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The Role of Mobile Governance in Indian Administration: Issues and Challenges

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ABSTRACT: India offers a unique chance for mobile governance, or m-governance, to transform the provision of public services thanks to the country's fast-increasing mobile phone adoption. This study investigates how m-governance might improve Indian individuals' access to and participation in government services. We look at how mobile platforms and apps can overcome conventional obstacles like physical location and restricted internet connectivity. The potential advantages of m-governance, including enhanced efficiency, higher openness, and increased citizen participation in the Indian government, will be highlighted in the abstract. The abstract will, however, also address the problems and difficulties related to adopting m-governance in India. These could include worries about data security, digital literacy, and fair access to mobile technology for a range of demographic groups. Through a critical analysis of these problems, the study hopes to offer useful information to help stakeholders and policymakers create m-governance plans to support equitable and accessible public services for all Indian residents.

KEYWORDS: Mobile Governance, E-governance, Administration, Transparency, Communication

I. INTRODUCTION

A subset of e-governance is m-governance. It guarantees that individuals can access electronic services through mobile technologies on mobile phones and other devices. These services eliminate the requirement for conventional physical networks to facilitate communication and teamwork. In the majority of India's rural areas, mobile services are both more affordable and available. Governments are pushing and utilising mobile phones to supply e-government services due to their growing adaptability, accessibility, and millions of subscribers. Governments have realised in recent years that mobile phones have the potential to empower citizens and influence how they engage with society at large as well as with one another. Additionally, mobile phones are thought to be a useful instrument for enhancing citizen-government relations, which in turn affects political decision-making and holds governments responsible for their actions.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To analyse the role of M-governance in Indian Administration
2. To know the merits and demerits of Mobile in our day-to-day lives
3. To find Opportunities and challenges of M-governance in Indian Administration

III. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This study is based on secondary data collected from journals, magazines, books, and websites.

The objective of M-Governance: The goal of m-government is to give citizens quick and simple access to public services via mobile devices. By expanding the advantages of remote government service and information delivery, mobile services are swiftly becoming the next big thing in government transformation. They will make government even more accessible and citizen-centric. One of the cornerstones to enhancing democracy by facilitating increased public service utilisation, engagement, and citizen empowerment is the delivery of timely and accurate information to citizens and the establishment of a two-way communication channel between the government and the people. Government agencies have made extensive use of mobile technologies, particularly in the areas of industry, transportation, services, retail trading, utilities, health care, agriculture, and communications. Companies are also implementing services as a result of realising how popular mobile phones are, particularly in the banking industry. Because mobile banking is so affordable and can connect with clients even in faraway locations, it is the way of the future.

Mobile Phone: Emerging Channel for Service Delivery: The "mobile phone" is utilised for more than simply texting and voice messaging these days. It is used for instantaneous communication. It is the most effective tool for closing the digital gap between the wealthy and the poor in rural areas. Mobile phones have made their way to remote rural areas in India within 20 years of their introduction, despite obstacles such as low literacy and lack of electricity and connectivity. However, it has also given young people countless options for both direct and indirect employment.

In its second stage of development, it has become a means of delivering many services, and anyone may now use their mobile phone to transfer money between bank accounts. To provide citizens and clients with business services, both public and commercial organisations have begun utilising "mobile phones." The Government of India also authorised the "Framework for delivering financial services through the mobile phone," which was created by an interministerial group. The Reserve Bank of India had permitted commercial banks to offer banking services on mobile devices. In keeping with this, the Indian government has introduced mobile Seva, which intends to give citizens access to government services via smartphones and tablets. It was created as the fundamental framework that makes public services accessible via mobile devices. Indians may now use their mobile phones to access infotainment, health, education, and agriculture services thanks to the introduction of 3G technology in the country.

M-governance in India: The government of India wants to build a special infrastructure and application development ecosystem for m-Governance in the nation by leveraging the vast reach of mobile phones and the potential of mobile applications to enable simple, 24/7 access to public services, particularly in rural areas.

