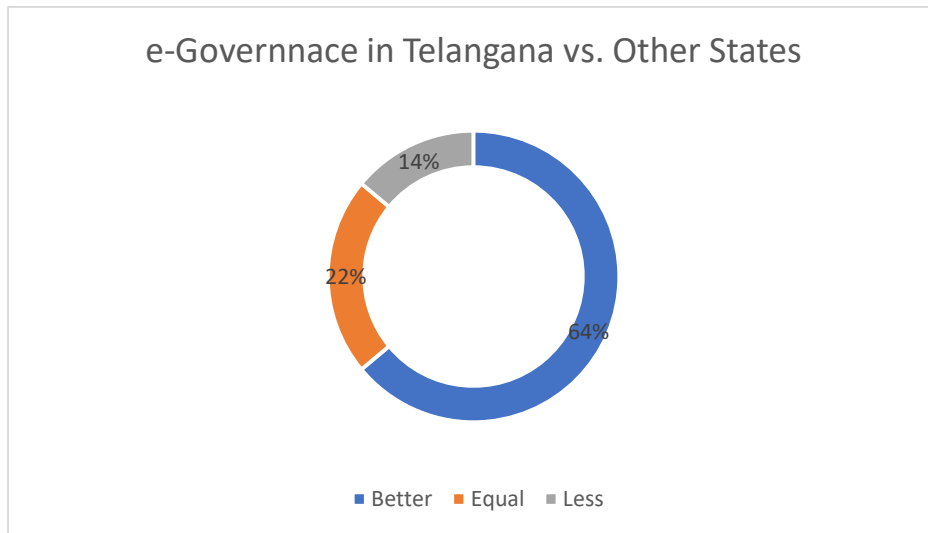
(Chart No. 1.12)

The below chart (1.13) indicates about the voice option to be given for the visually challenged citizens while accessing the Government portals/websites. Majority of the respondents i.e., 89.3% of them opined that the voice option should be made available for the visually challenged users while 10.7% of the respondents disagreed to the idea.



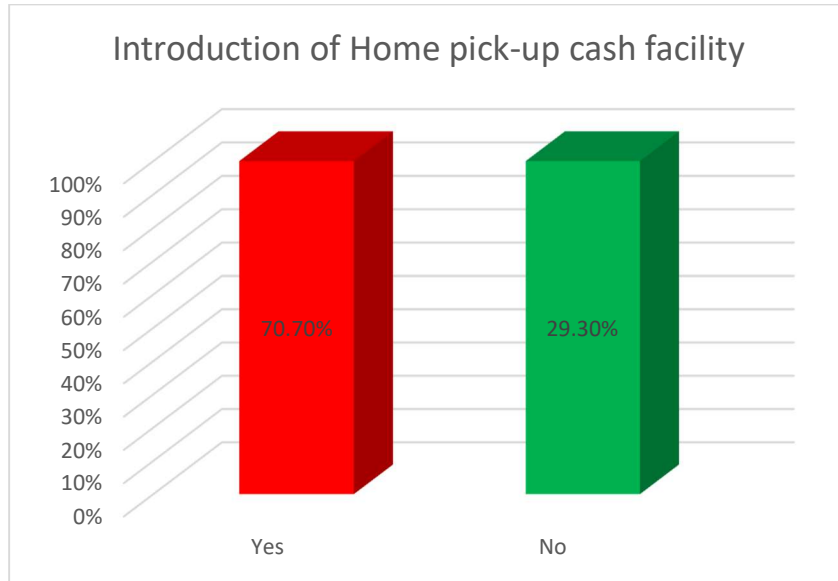
(Chart No. 1.13)

The below chart (1.14) indicates the perception of respondents about the level of e-governance/the availability of online services provided in Telangana vs other States. Majority of the respondents (64%) believe that its better in Telangana.



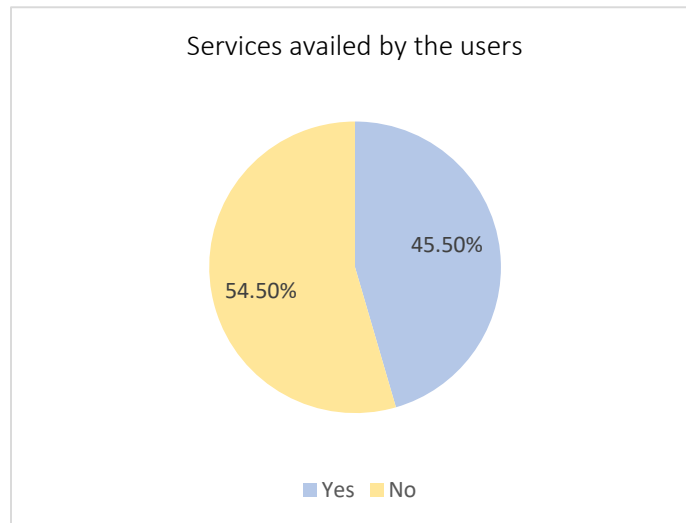
(Chart No. 1.14)

The below indicates (1.15) the perception of users about the introduction of ‘Home pick-up cash’ facility for online users who cannot make the payment through online like Debit card, Credit card, UPI payments. Majority of the respondents (70.7%) expressed that there should be a ‘Home pick-up cash’ service to be introduced by the Telangana Government while the remaining 29.3% of them disagreed to the idea.



