



Digital India and its Impact on Society Recent Developments

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Abstract:

Digital India's social impact involves massive inclusion through Aadhaar & UPI, better access to welfare/services (UMANG, CSCs), improved governance transparency, and empowerment via digital skills, bridging urban-rural divides in education/finance, though challenges like digital literacy gaps, cybercrime, and device costs persist, creating both immense opportunities and new societal complexities. The Indian Government launched the Digital India campaign to make government services available to citizens electronically by online infrastructure improvement and also by enhancing internet connectivity. It also aims to empower the country digitally in the domain of technology. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the campaign on 1st July 2015.

The nine pillars of Digital India are 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 Programmes. Each of these areas is a complex programme in itself and cuts across multiple Ministries and Departments.

Key words: *Digital India initiative- Public Internet Access Programme, e-Governance- Digital Infrastructure Creation, Digital Delivery of Services, and Digital Literacy.*

Introduction:

Digital India was an initiative taken by the Government of India for providing high-speed internet networks to rural areas. Digital India Mission was launched by PM Narendra Modi on 1st July 2015 as a beneficiary to other government schemes including Make in India, Bharatmala, Sagarmala, Startup India, BharatNet, and Standup India.



Digital India Mission is mainly focused on three areas:

1. Providing digital infrastructure as a source of utility to every citizen.
2. Governance and services on demand.
3. To look after the digital empowerment of every citizen.

Digital India was established with a vision of inclusive growth in areas of electronic services, products, manufacturing, and job opportunities.

Digital India aims to provide the much-needed thrust to the nine pillars of growth areas. Each of these areas is a complex programme in itself and cuts across multiple Ministries and Departments. The nine pillars of Digital India are given below:

- **Broadband Highways**– This covers three sub components, namely Broadband for All – Rural, Broadband for All – Urban and National Information Infrastructure (NII).
- **Universal Access to Mobile Connectivity**- This initiative focuses on network penetration and filling the gaps in connectivity in the country.
- **Public Internet Access Programme**- The two sub components of Public Internet Access Programme are Common Services Centres (CSCs) and Post Offices as multi-service centres.
- **e-Governance**: Reforming Government through Technology- Government Process Re-engineering using IT to simplify and make the government processes more efficient is critical for transformation to make the delivery of government services more effective across various government domains and therefore needs to be implemented by all Ministries/ Departments.



- **e-Kranti – Electronic Delivery of Services-** To improve the delivery of public services and simplify the process of accessing them. In this regard, several e-governance initiatives have been undertaken by various State Governments and Central Ministries to usher in an era of e-Government. e-Governance in India has steadily evolved from the computerization of Government Departments to initiatives that encapsulate the finer points of Governance, such as citizen centricity, service orientation and transparency.
- **Information for All-** This pillar aims to ensure transparency and availability of reliable data generated by the line ministries for use, reuse and redistribution for the people of India.
- **Electronics Manufacturing-** This pillar focuses on promoting electronics manufacturing in the country.
- **IT for Jobs-** This pillar focuses on providing training to the youth in the skills required for availing employment opportunities in the IT/ITES sector.
- **Early Harvest Programmes-** This pillar consists of a group of different short-term projects which have immediate effect on the Indian digital ecosystem like IT platform for mass messaging, crowd Sourcing of eGreetings, biometric attendance in the government offices, WI-FI in all universities etc.

Review of Literature:

Bora B (2024) emphasized that digitization was necessary to make everything digital or electronically accessible, hence the 2015 Digital India Mission launched by the Government of India. Your article seeks to briefly understand the Digital India programme, its vision, the pillars, the initiatives under the programme, the challenges in implementing the programme, and possible suggestions to achieve the desired goals. Digital India has improved digital literacy in India.

Anantha Lakshmi V and AnandiG(2020) Begins research by focusing on the ubiquity of technology and the digital world. According to them, the digital world is one in which digital technology is used in the best possible way. As such, the Digital India program aims to bring government services to the people digitally so that they can benefit from the latest information and technological innovations.

