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A Conceptual Study of Problems and Prospects of Digital India

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Abstract

We currently inhabit a technological and digital environment. The government of Mr. Narendra Modi has come up with the novel notion of "Digital India." The Indian government has taken the initiative to better connect its departments with the country's citizens. By minimising paperwork, it attempts to make sure that electronic access to government services is provided to citizens. The goal is to change the economy of the nation to one that is digitally empowered, and knowledge based. The idea is to improve digital literacy while establishing a high-speed internet connection in rural locations. The programme combines a variety of thoughts and concepts into a single, all-encompassing vision, allowing each one to be regarded as a component of a bigger objective. The entire central and state governments, under the direction of the Deity, carry it out. Electronic commerce includes a diverse spectrum of online business ventures involving goods and services. It isthe act of doing business operations through the use of digital information processing and electronic communication systems in order to create, adapt and re-establish relationships between businesses and consumers in to generate value. This article aims to demonstrate the various problems the Digital India Programme has encountered. Additionally, it describes the various prospects offered by the programme to citizens of the nation.

Keywords: Digital India, Challenges, Problems, Prospects, Technology.

Introduction

Narendra Modi, the Prime Minister of India, announced the launch of Digital India on July 1, 2015, with the goal of bringing high-speed Internet to rural areas and encouraging the availability of digital information and services in Indian languages. This program's conceptualization is all-encompassing growth in all aspects of digital services, goods, manufacturing, employment possibilities and so on. It aspires to involve both the Central Government and State Government in providing good governance to citizens and preparing India for the knowledge-based change. This programme, which is supervised by the Deit Y(Department of Electronics

and Information Technology), will have an effect on the ministries of communications and information technology, rural development, human resource development, and health, among others. Four senior positions would be created by DeitY within the department to manage the programme, such as an "additional secretary for Digital India, a joint secretary for infrastructure development, a joint secretary for capacity building and digital enablement, and a joint secretary for IT applications" in untapped areas and process re-engineering. By doing this, citizens would have access to government services online. By requiring the internet delivery of government services, it would also increase public accountability. The Digital India (DI) project will be managed by the government-owned company Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL), which is also in charge of the National Optical Fiber Network project. The initiative shall be carried out in stages between 2014 and 2018. Most eGovernment projects now receive money through budgetary allocations made by the corresponding ministries and agencies in the federal or state governments. Although specific nodal ministries or agencies will determine the financial needs for each project under Digital India, the government has estimated that it will cost Rs 113,000 crore.

Vision of Digital India Programme

The conceptualization of the Digital India initiative is to turn India into a digitally enabled society and knowledge-based economy.

Every citizen needs access to digital structure. One of the primary themes on which the concept of Digital India is grounded is "digital infrastructure as a utility to every person." This foresight states that it will be feasible to deliver targeted social benefits, encourage financial inclusion, and provide electronic government services to every inhabitant once Indian rural community are digitally linked via high-speed internet and broadband. Because it is a basic in this concept. It aims to provide the infrastructure required for digital identity, financial inclusion, and simple access to common service centres. Additionally, it is suggested to give citizens access to "digital lockers" where they could store papers released by government departments and agencies.