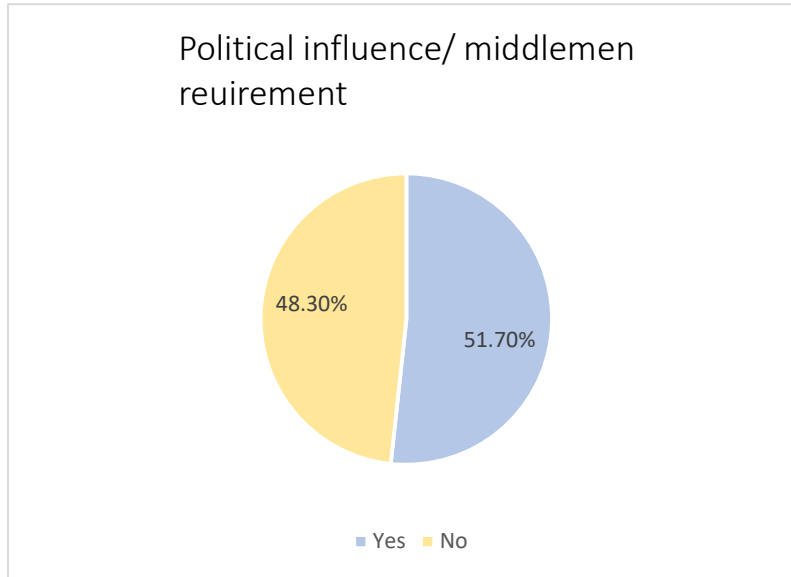
(Chart No. 1.15)

The below chart (1.16) indicates the services viz., like road cutting, drainage, electricity, or any Government permissions being availed by users online. Just below half of the users, i.e., 45.50% are availing/have availed some service provided by the Government online.



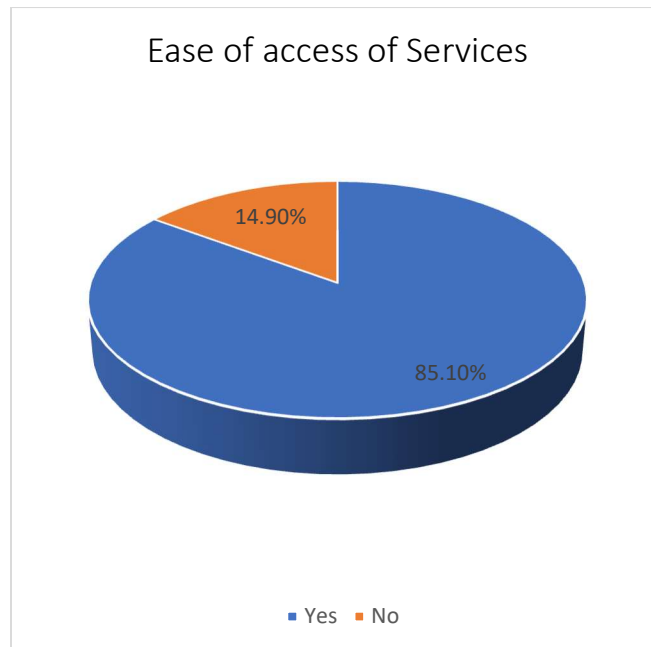
(Chart No. 1.16)

The below chart (1.17) indicates the requirement of the political influence or the middlemen in obtaining the permission for any services provided by the Government. 51.7% of them expressed that they had to take the help of middlemen or political influence while 48.3% of the respondents said that they got the Government permissions without any help online.



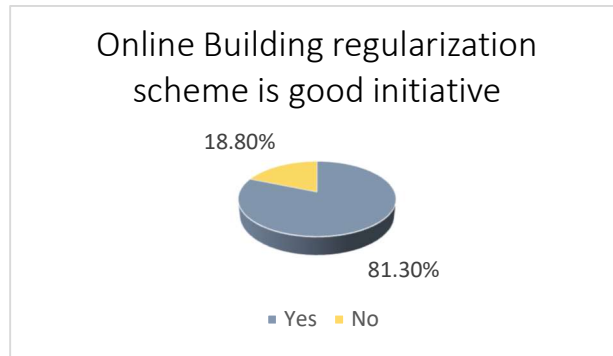
(Chart No. 1.17)

The below chart (1.18) indicates the ease of accessing the property tax, water bill services, etc., being provided by the Telangana Government online. Majority of the respondents i.e., 85.1% of them agreed that it is easier for them to access to the services like property tax, water bill payments while 14.9% of the respondents find it to difficult to access these services.



(Chart No. 1.18)

