CHALLENGES AND CURRENT PERSPECTIVE OF ONLINE LEARNING IN THE INDIAN ECONOMY: A REVIEWED STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Digital platforms for learning and education in India have always been considered material substitutes for classroom teaching. Due to the emergence of globalization shifting from offline to online education sector became more competitive and challenging. In the last decades, the compatibility in the use of internet electronic platforms and media seems to have increased to learn in a particular web-based platform. This apparent one such term is an Online Learning Environment and it can be supposed that all technical terms used in learning can be referenced by Online Learning. This paper comprises three parts- the present scenario, challenges, and future perspective in the context of online learning in the Indian economy. This research paper aims to understand the contribution of online learning, and then identify the issues and challenges that users may face (institutions, students, teachers) and its prospects in India. This paper has a conceptual study of research based on secondary data and relevant literature reviews.

KEYWORDS: online learning, scenario, challenges, prospects, objectives

INTRODUCTION

Education taking place over the internet is an online learning and refers to e-learning. Online learning is not as like traditional classroom learning but it is one type of distance learning. The intense use of the internet and the development of technology have changed the lives of people and brought a huge change in various fields where education is one of them. (Nadikattu,2020). Indian schools have developed an online learning system to provide a meaningful and continuous learning experience for students. The Internet plays a vital role in our daily lives, dictating our social lives, teaching, and learning. As the Internet has developed into a significant educational tool, online education presents many opportunities and resources for the educator and

the learner to access through numerous resources. During the last decade, online education used in various types often called distance education or web-based education has become an important part of many university programs.

Online learning is the newest and most popular form of distance education today. Within the past decade it has had a major impact on postsecondary education and the trend is only increasing. The experience of online learning is like for students and how it has changed the role of the instructor. It offered internet-based courses in form of synchronously and asynchronously. A form of learning with direct interaction between students and teachers is called synchronous learning meanwhile using indirect and independent learning is called an asynchronous form of learning. Globalization and an extremely competitive and dynamic environment have forced the world to constantly generate and changed the range of education strategies, expertise, and knowledge. As we move toward the new century we find ourselves in an era of rapid change. This is to keep pace with the changing world technology has become more complex in almost all sectors of economic growth and of course, education is not untouched. Demand for education by the masses arises from tremendous changes in the education sector. Due to the emergence of globalization shifting from offline to online education sector became more competitive and challenging.

Online learning can be difficult to define among all electronic technologies. Some authors or learners have found variance in describing online learning as "Wholly" (Oblinger and Oblinger, 2005)" on the other side some prefer a technology medium or context in which it is used (Lowenthal, Wilsom & Parrish, 2009). Some authors define direct relationships between E-Learning, Distance Education, Web base learning, Distance learning modes, and Online learning by stating that all use the same Electronic Technology (Rekkedeal et al., 2003; Voleoy & Lord, 2000.). (Benson and Conrad, 2002) both states online learning as the latest version of Distance Learning to experience learning by use of technology. This Improves the accessibility of educational opportunities for learners. Other prominent authors describe not only the accessibility of Online learning but also its connectivity, flexibility, and ability of Online Learning to promote varied interaction between instructors and learners (Ally, 2004; Hillzz& Turoff,2005; Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005). Specifically, not only avoid Online Learning relationship with distance learning and Traditional Learning system but as Benson (2002) states clearly that Online Learning is a recent and improved version of distance learning. These authors define the relationship between distance education or learning and online learning by their own views but do not assure to define it in a specific way. Nichols (2003) confirms that the learning management system is primarily used for online courses and components but reverses the term of e-learning used as to identify the tools to deliver the learning experience.

CURRENT SCENARIO

With no end in sight to the Covid-19 pandemic, some experts have begun praising technology-driven education as the new norm in the years ahead. On April 10, 2020, Dr Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank, Minister for Human Resources Development, tweeted that e-learning sites introduced by MHRD saw 1.4 crore visitors during the first lockdown (Ministry of HRD, 2020). Young Niti Aayog employee Richa Choudhary has suggested ways to integrate technology into the new curriculum (2020). According to Harjiv Singh, online

courses will likely offer the following benefits in the future: 1) Better access to education, 2) democratization of knowledge and information, 3) inclusivity of learning to advance, and 4) parental involvement in improving the curriculum and material to start (2020). To maintain learning continuity, Bulbul Dhawan has extremely gratifiedly remarked that a lot of government schools have also gone online (2020). On the other hand, some vehemently oppose children using technology in the classroom. Many schools in Silicon Valley are visibly low-tech, using chalkboards and pencils, and promoting the idea that "children develop creativity by creating things and attending classes in tree huts" (Weller, 2017).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Online learning is the newest and most popular form of distance education today. Within the past decade it has had a major impact on postsecondary education and the trend is only increasing. The experience of online learning is like for students and how it has changed the role of the instructor. It offered internet-based courses in form of synchronously and asynchronously. A form of learning with direct interaction between students and teachers is called synchronous learning meanwhile using indirect and independent learning is called an asynchronous form of learning.

