



Indian Education

A Challenge under Digital Learning



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India's education system has been highly traditional ever since ancient period under Gurukul system when pupils went to Gurukul after their Janu Sanskar. At Gurukul, a pupil had to undergo certain tasks pertaining to their guru's apart from receiving specialized education on 'shastras and vedic culture'.

Our ancient era has proven that education system is very useful not only to the mankind but also to entire species, environment etc. If we have a look at the bonding between Guru and Shishya, we see a very gelling relationship with lots of punctuality, discipline and eagerness of learning, for example: Guru of Rama was

Vishwamitra; lord Krishna's was Guru Sandeepan; Kaurav's and Pandav's was Dronacharya; Chandragupta Maurya's was Chanakya and of Swami Vivekanand was Ramkrishna Paramhans.

Around 400 BC, Nalanda and Takshasilla were the only education hubs in the world where 10,000 students from various parts of the world could study various specialized subjects under one roof. From Guru-Shishya system of conducting the classes in open-air to that of closed class room lectures, much has been gone under transformation. Now traditional way of teaching has changed to presentation form of teaching with the aid of LCD

Projectors to Online notes, using of Whatsapp, Facebook, which is the buzzword among the students.

Indian subcontinent is comprised of diverse population belonging to various ethnic and cultural groups. Apart from these differences, the most visible difference that makes a direct impact on the Indian education system is the diversity in purchasing power and affordability of the Indians. The traditional education system no longer fulfills the modern day complex needs where everything is dynamic and evolving at a very fast pace. There is a huge amount of transformation that is taking place in the present world every second. Therefore, a new and modern way of education is required to handle such transformation arising as a result of creation of huge amount of information in a systematic manner. Thus, to resolve the shortcomings of the traditional education system, the world is moving towards digital education which addresses all the current issues and challenges of traditional education.

Digital Education

Digital education can be defined as a combination of technology, digital content and instructions in the education system to make it more effective and efficient than the traditional education system. This



education system aims to shape the future of our coming generations for the betterment and growth of the society in existing era. A popular adage states: "Necessity is the Mother of Invention", which is very apt for India's higher education system. Necessity for change in India's context has a multi-dimensional context and emergence of the digital era is acting as the catalyst for change. The factors necessitating the change include the goal to increase the gross enrolment ratio from 18% to 30% by 2020, the need to ensure the youth experiencing the higher education system are equipped with the right skills, the need to bridge the gap between the academia and the

industry and the need to enhance quality of education delivered as well as make education affordable. At the same time, with the number of universities established having risen from 20 in 1950 to 876 in 2018, universities recognise the need for creating distinctive value propositions that are appealing to the students and parents. Most universities also face the challenges of attracting high calibre faculty, finding adequate funds for carrying out research and being aligned with the industry needs. The potential for transformation that digital era offers is a compelling reason for universities and education policy planners to rethink the operating models and the guiding principles of defining the outcomes from the higher education institutions. Digital technology can no longer be viewed as enabling the education system, but is the prime mover for the transformation process and hence the need to review all the associated processes enabling engagement with various stakeholders.

Before embarking on the changes and adapting to the digital era, the fundamental question to be asked is what is the purpose of the higher education system going forward. In the last hundred years, the purpose was to inform, educate and through this process develop the youth to be worthy citizens of the society. This is



in turn led to the universities deciding what programmes to offer, what should be the curriculum, determination of the duration of studies and the type of end qualifications namely bachelors or masters degree. The fundamental shift that is taking place in the wake of digital transformation in the higher education system is triggering the transition from "educating" to "learning". Education providers would have to adapt by not restricting their offerings based on the knowledge or capabilities possessed by the current education system. The successful adoption rates of MOOCs and courses offered by experts like NPTEL around the world cannot be ignored while configuring programme offerings, design and learning outcomes.

In the past faculty were considered creators of knowledge as the boundaries for knowledge creation were tightly drawn. With the redrawing of boundaries for engagement with various stakeholders including students, industry and experts around the world, the opportunity for co-creation of knowledge and making knowledge repositories richer is immense. With the process of learning being no longer restricted to a predefined physical space and format, education providers have to focus on the outcomes and the learning experience. With information and knowledge on any subject freely accessible to the learners, they will be rating the education providers based on their learning experience facilitated by technologies they are accustomed to in their everyday life punctuated by strong two way feedback system and responsive change to the learning needs and students had to adapt to the teaching styles of the faculty and their learning objectives were pre determined by the faculty.

