E-Learning – A boon for Indian Higher Education System

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Abstract
E-Learning is a part of new dynamics that characterises the educational system. It has become an important part of the society, comprising an extensive array of digitalization approaches, components and delivery methods. The use of e-learning is seen at all levels of educational system, thus in higher education as well. ELearning is visualised as the India’s license for boosting up its higher education system. Studies shows the positive effects of ELearning for the higher education system in India. And the only way to sustain a better future is by educating the younger generation with effective and efficient education methodologies.

Keywords: - E-Learning, Indian Higher Education

Introduction –
E-Learning:
E-learning is a part of new dynamics that characterises the educational system. It has become an important part of the society, comprising an extensive array of digitalization approaches, components and delivery methods. The use of information and communication technologies (ICT) for educational purpose has increased, & the spread of network technologies has caused e-learning practices to evolve significantly.

Education through internet, network is E-Learning. It is the network based transfer of skills & knowledge. E-learning refers to use of electronic applications and processes to learn. The e-learning applications and processes are the web-based learning, computer-based learning, virtual classrooms and digital collaboration. The contents are delivered through the internet, local intranet/extranet, audio or video tape, satellite TV & CD-ROM.

E-learning is used by learners and educators in homes, schools, higher education, business and others.

In the early days, e-learning received a bad impression, as many people thought bringing computers into the classroom would remove that human element that some learners need, but as time has progressed technology has developed, and now we embrace smartphones and tablets in the classroom and office, as well as using a wealth of interactive designs that makes e-learning not only engaging for the users, but valuable as a lesson delivery medium. The use of e-learning is seen at all levels of educational system.

Defining E-Learning:
Allison Rossett (2001) defines e-learning as: Web-based training (WBT), also known as elearning and on-line learning, is training that resides on a server or host computer that is connected to the World Wide Web.

Aspects of E-Learning:
The E-learning delivers few aspects. There is live instruction where specialized instructors can remain in their own/one locations and provide instructions to many students in other locations. Video content delivery where pre-recorded content is provided as material, that can be viewed when needed. Student to student interactions is an aspect where students learn as much from each other as they do from teachers. Up-to-date materials are provided through digital delivery for e-readers where textbooks are expensive to purchase, maintain and deliver. Another aspect is Self-learning which is quite common in higher education which is done by computer based training.
Indian Higher Education System: The Present Scenario:

Higher Education sector has witnessed a tremendous increase in the number of Universities/University level Institutions & Colleges since Independence. At present, the main categories of University/University-level Institutions are:- Central Universities, State Universities, Private Universities, Deemed-to-be Universities, Institution of National Importance and Institution under State Legislature Act.

The number of Universities has increased 34 times from 20 in 1950 to 677 in 2014. The number of colleges has also registered manifold increase of 74 times with just 500 in 1950 growing to 37,204, as on 31st March, 2013.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Types of Institutions</th>
<th>Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Universities</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Central</td>
<td>318</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Deemed to be University</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Institutions of National Importance</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Institutions established under State Legislation Act</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Review of Literature

Nelasco, Arputhraj & Paul (2007) in their paper studied E-Learning for Higher Studies Of India. The paper concentrates on Indian higher education scenario, eLearning content preparation and presentation tools, application of eLearning in various types of methodologies used in higher studies, pros and cons of eLearning and future of eLearning in India. Technology enabled learning is evolved through a combination of hardware, software, media delivery system and communication systems including networking. eLearning benefits the society by offering integration of all institutions, access to best faculty and quality study material, avoidance of human bias, dust free learning, individualized instruction, learning in experience, unique fast learner - slow learner mechanism, flexibility, cost effectiveness, zero opportunity cost of time etc. But the major challenge faced by eLearning is that it cannot replace human being. E-Learning in India has a very big potential and a bright future. Since virtual classroom has got bright future. It is also suggested to attract affordable international students, to utilise the adventurous faculty collaborators, to bring about e-twinning of institutions and to plan more inter-country exchange programs. To conclude global exploration into any branch of knowledge is possible only through technology enabled learning.

Jaiswal (2013) conducted the study to find out the current status of e-Learning in Indian Higher Education of U.P. He says if an educational institution is committed to give high quality education, it should be built on values and ethics, and be innovative in offering its teaching programmes. E-learning is not a single strand but is multifaceted, covering a wide range of approaches and methods. Thus, in order to study this objective 2919 teachers (839 teachers from professional courses and 2080 teachers from non-professional courses) and 7717 students (4512 students from professional courses and 3205 from non-professional courses at UG & PG levels) were selected as a sample from the eleven state universities of U.P. for the study. It was found that below average number of professional courses’ teachers in higher education used e-learning mode whereas only a few non-professional courses’ teachers used e-learning mode. He mentioned that there are three modes of e-learning viz. online mode, hybrid/blended mode and e-enhancement mode but only e-enhancement mode is being used by the professional and non-professional courses’ teachers in Indian higher education.
Kalaivani (2014) discussed the role of E-Learning in the quality improvement of Higher Education. He says that education is a light that shows the mankind the right direction to surge. The purpose of education is not just making a student literate but adds rationale thinking, knowledgeable and self-sufficiency. E-learning holds particular relevance to India as the youth constitute its major population and there is no other way to take education in such a scale without the intervention of technology. E-learning includes all the forms of electronically supported learning and teaching including Edutech. In e-learning all lessons can be learned in just one click. Teachers who are giving online lectures are real with vast experiences, without going to school, without spending single rupee for enrolment that is the wisest thing to do if we are not financially equipped. Learning management system and learning content management system is software used for delivering tracking the managing training education Luskin says that the “e” should be interpreted to mean exciting, energetic, enthusiastic, emotional, extended, excellent, and educational in addition to “electronic” that is a traditional national interpretation. This broader interpretation allows for 21st century applications for the improvement of Higher Education. Rapid changes in the technologies are indicating that the role of E-learning in future will grow tremendously in education.

