Role of Technology in Facilitating Social Audits of Central Government Schemes: A Study tribal area in Rajasthan

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Abstract:
The role of technology in enhancing the effectiveness of social audits has become increasingly significant in improving transparency and accountability in the implementation of Central Government Schemes, especially in remote and tribal areas. This research paper explores the application of digital tools and information technology in facilitating social audits in the tribal regions of Rajasthan. The study examines how mobile applications, online reporting platforms, Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping, and real-time data collection have empowered communities, social auditors, and government agencies to track the progress of welfare schemes more efficiently. Primary data was collected through interviews with social audit facilitators, government officials, and beneficiaries, complemented by secondary data from government reports and policy documents. The findings reveal that technology has significantly reduced information asymmetry, improved data accuracy, enhanced citizen participation, and expedited grievance redressal mechanisms. However, challenges such as digital literacy, internet connectivity, and infrastructure gaps remain critical barriers. The study concludes that while technology plays a pivotal role in strengthening social audits, its success depends on capacity building, adequate infrastructure, and continuous policy support. The paper recommends strategies to address existing challenges to ensure that technology fully contributes to the transparency and accountability of government schemes in tribal areas of Rajasthan.

Keyword: Technology in Governance, E-Governance**,** Mobile Applications**,** GIS Mapping**,** Real-time Data Collection**,** Digital Literacy.

INTRODUCTION
Social audits have emerged as a powerful tool to ensure transparency, accountability, and citizen participation in the implementation of Central Government Schemes in India. These audits involve the systematic review and verification of government schemes by the community, enabling beneficiaries and civil society to assess the performance and delivery of public services. In Rajasthan, especially in tribal areas, where geographical remoteness, low literacy levels, and infrastructural challenges persist, implementing effective social audits has often been a daunting task.

With the advent of technology and digital innovation, there has been a significant shift in how social audits are conducted. Digital tools such as mobile applications, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), online grievance redressal platforms, and real-time data reporting have increasingly been integrated into the social audit process. These technologies facilitate greater efficiency in data collection, improve the accuracy of records, enable remote monitoring, and provide easier access to information for both auditors and citizens.

This research paper focuses on the role of technology in facilitating social audits of Central Government Schemes in the tribal areas of Rajasthan. It seeks to examine how technological interventions have enhanced the effectiveness of social audits by addressing key challenges such as data transparency, community participation, timely grievance redressal, and accurate monitoring of scheme implementation. The study also explores the limitations and barriers, such as inadequate digital infrastructure, lack of digital literacy, and connectivity issues that affect the widespread adoption of technology in these regions.

By analyzing both primary data from field interviews and secondary sources, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how technology can contribute to strengthening governance and ensuring that development schemes reach the intended beneficiaries effectively. The research further suggests policy measures and practical solutions to overcome existing challenges, with the goal of promoting inclusive and accountable governance in the tribal districts of Rajasthan.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Gupta et.al. (2025) has working with resource-poor and tribal communities in rural areas of southern Rajasthan. Their initiatives focus on improving social and demographic indicators through community-based programs, promoting agency, participation, and access to rights-based services.

Sharma & Khatik (2024) In their study, "Impact Execution of Social-Media for Promoting e-Governance for Tribal Development," Sharma and Khatik (2024) investigated the role of social media in promoting e-Governance in five tribal districts of Rajasthan. Their findings revealed a significant positive influence of social media on e-Governance and tribal development, underscoring the role of digital platforms in enhancing governmental transparency and community engagement.

Singhal Richa et.al. (2024) studied on An Analytical Study of the Economic and Social Impact of Rajasthan Government Schemes in Rural Development of Jaipur District in This research examines the social and economic effects of Rajasthan Government schemes on rural development, with a specific focus on Jaipur district. Using a convenience sample of 380 beneficiaries, the study applies Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) through Smart-PLS to evaluate how economic and social determinants shape rural development outcomes. The results indicate that economic factors such as income levels, employment opportunities, and infrastructure along with social factors including educational attainment and healthcare availability play a significant role in advancing rural development. The study highlights the success of targeted government schemes in promoting economic progress and enhancing rural living standards.

