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Higher education: Challenges, trends and issues in digitalization

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Abstract

This paper aims to describe the digitalization of our Indian education system for Indian. The basic challenges in higher education system in India are resistance to change, learners motivation, technological skills of learners, evaluation etc. Therefore, a new and modern way of education is required to handle such transformation arising as a result of creation of huge amount of information in a systematic manner. Digital Education can be defined as the use of a combination of technology, digital content and instruction in the education system to make it more effective and efficient than the traditional education system. Through this research paper, an attempt has been made to upcoming trends in digital education system that will shape the future of our coming generations for the better.

Keywords: Challenges, trends, digitalization, Higher education

Introduction

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

– Jenny Arledge

Education plays an important role in the development of stable and civilized society, polishing human skills, developing the personality of individuals which makes the person knowledgeable, competent and skillful. Due to globalization, there is a flow of information, knowledge, technology and people. With technology as a catalyst, education is moving from a knowledge- transfer model to a collaborative, active, self- directed, and engaging model. In the present scenario, digitalization in higher education increasing day by day.

Why digitalization in higher education?

The modes of teaching in higher education have drastically changed in last 15 years. While some old guards still stay with the “Chalk and Talk” technology, it is very rare that in these days professors do not use some modern technology in class-room delivery. Abundant information on any subject is available on such sources as Youtube, Facebook, Wikipedia, and Google. New ways of teaching may include development of new information and communication technologies such as a cable and satellite transmissions, audio and video conferencing, PC software and CD Roms and in particular the internet sources.

In India there are many institutions such as IITs and IIMs that have in recent years opened satellite campuses abroad, or have signed memorandum of understandings (MOUs) with some foreign universities to offer online education.

Benefits to academic institution

- Time and Money of the Institution will be saved.
- They can easily plan to conduct online exam and publish the exam results quickly.

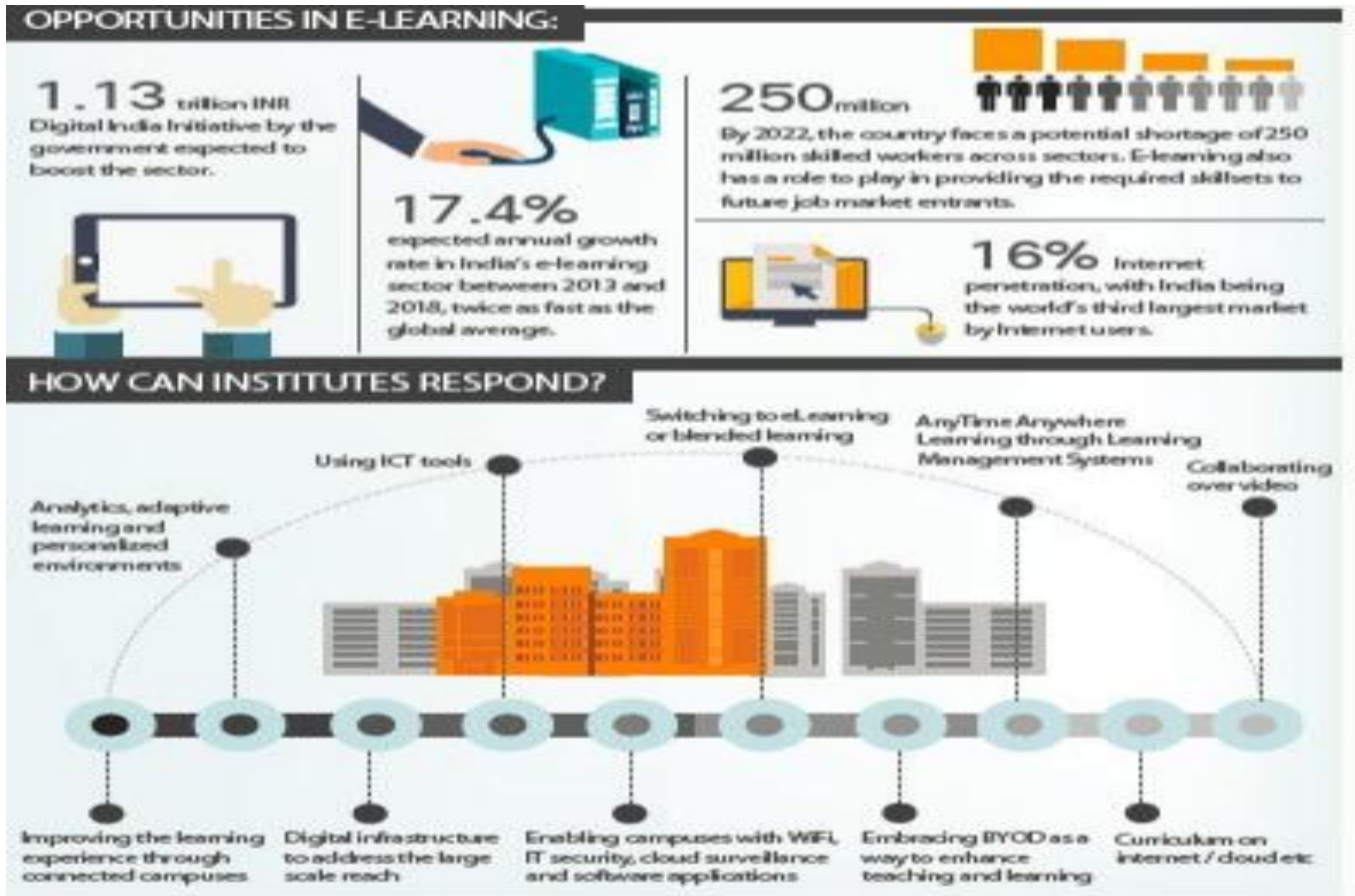
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- It makes knowledge to transfer easily and equally from teacher to each and every student with the help of effective and advanced technology based teaching tools.
- It helps in creating interest among student which will help them in learning many concepts through interactive- audio- visual teaching contents.
- Easy communication between Institution and Parents for student related academic activities.

