

E-Learning in Indian Higher Education and Future Prospects

¹B Naresh, ²D. BhanuSree Reddy

¹Asst. Professor, Marketing, Pune Institute of Business Management, Pune,

²Sr. Professor, VIT-BS, VIT University, Vellore.

ABSTRACT

E-learning is an alternate approach to the learning process which utilizes Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to collaborate and communicate in Higher Education (HE) environment. This comprises of technical and technological expertise that replaces the traditional class room learning with web-based component where learning process is experienced online. This study explores the effectiveness and efficiency of using e-learning in the process of teaching in higher education in India. The method of utilizing the information and communication technology is highly important in the Institutions and universities who provide quality and affordable higher education at flexible time. This paper emphasizes on the future perspective of E-learning in higher education in India, where the demand for higher education is on par with the developed countries. In 1980s E-learning was considered as useful tool for distance education alone in India. But now the scenario has changed and e-learning is emerging as the most innovative application of Internet that serves higher education as well. This study also describes the how e-learning leads to higher rate of HE enrollment ratio.

Keywords: Higher Education, E-learning, ICT.

1. INTRODUCTION

Technology is the one the most important factor that helps in structuring the society and providing information to it. The impacts of technology have brought many revolutionary changes in the society. It has brought changes in lifestyle, way pupil work and in the method of education, Archer et al (1999). The twenty-first century is era of globalization and it has set new standards of requirement for the social life which includes higher education too. The E-learning is the vital tool that makes the higher education as student centric learning. And also provide new and more flexible options of learning methods. Education with e-learning is accepted as value added across the educational sector Zenaida, T.D.(2004). India plays major role in E-learning market since the youth constitute its major population, and moreover no other technology based learning available as of now. E-learning is the form of education that is widely used in higher education in most of the developed countries but still the implementation and usage is in preliminary stage in the developing nations, Brown C (2008).

2. HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

India is a country with largest population which in turn is considered as valuable resource. The education system of India is very ancient and run through civilizations. The current state of Indian education system is complex and filled with enigma and inconsistency but still, it is believed that by 2030 India will be the nation which contains youth as its population in the world with more number of college-going pupil and currently it is in third position after China and the US, Pragati Chauhan (2016). One in every four graduates will be the product of the Indian education in near future with the population of 140 million college-going age group of population, since Independence higher education in India has massive growth and development. The gross enrollment ratio for higher

studies is 17.9%, which is expected to grow up to 25.2% by the year of 2017 Choubey, P (2009). Along with the regular enrollment; distance learning also grows progressively every year. According to recent report of "Indian Distance Learning Market Analysis" the growth of distance education market in India is expected to nurture at the rate of 24% during 2011 to 2016.

The vital and key player behind the growth of Indian higher education is introduction of private universities along with the universities monitored and aided by government. The various factors like technology development, passion towards education, awareness and perception towards e-learning, increase in faculty ratio, availability of internet, etc. determines and boosts Indian education market to reach INR 870 million by end of 2015-2016, Garrison, D. R (2003). The current GER is expected to rise to 30% by 2020 from current rate of just 13% and the demand also grows along with the market grows. It is very important to ensure that the institutions and universities have adequate facilities for research with adequate faculty to guide in the right path, world class curriculum and adequate infrastructure equipped with relevant technology to cope with the growing demand, Jaiswal, V. (2013).

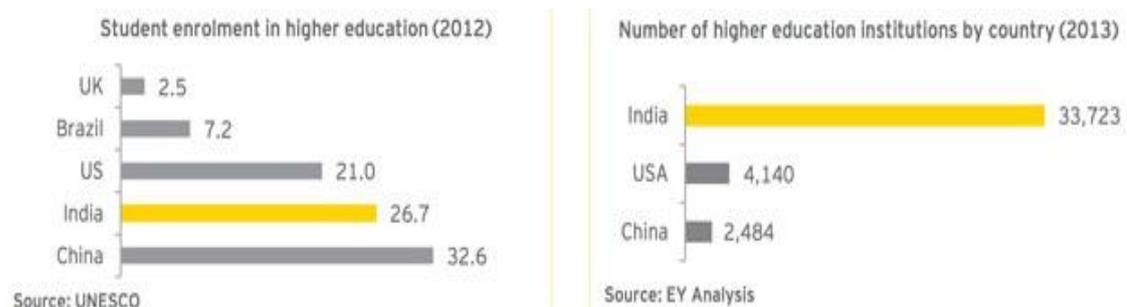


Figure: 1

3. IMPORTANCE OF E-LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The technological improvisation and globalization are the factors that enhance the growth of e-learning. E-learning has brought drastic change in the educational sector especially in higher education. Integration of Information and Communication technology along with e-learning has enriched the learning process in higher education. The role of e-learning has become imperative component of the higher education institution and universities. Education through e-learning enables access to the best tutors and the knowledge accessible worldwide (UNESCO, 2002).

Education plays key role in enhancing the Social and economic development of the nations all over the world. Higher education sectors implements E-learning as vital component to facilitate the knowledge acquisition and to withstand the fast growing competition and technology. Along with ICT, development of multimedia had brought changes in the traditional way of teaching. E-Learning has a significant role in transforming knowledge, skill and performance improvement of the higher education. The implementation of e-learning tool has brought in several drastic changes in the delivery of knowledge in higher education, Judith A. Pirani (2010).

