
DIGITAL EDUCATION: IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN QUALITY HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

With the technological advancements all around the world, the higher education industry is also getting benefited by digitalisation. Digital Education is the new innovative tool for spreading knowledge to wider audience and at a higher pace. Also, the quality of higher education is a matter of myriad state concern all over the world. The rapid growth of social media and social networking sites, especially, in developing country like India makes it easier for everyone to access information and communicate conveniently. Nowadays, it has become an important part of teachers' and students' routine life. From admissions to classes and from notes to alumni relations, social media is being integrated in every way possible in every college and university. It takes many forms such as social networking sites, blogs, vlogs, instant messaging and virtual communities. Social media enables educational institutions to provide stakeholders with information about new research programs, changes to policies, events, job vacancies, alumni engagement and institutional news. Some colleges and universities also use social media as a tool for recruiting students. Social media provides a perfect platform to highlight new courses, research and teaching staff and campus facilities in an attempt to attract more students. The research objective of this study is to understand the concept of digital education and to establish Social media as the transformation tool in imparting quality higher education in India. For this, analytical approach is used and a questionnaire was prepared to collect data to analyse the impact of social media platform in higher education from the perspective of a student. The study concluded that social networking sites are nowadays most widely used in information source for perceived convenience, effectiveness and perceived credibility. They have positive influence among students and are considered as the innovative digital tool for imparting knowledge.

Keywords: Digital Education, Social Media, Quality Education

Digital Education

Digital education means digital learning. It is a type of learning that is supported by digital technology or by instructional practice that makes effective use of digital technology. Digital education provides win-win opportunities for all. At one side, it leads to rapid rise in enrolments and added revenue because of digital education to colleges and other institution and on other side to students, as a flexible and alternate option, it allows them to study as per their convenient time and pace. Teachers and professors too find it convenient to

prepare their teaching plans aided by digital technology. Teaching and learning becomes a smoother experience as it includes animations, gamification and audio-visual effects.

Literature Review

The study involve review of different literature. Some of them are as follows:

Jinal Jani and Girish Tere (2015): Digital India programme introduced by government of India is important for the development of digital education in the country. Digital India drive is a project initiated by Government of India for creation of digital empowered society across the country. It has three important components namely digital infrastructures creation, digital delivering services and resources and digital education.

Jayesh M. Patel (2017): There are many web based tools which can be used in the classroom for digital education like twitter, Glogster, Prezi, Diigo, Dropbox, and Moodle. Teachers and students are interested in web based digital learning but because of lack of knowledge they are not initiating the same. Web based tools will make the learning interesting and students will get motivated which normal classroom cannot do.

Scope of Digital Education in India

Over the last few years, digital education in India is evolving at faster pace. It is changing the way students learn different concepts and theory in school and colleges. With increased digital solutions, the traditional chalk and talk method in school and colleges is slowly changing to more interactive teaching methods. Digital learning guarantee more participation from students as the current generation of students are well-versed with laptops, I-pads, and smartphones. There are different private players in the field of digital education who are continuously engaged in developing different interactive software to help teachers in classroom teaching. Globally India holds an important place in the field of education. There are more than 36,000 higher education institutes all over the country having over 127 million students enrolled across different fields and India has become the second largest market for digital education after the US. However, there is still a lot of scope for further development in the field of digital education.

Social Media: Today's priority

The word of mouth has always been considered one of the most powerful tools of communication. Social media is transforming people's lifestyle with new innovative ways of communication and sharing information and interests. The rapid growth of social media and social networking sites, especially, in developing country like India makes it easier for everyone to access information and communicate conveniently. Nowadays, it has become an important part of teachers' and students' routine life also. From admissions to classes and from notes to alumni relations, social media is being integrated in every way possible in every college and university. The use of social networking web sites by colleges to disclose news and by universities to collect information for education purposes is increasing rapidly. Around 70% of colleges use social media for teaching and other related activities.

Social Media's Effect on Quality Higher Education

Education sector in India has seen a series of rapid expansion in last couple of years which helped the country to transform into a knowledge haven. Social networking sites are nowadays most widely used in information source for perceived convenience, effectiveness and perceived credibility. They have positive influence among students and are considered as the innovative digital tool for imparting knowledge. According to the December



2018 statistics, there are 2.27 billion social network users in India. Out of this, nearly 89.28% of social media users use Facebook to share information and to connect with people worldwide. These users are expected to rise by 1.45 billion in just three years. With this pace of growth in users of social network, this mode of spreading education is found to be the most effective way. Also, there are around 2.1 million apps available for android users. Most of the institutions spreading higher education are coming up with their apps which help students to access all the content instantly and facility of online faculty is also available. They can clear their doubts and move ahead quickly. In line with this, WhatsApp is the next priority for exchange of information. With 1.5 billion monthly active users, this social media network floats around 60 billion messages a day. In 2016, the number of both iOS and Android app (on Google Play store only) downloads reached approximately 90 billion and in 5 years this figure is expected to be more than double. Below is a table which shows a comparison of various social networks, their users, age group of the users worldwide and the Indian users.

Social networking statistics

Social Media	Active User	Daily Users	15-35 Age	Indian Users
Facebook	2.26 billion	1.73 billion	91%	1.96 billion
Twitter	336 million	6.5 million	79%	32.5 million
LinkedIn	590 million	240 million	56%	47 million
Google+	540 million	2.4 million	83%	18 million
WhatsApp	1.5 billion	0.9 billion	88%	0.7 billion

According to the above statistics, out of total 2.26 billion users of Facebook, 87% users are Indian. And, 91% of such users belong to the age group of 15-35 years. There are around 1.5 billion users for WhatsApp and almost half of them, are Indians with around 90% falling under the age group 15-35 years. In India, more than 40% of the population belongs to the age group of 15-35 years. And, approximately 50% of the population is acquiring higher education. With such statistics in India, social networking sites undoubtedly spread quality higher education. They offer a student the opportunity to connect with other students, educators, administrators, alumni, both within and outside his current institution. Scholars praise social networking tools for their capability to attract, motivate and engage students in meaningful communicative practice, content exchange. The quality of education improves day by day as they incorporate the latest technological advancements in their content. But, every mode of communication comes with positive and negative aspect. Social media also does not guarantee quality education all the times, but the reviews, blogs and walls on these sites are open discussion forums which help analyse and choose the best content out of all.

Conclusion

The study clearly points that development of education infrastructure is required for the development of digital education across the country. This will lead to considerable increase in infrastructure investment in the education sector. Democratic governance, English speaking tech-educated talent and a strong legal and intellectual property protection framework are required for the development of digital education in Indian society. Government of India has also taken major Initiatives for the development of digital education in India like opening of IIT's and IIM's in new locations as well as allocating educational grants for research scholars in most government institutions. Nowadays, the tech-savvy trends have given social media a good place to share content. It provides a perfect platform to highlight new courses, research and teaching staff and campus facilities in an attempt to attract more students. They have positive influence among students and are considered as the innovative digital tool for imparting knowledge.



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