

DIGITAL INDIA INITIATIVES – AN IMPACT

Author's Name: Ms. Sahana S

Affiliation: Assistant Professor, The Yenepoya Institute of Arts Science Commerce and Management, Yenepoya University, Deralakatte, Karnataka, India

E-Mail: Sahana@yenepoya.edu.in

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Abstract

“In this digital age, we have an opportunity to transform lives of people in ways that was hard to imagine a couple of decades ago”-Narendra Modi. The Indian government has taken initiatives to make India digitalized. It is very important in the present generation because India has very poor infrastructure compared to the other countries. To fulfill the need of the Indian economy the government has taken initiative to make India digitalized. Digital India is campaign, which was launched on 1st January 2015 by the government of India to ensure that government services are made available to citizens electronically by improved online structure and by increasing internet connectivity by making the country digital empowered in the field of technology. It was started with a view to empower the people of the country digitally, this also aims to bridge India's digital segment and bring big investments in the technology sector. The initiative also includes plans to connect rural areas with high speed internet networks that are by providing broadband services in all villages. Some of the other facilities which will be provided through this initiative are digital locker, e-education, e-health, e-sign and national scholarship portal. The main components of digital India includes the creation of digital infrastructure, delivery of the services digitally and digital literacy.

Keywords: Digital India, Indian Economy, India, Infrastructure

INTRODUCTION

The Digital India initiative aims at availing digitalizing of various individual projects of all central government and ministries like education, health service and other services, that can be delivered to citizens using Information and Communication Technology by joining all the areas of India including the Gram Panchayats at high speed internet through broadband connectivity, in order to focus on the e-governance till 2019. It can also be viewed as the next step of already running National e-governance plan. In this program government will prefer to adopt public private partnerships wherever feasible for execution of these initiatives.

The digital world that we live in today is that where every civilian has a bright prospect to transform the lives in many ways that were hard to envision just a couple of years ago. It is the outcome of several innovations and technology advances. Today, every nation wants to be fully digitalized that will empower society in a better manner. The digital India Programme, an initiative of honorable Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi, will emerge new progressions in every sector and generates innovative endeavors for geNext. The motive behind the concept is to build participative, transparent and responsive system. All educational institutions and government services will soon be able to provide I-ways round the clock. Digital India will provide all services electronically and promote digital literacy. Digital technologies which include the concept of cloud computing and mobile applications have emerged as the catalysts for express economic growth and citizen empowerment. Companies all over the world desire to invest in Digital India-the 21st century India, as a growth opportunity. Hence, an attempt has been made in this paper to understand Digital India – as a campaign where technologies and connectivity will come together

to make an impact on all aspects of governance and improve the quality of life of citizens. Global investors like Satya Nadella, Elon Musk, Sundar Pichai have supported Modi's Digital India initiative.

Skill development & thrust on education, Stressing that his government has given top priority to skill development, Prime Minister had said the government is currently doing mapping for assessing skill manpower demand for specific sectors. He noted that there has to be synchronization between the objectives of the government, academic world, industry and job seekers for ensuring that industry specific skills are imparted. Reforms in the labour laws, besides the skill development, labour law flexibility is a key element for the success of this campaign for increasing manufacturing in the country. Economists say that "labour law flexibility does not imply hire and fire policy, it's about providing a sound social safety net to workers."

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To know how the technologies and connectivity will come together to make an impact on all aspects of governance and improve the quality of life of citizens.
- To find out how the government services can work effectively with practical solutions and innovative ideas to accomplish the vision of a digital India – a reality.

DATA COLLECTION

The secondary data has been collected. For this purpose, various magazines and journals have been used as it is a conceptual paper. Thus, the focus is to know more about the concept, its application and the impact on economy via other parameters. Therefore, qualitative and quantitative data have been used.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