The "Digital India" initiative, being carried out by the Indian government, aims to make the country a knowledge economy and a society empowered by digital means. As part of the Digital India initiative, e-Kranti plans to provide a range of e-government services across the nation. The goal of the e-Kranti programme is to revolutionise e-governance services by introducing cutting-edge technologies like cloud and mobile platforms, automating workflow, growing the portfolio of Mission Mode Projects (MMPs) in e-governance under different government departments, and emphasising service integration.

In February 2012, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology created and announced the Mobile Governance framework. Especially in rural areas, the Government of India's m-Governance framework seeks to facilitate easy, 24/7 access to public services by leveraging the vast reach of mobile phones and the promise of mobile applications. The framework seeks to establish a distinctive application development ecosystem and national infrastructure for m-Governance. These are the primary guidelines established by MEIT:

- Using the "One Web" strategy, all government departments and agencies' websites must be optimised for mobile devices.
- By the government policy on open standards for e-governance, mobile applications must use open standards to guarantee app interoperability across different operating systems and devices.
- For mobile-based services, uniform/single pre-designated numbers (long and short codes) must be utilised to ensure convenience.
- To the extent possible on the mobile platform, all government departments and agencies must create and implement mobile applications to provide all of their public services via mobile devices. They must also include the service levels that apply to these services.

To guarantee the timely adoption and execution of the framework, the government created the Mobile Service Delivery Gateway (MSDG), which serves as the fundamental infrastructure for facilitating the provision of public services via mobile devices.

Mobile Services Delivery Gateway (MSDG): Public services can be delivered to mobile devices via the MSDG using a variety of mobile-based channels, including SMS, USSD, IVRS, and mobile applications. Establishing government-wide shared infrastructure and services is the goal of the MSDG, which will facilitate the mainstreaming, deployment, and rapid development of m-Government services. Offering a common pool of resources that aggregates the demand for communication and e-government services, improves interoperability across various public services and lowers the overall cost of operating m-Governance services. It also serves as a platform for different government departments and agencies to test, quickly deploy, and effortlessly maintain m-Governance services across the nation. The infrastructure was created as a cloud-based service with an open standards foundation.

The following delivery channels are supported by MSDG for the creation and implementation of mobile applications for government services. Since mobile technologies are always developing, additional channels might be added later on if necessary.

- SMS (Short Message Service)
- IVRS (Interactive Voice Response System)
- USSD (Unstructured Supplementary Service Data)
- CBS (Cell Broadcasting Services)
- LBS (Location Based Services)
- Mobile Payment Service

One Web Approach: "One Web" refers to giving people access to the same content and services regardless of the device or browser they are using, as much as possible. This suggests that all government websites ought to be responsive to mobile users to provide them with access to the same content and services (as much as possible) that are, for example, available via desktops' internet.

IV. BENEFITS OF M-GOVERNANCE

- Cost Saving
- Proficiency
- Transformation/modernization of public sector organizations
- Added convenience and flexibility
- Better services to the citizens
- Easy interaction(Vikaspedia Domains, n.d.)



Conceptual model of m-governance

Initial steps taken:

- The Department of Electronics was established in 1970, which was the first move towards electronics governance in India.
- The National Informatics Centre (NIC), which was founded in 1977, initiated the District Information System programme with the goal of computerising every district office in the nation.
- The national satellite-based computer network, or NICNET, was established in 1987 and served as a catalyst for e-governance.
- In 1998, a National Task Force on Software Development and Information Technology was established.
- In 1999, the Ministry of Information Technology was established at the Centre.
- In Hyderabad, the National Institute for Smart Government (NISG) was founded in 2002.
- In November, a National Policy on Open Standards for e-Government was announced.

The Impact of Mobile Technology on Our Lives

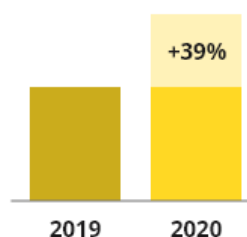
In this day and age of technology and cell phones, social media has made it easier than ever to communicate with friends and millions of other people, wherever we may be. All we require is an internet-connected smartphone.

