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# The Role of Digital Programs for Improving Indian Administration

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**ABSTRACT:** Digitalization is the improvement of specific processes by using digitized data and digital technology. It's different from digitization, which simply means representing a physical or an attribute as data. In simple terms, digitalization is the transformation from non-digital to digital. It involves human-driven processes and transforms them into software-driven ones. This research examines the impact of digital initiatives on the efficiency and effectiveness of Indian administration. By analysing various digital programs implemented across different levels of government, the study seeks to understand their contributions to enhancing governance, service delivery, transparency, and accountability. The paper investigates the challenges and opportunities associated with digital transformation in the Indian context, including issues of the digital divide, infrastructure, capacity building, and policy framework. It aims to provide insights into the potential of digital technologies to revolutionise public administration in India and offer recommendations for further strengthening these efforts.

**KEYWORDS:** digital India, e-governance, public administration, India, technology, governance reform

## I. INTRODUCTION

India, a nation of over 1.4 billion people, is undergoing a rapid digital transformation. The integration of technology into the fabric of society and governance has become a cornerstone of national development. At the heart of this transformation lies the government's ambitious digital initiatives, aimed at modernizing public administration and delivering efficient services to its citizens. This research delves into the intricate relationship between digital programs and the improvement of Indian administration. It seeks to comprehensively analyze the impact of these initiatives on various facets of governance, from enhancing service delivery and transparency to fostering accountability and citizen participation. By examining the successes and challenges encountered in the implementation of these digital programs, this study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of their role in shaping the future of Indian administration. The introduction of digital technologies in governance has the potential to revolutionize the way government interacts with its citizens, businesses, and other stakeholders. However, the successful realization of this potential requires a holistic approach that addresses issues such as digital literacy, infrastructure development, capacity building, and policy alignment. This research will critically evaluate these factors to identify opportunities for further optimization and improvement.

Ultimately, this study aspires to contribute to the ongoing discourse on digital governance in India by providing empirical evidence and actionable recommendations. It seeks to inform policymakers, administrators, and researchers about the transformative power of digital programs and the steps necessary to harness their full potential for the benefit of the nation. In the subsequent sections, we will delve deeper into the conceptual framework, research methodology, and a comprehensive review of existing literature on the subject.

## II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on secondary data collected from various sources, including journals, periodicals, books, and websites.

## III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To Know the India's Digital Programmes.
2. To analyse the importance of Digital Programmes for improving the Indian Administration.
3. To find the Challenges and issues of Digital Programmes

