

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMPUTER APPLICATION & MANAGEMENT

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A STUDY ON THE PERCEPTION AND AWARENESS OF THE PEOPLE ABOUT THE DIGITAL INDIA INITIATIVE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

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ABSTRACT

This research is focused on "Digital India: An Illusion or Reality", where the motive was to analyze the perception of the general public towards the initiative of the government of India. The underlying objectives were to find level of awareness and its implications on the mindset of individuals and to find a relationship, between the age of the respondents and their level of awareness. The source of information collected was primary data via questionnaire which was administered to the respondents belonging to different age groups. Stratified random sampling was used to gather 100 respondents pan India. It was found that age and awareness held a negative relationship, i.e. the older respondents seemed to be little less aware about the Digital India initiative whereas the younger generation had a very proactive outlook towards the same. As for the correlation between awareness and mindset it was further derived that the more the people were aware the better was their mindset, i.e. the more positive. Being the first research paper of its kind it succeeded in breaking the myth about the current generation being ignorant of the state of the economy, and the steps taken to improve it. The youth is not just aware but has very gainful insights into this whole initiative. The faith in the current government is however not blind, and we had some very reasonable criticism coming our way too. The aim of making the whole of rural India digitally able in a short span of 5 years is very unrealistic. The major benefit of this research study was spreading greater awareness and generating a sense of inclusion for a common man. The inputs received if taken up by the government can assure a better success of the programme.

KEYWORDS

digital India, youth, awareness, mindset.

INTRODUCTION

"tatus now is not whether you are awake or asleep, it is whether you are online or offline."

Narendra Modi

 **PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA**

The Modi government finally set the wheels in motion of the Indian economy after a long period of chaos. They started off with various initiatives like Make in India followed by Skill India and now we have the Digital India. The digital India programme focuses on harnessing digital technologies and empowering every citizen with access to digital services, knowledge and information. It is all about reducing the paper work and to make technology the means to bring about a national change. One of the major future implications of this initiative will be the connection between the rural and the urban India. This paper tends to elaborate on the goals set by the government of India within the digital India programme and the loop holes around these goals. This paper is an attempt to understand the programmes started by the government and to interpret it in a way so that the lay man can make sense out of the pros and cons of the initiatives.

The topic is important from research point of view because as citizens it is important for us to know that the initiatives taken by the government will have what level of significance in our day to day lives. It is essential for the general public to know all the facts and figures, and also analyze the benefits or drawbacks that it holds. This paper will help in getting a basic idea what is digital India all about.

OBJECTIVES

1. To determine the level of awareness and its implications on the mindset of individuals
2. To assess whether the younger generation has a positive mindset or not, towards the digital India initiative.

LIMITATIONS

1. Since the Digital India has only just begun, it will be difficult to understand its full-fledged impact on the country.
2. Besides, general populations' ignorance can render this research ineffective

LITERATURE REVIEW

The article "The Recipe for a True Digital India" reviews how the vision of a digital India is easier said than done. As of now more than a billion people are devoid of the internet technology and to provide it to each of them along with technical know-how of how to put it to the best use possible is a little far-fetched given the current standards of infrastructure and ease of doing business in the economy. It sheds light of various shortcomings like: Despite the growth witnessed in the mobile sector, due to poor network infrastructure there is scarcely any difference in 2g and 3g speeds; the national optical fiber network which is of key importance to the digital India scheme is battering; the growth of e commerce is being hampered by the inconsistent regulations. The learning from this article is that there

are various roadblocks to the scheme of digital India. Though they are not easy to overcome they are neither impossible. The work has to start from the ground level, in every direction not just in infrastructural aspect, mending past faults and thus moving towards a better future.

The article dated 6th July '15, on Livemint, titled Digital India: Challenges and opportunities, sheds light on the importance of bringing the panchayats under the internet sphere. The focus of the digital India programme should be on the rural India. It's not just about constructing the right infrastructure, but more importantly about how well the infrastructure works and when. Setting up optical fibers is the easiest part the major challenge is ensuring that each panchayat point of broadband is fired up, functional, used and distributed. Most of the schemes under the digital India programme are not new, just the old ones aligned under one major programme. What is to be learnt for this article is the epicenter of the whole digital India initiative has to be the villages and the panchayats, because even now that where the majority of the India resides, therefore the aim of the government should be to provide digital literacy to a large number of villagers, making them broadband-connected, and set a target number of panchayats to be brought under this scheme completely

