

**E-LEARNING DIMENSIONS IN INDIA**

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*Abstract*

*In the age of globalization and technological revolution, E-learning is emerging as a potential delivery medium for education and training. Electronic learning (or e-Learning or eLearning) is a type of Technology supported education/learning (TSL) where the medium of instruction is computer technology. Although e-learning has potential in India, adoption has been slow and will need a major marketing and awareness effort. In India, globalization has generated a good vibration and life for education. E-learning technologies have great potential to spread learning however, the benefits of these technologies have to reach the rural masses of India, and otherwise they will be one of the causes of the Digital Divide. In India, there has been an upsurge in the number of students going for management education. But, before management institutes embark on this e-learning journey, it is important to assess student readiness for this medium. This study is about to analyze the recent trends in E-Learning practices and its role on development of society.*

**I. INTRODUCTION**

The term was introduced in 1995 when it was all called "Internet based Training", then "Web-based Training" (to clarify that delivery could be on the Inter- or Intra-net), then "Online Learning" and finally e-learning, adopting the in vogue use of "e" during the dot com boom. The "e-" breakthrough enabled the industry to raise hundreds of millions from venture capitalists who would invest in any industry that started with this magic letter.

**Types of E-Learning**

There are fundamentally two types of e-learning: synchronous training and asynchronous training. Synchronous, means "at the same time," involves interaction of participants with an instructor via the Web in real time. Asynchronous, which means "not at the same time," allows the participant to complete the WBT at his own pace, without live interaction with the instructor.

A new form of learning known as blended learning is emerging. As the name suggests it is an amalgamation of synchronous and asynchronous learning methods.

**Asynchronous Methods**

**Embedded learning:** Embedded learning is information that is accessible on a self-help basis, 24/7. It can be delivered to the place of work, or to mobile learners. Electronic performance

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support system (EPSS) is a type of embedded learning. The advantage is that embedded learning offers learners the information they need whenever they need it.

Courses: The clear advantage of a self-paced course is convenience. Participants can get the training they need at any time. This can include just-in-time training where a participant gets exactly the training he or she needs to perform a task.

Discussion groups: A discussion group is a gathering of conversations that occur over time. They are also called message boards, bulletin boards and discussion forums. Discussion groups can be used to support a group of participants taking the same class or can be used to support participants performing related tasks. A discussion group is a very competent way to supply expert answers to a large group people. A single answer to a common question can help many.

Synchronous Methods .Virtual classroom: Virtual classroom duplicates the features of a real classroom online. Participants interact with each other and instructor's online, instant messaging, chat, audio and video conferencing etc. Blended Method: Most companies prefer to use a mix of both synchronous and asynchronous e-learning methods according to their requirement.

E-Learning is referred to as teaching and learning by using electronic media. This methodology supports the use of networking and communications technology in teaching and learning. E-Learning is generally meant for remote learning or distance learning, but can also be used in face-to-face mode. Online education is commonly called e-learning; here, the methodology of learning is unusual as compared to the traditional classroom type of learning. The transfer of skills and imparting of knowledge (method of teaching) in a traditional classroom is purely monopolistic in nature, whereas, every individual has different levels of wavelengths and grasps the subject matter at different paces. E-Learning is a way of improving the accessibility of the study material, moreover, the cost of accessing information online is decreasing by the advancement in the field of information and communication technology.

#### **Advantages of E-Learning**

- Students can sit at a comfortable place, set aside a convenient time slot, and successfully Undergo training.
- Time and money can be saved on travelling.
- It has become a universal method of learning for all, including teachers, students, and parents.
- Interacting with subject matter experts, professors, classmates through online world is much Easier, time saving, and affordable. Everyone is just a click away.
- For corporate people, networking is at their fingertips.
- Tuition fees can be reduced due to innovative learning methods.
- All type of information can be obtained through custom web search.
- E-Projects give special attention and exposure to students to cope up with real time practical Experiences and develop them professionally.