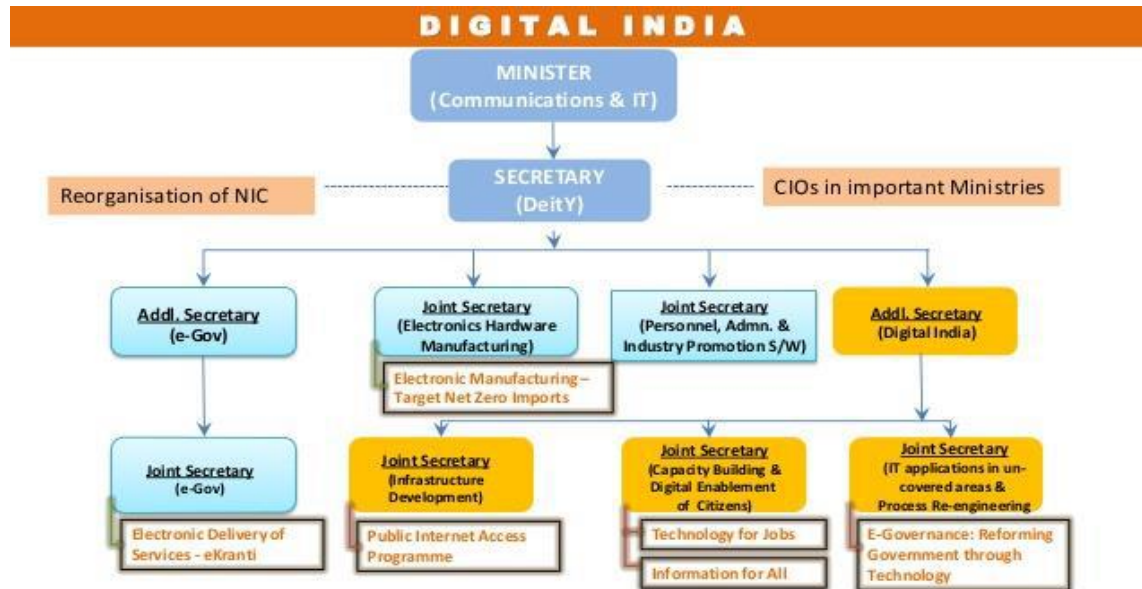
Gupta and Arora (2015) studied the impact of digital India project on India's rural sector. Authors found that many schemes were launched in digital India to motivate agriculture sector and entrepreneurship development in rural areas. Digital India programme is also promoting empowerment of rural Indian women through many projects.

DIGITAL INDIA

The program contains tasks that target to make sure that government services are available to people digitally and people get advantage of the newest information and connections technological innovations. Gandhiji felt that "India resides in its villages", and technology will help the villages to grow and prosper. Digital libraries, online magazines, e-book can be made available for free which will further help in knowledge sharing. PM Modi rightly said in his speech in San Jose, "I see technology as a means to empower and as a tool that bridges the distance between hope and opportunity. Social media is reducing social barriers. It connects people on the strength of human values, not identities." Technology is a bridge indeed, a bridge that connects the hope that India's villages will be educated and aware to the opportunity of internet and access to information from across the world. Digital India is not just an initiative but a need for this country, where majority of population still does not have access to the world of internet. The Digital India initiative seeks to lay emphasis on e-governance and transform India into a digitally empowered society. It is to ensure that government services are available to citizens electronically. Digital India also aims to transform ease of doing business in the country. The Department of Electronics

and Information Technology anticipates that this program will have huge impact on the ministry of communication and IT. It will focus on providing high speed internet services to its citizens and make services available in real time for both online and mobile platform. Modi’s government is focusing on providing broadband services in all villages of the country, tele-medicine and mobile healthcare services and making the governance more participative.

FIGURE: 1 DIGITAL INDIA



MAJOR PROJECTS UNDER THE INITIATIVE

Digital India comprises of various initiatives under the single program each targeted to prepare India for becoming a knowledge economy and for bringing good governance to citizens through synchronized and coordinated engagement of the entire government. There are nine projects which have been undertaken. These are as follows:

- **Easy access to mobile connectivity:** the government is taking steps to ensure that by 2018 all villages are covered through mobile connectivity. The aim is to increase network penetration and cover gaps in all 44,000 villages.
- **Highways to have broadband services:** government aims to lay national optical fibre network in all 2.5 lakh gram Panchayats broadband for the rural will be laid by December 2016 and broadband for all urban will mandate communication infrastructure in new urban development and buildings. By March 2017, the government aims to provide nationwide information infrastructure.
- **Provide public access to internet:** the government aims to provide internet service to 2.5 lakh villages which comprises of one in every panchayat by March 207 and 1.5 lakh post offices in the next two years. These post offices will become multi- service centres for the people.
- **IT Training for Jobs:** this initiative seeks to train 10 million people in towns and villages for IT sector jobs in five years. It also aims to train 0.3 million agents to run viable businesses delivering IT services. Additionally, the project involves training of 0.5million rural IT workforce in five years and setting up of BPOs in each North-eastern state.

