A STUDY ON SWAYAM - INDIGENOUS ONLINE LEARNING PLATFORM

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ABSTRACT

SWAYAM is a programme initiated by Government of India and designed to achieve the three cardinal principles of Education Policy viz., access, equity and quality. The objective of this programme is to take the best teaching learning resources to all, including the most disadvantaged. It seeks to bridge the digital divide for students who have hitherto remained untouched by the digital revolution and have not been able to join the mainstream of the knowledge economy.

Key Words: Self learning, Swayam, on line learning, MOOC,

INTRODUCTION

SWAYAM platform is indigenously developed by Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) with the help of Microsoft and It covers school, under-graduate, post-graduate, engineering, law and other professional courses. The sociological, geographical and political barriers in education can be overlooked by making MOOCs as parallel to regular school education. Learners towards MOOCs should be motivated by teachers by introducing its advantages in enhancing their knowledge and skills based on the courses of SWAYAM.

PERSPECTIVE OF SWAYAM:

SWAYAM provides an integrated platform and portal for online courses, using information and communication technology (ICT) and covering High School till all higher education subjects and skill sector courses to ensure that every student benefits from learning material through ICT. SWAYAM is a:

- One-stop web and mobile based interactive e-content for all courses from High School to University level.
- High quality learning experience using multimedia on anytime, anywhere basis.
- State of the art system that allows easy access, monitoring and certification.
- Peer group interaction and discussion forum to clarify doubts
- Hybrid model of delivery that adds to the quality of classroom teaching.

SCOPE OF SWAYAM

The SWAYAM shall cover the following:

a)   Curriculum based course contents covering diverse disciplines such as arts, Science, commerce, performing arts, social sciences and humanities subjects, engineering, technology, law, medicine, agriculture etc. in higher education domain (all courses would be certification-ready in their detailed offering).

b)   School education (9-12 levels) modules; for teacher training as well as teaching and learning aids to children of India to help them understand the subjects better and also help them in better preparedness for competitive examinations for admissions to professional degree programmes.

c)   Skill based courses, which cover both post-higher secondary school skills that are presently the domain of polytechnics as well as industrial skills certified by the sector skill councils of various Ministries.

d)   Advanced curriculum and professional certification under a unified scheme in higher education domain that can be tailored to meet the demands of choice based credit system (CBCS) currently being implemented in India at undergraduate level.

e)   Curricula and courses that can meet the needs of life-long learners of Indian citizens in India and abroad.

COURSES COORDINATORS AND CREDITS UNDER SWAYAM

In order to ensure best quality content are produced and delivered, nine National Coordinators have been appointed: They are AICTE for self-paced courses, NPTEL for engineering, UGC for post-graduation education, CEC for under-graduate education, NCERT&NIOS for school education, IGNOU for out of the school students and, IIMB for management studies.

Courses delivered through SWAYAM are available free of cost to the learners, however students if they to get certificate they have to attend the examination conducted by NTA from time to time with a little fee. The students would get a certificate on successful completion of the course. At the end of each module, there will be an assessment of the student through proctored examination and the marks/grades secured in this exam could be transferred to the academic record of the students as per the UGC guidelines.

The *UGC Regulation, 2016,* allows students who are enrolled in higher education programs across India to earn credits via SWAYAM. Each credit will be equivalent to 13–15 hours of learning activities. Any academic institution in India can offer up to 20% of its catalog in a particular program via SWAYAM.

GENESIS OF THE STUDY:

 SWAYAM will address the issue that quality teachers are not available in central, state and private universities/institutes in the country, besides a large number of such institutes have a number of vacancies of academicians not being filled since long; Ministry of HRD, has embarked on a major and new initiative called SWAYAM, which will provide one integrated platform and portal for online courses, using information and communication technology and covering all higher education subjects and skill sector courses to ensure that the every student in our country has access to the best quality of higher education at the affordable cost to all students across the country irrespective of geographical barriers.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- To find out students' familiarity with the Usage of Online Courses.
- To find out the general interest of the topics in online learning and the resources.
- To find out the effectiveness of study material uploaded on the SWAYAM portal.

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.

HYPOTHESIS:

H1: There is no significant difference between PG and Ph.D. 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

H2: There is no significant difference between Rural and Urban 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

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 500 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:

Results of PG and Ph.D. students' opinion with respect to MOOCs/SWAYAM platform and its Dimensions

1. There is no difference in the opinion of PG and Ph.D. students about the dimensionsof the MOOC/SWAYAM platform.

2. There is no difference in the opinion of PG and Ph.D. students about the dimension of the use of Online Courses.

3. There is no difference in the opinion of PG and Ph.D. students about dimension on Learning Resources Aspects.

4. There is no difference in the opinion of PG and Ph.D. students about the dimension of the Technological Aspects.

5. There is no difference in the opinion of PG and Ph.D. students about the dimension of the Learner's Engagement in Learning the Course.

6. There is no difference in the opinion of PG and Ph.D. students about dimensionsof the Knowledge and Skills gained through the Course.

Results between Rural and Urban Students' opinions with respect to MOOCs/SWAYAM platform and its dimensions.

1. There is a difference in the opinion of Rural and Urban students about the MOOC/SWAYAM platform.

2. There is a difference in the opinion of Rural and Urban students about the dimensionof the use of Online Courses.

3. there is no difference in the opinion of Rural and Urban students about dimension on Learning Resources Aspects.

4. there is no difference in the opinion of Rural and Urban students about the dimension of the Technological Aspects.

5. there is no difference in the opinion of Rural and Urban students about the dimension of

Learners Engagement in Learning the Courses.

6.   there is no difference in the opinion of Rural and Urban students about dimension on the Knowledge and Skills gained through the Course.

7.   Results of One-Way ANOVA between 18-24 years, 25-30 Years, 31-37 Years and 38 and above years age group students' opinion with respect to MOOCs/SWAYAM platform and its dimensions.

CONCLUSION:

It is observed that even though Information and Communication Technology has emerged tremendously, infrastructure has to be improved a lot on the campus, The basic infrastructure needed to implement MOOCs is still absent in many departments of the campus. Fast Internet services being costly, learners are bound to compromise with speed. To implement SWAYAM-MOOCs effectively, a fast internet connection is required throughout the campus. There is a need for awareness among students enrolling inMOOCs. It needs to be spread appropriately using social media sites, blogs along with traditional methods. Teachers have to motivate students to use SWAYAM-MOOCs appropriately in an extensive manner, basic digital education and familiarity of the students with the digital environment is an obvious pre-requisite. Making the students digitally literate and friendly is not an overnight task. Initially providing digital literacy at the grass-root level at the departments would be the first step towards promoting digital literacy. Teachers being the chief part of conducting MOOCs should be tech-friendly and familiar with the online digital environment. On the other hand, introducing MOOCs in some regional languages will be a subtle initiative to preserve the regional culture and linguistic heritage of the nation. Thus, the online courses can incorporate Quality, Affordability, Scalability, Inclusion, and Employability in the Indian Educational Society. Indian MOOCs may also have subject topics that have not been explored yet, such as Classical Indian Music, Indian History, Yoga, etc. They can also be used to provide high-quality education to remote parts with subjects that require intensive graphics and visual illustrations.

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