

DIGITAL INDIA: OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT

After the demonetization drive in India the next word which is viral is “Digitalization”, in general is the use of digital systems or in layman terms use of computer for data management. Technology has shrunk the globe these days. Everyone is in need of huge amount of data in our day to day life for several purposes. Digitalization of India is nothing but making your daily life less dependent and devoid of human interaction with the help of technology. Now the entire world is in our mobile handsets. You can book a travel ticket, do shopping, chat with your loved ones across the globe and even share your views to the external world more freely and easily. This is the result of digitalization. But to implement this is a great challenge. There are many roadblocks in the way of its successful implementations. These challenges need to be addressed in order to realize the full potential of this programme. It requires a lot of efforts and dedication from all departments of government as well as private sector. If implemented properly, it will open various new opportunities for the citizens of the country.

Key Words: *demonetization, Digital India, Digital Technology, Internet, Roadblocks.*

INTRODUCTION

India as a nation is one of the influential government and political body in the world. Giving tough competition to developed countries and global markets. Yet, are few steps back when it comes to digitalization. So, the present government is keen on developing India and taking it to the next level. To fulfill this dream, MODI has announced Digitalization of India. Radius of Digitalization of India is a core concept of the developmental aspects. Though the initiative has great impact, the path doesn't seem to be a cakewalk. Despite of a population of 125 crores, only 30 crores people have access to smart phones. Only very few of the rest 90 crores people have access to digital world. Unlike rural areas, large percentages of urban areas have high access to

digital world. Rural areas fall short both in access and understanding of the digital world. Government is launching various policies and programs with digital access.

Yet, in doing it is quite hard to for Digitalization of India to the extent we imagine. In 2013, India stood at 68th position in readiness digitized market. Currently we stand at 91st position. These statistics prove our mission of digitalization is not going as per our planned. Amidst these conditions, the government has to step up and further steps. Most of the citizens are unaware of the Government policies and programmes of digitalization.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PAPER

- To study the concept of digitalization.
- To find out the importance of this programme.
- To find out the challenges faced in implementation of this programme.
- To find out practical solutions and innovative ideas to accomplish the vision of a digital India-a reality.

LITERATURE REVIEW

- SundarPichai, SatyaNadella, Elon Musk researched about Digital India and its preparedness to create jobs opportunities in the information sector. He concluded that creating new jobs should be continued with shifting more workers into high productivity jobs in order to provide long term push to the technological sector in India.
- Microsoft CEO, SatyaNadella intends to become India's partner in Digital India program. He said that his company will set up low cost broadband technology services to 5lakhs villages across the country.
- Prof. Singh began with the basic overview of what Digital India entails and led a discussion of conceptual structure of the program and examined the impact of "Digital India" initiative on the technological sector of India. He concluded that this initiative has to be supplemented with amendments in labor laws of India to make it a successful campaign.
- Arvind Gupta intends to say that Digital India movement will play an important role in effective delivery of services, monitoring performance, managing projects and improving governance. An Integrated Office of Innovation & Technology to achieve the same, for problem solving, sharing applications and knowledge management will be the key to rapid results, given that most departments work on their own silos. Tracking and managing the

projects assumes significance because India has been busy spending money in buying technology that we have not used effectively or in some cases not even reached implementation stage. Sharing learning's and best practices across departments needs to be driven by this Office of Technology.

- Gupta and Arora (2015) studied the impact of digital India project on India's rural sector. The study found that many schemes have been launched in digital India to boost agriculture sector and entrepreneurship development in rural areas. Digital India programme has also set the stage for empowerment of rural Indian women.
- Rani (2016) concluded that the digital India project provides a huge opportunity to use the latest technology to redefine India the paradigms of service industry. It also pointed out that many projects may require some transformational process, reengineering, refinements to achieve the desired service level objectives.
- Midha (2016) concluded that digital India is a great plan to develop India for knowledge future but its improper implementation due to inaccessibility and inflexibility to requisite can lead to its failure. Though digital India programme is facing number of challenges yet if properly implemented it can make the best future of every citizen. So we Indians should work together to shape the knowledge economy.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Being an explanatory research it is based on secondary data of National & International Journals, articles, government reports, books, newspapers and magazines covering wide collection of academic literature on 'Digital India'. Considering the research objectives, descriptive research design is adopted to have more accuracy and rigorous analysis of research study. Available secondary data was extensively used for the study.

Challenges in Digitalization

- High level of digital illiteracy: Digital illiteracy is prevalent in most of the towns and villages in India. Cities have adopted digitalization but limited to certain extent. Full-fledged digitalization is cashless transaction on daily basis, use of internet services to get government certificates. This requires administration changes, Taxation changes and change in public mentality. So it's a team work which includes citizen's responsibility and support to the new system.

- Connectivity to remote areas: It is a mammoth task to have connectivity with each and every village, town and city. The problem of connectivity is a complex issue because every state has different laws pertaining to its execution. Also it is challenging for the central authorities to make a database where such huge information can be stored.
- Compatibility with center state databases: Every state has different internet protocols because every state is diversified. Diversified not only in the sense of religion but also in language. Hence software compatibility with the center is a crucial issue. Information shall be saved carefully.
- Cyber Crime: There is cyber threat all over the globe and digital India will not be any exception. Hence we need a strong anti-cyber-crime team which maintains the database and protects it round the clock
- Inter Departmental Coordination: Within the government there are various departments which should be integrated. Integration has technical as well as corporate issue. Corporate in the sense self-ego of the officers and staff of our government services are hurdle in the change. Also the middle man policy will be eliminated completely because of digital India, hence there will be imminent resistance from the working staff.
- Finance: Though there are resources with India but there is a huge capital cost which is to be invested and the fruits of the investment will be received after few years.
- Net neutrality: The issue is still on the table and we are blindly following the digital India. Net neutrality is must and we should make sure that digital India without net neutrality would be a great blow to entrepreneurs and citizens of India.
- Changing the mindset: This point will come into picture when you have allocated the required resources and material but when it comes to implementing them, most of them will be hesitant to change. People are accustomed with years of same of practice that they are not ready to change.
- Exchange of information: The information stored should also be used by other government offices. For example police, surveillance and other security issues can be easily resolved with digital India but its coordination is a mammoth task. It is not only a technological question but also deals with the question of privacy and security.

CONCLUSION

The vision of digital India is grand. It is a huge step towards building a truly empowered nation. If successful, it transforms citizen access to multimedia information, content and services. However the goal is still far away since most of the nine pillars of digital India mission are facing serious challenges in implementation. It is imperative that focused persistent attention must be given to each and every pillar so that this programme does not end up in failure. In fact we all should be mentally prepared for the change and be ready to face the challenges in implementing this policy, only then it would be possible to make this vision a reality.

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