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Development through Digitalization: An Analysis of Government Programs

Neha Meena, Research Scholar, Department of Political Science
Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, INDIA

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Author

Neha Meena, Research Scholar

E-mail : nehameena18@gmail.com

shodhsamagam1@gmail.com

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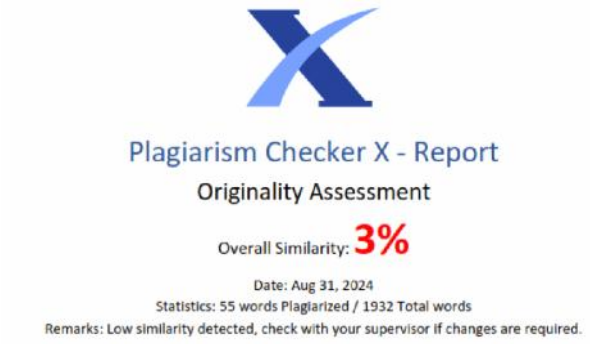


ABSTRACT

Digitalization of society is necessary in the current era of information and communication technologies to facilitate better and faster development. Developing nation like India, it can be achievable through digitalization. Thus, in July 2015, the Indian Government announced the Digital India program, with the primary objective of fostering the development of a society that is empowered by technology. This research paper tries to study the development through digitalization. For this, a brief analysis of the Government programs related to digitalizationhas been done. This research illustrate show digitalization affects several aspects of development and also covered the changes after digital India program especially after Covid 19. Secondary research method was used in this study and data were taken from secondary sources like journal, Government reports, Government websites etc. This paper concludes that the implementation of the Digital India program has led to an increase in the level of digitalization and especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. Digitalization has potential to develop a nation.

KEY WORDS

Development, Digitalization, Digital India, Information and communication technology (ICT), Government Program, Covid 19.

