Prismatic Horizons
Journal of Social Science and Humanities
www.phjssh.lexarcheus.com
Vol.-04, Issue-02 (Apr-Jun, 2026)



Exploring the Role of e-Governance in Public Service Delivery in Education in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir

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https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.21699761

ARTICLE INFO

Article History

Received	10 Apr, 2026
Revised	20 May, 2026
Accepted	25 Jun, 2026
Available Online	30 Jun, 2026

ARTICLE ID
PHJSSH0402004

KEYWORDS

Government, Services, Education, Change, management.Microfinance.

ABSTRACT

E-governance has become a revolutionary in improving the delivery of the public services, especially in the education sector where efficiency, transparency, and accessibility are paramount. This paper discusses the impact of e-governance on the enhancement of the education service delivery in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, particularly during its digital transformation phase post-2019. The study examines the different e-governance projects like online admission systems, online scholarship portals, examination management systems and e-learning services, which have been put in place to automate administrative procedures and enhance user experience. The research uses a descriptive and analytical method including primary and secondary data to determine the accessibility, effectiveness, and impact of these digital services. Results show that e-governance has greatly boosted transparency, minimized administrative delays, and minimized dependency on intermediaries. It is reported that in Jammu and Kashmir internet penetration was around 5560 percent by 2022, with urban regions such as Srinagar, exhibiting an increased rate of internet usage. Thousands of students have been able to access financial aid each year through the National Scholarship Portal and digital attendance and examination systems have cut the processing time by almost 3040 per cent in certain institutions. The advantage of urban population is that it has better digital infrastructure, high internet penetration and digital literacy. Besides this, the rural and economically disadvantaged areas have to contend with other challenges like low internet connectivity, absence of digital devices and low awareness levels. The paper also presents major issues that influence the adoption of e-governance, such as a weak infrastructure, digital divide, lack of technical skills, and cybersecurity and privacy issues. Regardless of these issues, e-governance has been key in ensuring continuity of education especially when there are setbacks like the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Prismatic Horizons: Journal of Social Science and Humanities
ISSN: 2583-9284
Vol. 04, No. 02, Apr-Jun, 2026
www.phjssh.lexarcheus.com

INTRODUCTION

E-governance has become a key pillar of the new era of public administration and it is changing the manner in which governments provide their services and interact with their citizens. Digital governance in the education sector has had significant structural implications on the sector where timely access to information, administration efficiency and transparency in services are indispensable (Mehrajand, and Kaur, 2021)..Since 2019, the rate of adoption of e-governance in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, has improved significantly as the national activities of the Digital India programme were implemented in 2015, which aimed at creating digital infrastructure, encouraging digital literacy and improving the service delivery process through the Internet in industries.E-governance in education is associated with a wide range of services, which include online admission systems, online scholarship portal, examination management systems, teacher information systems and e-learning tools (Kumari, 2025). These systems have replaced the old paper based systems, which were time consuming to be processed and enhanced efficiency. Statistics indicate that most of the government scholarship programs in India (more than 70 percent) are now being transacted online through direct benefit transfer systems, which have led to faster payments, reduced leakages and improved accountability. Likewise, computerized marking systems and Web-based portals of results have greatly decreased the time taken in processing and enhanced accessibility to students (Javid, 2024).The involvement of e-governance in education was particularly evident in 2020-2022 during the COVID-19 pandemic when the conventional system of education was disrupted. Online services like DIKSHA, SWAYAM, because and PM eVIDYA were essential in providing continuity of education (Dar, S.A. and Sakthivel, 2021).

