Perception and acceptance of online education compared to traditional means in India

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Abstract –

The online education market currently in India stands at USD 247 Million and is expected to grow by 5x. While we can see the development of the industry, we can likewise observe that a large portion of the students/learners is currently enhancing their primary and secondary education, test/entrance exams, reskilling, and accreditations through online methods. This shows there is a fair number of people who presently acknowledge the framework. While tuitions and learning at a school were the systematic framework, the change has been driven by online educational platforms. As indicated by the examination that I have led over the market, the pattern recommends that the number of individuals opting for the web instruction are just expanding at an extremely high rate. With the introduction of online educational platforms like Byjus, Jaro, Vedantu, Simplilearn, and so forth, there are many supplements to oblige both students and parents to the needs of students. It very well may be summarized that online instruction has endured and has been acknowledged; this is setting down deep roots and development. To pick up the trust and unwavering factor among the customers, different methodologies, such as freemium model and free trials, are being advanced by the players in the market to empower online learning among students and working experts. And so forth, a considerable number of students and guardians are moving toward them, and they can oblige their requirements. The situation of lockdown due to pandemic (Covid19) had posed a challenge to the online education system if they are capable of managing such a high need. One needs to really applaud the way online platforms tackled such a problem and made this convenient for the students. This shows the real capability that this online platform on the whole has. With the introduction of virtual classrooms and webinars, individuals have accepted it as a partial alternative to the traditional approach.

The exploration is led to remembering student's points of view and the acknowledgment of learners towards internet learning.

Introduction -

India has a multi-layered formal education system, which includes primary and secondary schools, graduation, post-graduation, and diploma courses. The schools are either governed by CBSE, ICSE, State, and International Bodies. We have one of the largest education systems in the world and are mostly dominated by private players.

Informal education includes coaching classes, vocational training, pre-primary schools, and technology-based educational courses, which act as a supplement/substitute for the formal education system. The informal education market in India is one of the largest in the world.

The online platform providers play a significant role in the online education ecosystem. Online players play a pivotal role in providing content and curation. C2C business model has emerged where the teachers and students can now be connected online.

The traditional system of education has a teacher in the centre with students surrounded. Online learning flips this model and puts the student in the centre. It helps in transforming the learning experience.

Today around 70% of the students have access to smartphones and are expected to penetrate at a high rate. This will help students from rural or urban areas have equal learning opportunities and access to the best teachers.

The current user database for online education includes 1. School Students 2. Working Professionals. The primary and secondary education sectors are filled with school students, whereas the test preparation and reskilling courses are usually chosen by the working professionals to meet the industry requirements.

It can be easily observed that technology has unlocked the power of education beyond imagination. With the

advancement of technology, online education has discovered its potential and will soon proliferate. Online courses or programs have been offered by most of the institutions in India to encourage distance education among students and professionals. In the higher education sector, many online tutorials have emerged in order to help students gain better knowledge and access to subjects taught. On the other hand, students are demanding various online courses to their universities, and the colleges are working to meet their demands. Many questions are being asked about Online education – whether it is viable? What is the integrity of online learning from the student's perspective?

The traditional technique is the classroom learning approaches content taught in the classroom at a particular time by a specific lecturer or a teacher, which was then supported by assignments and readings. With the development of technology and online education, learning has evolved. Access to content, quizzes, and teaching is unlimited. Online learning is known to have a more significant advantage over traditional due to factors like accessibility, location, and timing, although Blended learning has become the pattern for most of the students—the adoption of technology (online learning) with face-to-face instructions given by a professor.

Market drivers like Byjus, Jaro education, Coursera, etc. have made a significant impact in the field of online learning & distance education. They offer tutorials for classes from 1- K12, NEET, UPSC, MBA, Certificate courses too. The main transition is that the parents are now openly accepting online education. They are encouraging their dear ones to learn online and enhance the current skillset. Moreover, the traditional "tuition" has now gone virtual. Students have started accepting online learning, as it has varied advantages than that of physical mentoring.

The increased and improved access to smartphones in the major cities and the advancement that the internet has made have opened up a large field of information that is effectively accessible on the internet. With innovation ascending the stepping stool of proficiency in each area, the biggest addressable audience, primary and secondary education, longs for new aptitudes. With the constrained limits of the traditional method of teaching, significant urban areas are being prepared to mollify the education-hungry students and professors/experts. The introduction of niche subjects includes culinary administration, digital law, dental preparation, and so forth. Tier 3 and 4 urban areas will benefit from these changes and energize the advancement of online training.

