

Analysis of Government Publications in Digital Era

Chhavi Jain¹

¹Research Scholar, Librarian G D Goenka World School, Sohna, India
chhavimjain@gmail.com

Abstract - The thrust of assessing rich digital content from Government websites is responsible for the creation, storage, management and preservation of the documents. Due to the diversity of documents type, research nature, storage media and need of users, dissemination of information as an individual content provider becomes very difficult. This paper will show the present situation of documents available on Central Government websites and users response as per their experience.

Key Words: Government Publications, Government websites, Digital Archive, Digitization.

1.INTRODUCTION

Worldwide government is working to satisfy their citizen's need of information by providing it using innovative methods of information and communication technology. It becomes responsibility of government to provide high quality and cost effective services for good government citizen relationship. Digitization has potential to bridge the gap between government and citizens and provide non confidential documents to accelerate growth in an inclusive manner. Government seems seized of the potential in the information highway and has been trying to digitized and provides documents on respective ministry/ department website. Digitization is not a new phenomenon. Since 1970s, digitization has been deployed for efficiency gains across business. Since then there have been leaps of technology from low cost mobile connectivity to the internet. The triangulation of mobile penetration, internet connectivity and digital authentication has spawned multiple socio-economic benefits. It can provide the underprivileged population greater and equal access to a variety of opportunities- ranging from access to formal financial system, education to basic health. On the other side, connecting the population via digital platform can open large unaccessed market to government for delivery of services.

2.THE PROGRESS OF DIGITAL REFORMS IN INDIA

While digital reforms have been on the government's agenda, government has given it fresh impetus through Digital India, an umbrella initiative envisaging connecting all Indians to the internet, enhancing financial inclusion, and delivering government services efficiently.

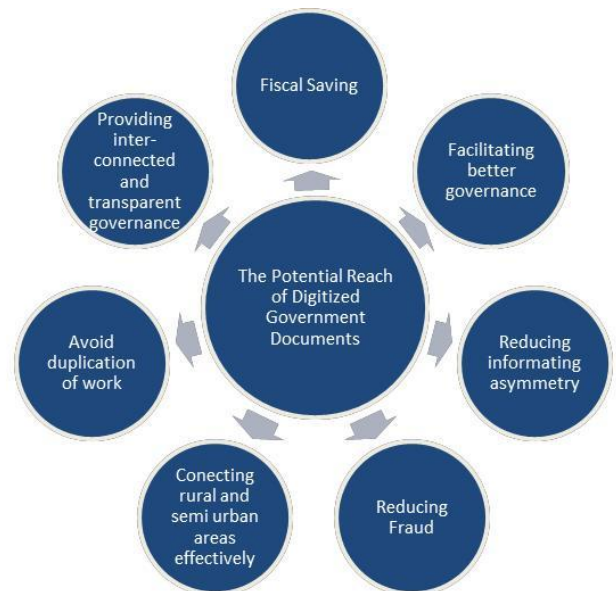


Fig 1 : Reach of Digitized Government Documents

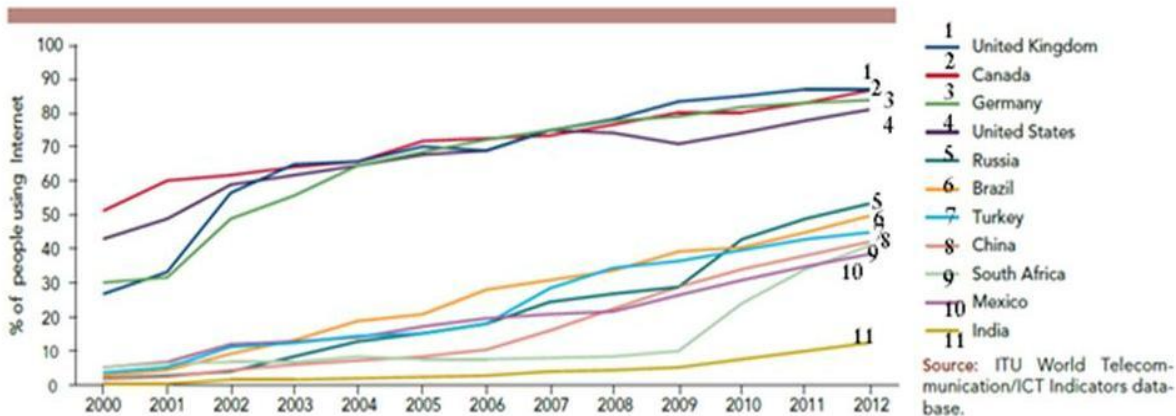


Chart 1: Change in percentage of people using the Internet, selected countries.

