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Digitalization of education- A need of the hour

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Abstract

Technology has become an integral part of the majority of people in their daily lives. Technology has played a big role in changing the way our children learn, get entertained, how they interact with their friends and how to behave in society. We are living in techno-savvy era where technology knows no bounds. This is the phase of radical development where technology is taking over every niche and corner. Smartphones, laptops and tablets are no more unknown words. During this phase the education system is evolving for the sake of betterment, as this generation's students are not born to be confined by the limits of simple learning; their curiosity is vast and cannot be catered with educational systems that were designed earlier. If we kept on teaching our children the way we taught them yesterday, we would deprive them of their tomorrow. Our old educational system lacks the capacity to stand a chance in the 21st century. So we are compelled to use digitalization in our educational system. This article aimed at analyzing the nature of the modern education process in digitalization of education and the initiatives government took in teaching-learning process in India.

Keywords: Digitalization, Technology, Education, Teaching-Learning.

1. Introduction

“Technology can become the wings that will allow the educational world to fly farther and faster than even before; if we will allow it”.

- Jenny Arledge

Digital India is an initiative by the government of India. It's aim to transform India and to empower its citizens and business. It is a large umbrella program which will restructure and transform the whole economy in the digitalized way. The objective of this policy is to make India 'A Digital Society', 'A Cashless Society' and 'A Digital Economy'. This will provide all the services online in a digital way which will promote digital literacy among the citizens. Through this initiative, all the services and information provided by the government or private players will be easily available anywhere, anytime on any device to use and secure. This program will help to improve the social, economic and environment conditions of the people through development of educational services in the information society. Based on this initiative, the government made it mandatory for the government institutions to make the cashless transactions to suppliers, buyers, consumers, public distribution authorities and the employees through net banking. This will not only secure the transactions but also save the time and bring transparency and prevent corruption in the government system. Through the technology we can connect the universities and colleges into the educational network where not only the urban but also the rural population can access the information and knowledge with the help of knowledge resource centre to develop in rural areas under the digital India program. Digital India Program is just the beginning of a digital revolution, once implemented properly, will open various opportunities for the Indian citizens and it will provide a participative, transformational and responsive system in the country.

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Digital workplace interventions: Indian universities

The technological revolution of information and communication technology (ICT) has brought a revolutionary change in the management of higher education institutions. The role, need and expectations of the students, academic and administrative staff members have been redefined (Pazhani, 2016). The students of the digital generation have become customers and they have more expectations from the universities in terms of rate of return with regard to the fee paid by them and also the employment skills they need to acquire from the university to complete in the globalised world. Integrating technology into the teaching and learning process is a great asset and benchmark for institutional excellence. To integrate the technology into the curricula has become necessary in the digital world. Teaching pedagogy in classroom has totally revamped. Students are learning from the online resources- books, journals, articles, reports, data provided by the universities. They gain information from online resources either in libraries, classrooms and seminar/ conference halls or during traveling in trains, airlines, metros and even at home. The gap in terms of access, equity and quality of education can be brought through effective use of technology.

There is a need not only to digitalization of educational information, digitalization of university's libraries but also to digitalize various support systems of universities. Universities are facing the difficulties in practical implementation of digitalization of university departments. They need to strengthen the online-admission process, teaching and learning activities, curricular activities, examination reforms, students and teachers improvement programs. The process of digitalization of educational activities transformed the Indian Universities there fold. These institutions have transformed into the learning organizations where the students, teachers and administrative staff are in the process of learning. Learning organizations are places "where people continually again education, learning environment and expand their capacities". To achieve world class standards in higher educational institutions it is necessary to have an improved collaboration, access to information available in all the parts of the world and e-governance as a security (Tiwari, 2013) [5]. The workplace of culture of the Indian universities can be digitalized through the ICT skills in following three parameters-

- E-learning
- E-libraries
- E-governance

To achieve the world class standards in the university system, it is necessary to change the workplace culture into the digital workplace culture that makes the university environment vibrant. In the digital age, the government has to empower the students, teachers and staff with ICT skills, develop their capacities through training and development and should be recognized. To transform the Indian universities into the technology based smart campuses and compete in the globalized world, the Indian universities through the initiatives of NAAC and NIRF Ranking have improved their services online and transformed them into a knowledge based network at some extent and still require to improve in the digital way of e-learning and e-governance. There is no single way to transform the universities through digital technology. It is a continuous process. It is up to the

universities to take the advantage of the digital age and stay relevant for their academics, staff and the students.

Initiatives for digitalization of education by Ministry of Human Resource Development (Kushwaha, 2018) [3]

The Government has taken various initiatives for digitalization of education. Some of these are:-

- 1) E-Pathshala, a web portal has been designed to disseminate e-resources including e-books developed by NCERT, SCERT/SIEs, State Boards.
- 2) Shagun portal has been designed to showcase the innovative and successful models implemented by all States and UTs in diverse circumstances.
- 3) The National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER) is an initiative to bring together all digital and digitisable resources across all stages of school education and teacher education.
- 4) SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active learning for Young Aspiring Minds), a Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) platform has been launched to offer various online courses for school education and higher education.
- 5) SWAYAM PRABHA DTH-TV programme for utilization of satellite communication technologies for transmission of educational e-contents through 32 National Channels has been launched.

The Central Government provides funds for implementation of various interventions of different levels of schooling at par to rural and urban area. Under SSA, there is a provision for the release of Rs. 50 lakh per district per year to the States and UTs for Computer Aided Learning (CAL) and Rashtriya Avishkar Abhiyan (RAA) to maximize ICT coverage in upper primary schools. The number of schools to be covered is decided by the concerned State/UT. An amount of Rs. 47433.24 lakh has been released under CAL and RAA components of SSA during last three years. Further, an amount of Rs. 99976.5 lakh has been released under the ICT component of RMSA during last three years to the states/UTs for creation and running of ICT facilities in secondary and senior secondary schools.

Teachers and learners should be supported in developing their use of digital technology to ensure it improves learning. Training for teachers and for learners, when it is offered, usually focuses on technology skills in using the equipment. This is not usually sufficient to support teachers and pupils in getting the best from technology in terms of their learning. On-going professional development and support to evaluate the impact on learning is likely to be required (Jha & Shenoy, 2016) [2]. The new phase of learning has begun and involves various advanced techniques like (Ainslee, 2018) [1]:

- Online courses: if a person wants to learn a new language or maybe to get trained in some specific course, but have no time to cover the distance. Online courses are developed by experts who have unmatched proficiency in their specific field and can give you the experience of real-time learning by designing their own online course.
- Online exams: Digitization gave way to the online exam, making the examination process convenient for both teachers and students.
- Digital textbooks: it is also prevalent with other names like e-textbooks and e-texts, digital textbooks provide an interactive interface in which the students have

access to multimedia content such as videos, interactive presentations, and hyperlinks.

- Animation: This is a captivating approach in which students learn in a better manner. By offering a visual representation of the topic, students grasp the concept in a more understandable manner. Even the toughest topics can be presented in a simplified way with the help of animation

Conclusion

Digitalization has no bound changed our education system, but we cannot say that it has diminished the value of our old time classroom learning. Neither do we want something so priceless to turn into dust. The best part about the digitalization of education in the 21st century is that it is combined with the aspects of both; classroom learning and online learning methods. Walking hand in hand both act as a support system to each other, which gives a stronghold to our modern students digitalization in education has also proved to be the right method for saving resources. Online examination platforms have restricted the frivolous usage of paper, directly confining the cutting down of trees. This way the digitalization of education industry in 21st century proves to be a benefit to our society.

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