#### IV. LIST OF INDIA'S DIGITAL PROGRAMMES FOR IMPROVING INDIAN ADMINISTRATION

- **Aadhaar:** Aadhaar provides 12 12-digit biometric and demographic-based identity that is unique, lifelong, online and authenticable. Further to give statutory backing to Aadhaar 'The Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act, 2016' was notified on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2016. Over 135.5 crore residents have been enrolled.
- **Common Services Centres:** CSCs are offering government and business services in digital mode in rural areas through village-level entrepreneurs (VLEs). Over 400 digital services are being offered by these CSCs. So far, 5.21 Lakh CSCs are functional (including urban & rural areas) across the country, out of which, 4.14 Lakh CSCs are functional at the Gram Panchayat level. There are 23,035 CSCs are functional in the State of Rajasthan, out of which 18823 CSCs are functional at the Gram Panchayat level.
- **Digi Locker:** Digital Locker provides an ecosystem with a collection of repositories and gateways for issuers to upload documents in the digital repositories. Digital Locker has more than 13.7 crore users and more than 562 crore documents are made available through Digi Locker from 2,311 issuer organisations.
- **Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance (UMANG):** for providing government services to citizens through mobile. More than 1668 e-services and over 20,197 bill payment services are made available at UMANG.
- **e-Sign:** e-Sign service facilitates instant signing of forms/documents online by citizens in a legally acceptable form. The services are being leveraged by various applications using OTP-based authentication services of UIDAI. More than 31.08 crore e-signs were issued by all agencies wherein, 7.01 Crore e-Sign were issued by CDAC.
- **MyGov:** It is a citizen engagement platform that was developed to facilitate participatory governance. Presently, over 2.76+ crore users are registered with MyGov, participating in various activities hosted on the MyGov platform.
- **MeriPehchaan:** The National Single Sign-on (NSSO) platform called MeriPehchaan was launched in July 2022 to facilitate/provide citizens ease of access to government portals. Total 4419 services of various Ministries/States integrated with NSSO.
- **Digital Village:** MeitY has also initiated the 'Digital Village Pilot Project' in October 2018. 700 Gram Panchayats (GPs)/Village with at least one Gram Panchayat/Village per District per State/UT are being covered under the project. The digital services being offered are Digital Health Services, Education Services, Financial Services, Skill Development, Solar panel solar-powered street lights including Government Citizens Services (G2C), and Business Citizen (B2C) Services.
- **National Rollout of District MMP:** e-District is a Mission Mode Project (MMP) that aims at the electronic delivery of identified high-volume citizen-centric services at the district or sub-district level. Presently 4,671 e-services have been launched in 709 districts across India.
- **Open Government Data Platform:** To facilitate data sharing and promote innovation over non-personal data, the Open Government Data platform has been developed. More than 5.93 lakh datasets across 12,940+ catalogues are published. The platform has facilitated 94.8 lakh downloads.
- **eHospital/ Online Registration System (ORS):** The e-Hospital application is the Hospital Management Information System for internal workflows and processes of hospitals. Currently, 753 Hospitals have been onboarded on e-Hospital and ORS has been adopted by 557 hospitals across the country with over 68 lakh appointments booked from ORS.
- **CO-WIN:** It is an open platform for the management of registration, appointment scheduling & managing vaccination certificates for COVID-19. It has registered 110 crore persons and has facilitated the administration of 220 crore doses of vaccinations.
- **Jeevan Pramaan:** Jeevan Pramaan envisages digitizing the whole process of securing the life certificate for Pensioners. With this initiative, the pensioner is no longer required to physically present himself or herself in front



of the disbursing agency or the certification authority. Over 685.42lakh Digital Life certificates have been processed since 2014.

- **NCOG-GIS Applications:** The National Centre of Geo-informatics (NCoG) project, is a GIS platform developed for sharing, collaboration, location-based analytics and decision support systems for Departments. So far, 659 applications across various domains are operational.
- **National Knowledge Network:** A high-speed data communication network has been established to interconnect Institutions of higher learning, and research. So far, 1752 links to Institutions have been commissioned and made operational. 522 NKN links have been connected to NIC district centres across India.
- **Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyaan (PMGDISHA):** The Government has approved a new scheme titled “Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA)” to usher in digital literacy in rural India by covering 6 Crore rural households (one person per household). It has 6.63 crore registered candidates and out of this, 5.69 crore candidates have been trained and 4.22 crore have been certified.
- **Unified Payment Interface (UPI):** UPI is the leading digital payment platform. It has onboarded 376 banks and has facilitated 730 crore transactions (by volume) worth Rs 11.9 lakh crore.
- **Future Skills Prime:** Meity in collaboration with NASSCOM has initiated a programme titled Future Skills PRIME. The programme is aimed at re-skilling/ up-skilling IT professionals in 10 new/emerging technologies which include Augmented/Virtual Reality, Internet of Things, Big Data Analytics, Artificial Intelligence, Robotic Process Automation, Additive Manufacturing/ 3D Printing, Cloud Computing, Social & Mobile, Cyber Security and Blockchain.
- **Cyber Security:** The Government has taken necessary measures to tackle challenges to data privacy and data security through administering the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 which has necessary provisions for data privacy and data security. India has made it to the top 10 in the Global Cyber Security Index (GCI) 2020 launched by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) on June 29, 2021, moving up 37 places to rank as the tenth-best country in the world on key cyber safety parameters.
- **Electronics Manufacturing:**
  - **Modified Special Incentive Package (M-SIPS):** As of date, 315 applications with proposed investment of approximately Rs. 85,632 crore have been approved.
  - **Electronic Manufacturing Clusters (EMC):** Under the EMC scheme, 19 Greenfield EMCs and Common Facility Centres (CFCs) measure an area of 3,464 acres with a project cost of. 3,732 crore including a Government Grant-in-aid of Rs. 1,529 crore have been approved in 15 states across the country. Based on the closure of receipt of applications under the EMC scheme, MeitY notified the Modified Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMC 2.0) Scheme on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2020 to further strengthen the infrastructure base for the electronics industry in the country and deepen the electronics value chain (*Achievements Made under Digital India Programme*, n.d.).

