

An Overview of Common Service Center (Arunodoi Kendra) with Special Reference to Rural Darrang of Assam

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Abstract—CSCs in Assam are the access points for delivery of essential public utility services, social welfare schemes, healthcare, financial, education & agriculture services, etc. Common Service Centers form a part of the National e-Governance Plan envisioned in providing Government services to the citizens at their doorstep at an affordable cost, and in a sustainable manner. A study was carried out in 10 CSC centers of rural Darrang of Assam. It was conducted as an ex-post factor research study and percentage analysis was used to analyze the data collected. The VLE's of the concerned CSC were interviewed.

This paper looks at the functioning of CSCs in rural Darrang District of Assam under Sipajhar Block.

Keywords: CSC, E-Governance, VLE.

I. INTRODUCTION

Darrang is an administrative district in the state of Assam in India. The district headquarters are located at Mangaldai. The district occupies an area of 1585 Km².

The present study is based on Arunodoi Kendras under Sipajhar Block of Darrang District, Assam. There are 181 villages in Sipajhar block and I have selected 5 villages with two CSC centers each. The following 5 villages are listed below;

Dumunichowki, Maroi, Deomorno, Dipila and Khandajan.

II. ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FOR CHOOSING SIPAJHAR BLOCK OF RURAL DARRANG (ASSAM)

Following are the issues and Challenges to be dealt with:

- i) Low digital literacy
- ii) Low awareness of e-government services
- iii) Longer travel time and transaction cost.
- iv) Most of these CSCs (Sipajhar Block) are not equipped with the required infrastructure like Uninterrupted internet facility and qualified staff members.
- v) Less profit as compared to urban Areas.

III. OBJECTIVES

Some of the major objectives are listed below;

- i) Emphasis on entrepreneurship in rural areas.
- ii) Playing an important role in the development of rural India and offering livelihoods.
- iii) Offers to act as an agent to numerous Government and Non-Government services.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on both primary and secondary data. The secondary data is collected from the reports highlight in the government website. The Primary is collected from the respondents through Schedule format, using digital ethnography and through field visits.

This paper looks at the functioning of CSCs in rural Assam even examining how women use digital platforms for livelihood generation through the VLE schemes, as well as their achievements and challenges.

V. FINDINGS AND RESULTS

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I have classified 3 groups according to their digital knowledge in my study of 300 respondents and 10 VLE's.

The first group (43%) comprises of those respondents who are having no knowledge of digital inclusion and digital uses. This group comprises of respondents who are illiterate and they are totally dependent on the VLE's for their work. They are having no knowledge on the use of computer and other online devices.

The second group (28.4%) comprises respondents with a high level of digital inclusion: they have a high level of digital access, as they use four or more devices to connect to the Internet; they have been classified as "Advanced" created to measure digital competencies; moreover, respondents from this group are those who have been classified as high achievers to measure digital benefits. They are usually the VLE's and the operator. They are qualified and being trained for the job.

The third group (28.6%) comprises of those qualified respondents who are having a government job. These groups have some knowledge of digital uses.

The below table categorizes the available respondents in different age groups. The age group between (21 -30) is almost double in numbers. This group is mostly college going students. The age group between (71 -90) is very less in numbers since they are senior citizens.

Table 1

Respondents Age Group	Number	Percentage
11-20 Years	37	12.33%
21-30 Years	98	32.66%
31-40 Years	50	16.66%
41-50 Years	59	19.66%
51-60 Years	33	11%
61-70 Years	16	5.33%
71-80 Years	5	1.66%
81-90 Years	2	0.66%

Overall 300 respondent's data have been shown in detail using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Analysis of the data has been down with the help of statistical method like graphs and tables.

