

**Digital And The Everyday: From Codes To Cloud**  
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**Lecture - 17**  
**Digital and our everyday interactions with the state-Part 01**

So, the session is on are everyday interactions with the state, and ideas are discussions yesterday after what professor Janki had presented yeah that leads us pretty well into what is the state, why is it that, we should be concerned about the state, what is it that state citizen interactions mean, and what does all that kind of what is it that we can understand or we can abstract in the context of an increasing reliance of the state to use digital technologies in it is everyday interactions yeah. This is what we will cover in the session; I will talk of a few cases of digital technology used by the Indian states. So, most of my examples are related to the Indian state, even within that largely government of Karnataka yeah some of the cases, but we will see how they are kind of how they can be extended to some other states and maybe other countries generally global concern issues etcetera.

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We do see an increasing use of digital technologies by the state and as a citizen, how do you interact with the state using digital technologies in it, does not example come to your

mind, why do you interact with the state of the citizen or when do you interact with the state of the citizen.

Student: (Refer Time: 01:58).

You need to have a.

Student: (Refer Time: 02:02).

Driving licence ok. So, for a driving licence you need to go to some department, which is an arm of the state and you want you would want to get that yeah. So, the state certifies you for certain capabilities. What are the other ways in which you interact with the state?

Student: (Refer Time: 02:21) complaints.

What kind of complaints?

Student: like if there is some problem with the like railway ticket booking or (Refer Time: 02:032) like that we will then complaint.

First is booking of railway tickets. So, because the state here is providing that service; so how do you access that service yeah and then if you have any grievances related to say booking of railway tickets, yeah or may be travelling on the train. So, any grievance related to a service that provided by one of the agencies of the state, you would want to interact with the state.

Student: So, I will put into (Refer Time: 03:02) direct or indirect interaction (Refer Time: 03:08) for example, I get down to road it is kind of a interaction which is state because state has independent or it is rule only rule, and I am following rules like rules by chance. So, this is the also form of interaction which (Refer Time: 03:28) because.

So, you are interacting with the rules that have been formulated by the state which allows you to access certain public facilities yeah public spaces.

Student: (Refer Time: 03:38) yes my identity as a religion before it proceed.

So, if you if you want an identity, you want if you want yourself to be identified yeah you rely on the state for identification ok.

Student: What is the landhouse (Refer Time: 03:55)?

Landhouse; so it where does the state come in?

Student: I have to I have to go the corporation (Refer Time: 04:04) I will take actions.

So after your bought. So, once you one up.

Student: Why I have to go for (Refer Time: 04:12) registration.

So you have to get your transaction registered by the state yeah that provides certain legal validity to the transaction. You are free to engage in a private transaction, but it may not be up held by a court of law, unless the states bears testimony to the fact that there is a transaction that has happened between two parts ok. So, there are lot of ways in which way interact with the state yeah. Increasingly a lot of those interactions are being mediated by digital technologies yeah. So, we will try to look at some of those cases.

Then we will step back and see what are the development priorities of the Indian state, is it a very surveillance oriented state is that what the Indian state has taken on to itself to ensure that people it will it will track everyone where they are or will it say monitor activities and you are also mention something else. So, is the Indian state and it is development priority is only concerned or largely concerned with figuring out where the citizens are, and is it only a law and order enforcing agency or is there something greater or more to what the Indian state is all about yeah. Then we will get into some perspectives and technology design yeah, I am trying to straddle a few kind of worlds in this kind of session yeah.

So, we will get into say certain theories of technology designs, yeah. So, why is it that technology comes into being, what kind of logic do we attribute to the design process, how can we study technologies yeah, how can we study technology evolutions yeah and then we will try to bring all of them together in our in the later part of the session yeah. So, let us how I plan to go about doing, it is there anything that you had in mind when you went through that small blurb on what this session is about. Do you have any expectations that you feel will not get covered here no so, but do feel free to interrupt whenever you have any concerns.

The first case that we will look at is the public distribution system. All of you are aware of the public distribution system what is this? What a public distribution system is?

Student: (Refer Time: 06:59).

Providing subsidised food?

Student: (Refer Time: 07:01).

To the marginal communities and why do you want to provide subsidised food to marginalised communities?

