



ICT INITIATIVES BY MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT FOR PROMOTING E - LEARNING IN INDIA

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Abstract: E-Learning is learning utilizing electronic technologies to access educational curriculum outside of a traditional classroom. In most cases E-Learning refers to a course, program or degree delivered completely online. There are many terms used to describe E-learning that is delivered online, via the internet, ranging from Distance Education, to computerized electronic learning, online learning, internet learning and many others. It can be defined as courses that are specifically delivered via the internet to somewhere other than the classroom where the professor is teaching. Sometimes it is delivered live, where students can electronically raise their hand and interact in real time with teachers and sometimes it is a lecture that has been pre-recorded. The introduction of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the educational industry has added new values to teaching and learning environments. The e-learning system enables education programs to reach a vast number of students. This study is aimed at getting the view of the ICT initiatives by Ministry of Human Resource Development for promoting e- learning in India.

Key Words: ICT, Distance Education, E-Learning, MHRD & UGC.

I INTRODUCTION

Web-based learning is used nowadays as an option to face to face education. As a matter of fact, its use increases in a direct proportion with the increase of the number of students. This has made government and educators exert a lot of effort to help the learners to get interactive content that is full of multimedia as it has been proven that it has a significant effect on the process of learning. E-learning has grown in significance as an educational tool just like technology has developed and progressed over the years. The 21st century has seen rapid progress with such things as the Internet and online learning. The Indian Constitution resolves to provide quality education to all and in an effort to fulfill the educational needs of the country specifically for the diverse societies and cultures of the country the government has chalked out different educational categories: Elementary education, Secondary education, Higher education, Adult education, and Technical and Vocational education is nothing but the development of the whole individual and nurturing the potentials inherent traits. E-learning is a useful medium through which India can attain the goal of reaching the unreached in education sector, motivating the learners for higher education as well as woman empowerment through their education. In the attempt to promote e-learning, Ministry of Human Resources Development (MHRD) in collaboration with University Grants Commission (UGC) has made continuous efforts to implement e-learning initiatives for teachers and students for encouraging e-learning.

2. NEED OF THE STUDY

2.1 ICT: Information and Communications Technology (ICT), is the infrastructure and components that enable modern computing.

2.2 Distance Education: Distance education is the education of students who may not always be physically present at a school, or where the learner and the teacher are separated in both time and distance.

2.3 E-Learning: A learning system based on formalised teaching but with the help of electronic resources is known as E-learning.

2.4 MHRD & UGC: Ministry of Human Resource and Development come under the Ministry of Education which is responsible for the development of the necessary infrastructure for the education sector. The University Grants Commission (UGC) is a statutory organization established by an Act of Parliament in 1956 for the coordination, determination and maintenance of standards of university education.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

V. P. Deshmukh, in his researcher paper, “**Online Education: A Paradigm shift in Education in India**”, opined that in the era of IT, e-learning can be efficiently used for different types of education. Most of the population of India is in the rural areas where literacy rate is poor due to the lack of educational facilities.

Vishal Bhateja and Poonam Rani, in their research paper, “**E- Education: A Need of Learning**” (2012), stated that many elite universities, such as Arizona State, Villanova and North Carolina offer online programs, as well as nationally ranked technical schools which offers a range of programs from Master of Business Administration to graphic design which can be completed entirely online, or can be combined with a traditional learning setting. The flexibility of online learning is particularly helpful for working professionals who want to return to education, but need to remain employed to support their families.

Wing Lam, Jeremy B. Williams and Alton Y.K. Chua, in a research paper, “**E-exams: harnessing the power of ICTs to enhance authenticity**” (2014), discussed about Universities 21 Global (U21Global), a completely online graduate school backed by 16 universities from around the world, having a unique feature of interactive examination instrument which harnesses the power of the various information and communication technologies (ICTs). This instrument, referred to as the Open-Book Open-Web (OBOW) exam, presents students with a description of a simulated business problem using multimedia.

3.1 OBJECTIVES

- To study the concept and benefits of e- learning.
- To explore various e – learning resources initiated by the HRD Ministry and UGC.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on secondary data which are availed from various sources of information such as Research Papers, Books, and websites etc.

3.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The study includes use of secondary data collected by other sources which may have some deficiencies.
- Due to the limitation of time and length of research paper the researcher was unable to develop a deep insight into the topic.

4. Various online learning Platforms and resource provided by the HRD Ministry in collaboration with UGC for e-learning for free:

• SWAYAM Online Courses

SWAYAM Online Courses provides access to teaching-learning resources. These resources were earlier delivered on the SWAYAM platform. Even during Covid 19 pandemic, Students or learners who registered on SWAYAM (swayam.gov.in) in the January 2020 semester could continue their learning as regular course due to E-Content.