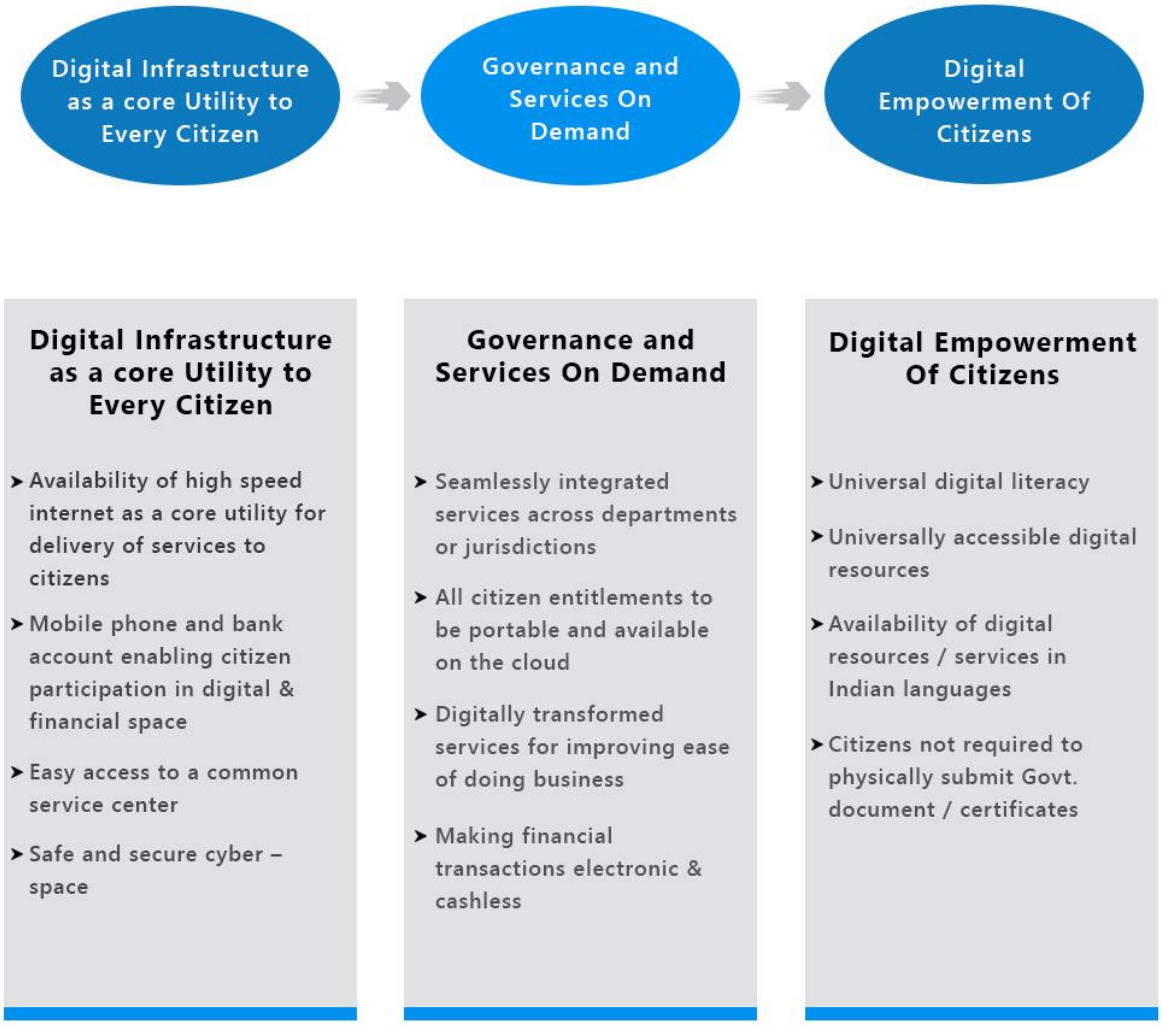

Figure 1: Digital India Plan- At a Glance

Major launches of Digital India Initiative

The Program embodies the Indian government vision to connect as well as to empower 125 crore citizens, to establish exceptional levels of clearness and answerability in governance and to use technical know-how to increase citizens' access to high-quality education, healthcare, farming, and financial inclusion. The "Digital India" Program will heavily rely on technology to establish straightforward, effective, and affordable governance.

As seen below, a number of projects and products have been launched or are about to do so:

Figure 2: Major Launches of Digital India

Nine Pillars of Digital India

The programme known as "Digital India" serves as a catch-all for many government agencies. It combines a wide range of concepts into a coherent whole so that each one can be put into practise as a component of a greater whole. “Broadband Highways, Universal Access to Mobile Connectivity, Public Internet Access Programme, e-Governance: Reforming Government through Technology, e-Kranti - Electronic Delivery of Services, Information for All, Electronics Manufacturing, IT for Jobs, and Early Harvest Programs are the nine growth areas that Digital India aims to give the much-needed enhancement to”. These topics are each intricate programmes in and of themselves that involve several Ministries and Departments.

