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E-Learning and its Draback in Context of India

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Abstract

E-learning has emerged as an important component of the modern education system, particularly in India, where digital technologies are increasingly being integrated into teaching and learning processes. The expansion of internet connectivity, smartphones, digital platforms, and online educational resources has created new opportunities for students to access education beyond traditional classrooms. However, despite its potential benefits, e-learning in India faces several challenges and drawbacks. Digital inequality, inadequate internet connectivity, limited access to electronic devices, lack of digital literacy, reduced student-teacher interaction, distraction, and difficulties in maintaining student engagement remain significant concerns. These challenges are particularly pronounced among students in rural areas, economically disadvantaged communities, and regions with limited technological infrastructure. Furthermore, excessive screen time, mental fatigue, and the lack of practical and experiential learning may negatively affect students' academic performance and overall learning experience. This paper examines the major drawbacks of e-learning in the Indian educational context, focusing on technological, socio-economic, pedagogical, and psychological challenges. It also explores the implications of digital education for educational equity and accessibility. The study highlights the need for inclusive digital infrastructure, teacher training, affordable technology, and a balanced approach combining online and traditional classroom learning to ensure the effective and equitable implementation of e-learning in India.

Keywords: *E-Learning, Digital Education, India, Digital Divide, Online Learning, Educational Inequality, Technology in Education, Learning Challenges.*

Introduction: E-learning facilitates learning by expanding and complementing face-to-face learning instead of just replacing it. The word ‘e-learning' first originated in the United States in the 1990s, but became popular in the late 1990s.As many HR activities, it was focused on earlier innovations such as computer-based teaching, on-line teaching, open or distance learning, andinformal e-learning based on information management methods. E-learning is delivered through websites and the internet. Provision can also be made for online guidance and discussion boards. Content could be distributed via PowerPoint, audio and video clips, drag- and-drop questions, Pdf, website links, and web-enabled platforms and educational communities.

The situation of the COVID-19 pandemic has shifted the world with rapid changes. Just now, the economy is being negatively affected due to the shutdown. Similarly, the education sector is still clashing for the effects of the lockdown. The shutdown accelerated for adopting emerging technologies. The unexpected lockdown during the Covid-19 pandemic has forced schools and teachers in both public and private institutions into a crisis mode in remote teaching. The outbreak of COVID-19 has more effects on over 120 crores of students and youth all over the world. In India, more than 32 crores of learners are being affected by various prohibitions and the national lock-down for COVID-19. According to the UNESCO survey, there are approximately 14 crores of primary and 13 crores of secondary students are affected which are the two most troubling levels in India. After studying the situation of the coronavirus pandemic, the WHO recommended to preserve social isolation as a first preventive measure stage. So, every country began the lockdown action and split the infected people. Sectors of Education like Schools, colleges, and universities have been closing down.

If time progresses without an immediate response to the end of the Covid-19 crisis, school, university and college suspensions will have not only a short-term impact on the standard of learning for more than 300 million individual students in India and will therefore have far- reaching economic and social consequences. This pandemic has also greatly affected the higher education system, which is a core determinant of the nation's economic future. A large number of Indian students, next only to China, enroll in foreign universities, especially in countries worst affected by the pandemic, the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and China. UNESCO's New Global Coalition for Realistic Solutions continuity to access to education for this type of pandemic hour seeks to find sustainable ways to pool resources and skills, and to channel free innovative solutions and online equipment ranging from powerful methods such as national cloud services, or as basic as radio programming, and easy

smartphone application.

In this regard the government of india and other educational institutions are taken some actions and initiatives to keep alive our educations system and maintaining the quality of education.

SOME INITIATIVES ARE…..