Graph 1

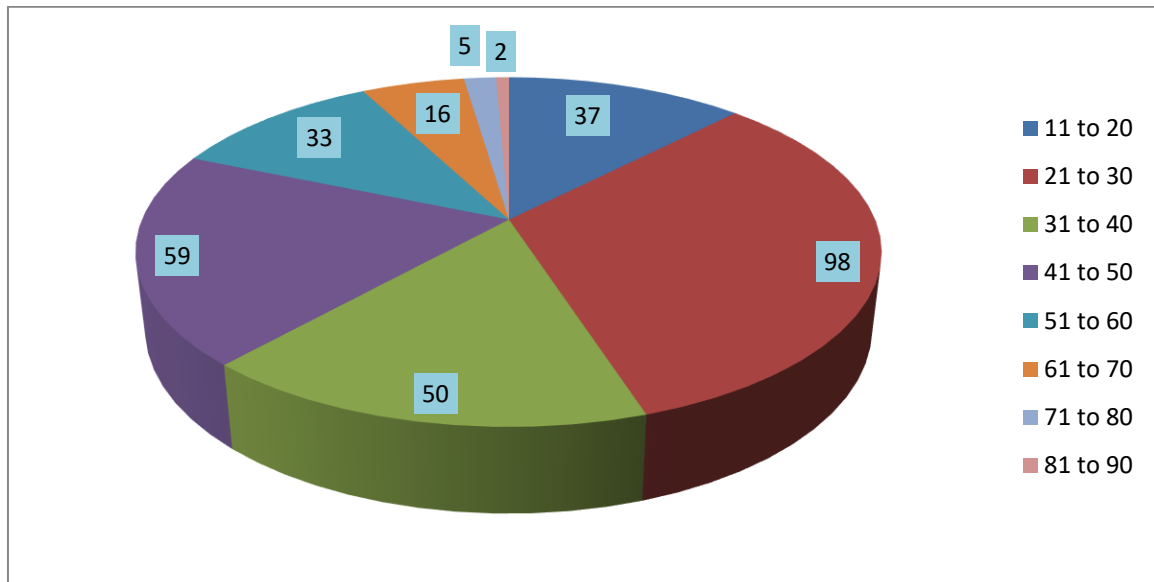


Table 2

VLE's Name	Educational Qualification	Other Occupation (If any)	Establishment	Popular Services offered	Any female operator	Place where CSC located
VLE 1	BA	Poultry farm	2020	PAN, Aadhar correction, voter correction, Xerox, DTP, LIC, DigiPay(NEFT, AePS, Saving Account-PNB), Mobile Recharge, Electricity Bill, DTH & others.	No	Khandajan
VLE 2	BA	No	2014	E-district services, PAN, Aadhar, Xerox, DTP, DigiPay(ICICI, Money withdrawal & Deposit), Mobile recharge, electricity bill etc.	No	Deomornoi
VLE 3	BA	No	2015	E- District services, PAN, Aadhar correction, voter ID correction, DTP, Xerox, Recharge	No	Khandajan
VLE 4	MA, Bed, LLB	Advocate	2014	E-district services, PAN, Aadhar, Xerox, DTP, DigiPay	Yes	Maroi

VLE 5	BSc	No	2022	Aadhar enrolment and correction, E-dalil (Khazana), LIC, AEPS, Xerox, DTP, DigiPay, and Mobile Recharge & Electricity bill payment, DTH & others.	Yes	Dumunichowki
VLE 6	B.A	No	2022	E-district services, PAN, Aadhar, Xerox, DTP, DigiPay.	No	Deomorno (Patidarrang)
VLE 7	B.A	No	2019	Aadhar enrolment and correction, E-dalil (Khazana), LIC, AEPS, Xerox, DTP, DigiPay, and Mobile Recharge & Electricity bill payment, DTH & others.	No	Dumunichowki
VLE 8	H.S	Electrical Shop	2018	E- District services, PAN, Aadhar correction, voter ID correction, DTP, Xerox, Recharge	No	Maroi
VLE 9	B.A	No	2015	Aadhar enrolment and correction, E-dalil (Khazana), LIC, AEPS, Xerox, DTP, DigiPay, and Mobile Recharge & Electricity bill payment, DTH & others.	No	Dipila

VLE 10	B.A	No	2000	E- District services, PAN, Aadhar correction, voter ID correction, DTP, Xerox, Recharge	No	Singimari
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The above table shows that the VLE's are qualified and some are having extra source of income to run the family. Two VLE's are having female operator. In rural Darrang of Assam the Female are coming forward to be self independent and actively involved in their work. A female operator is a BSC student who is also doing her side business. A 23 years old girl name Juri Nath is working as an operator in a CSC center of Maroi under Sipajhar Block of Darrang District. She is a graduate and have diploma in computer. She wanted to pursue her masters too. The CSC center is her only source of income for her family as her father is a farmer and mother housewife. She held from Punia village and is working hard to fulfill her dreams and aspirations. Another female operator is a 20 years B.Sc student. She held from Dumunichowki. She is working in a CSC center located in Dumunichowki

When ask about their satisfaction level as VLE, they were not much benefitted from CSC due to various reason. They are involved in other occupation to run their family. Sometimes they faced harassment because of electricity problem and slow internet connection. In their respective center they are doing some side businesses like selling mobile accessories, books and files, pens and pencils and a lot more items are available in these CSC center. Their monthly income varies depending on their services.