- **E-Governance:** The government aims to improve processes and delivery of services through e-governance with UIDAI, payment gateway, EDI and mobile platforms. School certificates, voter ID cards will be provided online. This aims for a faster examination of data.
- **Manufacturing of electronics:** the government is focusing on zero imports of electronics in order to achieve this, the government aims to put up smart energy meters, micro ATMs, mobile, consumer and medical electronics.
- **E-Kranti:** This service aims to deliver electronic services to people which deals with health, education, farmers, justice, security and financial inclusion.
- **Early harvest programs:** Government plans to set up Wi-Fi facilities in all universities across the country. Email will be made the primary mode of communication. Aadhar enabled biometric attendance system will be deployed in all central government offices where recording of attendance will be made online.
- **Global Information:** Hosting data online and engaging social media platforms for governance is the aim of the government. Information is also easily available for the citizens.
- **MyGov.in** is a website launched by the government for a 2-way communication between citizens and the government. People can send in their suggestions and comment on various issues raised by the government, like net neutrality.

IS INDIA DIGITALLY READY

There is no doubt in it. India is ready for this. Immediately with the introduction of this campaign, many organizations came forward to lend their hands for achieving India a digitally equipped country. Organizations like Reliance Ltd BSNL, are coming forward to spread digitalization among rural areas. And over 42000 villages all over India will be having seamless mobile connectivity by 2018. The internet saathi initiative aims to cover 4,500 villages over the next 18 months, starting with Gujarat, Rajasthan and Jharkhand. India is aiming to achieve universal digital literacy across the country. The prime importance is to make sure every individual can be able to leverage the potential of Digital India. The focus is at least one person in a household should transform into an e-literate. This will ensure the digitalization and connectivity of local institutions like panchayats offices, schools, other government offices and libraries etc. India is reforming its government through technology in the name of e-governance with the advancement of technology and digitalization. The nine pillars of Digital India program clearly confirms that India as a nation is at its nascent stage. One can easily assure that India will be digitally ready in the next three years.

IMPACT

India's economy has witnessed a significant economic growth in the recent past by growing 7.3% in 2015 as against 6.9% in 2014. The step taken by the government in recent times have shown positive results as India's gross domestic product at factor cost at constant prices 2014-15 is Rs 106.4 trillion, as against Rs 99.21 trillion in 2013-14, registering a growth rate of 7.3%. This clearly shows that Digital India initiative introduced by Indian government has contributed a lot to boost the economy of the country. The Digital India project itself will create employment opportunities for 17 million people directly or indirectly which will help in fighting against unemployment problems in India. In the next 5 years, India will emerge to be a leader in using IT in sectors like health, defence, education, agriculture and banking. Also the service sector will be digitally empowered. In the field of education, it also assures broadband connectivity in all

panchayats, schools, libraries and other public places. Apart from broadband connectivity, every village is provided with universal phone connectivity across the country. The Digital inclusion among the country ensures the manufacturing sector to revive the electronics manufacturing. With the make in India campaign and Digital India, the nation is planning to achieve net zero imports by 2020. This ensures the exports will be equal to the imports and this helps in the economic development of the nation. With the introduction of mobile connectivity in all villages, unique single portal can be maintained for all government related services. This ensures that all databases and information should be in electronic form and not manual. Since India is a service based country and till now we have focused only on software development, with the advent of Digital India, with its stress on making India a manufacturing hub will change the trend.

CONCLUSION

The Digital India program is just the beginning of a digital revolution, once implemented properly it will open various new opportunities for the citizens. It is one of the ambitious programs of Indian government, and is directly monitored by honourable Prime Minister of India. The program is multi ministry program, with the involvement of central cabinet ministers, state government etc. various grand companies like Microsoft, Google will also agree to be partner and help the success of Digital initiative. While there are many obstacles in the path of Digital India program, one major of which is Electricity. But this problem will soon be solved as there will be pressure on local leaders to get electricity in their village when Digital India program will be running in the nearby villages.

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