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MUSLIM ARTS COLLEGE





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on

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This is to certify that Prof./Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms A. MOHAMED SIDDIQUE, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MUSLIM ARTS COLLEGE, THIRUVITHANCODE has participated / presented a research paper entitled INFLUENCE OF E-GOVERNANCE IN HEALTH CARE SECTOR OF KERALA - SPECIAL REFERENCE TO E-HEALTH PROJECT, in the National Conference on "Multidisciplinary Research Ethics" organised by MAC Research Forum, Muslim Arts College, Thiruvithancode, held on September 4 & 5, 2023.


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INFLUENCE OF E-GOVERNANCE IN HEALTH CARE SECTOR OF KERALA – SPECIAL REFERENCE TO E-HEALTH PROJECT

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Abstract

ICT has the potential to revolutionize the way services are delivered around the world. ICT acts as a driver for the rapid delivery of services. The Government of India and the State Governments in the country are in the process of transitioning from traditional paper-based governance to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) based governance. E-Health is an important E-Governance project of Government of Kerala, which is implemented with the financial support of Government of India. The implementation of E-Health is a milestone in the Department of Health, Government of Kerala. This paper is purely based on secondary data. This paper discusses the concepts of e-health, functions of e-health, peoples' perception towards e-health project, etc. The paper provides an overview of the e-health projects of Government of Kerala.

Key Words: E-Governance, E-Health, Information and Communication Technology

Introduction

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in governance is referred to as e-governance. "E-Governance, in essence, is the application of Information and Communications Technology to government functioning in order to create 'Simple, Moral, Accountable, Responsive and Transparent (SMART)' governance" (Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, Government of India 2015). The Government of India and the State Governments, especially, Government of Kerala has been increasingly emphasizing ICT in governance in order to overcome issues such as: Red-tapism, Lack of Accountability and Transparency in Public Services, Lack of Access to Information, Slow Movement of Files and Documents, Ineffective Delivery of Public Services.

As a part of E-Governance initiatives of the Government of Kerala, E-Health project is implemented in the state which is expected to make substantial changes to the health sector. E-Health is a prestigious project of Kerala Government, funded by the Government of India and Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Kerala, designed to provide residents of Kerala with a convenient centralized quality healthcare system. Since the system is based on Aadhar, the people of Kerala will have unique identification and unified health care record.

The health sector of Kerala is often praised for its achievements in providing good health based on social justice and equity. Kerala has the highest life expectancy, lowest infant and maternal mortality rates, and lowest under-five mortality rate among Indian states. Kerala has also been designated as the world's first "Baby Friendly State" by UNICEF and WHO. Kerala's health sector is characterized by a decentralized and community-based approach, with a strong emphasis on primary care, prevention services, and specialized treatments. Kerala has a mix of public and private health facilities, with high utilization of both sectors by the population.