University Grants Commission (UGC)India's leading regulatory body for higher education, with the collaboration of the Ministry of Human Resources Development (MHRD) Under the Govt. of India, has made continuous efforts to implement e-learning initiatives even during the COVID-19 pandemic in India. Some of the essential steps to incorporate e-learning are: -

1. Government of India's iGotprogramme uses DIKSHA for COVID-19 training of physicians, nurses, ASHA staff, NCC, NSS, NYKS volunteers and more than 17 lakh individual training sessions have been performed and well, certified.
2. PM eVidya declared under the AtmaNirbhar Bharat policy that DIKSHA is the 'one nation;one digital platform' for education in India. DIKSHA is being converted into a forum for rich and diverse curriculum, linked to the e-content requirements of teachers and learners for all states and UTs, accessible via digital devices, to ensure continuity of access and learning experience.
3. Weekly Practice Program is CCT(Creative and Critical Thinking) to improve learner cognitive skills and create interest by relating learning to real-life circumstances. Teachers can also use these things to facilitate conversations and involve learners in self-learning adventures.
4. In SWAYAM PRABHA, a group of 34 DTH (Direct-to-Home) channels dedicated to broadcasting educational programmes 24x7, was introduced.The channels broadcast new content for a minimum of four hours every day, and this is repeated five times in the same day for students to select a convenient slot.
5. Online MOOC courses related to NIOS (classes 9 to 12 of open school) are uploaded to theSWAYAM portal; about 92 courses have begun and 1.5 crore learners are enrolled. Teachers and students can access all courses modules-text, videos, evaluation questions, etc. through SWAYAM. Various online software like Zoom, Google Meet, YouTube, etc. are used for online courses and teaching.
6. We can access e-Textbooks using the e-PG Pathshala digital platform and phone app (Android, iOS, Windows) for learners, mentors, teachers, and parents. Around 600 eBooks, which includes approx. 377 digital textbooks from class I to XII and 3,500 NCERT video andaudio contents, is available in different languages (Hindi, English, Sanskrit, and Urdu) in the public domain.
7. Apart from the preventative measures to be taken by academic institutions to deal with the rising situation of COVID-19, UGC has undertaken all steps to ensure that all higher educational institutions maintain regular interaction with students and teachers by electronic communication and keep them completely updated so that there is no distress among students and teachers.

Positive effect of e-learning: In this new era of teaching and learning by E-learning, we can see some positive things in compared to traditional system.

New threats and new patterns have emerged as a consequence of the outbreak of Covid-19 in the higher education system, including teaching-learning, teaching methods, assessment & evaluation, and management. The Indian system of education has been allowed to transform from the conventional system to the new age. The following aspects may be added to consider the positive impacts.

1. **Blended Learning:** COVID-19 has increased the adoption of digital education technology. Higher education institutions have moved towards a blended model of education.It motivated both teachers and students to become more tech-savvy.
2. **Cost Effective**: One of the biggest benefits of e-learning is it’s cost effectiveness. The price reduction is the result of educational institutions saving a lot of money on transportation and accommodation of both students and teachers. There are no pricey textbooks that push students further down the rabbit hole of student debt. Also, regular text material printing is not required so the whole method is ecofriendly as a plus.

3. **Learning Management System:** Use of learning management systems by schools and universities became a great demand. It opened up a great opportunity for various industries for developing and improving e-learning systems for use in academic institutions.
4. **Flexible Schedule**: Students and teacher can schedule the classes on Google Meet, Zoom, YouTube, etc. according to free time available to them which make comfortable conditions for both learner and teacher. During lockdown, teachers have to perform various tasks and training so through e-learning software they were easily doing time management. Students and teachers can agree flexibly on the specific teaching times and then meet online.

The crisis of the COVID 19 expanded collective teaching and learning for pupils, teachers, and institutions to a large extent. The student community has got the opportunity to learn from any institution in any part of the world. The teacher group has a chance to learn and teach from everyone, from any part of the globe. Besides, institutions benefit from the organization of online academic conferences, Webinars, meetings, intellectual talks, workshops, induction services, faculty development projects, etc. with the help of other institutions from the country or abroad. Although a large number of benefit we can draw from this E-learning and in future the benefit will increase by a wide range. But now country like India have to face so many challenges to implement this E-learning process with fully and efficiently. Some of the main challenges are …..