Using a systematic literature review allowed us to investigate data that were in conflict or inconsistent. A priori criteria are employed in the systematic literature review approach to compile, examine, and evaluate a body of literature. A systematic literature review identifies, evaluates, and summarises the evidence already available about the identified topic (Martin, Ahlgrim-Delzell, & Budhrani, 2017). A thorough literature study was done by (Shahini, Davis, and Borthwick,2019) to comprehend cultural concerns in massive open online courses (MOOCs).

According to **Harasim(1989),** " Online education as a new discipline of research combines online education with face-to-face instruction through computer-mediated communication. As defined by **Ascough(2002),** online education has many characteristics: (a) it provides an entirely distinct educational experience that is very unique in comparison to the traditional classroom,(b) communication happens through computers and the internet,(c) the involvement of the learner in the classroom is distinct and special,(d) the social aspect and educational environment can be changed. "Many scholastic educational have had no training and less experience in the use of communications and information technology as an educational instructional tool," according to **Donnelly & McAvinia (2012)**. Higher education is presently more inexpensive and accessible for many learners, especially for those who would not have been able to pursue it in a traditional in-class environment, attributable to the latest technology such as the internet, streaming video, online meetings, etc **(Bianco & Carr-Chellman,2002)**. As a response the extension in the current curriculum of higher education in all types of institutions today preference online learning as an essential component.

Research Methodology

Objectives - To understand the present scenario for online education

- To identify challenges faced by users detrimental to online education

Type of Research -Exploratory

Type of Data- Secondary Source of Data Observations and systematic review of literature

Online Education Market: Overview

India's technology is growing at an exponential rate, which has resulted in significant improvements in online education. India has a large base of digitally savvy consumers with a population of over 1.3 billion and access to high-speed internet and cell phones as the educational environment. Internet connection has become more widely available and inclusive as a result of the low-cost data revolution and the government's digital drive. In India, there are currently more rural than urban internet users. For the first time in 2019, there were more rural consumers than urban users (227 million and 205 million, respectively). 1 In the first quarter of 2019, 58 percent of those rural internet users was between the ages of 16 and 292; this indicates a key demographic for access.

Students receive their education online using electronic tools, including videos, audio, e-books, AR/VR, or any other electronic tool. Online education offers students many benefits, including a reduced cost of education and the ability to take specialized courses. The possibilities available to institutions are expanding as a result of the growing acceptance of cloud-based arrangements and increasing investment speculations by significant industry entrants aimed at enhancing the security and unwavering quality of cloud-based education platforms. Massive educational content is available online because of the market's numerous service and content providers.

The CMI research report provides a comprehensive analysis of the market's drivers and restraints for online education, as well as how they will affect demand over the forecast period. The paper also looks at international potential and competitive assessments for the industry for online education.

"According to the latest research study, the demand for global <u>Online Education Market size</u> & share was valued at approximately USD 30 Billion in 2021 and is expected to reach USD 49 billion in 2022 and is expected to reach a value of around USD 200 Billion by 2030, at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of about 23%during the forecast period 2022 to 2030." Network connectivity is increasing, and market companies are working hard to make internet services quick and simple to obtain. The market is expected to expand as anticipated. It has high demand throughout the current forecast period thanks to microlearning-related growth patterns and a drop in infrastructure costs, which are likely to function as assets.

Internet usage has drastically expanded as a result of advancements in the global technology infrastructure that have enabled people and businesses to reach previously unimaginable heights. The education sector has overtaken other industries throughout the digital upheaval because anyone can now enroll in online learning courses.

Even while there are presently more rural than urban internet users, there is still room for substantial rural expansion. Even though internet connection is becoming more widespread, more than 70% of people in rural areas still lack it. Although 66 percent of Indians live in rural areas, just 25 percent of them have access to the internet. Contrasting sharply with this is the metropolitan population, where internet density is closer to 98 percent. As more people obtain access, this will further contribute to a growth in the total number of internet users during the following few years. Online education is on the rise as a result of India's rapid urban and rural internet growth.