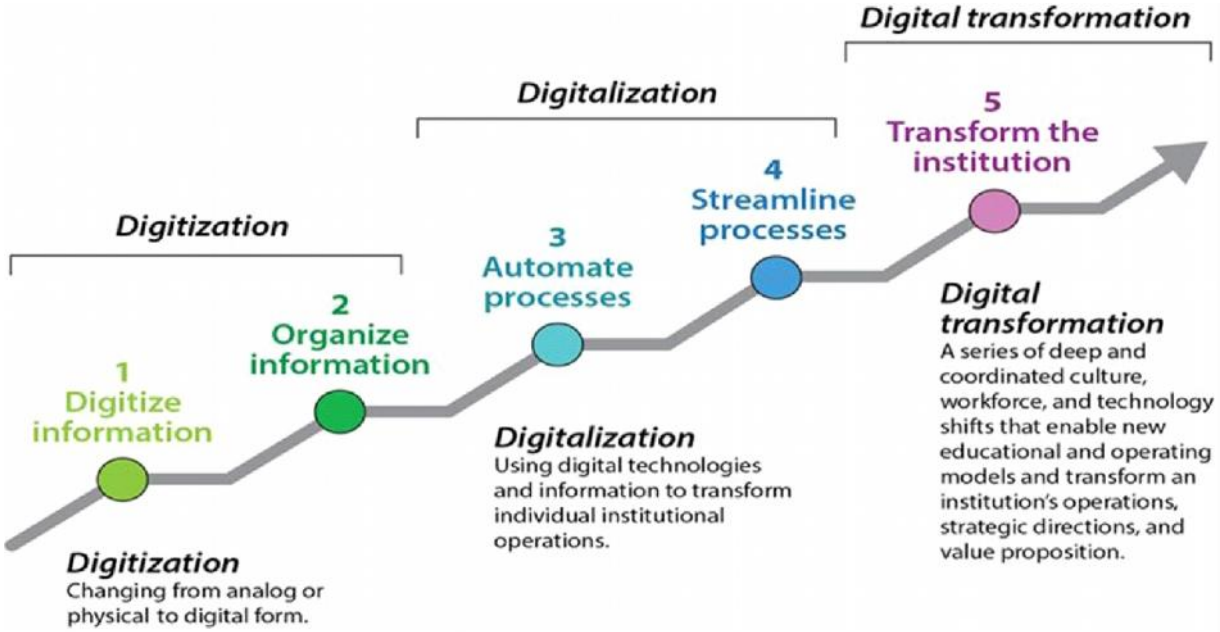
INTRODUCTION

Information and communication technology (ICT) is what defines the modern era. It is widely acknowledged that information technology plays a significant role in fostering social change and advancing the country. Among the developing countries,India has

reached a significant position in the development of ICT. Innovation in ICT is spreading digitalization in various components of development such as physical, economic, environmental, social, demographic etc.

Digitalization; the general term for the digital transformation of society and economy. It describes the transition from analogue technologies to the age of knowledge and creativity characterized by digital technologies and digital innovation. Defined briefly, it is the digital revolution in society. Our increasing dependence on digital technologies and their excessive use demonstrate that digitalization is the need of our present and progressive future and it has great potential to revolutionize socio-economic development.

Process of Digitalization in Society



*[**Source:** Digitalization in organizations | ILO/Cinterfor (oitcinterfor. org)]*

Area of Digitalization

*(**Source:** https://evergreen. team/articles/business-digitalization. html)*

Objective of the Study

1. To study the Government programs related to digitalization.
2. To study the impacts of digitalization on various components of development.
3. To study the changes after digital India program especially after Covid 19.

Research Methodology

This paper is focus on analysing and interpreting the secondary data to explain the development through digitalization. The main study area is Government schemes which is related to digitalization. Secondary data were taken from different journals, Government website and reports for the research paper.

Programs Related to Digitalization

After the Government of India's Digital India program and especially with Covid 19, digitalization of the country is expanding rapidly. In view of the constantly changing technologies and innovations, many schemes and portals are being operated by the Central and State Governments in the direction of digitalization. Some of the schemes are:

- **Digital India Programme:** The Government of India's flagship initiative, Digital India, was unveiled in 2015 with the objectiveof providing universal access to digital resources and transforming India into a society empowered by technology.

  There are nine pillars in the Digital India Program:

*(**Source:** https://digitalindia. gov. in/content/programme-pillars)*

- **Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyaan:** Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyaan was approved by the Union Cabinet in February 2017 to introduce digital literacy in rural India. The primary goal of the PMGDISHA scheme is to train 6 crore rural households (one person per household) in digital literacy so that they can use computers and other digital access devices (such as smartphones, tablets, and other gadgets) to send and receive emails, browse the Internet, access Government services, search information, conduct electronic transactions, and so on[1]. This will enable them to use IT to actively contribute to the process of nation-building. Pradhan Mantri Grameen Digital Saksharta Abhiyan is a dynamic and integrated platform of digital literacy awareness, education and capacity programs that will help rural communities to fully participate in the global digital economy.
- **DIKSHA Platform:** DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing)[2] is a platform for providing digital learning material for school education. It was launched in 2017 by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) under the Ministry of Education, Government of India[2].