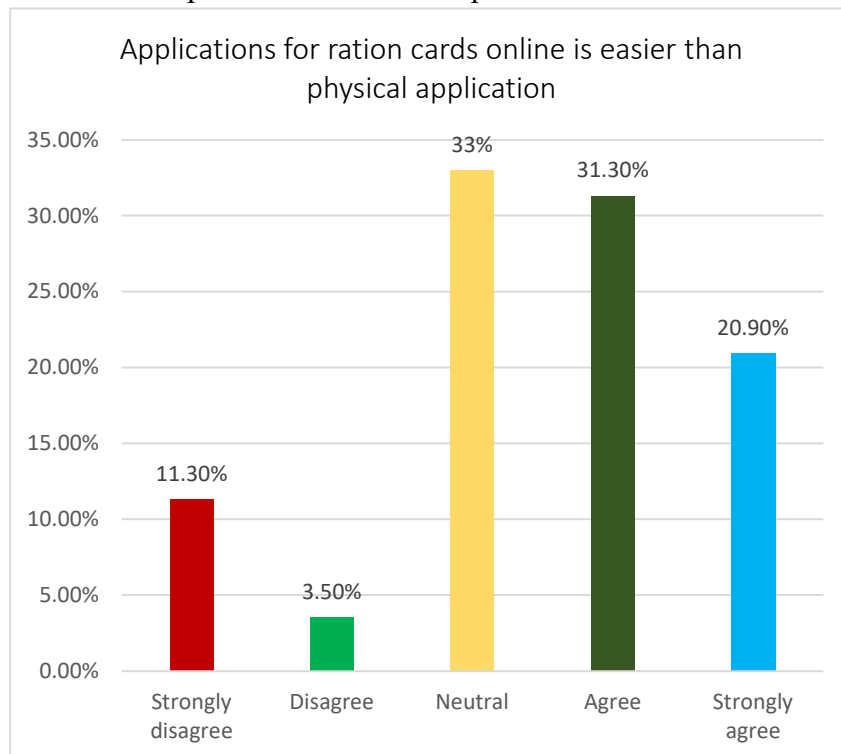
The below chart indicates (1.19) about the respondents’ opinion on the initiative of Building regularization scheme brought by Telangana Government. Majority of the respondents i.e., 81.3% of them felt that it is a good initiative while the remaining 18.8% of the respondents expressed that this scheme is not a good initiative.



(Chart No. 1.19)

The below chart (1.20) indicates the respondents’ perception of ease of application for ration cards online than the physical application. 20.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that the application of ration cards online is easier than physical application while 31.3% agreed to it, and 33% of them were neutral to this benefit. Thus, overall positive perception was observed.

33% of the respondents felt this comparison to be neutral and 31.3



(Chart No. 1.20)

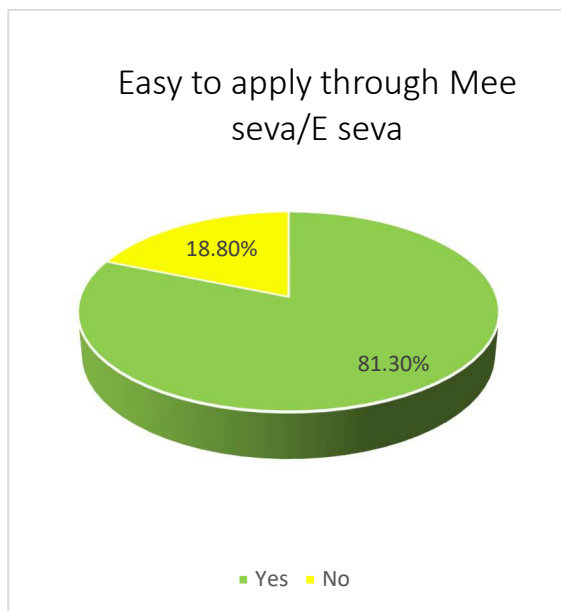
The below chart (1.21) indicate the perception of respondents about availing services from Mee seva/E seva of Telangana Government. Majority of the respondents, i.e., 81.3% of them feel that it is easier for them to apply for birth/caste/income certificates through Mee seva or E seva operators while the remaining 18.8% of them expressed that it is difficult for them.

Below chart (1.22) indicate perception of the respondents about the application charges while applying for the birth/caste/income certificates through Mee seva/E seva operators. 42.1% of the respondents felt that the charges are expensive while 57.9% of the respondents felt the charges do not seem expensive to them.

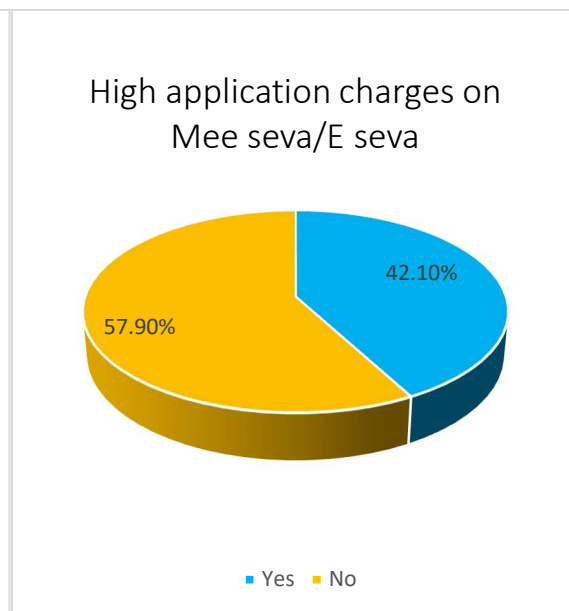
Below chart (1.23) indicate the perception of the respondents about the process seem time taking when they prefer Mee seva services. More than half of the respondents, i.e., 53.5% of them opined that the process seems time taking while 46.5% of them felt positive about it.

