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Exploration of the Perspectives of Students, Teachers and Experts on Online Education under the National Education Policy 2020

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Abstract

Since the recent pandemic in India, the New Education Policy (NEP) and online education have truly emerged, advancing steadily each day. If we examine the current format of education, we can say that online education aligns meaningfully and compatibly with the present New Education Policy. The main objective of this research paper is to assess the reliability, authenticity, and significance of online education in conjunction with the New Education Policy, using various past research studies, references, conclusions, and experiences. This research paper will discuss a brief introduction to online education and the New Education Policy, along with tools, resources, challenges, progress, conclusions, etc. The obstacles in the path of online education and the New Education Policy reveal a significant difference between today's rural and urban environments, which will be highlighted as a limitation in this research paper. Observing past studies, we can conclude that online education and the New Education Policy will complement and enhance each other in the future. However, we cannot ignore the gaps that online education presents. Therefore, it can be said that online education has shown some significant positive outcomes, as well as some negative impacts.

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1. Introduction: Education is an essential component of life. The Sanskrit word ‘Shiksha’ means to instruct or to learn. Any medium can be used to educate us. Through education, humans develop cognitively, emotionally, and socially. In today’s modern times, online education is a convenient and easy way to obtain a degree. The current system of online education is like a boon. Online education allows those who, for various reasons, have not had access to education to reach new heights. Previously, we would go to a gurukul or classroom and sit in front of our teacher to learn. However, the most recent approach to education is where students receive their education online from teachers they can connect with via laptops or mobile devices (Edu, 2020).

Online education means ensuring the availability of education to the end student using technological devices. In other words, online education acts as a medium between the student and the teacher. To further define online education, we can say it is the educational content provided by a teacher to students through various devices to fulfill academic purposes. Online education is a transformed version of traditional education and is delivered remotely. According to the Pew

Research Center, during the 2010-2011 academic year, 89% of colleges and universities offered fully online, hybrid/mixed online, distance education, or other non-face-to-face types of education (Parker, Lenhart, and Moore, 2011).

The objective of human resource development is to build individuals with good moral character, intelligence, talent, happiness, and confidence. The development of a well-rounded personality that meets the demands of professionalism, competence, integrity, and ethical principles depends on this process. Human resource development is essential to serve the nation and its citizens appropriately. Education greatly helps in developing character, intellect, talent, and confidence. Using ICT in the learning process helps reduce the number of classes offered in existing schools and colleges. Also, it addresses the challenges faced by lecturers who are unable to attend due to multiple responsibilities, as well as students who cannot attend due to various personal issues. Employing online services or application tools through the Internet, hybrid or blended teaching approaches aim to improve the quality of teaching and learning. This allows students to learn without constraints of time or place. Empowerment, IT education, and usage, fostering independent learning processes, and enhancing the quality of active learning processes are all promoted (Monika et al., 2018).

Online teaching has generated significant interest, both within and outside higher education. Some see it as an opportunity to change the way of learning and the competitive environment fundamentally. For others, it offers a chance to reach new audiences. Generational differences, the acquisition of technical skills needed for medical school, or specific samples, along with learning style differences among all residents and faculty or peers, contribute to this. This presents an opportunity to adopt blended teaching models and active learning processes that allow flexibility to accommodate different learning styles and utilize all methods as needed (Pihilin, 1996).

2. Needs of Online Education: The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of online education. To maintain continuity in learning, schools and colleges around the world are turning to online platforms (UNESCO, 2020). Online teaching provides flexibility by allowing students to access resources and attend classes on their terms (Inside Higher Ed, 2018). Through online teaching, accessibility improves, enabling people from remote areas or those with physical limitations to access educational opportunities (World Bank, 2019). The rapidly changing fields have expanded the need for lifelong learning, and online education offers a way to develop skills and adapt to these changes (Pew Research Center, 2016).

By actively participating in online education, students develop their knowledge and competencies, thus becoming independent learners. Students can study not only from their homes but also from other locations, such as hostels, colleges, cyber cafes, etc. It allows economically disadvantaged students to access study materials and connect with instructors. Anyone can access online education 24/7, providing the flexibility to learn in their free time. Through web conferencing, students in online courses can connect with subject experts and learn from them, enhancing their prior knowledge. Thanks to online education, students can learn in groups remotely, fostering socialization in the process.

