



## A STUDY ON ROLE AND PROSPECTS OF E-LEARNING IN EDUCATION SYSTEM OF INDIA

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### ABSTRACT

*For decades, the education system in India has been facing severe challenges. Inadequacy of infrastructure, shortage of quality teachers and conducive environment for students are a few to mention. These challenges over the period have turned into the barriers, preventing the students from getting quality education, a basic requirement for developing skilled human resource for future. On the other hand the corresponding demand for skilled human resource from industry has been ever increasing. In such a scenario, the evolution of e-learning or online education has emerged as a viable solution to the problems of lakhs of people who do not have access to the quality education. This paper attempts to study the role of e-learning systems in improving the current education system in India and explore its prospects in the days to come.*

**Keywords:** E-Learning, Online Education, Education System, IT Based Education, Digital Education.

### Introduction

Historically, the education system in India has been based on delivering education through brick and mortar model. However due to lack of technical expertise, adequate infrastructure and resources to lengthy permission processes; the prevailing Indian education system has not been able to meet the desired objectives of enabling and educating the young Indian students. The gross enrolment ratio (GER) for higher education in India was 12 per cent in 2010, which has been far below several other countries. For example, according to a Report, GER is 23 per cent for China, 34 per cent for Brazil, 57 per cent for U.K., 77 per cent for both Australia and Russia and 83 per cent for the U.S. In this context, the attempt of government to increase the number of students by 2020 so as to reach GER of 30 per cent becomes a big challenge.

The lesser enrolment ratio has been the consequence of different underlying factors, like poor infrastructure, quality deficiency, lack of innovative methods, affordability issues etc. However with the rapid increase in internet connectivity and number of internet users in India, the idea of delivering quality education through the internet, that would be accessible and affordable to all has given birth to the phenomenon of e-learning.

E-learning brings unique advantages with it. For example, it provides an easy access to people living in smaller towns and cities to the best possible learning resources from across the world, at a very affordable price and there is personalised attention to all the concerned students.

### Literature review

According to D Laurillard (2006) "e-learning is the use of any of the new technologies or applications in the service of learning or learner support", and it has been considered as operational definition of e-learning. Nelasco,

Arputhraj & Paul (2007) in their paper studied 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. Jaiswal (2013) conducted the study to find out the current status of e -Learning in Indian Higher Education. He observed that 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. 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.

### Discussion

The objective of this study is to:

1. To examine the role of e-learning in current education system
2. To explore the future prospects of e-learning

### E-Learning in India

The education system in India, once characterized by the traditional classroom model, has been witnessing a transformation into learning system that is online, self-driven and on the go. With the advent of Information Technology (IT), increased government and private sector investment in IT has resulted in increased awareness and use of IT based tools in different sectors, including the

education sector. With drastic improvement in availability and speed of internet, the idea of online based learning has started taking a concrete shape.

The first IT-based teaching tool was used in India in the 1980s through the advent of computer-based training, with study material being stored in CD-ROMs. However, it was the rapid emergence of the information and communication technology (ICT) market in the 1990s that gave significant and far-reaching impetus to the Indian e-learning market. The scope of e-learning has percolated the domain of schools and colleges to enter into entire learning spectrum. The corporate India is progressively inclining towards utilizing e-learning systems for its employees. Also, seeing huge business prospects, many private players such as Core projects, Educomp Solutions, Everonn Education and NIIT have established their presence in this segment in recent times.. Similarly, Tata Interactive Systems, a Tata Group company, has come up into developing online course content for the pre-school and higher-education segments.

### **Aspects of E-Learning**

Online learning has become a new facet of Indian education system, that is certainly posing a threat to conventional methods of teaching. Though online learning may not completely replace school/university based systems because these offer much more than just academic knowledge inside their campuses. Still, E-learning systems offer following new aspects to the education delivery system:

#### **1. Live instruction**

For those courses that may require specialised instructors, e-learning based education systems are perfect mediums for delivery of education. Running on live broadcasts, these instructors while remaining in one location can provide instruction to many students in other locations. This type of specialisation increases as students move into higher levels of education, for example towards advanced degrees in medicine, technology and management.