According to E-Government Complete Survey conducted by United Nations (2014) from 2009 onward there is a drastic change in percentage of people using Internet. Broadcasting model of governance unlocks up an alternative channel for people to gain access to data and also distribute it to the local or public domain from outside-sources. As per 2016 report by Mary Meeker of Silicon Valley venture capital firm Kleiner Perkins Caufied Byers showed that while global growth in internet usage was flat 9% , in India, growth was the fastest at 44%.

Digital transactions have exploded in all segments, especially after 2014. Our survey shows people from all segments of society are using government websites frequently to get information.

Digitisation offers an unparalleled opportunity to connect with government more rapidly and effectively. Government websites are used by business world, private sectors, education institutes, health and public well fare organizations for various purposes.

Recent change and development in technology is the main reason of rapid change in Government mechanism. Digital technology started connecting every corner of globe by inter connecting individuals and organizations. Government also started using technology to reduce costs and to provide better services. Hyperlinks are used to connect central government websites with other department websites with each other to avoid duplication of work. In India NIC (National Informatics Center) is providing network backbone and e-Governance support to Central Government, State Governments, UT Administrations, Districts and other Government bodies. It offers a wide range of ICT services including Nationwide Communication Network for decentralised planning, improvement in Government services and wider transparency of national and local Governments. Total numbers of central government websites are as follows:

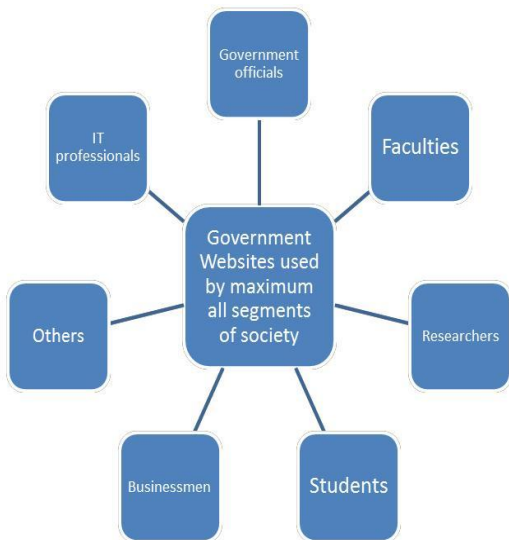


Fig 2: Government websites used by maximum all segments of society

3. Union Government

- Apex Offices(16)
- Ministries(51)
- Independent Departments(2)
- Departments(54)
- Commissions (84)

4. METHODOLOGY

Survey was carried out by two methods manually by questionnaire and automatically by using automated tools. Preliminary manual evaluation was necessary to know the problems and challenges faced by users while accessing Central Government websites. Then To check accessibility of websites, automated tool was used to cross check the users experience with technical point of view. The tool used was an open web accessibility evaluation tool called Achecker (“achecker.ca/checker/index.php”), which offers the facility to review accessibility and usability of webpages based on variety of International accessibility guidelines. Central Government websites have become centrally accessible location for knowing the activities of government. On daily bases they are posting or uploading documents on their websites. During our study we had calculated number of documents available on these websites under different headings by using XML- sitemaps (“XML-Sitemaps.com”). This is a *sitemap* generator that creates XML and HTML variants and counts number of documents. The number can be changed in future with the addition and deletion of document by respective ministry. With a survey questionnaire we have identified frequently used sections and websites by citizens. We used these sections to count number of documents available under same headings. 10 ministries are selected on the basis of frequently used by users. Following websites are used for survey

Ministry of Agriculture	agricoop.nic.in
Ministry of Home Affairs	mha.nic.in
Ministry of Mines	mines.nic.in
Ministry of HRD	mhrd.gov.in
Ministry of Panchayati Raj	www.panchayat.gov.in
Ministry of Defence	www.mod.nic.in
Ministry of Information & Technology	deity.gov.in
Ministry of Steel	steel.gov.in
Ministry of Textiles	www.ministryoftextiles.gov.in
Ministry of Science & Technology	www.dst.gov.in

Table -1: Sample Ministries used for survey

5. FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

The total count of documents in various segments is now visible which show a large amount of data on each and every website which is not archived and can be removed or changed by authorities frequently. Figures in table may change in future by day to day addition or deletion of documents by respective ministry.