The Four Rationales for Introducing E-Learning in Education (Source: Cross and Adam, 2007)	
Social	Perceived role that technology now plays in society and the need for familiarizing students with technology.
Vocational	Preparing students for jobs that require skills in technology.
Catalytic	Utility of technology to improve performance and effectiveness in teaching, management and many other social activities.
Pedagogical	To utilize technology in enhancing learning, flexibility and efficiency in curriculum delivery.



Source: Docebo “e-learning market trends and forecast 2014 - 2016”.

E-learning can be used in education in order to

- The open access to education will increase in independent problem solving capacity
- Make ease of inclusion and attainment of knowledge,
- Enhance the standard of education and helps in the improve the framework and management of educational system in the developing nations,
- Provides more opportunities for educational industry and for the individuals like learners, tutors, etc.

of learners,provision of integration for learner who could not continue their education in full time, development of self-discipline, technological skills, etc. in a cost effective manner are the added advantages of e-learning in higher studies Naresh B et.al (2015). To make use e-learning efficiently, institutions should implement e-learning in the areas like research,blended learning, management

and administration etc. The government and institutions has to support the learners with low cost technology environment and frequent availability of internet among users to make effective utilization of e-learning tools in learning environment.

4.FUTURE OF E-LEARNING IN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

The ease of access to internet is the gateway to the growth of e-learning in education system. The availability of internet along with technology and service provider helps online learning to reach its height in a very short span of time. Not only education institutions even organizations adopt e-learning as a part of training which helps in their growth and serves as a cost saving strategic technique. India has the population of 250 million and stands third in the internet usage whereas China and the US occupy first and second places respectively, Bates. A (2003). India has substantial potential as the huge market for E-learning. Usage of internet via Smartphone has increased in recent times, which acts as the personalized platform of e-learning to pursue higher studies without any geographic or time constraints to follow the dreams and compete in the competitive world.

The size of online education market in India is expected to grow up to \$40 billion by 2017 from current \$20 billion according to the report published in July 2014 by Docebo. India has one of the antique and prevalent academic systems in the world with more than ten lakhs schools and around 18000 higher education institutions. It serves as the highest target market with the population of 1.2 billion in education sector, Hrishikesh Joshi, (2016). E-learning has many unique advantages like providing world class education even to pupil located in small towns and other remote areas. It provides personalized curriculum as well as highly skilled tutors across the globe to the students. Through Conventional and class room based training, it is hard to provide standards of education to students when compared to online education at a given cost. It saves time and can easily be accessible from any corner with the help of internet technology and enable learner to enrich their knowledge, Altbach, P. G. (2009).



India E-learning Market forecast in USD Million, FY 2014 – FY 2018 (Source: Ken Research Institute.

Benefits of E-Learning in education to the stakeholders

For the stakeholder in education the benefits that happen through e-learning are students, government, employers and employees. (Table: 1)

Stakeholders	Benefits
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Enlarge access to education, ✓ Global knowledge sharing ✓ Feasibility of content delivery, ✓ Combination of ICT and multimedia ✓ Blending of work and education, ✓ Learner –centric approach ✓ Improvise-quality of education.
Employer’s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increase training quality, ✓ Cost effective strategy , ✓ Elevation of employee skills ✓ Enlarged employee efficiency ✓ Developing of a new learning culture, ✓ Sharing of costs and of training time with the employees, ✓ Increased portability of training.
Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increase the capacity and cost effectiveness of education and training systems, ✓ To reach target groups with limited access to conventional education and training, ✓ To support and enhance the quality and relevance of existing educational structures, ✓ To ensure the connection of educational institutions and curricula to the emerging networks and information resources, ✓ To promote innovation and opportunities for lifelong learning.

5.DISCUSSION

The current generations are synonymously called as “Netizens” and “digitals” and grownup with the technology. They find e-learning as the tool to escalate their career rapidly. E-learning helps them in pursuing their learning in their convenient space and time. Now the government of India is also

spending more on digitalization across all the government service including railway ticket booking, e-bills, etc... meanwhile as epic initiation taken by the government to conduct coal auction successfully happen via online in 2015. Furthermore they took initiation to evolve learning using technology like digital India, DietY, NPTEL, and SYAGAM etc....The adaptive nature of technology in e-learning provides the learners with various intellectual capabilities to utilize the best of knowledge without any time constraint. E-learning could not completely replace schools as they provide many other qualities other than academic knowledge. Even it has its disadvantages like lack of interaction, undergo contemplation, seclusion. E-learning might create the chances of piracy and plagiarism, ease of copy-paste, inappropriate selection skills, etc. However, education institution can develop their standards by providing education through of digital learning with the help of technology.

6.CONCLUSION

E-learning is an emerging trend of learning for future India. The majority of the students demand technology and flexibility is the reason behind the development of e-learning in higher education. It has created new definition and dimension in learning pattern and education system. To make complete use of e-learning both the tutor and learners should change the perception and the method of coaching and learning. Institutions also need to make few changes in the area like outcome assessment, investment in technology, faculty, etc. and in policies and governance towards e-learning. Rather than focusing on the cost, institutes should concentrate on the technology and services that suits them. While choosing the technology they should focus on security of data reliability ease of use for both tutors and students. To be cost effective they can either outsource or partnered with vendors or companies that provide e-learning. The growth of e-learning in India shows that, soon it will be an acceptable substitute to the class room learning in higher education.

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