

DIGITALISATION OF LAND RECORD SERVICE DELIVERY UNDER THE PUNJAB TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICE ACT, 2018: AN EVALUATION OF FARD KENDRAS IN SANGRUR DISTRICT

Jatinder Singh

Ph.D. Research Scholar,

Dept. of Public Administration, Punjabi University, Patiala

E-mail: jatindercheema008@gmail.com

Abstract

Digital governance improves transparency, efficiency, and accessibility in public service delivery. In Punjab, the Punjab Transparency and Accountability in Delivery of Public Service Act, 2018 ensures time-bound and accountable services. Fard Kendras play a key role by providing computerized land records and revenue services. This study examines the functioning of Fard Kendras in Sangrur district (Sangrur City, Bhawanigarh, Moonak, and Lehra Ghagga). Earlier, obtaining land records was time-consuming and required multiple visits, but digitization has made services faster and more accessible. Based on primary data from 80 service users, the study evaluates accessibility, timeliness, transparency, and user satisfaction. It also highlights platforms like Easy Jamabandi Punjab and Easy Registry Punjab. However, limited public awareness about these digital services and the Act remains a challenge, indicating the need for greater awareness programmes.

Keywords: Digital governance, the PTADPS Act, 2018, Fard Kendra, Time-Bound Delivery, Easy Jamabandi, Easy Registry.

INTRODUCTION

Digital governance has become an important approach for improving the delivery of public services in modern administrative systems. The use of digital technologies in government institutions helps make services more accessible, transparent, and efficient for citizens. By reducing manual procedures and introducing online systems, governments aim to provide faster and more reliable services to the public. Digital governance also helps in strengthening accountability and improving the relationship between citizens and public authorities. Public service delivery is a key responsibility of the government, as citizens depend on various administrative services in their daily lives. Among these services, land record management is particularly important in a state like Punjab where a large section of the population is engaged in agriculture and land-related activities. In order to improve the delivery of land record services, the Government of Punjab has introduced digital systems and service centres to simplify the process for citizens. One such initiative is the establishment of **Fard Kendras**, which provide computerized copies of land records and other related services. These centres aim to reduce delays, improve transparency, and make land record services more convenient for the public.

1. OBJECTIVES OF THE PAPER

- I. To examine the digitalisation of land record services delivered through Fard Kendras in Sangrur district under the PTADPS Act, 2018.
- II. To assess the level of awareness among beneficiaries regarding digital land record services, service timelines, and provisions of the Act.
- III. To evaluate the effectiveness of Fard Kendras in ensuring transparent and time-bound delivery of land record services to citizens.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a descriptive empirical research design to examine the digitalisation of land record services delivered through Fard Kendras in Sangrur district under the PTADPS Act, 2018. Primary data was collected from 80 beneficiaries visiting Fard Kendras in selected 4 tehsils namely Sangrur City, Bhawanigarh, Lehra Ghagga, and Moonak through a structured interview schedule using purposive sampling. In addition, the observation method was also used to understand the functioning and service delivery process at Fard Kendras. Secondary data was obtained from official records, government reports, and relevant literature. The collected data was analysed using percentage and tabular methods.

3. CONCEPT OF DIGITALISATION OF PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

Digitalisation of public service delivery refers to the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) to provide government services to citizens in a faster, more efficient, and transparent manner. Through digital platforms, governments can reduce manual procedures, paperwork, and delays that are often associated with traditional administrative systems. Digitalisation allows citizens to access various public services such as certificates, licenses, welfare benefits, and land records through online portals or digital service centres without repeatedly visiting government offices. It also improves transparency, accountability, and convenience by enabling real-time processing, electronic record management, and easier access to information. As a result, digital public service delivery helps create a more citizen-centric administrative system and strengthens good governance by making services more accessible and efficient for the public.

