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E-Governance in Indian Education: Emerging Dimensions and Contemporary Challenges

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Abstract

The future of education is more than just what learners are learning; it is about how well the educational system can be governed, managed, and made accessible through technology. E-Governance has become a valuable tool to revolutionize the way education is administered, managed, and delivered in India. Governance of Indian education is transitioning from traditional pen-and-paper management to technology-integrated, learner-centred systems. In the last few years as information and communication technologies (ICTs), digital platforms, Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Data Analytics, and Digital Public Infrastructure are increasingly being implemented. Digital governance has been extended from school to higher education through various initiatives by the Government of India like Digital India, DigiLocker, APAAR, Academic Bank of Credits (ABC), SWAYAM, SWAYAM Prabha, DIKSHA, ePathshala, National Scholarship Portal (NSP), National Digital Library of India (NDLI) and Samarth. The activities have enabled online enrollment, academic record keeping, digital credentials, scholarships, exams, credit transfer, learning services, institutional reporting, and communication between stakeholders in the education system. These initiatives have supported online admission, formfillup, and examination, maintenance of academic records, digital credentials, scholarships, credit transfers, and interaction among stakeholders in the education ecosystem. This conceptual paper discusses the emerging aspects of e-Governance in Indian education and how it could play a role in achieving efficiency, transparency, accountability, accessibility, quality assurance, and student-centred educational administration. This conceptual paper discusses the initial aspects of e-governance in the context of the Indian education ecosystem. It also gives an outline of how e-governance plays a vital role in ensuring efficiency, transparency, and accountability in the field of education. This paper highlights how these initiatives create a student-friendly educational administration. Moreover, this paper deeply discusses some of the key challenges that have to be addressed in the implementation of the educational e-Governance. The paper concludes that technology should not only be used as an administrative tool, but must also enable equitable access, effective decision making, institutional accountability, and better learning outcomes in India.

Keywords: *E-Governance, Educational Governance, Digital Transformation, Higher Education, Digital India, ABC ID, SWAYAM*

1.0 Introduction

Education is a fundamental instrument of socio-cultural transformation, economic development, and nation-building (Khan & Haider, 2025; Kumar, 2012; Tyagi, 2014). Regaining a vibrant role in educational governance is crucial to achieve equitable access, quality, transparency, accountability, and efficient administration of education in a diverse and populous country like India (Chhangani & Hussain, 2023; Gokani, 2017). In a diverse and populated country like India, it is vital to regain an active role in the management of education to ensure equitable, quality, accountability, and efficient administration (Khan & Haider, 2025). The Indian education ecosystem is a large structure in itself with a large numbers of schools, colleges, universities, teachers, learners, administrators, and regulatory bodies (Aggarwal, 2022; Hoque et al., 2025). In such a large and complex system, traditional paper-based management can lead to administrative delays, duplication of records, poor communication, and difficulties in monitoring and decision-making (Bhanti et al., 2022; Chhangani et al., 2023).

Therefore, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have created many opportunities to alter the way of educational managements (Chen & Li, 2026; Yadav et al., 2022). E-governance in education involves the systematic use of digital resources, online platforms, databases, and communication networks to streamline and enhance the effectiveness of educational administration. It also focuses on service delivery, decision-making, monitoring, and stakeholder engagement (Javid & Chinnathurai, 2018; Reji et al., 2025). It is not just about management; it is about transforming the relationships among educational institutions, government bodies, students, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders. Good e-governance has helps to update administrative processes, enhance access to information, increase transparency; lower transaction costs, and facilitate evidence-based educational planning (Parveen, 2018). E-governance in Indian education has been an ongoing process, starting with the digitalization of administrative records and examination procedures, progressing to the provision of online services, and ultimately evolving into integrated digital platforms (Khatoon & Kanvaria, 2026; T. R., 2023).

At the present time, technologies are being used for the smoothly conducting of admission, examination, scholarship, fee collection, academic record keeping, certificate issuance, grievance, and management of the educational institution (Reghunath, 2022; Shrivastava et al., 2014; Suri & Kaur, 2013). The Digital India program of 2015 established a key policy foundation for digital transformation in India. It focused on digital infrastructure, governance and on-demand services, and the digital empowerment of citizens. (Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology [MeitY], 2015).

Government of India has introduced several digital educational governance schemes like DigiLocker, APAAR, Academic Bank of Credits (ABC), SWAYAM, DIKSHA, National Scholarship Portal, and institutional Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems, which have increased the scope of digital education governance (Hoque et al., 2025; Yadav et al., 2022).

