

## E-Learning in India: A SWOT Analysis

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** the major purpose of this research is to recognize the strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats of e-learning in higher education based current analysis and literature

**Design/Methodology/Approach:** This paper carries the effort of researcher done on the topic of E-learning in India and measures its strength, weakness, opportunities and threats through literature review from various sources like SCOPUS, EMERALD, EBSCO, PROQUEST, SAGE and etc. SWOT analysis was done to know about the E-learning in India.

**Findings:** Outcomes of this study describe the strength, weakness, opportunities and treats of E-learning in India and also find the impact of e-learning in educational services. This throws the lime light on development and an opportunity which helps in the development of educational sector and the identification of threat and limitation helps to reduce the cost incurred and paves the way for future generation.

**Research Limitation/ Future directions:** This research is a conceptual part where empirical studies need to conduct in future for better outcome. Even though Technology has much positive effect, but still it holds some negative towards learners like, unavailability of computers and internet to use, unaware to use system related to content, process and etc., and infrastructure is also an important factor on e-learning education system. Mode of E-learning is not suitable for practical courses like, engineering, medical, technical, agriculture and etc.

**Originality/Value:** This research delivers a high influence on E-learning in India and its measures on SWOT Analysis and leads to the suggestion on E-learning institutional development and promote E-learning in India.

**Keywords:** E-Learning, SWOT, Higher Education, ICT, Educational Services.

### 1. Introduction: E-learning in Educational Services

The provision of educational services in digital or electronic format is known as E-learning. This includes learning materials, training, transfer of information, etc. The successful implementation e-learning is accomplished with the help of technology, new pedagogies, degree of participation of tutors and facilitators, nature of the courses and other demographic factors. This study analyses and explores the strength, weakness, opportunities and threats involved in providing higher education through e-learning.

### 2. SWOT Analysis

The acronym SWOT stands for strength, weakness, opportunities and threats. It is also known as SWOT Matrix which is used to analyses the current state of product/service or objective with four elements – Strength, weakness, opportunities and threats. Strength represents positive aspects, weakness represents the negative aspects or the disadvantages, opportunities represents favorable condition prevails for its growth and threats as limitations or unfavorable conditions. In this study analysis e-learning in higher education with the help of SWOT analysis and suggest strategic solution for the implementation and growth of e-learning higher education in India.

## 2.1 E-Learning - Strengths

The major strength of E-learning is easy access in any place and time. User group of present millennium are of digital citizens, they obtain, process and transfer information digitally and this suits for education system too. (Clark & Mayer, 2008, 2011), (Demiray, 2010, volume II). End-users can undergo learning or teaching process at their place in convenient time and also it does not have any restriction of time. (James, 2002). E-learning in higher education is molded with flexibility, Agility, Geographical liberation which in turn gives the self-sufficiency to the students pursuing Higher education through E-learning. (Brown & Charlier, 2012; Cook, 2007; Demiray, 2010, vol. II; Dobre, 2010; Hsieh & Cho, 2011; Ozuorcun & Tabak, 2012; Rosenberg, 2001; Singh, Pathak, & Naz, 2007; Šolc, Legemza, Sütöová, & Girmanová, 2012; Wang & Chiu, 2011; Canadian Council on Learning [CCL], 2009), accessibility (Demiray, 2010, Volume I), (Yucel, 2006; Cook, 2007).

Then comes the Equity, E-learning provides extensive customization of learning opportunities that suffice the need of students. learner (Clark & Mayer, 2008, 2011; Cook, 2007; Demiray, 2010, vol. II; Dobre, 2010; Liebowitz & Frank, 2011; Ozuorcun & Tabak, 2012; Rosenberg, 2001; Singh et al., 2007; Šolc et al., 2012; Yucel, 2006). It also provides access to higher education in all streams irrespective of circumstances with equal access and equal opportunities to all and fulfils the objective of the higher education system (Karimi, 2007). E-Learning in higher education is Contributory (Ozuorcun & Tabak, 2012), Significant and adaptable packages of methods, techniques, procedures of learning process.