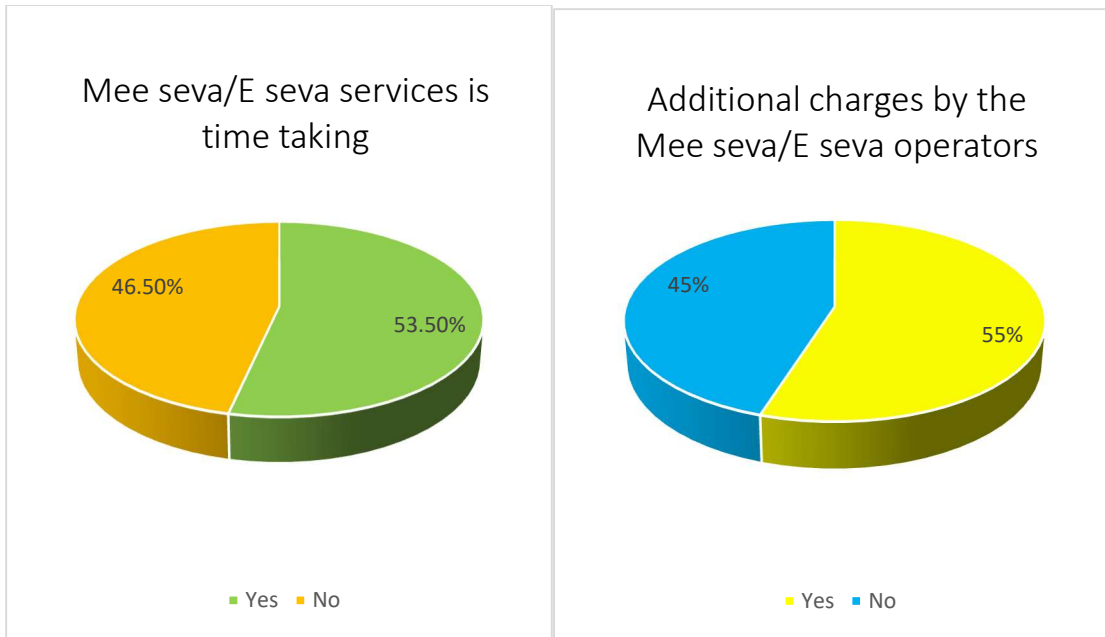
Below chart (1.24) indicate the perception of the respondents about the additional charges that are charged by Mee seva/E seva operators while availing the services. More than half of the respondents, i.e., 55% of them opined that the Mee seva/E seva operators are charging extra charges while 45% of them opined that the Mee seva/E seva operators are not charging additional charges.

(Chart No. 1.21)



(Chart No. 1.22)



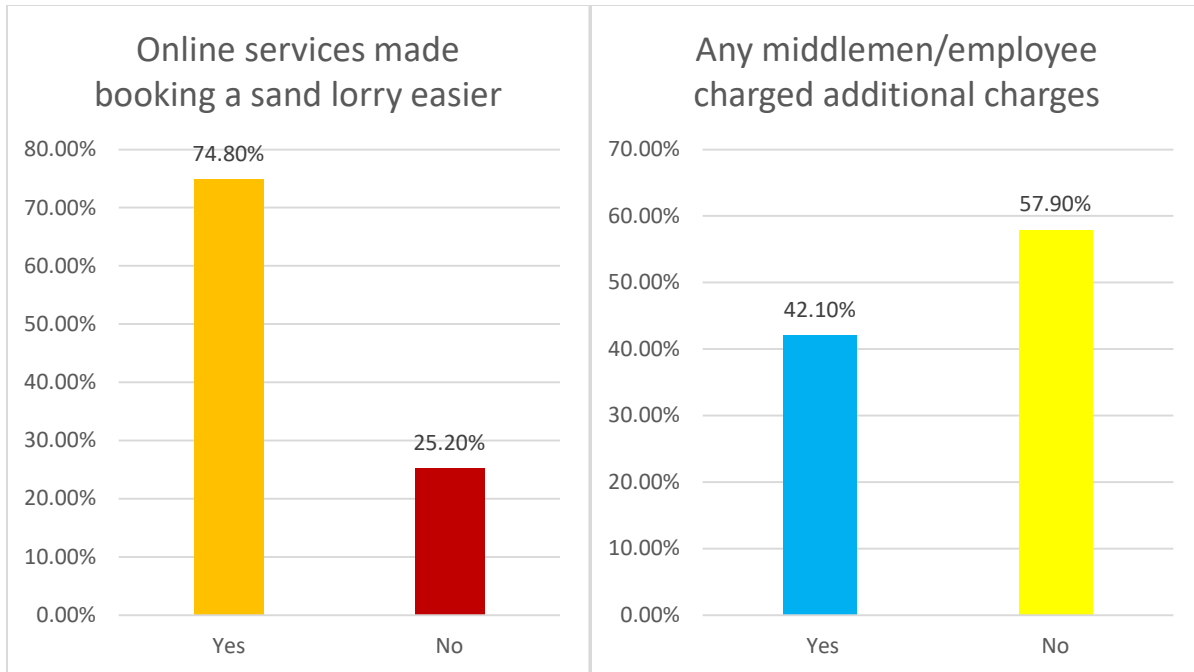


(Chart No. 1.23)

(Chart No. 1.24)

The below chart (1.25) indicates the booking of a sand lorry through online services made it easier. Majority of the respondents, i.e., 74.8% of them agreed that it has become easier for them to book sand lorry through online under ‘Mana Isuka Vahanam’ scheme while 25.2% felt otherwise.