These initiatives facilitate digital academic record-keeping, credential management, credit mobility, e-learning, scholarship management, teacher development, and institutional administration (Khatoon & Kanvaria, 2026).

The National Education Policy 2020 has also recognized technology as an essential tool to support and modernize planning, administration, assessment, and the teaching-learning process (NEP, 2020).

Another development in educational governance is the use of artificial intelligence, big data analytics, cloud computing, automation, and predictive technology. These technologies can be utilized to assist with institutional planning, learner support, resource management, monitoring, and evidence-based decision-making (Khan & Haider, 2025).

However, the digital transformation also brings concerns regarding security, privacy, algorithmic bias, data governance, accessibility, and accountability (Aggarwal, 2022). Moreover, the digital divide poses a significant hurdle. Factors such as access to the internet and devices, digital literacy, socio-economic status, language, and geographical location.

Therefore, the future of e-governance should be inclusive, accessible, secure, and learner-centric (Lubis et al., 2024; Singh, 2026). Against this backdrop, it discusses the development of educational e-governance, emerging technologies and initiatives, opportunities and challenges (Duggappa, 2017; Saikia, 2024). This paper also discusses the future directions for creating an integrated, transparent, inclusive, and educational governance ecosystem in India.

2. Background of the Study

The rapid development of technology in the field of education has transformed the way educational institutions operate, communicate, and deliver services (Tyagi, 2014). The outline of e-governance in India has been a vital aspect of

educational administration, and its importance has gradually developed due to the increasing demands on transparency, efficiency, accessibility, and accountability (Chhangani & Hussain, 2023; Gokani, 2017).

E-governance in the context of education involves of the systematic usage of digital technologies to manage academic, administrative, and financial activities related with educational ecosystem (Aggarwal, 2022; Chhangani et al., 2023; Hoque et al., 2025). It includes features such as online admission, registration, testing, scholarship management, degree and institutional management systems, and an online learning environment (Khatoon & Kanvaria, 2026).

E-governance has received major support at the policy level through the Digital India project and the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. As digital platforms and educational technologies become commonplace, students, teachers, administrators, institutions, and policymakers are becoming increasingly interconnected (NEP, 2020).

The digitalization of educational services has been faster by initiatives like SWAYAM, DIKSHA, the National Academic Depository (NAD), and SAMARTH management systems etc. (Hoque et al., 2025; Yadav et al., 2022). These determinations help to decrease the time of administrative works and promote the sharing of information. It has also reduced institutional errors and increased the accountability of institutions through transparency.

Despite all benefits, there are a number of obstacles that stand in the way of e-governance implementation in the country, like Indian (Chhangani et al., 2023; T. R., 2023). The gap in digitalization is a major issue in this context, such as poor internet access of learning institutions, unavailability of digital devices and infrastructure for learners.

Also, cyber security, digital literacy, and technical assistance may have an impact on the effectiveness of e-governance (Shrivastava et al., 2014; Yadav et al., 2022).

Therefore, e-governance is not only the digitization of administrative processes but also part of a larger shift towards more approachable, accountable, participatory, and data-informed governance.

Understanding its evolving scenario and the future path is playing a vital role towards the development of an inclusive and sustainable governance ecosystem in democratic country like India. It should ensure technical progress is consistent with principles of equity, quality, accessibility and accountability.

3. Evolution of E-governance in India

The following flow chart demonstrates the evolution of e-governance in India, followed by a brief description of its major stages and developments.