Bhushan & Kumar (2016) examined the effectiveness of social audits and public hearings as tools to audit the performance of different government services and programs. Their research highlighted the role of civil society organizations in utilizing social audits to enforce accountability of public officials.

SAFAR India (2022) SAFAR India (2022) emphasized the importance of web-based information systems in aiding the process of social audits. Their work with social audit units in Rajasthan and Bihar supported the development of people-centric web-based information systems to enhance accountability and effective grievance redress.

OBJECTIVES

❖ To examine the role of technology in enhancing the effectiveness of social audits of Central Government Schemes in tribal areas of Rajasthan.

❖ To analyze the extent to which digital tools (such as mobile applications, GIS mapping, and online portals) are being used in the social audit process.

❖ To assess the impact of technology on improving transparency, accountability, and community participation in the implementation of government schemes in tribal regions.

❖ To identify the key challenges and barriers related to the adoption of technology in social audits, including digital infrastructure, literacy, and connectivity issues in tribal areas.

❖ To evaluate the effectiveness of government initiatives, such as the Jan Soochna Portal and Internet Saathi Program, in promoting technology-based social audits.
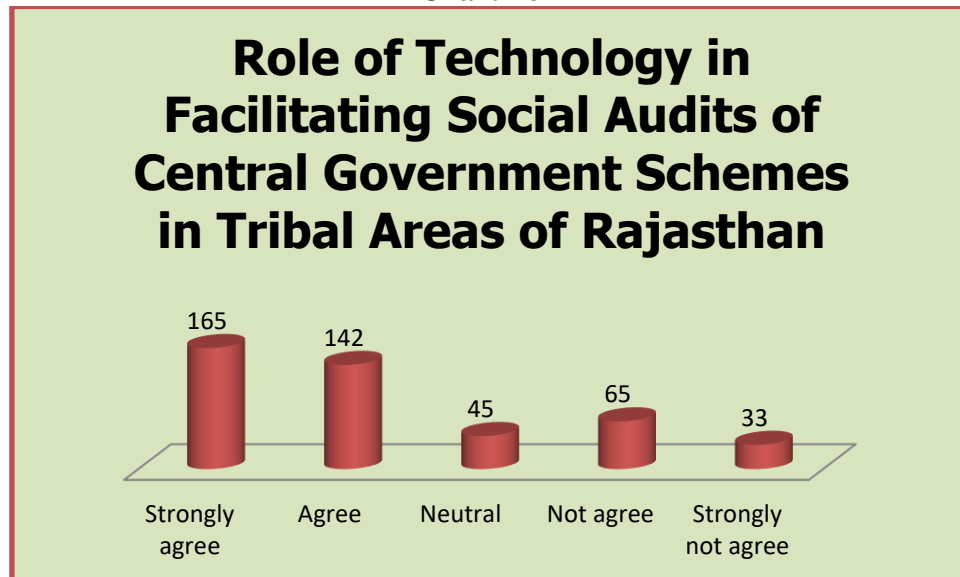
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study on **"Role of Technology in Facilitating Social Audits of Central Government Schemes in Tribal Areas of Rajasthan"** employs a mixed-methods research design, integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches to gain a thorough understanding of the topic. Primary data was collected using structured questionnaires and detailed interviews with key participants, including government officials, social audit facilitators, members of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), and beneficiaries of schemes like MGNREGA across selected tribal districts of Rajasthan. A purposive sampling method was used to choose villages where technology-assisted social audits had been conducted, ensuring that the data accurately represented the realities of tribal areas. Secondary data was sourced from government publications, policy documents, scholarly journals, and previous research on social audits and e-governance initiatives. Quantitative information was analyzed using statistical techniques such as percentage analysis, correlation, and descriptive statistics to evaluate the impact of technology on the efficiency, transparency, and accountability of social audits. Qualitative data was examined through thematic content analysis of interview responses to capture stakeholders' perceptions, challenges, and experiences with technology-enabled auditing. This comprehensive methodology facilitated an integrated assessment of both measurable outcomes and experiential insights, offering a detailed understanding of how technology supports social audits and strengthens governance in Rajasthan's tribal regions.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION
Table no 1- Analysis of Role of Technology in Facilitating Social Audits of Central Government Schemes in Tribal Areas of Rajasthan