4. COMPONENTS OF DIGITAL PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

Effective public service delivery requires proper systems, fair access, and monitoring to ensure services reach all citizens. The main components include:

- **Digital Infrastructure:** Digital infrastructure includes internet connectivity, servers, and technological systems that support online government services. It provides the basic foundation for delivering public services through digital platforms.
- **Digital Identity Systems:** Digital identity systems help verify and authenticate citizens when they access government services online. These systems ensure secure and reliable identification of service users.
- **Service Delivery Platforms:** Service delivery platforms through single window system, online portals or Mobile applications. Which citizens can apply and receive government services. They simplify procedures and reduce the need to visit government offices.
- **Governance and Legal Framework:** A proper legal and policy framework regulates digital public services and ensures transparency and accountability. It also protects citizens' data and ensures the lawful use of digital technologies.
- **Grievance Redressal Mechanisms:** Grievance redressal systems allow citizens to file complaints and provide feedback regarding public services. These mechanisms help improve service quality and strengthen accountability.
- **Digital Literacy and Inclusion:** Digital literacy ensures that citizens have the knowledge and skills to use digital services. Inclusion efforts help marginalized and rural populations access and benefit from digital public services.

5. THE PUNJAB TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICE ACT, 2018

The PTADPS Act, 2018, enacted on **17 July 2018**, was introduced to improve how public services are delivered to citizens by creating a more structured, accountable, and transparent administrative system. The Act requires that services be provided within a fixed time frame by designated officers, making departments more responsive to the public. A major feature of the Act is its emphasis on digitalization maintaining electronic records, enabling online applications, generating digital acknowledgements, and allowing real-time tracking of service status thereby reducing corruption and human error. The Act clearly defines the duties of designated officers and provides a strong grievance redressal system through the First Appellate Authority and, if needed, the Punjab Transparency and Accountability Commission. It makes transparency and accountability a legal obligation by mandating the publication of service timelines and responsible officers.

6. MAIN PROVISIONS REGARDING TIME-BOUND SERVICES UNDER THE PTADPS ACT, 2018

The Act is introduced to reform public service delivery by making it more efficient, citizen-centric, and accountable. It establishes clear timelines, defined responsibilities, and enforcement mechanisms to ensure the timely delivery of notified services. **The main provisions regarding time-bound services are as follows:**

➤ **Section 2(h) Electronic Modes**

Electronic mode refers to the use of digital technologies such as the internet, mobile applications, and email to deliver government services and communication between departments, citizens, and businesses.

➤ **Section 2(i) Electronic Service Delivery:**

Electronic service delivery means providing government services to citizens through digital platforms like online portals or mobile services, making the process faster and more convenient.

➤ **Section 2(n) Public Service**

This section defines a public service as any service officially notified by the government and provided to citizens. These services may be delivered through traditional methods or through electronic means such as online platforms. Once a service is notified under the Act, the concerned government department must provide it to eligible citizens within the specified time limit.

➤ **Right to Time-Bound Service (Section 4)**

Every Designated Officer and his subordinates shall provide the public service, as notified by the Government from time to time, to the eligible person, within the stipulated time in a transparent manner.

➤ **Commencement of Time Limit (Section 6)**

The stipulated time limit shall start from the date when the required application, complete in all respects, for a public service is submitted to the Designated Officer or to a person authorized to receive the application in such manner as may be prescribed. The receipt of each application shall be duly acknowledged by the Designated Officer or the person authorized to receive the application

➤ **Right to Appeal (Section 8)**

Any eligible person whose application is rejected or whose service is delayed may file an appeal within 30 days. The Appellate Authority must decide the appeal within 30 days of filing.

➤ **Penalty for Delay or Default (Section 10)**

The Appellate Authority can impose a monetary penalty on the concerned officer for delay without reasonable cause. The penalty range shall from ₹500 to ₹5,000. The penalty amount is recovered from the salary of the officer.

➤ **Constitution of the Commission (Section 12)**

This section provides for the establishment of the Punjab Transparency and Accountability Commission to monitor the implementation of the Act. The Commission is headed by a Chief Commissioner and is supported by a Secretary and staff appointed by the government. It acts as a supervisory body to ensure accountability and proper delivery of public services.

7. Time-Bound Land Record Service Delivery under the PTADPS Act, 2018

The Punjab Transparency and Accountability in Delivery of Public Service Act, 2018 mandates that notified land record service must be delivered within stipulated time limits. These services are officially notified by the Government along with designated officers responsible for their delivery. The table no.1 presents the list of land record service covered under the Act along with their prescribed time frames.

