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## e-Education in India-Trends and future perspective

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### Abstract

This paper examined the relevance of electronic education, its effects on effective actualization of distance learning programmes in India by defining the concept of electronic education in improving standard of the learning process. It also discussed the problems of this form of education. This includes technological expertise that supplements traditional classroom training with web-based components and learning environments where the educational process is experienced online. This paper reflects the importance of e-learning in higher education with its extent and growth in Indian LIS education. An overview of the National Policy on Education on electronic education and its initiatives in Indian educational system was discussed. Also, it elaborated on the importance of virtual library and ICT in effective distance education programmes and concluded by suggesting the way forward in improving electronic education system for advancement of distance education in India.

**Keywords:** e-Education, India-Trends, electronic education

### Introduction

The term "e-education" refers to the application of Internet technology to the delivery of learning experiences. E-education takes place in formal electronic classrooms, on corporate intranets used for just-in-time training, audio and video teleconferencing and in a variety of other technology-mediated learning spaces. The primary tools of e-education are e-mail, e-meetings, e-expeditions, and the methodologies of a pedagogy known as e-learning. In a society the student generation must be positively influenced by the imparters of education who have a higher moral, ethical and social responsibility. They have to realize the importance of technology and have to be well aware how to teach the future leader. They need to be technology better equipped. Annually, the demand for higher education is growing globally and India is no exception to it. Infact, in India, the number of applicants is three to five times as against the number of seats in any institution of higher education. Therefore, need arises for such a system, which will help to reach to the maximum number of learners and 'e-learning' is the solution for it. E-Learning is the experience that is delivered or enabled by electronic technology. The delivery of learning or content can be over the intranet, extranet or over the Internet, via CD-ROM, interactive TV, or satellite broadcast (Wagner, 2008). With the passage of time, student's number is exploding on university campuses. The universities have been averse to change their programs, both in content and delivery. Due to the growing Indian economy, India has a chance to become heart of e-learning programs. There are many e-learning classes which are coming to India to build and develop e-learning infrastructure. E-learning does not seem to replace the conventional classrooms with black boards but it seems to coexist with the already existing system. This system rather promises to reach to far off rural areas in India where education is still a looming darkness. The chances of e-learning to strengthen the educational system in India are very high. Furthermore the Government has also come forward undertaking the programs of upgrading the technical quality of the fresh graduates inciting them to go into research and teaching professions. E-learning is fast growing and seems to take control of the world because of its advantages (Saha, 2010 towards providing quality distance learning to more people in urban and rural areas, through the utilization of more effective web resources and practices. The major hindrance to the acceptance of e-learning can be attributed to the Indian mindset that is more inclined to traditional classroom teaching. The visibility of e-learning is currently limited to IT and educational CDs, but With PC penetration and overall online accessibility increasing in the country, the future of e-learning looks promising, provided

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the organization of content and delivery is well-structured.

### **Trends of e-education**

The technological trends of e-learning today are enormous and growing with very rapid pace. In this competitive world everyday some new trend is emerging to provide good learning techniques to the learner, among the popular technological e-learning Trends these are some listed:-

#### **Mobile Learning**

Mobile learning is the ability of an individual to obtain or provide educational content on personal pocket devices such as PDAs, Smartphone's and mobile phones. These devices with access to internet connection or with the availability of the resources on itself will be a great source of e-learning. Today everyone has smart mobile phones on which huge memory and faster internet availability can be achieved and this makes the user to learn anything he desire at any time and in any place. These devices are so portable that as if they walk with the user and never be a hurdle to carry them from one place to another. Mobile learning apps are also great source of this kind of learning. Mobile learning has a great role to accomplish the success of e-learning in a country not only like India but also in many developing countries of the world. Mobile phones are considered to be best platform for e-learning because:

- Potential to reach masses.
- Carried all the time.
- Easy to use.
- Cheap.
- Just in time learning

#### **Micro Learning**

Micro learning is a way of teaching and delivering content to learners in small, very specific bursts. The learners are in control of what they are learning and when they are learning. Typically designed and delivered in rich media formats; it is a learner-centric approach that provides just-in-time training that is available on multiple devices. All these aspects ensure that it can be easily accessed, quickly completed, and easily applied by the learners. The main benefits of this kind of learning are:

- Accessible.
- Rich media.
- Less time consuming.
- Just-in-time
- Learner-centric
- Less time consuming.

#### **Micro Learning also provides huge benefits to business environments like:**

- Affordable and agile.
- Shorter development cycle.
- Easy to update.
- Wider application.
- High impact.

#### **Cloud based E-Learning**

This type of e-learning is creating ripples in the field of education and business. These e-learning systems are hosted on the internet and can be easily accessed by logging into a service provider's site. Rather than installing all the software and course on user's or learner's computer, the instructional

designers will simply use their internet browsers to upload course content, create new courses, and communicate with learners and users directly. This is all done by learner management system, which also gives the designer the ability to store information on the cloud, which can be remotely accessed by other, approved users. Here are some notable advantages of using this type of e-learning methodology. They are

- Faster deployment
- Cost predictability.
- Easier to maintain.
- More storage space.
- Fully customizable and scalable.
- Learner oriented service request.

Learning at the speed of need – Access to online learning material & digital content through various devices

Today, due to hi-tech network and multimedia, the education sector has emerged as a fast developing field. Another prominent result of the use of technology in education is that there is an extensive change in the teaching and learning methods, styles, and content across many schools in India. Today, students use a unique form of technology called cloud technology wherein they can easily submit and review their assignment regularly. When a school includes such facilities in a digital learning environment, the classroom becomes much more comfortable and welcoming to students. With computers and digital elements in classrooms, students feel studying more enjoyable. The aim of a teacher however should be to create such an atmosphere which makes every student want to study. Moreover, considering that the young students today are usually surrounded by computers, iPads and mobiles, bringing the same technology into the classrooms makes them feel easy and acquainted.