Sengjan (2018) says: People post jobs online and apply for jobs online. I encourage my students to learn computers because computers are now a very important part of our daily lives. ” is inaccessible, which makes it unsuitable for the required implementation, and inflexible and likely to fail. So we Indians need to work together to create a knowledge economy. Sharma (2016) commented: An initiative of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Digital India program will bring new developments in all areas. The motivation behind this concept is to build a participatory, transparent and responsive system.

Gupta and Arora (2015) explored the impact of the Digital India project on rural India. The study reveals that digital India has launched a number of programs to boost the development of the agricultural sector and entrepreneurship in rural areas. The Digital India program has also created conditions for the empowerment of women in rural India.

Objectives of Digital India

The motto of the Digital India Mission is 'Power to Empower'. There are three core components to the Digital India initiative. They are digital infrastructure creation, digital delivery of services, and digital literacy.

Objectives of the study:

To study the high-speed internet in all gram panchayats and digital infrastructure creation, digital delivery of services, and digital literacy.

To provide easy access to Common Service Centre (CSC) in all the locality.

Digital India is an initiative that combines a large number of ideas and thoughts into a single, comprehensive vision so that each of them is seen as part of a larger goal.

The Digital India Programme also focuses on restructuring many existing schemes that can be implemented in a synchronized manner.

Research Methodology:

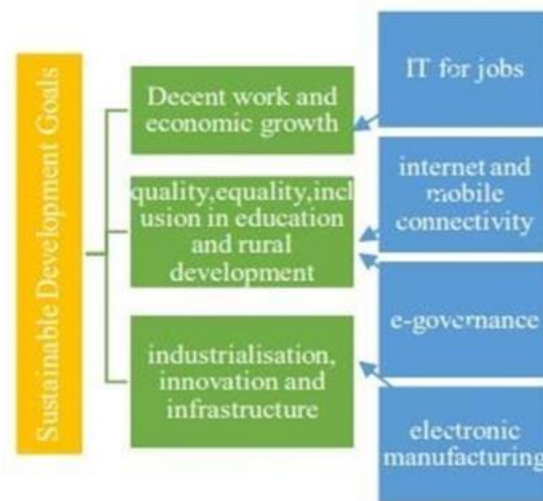
The study has analysed the secondary data sources of Journals and books related to Digital India Mission is an initiative that encompasses plans to connect the rural areas of the country with high-speed internet networks.

Advantages of Digital India Mission

Digital India Mission is an initiative that encompasses plans to connect the rural areas of the country with high-speed internet networks. Public Internet Access Programme is one among the nine pillars of digital India. On the platform of digital adoption, India ranks amongst the top 2 countries globally and the digital economy of India is likely to cross \$1 trillion by the year 2023.

Some of the advantages of Digital India are:

1. There is an increase in electronic transactions related to e-governance.
2. An optical fiber network of 2, 74,246 km has connected over 1.15 lakh Gram Panchayats under the Bharat Net programme.
3. A Common Service Center (CSC) is created under the National e-Governance Project of the Indian government which provides access for information and communication technology (ICT). Through computer and Internet access, the CSCs provide multimedia content related to e-governance, education, health, telemedicine, entertainment, and other government and private services.
4. Establishment of digital villages along with well-equipped facilities such as solar lighting, LED assembly unit, sanitary napkin production unit, and Wi-Fi choupal.
5. Internet data is used as a major tool for the delivery of the services and the urban internet penetration has reached 64%.



Paradigm for achieving Sustainable Development Goals

Challenges of Digital India

The government of India has taken an initiative through the Digital India Mission to connect the rural areas of the country with high-speed internet networks. Apart from the various initiatives taken by Digital India, there are several challenges faced by it.