Student: Because we are not able to access the highly (Refer Time: 07:15).

They are not able to access the highly in plated food markets ok. The highly in plated is with the in quotes so.

Student: (Refer Time: 07:26).

Sorry.

Student: Low income.

Low income yes.

Student: (Refer Time: 07:30).

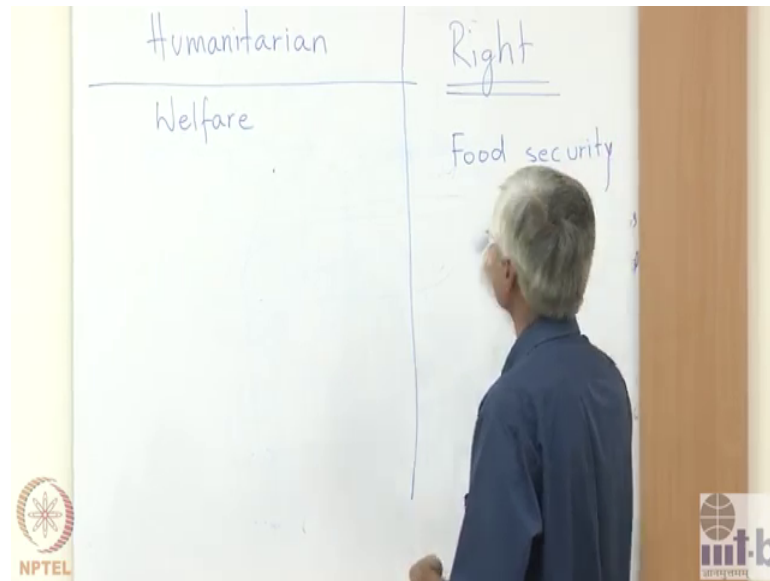
Yeah. So, so the income levels are low yeah they are marginal and therefore, they the state feels that they are not able to or they may not be able to access the open food market yeah and therefore, there is a sense in providing subsidize food grains to this people yeah. So, where is the, what is the logic behind providing that food, why do we want to subsidize food grains for those who are marginalised why should we?

Student: First thing is humanitarian approach like there people one from the people (Refer Time: 08:15).

Student: Sir it is almost (Refer Time: 08:19).

So, it is humanitarian.

(Refer Slide Time: 08:25)



Student: Any government is suppose support the (Refer Time: 08:27) (Refer Time: 08:28) government is humanitarian by in charge because (Refer Time: 08:32).

Student: It has life to have food (Refer Time: 08:41).

So, welfare versus right humanitarian. So, this is ones idea.

Student: (Refer Time: 08:49).

You will keep it separate. So, one is the state or there is one argument which if you take that argument, you feel that the state needs to be taking care of the welfare of it is citizens and if it feels that there certain groups, which are not able to access say food which is in many societies a basic requirement for survival in in fact, for human beings it is the basic requirement for survival. So, it is the states responsibility to take care of that need of people and that is a that is a welfare orientation of the state in plate yeah. To certain extent there is as humans we are expected to engage in human behaviour, yeah and which distinguishes ourselves from say other living organisms and that requires us to ensure that everyone are gets food gets access to certain basic services yeah.

On this side is a right prospective, there is as a citizen of the country we have right to food yeah do you see the distinction when it is a right yeah some of your in the development studies would definitely appreciate this, but when it is a right it is not a

welfare or it is not we were not invoking on humanitarian, charity those kind of words you are saying it is my right yeah and as a state you have to uphold my rights yeah.

So, there are different perspectives that can guide the state to formulate a scheme like this. In case of India this does not start with this, yeah the public distribution system is about 30, 40 years old yeah within it is different authors flavours it has been it has existed, but it is largely started with humanitarian concerns of a few governments of a few individuals, went in to say a welfare fed into a welfare orientation of the state and about t10 years back, there was a right to food yeah that was enacted or the national food security act and TDS is one of the main vehicles of enforcing that act yeah.

Now, given that background, this we will looking at a project which is using digital technologies in the implementation of public distribution system, and this is being done in the state of Karnataka.