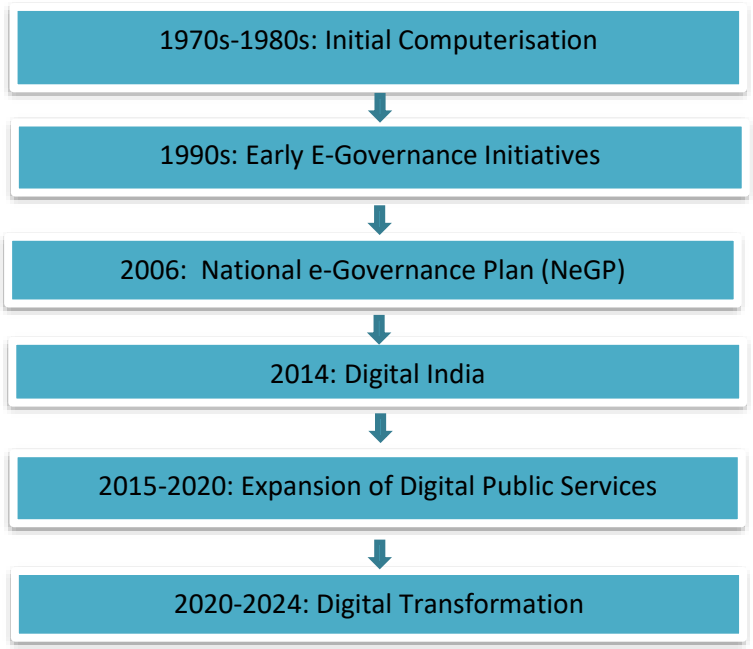

Figure 1: Evolution of E-Governance in India

The evolution of e-governance in the education system of India has been a step forward from the traditional education system that was paper-based file to the technology-driven, cloud-based integrated e-governance (Reji et al., 2025). The origins of e-Governance in the context of India trace back to the 1970s, when the Indian Government created the Department of Electronics and subsequently established the National Informatics Centre (NIC) in 1977 (Deshpande & Khullar, 2024). It

was also suggested in 2002 that an Indian portal be created so that the general public could access information on various subjects related to government operations, including rural development, agriculture, and social welfare (Tyagi, 2014).

On May 18, 2006, the Central Government adopted the 'National e-Governance Plan' (NeGP), which comprises eight components and 27 'Mission Mode Projects' (MMPs) to promote e-governance activities in India (Gokani, 2017). The Government of India launched the 'Digital India initiative' with the aim of transforming the country into a technology-driven, knowledge-based economy and society (Chhangani et al., 2023).

DigiLocker, e-Hospital, BharatNet and MyGov are some of the remarkable initiatives under Digital India. The programme has also encouraged technology-based governance and digital learning in the education sector, including the National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NMEICT) (Ministry of Human Resource Development [MHRD], 2014). Campus Connect, National Digital Library of India, and SWAYAM .

The NEP 2020 also highlighted the need of smart utilization of technology in education and the establishment of digital infrastructure, e-learning, digital content, and educational administration with technology. In recent years, e-governance has been moving towards an integrated path of data and automation with the advent of the Internet, cloud computing, Artificial Intelligence (AI), big data, mobile applications, and easy-to-use platforms (NEP, 2020).

In recent years, the adoption of cloud computing, artificial intelligence, mobile applications, and user-friendly digital platforms has significantly advanced e-governance towards becoming more integrated and data-driven. Thus, the evolution of e-governance in India's education sector can be viewed as a journey progressing from the initial phase of computerization to digitization and the availability of online services, ultimately leading to the integration of intelligent, learning-centric digital governance.

4. Integrated E-Governance Ecosystem in Indian Education

The following table presents various e-governance initiatives undertaken by the Government of India in the field of education, along with their respective functions and a brief description of their contributions to the integrated e-governance ecosystem.

SR. NO.	YEAR	INITIATIVE	MAJOR FOCUS
01	2011	**e-PG Pathshala**	Postgraduate e-content and digital learning resources
02	2015	**DigiLocker**	Digital academic documents and certificates
03	2015	**National Scholarship Portal (NSP)**	Digital scholarship administration
04	2017	**DIKSHA**	School education and teacher professional development
05	2017	**SWAYAM**	MOOCs and online higher education
06	2017	**SWAYAM Prabha**	Educational DTH channels
07	2017	**National Academic Depository (NAD)**	Digital academic records
08	2017-18	**UDISE+**	School education data and evidence-based governance
09	2018	**National Digital Library of India (NDLI)**	Digital library and learning resources
10	2019	**Samarth e-Gov**	Integrated higher education administration
11	2021	**Academic Bank of Credits (ABC)**	Academic credit storage and transfer
12	2024	**SWAYAM Plus**	Industry-oriented and employability-focused learning

Table 2: Integrated E-Governance Ecosystem in Indian Education

4.1 . e-PG Pathshala

e- PG Pathshala started in 2011 as part of the National Mission of Education through ICT for high-quality electronic content in post-graduate education. The platform provides structured e-content that has been developed as part of the UGC's educational technology initiatives and coordinated by INFLIBNET, for post-graduate students. In the context of e-governance, e-PG Pathshala promotes the use of electronic academic tools for access to knowledge, and technology-based higher education (Hoque et al., 2025; Yadav et al., 2022).