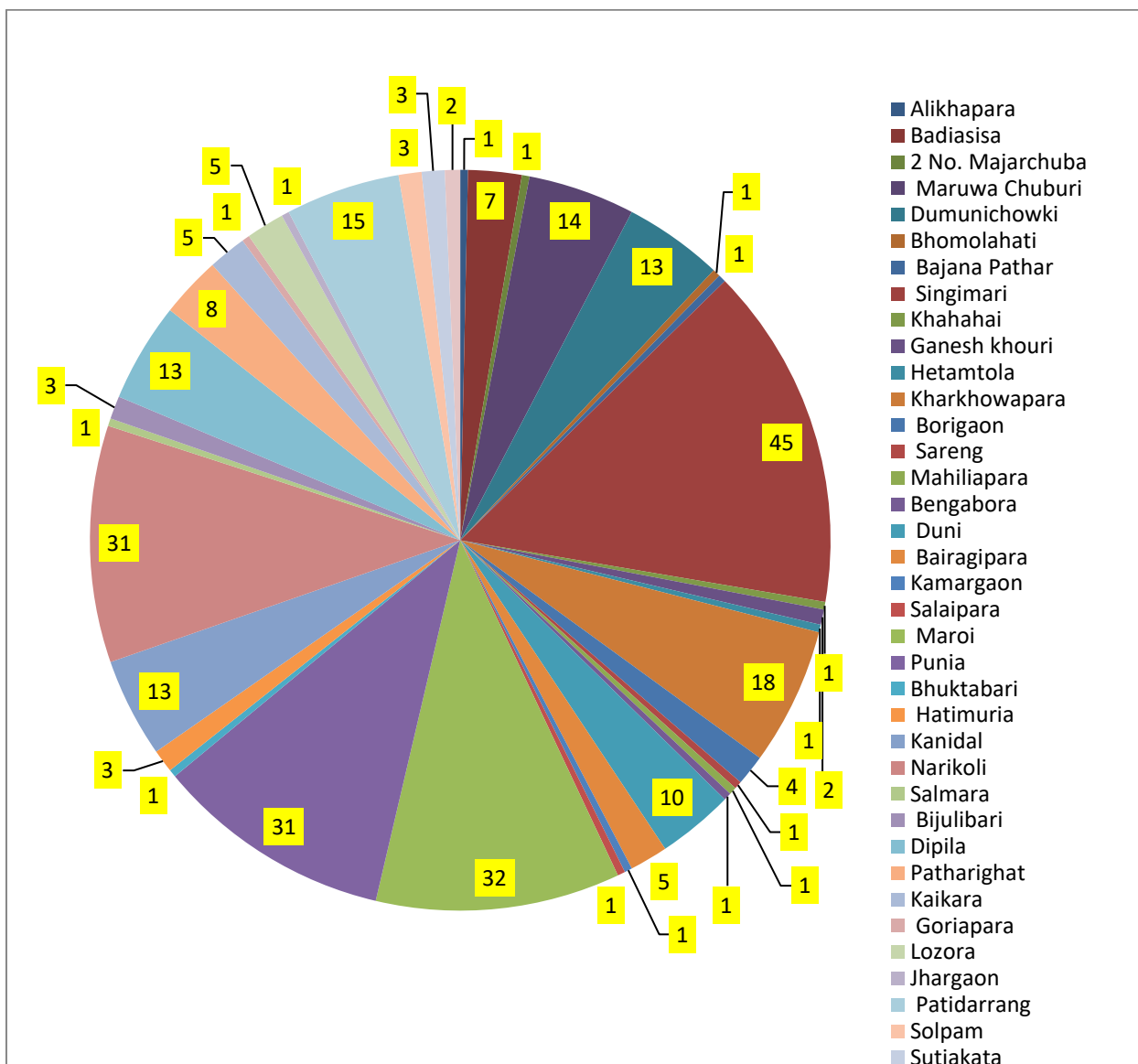
VI. OVERALL VIEW OF THE RESPONDENTS

The Respondents who have visited the following 10 CSC Centers are from the nearby villages. The villages are mentioned below with the total no. of respondent each.

Alikhapara=01, Badiasisa=07, 2 No. Majarchuba=01, Maruwa Chuburi=14, Dumunichowki=13, Bhomolahati=01, Bajana Pathar=01, Singimari=45, Khahahai=01, Ganesh khouri=02, Hetamtola=01, Kharkhowapara=18, Borigaon=04, Sareng=01, Mahiliapara=01, Bengabora=01, Duni=10, Bairagipara=05, Kamargaon=01, Salaipara=01, Maroi=32, Punia=31, Bhuktabari=01, Hatimuria=03, Kanidal=13, Narikoli=31, Salmara=01, Bijulibari=03, Dipila=13, Patharighat=08, Kaikara=05, Goriapara=01, Lozora=05, Jhargaon=01, Patidarrang=15, Solpam=03, Sutiakata=03, Sonawatari=02.

The below graph represent the number of respondents from the different villages of Sipajhar block coming to these CSC centers for their various purposes. The total number of respondents is 300.

Graph 2



VII. CONCLUSION

The Rural Assam is not lacking behind in providing online services through Arunodoi Kendras. A few laps and discrepancies, these Arunodoi Kendras along with the VLE are creating great performances and have even received awards.

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