Enhancing collaboration among the student group is one among the strength of e-learning. Even though they are scattered geographically, but still connected via Voice and video Conference, virtual classes, individual and group chat with tutors and with fellow students (FarajAllahi & ZarifSanayei, 2009). The limitation of resources like books in traditional learning is eliminated in e-learning with the help of Digital Library which offers books in the electronic format and can be accessed irrespective of location. With the help of Multi-media, simulation, images, etc. .inspires the students in terms of cognitive processes process (Clark & Mayer, 2008, 2011; Demiray, 2010, vol I; Liebowitz & Frank, 2011; Wang & Chiu, 2011; Wu, Xu, & Ge, 2012; INTEL, 2011). With the help of technology and networks, it accomplishes the collaborative learning (Clark & Mayer, 2008, 2011; Demiray, 2010, vol I; Wu et al., 2012; Yucel, 2006).

E-learning helps to reduce the fretfulness among students due to fear of lagging behind. It also motivates through various assessments and tasks, instant feedback, which encourage the focus, performance, self-confidence, habit of life-long learning and reduce stress (Clark & Mayer, 2008, 2011; Demiray, 2010, vol I; Ozuorcun & Tabak, 2012; Šolc et al., 2012, CCL, 2009, Demiray, 2010, vol II, p 534, Clark & Mayer, 2008).

## 2.2 E-Learning – Weakness

Though e-learning has lot of strengths, it also has few weakness in learning and teaching process of higher education.

The major difference between the traditional and E-learning is absence of tutor, which causes deleterious effects on academic enhancement and personal development of the students. Lack of relationship and direct communication between the students and tutors and complete dependency on technology leads to isolation of learners or students (Ozuorcun and Tabak, 2012 ). This has less frequent help of rapid development of technology which helps to interact and co-operate with the tutors. The tools and technique used by e-learning leads to disparity among the trainings that improves the digital competence to training that helps to develop academic skills (CCL, 2009).

E-learning is incompatible for practical courses in Higher education. E-learning provides information and training related to practical session but the learner cannot test their performance or real-time experience rather than master in envisaging. There is no use of knowing things and transferring it in unsystematic manner.

Information that are available in e-learning may be erroneous at times and may not be confirmed scientifically which leads to misperception and learning as challenging one (Hodavand, 2008). Feedback may be inappropriate since they are unaware how the student took the assessment. The technological service provided

by e-learning is irreconcilable with psychological factor persist in the learning process. It is not necessary that all the learning content and methods need to be effective and efficient (Clark & Mayer, 2008, 2011).

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### 2.3 E-Learning - Opportunities

Lot of opportunities are created on successful combination of education and the technology. It improves the learning capacity along with the opportunities. Student provided with internet facility has access to lot of training materials, journals, digital library, virtual training and conferences, etc. which in turn provide more relevant and updated information and equip the student as knowledgeable and efficient in the stream he chosen in the higher education (FarajAllahi&ZarifSanayei, 2009;Markovic, 2010; Sarkar, 2012).

E-learning or online education not only save time but also provide opportunity for work-life balance. It provides opportunity to pursue higher studies in spite of commitment which includes family, employment, etc. it helps to find new opportunity in the stream the employee is working with the help of online education (Bjork, OttossonandThorsteinsdottir,2008).

Cost incurred in e-learning is relatively less when compared with traditional learning and lay emphasis on the financial aspects such as distribution cost for service provider and travel and other conveyance cost for the learners (James, 2002, Karimi ,2007, Clark & Mayer, 2008, 2011; Cook, 2007; Demiray, 2010, vol I; Dobre, 2010; Ozuorcun&Tabak, 2012; Rosenberg, 2001; Wu et al., 2012; CCL, 2009).