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

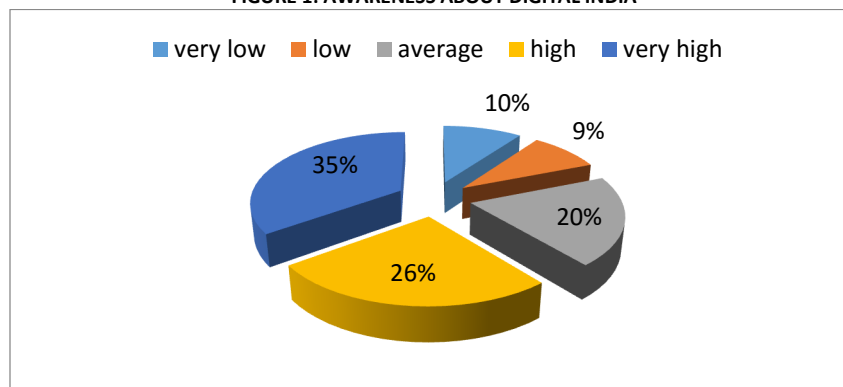
The topic, "A study on the perception and awareness of the people about the Digital India initiative of the Government of India", was selected owing to the various policies brought in by the dynamic new government with special focus on Digital India initiative. Data sources were majorly secondary including newspaper studies and sites like Department of Electronics and Information Technology Government of India (DEITY), Digital Indian (mygov), National Portal of India etc. A stratified random sample of 100 individuals was subjected to a questionnaire. The sample included individuals from different backgrounds professionally and economically with their age ranging from 16 to 65 and above. The questionnaire was prepared and administered to the respondents. The pre testing of the questionnaire was tested on 10 respondents and they comprised of students, working professionals and retired senior citizens. While they were answering, their behaviors and gestures towards certain questions were noted and changes were made accordingly. The main objective was to draw a complete picture of the pre and post Modi government and also to determine the outlook of the general public and their perspective towards the initiative. Primary data was the main source for data collection. The study was undertaken with a well-structured questionnaire which was administered via Google doc. The primary data was then interpreted, processed and analysed using percentage analysis and to calculate the general awareness regarding the much hyped Digital India Programme and its credibility as observed by the citizens of India. Data collected was presented in the form of tables and figures wherever required. Excel tools were used to formulate graphs and charts used in models and augmented by tables of data.

RESULTS

TABLE 1: AWARENESS OF THE DIGITAL INDIA INITIATIVE UNDERTAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT

S. No.	Response (level of awareness)	Percentage
a.	Very Low	10
b.	Low	9
c.	Average	20
d.	High	26
e.	Very High	35

FIGURE 1: AWARENESS ABOUT DIGITAL INDIA

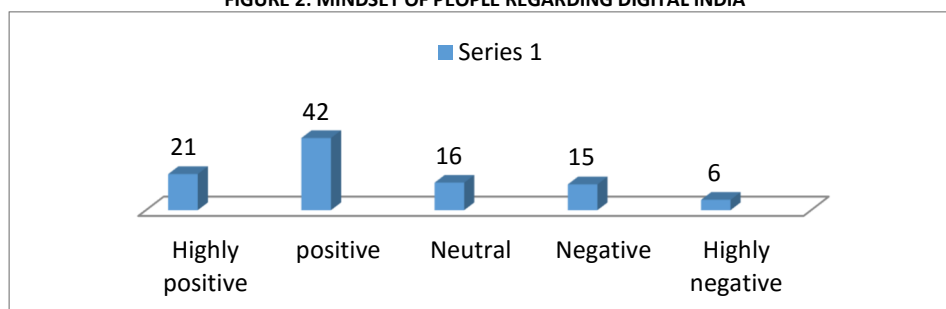


Discussion: Table 1 and figure 1 represents that maximum sample of 58% were unaware of the Digital India initiative and the rest 42% had knowledge about the same.

TABLE 2: OUTLOOK REGARDING THE DIGITAL INDIA INITIATIVE (if no)

S. No.	Response	Percentage
a.	Highly positive	21
b.	Positive	42
c.	Neutral	16
d.	Negative	15
e.	Highly negative	6

FIGURE 2: MINDSET OF PEOPLE REGARDING DIGITAL INDIA



Discussion: Table 2 and figure 2 show that amongst the people who were aware of the programme there was approx. 63% that had positive mindset in comparison to 21% that had negative views about the same.