## V. THE BENEFITS OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION FOR GOVERNMENTS

The ‘No Wrong Door’ policy is just one example of the benefits of digital transformation in government services. As with the private sector, digital transformation enables public sector organisations to get the best value from ever-tightening budgets and deliver a better citizen experience. Here are five key benefits:

1. **Increased efficiency and productivity:** Having a single source of truth, and clear oversight of documents and data can save valuable time when it comes to finding and updating information. Accessible data means users have the information they need when they need it the most. Document management automation can also help cut out repetitive tasks and streamline workflows, removing the need for things like manual data entry.
2. **Improved understanding of stakeholders:** In a world of ‘Big Data’, it’s much easier to build a picture of both internal and external stakeholders and use this information to continuously improve. For example, with internal digital workflows, it’s much easier to identify bottlenecks and take action to remove them. Externally, website data and analytics can reveal valuable insights into how citizens use the site and where improvements can be made or where additional content is needed.

3. **Easier collaboration across the organisation:** With documents and data accessible to everyone (with the correct authorization), every department has the latest version and the most accurate data. This reduces the likelihood of out-of-date information finding its way into a report, or the wrong details being held and duplicated across departments.
4. **Better decision-making through data-driven insights:** Real-time access to documents and data means you always have the latest version. Out in the field, caseworkers can use mobile devices to check and update information, ensuring data is not simply stored and forgotten about – it's actively used to inform better decision-making at every level.
5. **More dynamic and responsive public services:** Simply bringing in new technology doesn't constitute digital transformation. For transformation to be successful, it requires a deeper, cultural change. With people onboard, digital technologies can help organisations of every type become more agile, making them more able to adapt to changing priorities and the demands of citizens. (5 *Benefits of Digital Transformation in Government Services*, n.d.).
6. **Saves Time and Boosts Productivity:** Now, these are benefits you would expect to see with any digitalized system. Regular administrative tasks take teachers' and administrators' time away from their more important activities. School management software allows staff and teachers to focus on their primary responsibilities without their other responsibilities falling by the wayside. Schools can integrate their software with third-party features, offering even more benefits and functionalities (5 *Benefits of Digital Transformation in Government Services*, n.d.).

## VI. E-GOVERNANCE SIGNIFICANCE IN THE DIGITAL AGE

### Origin of e-Governance

- India was a pioneer in e-governance in the 1970s, with a focus on internal government.
- Defense, economic surveillance, planning, and military force deployment are all examples of applications.
- Elections, censuses, and tax administration, among other data-intensive services, can benefit from ICT.
- The Department of Electronics, established in 1970 and focused on 'information' and communication, was one of India's first significant steps toward self-government.
- The National Informatics Centre (NIC) was created in 1977. As part of an information system endeavour, all district offices nationwide were planned to be automated.
- The creation of NICNET, the first national computer network, in 1987 catalyzed e-governance (*Significance of E-Governance - Meaning, Importance & Evolution!*, n.d.).