In the digital era, students have the flexibility of deciphering and

customizing their learning goals within the framework provided by the education system and education system would have to modify its learning delivery process to suit the different learning styles thus personalization would become more and more critical while architecting learning solutions. Several institutions have begun to use social media for the purpose of marketing, creating awareness, gathering feedback and fostering collaboration between stakeholders. Going forward, it would be essential to align this medium as an essential component of the learning architecture.

Leaders in the education sector think of the future in terms of additional campuses and the need for additional space as they grow. Growth in future may not be linked to the physical space but the ability of the institution to keep pace with ubiquitous computing including new forms of hardware and software fostered by the speed of innovation in the telecommunication sector thus enabling institutions to redefine their boundaries and access to students far beyond their current reach and segments.

Internet and access to a whole range of information and services free of cost or at a nominal cost have created a new awakening in the society to lean towards socialistic temperament. Therefore education providers have to explore new frontiers of cost and value that could be delivered to the learners. While technology offers numerous options for serving the stakeholders, unlike in the past when the systems and applications of universities were stand alone, in the digital era there would be multitudes of applications and technology platforms that would have to be integrated and would have to communicate to one another which would raise challenges of security, confidentiality and intellectual property rights.

The role of digitization in higher



education is to support the structural changes and create the competitive edge. What Charles Darwin wrote about evolution of life forms-"It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the ones most responsive to change" is as much relevant for the education sector and therefore the time for action is now.

Challenges and Measures to Overcome Digital learning

Digital Learning has become very popular with period of time. But it imposes certain challenges which need to be overcome. Someone rightly said, "Digital learning should be more about the human touch that just machines". The following are the challenges of digital learning along with the measures to overcome these challenges:

Hindrances in Digital Learning

Every improvement has two sides



advancement and development and other relates to certain challenges associated with the implementation of this advancement. Unfamiliarity of employees towards technology is one of the biggest challenges of Digital Learning, which the managers need to work with it. People commonly resist change, even if the changes are superior to what they had previously. They might not trust that a technology-based learning program will be as effective as interacting with an instructor. It's a fact that e-learning implementation can create enormous change within a company, so implementers can expect to face some resistance. To overcome this resistance certain measures can be taken:

Refreshers' Benefit: Feature of multimedia learning enables to make the material more engaging and easier to assimilate. At the time of refreshers', such learning material will be at their fingertips when they want. This will enable to complete the learning within a span of time.

Effective Communication: Communication is the key to incorporate digital learning programme effectively. It will enable

to understand and accept digital learning program quickly. It is important that, trainees need to know what benefits digital learning offers them, and what are the objectives, among other aspects.

Motivation Classroom

It should run in the form of a seminar and discussion. It requires an advantage of accountability and supervision. One of the common challenges in digital learning is that employees may not explore the course material until made aware of specific source domain. It becomes rather a big challenge on how can we keep our students motivated enough to complete courses under digital learning. Moreover, how can we make them enjoy the learning experience? To overcome this challenge certain measures can be taken:

Incentives: Accreditation of courses and certification gives employees a tangible goal that benefits themselves as well as the employer. More broadly, any job training that can lead to career advancement or resume building is valuable to today's employee.

Appealing: One of the best methods to motivate your participants or audience is to make sure the digital learning courses developed are visual and appealing.

Innovative Learning Environment

It is essential to know how many employees are using the digital learning program, how long they spend on it, and how many complete the course, but above this, it is more important to know the performance which reflects their newly-acquired knowledge. If they display the skills and information gleaned from the digital learning program in their work, then the digital learning implementation has been effective in creating innovations in learning environments.

Outcome

Keeping in view all above factors, many different ways to define digital learning and the educational approaches can be applied in these innovative learning environments. It is noted that digital learning is an innovative approach for a holistic way of teaching and learning that can meet the today's needs. Thus, we can draw following outcome:

- ☞ It is an environment made up of collaboration, choice and an array of technological resources that supports a successful online learning experience.
- ☞ To overcome challenges of digital learning for learners, digital learning must be supported with best practices and its solutions.
- ☞ Instructors and learners must embrace the shift away from traditional classroom practices to a digital learning approach to education.
- ☞ The use of technology for digital learning can be overwhelming and also provide student motivation challenges, if proper supports from instructors, learners are extended.

To sum up, we can say that, digital learning based education is a fairly good step which will enable us to transform our society and nation from a better prospect.

We need to ponder on how effective this system would be and what shall be its outcome in terms of education. Moreover, the most important challenge for instructor /teacher is to focus on the overall elements of well-developed and well defined online courses that imbibe the applicable course elements into the digital learning environment. However, these digital learning systems have a big question; what impact will it lay on the ethical and social bindings that Tradition/GURUKUL education system was creating in students. ■