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- Some other useful features of online education is that it induces collaborative learning through live virtual classes, discussion boards, forums, games, case studies, online projects, online group assignments etc.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

One of the most important parts of the research is to review of related researches because it helps in many ways such as knowing the gaps therein for getting the clear idea of one's own research.

**Gerrard Catherine (2007)** demonstrates the need for accessible E-learning within the online environment by investigating disabled students' levels of engagement with a virtual learning environment (VLE) and the extent to which lecturers' use of the VLE made E-learning accessible. A small focus group of undergraduate students with various disabilities was used to create a case study approach. The paper presents key issues related to the pedagogical, practical and strategic use of a VLE, based on the perspectives of disabled students. It offers a considered approach to the use of a VLE in meeting the requirements of the UK disability legislation and in responding to the needs of disabled students.

**Vitalis et al (2008)** report on the research conducted with the purpose of establishing the acceptance of E-Learning, analyses the challenges of E-Learning and designs an assistive tool for people with disability at higher learning institutions in Tanzania. People's perception of E-Learning is greater at the tertiary level of education than at the basic education. It was found that the E-learning culture is also one of the obstacles in adapting E-Learning.

**Aggarwal Deepshikha (2009)** concentrates on the Indian education scenario in which content preparation and presentation tools, application to spread education to the remote areas, pros and cons and future of E-Learning in India are stated. A few suggestions have been made to use E-learning for informal and vocational training, which is highly effective for a developing country like India where a majority of population is living in rural/ remote areas and has received almost negligible formal education.

**Tan et al (2010)** report a study conducted to assess the impact of incorporating authentic learning principles (Herrington & Kervin, 2007) into a web-based multimedia learning module, and embedding it within a student-centred learning environment, on the student learning process. In this study's positive student responses towards this learning environment have indicated an encouraging support to develop more engaging multimedia web-based learning modules.

**Patil Anil Tanaji (2011)** refers E-learning takes place an important role in teacher's professional development. E-learning is widely accepted and it can be rich and as valuable as the classroom teaching. Researchers think that there is need in E-learning awareness for educational research. T test is used in this research n conclusion are drawn that Developed E-learning programme helped the male students and female students in better understanding for the content.

**Das et al (2011)** focuses on the Implementation of E-learning in West Bengal to Enhance the Present GER in Higher Education, it tries To minimize the number of dropout students of West Bengal, E-learning may be an outstanding way out to enhance the overall gross

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enrollment ratio (GER) in higher education This study focuses that higher education through E-learning can be a significant way out to get the students interested in higher education in West Bengal. In this paper an approach to E-learning is taken over targeting to increase the overall GER of higher education in West Bengal.

**Chawla Deepak and Joshi Himanshu (2012)** refer E-learning is emerging as a potential delivery medium for education and training. The purpose of this paper is to examine the awareness levels, degree of familiarity and readiness to accept E-learning environment.

Exploratory study and personal interviews were conducted to design the instrument which was administered to 240 students pursuing management education at the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmadabad (IIM-A), Factor analysis, cluster analysis and chi-square test were carried out to meet the objectives of the study. This may serve as a guide to those business schools which have started delivering management education or plan to deliver online education in future.

**Mehta Adarsh Preet and Mehta Ritu (2012)** state online education creates new opportunities for students and also for faculty, regulators of education, and the educational institutions themselves. He finds the Possible Reasons for Slow Success of Online Education in India. It state Future of E-learning in India is very bright. India has a major role to play in the international E-learning services industry. India is already one of the leading IT service provider countries, and it is now aiming to achieve the same position in the IT enabled services. The presence of world-class educational infrastructure and training professionals enables it to be one of the leading E-learning services providers in the world.

**Anand et al (2012)** referred E-learning as teaching and learning by using electronic media. In this paper we have made study about the awareness and impact of E-learning in selected rural areas in India, the providers and learners ratio and an analysis on the collected data has been made to find the advantages of E-learning resources and their affect on social and mental development of the individuals belonging to rural areas .