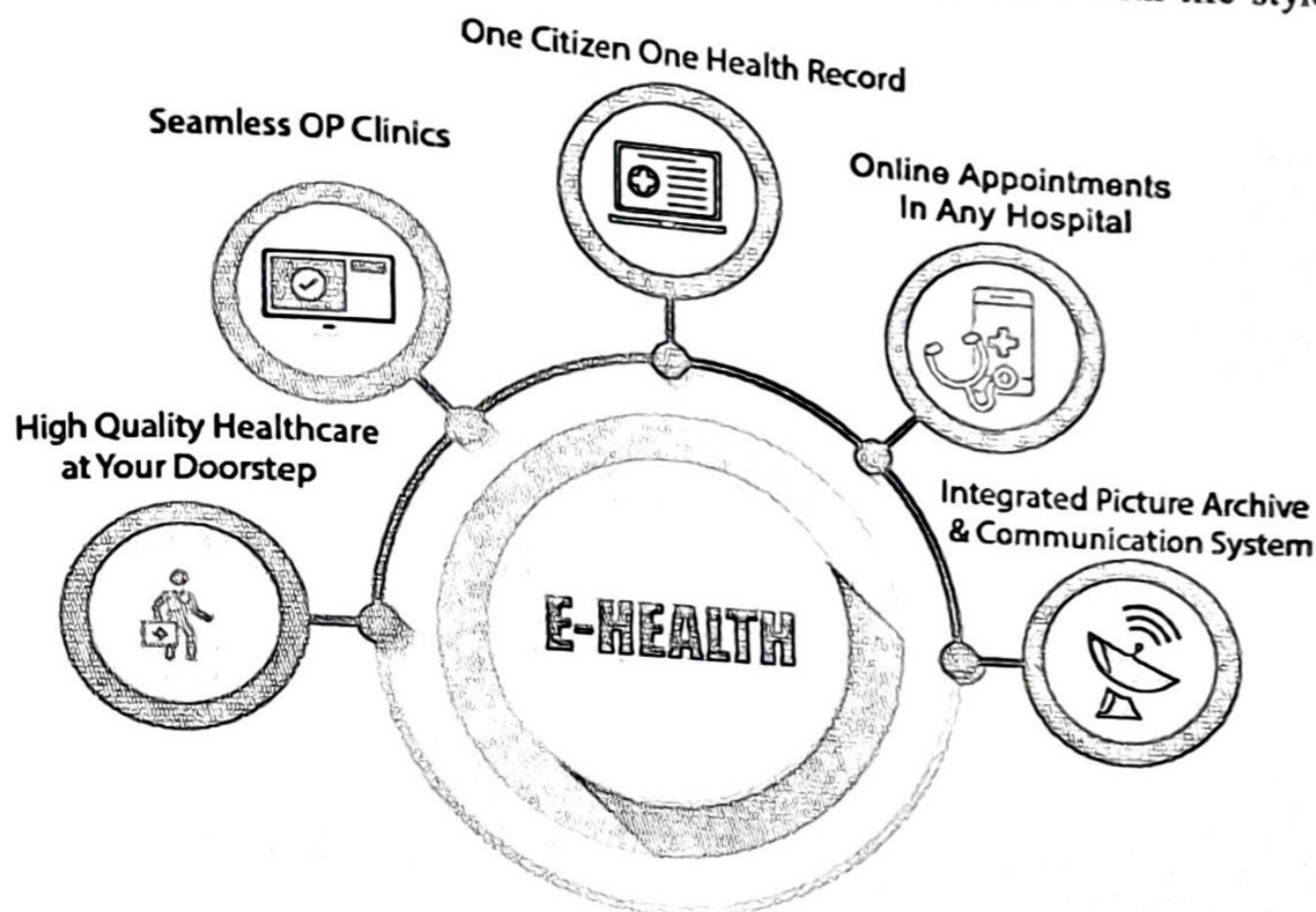
Objectives of the Study

1. To provide an overview of e-health project of Government of Kerala.
2. To examine the scope of e-health project of Government of Kerala.
3. To identify the effectiveness of e-health project in cancer care screening.

E Health – An Overview

E-Health is a prestigious E-Governance initiative of Department of Health, Government of Kerala. The project aims to computerize the entire gamut of activities in the hospitals, public health management and other institutions in the modern medicine stream. The project also offers features like One Citizen One Health Record, Online Appointment Booking at Government Hospitals, and Telemedicine Consultation for the citizens. The project is expected to empower and impact healthcare delivery in a big way in Kerala. The

objectives behind the implementation of e-health project were to ensure quality medical services to the people with low cost and to make proper screening to identify the patients with life style diseases, and cancer.



Scope of E-Health

- 1. One Citizen One Health Record (Unique Health ID):** E-Health provides a unique ID, which is linked with aadhar card. Aadhaar-based unique health identity card provides a unique health record for citizens, and it can be used for treatment at government hospitals. Doctors can avail all the medical investigation about a person through this Health ID.
- 2. Online Appointment Booking:** The people need not wait at Government hospitals for booking OP Tickets. They can pre-book their OP tickets at any Government hospital through the Citizen Portal, Akshaya Services Portal & through M-eHealth mobile app.
- 3. Telemedicine Consultation:** E-Health provides the citizens with the opportunity to consult the qualified doctors in real-time through the telemedicine facilities offered through M- eHealth mobile application. Review consultations are being launched as a pilot program and will be rolled out to the general public for advance appointment booking.
- 4. E-Health Management:** E-health involves various activities such as developing plans and assessment agendas, providing supervision and technical support, monitoring and broadcasting developments and trends, and supporting multi-sectoral partnership and management.