Table No.1 list of the Land Record Services cover under The PTADPS Act, 2018

Sr. No.	Service Name	Timeline	Designated Officer
1.	Issuance of Copy of Jamabandi/Fard (Online)	Instant/Same Day	System Generated
2.	Mutation (Unopposed)	30-45 Days	Tehsildar/Naib Tehsildar
3.	Certified Copy of Registered Documents	2-3 Days	Sub-Registrar Office
4.	Khasra Girdawari Copy	3-7 Days	Patwari/Kanungo
5.	Mutation (Opposed)	60-90 Days	Revenue Officer

Source: <https://www.plrs.org.in/>

The table no.1 shows that various land record services under the Punjab Transparency and Accountability in Delivery of Public Service Act, 2018 are delivered within specified time limits by designated revenue officials. The copy of Jamabandi/Fard (online) is issued instantly or on the same day, while services such as certified copies of registered documents and Khasra Girdawari are provided within a few days. Mutation services generally take 30–45 days, and opposed mutation cases may take up to 60–90 days.

8. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR TIME-BOUND SERVICE DELIVERY

The PTADPS Act, 2018 set up a clear system to ensure services were delivered on time in a transparent and accountable manner. It defined the responsibilities of officers and provided a mechanism to handle complaints and delays. At the grassroots level, Fard Kendras played an important role as the main revenue service delivery centres for citizens.

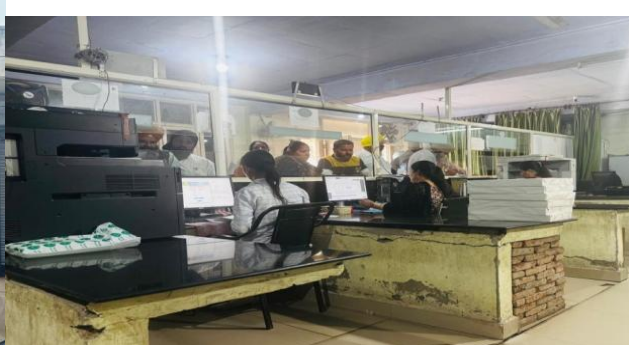
9. FARD KENDRA

Fard Kendras function as dedicated service delivery centres where citizens can obtain computerized copies of land records and related revenue services. The establishment of Fard Kendras was undertaken by the Punjab Land Records Society under the Revenue Department, Government of Punjab, with the objective of improving transparency and efficiency in land record management. These centres provide services such as issuance of Jamabandi/Fard copies and other land record information through digital systems. Fard Kendras act as an important interface between citizens and the revenue administration, ensuring faster, more reliable, and time-bound delivery of land record services.

They also help reduce manual procedures and minimize the need for repeated visits to revenue offices. By using computerized systems, Fard Kendras ensure accuracy and easy access to land records. This initiative supports digital governance and improves the overall efficiency of public service delivery in Punjab.

Image No.1. Outside view of Fard Kendra

Image No.2. Inside View of Fard Kendra



Source: Primary data

Source: Primary data

Table No.2 List of Fard Kendra under Sangrur District

Sr. No.	Place of Fard Kendra	Sr. No.	Place of Fard Kendra
1.	D.C COMPLEX, SANGRUR	3.	TEHSIL COMPLEX LEHRAGAGA
2.	TEHSIL COMPLEX , BHAWANIGARH	4.	TEHSIL COMPLEX MOONAK

Source: Primary data

The table no.2 presents the list of Fard Kendras located in Sangrur district, namely D.C. Complex Sangrur, Tehsil Complex Bhawanigarh, Tehsil Complex Lehragaga, and Tehsil Complex Moonak.

10. EASY JAMABANDI

Easy Jamabandi is a digital portal launched by the Government of Punjab in June 2025 to provide easy and transparent access to land records for citizens. The main purpose of this initiative is to allow people to view and obtain important land documents such as Jamabandi, Fard, mutation details, and other land-related information online without visiting revenue offices. The system helps reduce delays, minimize corruption, and improve transparency in land record services by enabling citizens to access their land records quickly through digital platforms.

11. EASY REGISTRY

Easy Registry is a digital initiative launched by the Government of Punjab in May 2025 to simplify and modernize the property registration process. The main purpose of this system is to make property registration faster, more transparent, and convenient for citizens by using digital technology. Through Easy Registry, people can submit documents online, complete verification, and receive updates about their application without making repeated visits to government offices. This initiative helps reduce delays, minimize corruption, and improve efficiency in land registration services, thereby strengthening digital governance and public service delivery in Punjab.