#### **2. Video content delivery**

E-learning systems facilitate the pre-recorded content such as lectures, presentations and documentaries etc. that may be delivered in a store and forward model so that the students can view it when needed.

#### **3. Video-conferencing**

The video conferencing feature of E-learning systems helps in one-to-one interactions among the students. It helps them in comprehending the subjects during the process of discussion. After taking lectures online, students can initiate discussions among themselves on the learnt topic.

#### **4. Remote test administration**

In some education systems, standardised tests are used to evaluate students on a level-playing field. These tests must be delivered securely and on-time to meet testing schedules. In a country like India, this is an uphill task due

to its sheer geography and population size. Digital technology based E-learning systems could be a solution to such issues.

#### **5. Up-to-date materials**

**The content uploaded on E-learning system is easily updated.** As against physical textbooks, where updating of content takes place over a couple of years, the virtual textbooks are easily updated by the experts from time to time.

#### **6. Self-learning**

E-Learning systems are very much helpful in higher education courses where students are required to go through self learning process. **At the higher educational level, the post-graduate students, especially in remote locations may now be able to consult instructors at the university when needed.**

### **Role of E-Learning in Indian Education System**

In modern era, India has not been among the early adopter countries of technology in the field of education. However, of late with access to high speed broadband internet and low cost computers and mobile devices there has been growth in the use of technology for learning. Today India is one of the fastest growing markets for e-learning based products and services. It is being expected that e-learning segment will reach the turnover of \$40 billion by end of 2017.

E-learning or the online version of classroom based education is poised to play greater role in Indian education system in following ways:

#### **1. Distance education**

India being a developing country, many of the students live in remote semi urban or village areas. For them, getting degree for higher education is still a distant dream. Such students could become huge beneficiaries of digital technology based distance education, enabled by e-learning, which could help them to complete their studies and get their degree accomplished.

#### **2. Online learning management system**

Different universities and colleges in India are now integrating online Learning Management System or LMS platform into their web portal. This is an aspect of E-learning which helps students in remotely accessing course material and also attend live classes with teachers. Pre-recorded lectures and videos are uploaded on the LMS platform, which makes it easy for students to study the same content multiple times.

#### **3. Learning through mobile apps**

With the number of smart mobile phone users crossing 300 Mn in India, the delivery of educational content through mobile apps has opened another huge opportunity for growth of e-learning programmes. The e-learning through mobile apps has begun to transform the way students used to study at large. The app enabled

e-learning programmes are now very helpful for students while they are moving or on the go, thus saving lot of their precious time.

### **Future Prospects of E-Learning in India**

According to a report by Internet and Mobile Association of India and market research firm IMRB, the number of internet users in India is expected to reach 450 to 465 Mn in June 2017. This upward trend of internet usage shows that a large number of people have access to the internet and this accessibility is going to increase by every passing day. This will enable more educational institutions to provide e-learning programs to its students, allowing them to access their course work from outside their classrooms.

India has one of the largest education systems in the world with a network of more than 1 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. Therefore with continuing upward trend of internet usage among the population, the prospects of e-learning systems being adopted at large can easily be envisaged.

### **Conclusion**

With increased usage of internet among the population and intense efforts by the government to promote digital education, the prospects to digitally educate the students and widespread adaptation of e-learning based education systems seem very rich. Besides, evolution of new age technologies such as cloud, data centers and virtualization, e-learning systems are certainly going to prosper by integrating technology with the education industry.

Apart from having its cost and access advantages, the e-learning systems provide a win-win for all. On one hand, the education institutions see the rapid rise in enrolments by masses of students and added revenue. On the other hand the students view this as a flexible option allowing them to study as per their time and pace. Teachers too find it convenient to prepare their teaching content well aided by technology. Thus, it can be said that Indian education sector is undergoing a sea change by setting and adapting e-learning systems that will completely change the way education is delivered and pursued by the institutions and students respectively.

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