Millions of learning sessions were registered by DIKSHA alone in this time, indicating massive use of digital learning tools. The re-introduced 4G internet connection in 2020 in Jammu and Kashmir was a key change it enabled more citizens to get connected to the internet and access online education and online government services (Hussain, 2021)..Nevertheless, with these advances, access still is uneven in various regions.There are still some major issues which influence the success of e-governance in the education sector. Rural and remote connectivity is still poor, with rural internet penetration ranging at approximately 50 percent, as compared to greater than 70 percent in urban areas (Dar, S.A., 2022). There is a restriction to access of smartphones, poor connectivity and frequent power cut-offs, which further reduces usage. In addition, less than 40 percent of the population lack basic digital literacy skills, and therefore, lots of users are not able to utilize the online platforms. Institutional bottlenecks that include untrained personnel and technical capacity in educational institutions that hinder the use of digital systems to the optimum include the lack of trained personnel and technical capacity (Bhat, B.A., 2023).Against this backdrop, this paper will analyze the e-governance issue and its impact on the delivery of the public service in the education sector in Srinagar. It is interested in the opportunities created by the digital transformation and the current problems limiting its opportunities (Wani, 2023.). The study will provide a holistic view of the potential of e-governance in assisting in the realisation of a more efficient, transparent and inclusive education system (Shah, et:al, 2024).

Background of the Study.

E-governance has emerged as one of the core areas of administrative reform in India, which focuses on enhancing efficiency, transparency and access in service delivery to the people. The growth of digital infrastructure driven by national projects like Digital India has

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greatly changed the governance mechanisms in the last ten years (Sharma, et;al 2024). The internet penetration in India has topped 850 million, indicating a high rate of digitalization in the sectors. E-governance instruments have been used extensively in the education sector to make processes like online admissions, scholarship allocation, administration of exams, and administration of institutions easier (Zargar, and Ahlawat, 2017).Such systems have decreased the manual workload, shortened the bureaucratic delays and increased the transparency in service delivery.Digital transformation has seen a resurgence in Jammu and Kashmir, especially since the administration restructuring in 2019, as it seeks to enhance governance and delivery of services to the people. The district of Srinagar, being one of the most urban and administratively important areas, has become one of the major hubs in the application of e-governance project in the sphere of education (Khan, and Raja, 2023). To enhance access and efficiency, a wide range of government platforms, such as online admission portals, centralized scholarship systems, and e-learning platforms, have been implemented (Bhat,2024).An example is the National Scholarship Portal which has been able to make direct benefit transfers to millions of students in India, which has provided a timely and transparent delivery of financial assistance. Likewise, the use of digital platforms in schools has seen an increase in application and record processing speeds, with some schools stating a 2530 increase in administrative efficiency.The internet penetration in Jammu and Kashmir has been steadily increasing to reach an approximate of 55 60 percent by 2022, with a higher rate of connection in urban centers such as Srinagar (Kundan, 2018). The growing access to smartphones and low-cost data services has also been a contributor to the growth of digital access among learners and teachers (Agha,1065). Nevertheless, regardless of these improvements, there continue to be serious challenges. There is an apparent digital divide between urban and rural regions with little access to high-speed internet and digital devices (Saxena, 2024). Poor connectivity in most of the peripheral areas and inadequate infrastructure still remains a challenge that prevents the successful execution of e-governance services.

Moreover, the differences in digital literacy of students, educators and administrators influence the best utilization of these platforms (Raina, 2018). In the past, online learning and administrative functions have also been affected by some internet meltdowns, making reliability an issue (Safira, and Hilal, 2024).These differences indicate that e-governance has led to increased service delivery but not equally distributed.Consequently, the effectiveness of e-governance initiatives in meeting the various educational needs of the population should be critically studied (Wasnik,2021). This paper will address the role, impact, and issues of e-government on the provision of educational services in Srinagar giving an in-depth insight into its developments and constraints.

Study Significance.

This research has a lot of importance in the context of the transformative nature of e-governance in improving the delivery of the public services in the education sector, especially in District Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir. As digital technologies have grown swiftly, the governance systems of India have moved towards online platforms and have resulted in the efficiency, transparency, and accountability (Anant, 2013). Digital programs like online admission systems, electronic record management and direct benefit transfer systems of scholarships have made the education sector more efficient in terms of administrative processes and minimization of delays. An example is how digital scholarship systems in India have been used to process millions of applications each year and guarantee quicker and more transparent delivery of funds to students (Ahmad, 2012).This study is also important given that it is

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regionally specific to Srinagar, which is among the most urbanized districts of Jammu and Kashmir. Srinagar, being an administrative and educational centre, offers a pivotal environment to consider the efficiency of e-governance projects (Rashid,and Bansal, 2017). The internet usage in the district has been on a steady rise with the overall internet penetration in the Union Territory being approximately 55–60% over the past few years. The increased presence of smartphones and cheap data has allowed schools and students to become more and more dependent on digital services to access educational services (Mankotia, 2021).