12. MAJOR FINDING OF THE STUDY

The present study is based on primary data collected from labour welfare service users in Sangrur district. To cover both rural and urban areas, two urban centre, Sangrur City, Bhawanigarh and two educationally backward tehsils Lehragaga and Moonak were selected. This helped assess land record service delivery across different areas of the district.

Table No. 3 Socio-economic Profile of Service Users

AGE	TEHSILS UNDER SANGRUR DISTRICT (Sangrur City, Bhawanigarh, Lehragaga, Moonak)				Total No. of Service users
	21-30 years	31-40 years	41-50 years	Above 51 years	
	08 (10%)	23 (28.75%)	31 (38.75%)	18 (22.5%)	80
GENDER	Male		Female		
	73 (91.25%)		07 (8.75%)		80
AREA	Rural		Urban		
	58 (72%)		22 (29%)		80
MARITAL STATUS	Married		Unmarried		
	68 (85%)		12 (15%)		80
EDUCATION	Illiterate		Primary	Secondary	Graduations & Above
	14 (17.5%)		38 (47.5%)	19 (23.75%)	09 (11.25%)

Source: Primary data

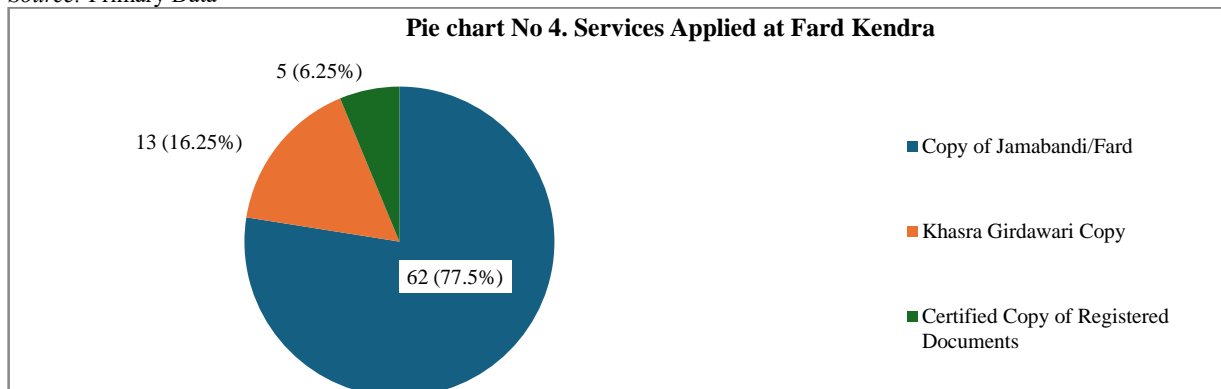
The table No. 3 shows that most service users were aged 41–50 years (38.75%), followed by 31–40 years (28.75%). A large majority (91.25%) were male, 72% belonged to rural areas, and (85%) were married. In terms of education, (47.5%) respondents had primary education followed by 23.75% had secondary education, while 17.5% were illiterate and 11.25% had graduation or above.

Table No 4. What kind of service have you applied at Fard Kendra? (Beneficiaries)

FARD KENDRAS UNDER SANGRUR DISTRICT (Sangrur City, Bhawanigarh, Lehragaga, Moonak)	
Purpose of Visit	Number of Service Users (Total 80)
Copy of Jamabandi/Fard	62 (77.5%)
Khasra Girdawari Copy	13 (16.25%)
Certified Copy of Registered Documents	05 (6.25%)

