A STUDY ON THE AWARENESS AND E-LEARNING EXPERIENCES AMONG PG STUDENTS ON SWAYAM PORTAL

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ABSTRACT:

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are the key drivers of technological innovations in online teaching in education in India. Ministry of Human Resource Development has launched the indigenous MOOC platform SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active-Learning for Young Aspiring Minds). The introduction of SWAYAM courses is to provide easy access, equity, and quality education to all. The success of the SWAYAM portal depends on awareness about this portal among the pupils and its scope in enhancing lifelong learning skills. This study is intended to discover awareness and learning experiences of e-learning on the SWAYAM among PG students of Rani Channamma University, Belagavi, and factors influencing the utilization of SWAYAM/ MOOCs by students. The students only who have been enrolled in SWAYAM courses are considered for the study. The study reveals that there is high awareness onthe SWAYAM/MOOCs among students. Very few students have enrolled in courses in different subjects. The study concluded that there is a need to encourage students to adopt MOOCs as a learning resource. This will need a collaborative effort between Faculty, University Departments, and also Academicians. There is a need for Industry, Academic Institutions to promote the acceptability of certification provided by SWAYAM in the job market.

Key Answers: MOOCs, SWAYAM, ICT skills, e-learning,

INTRODUCTION:

There is shortage of qualified faculty in India and resource crunch in setting up physical infrastructure. To reach out the learners at mass scale, MOOCs seems to be a viable solution. However instead of emulating the western world we need to design a solution that suits best with the country's pressing need to impart quality mass education.

Online learning refers to learning with the help of internet and a computer. Broadly the mode of online learning can be categorized under distance education. Distance education is an educational program where learners complete all or a part of educational program in a geographical location apart from the

institution hosting program. In online education both facilitator and the learner reside in different locations, and this mode of learning does not require physical class room, while internet and a computer facilitate the process of teaching and learning.

TRENDS IN THE USAGE OF INTERNET IN INDIA.

Significant advancements are being made in online education in India as a result of its exponentially developing technology. With a population of over 1.3 billion and the availability of high-speed internet and smartphones, India has a massive base of technologically driven consumers as the educational landscape shifts in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The low-cost data revolution and the government's digital push have made access to the internet more diverse and inclusive. India now has more rural internet users than urban internet users. For the first time in 2019, rural users outnumbered those in urban areas (227 million and 205 million, respectively). Of those rural internet users, 58 percent fell within the ages of 16-29 in the first quarter of 2019, indicating a prime demographic for access to online education.

SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active –Learning for Young Aspiring Minds):

SWAYAM, the Government of India initiated the programme is deliberate to attain the three-cardinal ideology of Education Policy such as access equity and quality. The main objectives of this programme are to take the maximum teaching, learning resources to all learners. This program is done with the IT platform that makes it possible hosting of all the courses including Class 9th to post-graduation are trained in the classrooms can be accessed anywhere, at any time, and by anyone. All the courses are prepared by the best teachers all over the country and in India are freely available to everyone.

With the help of Microsoft, SWAYAM Programme is developed by MHRD (Ministry of HumanResource Development) in collaboration with nine National Coordinating Institutions would be ultimately able of hosting 2000 courses and 80000 hours of online learning such as covering school, under-graduate, post-graduate, engineering, law, and so many professional courses are available on SWAYAM.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Empirical studies on different aspects of online learning programmes have been conducted abroad as well as in India like student engagement in studies, learners support facilities, and outcome of online studies. In a study on student engagement and blended learning, **(Vaughan, 2014)** the students perceived high value of using collaborative learning applications through online education, **Martin and Parker (2014)** revealed that the instructors of online education adopted virtual classroom strategies to reach distance learners and to promote interactivity in teaching-learning activities. **Maboe (2016)** highlighted the interactive learning facilities of student-to-student contact and student-to-teacher contact through online education. In this study, only 3.8 percent of the students had participated in online discussions. Regarding teacher's role in online education **Duncan and Barnett (2009)** has conducted a study, it was revealed that there was a rare engagement in pedagogical dialogue in online education. **Tello's (2007)** study reveals that the absence of social interaction and the presence of instructors came on the way of students completing online studies. **Levy, (2003)** highlighted the need for learner support activities beyond an instructor or help desk through an online programme.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY: The specific objectives of the present study are-

❖ To find out the awareness of MOOCs and SWAYAM platform among PG students of Rani Channamma University, Belagavi.

