RESEARCH ARTICLE

REVOLUTION IN GOVERNANCE THROUGH "DIGITAL INDIA": SUCCESS ACHIEVED, AND CHALLENGES AHEAD.

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Manuscript Info	*Abstract*
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Digital India is one of the initiatives to digitally empower Indian society. Digital India is presumed to bring more accountability and transparency in the governance. Digital India is a transformed version of government's already running E-governance programme. An attempt has been made in this paper to analyze digital India programme. This paper also endeavored to throw light on success achieved till 2014-15, challenges ahead for realizing the vision of Digital India. In the 21 century information is power in itself. Information and Technology has revolutionized and triggered new avenues of growth. Governments in India have made endless efforts to benefit its citizen. There are several ongoing social and economic development projects, programmes and schemes in India for the empowerment of its citizens. As the global scenario is changing India has taken many initiatives to renew older ways of procedures and governance. Government tries to be more responsive, participatory, efficient and more transparent in its activities and in delivery of its services. No doubt, digital India is a huge dream and no dream is so big to be achieved. But there are some challenges which need to overcome to make Digital India a reality.

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Introduction:-

In the present era of globalization, world is shrinking day by day by the use of Information and communication technology. Necessities and priorities are changing. Across the world governance is becoming more transparent, accountable and responsive using latest technology. The fast delivery of services is recognized and appreciated and government services are not an exception. Moreover development of any country is judged by its technology and its efficiency in providing services to its citizens. India has taken many initiatives to benefit and to be more accountable and responsive to the needs of its citizens. It's been 16 years when E- Governance plan was approved by Government of India. Government strived to provide services to the doorsteps of its citizens. Digital India is a programme which has further initiated and strengthens the programmes already running under e-Governance plan. This project made a steady progress through Mission Mode Projects and core ICT Infrastructure.

Objective:-

The objective of the subject matter is to analyze the Digital India initiative and to through light on its vision, success achieved till 2013-14 and challenges ahead for realizing the vision of Digital India.

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Methodology:-

To analyze the programme of "Digital India" and other national initiatives for E-governance in India, secondary data have been used. As the subject matter focuses on the analysis of digital India programme; the information have been collected from National Informatics Center, Department of Information and Technology websites for the analysis of various E-governance programmes under government of India. Besides this, the analysis of newspaper reports and authentic online data also form the part of data.

Digital India: Aims and Vision:-

The Digital India programme aims to transform India into new empowered nation. Under the umbrella of Digital India initiative many programmes have been started to make India a digital empowered society and knowledge economy.

Digital India aims to minimize the usage of paper and enables documents to be available in electronic form.

In simple words, digital India Aims:-

1. To provide digital infrastructure for every citizen;
2. Secondly, it aims to provide government services on demand;
3. Thirdly, Digital empowerment of citizens.

Most of the programmes already running under the E- governance project bestowed new lessons, besides providing roadmap for the vision of Digitalization of new India. National Informatics Center has been playing major role in development of e-Governance applications in various socio-economic sectors. Digital India has increased the responsibilities of NIC manifold.

E-Kranti is one of the main pillars of Digital India initiative. National citizen database, Visa and Immigration, posts, are some of the programs already completed under E-Kranti project. To fulfill the need of e-Governance, mobile Governance and Good Governance in the nation, the approach and key components have been changed in 2015 with the vision of altering e-governance for transforming governance, as the programme is aimed to provide government services available electronically and help people to gain benefits from technology.

Digital India has initiated and realigned already running programmes under E-governance plan. It has undertaken many new digital programmes such as digital lockers, MyGov mobile app, eSigh National Scholarship Portal and e-hospital application (for online registration, payment of fee, appointments, online diagnostic reports), Aadar enabled biometric attendance system, Jeevan Pramaan, E-greetings, e-Sampark, eSameeksha, eGreetings, national portal for lost and found children, tourist visa on arrival, secure email within Government Mobile Fertilizer Monitoring System (FMS), ePanchyats, Cooperative Core Banking Solution (CCBS) etc are some of the key initiatives undertaken by NIC during 2014-15.

Besides this Bharat Net is another programme to provide high speed digital highway for broadband connectivity project using optical fiber. Most of the population in India resides in villages. There are 2.5 lakh Gram Panchyats in the nation. In this way connectivity of 2.5 lakh Gram Panchyats would be the largest rural broadband connectivity in the world. Digital India program aims to ensure high speed Internet at affordable rates.