- **SWAYAM:** SWAYAM is a Government platform to provide free and quality online education to students. The aim of this initiative is to make the best learning resources accessible to everyone, even the most disadvantaged, in order to achieve the three fundamental goals of education policy: access, equity, and quality[3]. SWAYAM seeks to bridge the digital divide for students who have remained untouched by the digital revolution and have not been able to join the mainstream economy[4].
- **BharatNet Project:** In order to provide e-Governance, e-Health, e-Education, e-Banking, Internet, and other services to rural India, this project was started in 2015. Its primary goal is to connect all 2,50,000 Gram Panchayats in the nation and offer 100 Mbps connectivity to all Gram Panchayats[5].
- **ePathshala:** ePathshala is a portal which is developed by CIET and NCERT. It provides useful educational material to teachers, parents, publishers, researchers and educators through a digital platform. The material available on this portal is inmultiple language such as English, Hindi, Urduetc.
- **BHIM app:** Launched on December 30, 2016, BHIM (Bharat Interface for Money) is an Indian mobile payments application developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) that is based on Unified Payments Interface (UPI). Its main objective is to provide people the facility of direct e-payment through banks and to promote cashless transactions.
- **National Digital Health Mission (NDHM):** The aim of this mission is to create an integrated health system that will digitally connect physicians and patients by providing them access to real-time health records. It will promote accelerated and organised healthcare delivery across the nation, which can make a national digital health ecosystem that supports universal health coverage in an effective, open, comprehensive, reasonable, opportune and secure way[6].
- **Project Smile (SMILE):** Project SMILE, full form of which isSocial Media Interface for Learning Engagement[7] is a digital tool to providing online courses and classes through various social media platforms in all Government schools ofRajasthan. More than 20,000 WhatsApp groups are being created to send study material to students and teachers. Daily at 9 am the study material uploaded on the groups and parents/students can access it.
- **RajNet:** Rajnet is a platform that was introduced to offer multimode (terrestrial and VSAT) network connectivity across the entire state of Rajasthan. The objective of the Rajnet project is to disseminate citizen services to remote areas through the internet. It is intended to establish a multi-mode communication network up to the Gram Panchayat level in order to accomplish this objective. The following are some advantages of Rajnet: 1. To ensure that the state has sufficient internet connectivity so that the general population may take advantage of services like MNREGA, E-Mitra, and so forth, 2. Better availability of network and monitoring of uptime of network services and SLAS[8]. This is done through a centrally integrated NOC.
- **E-Sakhi:** About 1. 5 lakh volunteer women will be provided free digital training through this scheme. The primary objective of this scheme is to make at least 1 person from every rural family digitally literate.
- **E-Mitra:** E-Mitra – Electronic Service Delivery Platform for Citizens. Various citizen centric services of Government Departments are being made available in an integrated manner through service and information delivery points called 'e-Mitra' Centres/Kiosks. This project has been implemented in 32 districts of Rajasthan under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model. At present 472 e-Mitra kiosks are operational across the state, out of which 69 are rural kiosks.
- **CARISMA:** ComputerizationAutomation Refinement of Integrated System of Management and Accounting (CARISMA) is a project which aims to improve the quality of life in rural India by providing need-based agricultural solutions, digital connectivity for communication, health care, governance and others in a sustainable manner to promote ICT solutions[9].

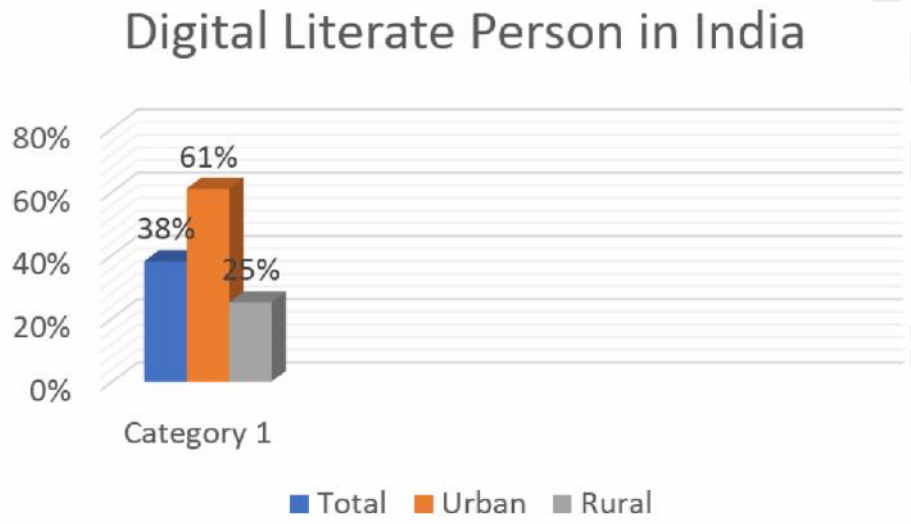
- **Single Sign On:** Rajasthan SSO (Single Sign-On) is an online portal developed by the Rajasthan State Government. It has been created to facilitate the people of the state to take advantage various online services under a single portal. To access all of the state Government's services, users can create an SSO Account ID, which acts as a unique digital identity.