Major problem of E-learning:

1. **Student:** Due to numerous financial issues or limitations, students from Ladakh, Lakshadweep, Northeastern regions, and Bihar, among others, do not have Android smartphones or many computers or laptops. In online classes, disabled students are falling behind. Science and medical learners are unable to practice in labs and conduct experiments like they can in traditional classroom settings. As they spend a lot of time studying on their smartphones and laptops for online classes, they are dealing with a variety of health-related problems and are under stress. Students' physical health and need for long stretches of sleep are both harmed by an inconsistent schedule.
2. **Educational Institutions**: Researchers have shown that all higher education institutions, including schools and colleges, lack the necessary infrastructure to conduct technology-based online instruction and assessment. Not all faculty members from higher education institutions have the necessary training or certification to instruct using online tools. Some instructors aren't prepared for the quick transition to online teaching and learning. A non-qualified teacher's online instruction cannot meet students' expectations or learning objectives.
3. **Government**: lack of use of established procedures Similar to DIKSHA, the initiative's intended purpose was not met. The government was unable to bridge the digital divide between urban and rural communities by providing an appropriate digital infrastructure. government regulations were not clear enough for people to grasp and follow through on. Lockdown caused many employed in the informal education sector to lose their jobs, and the government was unable to address their problems or the dispute over fees between parents and educational institutions.
4. **Infrastructural problem:** Though online learning doesn't require huge buildings, big classrooms, chairs, tables, blackboards, chalk doesn't mean there are no infrastructural requirements. The need for a computer, adequate software, constant electricity and high-bandwidth internet is quite a big demand. In most developed nations, this infrastructure is available to the public through public libraries if they cannot personally afford it. But for developing countries such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and many others, this quality of infrastructure is only available to a select few percent of the population.
5. **Technical issue:** Though the new generation is proficient in working with computers doesn't necessarily translate to Digital Literacy. To proficiently learn through an online system requires understanding the workings of multiple software, which presents a huge learning curve. Also, students need to understand online communication etiquette and know student rights and responsibilities in an online learning environment. A bigger problem is with constant technical issues faced by both teachers and students on these platforms. These problems often require technical support to rectify, causing frequent disruption in the learning flow.

6. **Abundant distractions:** With recurrent technical issues, bandwidth problems and monotonous lectures, online attendance has seen a drastic dip. Most students find learning online boring and often complain of lacking the motivation to make it through a class. Even teachers often complain of a lack of tools to make the classes engaging, leading to a loss of interest from both parties. With the lack of any accountability in the online teaching method, education quality often becomes compromised.

7. **Miscellaneous:** A significant problem for both teachers and students in the remote area is the connection of energy. Inadequate Internet Penetration According to a TRAL analysis, there are 68.6 crore (49%) active internet users in India, with 138.00 crores of people, will have a significantly lower population than a fluent nation. 48.30 crore people live in urban areas, with an internet penetration rate of 64.85%. 89.70 crore people live in rural areas, with an internet penetration rate of 20.26%. There is a loss of social cohesion as a result of slow internet connectivity, which prevents professors and students from attending all of their classes online.

Conclusion

The COVID-19 crisis has impacted immensely the education sector of India. While many challenges have emerged, new opportunities have also evolved. To safeguard education from the drastic effects of the pandemic situation, it is extremely important to revisit the future of learning and the change that could be done by equal access to quality education. India is not sufficiently prepared to provide education get to all regions of the country via digital channels. This is the students who are not fortunate, like the rest, will suffer from the choice of digital channels. But various universities and schools with the help of the Government of India are still trying to get to grips with various solutions to solve these issues and dilemmas. It's only through digital technology or e-learning that quality learning can be made availableto everyone without being validated in actual classroom space. The lack of capability, technology infrastructure, and financial assets are major limitations in the implementation of e-learning in India.

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