Preconditions and Requirements for Digital India.

A. **Digital Infrastructure**
   - High Speed Internet
   - Authentic Identity
   - Mobile phone and Bank accounts
   - Common Service Centre
   - Safe and secure Cyber-space
B. **Digital Empowerment of Citizens**
C. **Universal Accessibility**
D. **Strengthening digital Panchyats**

Findings of the study:-

Success Achieved: Basic infrastructure is fundamental necessity for the vision of digital India program. Success has been achieved in terms of establishing fundamental infrastructure for the realisation of the vision of digital India, which are discussed as follows:

- **Authentic Identities**: As a precondition of Digital India unique, lifelong, online and authenticable identities of people are required to achieve the aim of digital India. Adhar cards have been issued by Government of India as a base for authentic identities. According to Unique Identification Authority of India, 98, 74,80,453 Adhar cards have been issued by government of India; which includes 76.01%, people who are above 18 years followed by 21.94% people who are between 5 to 18 years and 2.05% children who are less than 5 years.

- **Bank Accounts:** To enable participation in digital and financial space at individual level mobile phone and bank accounts of citizens is another precondition. For financial inclusion Jan Dhan Yojana has been launched to provide direct benefit to people. Guinness World Records recognised the achievements under PMJDY (Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana). Till, 10th February 2016 over 20 crore (200 million) bank accounts were opened and 232.78 billion were deposited under the scheme.

- **National Knowledge Network:** According to National Informatics Centre (NIC) report 2014-15, under a national mission mode programme, National Knowledge Network 1360 link of institutions have been commissioned and made functional.

- **Web hosting and Cloud Computing:** According to NIC 2014-15, More than 4000 national websites/portals of government are running under this service. Beside this, approx. 3000 state websites currently are in process of migration to National Cloud.

- **Common Service Centres:** As Common Service Centres (CSCs) are the strategic basis of digital India programme. They are the access points for delivery of various electronic services to remote areas in India. CSCs enable financial inclusion as well as community participation of rural citizen in India. India is powerhouse of softwares, technology and creative ideas but the convenience and accessibility of electronic government services is not up to the mark in far flung areas.

- **Safe and Secure Cyber Space:** According to NIC, beside 446 new antivirus signatures, 84000 firewall rules have been applied for security of websites. Secure Alerting and Reporting System (SARS) has been enhanced.

Challenges:-

1. **Lack of Digital literacy in India:** According to census of India (2011) India has undeniably achieved literacy rate of 76.64 percent when a decade before it was just 65.38%. But when it comes to digital literacy people are not enough capable of using digital instruments. Language is one of the main hurdles in the proper utilisation of digital services.

2. **Lack of Awareness:** People in India are not aware of most of the schemes, programmes etc launched under Digital India programme. Most of the people who need the services most, are not aware about them.

3. **Safe and Secure Cyber Space:** Safe and Secure Cyber Space is one of the problems; which needs a serious concern at central level. Though the shifts to e-Governance practices through digital India programme. Government to citizen interactions have been increased. Besides this threats and malware Illegal, unsecure, fabricated stuff is also being uploaded which is causing indirect negative impacts on society.

4. **Untrained or Semi trained Human Resource:** Staff at grassroots and far flung areas are not well trained or they are semi trained. India is still fighting with other issues like health, education, poverty, income, work, employment, vulnerability. According to UNDP (2015) India ranked 130 in Human Development Index (HDI) and is still behind 129 countries in the world.

5. **Common Service Centres:** Common Service Centres are not adequately fulfilling the needs of people especially in remote areas. There has low connectivity.

Solutions:-

There are few measures which can be helpful in removing hurdles in the way of digital India programme, which are as Follows:-

1. Panchyat members should be trained so that they can benefit the other villagers. They are directly connected to people at grass root levels; they can generate awareness to the people. Awareness regarding information, content and service needs related to this programme should be advertised on local channels and newspapers.

2. Government should take initiatives for digital literacy in India.

3. Vocational courses should be started in small towns and villages in India.

4. Safe and secure cyber space environment must be created for people.

Conclusion:-

Having a well developed web interface could be of great benefit in changing the overall governance in India. Digital India is a huge dream and can be achieved through collective participation at national, state and at grassroots levels. This programme initiated many programmes. Fundamental infrastructure for Digital India has been almost been accomplished, now the challenges of Digital literacy, lack of awareness, Common Service Centers still remained challenges which require collaborative efforts of central and state governments besides administrative dedication.

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