In addition to being used for communication, mobile phones have become a necessary component of our daily lives. A wide range of apps are accessible to us that can greatly simplify our daily lives. There are more apps in app stores despite the growing expense of app creation. To make it easier for us to find them, several of these apps have been optimised for mobile app stores.

We can read books, listen to music, snap photos, watch films, play games, create and edit documents, obtain medical advice, and do a lot more with just our mobile devices. As a result, individuals are using their phones for longer and longer periods—by over 50% between 2019 and 2020.

39% increase in the number of hours people spent on their smartphones in 2020

Source: Slick Text

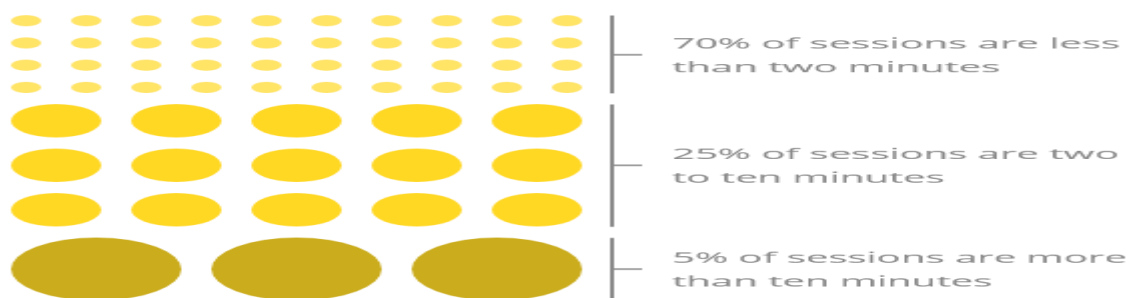


But since we develop apps, we have to consider how mobile phones affect society and our daily lives. We'll examine the advantages and disadvantages of regular mobile phone use in this post.

V. NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF MOBILE PHONES ON OUR LIVES

1. **Wastage of time:** Despite the many benefits that modern cell phones offer, there is a drawback to this technology. Surprisingly, according to a recent survey by the digital analytics company Flurry, we stare at our smartphones for about three to four hours a day on average—that's almost one day a week! Yes, that is true—one day!

On average, we pick up our phones **58 times per day**

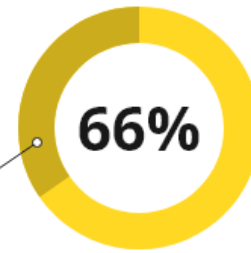


This time adds up to about **3 hours and 15 minutes.**

2. **Addiction:** The term "nomophobia," or the anxiety of not having access to a cell phone, describes phone addiction. Thus, the fear of being without our electronics is just as indicative of addiction as excessive screen time. According to studies, persons who are hooked to their phones, like those who are addicted to any other kind of addiction, frequently exhibit symptoms of anxiety, depression, and other mental health issue

66% of the population shows signs of nomophobia

Source: Trendhunter



3. **Distraction:** According to a different study, this one from Florida State University, smartphone notifications can reduce our ability to concentrate. Even though they are brief, they can be distracting enough to make it difficult to concentrate on a particular task, which lowers performance by causing you to think about unrelated things and let your mind wander. In certain scenarios, such as when driving, this can be extremely dangerous. A simple notification can result in very significant accidents.

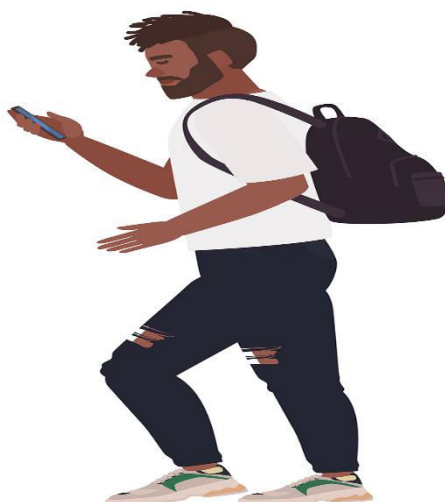
84% of US working adults use their personal phones during working hours

Source: Deloitte



These studies just scratch the surface of the effects that mobile technology is having on our lives; they are by no means comprehensive. I am aware that some apps are really useful in certain circumstances, but for every useful app, there are dozens of worthless ones that will only divert your attention, eat up your time, and reduce your productivity. Impacting social competencies

In addition to the previously listed issues, it has a significant negative influence on people's social lives. People are becoming less engaged with others in public and are more preoccupied with their phones—checking notifications, sending messages, or simply sharing the latest video—than they are with the real world. Our excessive use of cell phones has made us become "mombies," and as a result, our social skills seem to be declining steadily.