❖ To assess factors influencing utilization of SWAYAM/ MOOCs by students.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY:

The study is of descriptive survey cum ex-post-facto in nature. Students pursuing Post graduation from different departments of Rani Channamma University, Belagavi were treated as the population of the study for objectives one and two. For objective, three to eight students who are enrolled and completed the MOOC/SWAYAM course in different subjects were included in the study. A convenient sampling technique was adopted for the study. A total of five hundred students who were pursuing regular PG courses and enrolled in the SWAYAM portal were selected as samples. Data was collected using a self-designed questionnaire and an information schedule. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert- scale. 30 close-ended and 2 open-ended items have been selected to understand the perception, attitude, and learning experiences of the students towards the ICT initiative of MHRD i.e., SWAYAM-Indigenous platform of MOOCs.

VARIABLES OF THE STUDY

In the present study courses offered under SWAYAM Programme were considered as an independent variable, whereas the learning experiences of PG students enrolled in different courses of SWAYAM were considered as the dependent variables. Whereas, Gender, Locality, Medium of Instruction, and Stream were treated as moderator variables.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

Hypothesis1: There is no significant difference between male and female students' opinion

with respect to MOOCs/SWAYAM platform and its dimensions namely;

● Opinion on Use of Online Courses

● Opinion on Learning Resources Aspects

● Opinion on the Technological Aspects

● Learner's Engagement in Learning the Course

● Opinion on the Knowledge and Skills gained through the Course

Hypothesis2: There is no significant difference between Kannada and English medium

students' pinion with respect to MOOCs/SWAYAM platform and its dimensions namely;

● Opinion on Use of Online Courses

● Opinion on Learning Resources Aspects

● Opinion on the Technological Aspects

● Learner's Engagement in Learning the Course

● Opinion on the Knowledge and Skills gained through the Course

POPULATION, SAMPLE, AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE:

For the present study, the students studying in different PG departments of Rani Channamma University, Belagavi for the academic year 2020-21 were considered as the population of the study.

The sample of Five hundrend students was selected using Convenient sampling, a non-probability sampling Technique, because of ease of the sample availability and proximity to the investigator. The investigator has to complete the study in a short time; therefore, it is found that convenient sampling is most appropriate for this study. Students from various departments of Rani Channamma University, Belagavi who are enrolled in SWAYAM courses are chosen as samples of the study.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED IN THE STUDY

After the data had been collected, it was entered and processed by using Microsoft Excel - 2010 Software. To fulfill the objectives, hypotheses and purposes were tested by using the Independent Sample t-test, ANOVA, AND POSTHOC (Tukey HSD test) test and the results obtained thereby have been interpreted.

FINDINGS

H1: Results between Male and female students' opinion with respect MOOCs/SWAYAM platform and its dimensions

1. Female students have a higher opinion on MOOC/SWAYAM platform as compared to male students.
2. Female students have a higher opinion on Use of Online Courses as compared to male students.
3. Female students have a higher opinion on Learning Resources Aspects as compared to male students.
4. Female students have higher Opinions on Technological Aspects as compared to male students.
5. There is no difference in the opinion of male and female students about the dimension of the Learner's Engagement in Learning the Course.
6. Female students have higher Opinions on the knowledge and skills gained through the course as compared to male students.

H2. Results of Kannada and English medium students' opinion with respect to MOOCs/SWAYAM Platform and its Dimensions.

1. It is observed that (Mean N=112, M=112.99) English Medium students have a higher opinion on MOOC/SWAYAM platform as compared to (Mean N=301, M=116.67) Kannada Medium students.
2. English medium students have a higher opinion on Use of Online Courses as compared to Kannada medium students.
3. English medium students have a higher opinion on Learning Resources Aspects as compared to Kannada medium students.
4. There is no difference in the opinion of Kannada and English medium students about dimension Opinion on Technological Aspects.
5. There is no difference in the opinion of Kannada and English medium students about dimension Learner's

Engagement in learning the course.

6. There is no difference in the opinion of Kannada and English medium students about dimension Opinion on the Knowledge and Skills gained through the Course.

CONCLUSION:

SWAYAM has its positive way of producing and bringing out young talented minds to society. The result shows that PG students have enthusiasm towards acquiring the knowledge and skills through online courses because it saves their time and helps them to learn on their own time. The e-content can be viewed at any time until the students understand the concepts. they said that they can download the PDF files and PPTs uploaded as course material. The result shows that female respondents are more involved in doing the online courses where male respondents are not so active in online courses. They opined that though SWAYAM courses work at no cost there was no proper guidance about these courses for them. Many of them have been discontinued the courses in the middle of the session because of their busy schedule of academic activities. The learners prefer to complete courses thatprovide them with certificates. The survey reveals that learners are interested in the SWAYAM programme that provides new knowledge and supports life-long learning.

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