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**Entitlement to Foodgrains under the Karnataka PDS**

Status	Entitlement - quotas (per size of household)	Entitlement - price
APL	None	None
BPL	1 member: 8 kg. 2 members: 16 kg. 3 or more members: 24 kg.	Rice: Rs. 1/- per kg. Wheat: Rs. 1/- per kg.
AAY	29 kg. (any household size)	

Source: Masiero and Prakash (2015)

Ah this is study one of my co researchers and I did around 2014-15. So, the findings maybe slightly dated, but nonetheless I feel it is relevant for a discussions today yeah.

So, this is the entitlement some of you would probably be aware of this, there are three categories of ration card holders in Karnataka most of the other states of India also this is how it is. You have APL is above poverty line yeah in case of Karnataka you are not provided any subsidised grains to the fair price shops. BPL this is what the entitlement is,

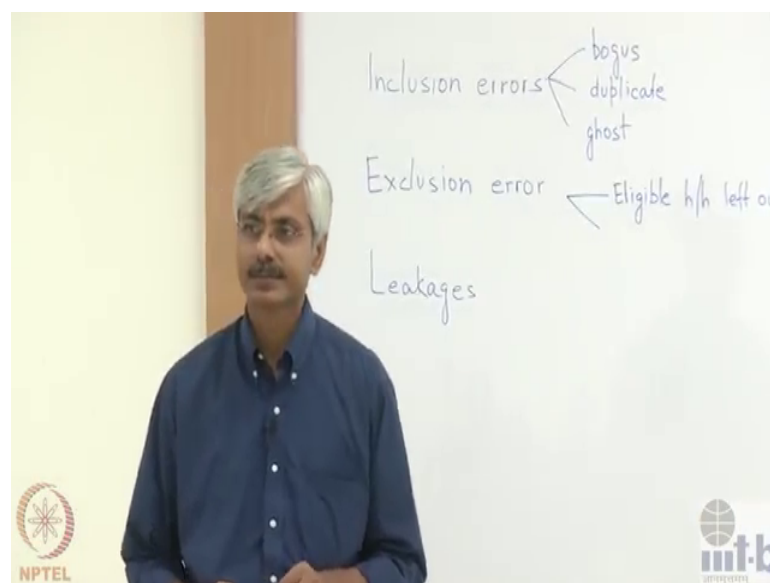
for within the BPL the extremely below poverty line kind of families they are the antyodaya anna yojana cards is what they are given and they have a certain entitlement yeah.

So, this is the kind of entitlement to food grains under the Karnataka PDS that existed about two years back more or less that is how it remains. This is how the supply chain looks like for PDS you have suppliers largely food corporation of India yeah in certain cases some food grains are procured locally yeah, but most of the food grain that is been provided is rice and wheat yeah. So, that is handled by food corporation of India at national scale comes to authorised wholesale dealers roughly at a district Taluk level, goes into the authorized ration dealers of the fair price shops and from there it goes to the people who have these cards and can access and have an entitlement to certain quantities of food at a subsidised price yeah.

Now, in this context as a state what and given, that this is what guides the state to have a service like this. Where do you see some of the failures or what do you see as some other problems that could occur in a system like this.

Student: The estimation of the APL means BPL (Refer Time: 14:33) like this always like we some could be included (Refer Time: 14:38) or some could be excluded that is always of possibility.

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You are saying that there could be errors in and this not inclusion sorry this is actually exclusion error. Those who should be getting that subsidy are not being provided that subsidy, because the way in which the estimation of the way in which the survey for deciding whether a family should be APL BPL is not done properly yeah. So, that is one of the ways in which error could creep in into a system like this yeah they could be a families who need the state subsidy, but are excluded; what could be other errors?

Student: (Refer Time: 15:37).

So, ah. So, what kind of corruption in distribution will come in? So, that is where we talk of a bit of leakages yeah. There might be a lot of leakages. So, one is leakages and it may happen at all these levels yeah. So, it could happen at the level of the food corporation of India some grains could get diverted from there some grains could get wasted at the food corporation of India, because they are not proper arrangements for storing them yeah.