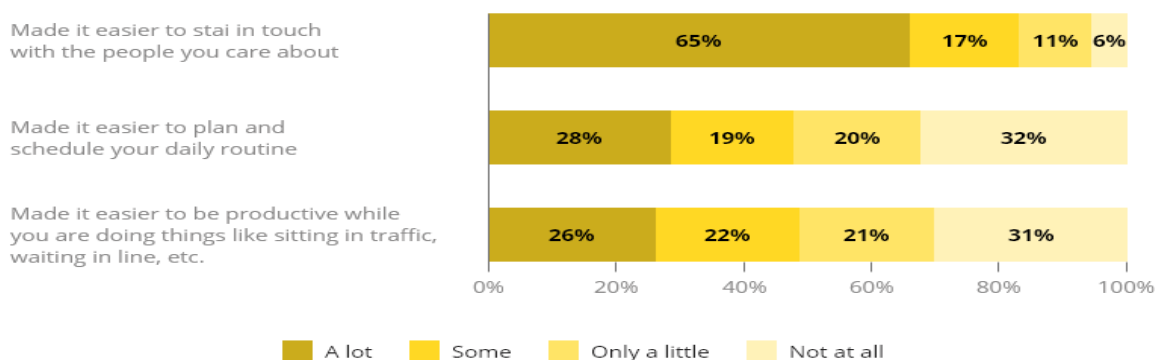


We frequently encounter "mombies," sometimes known as "smartphone zombies." If you're unfamiliar with the phrase, you've probably seen one today. They are the folks you see strolling slowly and strangely down public streets while glancing at and using your phone's display. However, there's more at risk here than just road safety; consider how frequently they collide with objects.

Since its introduction, mobile device technology has advanced significantly, particularly in the previous ten years. Mobile devices have become increasingly compact, potent, and extremely practical. They are ubiquitous and growing significant in nearly everyone's life.

Positive and negative impacts of cell phones

% of adult cell owners who say that their mobile phone has ...



Source: Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project, March 15-April 3, 2012 Tracking survey. N=2,254 adults ages 18 and older, including 903 interviews conducted on respondent's cell phone. Margin of error is +/-2.6 percentage points based on cell phone owners (n=1954)

It's time to step back from our fixation with the potential thinness, light weight, and adaptability of mobile device hardware. Though it's entertaining to speculate about the next big phone or tablet, it's not everything. What matters are the significant improvements in our lives and the significant roles that these devices are playing.

NOTE: Visit our page to find out how we can help you realise your app concept or get in contact with us if you have an app idea that could make our lives better.

VI. POSITIVE EFFECTS OF MOBILE PHONES ON OUR LIFE

1. **Communication:** Mobile technology, in the form of phones, tablets, and laptops, is improving our lives more than ever before, despite its negative aspects. It accomplishes this in a variety of ways, routinising communications being one of them. We can communicate with people we need to, for personal or professional reasons. The use of mobile technologies has improved our company practices.

We have never been able to share as much as we can now with friends and family, and a big part of the reason for that is mobile technology. The use of mobile devices and the technology they enable has allowed participation in social networking to increase to unprecedented levels. Our relationships with friends and loved ones are greatly impacted when we divulge seemingly insignificant details like where we are, what we are doing, and how that looks.

Those who would have been cut off from the outside world amid catastrophic occurrences now have a voice because of mobile technology. When a local catastrophe occurs, that voice can cry out for support, letting these individuals know that they are not alone for the first time. With mobile communication, they may use text, audio, and—most importantly—images to convey their situation and effect genuine change.