Some of the challenges and drawbacks of Digital Mission are mentioned below:

1. The daily internet speed, as well as the Wi-Fi hotspots, are slow as compared to other developed nations.
2. Most of the small and medium scale industry has to struggle a lot for adapting to the new modern technology.
3. Limited capability of entry-level smartphones for smooth internet access.
4. Lack of skilled manpower in the field of digital technology.
5. To look for about one million cybersecurity experts to check and monitor the growing menace of digital crime.
6. Lack of user education.

Digital India Initiatives

The Government has taken up many initiatives under the Digital India campaign. Discussed below are few such important initiatives:

1. **DigiLockers** – This flagship initiative aims at ‘Digital Empowerment’ of the citizen by providing access to authentic digital documents to citizen’s digital document wallet
2. **E-Hospitals** – It is a Hospital Management Information System (HMIS) which is a one-stop solution in connecting patients, hospitals and doctors through a single digital platform. Till February 2021, as many as 420 e-Hospitals had been established under the Digital India campaign
3. **E-Pathshala** – Developed by NCERT, e-Pathshala showcases and disseminates all educational e-resources including textbooks, audio, video, periodicals and a variety of other print and non-print materials through the website and mobile app

4. **BHIM** – Bharat Interface for Money is an app that makes payment transactions simple, easy and quick using Unified Payments Interface (UPI)

Impact of Digital India Campaign

Since its launch in 2015, the Digital India campaign has left its impact in various fields:

- Around 12000 post office branches in the rural areas have been linked electronically.
- The Make in India initiative has improved the electronic manufacturing sector in India
- Digital India plan could boost GDP up to \$1 trillion by 2025
- Healthcare and education sector has also seen a boost
- Improvement in online infrastructure will enhance the economy of the country

Challenges & Negative Impacts

- **Digital Literacy Gap:** Despite progress, a significant portion of the population lacks digital skills, especially in rural areas.
- **Cybersecurity Concerns:** Increased online activity raises risks of cybercrime, leading to user mistrust and calls for stronger cyber laws.
- **Digital Divide Persistence:** High costs of devices and internet services remain barriers for the poorest citizens.
- **Social Isolation:** Increased screen time can negatively impact face-to-face communication and social skills.
- **E-Waste:** Higher digital adoption leads to increased electronic waste, posing environmental concerns.

Overall Transformation

Digital India has built a foundational digital infrastructure (broadband, mobile connectivity) that underpins a burgeoning digital economy and an empowered society, making India a global leader in digital innovation, though navigating these significant social changes requires continuous effort to address the inherent challenges.

Findings

- **Financial Inclusion:** UPI revolutionizes payments, while Aadhaar enables Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT), ensuring welfare reaches the needy, reducing corruption and increasing access for vulnerable groups.
- **Improved Governance:** Platforms like MyGov and UMANG simplify access to over 1,000 government services (healthcare, bills, land records) and boost citizen engagement
- **Rural Empowerment:** Common Service Centers (CSCs) bring digital services to villages, bridging the digital divide and offering access to education, banking, and healthcare.
- **Education & Skills:** Initiatives like PMG Disha train millions in digital literacy, while m-Education services extend learning to remote areas, addressing teacher shortages.
- **Healthcare Access:** E-Hospital platforms improve patient access, while digital tools help reach rural populations, enhancing quality of life.
- **Empowerment:** Digital platforms create new opportunities for women and youth in entrepreneurship, jobs, and education, fostering inclusive growth.

Conclusion:

Digital India is a programme to transform India into digital empowered society and knowledge economy. The Digital India is transformational in nature and would ensure that Government services are available to citizens electronically. It would also bring in public accountability through mandated delivery of government's services electronically, a Unique ID and e-Pramaan based on authentic and standard based interoperable and integrated government applications and data basis.

Change is brought about by digital possibilities. This transition is vital, especially when one considers rural India's struggle to sustain social services, access to education, work opportunities, and other necessities in the face of population changes. The establishment of a highly fragmented and highly specific niche society for any imaginable type of cultural growth is enabled by Digitalization, which enables the development of widely scattered, interacting youth for cultural movements.

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