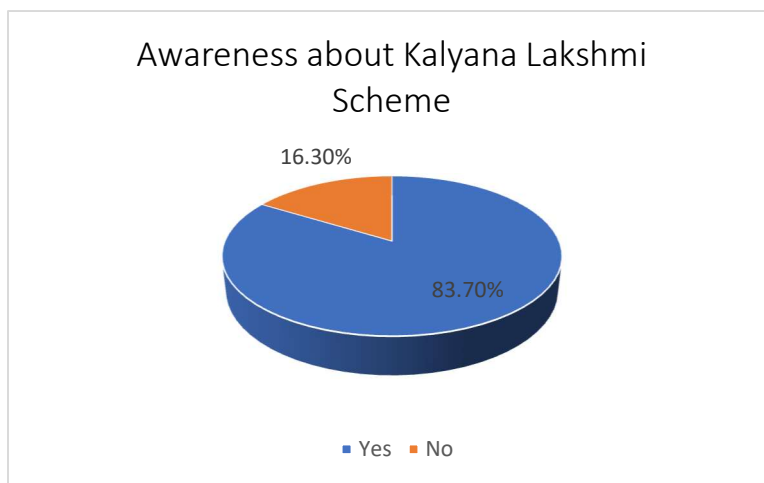
Below chart (1.26) indicates the middlemen/employees charged extra while availing this service. 57.9% of the respondents said that they were not charged any additional charges while 42.1% of them expressed that they have been charged additionally by the middlemen.



(Chart No. 1.25)

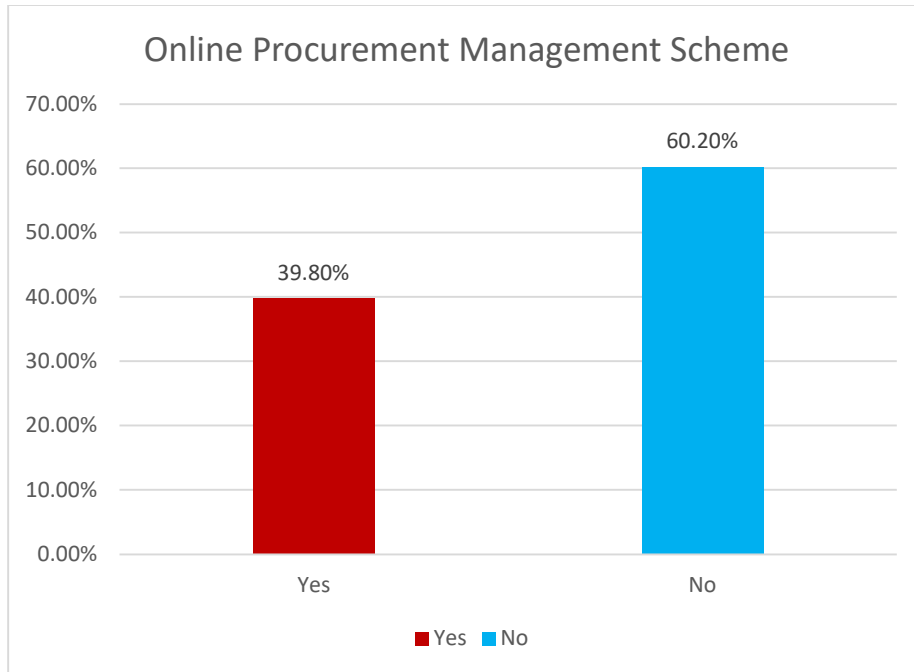
(Chart No. 1.26)

The below chart (1.27) indicates that the majority of the respondents, i.e., 83.7% of them are aware of the ‘Kalyana Lakshmi’ scheme introduced by the Government of Telangana while 16.3% are unaware.



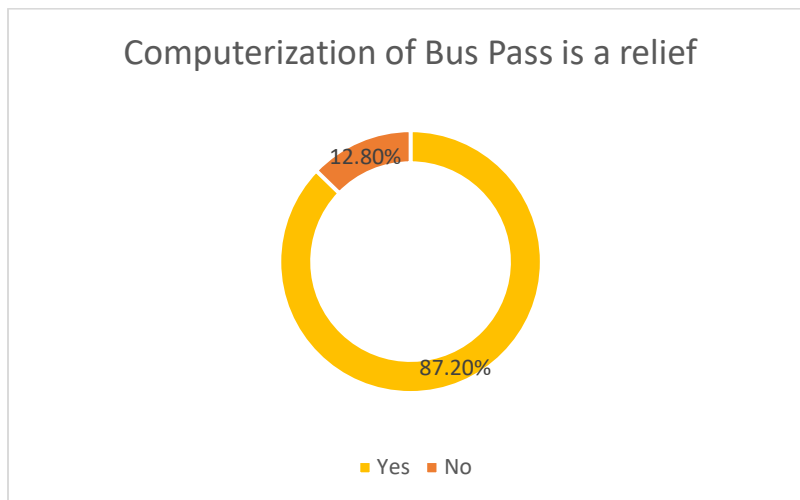
(Chart No. 1.27)

The below chart (1.28) indicates the respondents’ opinion on whether the farmers in rural areas are aware of the ‘Online Procurement Management’ Scheme or not? 60.2% of the respondents opined that the farmers in rural areas might not be aware of the ‘Online Procurement Management Scheme’ introduced by the Government of Telangana while 39.8% opined that the farmers in rural areas might know about the scheme.