2. **Daily necessities:** Our lives have been transformed by mobile phones. Thanks to their built-in cameras, they can now not only help us remain in touch with friends and family on social media or have video conversations without costing us for data usage, but they also make booking hotels and taxis as well as taking pictures of memories easier than ever! More information than ever before is at our disposal. Searching for useful resources fast has become

second nature for whatever task we need to complete. Even now, our devices can predict our information needs and deliver it to us at the most convenient time.

3. **Health care services:** Although cell phones have greatly enhanced many aspects of our everyday lives, many people's quality of life has increased significantly. Although the use of mobile technology in the healthcare industry is still in its infancy, many people are already experiencing significant gains as a result of it.

Medical professionals can analyse home medical tests from any location and make critical adjustments to the patient's care, or they can obtain a rapid medical opinion through applications like this one. Using a phone, medical staff members can remotely test pacemakers and modify the device's programming to account for changes in a patient's condition. While the patient is at ease in their own home, doctors can view complex diagnostic imaging on their phones and identify diseases that require prompt treatment.



Healthcare providers from a distance can diagnose and prescribe treatment to rural residents in developing nations who lack access to healthcare services locally. Patients can use a phone at the point of sale to verify if a medication is authentic in locations where counterfeit drugs are a major issue. For people who are impacted, this is improving healthcare every day and saving lives.

Tablets are being used by kids with conditions like autism to improve their ability to concentrate and interact with others. Tablets are helping patients recuperating from brain injuries and strokes tremendously. More than ever, patients of all ages are connecting with their loved ones and healthcare providers via mobile devices.

People who are deaf from birth can hear their children speak for the first time because of implants that can be programmed via wireless technology. The use of text messaging on phones has significantly improved deaf people's ability to communicate. Diabetes patients can wirelessly send their glucose readings from a glucose monitor to a tiny insulin pump, which delivers precisely the necessary dosage of insulin to maintain stable blood sugar levels.

In addition to making life better, mobile phones enable blind people to attain a remarkable degree of independence. These phones include software that can safely navigate the blind through busy cities in addition to speaking to them so they can understand what is on the screen. The blind can choose complementary outfits for the day with the use of mobile technology. Smartphones now can scan changes from purchases to determine how much was provided.

Opportunities in m-governance: As previously mentioned in the report, m-governance's primary goal is to advance the government's SMARTTEAM quality. The idea of m-governance must be applied to every facet of life to be completely realised. The following are the most promising areas where m-governance can enhance current offerings and provide unmatched extras:

- **Education:** A lot of colleges provide computer-accessible virtual classrooms that make it easy for students to take classes no matter where they live. It is also possible to apply this idea to schools. Educational institutions are

gradually transitioning to a mobile and computer-friendly environment. In the field of education, M-governance guarantees learning both within and outside of the classroom. Announcements can be issued and received in real time, reducing the communication gap between educators and pupils. In addition, parents can get updates or reminders about their child's progress. The effective use of human resources is a significant benefit of m-governance in education.

- **Agriculture:** Farmers can be trained and educated about the newest scientific techniques to increase crop yield through the application of m-governance in this field. Regarding agricultural matters, farmers can receive remote assistance. For example, farmers can post information about the fertility of their soil to find out which fertiliser to use and how much, or they can upload a picture of a crop that is ill to obtain advice from an expert. Information regarding crop prices and weather conditions can also be sent to the farmers. Apps that help farmers track crop productivity can be enhanced with modules for agricultural calculations.
- **M-voting:** By doing away with the need to travel to a polling place and wait in queue, the MPVS (Mobile Phone Voting System) can reduce time, energy, and expense associated with m-governance. Additionally, voters may cast ballots from anywhere in the globe.
- **Information Provision:** The public can receive alerts and notifications on a range of topics that they choose to be informed about, such as power outages, job opportunities, traffic, the timetable for public transport, and other services.
- **Emergency Broadcasts & Disaster Management:** A warning system that can broadcast alarm notifications and messages to individuals in the event of an emergency, such as a hurricane or tsunami, could potentially save hundreds of lives. This could be the best way to employ m-governance for disaster management as well as prevention initiatives.