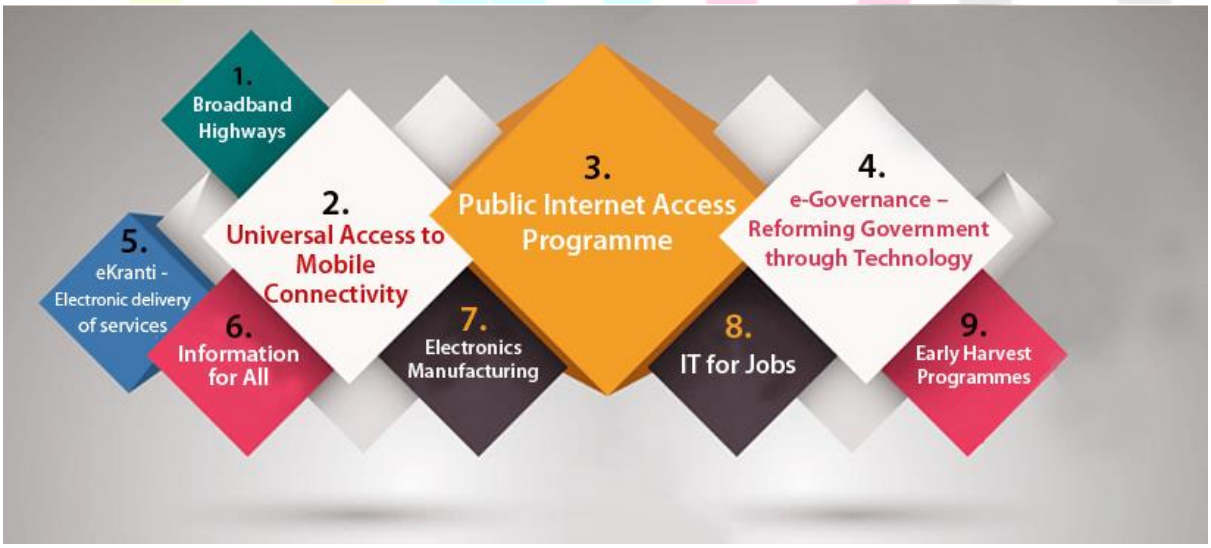

Figure 3: Nine Pillars of Digital India

Literature Review

Numerous studies have been done on the program's numerous aspects, including its economic, social, and ethical components. Here, a number of these online searches-turned-studies have been looked at. Satya Nadella, the CEO of Microsoft, wants to collaborate with India on the Digital India programme. He claims that his company will establish economical internet services in 5 lakh localities across the nation. The Digital India movement, according to Arvind Gupta, will be essential to the effective delivery of services, the management of projects, and the enhancement of governance. Prof. Singh started out by outlining the broad scope of "Digital India.". Studies have been conducted on the program's many facets, including its ethical, social, and economic elements. Here, several of these online queries that later become studies have been examined. Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella wants to work with India on the Digital India initiative. He said his business will install inexpensive internet technology services in 5 lakh communities across the country. According to Arvind Gupta, the Digital India movement will be crucial to the improvement of governance, project management, and service delivery. Prof. Singh began by describing the expansive nature of "Digital India."

The effects of digital India were scrutinized by Gupta and Arora in 2024. According to the report, to help rural businesses and the agriculture sector thrive, a number of programmes have been launched in the digital India. This initiative also established expectations for the women of India in rural areas. The digital India project, according to Rani (2021), offers a significant opportunity for the sector. It also made note of the fact that many projects could need to go through some sort of transformational process or undergo some reengineering in order to meet their desired service level goals. Midha (2022) came to the conclusion that while the development of digital India is a brilliant plan to prepare India for the future of knowledge, it must be implemented incorrectly owing to its inflexibility and lack of accessibility to succeed. Even though the digital India programme is encountering numerous hindrances, if successfully executed, it can warrant that each individual has the finest approaching possible. As a result, Indians should cooperate. Seema Dua claims that the implementation of the digital India mission is fraught with difficulty. She thinks that the Digital India campaign will fail because there is a lack of infrastructure development in rural and distant areas, a lack of adequate cyber security capabilities, a lack of effective engagement from multiple agencies, and a lack of commitment and effort.

Research Objectives

The core objectives of the study are:

1. To analyse the prospects offered by the Digital India Programme to the citizen of India.
2. To analyse the problems encountered during implementation of the Digital India Programme.

Research Methodology

Research Design*:* The research design of the study is descriptive in nature.

Sources of Data Collection*:* The data was solely acquired through secondary sources i.e. from a variety of websites, periodicals, and e-contents etc.

Prospects of the Digital India Scheme

Digital India program offers business prospects originally in the subsequent sectors:

• **Automated Manufacturing**: By investing in the infrastructure of testing facilities that meet the necessary standards, telecom and electronics can offer the private sector chances for skill development.

• **Information and Communication Technology**: Jobs for IT specialists, software developers, and network experts are needed, as well as IT trainers to instruct people in small towns and rural areas.

• **National e-Government Department:** With its creation, a need for senior consultants and IT consultants arose.

• **Healthcare:** Remote health plans and telemedicine will open up a lot of opportunities for universal access to high-quality care.

• **Cybersecurity:** A significant area of attention with many of prospects is cybersecurity. All types and sizes of businesses need to make considerable investments in safeguarding their goods and services.

