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# A Study of E-Learning and Its Impact on Higher Education in Global Age

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## **Introduction**

Advances in information technology, coupled with changes in society, have had a tremendous impact on educational systems. This provides an opportunity to develop new flexible learning environments which have not been possible before. E-learning focuses on usage of technology in the field of education and learning. However, the application of technology does not change how people learn; it changes the way in which they can be taught. In fact, technology should facilitate the learning process by providing more efficient ways to teaching. In this regard, e-learning can be considered as one of the most significant methods of teaching by using modern technology. In the current scenario, where the world is being dominated by globalization, networking and information technology has reached its peak, e-learning plays a vital role in the field of education.

## **Concept and Aspect of e-Learning**

E-learning is electronic learning, and typically this means using a computer to deliver part, or all of a course whether it's in a school, college, part of training or a full distance learning course. E-Learning is learning utilizing electronic technologies to access educational curriculum outside of a traditional classroom. In most cases, it refers to a course, program or degree delivered completely.

*“Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school.”*

—Albert Einstein.

While Einstein's words may have been intended in good humor, they aptly reflect

the fact that effective education is constant and always evolving. In fact, the face of education has experienced a sea change over the decades. Once characterized by the traditional classroom model, education has metamorphosed into learning that is instant, online, self-driven and on the go. The journey of education in India, too, has been dotted with innumerable milestones.

In other words, e-learning can also be described as learning that is delivered online, via the internet, ranging from Distance Education, to computerized electronic learning, online learning, internet learning and many other forms. So e-learning can be defined as courses that are



specifically delivered via the internet to somewhere other than the classroom where the professor is teaching. It is interactive learning in which learner can also communicate with teachers, professors or other students in the class. Sometimes it is delivered live; where one can “electronically” raise hand and interact in real time and sometimes it is a lecture that has been prerecorded. Normally, there is a teacher or professor interacting /communicating with learner and grading the participation, assignments and tests. E-Learning has been proven to be a successful method of training and education. It is becoming a way of life for many citizens in our country e.g. farmers education, adult education, pre-primary and primary education as well as in higher education.

## History of E-Learning

A revolution in the information technology and the emergence of web has made the human society take a huge leap. The focus of society is shifted from industry to information. The appearance of information technology has been the most important event at the start of this century. Information technology suddenly became an important element of every aspect of our society. Education is no exception. The use of multimedia and networking is welcomed by the field of education. In 1960, the University of Illinois developed a classroom with linked computer terminals where the students could listen to recorded lectures of a particular course. This was the first time that some form of e-learning was followed. Computer based learning gave birth to many

e-learning courses. With the growth of internet in 1990s, correspondence schools like University of Phoenix started showing interest in virtual education. Some experts refer to the education in 21st century as a multimedia network education. Educational information is being accepted and promoted by all the nations around the world. A fact stated by the National Centre for Education Statistics that in 2008, there were 18 million students, who were enrolled in some online program worldwide, which was a 1.6% increase from 2002. In India, even though the statistics are not so high, still there is a large scope of online education. Under this situation, the education system and the teaching methods and many other things related to the education field are changing. And this transformation has given birth to e-learning.

## A shift from traditional learning to e-learning

Traditional education system consist of one way communication system by the gurus to the students, which consist of imparting education to the student in best possible way. In this student require to attend the classes in person and on the campus. It makes sense id you decide to live in the dorms or are an incoming freshman who wants of real college experience. There are certainly more opportunities to join clubs, association or fraternities while taking classes on campus. It may be a better choice for those students who are not very savvy with technology or want to enjoy interacting with teacher and professor face to face. As we know in it is one way system (only getting knowledge) because of the



development of modern education system has taken place which was subsequent known as E-Education system.