Benefits to Students

- They can easily view their daily time- table, class assignments, any events planned school etc. from home.
- They are able to prepare projects and presentation online.



- They can give online exam and view their results.
- They can access library online.

Benefits to Parents

- They can easily pay the school fees and other activity charges.
- Easily view internal and semester exam schedule and results.
- They can get information on various school events, notices, holidays and can track the presence of ward in the classroom/ outside the class.

Benefits to Teachers

- It helps the teacher to manage their class time and teaching content effectively.
- It helps in explaining the difficult content easily and effectively.
- They can check daily time- table, assignments, teaching history, events and holiday list, self as well as student attendance etc.

Challenges in digitalization of higher education

• Resource and Internet connectivity related challenges

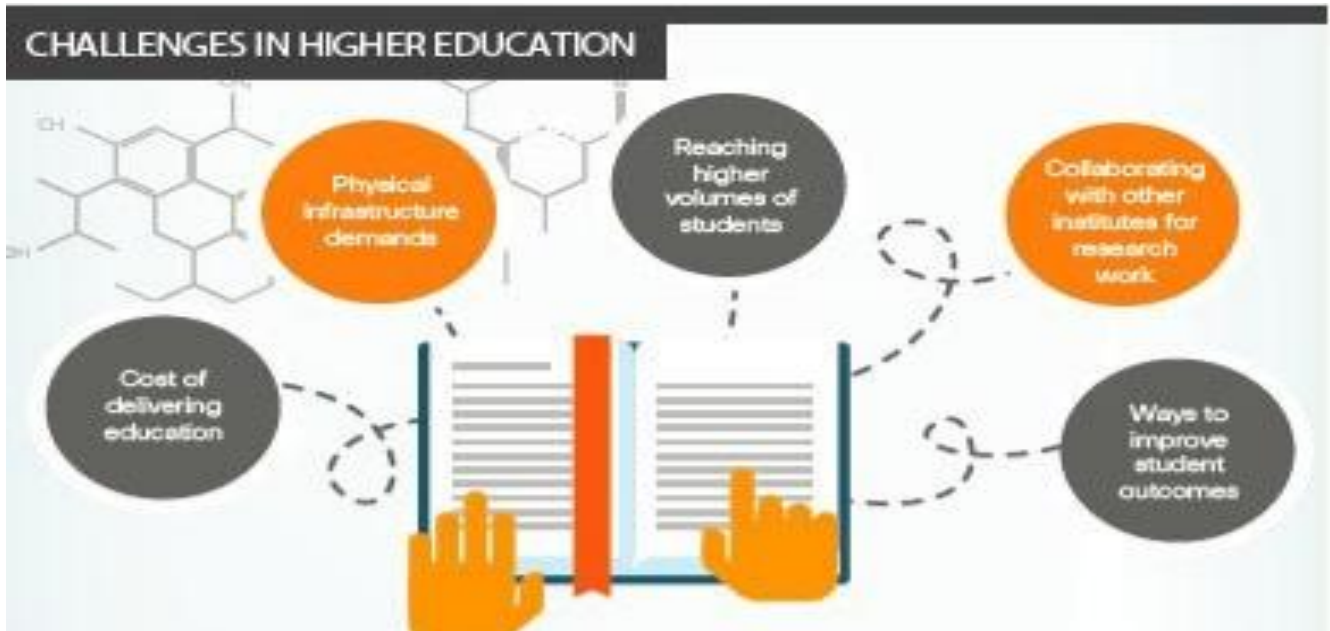
One of the main challenges for digital education in India is poor internet connectivity in rural areas and some part of urban areas. Majority of population across India has still no access to internet and a large population in rural areas is still illiterate in the field of digital technology.