In the transit from FCI godowns to the say taluk or district level godowns there could be some leakages yeah. Again someone genuine grounds of wastage or acceptable limits of wastage some because there is a collusion that happens between oh of few parties and that leads to diverting food grains in the open market. Again some of that could happen at the level of the authorized ration dealers yeah at the fair price shops where the fair price shop owner yeah may not give the desert or other entitled quantity of food grains to a particular house hold yeah, and that can be through 2 or 3 different ways the fair price shop owner could collude with certain non-eligible families, and ensure say that the process of identification of families or households is kind of taken care of.

So, that in eligible families get ration card and there is a diversion in that way. The other way could be when it is extortionary yeah what could be extortion? I am entitled to say 20 k gs, I go to the fair price shop the shop owner gives me 15 k gs and gets my signature for 20 k gs yeah. So, that is extortion I know that I have been given 15 k gs I know that I am entitled to 20 kgs, but then because the shop on owner is indulging in ex in that extortion practice, I have to make do with only 15 k gs or else I will not get anything here.

So, a bit of collusion, to ensure that you have say bogus cards yeah a bit of extortion and that is when what you are doing is, your saying that I wield a disproportionate power over the beneficiaries and therefore, I will extort the third could be you could have a lot



of ghost cards yeah. So, lot of these inclusion errors for example, are related to your cards. So, they are bogus cards your duplicate cards and your ghost cards. So, you do not have families, but those families have been created to siphon of food grains yeah. So, they could be some of these inclusion errors, there could be exclusion errors, there could be leakages. So, one exclusion error is when you said eligible households are left out what could be the other form of exclusion error, how can you exclude people or how can you exclude benefits to flow to the intended beneficial?

Student: (Refer Time: 19:37).

That is your ghost cards all that stuff yeah.

Student: If a BPL cards (Refer Time: 19:44) is there are exclusion error.

Yeah that is that is eligible households are left out, what is the intention why do you want this to why what is the purpose behind the screen?

Student: The people with (Refer Time: 20:02) (Refer Time: 20:03).

Yeah all of them are covered.

Student: (Refer Time: 20:05) where (Refer Time: 20:08) where they are living I think.

It is a survey that is expected to be carried out every year.

Student: No point is when the (Refer Time: 20:17) is found is which shop they will they did (Refer Time: 20:21) like (Refer Time: 20:22) keep using (Refer Time: 20:3) that form.

So, that is one of the issues. So, they get excluded. So, these are eligible households, but because they keep on moving they do not have a permanent place of residence, they are excluded even though they should be provided that security of food.

Student: I just do not bother about these things even go there ( (Refer Time: 20:46).

Where the bother or not if they have a right, the state should be enforcing that right. So, it is an exclusion error.

Student: Yeah because (Refer Time: 20:54).

Ya. So, so. So, that is that is more like an exclusion error what is it that you are trying to achieve through this yeah the right what is the right, which right we are enforcing through puff?

Student: (Refer Time: 21:07).

Student: But right food is basically (Refer Time: 21:10) when you ask right food then why do not (Refer Time: 21:15) that (Refer Time: 21:16) then right (Refer Time: 21:18) and then right (Refer Time: 21:19) right so, much (Refer Time: 21:2500).

Will not go there this is national food security act. The national as a nation we have a grid that there is a right to food security yeah. So, every person or every citizen of our country should have should be secure in terms of food availability and that the state enforces through this scheme. So, right now the logic behind the existence of a scheme like this, derived from the national food security act yeah. So, what is that we want to achieve through this scheme? Food security yeah. So, one is the food does not reach the people yeah, but we do not to expect that the people once they have that food yeah what do you want as a state we want as a state for them to consume food yeah. We do not only want the grains to get into their houses we want them to consume food. So, if you consider that prospective how could people get excluded if they do not consume food. So, if the food grains that are provided to them are often quality, that cannot be consumed you are excluding people even when everything else is functioning very well you are excluding people from this the enforcement of food security yeah.

So, quality through quality also you can exclude a lot of people. So, while all your end everything might be working well, there is a fair average quality of food grains that is expected to be supplied through the fair price shops. If you degrade the quality of the food grains what will happen and what happens in many cases? The food grains are taken and they fed to the cows or they fed to the goat. Now that is not what we are interested in as a state. The food security act at this point applies to human beings yeah they are not the national food security act has not considered goats and cows at this instant yeah.

So, if you are doing indulging in that; that is another way in which you are excluding people right.