

# Emerging Trends of E-Learning in Indian Higher Education: Challenges and Opportunities

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## ABSTRACT

*Education plays the key role in the development of any nation. It is the fundamental enabler of knowledge economy which lays the foundation for a continuous and equitable growth of any country. India has one of the largest higher education systems in the world, with 903 University, 39050 Colleges and 10011 Stand Alone Institutions with Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of 25.8%, which is calculated for 18-23 years of age group. The enrolment for Higher Education is 36.6 million which includes enrolment of 57840 in MBA, 25305 in PGDM and 3431 in PGPM<sup>1</sup>, but gradually the scenario has been found as reverse in last few years. The enrolment in full time program is reducing whereas the online education is skyrocketing. This changing scenario in education system really gives a boom and new education learning methodology in Higher Education.*

*E-Learning in India is a part of new dynamics that characterises the educational system. It has come a long way with the development of technology. India is one of the nations that is developing at an exponential rate in terms of technology. The rise of the internet has changed the way of life in India. People like to do everything online, they shop online, do business online, make friends online, learn online, etc. While e-Commerce is the most significant online industry, online education and learning stand right next to it. With the ever-increasing information available on the internet and the countless number of online courses, many people in India prefer to learn online. Besides being engaging and interactive, e-learning has come across as a flexible learning method for students getting access to world-class learning material despite geographical restraints. When the learner gets access to both visuals and audio, learning becomes more fun, and this is what the e-learning industry is thriving on to presently grow at a steady rate of 25 per cent year on year. A report by KPMG and Google highlights that by 2021 the Indian online education industry is likely to witness a 6X growth. The adoption of e-learning technologies is supposed to expand from 1.6million users in 2016 to 9.6 million users in 2021.*

*This global trend is catching up as an unrivalled alternative to traditional learning methods by connecting the learner directly to a subject matter expert. The key factors leading to the growth of the digital market in India are rising demand from various segments, growing number of smartphone users, improving penetration of internet, and increasing participation at the government level. New age technology platforms help in assessing the performance of students, teachers and institutions as a whole and are increasingly being adopted by educational institutions in India. Cloud-based platforms which help classroom go paperless are also finding takers. Also apart from the latest developments in ICT classrooms,*

*The study was intended to investigate problems related to e-Learning in higher education in India along with analysis of prospect of e-Learning in the related area. The study shows the positive effects of E-Learning for the higher education system in India. And the only way to sustain a better future is by educating the younger generation with effective and efficient education methodologies*

*Keywords: E-learning, Higher Education, smartphone, ICT*

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<sup>1</sup> AISHE Report 2017-18

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The education system in India need to enhance the reach of education, improve retention patterns, smooth out disparities in education, training of teachers and compensate for the lack of teachers in remote areas. In spite of long-time efforts by Indian policymakers through planning tools, Indian education system has not succeeded in providing educational infrastructure to all the corners of the country. Though the educational institutes of India are trying to deliver quality education, every institution has distinct goals, standards and regulations, budget pressures, security concerns, and technical legacies, but these institutions are not getting the proper output of even though they have world class infrastructures and facilities. The new generation of students were more tech savvy and prefer to get most of their requirement through these technologies. In these requirements, education is one of the important basics need of the students. The students are easily able to get all the learning materials and notes on internet at very low cost and hassle free. E-Learning is a broadly used term generally referring to web-based learning, online learning, blended learning, networked learning, distributed learning, flexible learning, etc. It is increasingly being seen as a tool to widen the access to education and developmental opportunities not only at the institutional level but nation as a whole.

### ADVANTAGES OF ELEARNING

#### a) Learn From Anywhere, At Any Time

Since online education only requires a laptop or a smartphone with an internet connection, students can learn anywhere at any time. This flexibility helps working professionals to pursue new courses without giving up their jobs. They can learn at weekends or in their free time. All the course materials are readily available at student's fingertip.

#### b) Save Money And Time

Online education is much more cost effective than completing a regular on-campus degree. It helps students who cannot afford a regular college degree to accomplish their dream without spending a fortune on college education. Since you study at your own time, it helps to save time as well.

#### c) Learn At Your Own Pace

Everyone learns at a different pace. In a classroom, where all students are being together, following the lesson may be difficult. This is a serious disadvantage of traditional education. Online education solves this issue. In online education, all course materials are provided beforehand, and students learn by taking their own time. They can also clarify their doubts by live chats or forums as well.