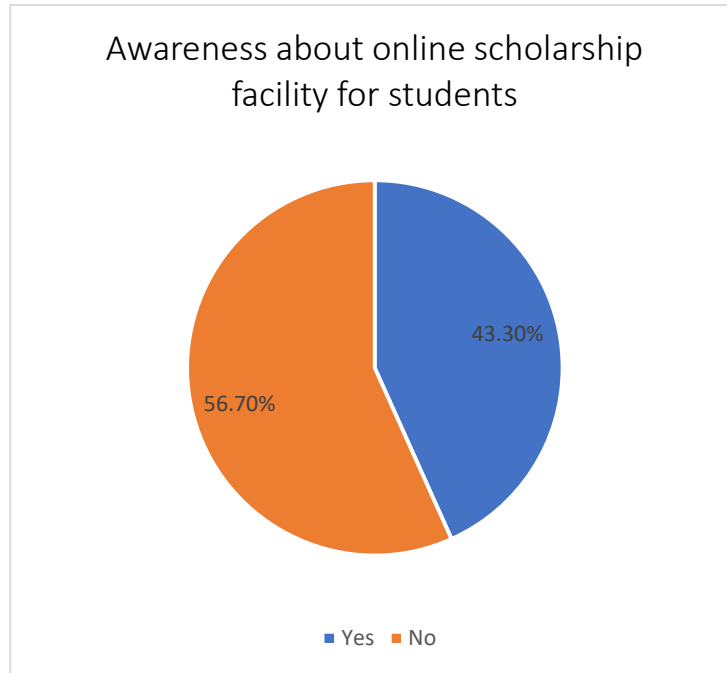
(Chart No. 1.28)

The below chart (1.29) indicates the computerization of Buss passes in Telangana. Respondents were asked whether it is a relief for them from long waiting at bus pass counters for obtaining/renewing the bus pass now that it is available online? Majority of the respondents, i.e., 87.2% of them agreed that it is a relief for them after the computerization of bus pass services and they are able to renew their bus pass in time while 12.8% of them disagreed.



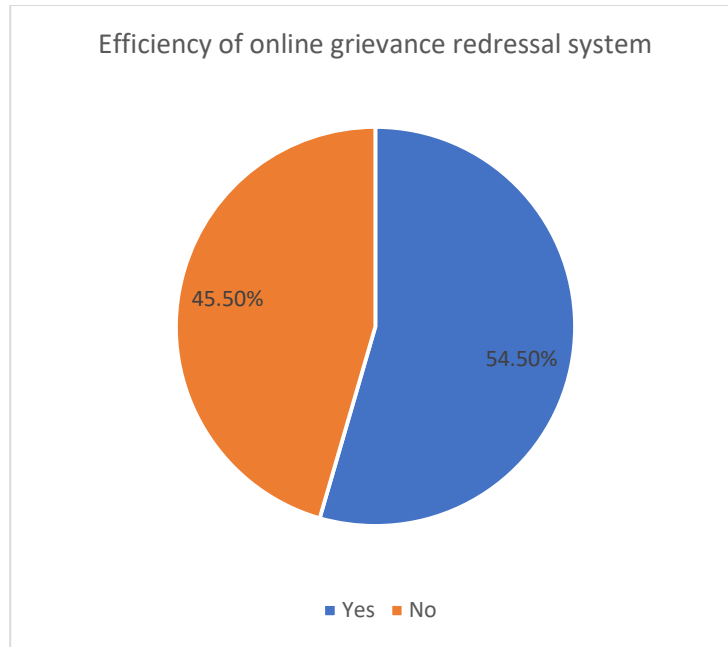
(Chart No. 1.29)

The below chart (1.30) indicates the awareness of respondents about scholarship facility for students being offered by the Government of Telangana online. 56.70% of the respondents said showed unawareness while 43.3% had knowledge of it.



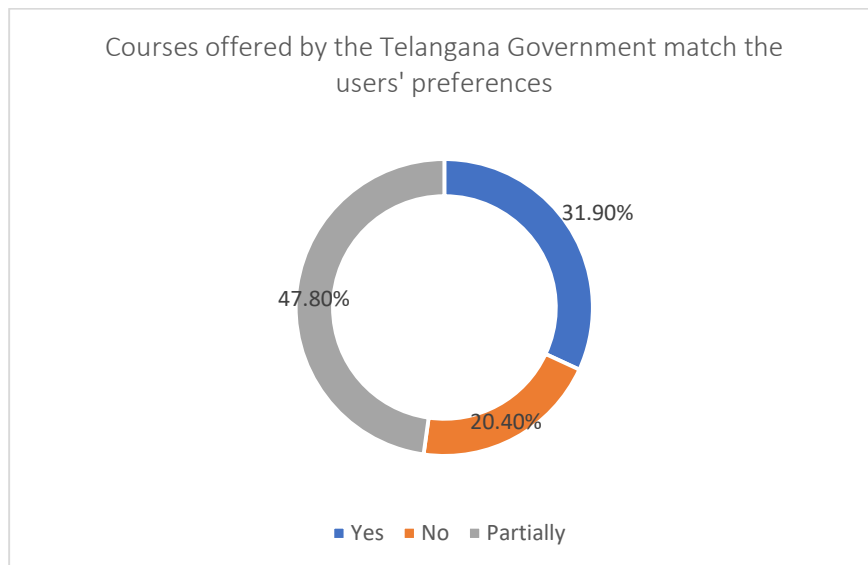
(Chart No. 1.30)

The below chart (1.31) indicates the efficiency of online grievance redressal system. 54.5% of the respondents felt that the grievance redressal system works efficiently while 45.5% of them said it doesn't work properly.



