Online Learning As Future Transition Of Education In Indian Prospect

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Abstract: Countries all over the world are focusing on the continuous online delivery of the education in this pandemic condition. For this all stakeholders of the education need to play an important role, as learning can never be put on hold. All strata of education system are taking digital initiatives from kindergarten to research level so that the teaching-learning process continues. Online education is prevalent in all academic institutions in the world in various modes. Emergence of new technologies, universal adoption of World Wide Web, training requirement of future workforce that will be essentially based on technology is the basis of development of new framework in education system.MHRD has already taken many initiatives to enhance learning by various digital platforms for academic fraternity. In the coming years, digital learning is going to become indispensable in our education system. This article aims to present the expected new normal in the near future, which requires proper infrastructure, well-trained teachers and students without any inhibitions, uniform government policies, and fast universal access to network.

Keywords: Online education, e-learning, Digital technologies, Higher education, Government policies.

Introduction:

In the present situation with the eruption of Covid-19 all across the world, various prudent and defensive steps are being taken to encounter this universal pandemic. It was the foremost need of shutting down all schools, universities, workplaces, events to check the spreading of this novel virus. Teaching-Learning process was envisioned to be held back at this time to considerable duration of time.However,technology came to our rescue and assisted us in continuing with learning process through various means available online.

Technology plays a great role in learning process. It has been rightly mentioned that learning should not stop under any catastrophe. Information and Communication Technology is a great coordinator and facilitator for the process of online learning, it assisted in maintaining the process of teaching-learning all in one piece at this critical time. Diversified digital platforms enabled with ICT tools are available for educators, students, research scholars and everyone who is keen to learn 24x7. All these tools can be accessed at flexible timings and provide constant learning whenever desired at

comfortable pace.UGC ,India has organized, prepared and shared assorted links available online on various platforms that can be easily accessed by all academic members, students, faculties, researchers in the form of audio, video or text.

Online Learning as the need of the hour:

The term online-learning can be defined as the application and integration of electronic based media, education technology and also ICT in online education. Online learning or *e-learning* is described as a learning managed by means of electronic media, generally supported by the online network (Oxford Learner's Dictionary).The success of online learning relies on the self-motivation of individuals to learn productively. E-learning industry is economically and reasonably substantial. Advancements in the areas of web based and multimedia technologies are the elemental facilitator of e-learning. The industry has five key factors like-consultative, teaching-learning content, various technologies, services and support. Online learning enhances distance learning programmers and learning with flexibility. It can also helps in traditional classroom teaching in unification with web based teaching and learning.

Online learning has numerous advantages, as in it helps in saving time and expenditure or the probability of learning anytime and anywhere. Many students accept that this type of learning is convenient for them to pursue various degrees at higher level. A great majority out of these students are intrigued to pursue methods which allow them self-paced learning in flexible environment. Furthermore, in non-synchronous digital learning classes, students are not restricted to any time, they can simply log in whenever they feel like and complete their assigned tasks. After so many benefits still, a small section of teachers considers it tough to keep their students occupied in an online-learning class. One of thereasonscould be the lack of face-to-face interaction like that in a traditional class, which develops and affects various affective domains.

Discussing further about the online learning, Learning management systems (LMS) are platforms which assists in providing digital learning. It is a sort of Online resource that permits you to create and store e-learning courses, it provides access of the content to the learners and helps in evaluation with result assessment. Online-education can provide access to the finest teachers and the outstanding exercises or knowledge feasible (UNESCO, 2002). In contemporary times, a large section of universities are following the process of integrating information and communication technologies. These higher education institutions desire to expedite the addition and assimilation of knowledge and to coordinate along the present rapidly expanding technology. In all over the world, the higher education sector of any country plays an important role in social and economic developments.

Online learning in combination with ICT in education nowadays can be labelled as e-learning, blended learning, distance learning, online education etc. The different kinds of ICT devices accessible and including applicability to education, such as teleconferencing, email, audio conferencing, lessons with the means of television, radio broadcasting channels, interactive

programmes on radio, interactive voice response system, have been utilized in education for various outcomes (Bhattacharya and Sharma, 2007).

ICTs can be utilized in education conducive to:
- promote the attainment and incorporation of knowledge;
- provide favourable circumstances to developing countries to improve educational systems;
- advance formulation and accomplishment of policies;
- Broaden the reach of chances for business as well as for individuals.

Significance of digital tools in educational arena:
ICT has diminished the hurdles in the present conditions. It has associated education industry and all other industries to continue their process by using various digital platforms. Many educational institutions has taken assistance of various online tools like-Skype, Zoom App, Google meet, Google classroom, Webex etc.These platforms with their updated and customised versions have helped the education system in taking continuous online classes and to some extent helps in creating similar conditions as traditional classrooms. These digital applications provided all interactive face to face learning which made online teaching-learning convenient and interesting.

