

THE IMPACT AND GROWTH OF ONLINE EDUCATION IN INDIA

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Abstract: Web-based Education is becoming very popular in India at every level of education, which can be attained through online websites or Educational Web Portals. Educational Web Portals provide a variety of eBooks, articles, journals, research papers, online courses, and other educational resources. In this paper, we will discuss the utilities of Educational Web Portals in higher education and evaluate a different type of web portals that provide different options of learning in the Higher education field. This study is based on the experiences students and scholars who are the part of a Facebook page community from all over India and they are engaged in Web-Based Learning and help each other through online communication. The experience for English speaking scholars is different from non-English speaking scholars. The scholar coming from a non-English speaking background does not get the same quality of online resources as English Speaking Scholar has. This is a challenging problem and the researcher dwelled deeper for the solution. The researcher will discuss possible solutions to overcome this problem. She will suggest creating a glocal web portal which can be a bridge between the content creator and a learner in their local language. Such Glocal Educational web portals will help the non-English speaking scholars and will enhance researches at the local level.

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Introduction:

The Indian economy has grown faster in the past two decades due to the collective contributions of educational, industrial and service sectors. This has made policy maker realize that to achieve the full potential of citizens it is important to introduce inclusive, free, easily accessible and qualitative education (Das, 2011). Considering the needs of this era, a different concept of education (OERs) on digital platforms was introduced during a conference hosted by UNESCO (2002). These digital platforms provide access to many resources (OERs) for educational purposes. In India, a good number of OERs for all disciplines are present on these platforms. These resources are provided publicly and released under copyright license that allows sharing, accessing and repurposing (Bhattacharyya, 2022). Since the introduction of this concept, open educational resources (OERs) have evolved and expanded across the globe in various formats. These resources are focused on democratization of education, enables learning for students of diverse backgrounds, provides high quality study materials, promotes inclusivity, lifelong learning, and collaboration among different departments. This concept comprises various LMS platforms (Learning Management Systems) along with text and video

material. Some popular LMS platforms include Moodle, Canvas, Blackboard Learn, Sakai, Brightspace by D2L, and Google Classroom. These platforms vary in terms of features and provide educators with tools to create, organize, deliver, and assess learning content in both traditional and online learning environments. In this era, higher education institutions are continuously facing a number of challenges such as high cost for study materials, their maintenance and regular attendance. In response to these challenges, the institutions are increasingly turning to freely available resources on the internet. This pedagogical shift towards open educational resources (OER) not only reduces financial burdens on students but also fosters greater access to a wide range of educational materials from around the world. The diversity of open educational resources allows teachers and students to access a wide variety of content according to their special needs. As institutions continue to embrace OER initiatives, they contribute to a more inclusive and equitable society, where quality learning materials are accessible to all regardless of geographical or financial constraints. Thus, OERs promotes the flexibility and customization of educational experiences. To summarize, it can be said that OERs play a crucial

role in making education universal and increases the active participation of learners.

According to Kurelovic (2016), “this open access to information bring notable contribution in the knowledge, participation and collaboration among people”. Dutta, (2016) further stated that the major problems of educational materials can be reduced by using Open Educational Resources. National Knowledge Commission has advised to make public availability of open access for quality education. Keeping this in mind, Government of India has launched several initiatives such as SHAKSHAT, NPTEL, OSCAR and NMEICT. These are web based interactive portals that helps a learner to interact with teachers and raise doubts. It is also possible for students to enrol in various courses and get certification. This feature is extremely helpful for students belonging to rural areas. Moreover, these resources have become prominent contributors as a medium of research, education and training. OERs are leading the global population towards becoming a better and knowledgeable society. For the educators, OERs presents an opportunity to update their skills to improve teaching-learning process (Padhi, 2018). Additionally, Manju and Bhatt (2021) in their study found that due to the easily accessibility the OERs are an asset for educational institutions. The findings of the study further suggested that educators and students had positive experiences by using OERs as primary course material. These materials are available online and information can be accessed from anywhere in the world (Bhattacharyya, 2022). From the review of the literature, it can be said that the OERs are the transformative force that have successfully shifted that approach of teaching and learning from traditional to digital mode. Thus, allowing the population of our country to learn according to their needs.