3. Applications of Online Education: Online education encompasses a wide range of courses and programs offered through digital channels, enabling students to access learning resources, communicate with teachers, and collaborate virtually. Many educational organizations have adopted this mode of instruction, from colleges offering fully online degree programs to K-12 schools incorporating online lessons into their curricula. According to a Babson Survey Research Group report titled "Online Learning in the United States, 2020," over 6.6 million students in the United States were taking at least one course online as of 2020. This figure underscores the growing importance of online learning as a widely used instructional strategy,

allowing students to pursue domestic and international studies and obtain degrees from the comfort of their homes.

While digital or online education cannot replace in-classroom learning, it has its advantages. It allows flexible and personalized learning according to the learner's capacity, and any digital medium can continually enhance and expand the content. The rapid increase in internet access and various government initiatives, like the Digital India campaign, have created a favorable environment for moving towards digital education. This shift is being complemented by PM E-Vidya, a national initiative launched by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) to integrate all efforts related to digital/online/on-air education. It includes DIKSHA (One Nation-One Digital Platform), TV (One Class-One Channel), SWAYAM (online MOOCs on various subjects), IITPAL (a platform for exam preparation), Akashvani (through community radio and CBSE Shiksha Vani podcast), and study materials for differently-abled students developed by NIOS. All these areas of e-learning are being systematically expanded and developed by the MHRD in a phased and organized manner.

With online education, you can understand and learn any subject or topic, helping you gain more information. Many students want to attend coaching centers but are unable to due to distance; in such cases, they can take advantage of the situation and use online education for learning. When a student encounters any issue, the teacher can offer guidance. Students can learn by regularly watching or recording videos. The use of online education is a significant development in the field of education. Its adaptability, accessibility, and versatility have made meaningful learning experiences possible for students of all ages and backgrounds. The innovative potential of online education is transforming traditional teaching methods, creating a more inclusive and dynamic educational landscape, even as challenges such as the digital divide and learner engagement persist (Pankaj Dogra, 2022).

4. Barriers of Online Education: Along with the many benefits of online learning, there are also some drawbacks. Unlike a physical classroom, the positive environment provided in offline classes is missing in online learning. Offline classes offer a more enjoyable atmosphere where teachers and students can engage in focused discussions on a single subject. Additionally, excessive exposure to gadgets raises health risks such as headaches, poor vision, and lack of focus. One downside of online exams is the constant risk of losing internet connectivity during an exam. Students also face issues like slow internet speeds and server failures. Online exams have a higher possibility of cheating; often, honest students fail while those who cheat succeed.

Students find it harder to focus on their studies in online classes compared to offline ones, as their minds tend to wander. Even teachers struggle to maintain students' attention in e-classes, and students may get distracted by interacting with each other. Thus, the difficulties faced by many students remain unresolved. It has also been observed that children spend more time on mobile games, movies, social networking, YouTube, chatting, etc., rather than focusing on learning, which is a significant drawback of online education. This often leads to easy distraction, and the internet has proven to be harmful in several ways.

The downside of online education often involves wasting time on entertainment under the guise of studying. Many young people remain highly active on YouTube and social media. Although educational content is available on these platforms, they are also sources of distraction. This diversion impacts children's behavior and education negatively (Admin, 2022).

Conclusions and Suggestions: The above-mentioned previous research also demonstrates that both professors and students agree that learning through the online education system can be easier, faster, more accurate, and more efficient, as it is interactive and user-friendly. To maximize the utility of online educational studies, other educational institutions or universities can improve

academic communication efficiency, speed, and accuracy through online education services. This can be further developed using cellular-based applications, which can be accessed through devices.

When we consider the success of the utility of online education, we find that the Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences offers three main categories of courses: fully online, online with seminar-based, and on-campus courses. Due to a financial system that provides a student's financial cost upon completion, we can say that we must meet the demands of students, their future (and/or current) employers, and the general public, while also minimizing the dropout rate. As a university, to fulfill our duties, we need to maintain the quality of education at a high level. As a result, the search for the best modifications in lectures and teaching methods continues.

The use of online education is a significant development in the field of education. Its adaptability, accessibility, and versatility have enabled meaningful learning experiences for students of all ages and backgrounds. The innovative potential of online education is transforming traditional teaching methods, creating a more inclusive and dynamic educational landscape, even as challenges such as the digital divide and learner engagement persist.

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