Faculty, Students along with all academicians are accomplishing maximum utilization of the lockdown period. Many online learning platforms are offering opportunities to get enrolled in large number of courses. To name a few such learning tools are Swayam portal, Coursera, edX,Udemy,NPTEL and plenty others. Students are given chances to access the notes, content and free books of various subjects and disciplines by means of numerous online available platforms like ugcmoocs.inflibnet.ac.in, epgp.inflibnet.ac.in, swayamprabha.gov.in, youtube.com, etc. (Gupta,2020)

Online learners are now been offered flexibility to choose from a bountiful of courses and programmes. With the advent of technology, the students have privilege to continue their studies at their own speed and time. Online learning has transformed the system of education, as the need of blended learning has been highlighted during the current times. The technology which was taking place in education industry slowly took a huge leap in present scenario.

Without any terrestrial restraints, students are now given opportunity to advance their degrees or update their knowledge and learn new skills. This has been made convenient by the use of the internet along with education technology. Hence, online learning is competent enough to adjust in the busy schedules of teachers and students. It is also cost-effective and does not hinders the path for getting education through world class institutions/universities.(Singh,2020)

Digital Educational Platforms launched in India:
Educational Institutions all over the country tried to assure that the students experience less academic loss. These institutions are giving their best efforts in conducting virtual classes, video

conferencing and using of other online platforms to upload the concerned study material online. The present prospect of evolving learning industry is:

> India will experience a digital revolution as soon, 500 million new users will be added to the 370 million internet users in India. Also, the outreach of the internet is not limited to the urban landscape alone nowadays, but it has reached rural areas, too. These factors create a huge market for the eLearning sector in India.(Walia,2020,para.1)

A number of considerable online learning platforms has been provided by Union HRD ministry to support learning amid lockdown:

➢ **SWAYAM Portal MOOCs:** These are online based interactive-media courses created specifically for students studying at higher education level. Many courses are approved by AICTE as FDP for Faculty. Students can also earn academic credits in plenty of these available courses. These are available throughout the year.

➢ **E-PG Pathsala:** This web based platform offers e-books up to PG level, which can be easily accessed.

➢ **Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing (DIKSHA):** Around 80,000 Curriculum related content in 15 languages is being provided on the portal. It is also giving access to extensive scope of videos with explanation, various interactive activities and games,quiz,lesson plans, experience based content along with worksheets.

➢ **CBSE PODCAST:** A new podcast app has been launched by CBSE which goes with the name *'CBSE-Shiksha Vani'*.This application is accessible through Play Store for downloading by Android phone users.

➢ **National Digital Library of India (NDL) :**This digital platform is available for all categories of educational institutions,academicians,differently baled students and all others who are ready to learn. The Website address to access is: https://ndl.iitkgp.ac.in/.

➢ **IIT Pal**: Many students wish to clear through IIT entrance exams. So IIT Pal provides lectures for such students in Science subjects which are helpful in cracking IIT entrance exams. Website that can be accessed is: https://nta.ac.in/LecturesContent.

➢ **Vidwan:** It is linked with National Mission on Education through ICT (NME-ICT).It is anindex of experts and all stakeholders associated with research areas and wish to establish networks.

> **e-Shodh Sindhu:** It provides platform for access to higher education electronic resources with the help of INFLIBNET centre. A large number of peer reviewed journals and institutions are linked with the portal.

> **E-Classes On Swayam Raba DTH Channels:** Even when the school students are in quaratine with rest all country,MHRD has started e-classes to ensure that the students are not aloof from learning and stay connected with studies.Recorded and live both programmes are being telecast on the Swayam Prabha,TV channel.The duration is for six hours for whole week besides three repeat telecasts which makes the learning available for 24 hours.

> **UMANG mobile app**: Students can take reference on the government's UMANG mobile app. Primary and Secondary level students can access a large number of e-books,audio and videos related to all subjects.NCERT has given access to books and study material on e-pathshala.(Nandini,2020)

> **One Class,One Channel**: Union Finance Minister has proposed for 12 channels for 12 classes in school and utilisation of radio community programmes. Permission has been given to top 100 universities of the country to offer online degrees and courses for promotion of e-learning from 30 May 2020 automatically.**PM eVidya programme** will provide more scope for educational technology start-ups to enhance digital education in India. At elementary school level, Centre is planning to launch a fresh mission for early literacy and numerical skills(Express News Service,2020).

