



EDITORIAL COMMENT



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Accurate Data, the Limits of Data Models, and Working with Shareholders

Over the last few decades, the importance of data has become increasingly evident. Data analytics can provide incredibly accurate insights and help businesses and governments prepare for the future. In the current COVID-19 pandemic, data analytics has allowed governments to model potential outbreak waves and prepare for them through optimising healthcare resources, fortifying supply chain, and ramping up production of essential goods. In order to maximise the usefulness of data, the focus should be on two key areas.

Accurate data is crucial in delivering meaningful insights. If the data being used for predictions is incomplete, then the analytics derived from it will also be less accurate. In the case of the COVID-19 pandemic, data inaccuracies can prove catastrophic. Underreporting of COVID-19 cases due to decreased testing, lack of genomic sequencing of new and more virulent variants and other factors can all lead to data

and data models that are less accurate and hamper efforts to predict new outbreaks. Incorrect or incomplete data can lead to a sense of complacency which in turn can lead to being underprepared.

The second key factor in producing helpful predictions and meaningful analytics is close collaboration between data analysts and the end-user of the predictions, such as the government. When building prediction models for situations like the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important that all stakeholders understand the range of possibilities that are realistic according to the model and can plan around both the expectation and also the worst case scenarios. Analysts must ensure that in addition to explaining the distribution of possibilities, the choices they make about thresholds are meaningful and well thought out so that end-users are not caught off guard.



INTERVIEW



Shri. V Srinivas, IAS

Additional Secretary to Government of India and additional charge of Director General National Centre for Good Governance, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions

Q: Please tell us briefly about yourself and the work your department does?

A: I serve as Additional Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) and also hold charge as Director General National Centre for Good Governance. The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances is responsible for driving administrative reforms for the government as well as redress all grievances on public services. The DARPG endeavours to ease citizen interaction by adopting global best practices and by documenting and disseminating good governance practices. The mission is to foster excellence in governance and pursue administrative reforms through improvements in government policies, structures and processes, promoting citizen-centric governance with emphasis on grievance redress, innovations in e-governance, awards and documentation & dissemination of best practices.

Q: What role does data play in the space of governance?

A: Decision making in the 21st century has become highly complex and has to be based on robust data sets. Quite clearly the statement that “in god we trust, everybody brings data to the table is appropriate.” There is a great need for emphasis on robust data collection, collation and analysis for considered decision making. Aadhar-enabled systems have become a big part of modern governance. Many Departments are using big data and analytics – for example the Aarogya Setu app notifies individuals who have been in potentially dangerous proximity to people infected with COVID-19. The DARPG has formulated an output data based on Good Governance Index for Assessment of State Governance of State Governments and an input data based National e-Services Delivery Assessment for Assessment of e-Services in States. It is expected that the findings will enable enhanced analysis for good governance in India.

Q: Could you share one challenge that you/your department faced using data and if so what are the ways that organisations like the Public Affairs Centre and your department do together to address this?

A: The DARPG has been mandated to develop an indigenous India Index on the lines of the Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI). In this direction, the DARPG has been working with the NITI Aayog and the Public Affairs Centre. A webinar on the world wide governance indicators was convened by the National Centre for Good Governance in April 2021 between the knowledge partners Development Monitoring & Evaluation Office (DMEO), Centre for Good Governance (CGG) Hyderabad and PAC Bengaluru to understand the data sets of the worldwide governance indicators. The DARPG looks forward to cordial and constructive collaboration in the coming days.

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UPDATES

April 7, 2021

Chief Secretary Shri P Ravikumar visited CODR to review the progress made by CODR during 2020-'21

April 9, 2021

Delivered the first set of NeSDA reports of 139 services from Revenue and Transport departments to ARC-2 team as planned

April 19, 2021

PPMS department conducted a review meeting of accomplishments of CODR during 2020-'21, during which the teams presented the findings of the second set of reports on SDP and SDGs

April 26, 2021

Submitted modified reports on SDP and SDGs, based on the feedback received during the review meeting conducted by PPMS conducted on 19th April

April 27, 2021

A follow-up meeting was conducted by PPMS department with our Director to discuss the 'way forward' strategy on the CODR-PPMS engagement



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