A STUDY ON DIGITAL EDUCATION IN INDIA - SCOPE AND CHALLENGES

Prof. Afia Sultana
Assistant Professor, Jain College Bangalore.

Abstract
Digital learning has been adopted as a set of information technology in education institutions and is becoming a trend in the learning process. Education has been transformed globally in recent times due to the digital revolution which has taken place all over the globe. From a traditional method where typical Indian classrooms were featured by students attending long sessions of hours, the lecture session happened without utilization of any ICT facilities. Thanks to digital technology which has started making the life of students as well as teachers easier by being more flexible and advanced? Digital education is fun learning and gives an exposure in practical development in various fields which thereby helps boost the cognitive elements in a learner's brain. Educational institutions adopting digital education solutions, and trying to make the classroom environment more inclusive and participatory. In India, from the last few years there has been considerable rise in digital learning with all levels of education. The purpose of this research is to give an overview of digital education, its components, benefits and challenges faced in Indian society for moving towards digital education.

Keywords: digital education, virtualization, initiatives.

Introduction
With the development of mobile phones, laptops and other modern devices, things are becoming more digitized in today's era. Digital education is digital learning or technology enhanced learning (TEL). Digital education is the way of adopting education through technology or through digital devices. Digital learning occurs across all learning areas and domains.

Online education has been used as an aid to the education that is imparted in schools and colleges. Online education has moved from being a supplement to the education received in schools and colleges to becoming the primary source of education. Consequentially online education platforms saw a spike in the number of new users that were registering on these platforms. Even schools and colleges have had no other option but to make the move from the classroom to the online space. So during this boost that online education has received because of the lockdown there have been talks on what the future of online education is going to look like. While we are talking about the future, it is important for us to pause and assess the present situation of online education in India and think if online education is meeting the education needs of all Indian students? And the answer is not quite right. For this it is required to first understand that online education works perfectly well as long as we have the right technology. Even if Indians have access to smart phones, laptops and the internet, there is still a fundamental problem that we have to deal with as a country which is that of electricity. Rural India faces very irregular power supply. Only 47% of Indian homes receive a power supply of more than 12 hours. In a country with a population of over a billion people, less than half of us get more than 12 hours of electricity. With this infrastructure in hand, the need for improvement becomes ever so important so that students can access their online classes without being interrupted by constant power cuts. Apart from the gap in infrastructure that needs to be fixed, we must also remember that schools in India provide much more than education to students coming from lower income families. So while we are making progress in the field of online education, we must also remember the other services that schools provide to these students. The future of online education in India would depend on how successfully we are able to cater to the education needs of India's largely under-served rural population.

Component of Digital Education
Primarily Digital Education has 3 components:
- The content.

- The technology platforms.
- The delivery infrastructure.

For better understanding, key initiatives taken by the Indian government to boost digital education activities:
The Indian government established the National Digital Educational Architecture (NDEAR) to strengthen digital infrastructure and support activities related to education planning.

The government introduced the PM eVIDYA Programme in May 2020 to make e-learning more accessible for Indian students and teachers and promote and strengthen digital education in india.

Benefits

✓ Digital learning helps in saving the time of the educators as well as students.
✓ Helps the teacher to analyze the growth of all the students.
✓ Provides transparency in the learning possess.
✓ It is more engaging than conventional methods of learning.
✓ Tutors teach a student in a structured manner and create a safe learning environment. The Online availability of learning videos makes it easier for the learners.
✓ Digital learning provides a space for the student to learn at their own speed.
 Subject concepts and theories make any boring concept interesting as digital visuals and
✓ Graphics are used to explain concepts and theories.

Bottlenecks of Digital Learning

Learners can easily lose interest and concentration in digital mode of learning as there are no Face-to-face lectures.
There are many websites that offer digital learning without accreditation of any educational Authority which leads to fraud
There won't be a chance of professional networking, overseas experience which is considered Important parts of a course.

E-Learning Types

Internet based mode Online Learning- In this type of learning the learner can access the all study material online in form of word documents, visuals, pictures, videos with audio.
Video Conferencing- In this type of learning the learner can communicate face to face with a teacher or instructor who is seated somewhere else. In video conferencing instructors can communicate with multiple learners. As compared to other e-learning technologies this technology is costlier.
 Webinars/ Web based Learning- This type of learning is like an online seminar so it is called Web seminar/webinar. In this type of learning the instructor uses the audio, video to instruct multiple learners online as a seminar. After the whole presentation participants can ask related queries or questions. Generally this form of webinars are industry focused and very beneficial because it saves time of participants and also helps in reducing cost of travelling and other expenditure.

Challenges

Students - students from rural areas are neither having any digital device like smartphones or laptops due to financial constraints. Learners with disabilities are lacking behind with digital learning.
Educational institutions - not all educational institutes are ready to perform online technology-based education and evaluation. The teachers from educational institutions are not trained enough to teach with different methods and adopt technology.
Parents - due to lockdown people working in the informal sector lost their employability and without any source of income there was no timely payment of fees. There are huge obstacles for working parents and disadvantaged people in the rural areas.

Government - lack of implementation of standard policies. The government was not able to provide adequate digital infrastructure. Lack of clarity in the guidelines of government as people were not able to understand and follow up properly

Conclusion

Education sector in India has seen a major expansion in the last few years. While many challenges have emerged, new opportunities have also evolved. The study clearly defines the importance of digital infrastructure for smooth adoption of digital education in Indian society. There are many initiatives taken by the government for the development of digital education. Some major plans by the government to digitize academic records such as academics, degrees, diplomas, certifications. The study highlighted different challenges of digital education in an Indian society. Proper planning and measures should be adopted to overcome the challenges for the development of digital education in India.

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