All new initiative by the Indian government reflects that they are eager to bring changes in digital learning for the technological advancement-learning tools and technologies are being promoted by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) ascrucial for transmitting education. The government has initiated various programmes to improve research and Development in digital technology. The government also plans to provide financial assistance to factors involved in the growth of online digital initiatives including training of faculty, development of quality content etc. at various levels.

Global Trends and Indian initiatives for Online Education:

Professionals has been offered an array of options by e-learning industry. They are offered a huge range of learning possibilities irrespective The options offer a range of learning facilities that they can relish nevertheless of any stature and region, which was unimaginable few years back. Different private universities are providing online learning courses in large number as per the report by global professional services firm, KPMG. Higher education specially with courses like MBA and MCA is taking small steps towards wide acceptance of digital learning with the help of online platforms.

In comparison to few years back, rural areas are now slowly giving way to more use of internet which will lead to enormous surge in the figure of online accessible courses by students. KPMG has

reported that, by 2021, Indian online education industry will observe an expansion of about 6 times. A report named "Online Education in India: 2021" by (KPMG,2017)predicts:

> It is astonishingly true that the number of users enrolling in online education may touch 9.6 million users by 2021, from 1.6 million users in 2016. The revenue associated with it may be worth $1.96 billion. Estimates point out that the eLearning market worldwide will grow massively to the tune of more than 243 billion U.S. dollars by 2022. These forecasts clearly point that eLearning is all set to become a global trend, and sooner or later, more and more people may opt for it over traditional classrooms.

As the online education market is on spurt, it has become potential crucial point in the coming years to result in hike of employment chances, filling the demand-supply difference in the Indian industries. The rapid change from the classroom to digital learning in many countries all over the world has made people marvel whether this mode will continue or perish as soon the crisis of this pandemic situation ends. Since the rise of COVID-19,all educational apps,virtual classrooms, online learning softwares,video conferencing tools has suddenly witnessed a sudden growth in usage.

We all need to analyze the potential of the online learning because the technology is going to play major role in education sector now (Li & Lalani,2020).Many of the educational institutions have initiated and continued online classes in the COVID-19 times. They are carrying out all attempts to complete the loss of students by integrating ICT in their Lectures. It's are using Webex app and others are also making use of the various apps for live coaching classes. University regional centre like IGNOU Bhubaneswar, strongly carried out online classes and different introduction programmes through ZOOM app during this period..

Response of Education industry towards continuous learning around the Globe:

Various online learning platforms has started offering free access to numerous of their services in return to considerable expectations which has raised recently.BYJU'S is one such platform which was founded in 2011 announced free live classes and it witnessed good response from the student community who enrolled in great number and thus increasing its market.

Chinese apps like Tencent classroom,Alibaba, led to an online movement in the student learning in middle of February this year. Many educational giants are developing capacity so that it could provide integrated usage of learning online both to teachers and students. Another Singapore based technology company Lark, has announced for free virtual collaborative services to be utilized for education industry in India. It has helped in enhancing remote working between teachers, students and parents.UNESCO has also recognized Lark's contribution in facilitating learning at this time when educational institutions are closed (ANI,2020).

Local educational broadcasting of the content for classes pre-K to 12th grade has been initiated by forming partnerships between school districts and local media channels. The Los Angeles Unified

School District and PBS/SoCal/KCEThas formed one such partnership in USA. (Press room-KCET,2020).In this way,BBC has also initiated virtual in-effect learning with the help of Bite size daily online lessons that begun from last month in April. Several significant subjects are being offered for school level students (age 14-16) in UK on daily basis with various celebrated personalities. It is providing guidance to parents for homeschooling their children and also children with special educational needs are being guided. (Barr,2020).

Online learning as integral part of education in future:

Many experts believe that the shift to online education has been unplanned with less bandwidth, no proper training,and less groudwork.So it may result in uneven growth which will not be conducive for education industry. Some holds that new integrated model of education will arrive any time soon with meaningful gain. "I believe that the integration of information technology in education will be further accelerated and that online education will eventually become an integral component of school education," says Wang Tao, Vice President of Tencent Cloud and Tencent Education.

Higher level institutions and universities have successfully progressed towards launching of online learning. Zhejiang University, China provided to get 5000 online courses in just two weeks through "Ding Talk ZJU".The Imperial College, London initiated to offer a new course on the topic, science of corona virus, that has become the maximum enrolled class which is being launched in 2020 on the Coursera platform.

A large number of educators who are using the online platfoem to deliver lectures in current times have accepted that it has changed the technique of teaching. The faculty and students are finding it simple to utilize chat groups, Online virtual meetings,polling,sharing of document and much more. It looks this process will continue even after the pandemic slows down. Traditional and Online learning are going to be used by education community all together.