Source: Primary Data

Pie chart No 4. Services Applied at Fard Kendra



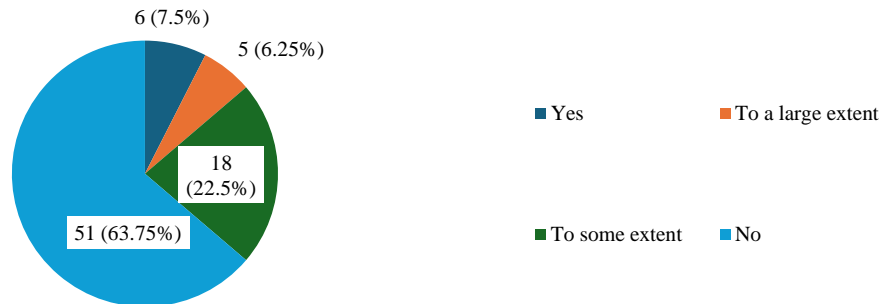
The table and pie chart no.4 show that, a majority (77.5%) of beneficiaries at Fard Kendras under Sangrur district applied for Copy of Jamabandi/Fard, followed by 16.25% who applied for Khasra Girdawari Copy. Further, 6.25% of the beneficiaries applied for Certified Copy of Registered Documents. This indicates that most service users visited Fard Kendras mainly to obtain copies of Jamabandi/Fard.

Table No 5. Do you know about the services provided under Fard Kendra? (Beneficiaries)

TEHSILS UNDER SANGRUR DISTRICT (Sangrur City, Bhawanigarh, Lehragaga, Moonak)	Yes	To a large extent	To Some extent	No	Total No. of Service Users
FARD KENDRA	06 (7.5%)	05 (6.25%)	18 (22.5%)	51 (63.75%)	80

Source: Primary Data

Pie chart No 5. Awareness of Services Provided under Fard Kendra



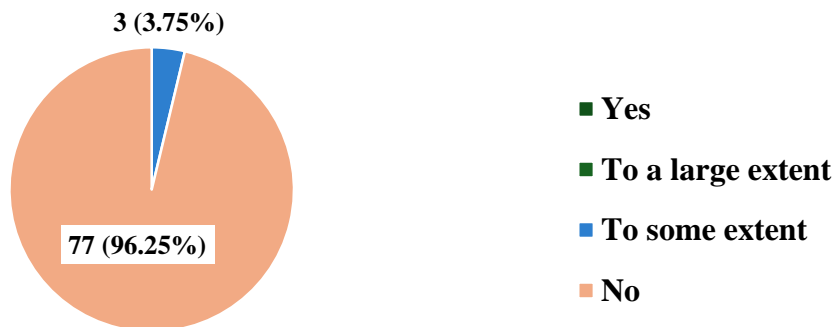
The table and pie chart no.5 indicates that a majority (63.75%) of beneficiaries were not aware of the services provided under Fard Kendra. About 22.5% of respondents knew about the services to some extent, while 7.5% reported that they were aware of the services. A smaller proportion (6.25%) stated that they knew about the services to a large extent.

Table No 6. Do you know about The Punjab Transparency and Accountability in Delivery of Public Service Act, 2018? (Beneficiaries)

TEHSILS UNDER SANGRUR DISTRICT (Sangrur City, Bhawanigarh, Lehragaga, Moonak)	Yes	To a large extent	To Some extent	No	Total No. of Service Users
FARD KENDRA	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (3.75%)	77 (96.25%)	80

Source: Primary Data

Pie chart No 6. Awareness of PTADPS Act, 2018



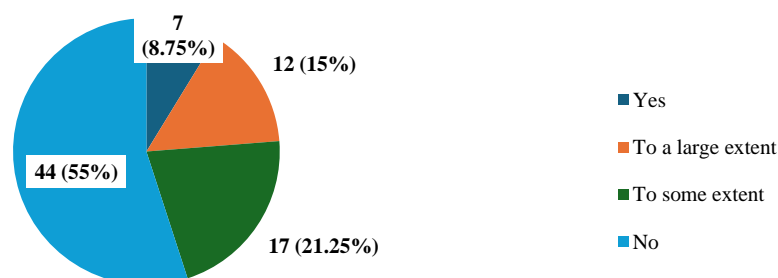
The table and pie chart no.6 shows that a vast majority (96.25%) of beneficiaries were **not aware** of the Punjab Transparency and Accountability in Delivery of Public Service Act, 2018. Only 3.75% of respondents had awareness **to some extent**. Overall, the data indicates a lack of awareness among beneficiaries regarding the PTADPS Act, 2018.