TABLE 3: STATED REASONS FOR THE LAUNCH OF THE PROGRAMME BY THE RESPONDENTS

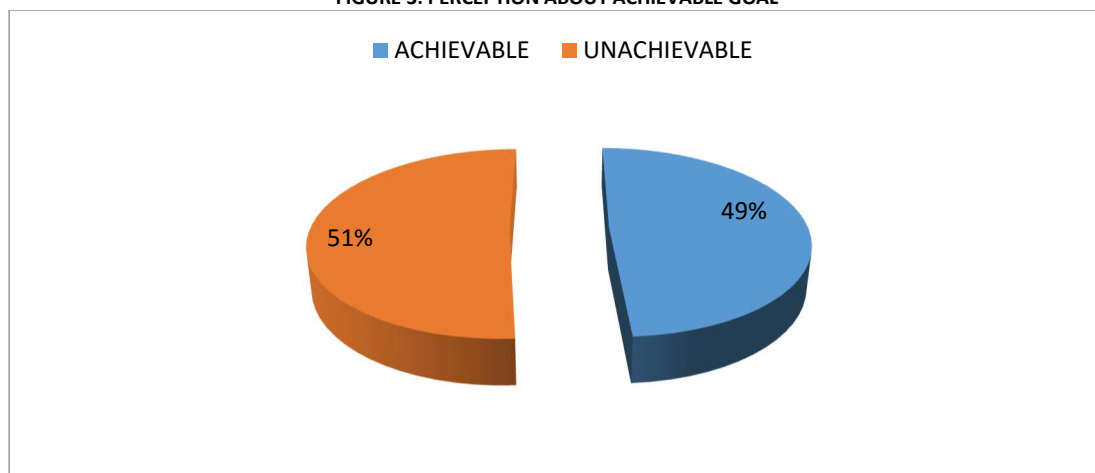
S. No.	Response	N=100	Percentage
a.	Transparency	15	15
b.	Reduced Paper wastage	12	12
c.	Corruption	11	11
d.	Rural upliftment	5	5
e.	Others reasons	57	57

Discussion: The main reason according to the respondents for launching the Digital India programme was to create transparency between the government and the general public. The response includes reduced paper wastage, reduction in corruption etc as further reasons to launch the respective programme. The news report on Digital India states that there is less awareness in the society about the initiative but the research shows otherwise, it did not just show people’s awareness about the programme but also their in depth valuation of the same. If not much, then they had at least some knowledge about the initiative. On a point of similarity with the article the respondents were at a back foot when it came to the knowledge about rural upliftment being a major aim of the Digital India initiative

TABLE 4: RESPONSE REGARDING THE ACHIEVABILITY OF THE GOALS SET BY THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA WITHIN THE DIGITAL INDIA INITIATIVE

S. No.	Response	N=100	Percentage
a.	Yes	49	49
b.	No	51	51

FIGURE 3: PERCEPTION ABOUT ACHIEVABLE GOAL



Discussion: Table 4 and figure 3 is indicative of the fact that there is a very close tie between those who believe that the goals are achievable and those who believe they are not, 49:51. What was observed was, since people were not actually aware about the rural empowerment agenda of the government, their outlook about the programme was quite positive. But it was all owing to the ignorance. A gradual increase in people’s understanding about this initiative is observed as they move further with the questionnaire.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the entire research is given as aligned to the objectives. The first objective was, “to determine the level of awareness and its implications on the mindset of individuals”, a direct relationship was observed between the level the awareness and the mindset of the people towards the Digital India initiative. The more abreast with the information the more positive was found to be the outlook. Thus it can be referred that as people researched into the intricacies of the Digital India programme, they were actually satisfied with the aims set by the government.

The second objective was, “To know that the younger generation has a more positive mindset because they are more aware about the Digital India initiative”. There was a negative correlation between the age groups and the level of awareness amongst the respondents. The people in the bracket of 16 to 35 years of age were well aware and had a positive mindset towards the initiative taken by the government, whereas the people in the bracket of 36- 65 years and above were skeptical about the change and resisted the programme.

When the research on ‘Digital India: An Illusion or Reality’, was conducted we came to a realization that the general public was not so unaware after all. Being the first research paper of its kind it succeeded in breaking the myth about the current generation being ignorant of the state of the economy, and the steps taken to improve it. The youth is not just aware but has very gainful insights into this whole initiative.

The faith in the current government is however not blind, and we had some very reasonable criticism coming our way too. The aim of making the whole of rural India digitally able in a short span of 5 years is very unrealistic.

RECOMMENDATIONS

One of the major changes which will have to accompany digital India Initiative is making every government official at ease with using computers. Also since all the mechanism will be virtually handled, it increases the scope of cybercrime. Thus an equal growth in the cyber security has to be a part and parcel of this Digital India initiative. There would be, finally, some authority or officials at the top of it; hence again, we would have some scope of human indulgence, which can go either way, therefore proper monitoring cannot be done away with.

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