**Oye et al (2012)** focus E-learning in the workplace. The purpose of this review is to draw together what research has been done on E-learning in the workplace to inform future researchers. E-learning is one answer to sweeping global changes, labor market and productivity issues. The paper shows that the employers can integrate individual learning with organizational needs and provide employees with the knowledge and skills they need. In short E-learning provide the opportunity for learning on the job of what is needed, when it is needed, through the information and communications technology that are part of the work.

### **III. SCOPE OF E-LEARNING IN INDIA**

Online education in India is gaining importance at a much slower rate than the western world, where most educational activities are carried out online. Tremendous opportunities exist

in the untapped rural areas as online education is at its nascent stage in India. Awareness has to be created among the general public in terms of the benefits and career aspects of online education. Job oriented vocational courses are offered online, enabling students to

complete such courses in a stipulated time. One can also prepare for competitive examinations in various fields like engineering, medicine, law, social sciences, etc without having to purchase physical books, thus saving huge amounts of money and space. Since online courses are student centered and not time bound, it enables blended learning. Online education can be pursued not only by students, but also by working individuals who wish to pursue extra courses, house wives, business persons, senior citizens, accountants, real estate agents, managers working in diverse fields etc.

#### **IV. CURRENT SCENARIO OF E- LEARNING**

E -Learning can be examined at two levels. The first one is education and another one is training. For education can be used at both elementary and higher levels. In training it can be used by companies to train and upgrade their employees. E-learning permits the delivery of knowledge and information to learners at an accelerated pace, opening up new vistas of knowledge transfer. Early adopters are companies that have tried to supplement face-to-face meetings, demonstrations, training classes and lectures with this technology. –The adoption of E-learning in all spheres –corporate, schools universities, etc –is low at present. The Indian market is not substantial when compared to the international market. E-learning in India has been most successful in the corporate segment where it is seen as a means of achieving business goals and motivating employees. A lot of work has to be done to make E-learning successful for education, both formal and informal and to cultivate faith of people in online degrees in India apart from the ones given by renowned institutions like IITs. If E-learning reaches the remote and rural parts of India, it would be much faster to educate people. One major problem faced by India is that almost all highly skilled professionals are based in bigger cities that deprive the rural population from getting educated through them. E-learning simplifies this process by taking the knowledge to masses provided that there's internet connectivity available at some nearby area. Even in the area of higher education, the supply and demand are not balanced. Looking at the population, the available universities are not enough to accommodate all the people seeking education. At this point distance education comes in and has already been quite popular. E-learning can play a major role even here.

#### **V. GLOBAL E-LEARNING MARKET**

Growing demands for E-learning require a combination of methodologies, tools, and technologies to effectively scale by E-learning development throughout the organization. IDC forecasts that the E-learning market, which was about \$6.5 billion in 2003, is increased to more than \$21 billion by 2008, and will hit \$52.6B by 2010. The 2007 U.S. E-learning market is presently \$17.5 billion. The U.S. enterprise E-learning adoption accounts for 60 percent of the market, while Europe's accounts for 15 percent, overall usage of E-learning in Asia are expected to reach a compound annual growth rate of 25 percent to 30 percent through 2010. According to an education sector report by CLSA Asia Pacific Markets, the E-

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learning market size is estimated at \$27 million or Rs. 105crore, which is projected to grow to \$280 million or Rs. 1,092crore by 2012. Comparing this to the size of the US E-learning market valued at \$4 billion or Rs 15,600 crore, and it may appear rather small, but the potential for growth in India given the huge population, lack of educators, etc, is much more. Meanwhile, the current E-learning global market size is over \$20 billion (Rs 78,000 crore) grown ten-fold since 2000, and is expected to surpass \$52.6 billion (Rs 2,05,000 crore) by 2010. Online tutoring, on the other hand, is a \$4 billion (Rs 15,600 crore) industry and is growing at a rate of 10%-15% per annum according to *Financial Express*. Computer-based learning on the other hand, still has a market size of \$150 million (Rs 590 crore), in India which is expected to grow to \$750 million (Rs 2,900 crore) by 2012, according to the CLSA Asia Pacific market report:

E-learning or online education in India is getting good track because of number of internet users has increased. Almost half the population of India today is below 25 years of age and the number of Internet users are growing continuously. E-learning is also very much popular among young professionals. There is a huge student segment in India in the age range of 16 to 35, who are willing to study online. It is helpful from student and working professional point of view. The size of e-learning market in India is expected to grow to INR 1,092 Crore by this year end. E-learning in India has been classified in three different tiers namely; tier 1, tier2, tier3 e-learning. Major players in this industry are TIS, NIIT, EDUCOMP, IBM INDIA, and SKILL SOFT. These Companies provide education to the students and also provides product and solution to other sectors. Some of the well known institutions like IITs and IIMs are also providing e-learning facilities in India.

#### **VI. CHALLENGES FACED BY E -LEARNING IN INDIA**

Majority of population staying in rural areas and making them aware about the concept of e learning is a major challenge. Lack of infrastructure in terms of connectivity, availability of Internet, etc. is another issue. The government is taking various measures to improve the communication systems and new technologies like 3G in the telecom space have already started to be implemented to make things better.

Social Implications of E-Learning is another segment of study that is very important to be understood for the success of e-learning in India. The social implications of e-learning may be categorized into the following types of issues: cultural, gender, lifestyle, geographical, religious/spiritual, literacy, disabilities, and digital divide. Within the cultural issues category are content, multimedia, writing styles, writing structures, Web design, and participant roles. Some content, although crucial to the course, may be either unacceptable or unfavorable with certain members of the class. If faculties are aware of a sensitive component of the discussion or material covered, how can that faculty member lead the class to include or exclude the materials? Even writing styles can impact the process of holding an online course. The students and instructor need to know the –rules of the road of written assignments. And, what participant roles are expected and/or tolerated; and, if the expectations are not met, who is responsible for keeping discussions and homework on track? Gender issues continue to be a part of class, even though people are separated by miles and even continents. Possibly it is the instructor's responsibility to monitor facilitation

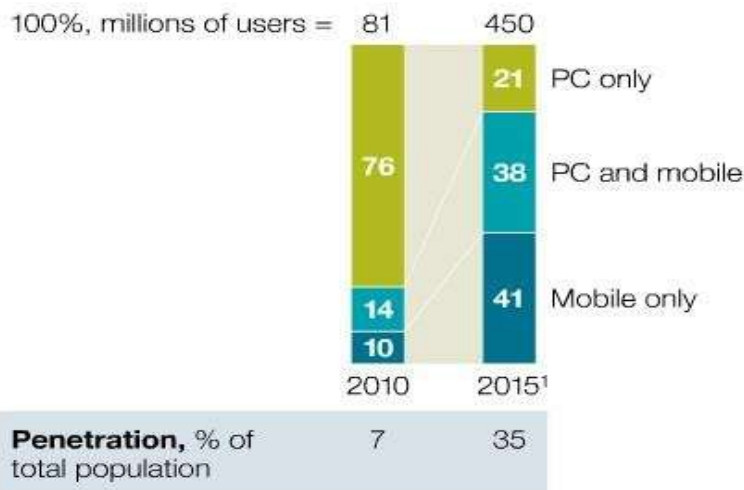
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and rotate leadership roles in groups to assure gender neutralization. Any behavior issues must be addressed and corrected immediately. Lifestyle differences take on any number of forms, and the instructor will need to be on guard to assure equal treatment of class members, regardless of their respective lifestyles and preferences. In some situations the students themselves will take on this monitoring role, while in other situations the instructor must step in. The —different strokes for different folks| adage must be maintained— preferably with a minimum of disruption to the entire class. Geographical issues and differences make be very apparent, especially when we are looking at a global perspective.