With a satisfactory progression, a convincing structure hybrid education framework has risen to synergize the division. Repetitive practices in education hinder understanding a subject to its most substantial degree, something that can be just enhanced by the digitization of substance. The reaction towards digitization of content has been delighting as not just understudy of Tier I or Tier II, yet in addition, understudies of Tier III urban communities are likewise taking advantage of online training. The bounty inaccessibility of the internet, with its pocket inviting estimating, has opened up roads for understudies to assimilate this critical apparatus. With time we are set to reform education to its most genuine sense.

Parents, on the other hand, have started testing the online tutorials on their students to know if the system helps their students increase their knowledge base. Many parents & students have inculcated the habit of online tutorials instead of traditional tutoring as they find it accessible, time-worthy, and useful in terms of student progression. Many parents have seen their dear ones perform better in their studies after inculcating the habit of online tutoring. In many parts of India, students & teachers have started accepting online education and learning. As the pandemic hit almost the whole world, in India, the knowledge was done virtually. This brought in a change in the pattern of studying, and experience, where most of the students felt virtual, learning is a better means as it is convenient, quality content, and unlimited access.

Literature Review -

According to the KPMG report which was published in May 2017 –

The main three categories recognized to grow by 2021 -

Reskilling and Online Certifications – In 2017, this is the largest category at USD 93Million

Primary and secondary supplemental education – This is going to be the largest category by 2021 growing at CAGR 60%

Test preparation – The fastest-growing group by 2021 will be test preparation, which is expected to grow at 64% CAGR.

It was also stated that the motivational factors for Indian Students to adopt online learning were – perceive convenience, the flexibility of courses, and a commencement date and variety of study material.

While accessing courses online, students prefer Laptops over mobile phones. This shows that students want to study while having a big screen.

KPMG report states the future of online education –

1. To enhance user engagement, gamification concepts will be enhanced. This will help the user acquire and improve knowledge. Gamification helps in incentive-based learning, levels, simulation of ideas.
2. Adopting of Hybrid Channel approach – Collaborating online and offline channels to

provide universal content and learning. The online players must enhance offline touchpoints for the students. Offline players must improve their online element by providing varied courses and content.

3. Online education evolves the concept of continuous learning – It helps employability, social knowledge, and entrepreneurship.

4. Changing the business model/evolving the model with changed consumer behaviour – For example – proves internships and projects while a student pursues the course to enhance his/her knowledge and experience.

5. Technological innovations – Big data and artificial intelligence will help assist customizable content for every student. Also, data storage on the cloud as the content can be consumed anytime and anywhere.
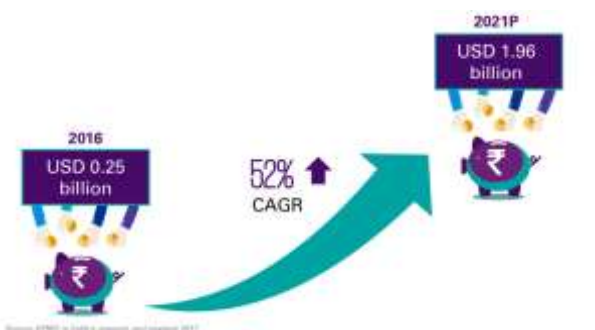
By 2021, the online education ecosystem is expected to grow by USD 1.96 Billion due to increased customer adoption, improvements in product offerings, and changes made in the current business model. The paid user database is expected to increase in huge numbers.

A few market characteristics which are expected in future are -

1. Enhanced customer experience and support will attract students towards online platforms.
2. Self-driven users are going to research courses extensively online before they make a purchase decision.
3. Customer retention can be gained by value-added services like internships, career counselling, and industry interaction.
4. Online players might move towards blended courses – offline touchpoints
5. To build practical knowledge, live projects, and real-time job offerings will help in enhancing user retention.
6. In rural areas, government initiatives are expected to be enabled.
7. Freemium model is to be retained before the user makes the purchase.

Growth Drivers of Online education –

1. Online education provides low-cost alternatives –

The cost of infrastructure is minimal, and the student database is extensive, which helps reduce prices via the online channel.
The online skill enhancement courses are 53% cheaper than offline alternatives.

2. Provides quality education to potential students – The number of enrolments in the open course and distance learning rise in India and is expected to reach 10 million. The areas where the quality of offline education is low, adoption of non-traditional methods is encouraged.

3. Industry relevant training –
Employment is based on the skills and knowledge that the industry requires. Hence, the reskilling and certification courses will help the students meet the criteria that the industry has kept, and the unemployment level will be minimal.