Objective/Purpose—

- To understand ELearning and explore Indian higher education scenario.
- To examine how E Learning is a boon for higher education in India and the application of new introductions.
- To explore the future of eLearning in India.

E-Learning for Indian Higher Education system –

Scope of E-Learning in higher education in India:
The current state of course wares in India where textual education conquers over the practical knowledge, there is a huge scope for betterment if ELearning and online courses are adopted in the daily timetable after or during lectures. It is advisable that colleges professors engage in providing at least once a week practical knowledge lectures with the help of such online courses.

The convenience, reach affordability, ease of access, and ease of collaboration will give online education an edge over the traditional methods of learning and it is expected that students pursuing studies online will grow exponentially over time.

E-Learning-A boon to Indian higher education system (Application of New Introductions):
The use of e-learning is seen at all levels of educational system, thus in higher education as well. India has seen a fair amount of progress in ELearning in India for higher education. E-Learning is visualised as the India’s license for boosting up its higher education system. The increasing fusion of the online education companies and organisations, it is strongly believed that India shall finally cope with the lag in its higher education system. The only way to bridge the growing division in public and private education in India can be tackled by utilizing ELearning and online learning.

A website named Coursera, provides such online courses through collaborations with various well recognised and National level Universities and Institutes all across. The one such very popular open online course in India is MOOCs which collaborates with National level Institutes as IITs and brings in these online courses. The courses are all free and provide free certificates of completion who are done and have completed all the quizzes and peer evaluation assignments in the respective courses.

One can find online courses for various fields like Professional Marketing, Digital Pedagogies, International Business (PGDBM), Forensic Sciences and several MBA courses in the form of distance education. Moreover, even the state universities in India have started their wing of graduate and post-graduate programmes in the form of online education.
Various MOOC Types

1. xMOOC
   The most common type of MOOC, organized around a central professor and core curriculum.

2. cMOOC
   "Connectivity" MOOCs resemble graduate seminar courses; course materials provide a starting point for student discussions with the core of the learning coming from student-to-student interactions.

3. DOCC
   Distributed Online Collaborative Courses are courses in which the same core course material is distributed to students at multiple institutions, but the exact administrations of the material can vary. Students can also engage with each other across institutions via the online component.

4. BOOC
   Big Open Online Courses are similar to MOOCs but limited to a smaller number of students, typically 50.

5. SMOC
   Synchronous Massive Online Courses differ from xMOOCs in that the lectures are broadcast live, requiring students to log in at specific times in order to hear the lectures.

6. SPOC
   Small Private Online Courses are similar to BOOCs, in that the class sizes are limited, but the student teacher interactions are more closely modeled after traditional classroom interactions. SPOCs are similarly referenced in the "flipped classroom" model.

7. Corporate MOOCs
   MOOC courses designed for employee training or continuing education typically subsidized or uniquely accredited by employers.

Figure 1. Higher Education Scenario: Learner's Choice

Source: Gurman (March 2010)
Through various surveys there can be seen a lot of enrolments for the Coursera. People from different countries are taking these courses. And if we look at the data India stands 2nd among the few of them in attending Coursera.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of world</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There is open access to education all around. Students can easily go into the various websites and get easy access to education, course materials. Many of them are free of cost or with minimal charges. To name one as an example NPTEL where students can get course materials.

Of all the Engineering courses without much of an issue. It's like a World class education at your finger tips.

http://nptel.ac.in/

**E-Learning-The Promising Future in India**

E-Learning has become extremely popular. The rise in Internet users and the revolutionary changes that have happened in education have created a fertile environment for E-Learning to grow. The face of higher education has experienced a sea change over the decades. Once characterized by the traditional classroom model, higher education today has changed into learning that is instant, online, self-driven and on the go. The journey of higher education in India has been marked with innumerable milestones – most recently, E-Learning.

The Government of India (GoI) is a strong supporter of E-Learning and the Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY) have been actively developing tools and technologies to promote it. These are content development, R&D technology initiatives, human resource development projects, and faculty training initiatives to improve through E-Learning.

The rapid increase in the Internet connectivity in the last few years has been an important catalyst for the growth of E-learning in India which will help make further inroads. Fuelling this growth will be India’s higher education system.

In the near future, universities will see more students accessing this coursework from outside the traditional campus and classroom.
Conclusion –

The only way to sustain a better future is by educating the younger generation with effective and efficient education methodologies. It optimistic to expose students to the latest technology so that they are not left clueless while they reach the stage at which they will contribute to society. The study shows the positive effects of ELearning for the higher education system in India. In the country like India it is very essential that the ELearning reaches the lowest sections of the society so that in the near future, we have strong and stable labour force in services and agriculture sector.

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