Advantages of E-Health Project

The e-Health project of Kerala has several advantages and disadvantages. Some of the merits of the project are:

- The project provides residents of Kerala with a convenient centralized health care system.
- The system is AADHAAR-based, which means citizens will have unique identification and unified health care records.
- Citizens can book online appointments to any of the government hospitals with ease through the Citizen Portal, Akshaya Services Portal, or through the M-eHealth mobile app available on Google Playstore.
- The eHealth project aims to establish a proper healthcare system for the people of the state by providing a pollution-free environment and taking care of the old and weak.

Disadvantages of E-Health Project

Some of the disadvantages of the project are:

- The system is AADHAAR-based, which means that citizens' privacy could be at risk.
- The system may not be accessible to everyone, especially those who do not have access to technology or are not tech-savvy.

- There may be issues with data accuracy and security.

Cancer Care Screening

Cancer care screening is an important function of e-health portal. This initiative is implemented with the help of 'Asha' workers. 'Asha' workers are trained persons appointed by the Government to visit the people and make surveys to identify the health issues of peoples, especially cancer diseases. It is more effective to identify and treat cancer diseases in the state. The Government of Kerala providing more attention towards health sector and spending more and more money for the development of the sector.

Table 1.1
Cancer Care Screening

SL No.	District	Survey done	Referred for Cancer Screening	Referred for Oral Cancer Screening	Referred for Breast Cancer Screening	Referred for Cervical Cancer Screening
1	Thiruvananthapuram	1153894	73730	3972	62246	9561
2	Kollam	1228301	67509	3421	57433	8286
3	Pathanamthitta	550330	30555	1605	27005	2516
4	Alappuzha	969235	59101	2662	52631	5015
5	Kottayam	884574	52414	2476	46376	4681
6	Idukki	472804	26932	1030	24105	2146
7	Ernakulam	1250263	68675	3054	59845	7116
8	Thrissur	1569967	101061	4398	90026	8502
9	Palakkad	1269609	77271	3007	68483	7049
10	Malappuram	1850983	110355	5579	91193	15982
11	Kozhikkode	1083638	65695	2901	54658	9559
12	Wayanad	431881	26701	1847	21826	3682
13	Kannur	1132003	69647	2458	63122	5121
14	Kasargode	573677	38707	1477	32954	5020
TOTAL		14421159	868353	39887	751903	94236

Source: ccs.ehealth.kerala.gov.in

The Table 1.1 shows that, cancer screening surveys were conducted within 1,44,21,159 peoples in Kerala. Among them, 8,68,353 people are referred for cancer screening, 39,887 people are referred for oral cancer screening, 7,51,903 people are referred for breast cancer screening, and 94,236 people are referred for cervical cancer screening. This screening reference is made on the basis of symptoms identified by the trained 'Asha' workers during their house visit.

Findings and Suggestions

The e-health initiative of the state government reduced the physical strain of the people of Kerala. It helps them to make appointments in Government hospital through online platform. It reduce their waiting time in hospitals. Online consultation (Tele medical consultation) was more useful to the people during lockdown days. The restriction to travel is affected to the people. There is no need to bring previous medical prescription and summary to the hospital, because everyone get a unique health ID which saves their previous health history and it can access by the Government medical practitioner from any hospitals. The cancer care screening process is very useful to people and such kind of surveys are essential to provide awareness to the people.

The existing e-health project is concentrated on Government hospitals only. It should be spread to private hospitals also. Senior citizens and children are needs special attention, so it should be included in e-health portal. Awareness videos should be posted to the e-health portal to teach the importance of health care.

Conclusion

E-health project is a prestigious e-governance initiative of Government of Kerala designed to provide residents of Kerala with a convenient centralized healthcare system. It provides various services like unique health ID, online consultation, online appointment booking, etc. The e-health project enhances cancer screening facility with the help of trained people. Cancer screening surveys are carried among 1,44,21,159 people in Kerala and 17,54,379 people are referred to further cancer treatment. At present, 2,59,55,997 people (1,26,83,802 males, 1,32,71,379 females, and 816 transgender) are registered with E-health portal. From the statistical data, it is clear that the peoples of Kerala accepted the e-health project. It plays a vital role in the cancer screening and reference process, and it also helpful to identify the lifestyle diseases. Overall, the e-Health project is a step in the right direction towards providing better healthcare.

services to the people of Kerala. However, there are still some issues that need to be addressed to ensure that everyone can benefit from this initiative.

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