#### d) Recognition Of Online Degrees

Online degrees are accepted by many companies and employers in India as long as it is accredited and approved by Distance Education Council (DEC) of India. Many of them are encouraging their employees to get online education as well.

### DISADVANTAGES OF ELEARNING

#### a) Chances Of Distraction Are Very High

Students can easily lose track of their studies in online education since there are no face-to-face lectures and classmates to remind you about assignments. Until and unless you keep yourself motivated, it takes a long time to complete your course or abandon your entire course.

#### b) Fraudulent Online Courses

There are many websites that offer online courses without the accreditation of any educational authority or in the name of fake authorities. Such courses will not help you to get any job. So it is very important to choose an accredited online/distance program before you spend money on it.

#### c) Cannot Do Courses That Require Labs/Workshops

Practical Oriented programs like Engineering, Hotel Management, MCA not possible online as these programs requires labs or hands-on workshops online.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

- Soni, Ravindra Kumar (2015) reflected about the prospects and problems of e-learning in India. The study also discussed about various e-learning teaching modality and its benefits. The study has not discussed about the problem in rural India in implementation of online learning.

- Bhadauria, Ruma (2016), IJETMAS, Volume 4, Issue 2, ISSN 2349-4476, conclude about the benefits of e-learning in Higher Education System. It highlighted on how the learning should be reach to the inetrior of the country, but the study has not discussed on the futuristic and scope in rural market.
- Sheakh, Dr. Tariq (2018), Journal of Dynamical and Control Systems, is case study on the higher education and e-learning. The study emphasis on additional learning to the student thorough online mode to become more practical and upto date as per the corporate culture.
- Ray, Partha Pratim, Indian Journal of Computer Science and Engineering, Vol. 1 No. 4 340-352, ISSN : 0976-5166 discussed about the new trends in education system and adoption of online mode to teh young dynamic society.

### 3. PROBLEM DEFINITIONS

- Many people are not aware about the various online programs available in India.
- The increasing craze of e-Learning becomes a threat for regular full time programs.
- To assess if e-learning-online educational platform is accepted by the population.
- To asses if e-learning will help in making India as Literate Nation.

### 4. OBJECTIVES

- To study the various program available in online mode
- To study the awareness of e-learning in India
- To know the various schemes and benefits of Indian Government as started for the growth of online courses.
- To study the reason for increasing craze of e-learning in higher education in India

### 5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Did population in India were aware of e-learning mode of education?
- What were the actual challenges to e-learning service operators in Indian Higher Education?
- Why the craze of full time regular education system is decreasing in India?

### 6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

**Method** The study was descriptive and analytical, so a Survey method was used. A well-structured questionnaire was prepared and was administered to the respondents through a personal interview and other methods to collect the primary data. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Part one is respondent's profile and Part two was the main survey.

The sample to which the questionnaire was administered was based on random sampling techniques. The sample distribution was given in Table 1.

Age (Years)	Male	Female	Total
Less than 20	12	20	32
20-30	40	21	61
30-40	42	32	74
40-50	22	32	54
More than 50	32	13	45
Total	148	118	266

Table 1, Source: Primary data

### PRIMARY DATA

Primary data was collected randomly through the structured questionnaire in Mumbai, Navi Mumbai and its suburbs by using simple random sampling.

**SAMPLE SIZE**

The study was limited to those participants who willingly elected to complete the instruments in their entirety. There were a total of 275 respondents, of which a figure of 266 was selected for the study.

**SAMPLE DESIGN**

The researcher relied upon simple random sampling technique, considering the research methodology and research type as per guidelines. A caution was exercised during the study that the respondents who did not show inclination to be a part of the study were not covered.

**SECONDARY DATA**

The secondary information or data was collected from newspapers, previous research articles and relevant websites.

**RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS**

A summated closed end questionnaire was used with different viewpoints of people. In this questionnaire, all the questions were positively framed to study the impact of independent variables like age, gender and profession on the dependent variable.

**STATISTICAL ANALYSIS**

Efficient and effective data analysis is the result of effective data preparation. This was found to be very crucial between the completion of the field work and the statistical processing of the collected data. Data preparation involved transferring the questionnaire into an electronic format which allowed and facilitated subsequent data processing. Data sheet was prepared directly at Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS) software for further analysis.