The Indian government has already taken steps in this direction by launching a number of mobile apps and web portals for m-governance, some of which are as follows:

- A. **MyGov** is an app that encourages citizens to actively participate in governance by providing suggestions for policy formation and programme implementation. It focuses on crowdsourcing ideas to the government.
- B. **OnlineRTI:** Using this programme, users can submit RTIs straight from their smartphones. This software allows the user to interact with RTI activists, view their profiles, and stay updated about the application. Additionally, it offers users the ability to start forums and communities.
- C. **Incredible India:** This app offers both domestic and foreign tourists information about government-affiliated tour operators, approved inbound tour operators, travel agencies, domestic tour operators, adventure tour operators, tourist tour operators, classified hotels, and approved regional level tourist guides available in respective cities/tourist centres. It also offers tips about the best places to visit based on the user's current location.

UMANG: The National e-Governance Division (NeGD) and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) developed this. 200+ services provided by the Indian government at the federal, state, and municipal levels of government are to be integrated under a single platform via the Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance.

Challenges in m-governance: The government's tactics are still in their early stages, and more work needs to be done. The dream and notion of m-governance are difficult to completely realise in a developing nation like India.

- A. **Infrastructure:** In order to fully realise the potential of mobile government, a substantial infrastructure is needed. This infrastructure comprises both MCT services and a reliable source of power. Even in remote areas, the creation and delivery of m-governance services can be accelerated by a strong and well-developed infrastructure.
- B. **Security & Privacy:** People are constantly worried about the information they give the government about themselves. To stop it from being misused, the government should work to protect citizens' private and sensitive information. For example, safety precautions for users connected to public wireless networks, which are particularly vulnerable to network spying and packet manipulation. To preserve the public's trust in m-governance, an appropriate security system needs to be put in place.
- C. **People's willingness and ignorance:** The country's residents' acceptance of m-governance is a major factor in its success. The benefits of mobile governance are typically unknown to the public, and they are hesitant to adopt new habits and ways of doing things.
- D. **Literacy:** Another barrier to the effective deployment of m-governance, particularly in rural and semi-urban regions, is the low level of IT and technical literacy.
- E. **Language:** Over a million people in India speak more than thirty different languages. Individuals from various states speak various languages. It is imperative to offer m-governance services in both local and regional languages.

- F. **Development for Mobile Platforms:** There are many different mobile platforms available, and creating a framework that works on each one is a laborious effort. Furthermore, not all websites are mobile-friendly, and mobile apps are not always as good as their web counterparts. Furthermore, switching from a conventional file system to mobile apps and web portals is a highly difficult undertaking.
- G. **Legal concerns:** Laws governing m-governance practices that outline the obligations of data holders (the government) and the rights of data subjects (citizens) must be drafted by the government. For the seamless transfer of m-governance duties, it is also necessary to establish clear policies regarding the types of data the government will collect and how it will use individuals' data.
- H. **User-friendliness for physically and visually impaired people:** M-governance should be as user-friendly as feasible for both physically and visually impaired people and the broader public. Other techniques, such as IVR and voice recognition, can be used in these situations.
- I. **Data Overload:** Because users of mobile devices are constantly connected, the world around them is under more strain. These constant connections may overload the network, delaying communication in a place like India where Internet capacity is insufficient to accommodate all traffic.
- J. **Cost:** The government will incur more costs as a result of the shift from traditional to mobile governance. It would cover the price of infrastructure development and upkeep, staff training, and not simply the planning and creation of the m-governance framework.

VII. CONCLUSION

The advantages and difficulties of mobile governance in India are covered in this study. M-governance is still in its infancy and has room to grow to benefit the nation's residents by offering better services. If both the populace and the government possess superior technological skills, the nation can experience social and economic progress. The government has increased its investment in m-governance and taken the initiative, which has the potential to bring about fundamental and unmatched social reforms that will uniquely benefit every citizen.

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