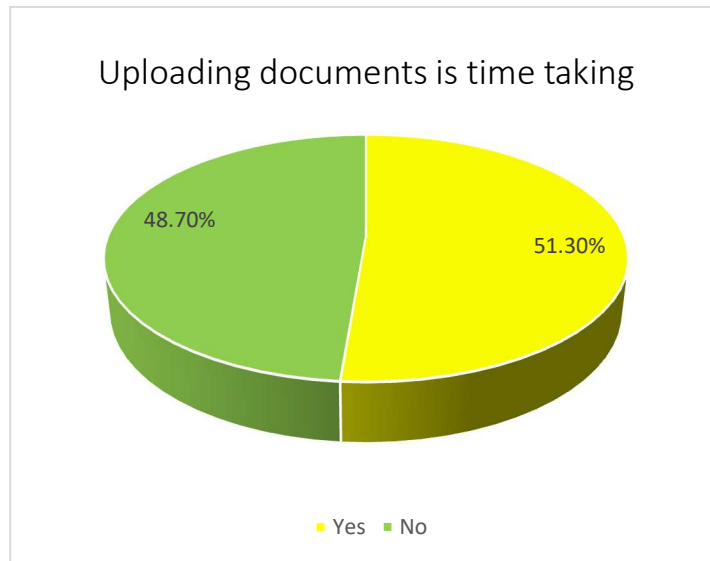
(Chart No. 1.31)

Below chart (1.32) indicates the courses offered by the Telangana Government match the users' preferences in Education through DOST scheme. 31.9% of the respondents opined that the Government is offering their preferred courses while 20.4% of them opined that the Government offering courses are not their preferred courses while the remaining i.e., 47.8% of the respondents opined that the courses by the Telangana Government are partially what they prefer.



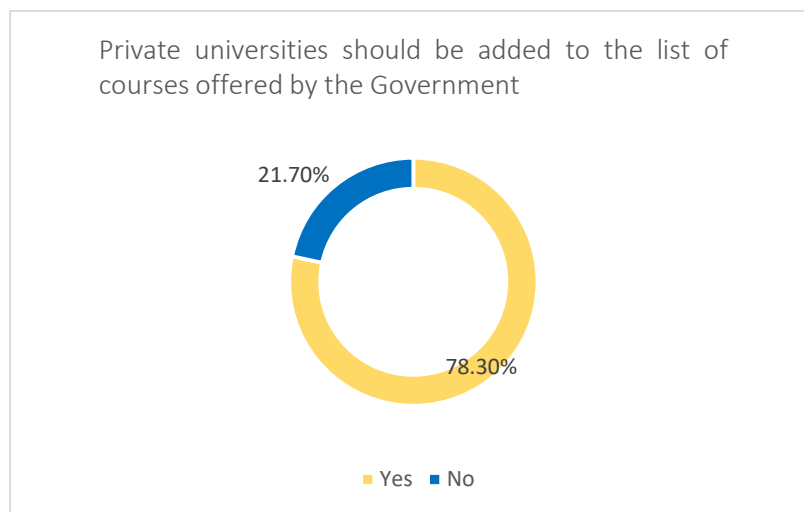
(Chart No. 1.32)

Below chart (1.33) indicates time taking to uploading documents online. More than 51.3% of them opined that it is time taking and 48.7% of them opined that it does not take lots of time while uploading the documents online.



(Chart No. 1.33)

Below chart (1.34) indicates the opinion of the respondents that private universities should be added to the list of the Government courses offered online. Majority of the respondents, i.e., 78% of them opined that the private universities should be added whereas 21.7% of them opined that there is no need to add the private universities.



(Chart No. 1.34)

Findings:

In the previous sections, the data collected by the means of distribution of a questionnaire to the sample and a brief profile of the sample has been presented. The following are the findings of the study.

- Around half of the respondents are between the age group of 26-30. While some are between the age group of 31 to 35 and the remaining are of the respondents belonging to the age group of 19 to 25.
- Majority of the respondents are men whereas the remaining of the respondents are women.
- Majority of the respondents are from the urban areas while the remaining of the respondents are from semi-urban areas and rural areas.
- Out of 150 respondents, around half of them are graduates, and almost the other half of them are post-graduates while a very few of them have finished intermediate as the highest Education.
- In terms of occupation, more than half of the respondents are from the private services, while a few are from Government services, the other few respondents are students, unemployed, are into business, homemakers and retired.
- Majority of the respondents trust the online services provided by the Telangana Government.
- Majority of the respondents access the online services through mobiles, while a few accesses through laptops and desktops. Although, no user has accessed the services through tablet.
- Majority of the respondents are aware of the online services being provided by the Government of Telangana.
- Majority of the respondents prefer to avail Governmental services online while a very few of them prefer visiting the Government offices.
- More than half of the respondents access the official website or portal to avail services provided by the Government while the remaining of the respondents prefer to use Mobile app.
- Overwhelmingly, super majority of the respondents opined that the citizens will be benefited if Government services are available through electronic medium while only very few felt otherwise.
- Nearly half of the respondents opined that major benefit of e-Governance is time saving, and the remaining felt it is reduction in corruption, increased efficiency felt that the major benefit is empowerment of citizens.
- More than half of the respondents opined that online services are somewhat responsive, while the remaining felt they are very responsive while the remaining respondents opined that the online services provided by the Government are not responsive.
- Majority of the respondents agreed that they get OTP for online services in time while the remaining expressed that they do not receive OTP in time.