#### **Video based learning picking up pace in India**

Video-based learning makes education engaging, entertaining and exploring. The interactive preface of this segment ignites learning with a pedigree of learning out of leisure with creativity, fun and entertainment on cards via the wonderful Apps, podcasts, videos, interactive software, ebooks 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 and recognition. Now the classes are student-friendly, student-operated and info-packed.

#### **Popularity of online courses – MOOCs & Other distant learning programs**

Talking about the popularity of MOOCs in India, India is the second biggest market for MOOCs in the world, after the USA. It is however expected that India in the coming years will supersede the USA. Our country has the second largest population in the world after China and is the third in terms of university enrollment worldwide. Respectively, the USA and China are first and second for university enrollment at the moment but this may soon change.

MOOCs have opened the gateways for a lot of Indians in terms of being part of an educational revolution. It gives a great opportunity to avail high quality learning with the help of internet connectivity. Two foremost reasons as to why MOOCs is a good idea in India is millions of Indians live in

poverty and are unable to afford or gain access to a higher education and secondly there are more applicants than seats in the Indian Universities.

### **Game based learning is creating a buzz in the K12 sector**

Game based learning creates an environment where the learners easily relate themselves to and get involved. The world we have today is cultivating children who are more than just well aware of both the developments in their surroundings and their skills and abilities.

Transforming the k-12 sector, game based learning undoubtedly will revolutionize the education world products and give us a better self-trained genext.

### **Cons**

1. Crowd funding may not comply with FSA regulations (Financial Services Authority) – there seems to be ways around this by offering freebies and discounts to investors
2. You may not raise all the funds required – if the total cash asked for is not taken up, then the transaction is not completed
3. The product is the focus and not the business model – no business plan or financial projections are usually included so how would anyone know how it would make money?
4. Entrepreneurs can put in less money – if there is less ‘skin in the game’, anyone can offer up any madcap idea
5. No due diligence – since there is less chance for meeting investors and their thorough questioning, the business idea won’t be tested properly
6. Hundreds of investors – instead of one or two knowledgeable investors, you may end up with hundreds of non-experts, which is difficult to manage
7. High risk of startups – nonprofessional investors may not understand that 9 out of 10 startups can fail and stand to lose all their money
8. Intellectual property can be at risk – you cannot protect your business idea when it is described online for all to read
9. No track record of returns – with so many investments proliferating and the majority bound to fail, crowd funding will gain a bad reputation and be more tightly regulated in future
10. Amount of funding small – crowd funding is not suitable if you’re seeking to raise millions

### **Pros**

1. Better for small projects, artists and non-profits – great way for such projects to raise money
2. Reduces the time and effort to raise money – fundraising is time-consuming and tedious and crowd funding can cut through that
3. Opens up the market for small investors – probably the only way small investors can look at funding startups that are not by friends and family
4. Opens up new funding sources for small business – with bank funding more difficult to obtain, crowd funding has enabled more funding for the smaller business
5. More ideas get funded – helps the economy and encourages entrepreneurship

### **e- Education: Future Prospects**

Looking at the current trends, it is expected that online higher education market will witness considerable growth in the next five years and aid in distance learning programmes. However, since these courses are limited to theoretical content currently, adoption of virtual classroom concepts could bring a practical component in the online medium.

Apart from that, more number of students, especially from tier 2 and 3 cities are expected to adopt different online channels to prepare for competitive exams. This is considering the limited options available for offline test preparation at these places.

Hybrid model is expected to gain traction in future, where online players are expected to open offline centers to provide classroom-like experience to students. Also, gamification, the approach of introducing fun elements like video game design in learning, is likely to gain popularity in India. As per the report, some players have already started entering the space in order to enhance engagement of learners.

e-learning in India: Compared to an almost 80 per cent literacy rate in urban India, that in rural areas is only 56 percent. Further, the average teacher: student ratio at primary level is 1:58 in rural regions (Choubey, 2009). Perfection and improvement of connectivity is another area of concern. India needs to increase penetration in terms of PCs and communication lines for any e-Learning project to be successful. The soaring cost of ownership, which proves to be a hurdle, needs to be lowered. Following steps could help in arresting the above problems:

- The Service providers, including the Government need to cut the tariff levels. As the field becomes more and more competitive, this is bound to happen.
- The government needs to stimulate a learning culture and e-learning must become a policy issue. Government must distinguish the e-learning industry as a separate forum and not treat it as part of the IT enabled services (Its) or a sub sector of the IT industry.
- Use of open source software will not only be cost effective but can also meet the localized demands for the vast linguistic diversity of India. Further, open source software can also be used on old hardware.

### **Conclusion**

E-learning is emerging as the future trend of learning in India would be dominant in the times ahead. E-Learning has created new dimensions in education, both within and beyond the curriculum and is still looking at further opportunities of becoming more practical. A word of concern at this juncture would serve good. Though, e-learning seems to be a solution for an absent teacher, deploying such an atmosphere would be requiring much thought. Both the instructor and the learner need to shift their methods of teaching and learning. Educational Institutions need to have suitable strategies in place for successful deployment of the e-learning process. But, callit Web-based Training (WBT) or Border-less Education; e-learning is here to stay. I strongly believe that e-learning will soon substitute classroom learning in India.

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