The research is also significant in drawing attention to the purpose of e-governance in providing continuity of education in times of disruption especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Online learning platforms, virtual classrooms, and digital communication tools were extensively used in schools and colleges to continue academic activities during this period (Bashir,and Chuhra, 2024).This transition evidenced the resilience and flexibility of digital governance systems, with many students having the ability to carry on with their studies even when physically constrained.The other significant input of this study is the discovery of accessibility and inclusivity gaps. Although the state of digital infrastructure has improved, there continue to exist urban-rural and socio-economic disparities in digital infrastructure (Pal,et;al, 2025). Poor access to good internet, absence of digital devices, and low digital literacy levels remain barriers to access to e-governance services by many students. The challenges are especially apparent in peripheral territories, where difficulties in connectivity and lack of infrastructure are still huge obstacles.The study offers important information to the policy makers, educators and administrators by analyzing these issues (Malik,et;al, 2014).It provides a foundation to design strategies to enhance digital infrastructure, increase digital literacy, and institutional capacity building. In the long run, the study will enhance more inclusive and efficient e-governance in the education sector, making sure that all layers of society gain the advantages of digital transformation.

Problem statement

Although e-governance initiatives in India are rapidly growing, a number of challenges still curtail the successful implementation of e-governance in the education sector especially in District Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir. Although online admission systems, scholarship portals, e-learning apps, and other digital resources have been implemented to enhance service delivery, their access and usability are not equal among various sectors of the society. There are more than 850 million internet users in India, but there are still unequal access levels, particularly in infrastructural and geographically limited areas (Nagaraja,2016).The digital divide between urban and periphery is one of the biggest issues. Despite an internet penetration rate of about 55-60 in Jammu and Kashmir, high speed and quality connectivity has been intermittent in most places not located within the urban centers such as Srinagar. Students in rural areas tend to encounter problems because of the lack of access to smartphones, computers, and a connection to the internet, preventing them from using online learning resources (Nanda, 2022).This gap is also expanded by the low rates of digital literacy, especially in economically disadvantaged communities.The continuity and reliability of e-governance systems has also been a big problem in the region because of frequent internet disruptions and technical inefficiencies. Disconnections have disrupted online lessons, testing, and administrative services, lowering the quality of the digital platforms. Besides this, most institutions do not have sufficient technical support and skilled staff to support and administer e-governance systems effectively (Pardhasaradhi, and Ahmed, 2007).The second critical problem is the ignorance of the users, including students, teachers, and administrative staff, in terms of

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awareness and technical skills. This restricts the best use of the digital services and diminishes their intended effects. It also demonstrates the issues of data privacy and cybersecurity as a major obstacle because growing digitalization exposes users to possible threats like data leaks and abuse of personal data (Prabhu, 2013).Thus, the main issue that this research will solve is the discrepancy between the perceived advantages of e-governance and its practical application in the education sector in Srinagar, which necessitates a thorough analysis of the issues and success of the latter.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical frameworks used in the work of this paper are a blend of literature that informs the process of adoption, implementation, and effectiveness of e-governance in the delivery of public services, especially in the education sector. The Technology Acceptance Model is one of the main frameworks used in this study as it highlights that perceived usefulness and ease of use of digital platforms are important factors in their adoption. Within the framework of Srinagar, the rise in using online admission systems, digital scholarship portals, and e-learning platforms demonstrate how accessible and user-friendly technologies can have a considerable impact on their uptake by students, teachers, and administrators. As the use of smartphones grows faster and a high percentage of students accessing educational materials via mobile internet connectivity, usability and efficiency of the systems are becoming major determining factors of their success (Singh, 2013).The Diffusion of Innovations approach assists in understanding how digital technologies are disseminated to various parts of society in the long run. Though in Jammu and Kashmir, the urban centres such as Srinagar have been more progressive in adopting digital services, other peripheral areas have still been left behind due to infrastructural and socio-economic barriers. This lopsided application can be reflected in the dissimilar rates of internet penetration of about 55-60 percent in the region which means that a large number of the population do not have access to digital services (Sapru, 2014).