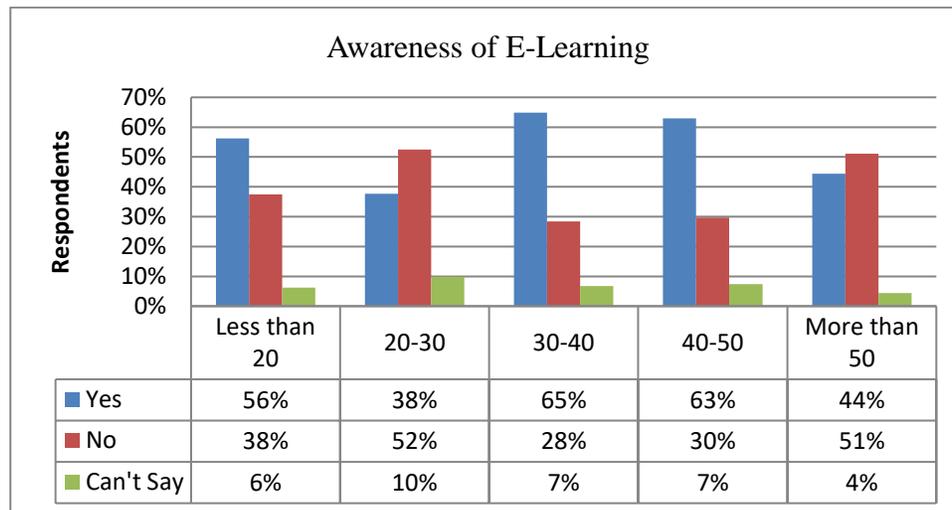
On the basis of the datasheet tables were prepared for the analysis.

**7. FINDINGS & ANALYSIS**

**7.1.AWARENESS OF E-LEARNING (REFERENCE TABLE 3 AND GRAPH 2)**

Age (Years)	Yes	No	Can't Say
Less than 20	56%	38%	6%
20-30	38%	52%	10%
30-40	65%	28%	7%
40-50	63%	30%	7%
More than 50	44%	51%	4%

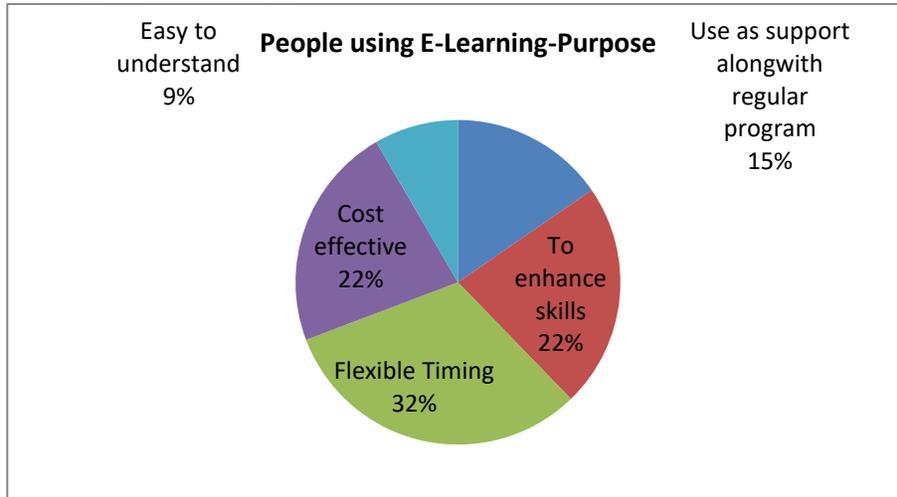
Table 2, Source:Primary Data



Graph 1, Source:Primary Data

The study and the above data reflect the mixed response about the E-Learning. Around 56% of people having age less than 20 years and 65% of the age bracket 30-40 years were aware about the E-Learning. The age brackets of 30-50 years were more aware about the E-Learning. During the study, it has been found that the people of these age brackets were opting for E-Learning modality of Education to enhance their skill and knowledge which required for their growth and internal promotion where they were employed. The people of age group less than 20 years were using E-Learning for finding the notes and related study materials of their regular Education. This group of people prefers to enroll for many short term program in E-Learning mode to enhance their skill and knowledge so that they will get good and respectable job in today's competitive World.