Increased opportunity in service provider of digital learning, preparation of training materials, online tutors, etc due to increase demand for e-learning. It also includes increased market share and technological development, economic development training (Clark & Mayer, 2008, 2011).

Universities has only limited number seats, it cannot offer higher education to all graduates, on the other hand there are many students who cannot attend direct classes due to various reasons. Higher education through online learning or e-learning bridges the gap. (Hodavand, 2008). The development in technology helps in the rapid growth of e-learning (Clark & Mayer, 2008, 2011; Motschnig-Pitrik&Standl, 2012; Liebowitz, 2011; Welsh, Wanberg, Brown, & Simmering, 2003; Dobre, 2010).

E-learning trainings can be delivered through various platforms like windows, MAC, UNIX,etc. All kind of Platform users can access higher education through E-learning so the deployment of e-learning in higher education has increased in recent times.

### 3. Limitations of E-learning

E-learning helps in the simplification of learning process and boost up the speed of growth of higher education (Faraj Allahi & Zarif Sanayei, 2009), but it has many restrictions and limitations while implementing it. Though technology has much positive effect at same time it has negative impacts.

To pursue higher education through e-learning, availability of computers and access to internet is mandatory, but availability of computers and access to internet connection to everybody is bit impossible due to economic and geographic distribution in developing countries.

Next to availability here comes the knowledge about the usage of computers and related technology. Due to lack of knowledge and awareness about the courses and services offered through e-learning, this method is not yet spread across the locations (Hodavand, 2008). E-learning available in regional languages but still most of the courses are offered in English. Students might be proficient in their regional language and not in English has one of limitation of E-learning (Asmal, 2003).

Infrastructure is another important factor that impact the usage of e-learning in higher education. The bandwidth available in our country is pretty much less when compared to the developed nations. The velocity



of bandwidth available in our country is not sufficient for the implementation of e-learning in higher education (Sharif, 2014).

E-learning method of training is not suitable for all of courses. Few courses like Medical, aeronautical, agriculture needs more practical knowledge than the theoretical knowledge. The cost incurred in implementation of technology and data transmission is high. Rather than this the cost and time incurred in support and maintaining of data and infrastructure is expensive.

The freedom provided in e-learning affects the performance and attendance of the students. It can also affect the responsibility, discipline due to lack of face to face monitoring which in turn might leads to high dropout rates of the students (Dobre, 2010, p.17). There are only limited policies laid government to support higher education through e-learning and less number of rules and regulation on quality of course content and the time period (Demiray, 2010, Volume I).

E-learning has limitations like security and authorization, lack of scrutiny of students, poor and lower bandwidth, inadequate infrastructure and many other technical problems. (Liebowitz & Frank, 2011); technical problems (Demiray, 2010, vol I; Demiray, 2010, Volume II, Dobre, 2010, p 17). The transformation of traditional learning method to e-learning and replacement of teachers might also cause psychological effects too. It includes resistance to change, unwillingness to use technology, lack of confidence, fear of unknown, lack of control, cost incurred in implementation and training for tutors. (Arabasz et al., 2003, Ozuorcun & Tabak, 2012),

#### 4. Conclusion

<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independence of access to time and place</li> <li>• Impartiality</li> <li>• Enhancing the individual and group participation.</li> <li>• Exposure to Global standard of education</li> </ul>	<p>Weakness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Absence of teacher:</li> <li>• Access to unsupportive information:</li> <li>• Students' assessment and feedback is limited:</li> <li>• Being unsuitable for practical courses in agricultural education:</li> </ul>
<p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrollment of more number of students in Higher education</li> <li>• Graduation without disturbing the Work-life Balance</li> <li>• Time saving and cost efficient for learners.</li> <li>• Education to all category of pupil.</li> </ul>	<p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Threat to Uniqueness and consistency</li> <li>• High implantation and maintenance cost :</li> <li>• Lack of technology and Infrastructure</li> <li>• Security and authorization issues.</li> <li>• Lack of computer knowledge</li> </ul>

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