The E-Governance Maturity Model is a handy tool to evaluate the maturity of digital governance systems. Within the education sector, numerous services have evolved away from simple information-sharing systems, into more sophisticated transactional systems, including online admissions and direct benefit transfers of scholarships. In India alone, million applications of students are done through digital platforms every year, and this shows that there is a transition to more integrated and efficient service delivery systems (Singh, 2013).Digital Divide is a crucial perspective in interpreting differences in access to technology. The disparity in income rates, access to gadgets, internet access, and digital literacy will still define how beneficial people are to e-governance programs (Mushtaq, 2022).Such loopholes are especially evident in poorer and more isolated areas, where poor infrastructural facilities inhibit engagement in online learning.These frameworks in conjunction offer a holistic foundation to analyze the opportunities and challenges of e-governance in education, which can better understand its efficacy and restrictions in Srinagar.

Study Objectives.

1.To examine the nature and types of e-governance services to citizens in the education sector of Srinagar, and to determine their accessibility and effectiveness in facilitating transparency.

2.To discuss the main issues and limitations of the successful implementation, functioning, and development of e-governance in the education sector in Srinagar district.

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Methodology

The research is based on a mixed-methodology that includes survey, descriptive and documentary techniques. The structured questionnaires and interviews were used to collect primary data involving 301 respondents who are over 18 years of age and include students, parents and educators. Random sampling was employed to make sure that there was representation of various socio-economic groups. The secondary data was collected through official reports, academic journals and government publications. Patterns of access and use of e-services were analyzed using the descriptive approach, and contextual insight of the policies and structures in the provision of e-governance in education was obtained using the documentary approach.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Services and their Effects: E-Services Available.

According to the study findings, the variety of e-governance services was already implemented in the education sector in Srinagar, which shows a great boost in the digital transformation pace after 2019. These services involve online admission systems, online scholarship portals, online examination results, e-learning, teacher management portal, and online grievance redressal (Dutta, and Panay, 2024). All of these are signs of a definite change in traditional administrative practices towards more efficient, transparent and technology-driven administration.There are major e-governance interaction models in which these e-services can be categorized. The most visible one is Government-to-Citizen (G2C) services, which allow direct interaction between the government and the citizens (Hussain, 2017). This has been applied in the education sector through online admissions, scholarship applications, examination results, and admission to online learning platforms and this has made access to services much more convenient and accessible to students and parents. The Government-to-Government (G2G) services enable integration within different departments and agencies of the government including education boards, districts administration, and policy-making agencies, which can guarantee improved information sharing, improved process management, and effective execution of education policies. The concept of Government-to-Employee (G2E) can be seen in teacher management systems, online attendance, payroll processing, and capacity-building platforms, which improve the efficiency of the administration and enhances the workforce management and, Government-to-Business (G2B) services implies the cooperation with vendors and technology providers to develop infrastructure and maintain digital platforms and support services within the education ecosystem.These services have been greatly enhanced in the post-2019 period as the more national digital initiatives are expanded (Shah,et;al 2024). Online learning platforms like DIKSHA, SWAYAM, and PM eVIDYA were instrumental in the pandemic of 2020, which essentially provided continuity to education even when most institutions were hit by the pandemic. Centrally sponsored schemes have been integrated with regional digital systems in Jammu and Kashmir and have led to greater efficiency especially in the scholarship disbursement system via Direct Benefit Transfer and centralized admissions (Bashir, 2024).Nonetheless, these e-services are not equally accessible to various socio-economic groups. The urban population is in a better place in terms of digital infrastructure, such as the reestablishment of high-speed internet connectivity, the spread of smartphones, and digital literacy. Consequently, urban students and parents are keen users of online platforms. Conversely, rural and disadvantaged communities still have to deal with challenges like limited connectivity, access to digital devices, and digital awareness.In spite of

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these, e-governance has brought a lot of transparency and accountability in the education sector (Javid, 2024).Real-time tracking of applications, automated notifications and digitized records are among the features that have minimized bureaucratic delays and reduced chances of corruption. Meanwhile, the usability and inclusivity problems continue, such as server overload, slowness of the system, complicated interfaces, and language barriers.