4.2. DigiLocker

DigiLocker as an initiative of Digital India launchedby government of India on 1st July, 2015 under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, offering a secure digital medium and access to authentic electronic documents for citizens. In education, DigiLocker facilitates the digital availability and sharing of marksheets, certificates, degrees and other credentials (Reji et al., 2025).

4.3. National Scholarship Portal (NSP)

The National Scholarship Portal (NSP) is a single platform that was launched on 1st July of 2015 under the Digital India Programme to provide e-services related to scholarship. It provides an integrated solution for student registration, application, verification, and approval related to scholarship disbursement. The portal aims to enhance transparency and avoid duplication and delays in the distribution of scholarships (Sanghv et al., 2022).

4.4. DIKSHA

The national digital platform for School Education and Teacher professional development, DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing), was formally inaugurated on September 05, 2017. It has been developed by the Ministry of Education and provides e-content, QR-coded books, teacher-training modules, assessments, and other digital content. DIKSHA's key contribution is that it has created a platform for teachers, students, parents, states/Union Territories, and national educational organizations to come together and participate in the digital education ecosystem. It also facilitates inclusive and integrated digital learning across multiple languages (Hoque et al., 2025; Yadav et al., 2022).

4.5. SWAYAM

SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active-Learning for Young Aspiring Minds) was formally launched on July 9, 2017, with the aim of providing an integrated national platform for Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). It offers courses from class 12th to postgraduate, combining video lectures, reading materials, self-assessment, and discussion forums. SWAYAM contributes to e-governance by expanding access to quality education, supporting flexible learning and enabling academic credit transfer (Behera & Kaware, 2025; Hoque et al., 2025).

4.6. SWAYAM Prabha

SWAYAM Prabha was inaugurated on 7 July 2017 as a group of educational DTH channels providing quality educational programmes through satellite-based broadcasting. Initially designed as a 24×7 educational television network, it uses GSAT-15 infrastructure and disseminates content prepared by institutions such as NPTEL, IITs, UGC, CEC, IGNOU, NCERT and NIOS. Its importance for educational governance lies in extending digital education beyond internet-dependent learners (Yadav et al., 2022).

4.7. National Academic Depository (NAD)

NAD is a government initiative to create a secure digital repository of academic awards launched on 9 July 2017. It enables educational institutions to upload academic records digitally and allows authorized users to view and verify academic credentials electronically. NAD improves the functioning of the education system by eliminating reliance on physical certificates, facilitating rapid verification, and reducing the risk of academic fraud (Hoque et al., 2025; Yadav et al., 2022).

4.8. UDISE+

UDISE+ (Unified District Information System for Education Plus) was launched around 2017-18 as an upgraded version of UDISE to improve the process of collecting, consolidating, and analyzing data related to school education. Through the help of ICT, this system gathers data on schools, students, teachers, infrastructure, and other education-related parameters. It can be used by the administrators at various levels to monitor educational development (Sharma & Pattanayak, 2023).

4.9. National Digital Library of India (NDLI)

The National Digital Library of India (NDLI) was formally launched on 19 June 2018 as a national digital repository of teaching-learning resources. Developed at IIT Kharagpur with support from the Ministry of Education. It provides a unified platform to search and access educational content from diverse sources. NDLI supports e-governance by facilitating equitable access to knowledge, reducing barriers related to educational resources, and promoting the sharing of digital resources as per the needs of the individual (Anasane, 2022).

4.10. Samarth e-Gov

Samarth e-Gov was initiated in 2019 under the National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NMEICT-III) to promote digital governance in higher education institutions. It provides a cloud-based enterprise resource planning framework for universities and higher education institutions. Samarth modules facilitate admissions, student management, examinations, finance, human resources, and other institutional processes (Khatoon & Kanvaria, 2026).

4.11. Academic Bank of Credits (ABC)

The Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) was introduced under the UGC Regulations, 2021, and the ABC framework was launched on July 29, 2021. It digitally records academic credits earned by students from recognized higher education institutions and facilitates their accumulation, transfer, and redemption. This initiative is a significant shift towards a flexible and learner-centric system of higher education governance. The ABC supports multiple entry and exit points, the study of diverse subjects, and academic mobility, thereby facilitating the implementation of key provisions of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 (Ghosh & Kumar, 2024).