The requirements of Online learning:

Adopting technology always bring challenges to be overthrown. Few of them are mentioned below:

A large number of students strive to engage in online learning because of lack of dependable access to internet; this digital divide can be observed in almost all countries across the globe. Disadvantaged group of students even do not have own computers/tablets or smart phones to have regular access to digital learning (Li&Lalani,2020).

There is still a hesitation among students of being detached whenever they enroll themselves in an online course's great number of students who aspire to pursue an online course always have a common reluctance whether this online platform course has proper accreditation and relevance as the other regular courses. Students sometimes have doubts regarding the content of the learning material(Singh,2020).

The teachers of government aided institutions or a numerous less privileged private or non-aided schools or educational institutions may not at all have the knowledge of online tools such as Google Classroom,Zoom,LMS which are applicable for such intent. They do not either have the competence to utilize the resources. Our education system has not been successful in giving proper training to our educators and our students. The importance of online learning was never imparted to them so they are not prepared for the transition of traditional classroom teaching to digital education (Rayan,2020).

A dynamic change in education is crucial :

Positive and negative aspects are always present in any system. The ultimate goal should be to maximize strengths and minimize any weakness so that lot of opportunities can be given space. The present young generation are already familiar to the digital world. So it is the correct time to move from traditional approach to content based online approach.

Educators also during the lockdown period experimented and developed creative ways to use technology. When there was no other option they learnt to create e-resources with the help of online tools to be uploaded on You Tube etc. platforms. They tried to prepare learning content and then share documents and other resources with students by making use of different tools available. Regular classes were taken with the help of various video conferencing facilities such as Zoom, BlueJeans,Google Meet. Many of these video conferencing apps provided many free features that can be easily used in online classes for teachers and students. Features such as document sharing, use of white board, face to face interaction, easy scheduling of meeting, less consumption of data, long hours of classes and many more are being customised as per the demands of the education industry.

Integration of ICT tools in education system has to be upgraded to next level now. The integration of technology is still in earlier stages in India and it need to be taken care of and categorized in four levels:

➢ Teachers need to be given proper organised training and Continuous Professional Development for making use of technology and also to produce results.

➢ The process of teaching-learning and assessment.

➢ Improving access to education for disadvantaged groups (differently-abled students, girls and students) living in remote areas.

➢ Proper planning, administration and management of the education structure in the country.

The proposed National Education Policy, 2019 have further emphasized on these above areas of technology integration and application. MHRD has launched several initiatives based on ICT.Many of them, are totally free to access by both educators and the learners. But the main contradiction is

neither the faculty and nor their teachers are aware of such inititatives.EDUSAT was launched in 2004 with a seven year life span but only 10% of its maximum capacity was barely utilized. If the teachers have been well aware of these all technological efforts and initiatives and then such negative points for proper utilization of online learning would have never came before us.

To expand online education in the country, the MHRD started a campaign 'Bharat Padhe Online' in April 2020.They invited opinion and ideas from academic faculty in addition to students and teachers. At this time all educational stakeholders need to share their valuable ideas so that online education can be intensified.

Conclusion:

Higher Education sector need to play a significant role and develop new trends,excellence for their future. Information and communication technologies can be very helpful in achieving this goal of the education system.MHRD and UGC are continuously initiating many plans to integrate ICT at national level for all academic fraternity and educational institutions. Technical competence is one of the essential skills for ICT and online learning for both teachers and students. Observing the current scenario, it seems the future of technology has become the present of our education system.

Technological investments are fruitful for educational institutions, they need to develop infrastructure for future in their institutions by training all teachers and students.ICT will not replace the traditional face to face teaching but would enhance the learning process by blending traditional and Online education. Education system need to develop a framework and integration policy at national level for all educational structures-from pre-primary to research level. Online learning no doubt is beneficial to diverse learners who are distant by time and location.

Efforts by educational institutions for developing institutional framework to deliver blended format of teaching-learning process is foremost requirement. Educators need to be receptive to the digital learning platforms. In addition, it is significant to build well established quality assurance structure and quality yardstick for online education. Rapidly increasing e-learning platforms need to be regulated by government policies and uniform online education guidelines can help the digital initiatives in our country.

In today's global world, there are no strict personal, cultural and educational boundaries. Online education leads to lifelong learning anytime and anywhere that becomes helpful for the students. Also it is a tremendous way to increase the academic and professional competency by the educators and researchers by creating open educational resources for all to access. Digital transformation has helped to convert educators into producer and architect of knowledge. Every online education effort has given the academicians the time for learning and teaching simultaneouly.Michael Allen has aptly said,

"There are no refunds; learners cannot get their time back if we waste it." (Gupta,2020)

So it is better to continue with teaching-learning with the help of technology integrated in our future education and teaching approaches.

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