The after 2019 phase has seen massive advancements in the scope and efficiency of e-governance in education. Other than this, digital inequality and user-friendly design should be addressed to attain the objective of inclusive and equitable digital governance.

Challenges Affecting E-Governance

- **Inadequate Digital Infrastructure**

The paper identifies poor digital infrastructure as a significant challenge towards successful e-governance. Despite the restoration of 4G services in 2020, connectivity in rural and remote areas is still inconsistent (Pal et al., 2025). The rural internet penetration (6065) is much less than in urban regions (more than 130%). Cycles of network breakdowns, poor bandwidth, and power problems also restrict access to online platforms.

- **Digital Literacy Gap**

A considerable segment of the population (approximately 4050 percent) is not digitally savvy to use e-government sites effectively. This results in the reliance on intermediaries like Common Service Centres, adding time and cost (Mankotia, 2021). This is more pronounced in the rural and older population and contributes to inequalities.

- **Institutional and Administrative dilemmas.**

A good number of learning institutions do not have properly trained individuals to handle digital systems. Many members of staff in government schools have had little training in ICT. Inefficiencies are caused by resistance to technological change, poor coordination across the departments as well as inadequate capacity-building programs (Von Haldenwang, 2004). The presence of manual and digital systems leads to duplication, delays and confusion.

- **Socio-Political Constraints**

In Jammu and Kashmir, region-specific circumstances can impede the development of digital infrastructure as both historical communication limitations and security disturbances have caused the service continuity to be slow (Lubis et al., 2024). Though the situation has become better, the long-term effects can still be observed in the unequal development.

- **Cybercrime and Data security issues.**

As the use of digital platforms has increased after 2019, the risks of data breach, identity theft, and misuse of personal information have become bigger. Yet, the level of awareness about the data protection practices is still low, particularly among the first-time users.

- **Financial Constraints**

Maintaining e-governance systems necessitates lifetime investment in upgrades, maintenance and expansion. Financial constraints are still a problem, despite the increase in government funding (Gorla and Chiravuri, 2016).

- **Poor Awareness and Non-utilization:**

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There is also an uneven awareness of the available services on e-governance which has led to under utilization of e-governance services in various regions.

- **Need for a Comprehensive Approach:**

To solve these issues, it is recommended to enhance infrastructure, enhance digital literacy, institutional capacity, cybersecurity, and create awareness to facilitate effective and inclusive e-governance (Mathur et al., 2009).

Final reflection of the study.

1. Post-2019 Digital Transformation: The analysis indicates that the post-2019 was a pivotal moment in the education sector of Srinagar since there was a rapid shift to e-governance. In 2020, the 4G internet services were restored, greatly enhancing access to digital services, which facilitated the delivery of faster services. Nevertheless, connectivity disparities still impact almost 4050% of the rural population.

2. Online Education Services Growth: During 2020-2022, the pandemic did not interfere with education due to the use of digital platforms. Digital content, online classes, and e-learning systems served a multitude of students. Nonetheless, approximately one-third of the rural students were excluded on the basis of unavailability of devices and poor internet connectivity.

3. Administrative Processes: E-governance has minimized the administrative delays by about 30-40 percent since 2020 due to automation of admissions, results and record maintenance. Nevertheless, the problem of frequent server problems and system failures during the rush hours still impacts the efficiency of service and customer experience in most institutions.

4. Enhancements in Transparency and Accountability: Service digitization has increased transparency by providing real-time movements of applications and minimizing human involvement. The number of cases of procedural delays and discrepancies has decreased since 2019. However, it is the ignorance of users that continues to curtail the maximum benefits of transparent governance systems.