**India’s Internet users will increase fivefold by 2015, and more than three-quarters of them will choose mobile access.**

**Share of Internet use by channel in India, %**



<sup>1</sup> Projected.

Source: 2010 McKinsey digital consumer survey; McKinsey analysis

**Total Home and Work Computers - Online Readers in India**

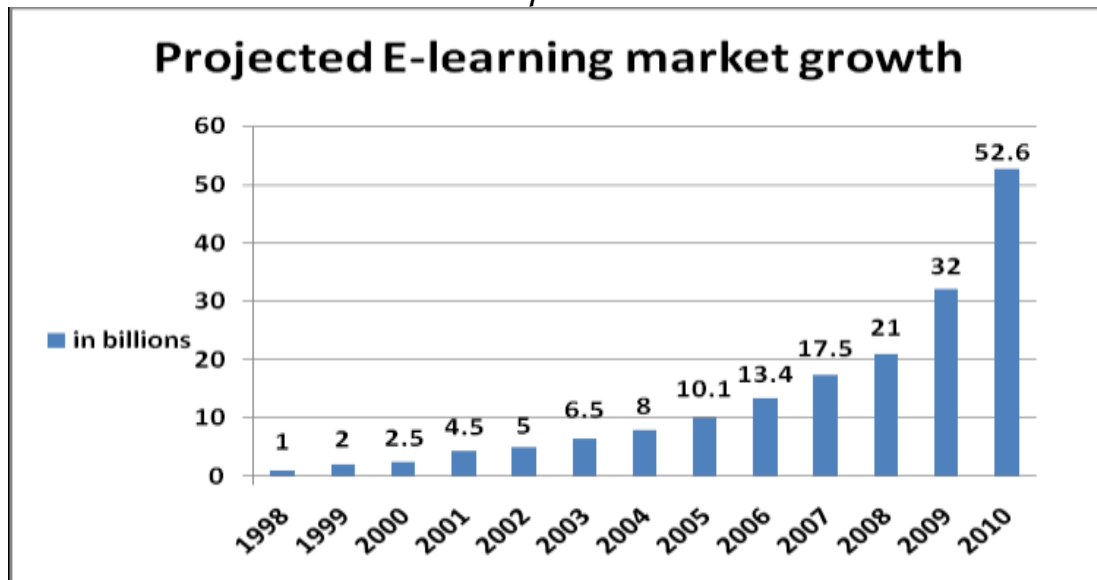
ComScore News/Information Properties in India			
	August 2012	August 2013	% Change
<b>Total Unique Visitors(000)</b>	40,044	45,902	15%
<b>Total Visits(000)</b>	259,686	364,592	40%
<b>Average Daily Visitors (000)</b>	7,042	9,402	34%

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Average Minutes per Visitor	31.6	41.6	31%
Total Unique Visitors (000)	40,044	45,902	15%

*Total Home and Work Computers - Online Readers in India*



Sources: Mckinsey digital consumer survey 2010

## VII. CONCLUSION

Globalization and transformation of economies and firm have forced companies to think of innovative ways to cut-down costs and remain competitive. In the corporate world, E-learning is emerging as a preferred medium to impact training keeping as compared to the traditional instructor-led training. The growth of E-learning can also be attributed to the availability of high-speed bandwidth at relatively lower costs. India has around 100 million internet users and is the third biggest internet market in terms of user base owing to its population of more than a billion. Electronic learning (or e-Learning or eLearning) is a type of Technology supported education/learning (TSL) where the medium of instruction is computer technology. Although e-learning has potential in India, adoption has been slow and will need a major marketing and awareness effort. In India, globalization has generated a good vibration and life for education. E-learning technologies have great potential to spread learning however, the benefits of these technologies have to reach the rural masses of India, otherwise they will be one of the causes of the Digital Divide. In India, there has been an upsurge in the number of students going for management education. But, before management institutes embark on this e-learning journey, it is important to assess student readiness for this medium



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