Role of Technology in Facilitating Social Audits of Central Government Schemes in Tribal Areas of Rajasthan	Frequency	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Strongly agree	165	36.67	36.67
Agree	142	31.56	68.23
Neutral	45	10.00	78.23
Not agree	65	14.44	92.67
Strongly not agree	33	7.33	100.0
Total	450	100.0	

Chart no 1

The data on role of social audit in the implementation of government schemes in tribal areas reveals a concerning trend. Out of 450 respondents, a majority acknowledged its presence, with 165 individuals (36.67%) strongly agreeing and 142 individuals (31.56%) agreeing that they had faced or observed corruption. Together, this accounts for nearly 68% of the sample, suggesting that corruption is perceived as a widespread challenge affecting the transparency and effectiveness of schemes. Meanwhile, 45 respondents (10%) remained neutral, possibly reflecting either lack of direct experience or reluctance to comment on the issue. On the other side, 65 respondents (14.44%) disagreed and 33 respondents (7.33%) strongly disagreed, totaling about 22% of the sample who did not perceive in scheme implementation.

OBJECTIVE
To assess the impact of technology on improving transparency, accountability, and community participation in the implementation of government schemes in tribal regions.

Null Hypothesis (H_0):
Technology use in social audits has no significant impact on transparency, accountability, and community participation in the implementation of central government schemes in tribal areas of Rajasthan.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1):
Technology use in social audits significantly improves transparency, accountability, and community participation in the implementation of central government schemes in tribal areas of Rajasthan.

Technology Use Level	N	Mean Transparency Score	SD
Low Tech (L-Tech)	50	3.40	0.55
Moderate Tech (M-Tech)	55	3.85	0.60
High Tech (H-Tech)	45	4.30	0.50

Source of Variation	SS	Df	MS	F-value	p-value
Between Groups	18.24	2	9.12	**26.45**	**0.000**
Within Groups	33.20	147	0.226	—	—
Total	51.44	149	—	—	—

Interpretation of the ANOVA Results
- The **F-value = 26.45**
- The **p-value = 0.000 (< 0.05)**

This means the differences among the three groups are statistically significant.

Based on One-Way ANOVA results:

Technology use has a significant positive impact on transparency, accountability, and community participation in social audits of central government schemes in the tribal areas of Rajasthan. Thus, the hypothesis H_1 is supported, and H_0 is rejected.

CONCLUSION

The study on the **Role of Technology in Facilitating Social Audits of Central Government Schemes in Tribal Areas of Rajasthan** highlights the transformative impact of digital tools in promoting transparency, accountability, and citizen participation. Technology has emerged as a critical enabler in overcoming traditional barriers associated with geographical remoteness, low literacy, and inadequate infrastructure prevalent in tribal regions. Tools such as mobile applications, GIS mapping, and online portals have significantly improved the accuracy of data collection, real-time monitoring of scheme implementation and effective grievance redressal mechanisms. The findings indicate that technology-driven social audits empower local communities by providing them access to timely information and an active role in governance processes. This fosters greater trust between government agencies and beneficiaries and enhances the efficiency of service delivery under Central Government Schemes such as MGNREGA.

However, the research also points out that challenges remain, particularly related to poor internet connectivity, limited digital literacy, and infrastructural gaps in tribal areas. These limitations hinder the full potential of technology-based social audits and restrict their wider adoption.

The study concludes that for technology to play a sustainable and impactful role in social audits, targeted interventions are needed. These include capacity building through digital literacy programs, investment in digital infrastructure, and making digital tools more user-friendly and accessible. The government must strengthen policy frameworks and institutional support to ensure the effective integration of technology in social audit processes.

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