5. Digital Divide and Inequality: One of the key results is the existing digital divide between urban and rural regions. Although the urban internet penetration is over 70, rural access is under 50. This gap limits the fair access to e-services and supports the current socio-economic disparities in the opportunities of education.

6. Institutional and Capacity Constraints: The lack of trained personnel to deal with digital systems is a problem in many educational institutions. It is indicated that more than 40 percent of employees need more ICT training. The other obstacles towards successful implementation of e-governance projects at institutional level comprise resistance to change and lack of technical support.

7. Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) role: Direct benefit transfer (DBT) has been introduced in scholarship schemes to increase efficiency and minimize leakages post 2021. Transfers of funds are not as corrupt because funds are transferred to beneficiaries directly. Nonetheless, there is concern with problems like Aadhaar linkage errors, delays in verification which continue to impede on-time financial support.

8. Challenges of Infrastructure and Connectivity: Although infrastructure issues have improved since 2020, an infrastructure constraint is a significant issue. Low bandwidth and

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network disruption is common in rural areas. Also, unstable power supply in certain areas also limits access to digital platforms, which influences the stability of e-governance services.

9. Cybersecurity and Data Privacy Concerns: As more people rely on digital platforms, data security concerns have been heightened since 2019. The threat of data breaches and misuse of personal information is on the increase. Nevertheless, cybersecurity practices are not well-known, especially among rural users and new digital users.

10. Sustainability and Future Outlook: The paper concludes that although e-governance has greatly enhanced delivery of services to the people, there is need to invest continuously to enable sustainability in the long term. Infrastructure should be strengthened, digital literacy must be increased, and the system design should be improved. By dealing with these challenges, inclusive, efficient and resilient e-governance will be achieved in the education sector.

Contribution of the study

This paper adds to the knowledge on e-governance in the education sector by offering empirical data of Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir. It underscores how digital programs are changing the provision of educational services in the grassroots. Through addressing the views of students, parents and teachers, the study provides a good understanding of practical issues and advantages of e-governance.The research also pinpoints the significant determinants of accessibility and transparency hence giving a guideline to policy makers to enhance systems of service delivery. It supports the need to focus on infrastructural and digital literacy gaps in order to make educational services accessible to everyone. Moreover, the study adds to the body of literature by studying e-governance in an area with distinctive socio-political dynamics.

The combination of survey, descriptive and documentary techniques provides the study with a thorough analysis of the topic. It is also used as a source of future research and policy making in such situations and helps in bridging the gap between theory and practice.

CONCLUSION

E-governance has been seen to be a major driver towards revolutionizing the delivery of public services in the education sector of District Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir. The results of this research show clearly that the introduction of digital platforms has helped to enhance the efficiency of the administration, increase the transparency, and access to much-needed educational services. Online admission systems, digital scholarship portals, e-learning platforms, among others, have led to less procedural delays, less bureaucracy, and facilitated less cumbersome interaction between institutions and beneficiaries. These innovations have been especially helpful in providing continuity in education amid disruption, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.Simultaneously, the research also points out the uneven distribution of the benefits of e-governance. Although urban dwellers in Srinagar have been in a better place to capitalize on the digital services because of enhanced infrastructure and increased levels of digital literacy, the rural and marginalized groups still experience a lot of disadvantages . Poor internet connections, insufficient access to digital tools, insufficient technical expertise, and awareness levels are some of the challenges that curtail the reach of e-governance programs in an inclusive manner. Moreover, the overall effectiveness of the digital governance mechanisms is also influenced by the data security, system reliability, and institutional capacity concerns.Thus, it is clear that e-governance has recorded significant gains in improving

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delivery of educational services, but it has not achieved its full potential. These challenges need to be tackled in a holistic and all-encompassing manner that puts more emphasis on development of infrastructures, digital literacy initiatives, and capacity building among the stakeholders. Implementing policies more strongly, providing proper connectivity, and facilitating easy-to-use digital platforms are crucial measures towards equitable access.Finally, e-governance in education is a matter of success and sustainability that relies on the collaboration of government agencies, educational organizations, and the citizens. An interactive and responsive strategy will play a vital role in creating a more inclusive, efficient and resilient education system in Srinagar.

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