With the rapid advancement & growth of countries & impact of globalization is having a substantial effect among various sectors of most nations. We are looking to maximize educational potential in rural areas. Taking this into consideration Government may choose powerful strategies aimed of development of rural areas & for this purpose government organized ICT work well in this area. E-education is a new education concept by using the internet technology. It deliveries the digital content, provides a learnt orient environment for the teacher & students. It promotes the constructions of lifelong learning opinions & Learning society. India need to embrace internet & technology if it has to reach all of its huge population the majority of which is located in remote village. Today the whole world moving towards information based world & society after all information is knowledge & knowledge is wisdom. Today there is a requirement to provide e-education to rural areas because India's like developing country where most opportunity to connect with the other worlds easily & conveniently. E-learning is generally meant for remote learning and distance learning but can also be used in face to face mode.

E-education also refers "E-learning" or "Distance Education" involves taking course over the internet as opposed to in the classroom. Its popularity due to its flexibility & convenience that an online

experience provides. It allows student to work at their own pace without the confines of a strict class schedule. The main aim of the education is the elevate the scope, purpose for computer education in rural India.

The traditional learning system had been used in India and was sustainable for long. But the educational needs are changing and a global education standard is imposing itself and forcing the Indian education system to undergo many changes. The concept of e learning is definitely gaining popularity in the country but at a slow pace as compared to other countries.

## **EMERGENCE OF E-LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

Academics were prominent among the early users of email and the World Wide Web, initially to support their research, access information, or communicate with colleagues, and later to supplement their teaching. As a consequence, many of the diverse strategies now in place in traditional universities can be traced to early, often modest, pilot projects and initiatives by individual teachers. While many of these early applications involved little more than making lecture notes, or other instructional materials, available online, some teachers went further, using online technology to communicate with their students, provide access to external resources and – where interest and opportunity coalesced – to develop and teach Web-based courses. Many of these early programs were developed by staff in departments of



Computer Science or Informatics, where the synergy between research and teaching was strongest, and the essential infrastructure for course development and delivery most accessible; similar synergistic opportunities (in research, marketing, or program development) stimulated involvement by schools of education, and by departments of continuing education and extension studies. As access to the required facilities became increasingly ubiquitous, and experience of using the technologies grew, online-learning inevitably expanded to embrace a wider range of programs and institutional staff.

## **E-LEARNING IN INDIA**

The revolutionary change which is taking place in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) has dramatic effects on the way universities carry out their functions of teaching, learning and research, particularly on the creation, dissemination and application of knowledge. These developments pose unprecedented challenges to higher education institutions in developing countries particular in India as India is viewed as the leading country on the continent. In other word, increasingly, a number of universities worldwide including some in India are making positive attempts to implement e-learning strategies in order to enhance equity, quality, share instruction technology resources, compete in global environment of higher education and meet the rising demand for tertiary education.

The e-learning landscape in India is transforming in a rapid pace and it is driven

by diverse economic, technological and social trends. Probably the most important of all these trends is the enormous demand for access to quality higher education. In India, 65% of the population are illiterate. 70% of the population live in rural areas. There is a great digital divide between urban and rural India; thus, India needs to take IT to the masses in order to increase the literacy and provide access to education via e-learning programs. For this purpose, the government with cooperation of private sector is trying to provide computer literacy to the masses.

The need for e-learning in India is a great challenge. One of the biggest, if not the greatest, problem is to overcome the digital divide, an endeavor in which the government needs to take the lead role. The public needs to be exposed to computers and join the information revolution. People need to expose their children to computers as an enabler to learn and integrate learning. However, most of the children live in rural areas. Thus, the government has established computer literacy programs in order to take the IT to the masses particularly rural people.

According to a recent study in a global level online learning program, after the United States, India has been reported to have the second highest number of online course enrollments with more than over 1,55,000 students from the country. Of a total of around 1.2 million students worldwide, 32% are from the U.S while 15% are from India. In higher education,



there is a growing demand to create a virtual learning environment (VLE) in which all aspects of a course are handled through a consistent user interface throughout the institution

E-learning has become increasingly popular across Asia. The continent's rise in Internet users and the revolutionary changes that have happened in education have created a very fertile environment for e-learning to grow. The rapid increase in Internet connectivity in the last few years has been an important catalyst for the growth of e-learning in India. A robust Internet ecosystem, with a multitude of local and global players, will help online learning make further inroads. With the number of Indian Internet users expected to reach 250 million this year, rivalling the US and second only to China, India's potential as a huge market for e-learning is enormous. Additionally, a large number of new users are accessing the Internet for the first time from their smart phones, which is an ideal, personalised and commerce-enabled platform for e learning adoption.