• Shortage of trained teachers

A major obstacle in the use of digital education in rural areas is the lack of knowledge and skills. There is a shortage of teachers, formally trained on digital technology. In some of the academic institution in rural areas, school teacher and college professors are not interested in using digital tools for conducting classes.

• Language and content related challenges

Language is one of the main barriers for the development of digital education in India, there are several different languages in different state have been spoken all across country, pushing all the digital content in all these regional languages some time becomes difficult for the agencies.



- **Poor maintenance and upgradation of digital equipment**

In rural areas maintenance and upgradation of digital equipment is one of the major challenge. This is largely due to budgetary constraints by government. The digital education projects in rural school and colleges are not self-sustainable. An initial stage various projects have been launched by government for the development of digital education, but later they have not been taken due care for the maintenance of digital equipment which affecting the digital education development in rural areas.

- **Insufficient funds**

Digital education involves effective and efficient usage of appropriate and latest hardware and software technology available in the market. In developing countries like India, digital technology implementation into education systems is a difficult task as it requires huge funds and infrastructure. As a consequence of lower funds higher education institutions were not only cutting faculty salaries, having hiring freeze, dismantling entire departments (or some programs), but also were willing to offer more and more cost saving digital classes. So by 2013 we have this unique situation for digitalization that it must help administration save funds and simultaneously improve the quality of education.

Emerging trends of digitalization

- **Digitalized classroom/Flipped classrooms a growing trends**

A complete revolution in the way we learn today has been brought by Technology. Teachers teaching in the classroom can capture the students and the full strength in the class by digital screens, thus facilitating each child to get the same base content and input from the teachers. This feature of digital era has increased the student engagement as it combines various instructional styles. The aim of a teacher however should be to create such an atmosphere which makes every student want to study.

- **Video based learning**

Video- based learning s a part of digital marketing has geared up in Indian Education Sector and has made education engaging, entertaining and exploring. It enables learning with a pedigree of learning out of leisure with creativity, fun and entertainment on cards via the wonderful Apps, podcasts, video, interactive software, e books and online interactive electronic boards. Children are excited and operative with interest to manage the showcase via their intelligence, exploring the weak techno skills of teachers and assist them in public with pride and honour.

- **Massive open online course (MOOCS) & Other distant learning programs**

A massive open online course (MOOC) is an online course aimed at unlimited participation and open access via the web. India is considered to be the biggest market for MOOCs in the world after the USA. Since the population of India is huge, massive open online course (MOOC) are said to gateways for a lot of Indians in term of bringing an educational revolution. Online distant learning programs give a great opportunity to avail high quality learning with the help of internet connectivity.

Conclusion

Digitalization has no doubt changed our education system, but we cannot say that it has diminished the value of our old time classroom learning. The best part of digitalization of education in the 21st century is that it is combined with the aspects of both; classroom learning and online learning methods. This way the digitization of education industry in the 21st century proves to be a boon to our society.

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