• **Telecom:** Teach the workforce in rural areas about telecom and related services (TSPs).

• **Infrastructure:** The development of broadband and the integration of network and cloud infrastructure for improved connection opens up a number of opportunities for networking professionals and related businesses.

• **Agriculture:** The sector accounts for over 51% of employment in India and 16% of the country's GDP. It will support our farmers' decisions regarding crop varieties, seed types, protection of plant and information of market rate. The prospect will surge if administration creates a structure for private sector to contest and provide finest services to farmers like- Setup of virtual market, crop insurance, soil health card scheme etc.

•**Economy:** Millions of Indians' lives could be drastically altered by the digital economy. With this tool, the nation would have the chance to take on new responsibilities.

• **Marketing:** There are several chances in the marketing field, including online buying, e-commerce, and digital advertising processes.

• **Finance:** Discovering alternative routes from internet banking to digital wallets, crowdsourcing, and low-cost business transactions.

Problems faced during the implementation of Digital India Scheme

- **Lack of departmental coordination:** This is an umbrella project that involves participation from numerous departments and requires dedication and effort. As a result, all the parties concerned must exercise strong leadership and provide timely support.
- **Insufficient private participation:** To complete projects on time, significant private engagement is required. Due to lengthy and complicated regulatory processes, there is little private participation in government projects in India.
- **Constant and rapid adoption of the internet:** Of the 4 billion people worldwide without Internet access, 25% are in India. *"India is the 4th largest smart phone market with almost 111 million smart phone users*". India charges $3.4 per month on average for a 500MB prepaid mobile data package, compared to "$35.8 in Brazil, $15.5 in China, and $17 in Russia". Despite having the lowermost data rates in the world, India's adoption of the internet is not promising. Illiteracy, the cost and accessibility of mobile devices and data plans, and a lack of regionally appropriate Apps will make it difficult for the Internet to spread more quickly. Due to expensive data fees, Internet usage is still minimal.
- **Infrastructure:** Despite the National Optic Fibre Network (NOFN) project's goal of constructing a countrywide high-speed broadband network by the year end, there are further infrastructure shortfalls that must be addressed. For example, there are not enough reliable and sizable data centres to store the data of an of whole country. In addition, the majority of rural Indians cannot afford the very last interconnectivity and the physical infrastructure at consumer locations. With the NOFN initiative, infrastructure fulfilment is important.
- **Cybersecurity:** According to a National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) report, cybercrime increased significantly in India between 2012 and 2013, rising by 50%. In the recent years, there have been numerous incidents of cybercrime at both the business and individual levels. It might be dangerous and jeopardise national and individual security to store the data of 1.2 billion people in the cloud. As a result, the Digital India project requires extremely high levels of network security at every level of operation.

Measures to Overcome the Problems for Effective Implementation of Digital India Programme:

• **Digital Literacy:** Despite a growing number of smartphones and internet users, India has a low level of digital literacy. Improving digital literacy is essential if the advantages of the Digital India programme are to be felt by all demographic groups.

• **Building skills:** To upkeep the inventiveness and services planned under the Digital India banner, a solid talent foundation is necessary. The growth of electronic-governance services, their upkeep and decision-

making for all digital activities would be made possible by the enlargement of technical capabilities within state governments and ministers.

• **Digital adoption:** For Digital India to be effective, all facets of society of India must do so. In addition to creating demand, this will help Digital India realise its goal of empowering all residents.

Defining the private sector's role: A framework that outlines the private sector's obligations regarding investments, content, and job guarantees must be established before the sector may participate in skill development programmes.

• **Institutional introduction of digital skill programmes:** Institutional trainings in Indian schools, colleges, and institutions should include skill development and digital literacy. All graduates should be required to have adequate digital abilities; therefore, core curriculum and interactive programmes should be compulsory.

• **Expanding access to digital infrastructure in rural and isolated areas**: There is a need to accelerate the development of digital infrastructure, notably fibre networks. Post offices, government buildings, and CSCs are examples of existing government infrastructure assets that should be better utilised for the delivery of digital services in outlying areas.

Conclusion

The Digital India plan would usher in a digital revolution once properly executed and provide the populace with a wealth of new options. The success of the Digital India effort, however, would depend on the regulatory framework. The entire government decides that these restrictions provide the kind of environment that entices private organisations to participate, work together, and create efficient ecosystems. If the government takes the largest possible role in governance and the smallest possible role in administration, India will be digitally prepared in a short period of time.

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