Fuelling this growth will be India's education system, already one of the largest in the world with a network of more than one million schools and 18,000 higher education institutions. More than half of the country's 1.2 billion population falls in the target market for education and related services. In the near future, universities will see more students accessing their coursework from outside the traditional campus and classroom. According to a July

2014 report from e-learning solutions provider Docebo, the worldwide market for self-paced e-learning reached \$35.6 billion in 2011. The five-year compound annual growth rate is estimated to be almost 7.6 per cent so revenues should reach \$51.5 billion by 2016. While the aggregate growth rate is 7.6 per cent, several world regions have significantly higher growth rates. The highest growth rate is in Asia at 17.3 per cent, followed by Eastern Europe, Africa, and Latin America at 16.9 per cent, 15.2 per cent, and 14.6 per cent, respectively.

As per the recent UK-India business Council report titled Meeting India's educational Challenges through E-Learning-2015, India is the second biggest e-learning market after US. So no doubt that India is bull's eye that every e-learning service provider wants to target. The Central Government is also not in the back foot as far as launching new services in e-learning sector. MOOC (Massive Open Online Courses) is one of the major, authentic and recent initiatives of e-learning in India. E-learning provides scope of gaining knowledge and experience form work experience, from online courses and also from the authentic materials used for specific purposes. Recently e-learning gains authentic platform of learning from its old misconception.

## **Rational of the study**

In the current super fast era and globalised world, education needs to meet the additional demands of present time such as creating globally competent work force. Due to globalization, the whole world has

become a global village. Now, education can be used as a useful tool to raise awareness of environment, peace, culture, social diversity, increased competitiveness and the concept of a global village. In the present world, education is being used as a means of becoming a global citizen. In order to work in this more competitive world, one has to be competent enough to survive. Education gives us that powerful tool by which we can live a life of worthiness. It is only through improving the educational condition of a society that the multi-faceted progress of its people can be guaranteed. E-learning is the best option available to achieve these goals. E-learning is also a powerful medium to improve inclusiveness of education in our country. 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.

The adoption of e-learning in all spheres—corporate, schools, universities, etc—is low at present. The Indian market is not substantial when compared to the international market. e-learning in India has been most successful in the corporate segment where it is seen as a means of achieving business goals and motivating employees. A lot of work has to be done to make e-learning successful for education, both formal and informal and to cultivate faith of people in online degrees in India apart from the ones given by renowned institutions like IITs. If e-learning reaches

the remote and rural parts of India, it would be much faster to educate people. Looking at the population, the available universities are not enough to accommodate all the people seeking education. At this point distance education comes in and has already been quite popular. E-learning can play a major role even here. The result of this study could be significant and likely to be effective to enhance and improve the quality of higher education. Hence the present has been taken.

### **Objective the study**

1. To observe the development in higher education through e learning.
2. To find the issues for implementation of e learning into higher education.
3. To examine the implication of the result to both students and lecturers and the global impact on society.

### **Issues of e-learning in higher education**

The internet are using to deliver e-learning initiatives has created expectation both in business market and in higher education institutions. As there are some issues surrounding the implementation of eLearning into higher education, including the structure and delivery of higher education, the implications to both students and lecturers and the global impact on society.

### **Organisational Structure of Universities**

Over the past decade the structure of higher educational institutions has changed, partly due to the introduction of technological



initiatives. It advocates by many writers that the structure of today's universities must be 'changeable' in order to integrate distance learning courses, and those institutions that will not or cannot change their structure to incorporate this technology may be bypassed by other educational providers, such as virtual universities and independent educational services. It also suggests one of the challenges facing traditional universities intending to transform organisational structure to incorporate technological innovations is coming to terms with the process design for distance learning courses.