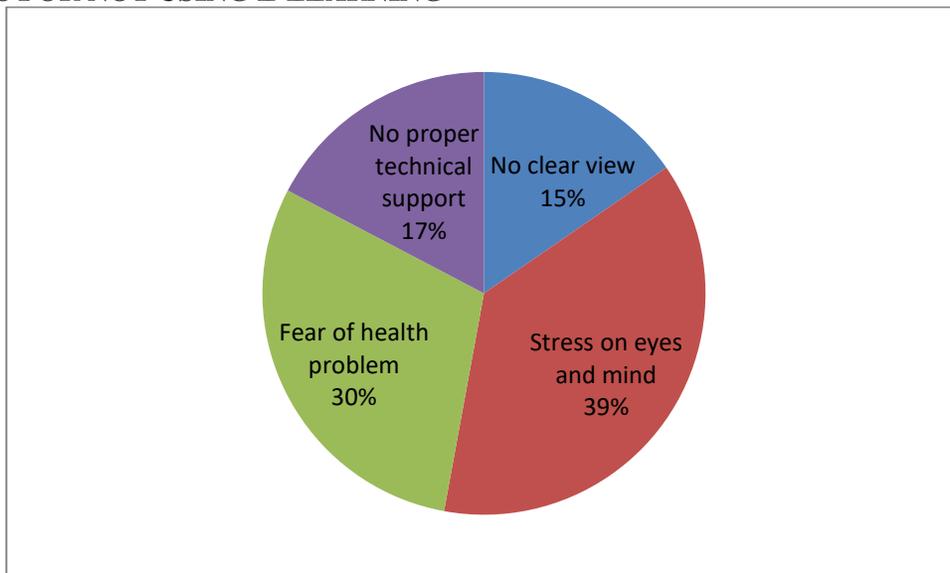
**7.2. REASON FOR USING E-LEARNING**



Graph 2, Source: Primary Data

The above result reflects the responses of those who were aware and using E-Learning. The above result shows that the maximum respondents were using e-Learning Mode of Education because of the Flexible timing and Cost effective. During the study, few of the people told that they were pursuing short term courses in e-Learning mode to enhance their skills which will help them in getting increment and promotion in their existing job.

**7.3. REASONS FOR NOT USING E-LEARNING**



Graph 3, Source: Primary Data

The above result found from the respondents who were aware but not using E-Learning or not in favour of it. During the study it has been found that 38% and 30 % of the people were not using E-Learning because of the

stress on eyes and having fear of getting health problem respectively. During the study it has been found that the maximum people of age bracket 50 and above were not in favor of using E-Learning,

## 8. CONCLUSION & SUGGESTIONS

E-learning has bright future in India, but because of the average awareness and poor technical support the people are not getting ready to accept this technology. They fully agreed that it help to have knowledge or lecture of good teachers or University, but it has been found that the percentage of people favouring E-Learning were less. They have fear of getting health problem by using techno based learning where there may be affects because of various rays and electromagnetic filed generated from this technology while using. It future and scope in Remote areas are better than the urban areas. The reason is because of less cost and flexible timing. Even the people in remote areas are able to get the lectures of Best to Best Institutions via E-Learning, but they have to be self motivated and must have interest to learn. It can't be effective in forceful manner.

There are a few suggestions to make e-leraning a success:

Awareness- The Government should encourage the awareness on the usage and benefits of e-wallet or any other e-transaction modality. There are different suggestive methods for awareness which are as below:

- a. day in Indian culture, still involvement of Government in any campaign or business gives trust in the mind of common people. So, suggest to include Government school teachers for awareness campaign. The teacher will meet the people and guide them on the usage and benefits of e-learning.
- b. Different activities in the form of role plays or movies on e-learning teaching modality can be shown to the people.
- c. Young Generations are the most user of smart phone and internet. The Government or the NGO may conduct different activities for the college students. They may give certain benefits by offering discounts or gift on purchase on items.
- d. The Government can include the topic or subject e-learning or "Digital India" in the curriculum of junior college or school level.
- e. The ladies will be given gift or discounts on usage of e-learning for various program or skill based short term courses.
- f. The Govt. should make centre in various villages where there shall be good connectivity of internet and availability of computers. All these centre must be operated by an instructor or coordinator who will be properly trained about the usage of e-learning.

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