India's online education market has a 2016 value of USD 247 million and is projected to grow to $1.96 billion by 2021. 4 9.5 million people are anticipated to use paid online education by the year 20215, according to estimates. The COVID-19 pandemic isn't taken into consideration in these numbers, so it's completely feasible that the projections will be off as more and more schooling gets moved online.

Highlights on Online Education in India

Revenue: online education in India is targeted to reach up to USD 6.71bn.

Growth rate: it is expected to reveal a yearly growth rate (CACR 2024-2028) of 21.56%.

Market volume: The online learning platform market in India is predicted to have USD 5.50 bn in 2024.

Global comparison: The US is looking forward to generating the most revenue with USD 87,517m in 2024.

Average revenue per user: the online education market in India is expected to amount to USD 35.36 in 2024.

Number of users: in India is expected to reach 287.6m by the year 2028.

User penetration: in India it will be at 13.2% in 2024.

Internet Adoption: India has a 50% internet adoption rate. The number of internet users in India is expected to reach almost 735 million by 2021, which would raise the demand for online education providers.

Current government initiatives: are intended to develop the infrastructure that is required for students to pursue online education. The linked section below contains details about a few of these initiatives, such as the YUKTI portal, SWAYAM Prabha, eBasta, and e-VIDYA.

Affordability: Online courses at the UG or PG level are significantly less expensive than traditional programs; students save on tuition, lodging costs, and travel costs since they have the convenience of finishing the course from home and frequently at their own pace. Several courses leading to credentials are free, and vendors like Udemy have pricing as low as $11.99 USD.

Demographics: In India, people aged 15 to 408 make up over 46% of the total population. This younger age group is the ideal target audience for online education since they are more likely to accept online formats than older age groups and because the reduced cost appeals to a price-sensitive market.

New Developments in India's Online Higher Education System

The demand for certification courses is being driven by the urge for retraining and upskilling. The number of students enrolling in online programs more than doubled between 2015 and 2018. More than 70% of these students used online learning to increase their work options or learn a new skill. Current employees may find online models appealing since they give them the freedom to learn these abilities without interfering with their workdays.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) started actively supporting online education models in 2018 and has since permitted several schools to provide a small proportion of their courses online10.

The UGC expanded on this in 2019 by establishing a uniform structure for them and enabling accredited universities to offer more courses and diploma programs. Because of the UGC regulations, these online programs can be compared to their traditional equivalents. This support will assist in ensuring the quality of online programs, hence lowering doubts about their effectiveness.

The COVID-19 epidemic, which accelerated everything's online adoption, strengthened this impetus. Institutions and governments have increased their support for online learning dramatically in an effort to provide continuing education while separating people from one another socially. Several tools are emerging to enhance the online model and make it a workable replacement for a traditional classroom as more schools start to offer online courses.

CHALLENGES OF ONLINE LEARNING

According to Moore, Dickson-Deane, and Galyen (2011), scholars "believe that there is a relationship between distance education or learning and online learning but appear unsure in their descriptive narratives," and they conclude that online learning is the most challenging to define. To compile and give a status report on learning analytics research, a survey of the literature on the subject's methodologies, advantages, and difficulties was done. (2016; Nunn, Avella, Kanai, & Kebritchi.)

Accessibility is the primary challenge with online education:

A report created in May 2020 states that India has 56.45 crore internet users overall, out of a total population of over 138 crores (Diwanji, 2020). So, it can be assumed that approximately a third of its population still lacks access to the internet. It is unclear under these conditions if all students enrolling at different levels will have access to online education.

Technical Infrastructure: According to a poll by QS I Guage, over 3 percent of residential broadband users had cable cuts, 53 percent experienced bad connectivity, 11.47 percent experienced power outages, and 32 percent experienced signal problems. In terms of mobile hotspots, 40.18 percent experienced bad connectivity,

3.19 percent had power problems, and 56.63 percent had signal problems (QS I Guage, 2020) prevailing conditions, it is unlikely that all students will be able to get reliable internet connectivity, preventing them from logging in to take online courses.

Lack of consensus: On the other hand, there is also no agreement on the kind of platform that should be used for holding online classes. At that time, only a small number of academic institutions in India had access to the paid edition of a digital platform that allowed for smooth class streaming. Because of this, the quality of these online sessions fell short of expectations and failed to hold students' attention for an extended period of time.