### **Higher Educational Institutions links with Industry**

Researchers have indicated that a more business-focused approach to higher education in conjunction with improved technology has resulted in an increased number of university to business alliances. It also accepted that universities are driven to e-Learning as a marketing tactic to attract part time students and to maintain market position, and the rise of alliances with other organisations is inevitable due to social demands for knowledge and the lack of public and government funding in higher education.

### **Incorporating eLearning in Organisational Strategy**

It asserts that if universities are to compete in a global higher education market they must embrace the technological advancements and use them as a strategic tool, capable of transforming educational

and business practices when it implemented 'properly' could modernise higher education, but when deciding an effective strategy it is imperative to consider that distance learning is a means to an end, not the end itself.

### **The Role of Teaching Staff**

The dynamic nature of the IT industry in conjunction with evolving eLearning technologies has created a tension for lecturers in higher education. ELearning initiatives have reportedly created new educational issues for lecturers, such as changing work patterns. The teaching techniques used by lecturers in traditional courses may also have to be reviewed and modified, as they do not always prove effective or necessarily transferable in eLearning environments. Many suggest that rather than changing the role of the lecturer, it will gradually disappear completely with the rise of improved eLearning technologies and methodologies.

### **Enhanced Teaching Tools**

The future delivery of education is envisaged through eLearning technology providing lecturers with superior teaching tools. It observed that online methods facilitate more effective education and offer significant advantages over traditional teaching methods. Despite the apparent advantages of eLearning teaching tools there appear to be certain practical problems with regard to utilising these techniques in educational learning environments. It is experienced that nearly two thirds of the students in the class did not participate fully

because of technical problems i.e. frustrations in trying to connect and utilise the networked systems.

### **Training Staff in eLearning Techniques**

Recent studies indicate that the success of eLearning methods in higher education can only be measured according to the effectiveness of delivery, training staff may be regarded as a major challenge in the adoption of eLearning initiatives. It is acknowledged that some academics working in higher education are reluctant in accepting aspects of technology in their teaching and learning. Lecturers that enter the profession in today's information age are much more likely to have used computers and have significant access to the Internet than those in previous years and are more likely to accept technological advances in teaching methods.

### **The Learning Environment**

There is a notion that an eLearning environment offers students an improved learning experience when compared to a more traditional learning environment. It is imperative found that student participants on eLearning university courses using techniques such as virtual lectures and bulletin boards, achieved better grades than students who studied in traditional learning settings. However, although eLearning environments overcome the traditional time and space constraints, universities must be cautious when deciding if distance learning environments should replace the traditional methods, as students recognise the benefits

of the eLearning environments but only when combined with traditional formats.

### **Student Performance**

It is obvious that students enrolled on eLearning courses perform better than those on more traditional schemes. There is evidence to suggest that eLearning university students outperform those on traditional courses. An example of example of Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) in America, where eLearning techniques have not only improved student exam results but have acted as educational bridges between subjects, breaking the ancient boundaries between disciplines.

### **Accessibility for Students**

One of the most valuable attributes of eLearning techniques and delivery are that they potentially give students greater access to education, in comparison to more traditional less flexible educational methods. Writers express the view that full time and part time students can now partake in their chosen degree courses from any location, giving people who travel or who are relocated, a transferable and easily accessible learning resource and experience. Through the use of advanced technology, students who have previously not had access to higher education now have the opportunity to study at the location that best suits their needs.

### **Conclusion**

E-learning have potentially major impact on the way higher education is designed, implemented and delivered. In developing countries, E-learning raises the level of education, literacy





and economic development. This is especially true for countries where technical education is expensive, opportunities are limited, and economic disparities exist. The last decade has seen a phenomenal of with in the use of web in university education, with various factors influencing are adoption of web-based technology. When considering the implementation of E-learning, educational institution must be structurally flexible and be emplace the capabilities of distance learning as a tool to support over all learning. Many innovative was taken strong steps toward E-education. It is beneficial to people who have universal access. It requires large amount of investment and infrastructure facilities and prove more useful and best suited alternative for rural education and services delivery.

Although Indian nearest is still young, it with continue to adopt the concept of E-learning worked in order to meet its communication need and size business opportunities .

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