Ministry	Technology & Science Ministry	Textiles Ministry	Technology & Information Ministry	Steel Ministry	Defence Ministry	RajPanchayat Ministry	HRD Ministry	Mines Ministry	Affairs Home Ministry	Agriculture Ministry
Rules and Acts	367	198	269	456	347	186	433	252	468	342
Circulars	456	215	240	249	322	211	453	264	251	450
Downloads	476	286	275	558	376	231	324	278	268	497
Schemes	359	297	268	279	445	256	254	199	247	278
Reports	315	279	257	654	318	234	236	248	259	264
Policy Guidelines	563	269	228	437	536	246	278	221	240	268
Action Plans	313	258	278	389	448	283	343	232	268	234

Table 2: Number of documents available under frequently used sections

While checking with AChecker, result shows that the most of the government websites have accessibility issues. Test is performed on AChecker to check accessibility barriers.

1. Provide ways to help users navigate, find content, and determine where they are.
2. Link text may be meaningful.
3. Anchor text may not identify the link destination.

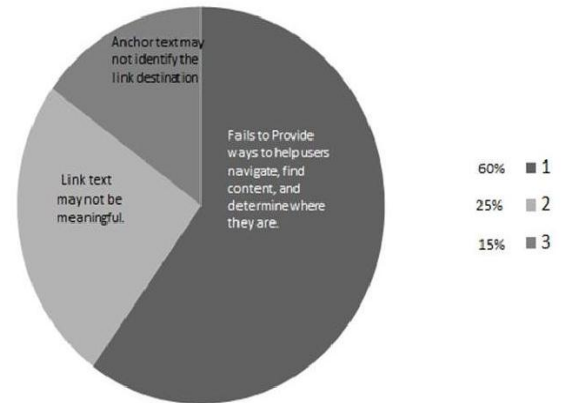


Fig 4: Percentage of accessibility problem shown by ministry websites.

Citizen-government interactions occurs primarily online, making government web presence often the primary way citizens experience government. Well informed and educated citizens understand government mechanism quickly and are in position to make their decision while retrieving data. Today citizens know their responsibilities and rights about information from government. If user knows the correct governance methods, Ministry/ department website or correct title of article, they can try to find desired information on internet without fear or assistance. Following are the responses from users; show their experience of finding document or information from Central Ministry websites.

Table 3: Responses from users show their experience of finding document or information from Central Ministry websites.

Experience of searching information on internet	Very easy, I always Got information quickly	Easy to search, I got information but it takes time.	Easy to search, I got information but it takes time.	Always difficult, can't reach up to right information in three clicks
Users Response	10%	10%	30%	50%
What are the major barriers for locating and accessing information	Websites or portals are linked and main content is hidden under many webpages	No searchable interface is available	Publications are not searchable with hindi/ other local languages	Older publications are not available in digital format
Users Response	40%	30%	10%	20%
Available files or documents are quick to access and easy to download	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Users Response	10%	45%	25%	20%
Keyword search is useful to retrieve information	60%	20%	20%	0%
Browsing information is possible to hindi or other regional language	55%	20%	15%	10%
Can access documents with date of publication	65%	20%	15%	0%

6.CONCLUSION

This survey was conducted on 100 people from various segments of society and 10 websites which are maximum used by users. With the response of manual and automated survey, we can conclude that users like to use digital media to get information from government. Digital India initiative and Right to Information act both are increasing this eagerness of knowing current happenings in Parliament, or reading new notifications and action plans, getting forms directly from websites etc. After users survey we have come to know that information or documents are available on websites but it is difficult to get it because of limited search and browse facility, too much interconnectivity of website so users have to spend more time in opening windows one after other before finally downloading document. Retrieving old data is again difficult as it is not archived at one place.

REFERENCES:

- [1] Achecker [Computer software]. (2016). Retrieved from <http://achecker.ca/checker/index.php>
- [2] Meeker, Mary. (2016). Internet trends report. Retrieved from <http://www.recode.net/2016/6/1/11826256/mary-meeker-2016-internet-trends-report>
- [3] United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2014). Bridging the digital divide. *E-Government Survey*. pg. 125. Retrieved from www.e-gov-complete.com/survey2014
- [4] XML-Sitemaps [Computer software]. (2016). Retrieved from <http://XML-Sitemaps.com>

BIOGRAPHY



Chhavi Jain, Librarian at G. D. Goenka World School, Sohna, Haryana, India and Research Scholar, Standing committee member of Information Literacy Section, IFLA. Continued with research on Government publication in Digital era, Institutional Repositories and Digital libraries.