Table No. 7. Did you know about the stipulated time period of delivery of service you have applied for? (Beneficiaries)

TEHSILS UNDER SANGRUR DISTRICT (Sangrur City, Bhawanigarh, Lehragaga, Moonak)	Yes	To a large extent	To Some extent	No	Total No. of Service Users
FARD KENDRA	07 (8.75%)	12 (15%)	17 (21.25%)	44 (55%)	80

Source: Primary Data

Pie chart No 7. Awareness of Stipulated Time Period



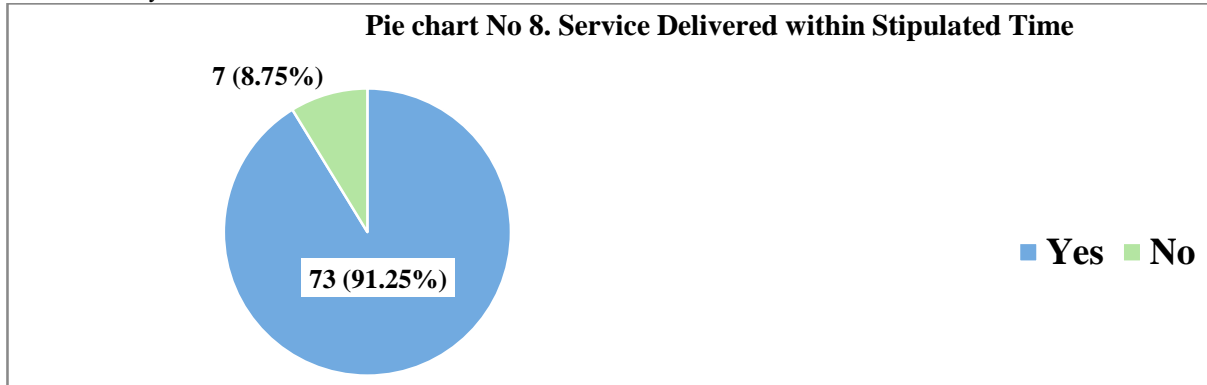
The table and pie chart no.7 shows that a majority (55%) of beneficiaries were **not aware** of the stipulated time period for the delivery of the service they applied for. About 21.25% of respondents knew about it **to some extent**, while 15% were aware **to a large extent**.

Only **8.75%** of the beneficiaries reported that they were fully aware of the prescribed time limit for service delivery. As a result, the data indicates a lack of awareness among beneficiaries regarding the time-bound service delivery system.

Table No. 8. Was the service applied by you delivered in stipulated time period? (Beneficiaries)

TEHSILS UNDER SANGRUR DISTRICT (Sangrur City, Bhawanigarh, Lehragaga, Moonak)	Yes	No	Total No. of Service Users
FARD KENDRA	73 (91.25%)	07 (8.75%)	80

Source: Primary Data

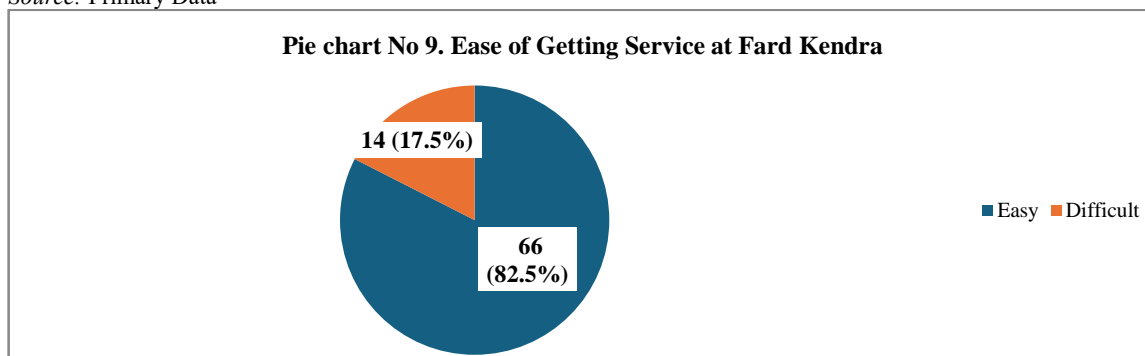


The table and pie chart no.8 highlights that large majority (91.25%) of beneficiaries reported that the service they applied for was delivered within the stipulated time period, while 8.75% stated that the service was not delivered within the prescribed time. As a result, the data indicates that most services at Fard Kendras were delivered within the specified time limits.