- Majority of the respondents felt that the voice option should be made available for the visually challenged users.
- Majority of the respondents expressed that a 'Home pick-up cash' facility should be introduced by Telangana Government to avail services online while the remaining disagreed to the idea.
- Around half of the respondents expressed that they had to take the help of middlemen or political influence while the other half expressed that they got the Government permissions without any help.
- Majority of the respondents agreed that it is easier for them to access to the services like property tax, water bill payments online while the minority find it too difficult to access these services.
- Majority of the respondents felt that it was a good initiative to bring 'Building regularization scheme' online while the remaining minority expressed that this scheme was not a good initiative.
- Few of the respondents strongly agreed that the applying online for ration cards is easier than physically applying, while other few agreed to it. While other few were neutral about it.
- Majority of the respondents felt that it will be easier to apply for birth/caste/income certificates through Mee seva or E seva operators while the remaining expressed that it will be difficult.
- Nearly half of the respondents felt that the online charges for services are expensive while more than half of them felt that the charges do not seem expensive to them.
- More than half of the respondents opined that the process is time taking on Mee seva/E seva operators while the other half of them felt otherwise.
- More than half of the respondents expressed that the Mee seva/E seva operators are charging extra while the remaining felt otherwise.
- Majority of the respondents agreed that it will be easier to book sand through online scheme 'Mana Isuka Vahanam' while the remaining minority felt otherwise.
- More than half of the respondents said that they were not charged any additional charges while the remaining expressed being charged additionally by the middlemen.
- Majority of the respondents are aware of the 'Kalyana Lakshmi' scheme introduced by the Government of Telangana while the minority of them are unaware.
- More than half of the respondents felt that the farmers in rural areas might not be aware of the 'Online Procurement Management Scheme' introduced by the Government of Telangana while the remaining felt that the farmers in rural areas might know about the scheme.
- Majority of the respondents agreed that computerization of bus passes is a relief while the remaining of them disagreed.
- More than half of the respondents said that they are not aware of online scholarship service given by the Telangana Government while the remaining of them are aware.

- More than half of the respondents said that the online grievance redressal system works efficiently while the other half said it doesn't work efficiently.
- Around half of the respondents opined that the courses by the Telangana Government are partially what they prefer. And the remaining felt that the Government is offering their preferred courses.
- More than half of the respondents opined that it is time taking to upload documents online to avail Government services while the remaining felt otherwise.
- Majority of the respondents expressed that the private universities should be added to the Government offered courses online.
- More than half of the respondents felt that the Government of Telangana is doing better in e-Governance compared to other states, and the remaining felt that it is equal to other States, Telangana is at a lower level in implementation of e-Governance compared to other States.

Conclusion:

It is the human instinct to move towards better avenues in every domain be it, lifestyle, health, income, career, research, science, technology, etc. It is this feeling of betterment, which drives the progress of a society with time. The technological advancements in every field act as catalyst for the progress. Same is the case with governance. With the advent of robust information and communication technology (ICT), the face of governance is changing rapidly. In this information age, e-Governance is slowly but steadily replacing the time-consuming processes and practices of Governments across the world, their interaction with their citizens and departments. In the same spirit, State of Telangana in India has introduced many online services as part of e-Governance for the general public through the official Mobile app (T App Folio) and website/portal.

The findings of this study have shown

High awareness and quick adoption: It is observed in the study that people are well aware of e-Governance initiatives being taken up by the Telangana State. Users in our study are mostly accessing the online services through mobile and majority of age-groups in both genders and all backgrounds are adopting fast to e-Governance.

Trust: Users have shown trust in the e-Governance system of Telangana State and wish to see more services being added online. People are confident in paying taxes and bills, booking of services, and overwhelmingly prefer it above visiting Government offices.

Highly beneficial: Telangana State's move towards e-Governance has garnered majorly positive response among its citizens. People believe that the most important benefit is time saving, followed by reduction in corruption, increased efficiency of departments and empowerment of citizens. Majority of the respondents believe that Telangana is doing much better than other Indian States in the domain of e-Governance.

Ease of access to services: People are availing a wide array of online services like applying for Birth Certificate/Death Certificate/income certificate/caste certificate, property tax filing and payments of bills, permission for water connections, registration for employment, scholarships, building registration, bus passes, registration for courses, etc., and more services are being demanded / added with time.

Quality control: Close to or just less than half of the respondents feel that uploading of documents for online services is time consuming, websites/portals are not enough responsive, e-seva operators are charging extra, grievance redressal system is not that efficient. Thus, there is a need and scope to maintain and improve the quality of operations in e-Governance.

Future: There is a rural-urban divide among the users. Majority of the respondents feel that that people in rural area may not be aware of e-Governance. Respondents felt that the 'Procurement Management scheme' for farmers might not reach them effectively as most of them might be illiterate.

Further, the respondents suggested that the Government should bring more services related to farmers, a better grievance cell for civic facilities, effective way to procure disability certificates, anti-corruption bureau, disaster management services, home-cash collection for services, effective response from T App Folio, complaint system for road encroachment, hassle free road contract and bar licenses, more Government schools, colleges and hospitals to be constructed and to be monitored them under proper regulations, public and bank services at home, etc., point out that there is need for investment in social sector at ground level coupled with efficient monitoring through e-Governance.

Special voice, visual and other options may be provided for specially abled people to access online services.

It may be concluded that the move to e-Governance by Telangana State has been taken up by the general public as a highly beneficial step in the right direction. With the awareness campaigns, especially, in rural areas, increased registration of people for online services, better quality control, and the many services yet to be added, etc., provide huge scope for Telangana State to improve and create new benchmarks in e-Governance for other States of India. However, maintaining 24-hour grievance redressal, increasing digital literacy to citizens especially among women, improving the Internet connectivity in rural areas will make the e-Governance more effectual and in functioning towards the society. Telangana is a leading State in e-Governance, and with fast adoption by users, will successfully venture into the future.

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