- **UG/PG MOOCs**

UG/PG MOOCs hosts learning material of the SWAYAM UG and PG Non-Technology archived courses.



- **e-PG Pathshala**

e-PG Pathshala hosts high quality, curriculum-based, interactive e-content containing more than 23,000 modules (e-text and video) in approximately 70 Post Graduate disciplines of social sciences, arts, fine arts and humanities, natural & mathematical sciences.

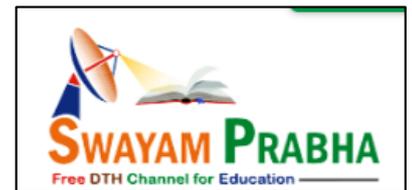


- **e-Content courseware in UG subjects**

e-Content courseware in about 87 Undergraduate courses with about 24,110 e-content modules is available on the CEC website at <http://cec.nic.in/>.

- **Swayamprabha**

'Swayamprabha' is a group of 32 DTH channels providing high-quality educational curriculum-based course contents covering diverse disciplines such as arts, science, commerce, performing arts, social sciences and humanities subjects, engineering, technology, law, medicine, agriculture, etc to all teachers, students and citizens across the country interested in lifelong learning. These channels are free to air and can also be accessed through your cable operator. The telecasted videos/lectures are also as archived videos on the Swayamprabha portal.



- **CEC-UGC YouTube channel**

CEC-UGC YouTube channel provides access to unlimited educational curriculum based lectures absolutely free. CEC is popularly known as Consortium for Educational Communication.



- **National Digital Library**

National Digital Library is a digital repository of a vast amount of academic content in different formats and provides interface support for leading Indian languages for all academic levels including researchers and life-long learners, all disciplines, all popular form of access devices and differently-abled learners.



- **Shodhganga**

Shodhganga is a digital repository platform of around 2,60,000 Indian Electronic Theses and Dissertations for research students to deposit their Ph.D. theses and make it available to the entire scholarly community in open access.



- **e-Shodh Sindhu**

e-Shodh Sindhu provides current as well as archival access to more than 15,000 core and peer-reviewed journals and a number of bibliographic, citation and factual databases in different disciplines from a large number of publishers and aggregators to its member institutions including centrally-funded technical institutions, universities and colleges that are covered under 12(B) and 2(f) Sections of the UGC Act.



- **Vidwan**

Vidwan is a database of experts which provides information about experts to peers, prospective collaborators, funding agencies policymakers and research scholar in the country. Faculty members are requested to register on the Vidwan portal to help expand the database of experts.



4.1 BENEFITS OF E – LEARNING

- **It accommodates everyone’s needs**

The option of online learning allows for the learning experience and opportunity to be available to anyone, anywhere, in real-time. It provides flexibility for online learners to not be limited to scheduled semesters of online training programs, but they can now learn after work, or on the weekends as well.

- **Lectures can be repeated**

One of the benefits of online learning is that it gives option of replaying videos, retaking quizzes, and even mini-games that have been proven to help with retention rates overall. There is no stress over missing a lecture, as it is always available to watch on the time when one is available to study.

- **Content can be easily updated**

With technology and the current market constantly changing and evolving, it is important that learning material to be evolving and staying relevant. The E-Content can quickly be updated with the new information, and upload it live for the students to continue studying.

- **Constancy**

On e-learning platforms, educators get a higher degree of coverage to communicate their message in a consistent way to the students, this ensure that all the learners receive the same type of training.

- **Eco-friendly**

e-learning is eco-friendly as there is no need to cut the trees for papers. Also, there isn’t any need of traveling to the particular education centre to learn, which helps in reducing the air pollution.

- **Adaptability**

E-learning helps in communicating new content, concepts and ideas to the learners. E-learning is a quick way of learning whether it is formal education or entertainment.

- **Fun way of learning**

E-learning is a fun way of learning. Gamified quizzes and challenges, use of attractive graphics and videos help the students to study in an amusing way.

- **Better results**

Studies show that e-learning gives the better results as students get to learn the constantly updated topics and concepts. Also, with the use of attractive graphics and videos, it is easier for students to recall the concepts for the longer period of time.

5. CONCLUSION

Rapid increase in internet connectivity is an important catalyst for the growth of e-learning. A robust internet ecosystem, with a multitude of local and global players, will help online learning make further progress. In underdeveloped and developing countries, e-learning raises the level of education, literacy and economic development. E-learning is increasing the percentage of literate population in the total population of India. E-learning plays a vital role in educational development as a wheel of growth in education sector. Through E-learning lot of opportunities can be captured and speedy development will possible. The prominent bodies of Government of India MHRD and UGC are working constantly to develop more free e-Learning platforms for the learners across various branches to keep the learning and the teaching system uninterrupted and ongoing.

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