Table No.9 How was the procedure for applying services at Fard kendra? (Beneficiaries)

TEHSILS UNDER SANGRUR DISTRICT (Sangrur City, Bhawanigarh, Lehragaga, Moonak)	Easy	Difficult	Total No. of Service Users
FARD KENDRA	66 (82.5%)	14 (17.5%)	80

Source: Primary Data

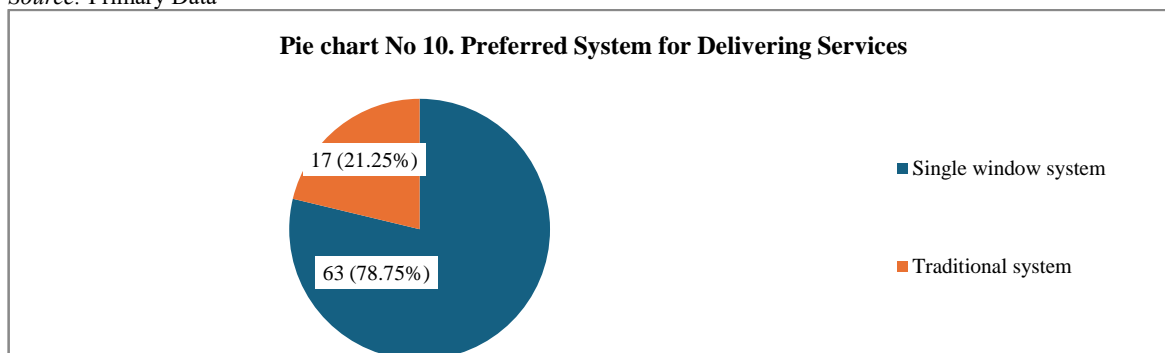


The table and pie chart no.9 shows that a majority (82.5%) of beneficiaries found the process of obtaining services at **Fard Kendras** to be **easy**, while 17.5% of respondents reported that the process was **difficult**. Thus, the findings show that most beneficiaries found the process easy to access.

Table No.10. Which system is better for the delivering services to citizens? (Beneficiaries)

TEHSILS UNDER SANGRUR DISTRICT (Sangrur City, Bhawanigarh, Lehragaga, Moonak)	Single window system	Traditional system	Total No. of Service Users
FARD KENDRA	63 (78.75%)	17 (21.25%)	80

Source: Primary Data

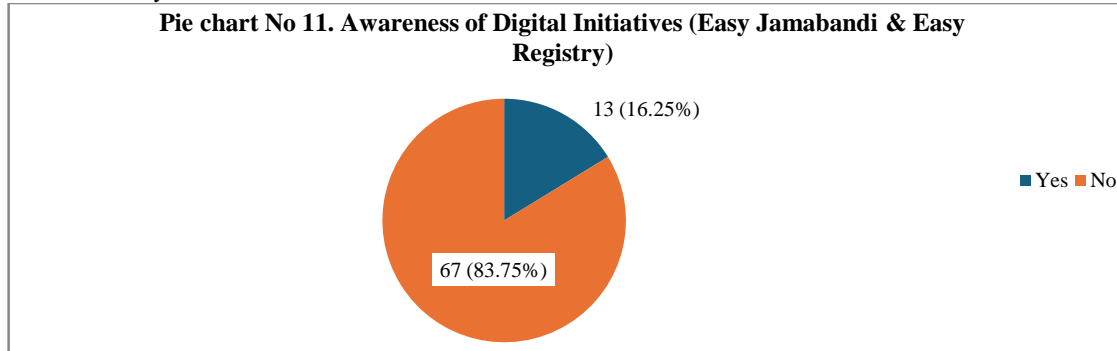


The table and pie chart no.10 shows that a majority (78.75%) of beneficiaries considered the single window system better for delivering services to citizens, while 21.25% of respondents preferred the traditional system. Overall, it can be said that most beneficiaries favored the single window system for service delivery.

Table No. 11. Do you know about the digital initiatives in land record services such as Easy Jamabandi and Easy Registry?

TEHSILS UNDER SANGRUR DISTRICT (Sangrur City, Bhawanigarh, Lehragaga, Moonak)	Yes	No	Total No. of Service Users
FARD KENDRA	13 (16.25%)	67 (83.75%)	80

Source: Primary Data



The table and pie chart no.11 highlights that a majority (83.75%) of beneficiaries were not aware of the digital initiatives in land record services such as Easy Jamabandi and Easy Registry, while only 16.25% of respondents reported that they were aware of these initiatives. This indicates that awareness about digital land record initiatives among beneficiaries was very low.