India is a vast country having diversified culture, heritage, language, class of population and education system. We have various schools following Gurukul system to schools having world class infrastructure. We have some schools conducting in-house activity for physical and overall development of students where as some students are still struggling for basic educational facility such as books and stationary. Some schools and colleges have international tie-ups sending students to different country for study or for orientation programme. There are great variations in quality education due to reasons like social background, poverty, difference in standard of living, lack of teacher training programme etc. Indian education system is one of the largest education system in the world and holds key position in global

education industry. There are 10,30,996 schools in India, out of which 8,53,184 are in urban and 1,77,812 are in rural area. Up to 31st March 2019, there are total number of 907 universities in India in which, 399 are state universities, 126 deemed to be universities, 48 central universities and 334 private universities. Irrespective of such a large number of school, colleges and universities, there is still a ray of growth and development in education system. However there is still a lot of potential in Indian education system.

OERs in Indian Educational System:

Like other developed nations, India has also recognised that importance of OERs and launched various initiatives to provide nationwide access to their educational resources. The educational institutions have recognised the need to put out qualitative study material in order to bridge the learning gap in the country. The study material that is offered by Indian educational institutions are majorly in English language. Because of this, the students of other countries are also benefitting from these courses and programs. The official need of using OERs under ‘National e-Content Curriculum Initiative’ in Indian educational system was recognized in 2008 by National Knowledge Commission. The aim of this was to create, adapt, and utilized OERs by Indian institutions (Padhi, 2018). Several academic institutions have started creating the repositories by organizing seminars, workshops and orientation programs at school and college level. These programs are also helpful in creating awareness about OERs among students and teachers. This initiative has also reduced the printing cost of study material by providing online content (Bhattacharyya, 2022).

Online education for educators

Online education can also be designed to accommodate a variety of learning styles among students. As educators, it is likely that we will have to put in additional efforts to incorporate online learning programmes into the curriculum in the most suitable manner. Online training programmes are helping teachers/educators advance their skills in curriculum implementation, policy, education systems and leadership, both independently and with the support of their institutions. It lets them collaborate with their peers and learn new instructional skills that are relevant to their career. These programmes can help them develop new skills and capabilities in their students with the help of technology and interdisciplinary approaches. As the overlap of the traditional and online modes of education is becoming more and more inevitable, we

owe it to our students to make their education relevant to their future through ingenuity, passion and careful planning.

Current state of e-learning in India:

Due to new-startups, new technology and higher internet speed and availability of Smartphone's, the dimension of online learning is growing manifold. Government of India is also making endless efforts to provide access to online learning available to students in every corner of the country. Low internet tariff, cheap mobile phones and easily availability of SIM cards provides stimulus to the effort of government. Today in India we have online courses from primary level to professional level. Large number of training institutes and start-ups companies are provide wide variety of services in E-Learning. Many service providers are providing video lectures along with study material. Many people, on the other hand, are focused on giving access to courses at any time and from any location through a conveniencebased training and learning system. Another reason for growth of E-Learning in India is requirement to update in skill and knowledge. For example a software professional having experience of 10 years, also is in needs to update his or her skill in the field of programming language, data analytics, cloud computing etc. Increment in salary, promotion, better working condition also insists people to update their skill and knowledge and this can be achieved only with the help of E-Learning resources. In India, lot of start-ups is already setting their business in the field of E-Learning or online learning. many startups like Learn Social, Simplilearn and Intellipaat are playing a role of aggregator and aiming mid-level professionals to provide them access to E-Learning resources. Simplilearn, the Bengaluru based start-up is currently providing near about 200 certification courses in the field of Quality Management, Financial Management, Project Management, Information Technology etc. the company has trained over 2,25,000 professionals across the globe. According to CEO of Intellipaat, Diwakar Chittora, after starting its operations in 2011, the company is witnessing growth of almost 1000%. Intellipaat is providing online IT training including corporate training and more than 80 technological courses worldwide. Learnsocial, six year old Hyderabad based company is working on an aggregator model. The aim of company is to become Amazon of online learning. mid-level professionals and students are targeted customers of company. According to founder, Raju Vanapala, company has above 2,00,000 users and trained over 1,500 learners.