Impacts of Digitalization on Various Components of Development in the Current Scenario

- **Education:** Digital literacy is the understanding and navigation of multiple digital platforms and analysing their potential as mediums of communication. With digital tools, students can get quality education anytime and anywhere, that is why digital education can bring positive changes in development.

A total of 53. 67 lakh beneficiaries were certified under two schemes named "National Digital Literacy Mission" (NDLM) and "Digital Saksharta Abhiyan" (DISHA)[10]. Through the "Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan" (PMGDISHA), around 6. 20 crore applicants have been enrolled and 5. 29 crore have received training; out of them, approximately 3. 93 crore candidates have received certification under the above schemes.

Following chart shown digital literate person in India:

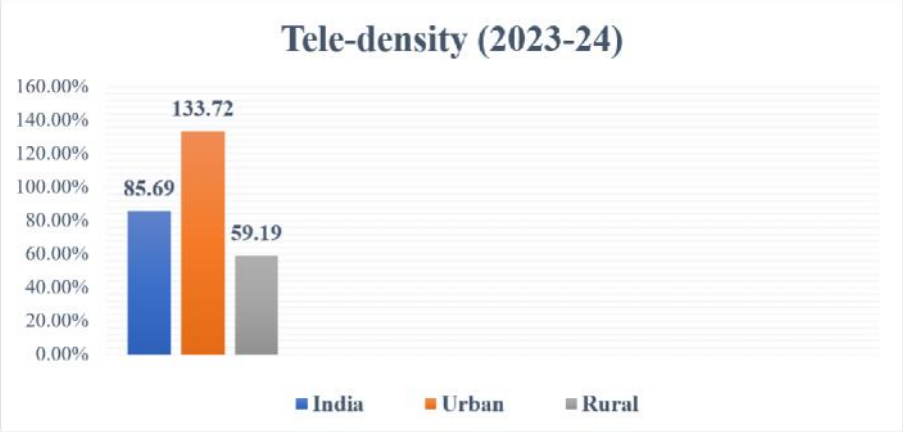


*(**Source:** http://www. ideaforindia. in)*

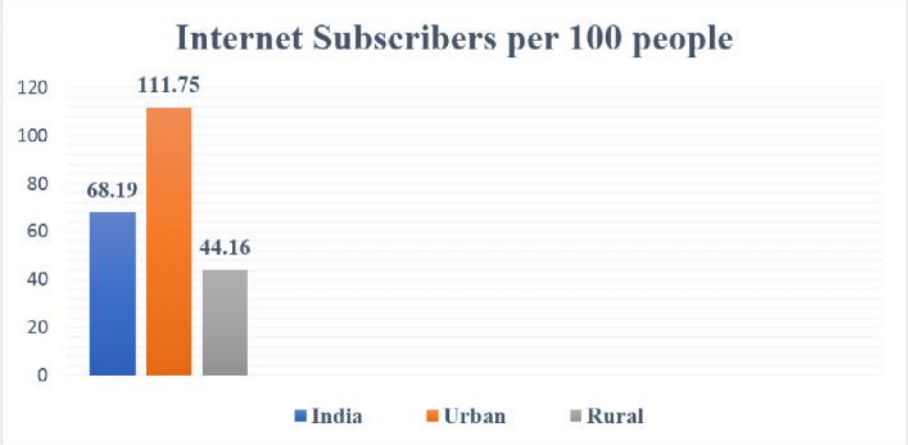
- **Agriculture:** In the agriculture sector, digital technology not only provides access to new agricultural methods, techniques, weather related information, agricultural technologies suitable for water scarcity and drought affected areas but also post-harvest techniques, processing methods, including the latest market prices. Information can be obtained sitting at home with just one click. For this one just needs to use smartphone and internet.