3. SUGGESTIONS

The major suggestions are given below:

- Awareness campaigns:** The government should actively promote awareness about Fard Kendra and the PTADPS Act, 2018 in local communities, schools, colleges, universities, and government departments. Clear information about service timelines, required documents, and appeal rights should be shared through talks, workshops, seminars, and conferences so that people receive proper guidance.
- Digital Awareness:** Digital awareness about Fard Kendra working should be promoted through social media platforms like **Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter**. Short informative videos, reels, and simple explanations can help people understand their rights and the importance of timely public services. Senior officers, advocates, and experts can also share information through **podcasts** and online sessions to reach a wider audience and enhance public awareness.
- Improve Help Desk Performance:** Every Kendra should have a help desk managed by properly trained staff that can guide citizens, provide correct information, and assist them with service procedures in a clear and polite manner.
- Display Time Limits and Appeal Process Clearly:** Service delivery timelines and the grievance redressal mechanism should be prominently displayed on notice boards and digital screens in simple language.
- Training and Guidance for Employees:** Officials should be trained to explain expected service delivery time and legal provisions to applicants at the time of submission.
- Strengthen Monitoring and Accountability:** Regular monitoring should be conducted to ensure services are delivered within stipulated time and penalties are imposed in case of delays.
- Engagement of NOGs:** Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) can help spread awareness about digital land record services and government schemes. They can organize awareness programmes and training camps, especially in rural areas, to help citizens understand and use digital services at Fard Kendras.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the digitalisation of land record services through Fard Kendras has contributed to improving the accessibility and efficiency of public service delivery in Sangrur district. Services such as issuance of Jamabandi/Fard and other land record documents are generally delivered within the stipulated time period, indicating progress in digital governance and administrative efficiency. However, the findings also reveal that a large number of beneficiaries lack awareness about digital initiatives, service timelines, and the provisions of the Punjab Transparency and Accountability in Delivery of Public Service Act, 2018. Therefore, increasing public awareness, strengthening digital infrastructure, and improving citizen engagement are essential to ensure that digital land record services through Fard Kendras effectively promote transparency, accountability, and citizen-centric governance.

REFERENCES

- S.K. Agarwal, *Right to Public Service: A Guide*, Transparency International India, New Delhi, 2010.
- Anil Kumar Jha, *Right to Public Service*, Axis books Pvt. Led, 2013.
- Nick Robinson, *Right to Public Service Acts in India: The Experience from Bihar and Madhya Pradesh*, Accountability Initiative, Centre for Policy Research, Dharam Marg, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi, 2012
- Sushil Kumar Singla and Himanshu Aggarwal, *Impact and Scope of e-Governance Initiatives in State of Punjab (INDIA)*, International Journal of Computer Applications, Volume 44, No.14, 2012
- Kartic Sharma, *Rights Based Approach as an Effective Mechanism to Strengthen Government Institutions and Promoting Accountability: A Study of Punjab Transparency and Accountability in Delivery of Public Service Act 2018*, Indian Journal Of Social Studies and Humanities Vo.1 (22), 2025.
- R. K. Sharma, Transforming Public Service Delivery through E-Governance, IOSR Journal of Economics and Finance, Vol. 17, Issue 1, 2016.
- Alexander B. Sukhodolov and Elena G. Popkova, Public Governance and Digital Service Delivery, Journal of Governance and Regulation, Vol. 14, Issue 1, 2023.
- Harpreet Singh, *Digitalisation of Land Records Through Fard Kendras in Punjab*, International Journal of Scientific Development and Research (IJS DR), Volume 10 Issue 8, 2025.
- V. K. Chand, *Public Service Delivery in India: Understanding the Reform Process*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2010.
- Akashdeep Singh, e-Governance Initiatives in Punjab: An Overview, World Wide Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development (WWJMRD) Vol. 3, 2017.
- Punjab Land Records Society. Fard Kendra Operational Manual – 2016, Chapter 3: Application Procedure
- <https://plrs.org.in/>
- <https://www.plrs.org.in/pdfs/RTI%20WebSite/2016%20FKM.pdf>
- <https://easyjamabandi.punjab.gov.in/>
- <https://easyregistry.punjab.gov.in/>