4.12. SWAYAM Plus

SWAYAM Plus was formally launched in February 2024, with IIT Madras serving as the nodal implementing institute. It extends the value of the SWAYAM chain to include industry-oriented employability and career-focused learning. It bridges the gap between education and industry by offering courses designed for employment and career readiness, while also providing academic recognition, including NCrF-aligned credits where applicable. The e-governance approach of SWAYAM Plus fosters synergy among the government, higher education institutions, and the industry (Maurya & Ahuja, 2025).

5. Contemporary Challenges of E-Governance in Indian Education

The following are some of the contemporary challenges that hinder the effective implementation of e-governance in the Indian education system.

5.1. Digital Divide and Unequal Access

The digital divide in access is still a significant problem in India's education system. Students and teachers belonging to rural, tribal, remote, and economically backward areas may not have consistent access to the internet, smartphones, computers, or electricity. This gap hampers their use of digital educational services and leads to unequal participation, learning opportunities, and access to government-supported e-governance platforms (Chhangani & Hussain, 2023; Khan & Haider, 2025).

5.2. Digital Literacy and Capacity Building

Lack of digital literacy among teachers, learners, and other administrative staff working within the educational ecosystem affects the effective use of e-governance in education. Just providing digital infrastructure is not enough to ensure their meaningful utilization. For showing cconfidence and competence during the use of educational portals and management systems, the government should provide regular training, technical support, and professional development to users (Chhangani & Hussain, 2023; Khan & Haider, 2025).

5.3. Data privacy and security management

In the present era, with the increasing digitization evolution of educational management record keeping. A large amount of sensitive data related to learners, teachers, and institutions exists. The government should ensure that unauthorized individuals, the wrong persons including those using false identities or cyber intruders cannot access this information poses a significant challenge. Therefore, educational institutions must ensure strong cybersecurity infrastructure, secure authentication methods, responsible data management, and strong privacy protections (Chhangani & Hussain, 2023; Khan & Haider, 2025).

5.4. Data Quality and Accuracy

E-governance depends on accurate, timely, and reliable data management. Errors in institutional information such as teacher details, learner records, and other data can impact planning, monitoring, and decision-making processes. Unreliable

data entry methods and inadequate verification systems can undermine the reliability of digital databases and, ultimately, weaken evidence-based educational governance (Chhangani & Hussain, 2023).

5.5. Language and Digital Inclusivity

In India, linguistic diversity poses a big challenge to the development of inclusive e-governance. Most digital platforms and resources are available in English or Hindi and may not be accessible to those who prefer using other local languages. Digital governance works best when it incorporates multilingual interfaces, content in regional languages, user-friendly design, and accessibility features for persons with disabilities, thereby benefiting diverse users (Hoque et al., 2025; Khan & Haider, 2025).

5.6. Sustainability and Continuous System Upgradation

The authority should ensure sustainable development and continuous improvement of the system as per the demands of stakeholders. Since e-governance systems rely on digital technology, they require ongoing maintenance, technical enhancements, cyber security improvements. If digital platforms are not updated in line with evolving educational and technical needs and circumstances, they risk becoming outdated. It is difficult for institutions with limited resources to sustain operations over the long term. Continuous funding, technical support, scalable infrastructure, and the ongoing evaluation of digital systems are essential for maintaining operations (Javid & Chinnathurai, 2018; Khan & Haider, 2025).

6. Conclusions

E-governance has emerged as an important component of the digital transformation of Indian education. The shift from traditional paper-based governance to technology-based governance has transformed the way educational services are designed, implemented, and evaluated. The introduction of various initiatives like DIKSHA, SWAYAM, SWAYAM Prabha, UDISE+, DigiLocker, Academic Bank of Credits, e-PG Pathshala, National Digital Library of India, and SAMARTH reflect the increasing digitization of school and higher education governance. These efforts have helped enhance accessibility, transparency, administrative efficiency, academic mobility, and the availability of educational information and resources. The new contours of e-governance suggest that digitalization of governance is not limited to administrative processes. These efforts have led to improvements in accessibility, transparency, and administrative efficiency of educational resources. The new form of e-governance demonstrates that the digitalization of governance is not limited to administrative processes. Thus, the use of e-governance for educational planning and service delivery is gradually becoming significant. However, the effectiveness of e-governance cannot be assessed solely based on the availability of digital platforms. Its implementation still faces many obstacles, such as the digital divide, poor infrastructure, digital literacy, concerns about data privacy and security, interoperability challenges, language barriers, and others. Failure to deal with these challenges could lead digitalisation to further and even reinforce inequalities in education. Thus, a mixed approach between technological innovation and inclusion should adopt for the success of e-governance in Indian education.

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