### E-Governance Significance in the Digital Age

- The government has encouraged digitization through projects like 'Digital India,' 'Make in India,' and 'Skill India' to promote economic inclusion and social transformation.
- As a result, India is getting ready for a new era of increased digitalization.
- E-governance is essential for disseminating the many benefits of economic growth of digitalization to all segments of society.
- Government activities could be turbocharged through technology and citizen-centricity to achieve a safer, more efficient, and sustainable society.
- Given India's complexity, a holistic strategy is essential for good governance. In the age of digitization, letting go of old tactics and embracing new technologies in governance will result in a faster, smarter, and more proactive government serving its citizens.
- Governments must use modern governance methods to address modern risks such as cyber fraud and fake news as the world moves toward a new era of digitization.
- **Ease of Doing Business:** Doing business as simply as possible is crucial for the country's economic success.
- E-governance can assist with rapid project approval and project and rule tracking.
- **Ease of services:** E-governance involves digitization of property records, single-window grievance administration, and vital service maintenance, as well as making tax payments and government dues easier and delivering services via the Internet.
- It resulted in a more productive work atmosphere and better services for Indian citizens.
- **Real-Time Governance:** The government may immediately respond to public concerns and monitor infrastructure projects, incidents, and meteorological and climatic phenomena across the state using digital services.

- Cost-cutting: The purchase of stationery accounts for the majority of government spending.
- Paper-based communication demands a significant amount of stationary, printers, computers, and other equipment, all of which are expensive to maintain.
- The government saves money by using the Internet and telephones to lower the cost of communication.
- Governance is more transparent when information and communication technology (ICT) is used.
- The vast bulk of government data is available on the Internet. Citizens have unrestricted access to information at all times.
- E-governance has decreased corruption by keeping track of different government processes online.
- **Accountability:** As the government's decision-making process becomes more transparent, it becomes more accountable. The phrase "accountability" concerns the government's obligation to its citizens (*Significance of E-Governance - Meaning, Importance & Evolution!*, n.d.).

## VII. CHALLENGES

1. **Digital illiteracy:**
  - Where there is still 25 % illiteracy the target of the high level of digital illiteracy is one of the biggest challenges. According to the ASSOCHAM-Deloitte report on Digital India, November 2016, around 950 million Indians are still not on the internet.
  - India has 1600 languages and dialects. Non-availability of digital services in local Languages is a great barrier in digital literacy.
2. **Financial:** Though there are resources in India there is a huge capital cost that is to be invested and the fruits of the investment will be received after a few years.
3. **Politico-administrative:**
  - Integration of various government departments, needs to be done which has technical as well as corporate issues.
  - Also the middleman policy will be eliminated, hence there will be imminent resistance from the working staff.
4. **Security:** There is a cyber threat all over the globe and digital India will not be an exception. Hence we need a strong anti cyber crime team of about 1 million trained cyber security professionals by 2025.
5. **Infrastructural:** India's digital infrastructure is comprehensively inadequate to tackle the growing increase in digital transactions. The challenge faced by the programme is slow and delayed infrastructure development.
6. **Electronics Manufacturing:** India stands to import three-quarters of the \$400bn worth of electronics products it will consume in the next five years. Hardware exports as of now are still under \$10bn. This calls for a very big ramp-up in local manufacturing.
7. **Connectivity to remote areas:** It is a mammoth task to have connectivity with every village, town and city. The problem of connectivity is a complex issue because every state has different laws about its execution.

## VIII. SUGGESTIONS

1. Digital literacy should provide knowledge to secure their online data.
2. Massive awareness is to be created particularly in rural areas.
3. The digital divide needs to be addressed. The National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) project can help bridge this gap.
4. This mission needs content and service partnerships with telecom companies and other firms to develop infrastructure.
5. The success of the digital India project depends upon maximum connectivity with minimum cyber security risks. For this, there should be a strong anti-cybercrime team.
6. To improve skills in cyber security, cyber security courses should be introduced with academics.
7. There is a need for the effective participation of various departments and demanding commitment and efforts. Various policies in different areas should support this goal.
8. In rural and remote areas, private sector players should be incentivised to provide last-mile connectivity.

### **IX. CONCLUDING**

Digital programs are not merely tools for modernization but catalysts for transforming the way governance is perceived and practised in India. They have the potential to bridge the gap between the government and the governed, fostering trust, transparency, and accountability. By building upon the successes of initiatives like Digital India and addressing the challenges head-on, India can create a digital ecosystem that empowers citizens, drives economic growth, and strengthens its position as a global leader.

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