4. Government initiative to drive adoption of online learning –
Government initiatives like SWAYAM, E-Basta will enable the infrastructure needed by students to study online.

5. Increased number of internet penetration in India –
The increase in the penetration in the semi-urban and rural areas is providing and will provide high potential for growth.
The projected users are about 735 million by 2021.

6. Growing number of smartphone penetration –
The numbers are expected to be around 180 million smartphone users by end of 2021. This means that access to education through phones is going to increase at high speed.

7. Increase in the disposable personal income –
The disposable income of India is expected to increase at around 55%.

8. Young market, broad audience –
Nearly 40% of India's population is between the age of 15-40.
This is the target market as young people with high aspirations, and low income will help grow the online learning market in India.
The acceptability of online education is high among young people.

Taking forward from the projection given by KPMG, I wanted to present my opinions and convey how the present generation has

accepted it since 2017 and what potential it will have in the future.

Analysis –

By observing the literature review conducted, we can analyse and interpret a few trends in the online education segment –

1. The number of consumers in the online education market has been increasing. The number is expected to grow by 5x by the end of 2021.
2. Online education acts as a supplement to the traditional means of education. Instead of opting for the old school tuitions, online tutorials have been accepted by most of the households in the urban area.
3. The main motivational factors for learners to opt for online education are – convenience, quality content, and the flexibility of time. The coaching can be paused and repeated until the learner is satisfied.
4. Online education helps evolve the concept of continuous learning. The learner can enhance his knowledge and skillset by enrolling in various courses.
5. The Freemium model is usually a plus point as it builds the trust factor among the consumers before they make a purchase.
6. The target market is usually the young audience, 18-40 years who are willing to try new things and accept changes.
7. Pandemic (Covid19) was a challenge for the players in the market as the whole world went virtual. These players could still serve their consumers and attract new consumers in no time. This shows the calibre and reliability to an extent where they can reach in attracting online consumers.
8. Online education with the help of government initiative is now accepted in semi-urban and rural parts of India.
9. Based on the above evidence, which has been stated earlier, we can totally say that the performance of the student in terms of understanding, grasping and applying the gained knowledge from these online resources has increased tremendously.
10. The reliability of these resources, which are available at any given point of time, can be reviewed any number of times. Continuous test strategies have been the significant backbones for such good success in catering to the students.

Scope for further research –

Presently the online system of education is only concentrating on better tutoring and one-to-one coaching. However, for the formal degree certificate, the online credits are still now accepted by various governing bodies.

Online education can be complete when online players can provide a formal degree, which is accepted by all the bodies governing the education system.

IGNOU is an open university that acts as an alternative as it provides a formal degree after completion of an online course, which is accepted up to a certain extent because the government establishes it.

The online players must come up to a stage of acceptance though they are private and not governed.

Further research can be conducted based on why the traditional technique is still the go-to-means for Indians.

Conclusion –

Tuition culture is predominant in India, with around 71 million students taking up tuitions to improve and uplift their education. The main challenge which is being faced is creating a truly personalized learning experience and utilizing technology to its fullest. Although people are migrating and completing courses online, there is a corporate stigma attached to it that people often look down upon an online certification, rather than a conventional classroom certification. Although this sentiment is arbitrary, sometimes it could act as a payload in a learner's resume. With the rise of online learning, the reachability of training has expanded and can consider the requirements of urban, semi-urban, and rural zones (with the help of government). The analysis of the entire area likewise shows that the number of students picking a course is expanding indefinitely in India. The pattern of peer recommendation, acknowledgment by parents, and student development have demonstrated a significant event in the manner education is being consumed. The elements like convenience, quality substance, improved innovation are the inspirations for students to settle on online training over traditional strategies. Along these lines, to place it more or less, online instruction and learning has made due in India and is being acknowledged at a high rate by the majority of the levels. Although one has to agree that online education technology is still is in its infancy.

Nevertheless, it has impacted drastically in the way India learns today. Looking at the calibre this platform holds, the more people get accustomed to this platform brings the better potential out of it. The market is relied upon to develop and exceed expectations, as the segment's players can consider the students' requirements inside no time. The freemium model methodology towards building trust has helped them develop and get by in the market. The

buyers are presently sure and adjusting towards the arrangement of online training. In conclusion, I could say that the online education system is a new revolution that has excellent potential with a variety of benefits, and it requires some time for people to get habitual, to see unleash its correct calibre.

References –

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