Content: Interestingly, the current curriculum has never been planned to use technology. As a result, a teacher finds it challenging to change the course material to make it digitally friendly. Nevertheless, educators lack the skills necessary to create digital content. They, therefore, struggle to produce content that is good enough to be uploaded online.

Resources are scarce: In India, not every family member has a personal computer or another device that they may use to access the internet. The majority of families share resources like laptops, PCs, and smartphones. As a result, not all children in a family with several children will have equal access to such a gadget. Which option is best depends on factors such as need, age, gender, IQ, etc.

Expensive: A student needs their own gadget in addition to reliable internet connectivity, neither of which are offered for free or at a low-cost and fair price. Can all students afford these costs while 80 crore people receive free grain distribution through the Pradhan Mantri Gareeb Kalyan Anna Yojana?

Privacy: A young kid could not know how to protect their data, in which case their privacy might be violated. On the other hand, in a country like India where people live in small, congested houses, a student may not get a private room \ to study online.

Addictive: The ease of access to technology and the integration of the internet into academics will force students to be constantly online, which over time could lead to addiction for them.

Harmful: Students' eyesight is likely to suffer irreparable harm from prolonged screen use for online coursework. On the other hand, prolonged use of electronic devices when seated is likely to result in neck and back pain. In addition, it is known that the light emitted from the screens of such gadgets interferes with sleep, which over time may result in issues with anxiety, depression, insomnia, vertigo, memory loss, etc.

Environment: created and maintained by online sessions is chaotic and unruly. There is nothing that can be done to change a pupil, regardless of whether they are misbehaving, not dressed adequately, or lack digital literacy.

Information, not knowledge: Online sessions will fall short of imparting knowledge since they only share information devoid of any real-world application. Students just take up information passively. They develop the habit of searching the internet for every question put in front of them, which hinders their originality and critical thinking.

CURRENT PERSPECTIVES OF ONLINE LEARNING

Mobile Education

In 2017, 320.57 million people used their mobile phones to access the internet, according to a report in Stastia (2018). By 2021, this number is anticipated to rise to 462.26 million. The increase in subscribers is attributed to the low cost of 4G internet and smartphones. IAMAI anticipates that the National Telecom Policy (NTP) 2018, which focuses on cutting-edge technologies like 5G, would encourage higher-quality data services at more reasonable costs and help close the digital divides that will encourage internet usage through mobile internet in rural areas. 73% of internet usage time in 2016 would be on mobile devices, according to a survey by Zenith.

Investors' Interest

Entrepreneurs are investing heavily in online education since it is predicted to grow over the next five years as a result of the Digital India campaign, the value placed on education in culture, and the declining cost of mobile data. Byju's has received $50 million from the Chang Zuckerberg Initiative, Eruditus has received $8.2 million from Bertelsmann India, and EduPristine has received $10 million from Kaizen Management Advisors and DeVry Inc. Khan Academy is a non-profit organization that receives funding from foundations including The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Google, and Reed Hastings, the creator of Netflix.

Blended Model

In the future, traditional classroom instruction and online learning will converge. Blended learning is a concept that mixes traditional classroom instruction with online digital media. Both the teacher and the student must be there physically, although the learner does have some influence over the time, place, path, or pace. This model will benefit from both traditional classroom techniques and computer-mediated activities. In the future, face-to-face offline pedagogy will be supported by online courses on practical knowledge and soft skills in virtual classrooms.

New Curriculum

Currently, IT-related courses are the most sought-after ones in online education, covering topics like big data, cloud computing, and digital marketing. But in the future, there will be greater demand for a variety of courses in uncommon fields like culinary management, photography, personality development, forensic science, cyber law, etc.

CONCLUSION

If it can be implemented in cooperation with businesses, academic institutions, and the government, online education has the potential to completely alter the future of education. To close the gap and ensure that graduates are prepared for the workforce, significant curriculum reforms are needed. Technology needs to be used to change the educational process and make it more useful. Moreover, courses should be created in many languages to broaden their appeal and provide additional opportunities for young people in rural India. Designing strategies to improve the social skills of online learners requires innovation. A minimum of 50 %

of the Indian population is restricted to rural areas and is underprivileged in basic needs where education is one of them. The government must take steps to provide basic needs so that the motive of NEP can be achieved as well. The future perspective of online education would be the part of every individual and all types of educators have to be prepared to teach online and use technology in eduction.

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