Changes are taking place in the agriculture sector through Crop Insurance App, Kheti-Badi App, e-NAM, Krishi Mitra, Digital Mandi, e-PashudhanHaat, Dairy Knowledge Portal etc.

- **Economic:** There should be positive changes in the economic sector like digital payments (BHIM, UPI, PhonePe, GPay, Paytm etc.), online banking, online marketing (Amazon, Flipkart etc.), beneficiaries of Government schemes getting benefits directly in their bank accounts etc. They must have their own smartphone and internet to obtain this benefit. According TRAI report 2023-24, tele density and internet subscribers are increasing continuously. This is shown by the following data:



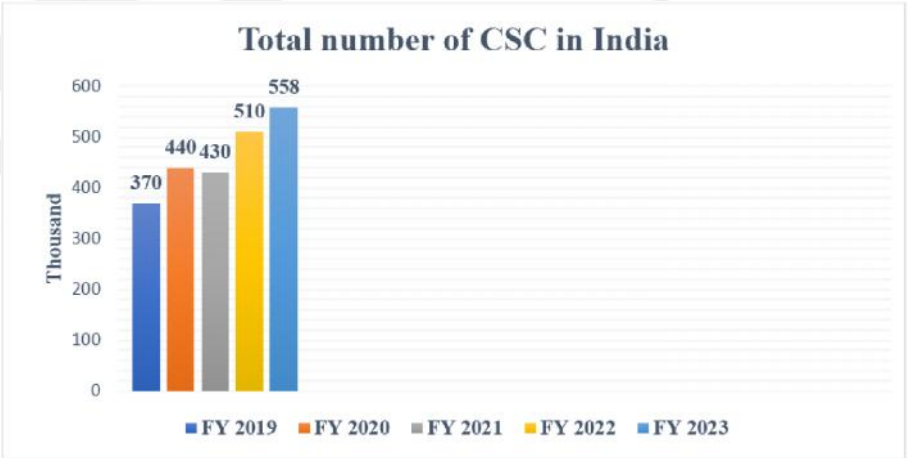
*[**Source:** Report_14082024_0. pdf (trai. gov. in)]*



*[**Source:** Report_14082024_0. pdf (trai. gov. in)]*

- **Administration:** In the direction of e-governance, the Union Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MEITY) had started the National e-Governance Plan. Digitalization has promoted public participation in governance through Common Service Centre, Digi Locker, e-Mitra etc.

Common Service Centreis an integrated platform for providing services to citizens. The total number of CSCs operating in the country was 2. 13 lakh in the year 2016-17, 2. 64 lakh in 2017-18, 3. 45 lakh in 2018-19, 3. 65 lakh in 2019-20, 4. 40 lakh in 2020-21 and 5. 58 lakh in 2023-24. This is shown by the following graph:



*(**Source:** India: number of Common Services Centre 2023 | Statista)*

CONCLUSION

The level of digitalization in India is increasing after the Digital India program, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Both the central Government and the state Government have launched several schemes to promote digitalization. The Government's commitment towards Digital India is highlighted by the fact that the amount spent on the Digital India program is being increased every year which is shown by the following table:

Financial Year	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Amount	3212. 52 crores	3958 crores	6388 crores	10676.18 crores

*[**Source:** Budget 2020: With 23% boost, Digital India Program gets Rs 3,958 crore, ET Government (indiatimes.com), Budget allocation for Digital India Program increases by 67% for 2022-23 - The Hindu BusinessLine]*

Although Digital India program is a significant reform for digitalization but there are some challenges in front of development like poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, poor infrastructure, low female labour participation, corruption, lack of transparency etc. But by optimizing the use of digital technology and increasing its efficiency, digitalization can improve standard of livingfor all segments of the population and contribute to the development of the nation through Government programs aimed at enhancing digitalization.

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