Future of e-learning in India:

Integrate training techniques such as online learning and gaming, and is anticipated to increase 38 percent in the next 2-4 years embrace transformational and creative ways in higher education have a 50 percent enhanced Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER). Decrease state-by-state, gender-based, and societal disparities in Germany to 5% emerge as the world's single largest source of global talent, with one out of every four graduates coming from India's higher education system; be among the top five countries in the world in terms of research output, with an annual R&D spend of US\$ 140 billion; and have more than 20 universities among the top 200 universities in the world. Various government efforts, as well as an emphasis on innovative education approaches like as E-learning and M-learning, are being implemented to support the expansion of the distant education industry. In recent years, the education system has experienced a slew of reforms and increased financial outlays that have the potential to turn the country into a knowledge sanctuary. With human resources playing an increasingly important role in the country's overall growth, education infrastructure development is likely to remain a top priority in the coming decade. In this scenario, education infrastructure spending is anticipated to grow significantly over the next decade. The Indian government has taken a number of initiatives, including establishing additional IITs and IIMs and giving educational grants to research researchers in most government institutions. Furthermore, with numerous educational institutions adopting online learning, India's higher education industry is poised for significant transformation and progress in the coming years. India has a key role to play at the international level in the E-Learning business. India is the world's finest E-Learning supplier since it has some of the greatest training experts and educational infrastructure. The future of the E-Learning portal is promising, as India is currently a leader in the IT industry. The Government of India is taking every step possible to improve India's elearning environment through legislation and financial assistance. Not just the government, but several private sector actors are working hard to speed up India's e-learning system. Many international companies are considering establishing an E-Learning system in India. In India, there are more than ten open universities that provide over 500 courses. Distance education is also growing its breadth and pace in India, as it costs half as much as traditional education and allows students to access better and higherquality education without having to

leave their homes or jobs. We may conclude that the future of elearning services i

Advantages of e-learning:

Out of the several advantages, one of the most important advantage is that with the use of ELearning, user can access E-Learning portal at any time and according to their comfort. It can also be accessed from any browser or on any platform or device. Flexibility of time and place make E-Learning portal and services more popular amongst youth and professionals. One of the main advantage is that updated information can be accessed from any part of the world only with the help of internet. Even user from remotest part of the world can access and learn updated learning material through E-Learning portals. Its provides great advantages to working Professionals by providing flexibility in learning. Many certification courses are easily available which are earlier not possible with travelling from one place to other.

Conclusion

There are a great number of open educational resources present in our country. These resources are available online and are easy to access. It is reported by many authors that the students, teachers and academicians are getting benefitted from these resources. OERs such as NSDL, SWAYAM, e-Gyankosh are some of the initiatives that have opened the new doors for opportunities. These OERs help students by learning remotely, without any cost and can also get certification. However, there are also some challenges that hinders the learning process. By overcoming these challenges, it is possible to making education available for all. After the United States, the Philippines has become the second largest market for e-learning. By 2021, the industry is anticipated to be worth \$1.96 billion, with 9.5 million consumers. By 2026, the online education industry in India is expected to reach US\$ 11.6 billion. In the lives of students and working professionals, online education has had a favourable influence. It has provided them with the chance to take extra courses in addition to their education or jobs, as they see fit. Online education has also aided teachers in institutions by allowing them to ask students to study specific parts of the curriculum online that do not require a lot of classroom instruction. As a result, the online study allows instructors to save time so that they may spend more time interacting with students. The quality of education has increased as a result of online courses, and students may now refer to the information at their leisure. The reach of online education is expanding in

the digital age, and it will benefit students, professionals, and institutions alike. E-Learning, or web-based learning, will be the future of education in the coming years. It is a gift to society since it is accessible to people from all walks of life. The government should broaden the scope of online education and raise awareness among all segments of society. E-learning is advantageous not only to students, but also to instructors and professionals who want to improve their knowledge and abilities. The growth of the E-Learning system can assist a country like India attains a higher level of economic development, education, and literacy. Online education will give a diverse chance for corporates to grow their commercial prospects, not just for students, instructors, and professionals.

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