

Role of ICT in Indian Higher Education
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Abstract

Education is a very socially oriented activity and quality education has traditionally been associated with strong teachers having high degrees of personal contact with learners. ICT has become an integral part of today's teaching learning process. Effective use of technology can motivate students, make our classes more dynamic and interesting and renew teacher enthusiasm as they learn new skills and techniques. The role of ICT in higher education is becoming more and more important and this importance will continue to grow and develop in 21st century. The use of ICT in education not only improves classroom teaching learning process, but also provides the facility of e-learning. The adoption and use of ICTs in education have a positive impact teaching, learning and research. The use of ICT will not only enhance learning environment but also prepare next generation for future lives and careers. This paper highlight the various impacts of ICT on higher education and explores various potential future developments.

Keywords:-Information and Communication Technology, ICT initiatives, Higher Education

Introduction

According to Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar (Bombay ,Legislative council Debate,27 july,1927), “ The university is a machinery whereby education facilities are provided to all those who are intellectually capable of using those facilities to be the best advantages but who cannot avail themselves of those facilities for want of funds or for other handicaps in life”. The people in university education shape the behavior; minds and the social and human values of the student community .Effective use of technology can motivate students, make our classes more dynamic and interesting and renew teacher enthusiasm as they learn new skills and techniques. Technology is also helping the students to understand any abstract concepts clearly. ICT has become an integral part of today's teaching learning process. The integration of ICTs in teaching in general and teacher education in particular is the need of the day. The use of ICTs can make substantial changes both for teaching and training mainly in two ways; firstly, the rich representation of information changes learner's perception and understanding of the context. Secondly; the vast distribution and easy process access to information can change relationships between teachers and taught. ICT can also provide powerful support for educational innovation. In the last few decades, we have seen an increasing number of youngsters gaining access to higher education .This phenomenon reflects a trend at a global level ,which is largely due to the democratisation and development of societies, the improvement of living conditions and structures ,the demand for a more highly qualified performance both in professions and citizenships we have, therefore witnessed a change both in terms of quality as well as quantity in the student population ,reflected in the gradual loss of the elitist and formal character of higher education through the admission of individuals from all social classes(Soares and Almeida,2002).

“The emancipatory and transformative potentials of the ICT in higher education in India has helped increase the country's requirement of higher education through part- time and distance learning schemes. It can be used as a tool to overcome the issues of cost, less number of teachers and poor quality of education as well as overcome time and distance barriers.”(MC Gorry, 2002)

Review of related literature

Ozdmemir and Abrevaya (2007) asserted that ICT is reducing the cost per students and expanding the enrolments and makes the provisions for employers and supports enduring learners. Lalitbhusan S Waghmare, et-al (2014) studied “Role of Information and communication technology in Higher education: learners perspective in rural medical schools”. They concluded that there is a need to foresee the role of technology in education and take appropriate measures to equip the stakeholders for adequate and optimum application of the same. Uttam kr Pegu studied “Information and communication technology in higher education in India: challenges and opportunities” (2014). The study revealed that ICT enabled education will ultimately lead to the democratization of education and it has the potential for transforming higher education in India. Mahisa, Anju studied “The role of ICT in higher education in India” (2014). The study revealed that ICT play vital role as a strong agent for change among many educational practices.

Major ICT initiatives in Higher Education

Various initiatives in the recent past portrayed the significant role that ICT plays in the realm of higher education development. Several projects have reduced the costs, and it also has increased transparency. India has taken up major initiatives in terms of content delivery and furthering education through Information and Communication technology. For example Gyan Darshan was launched in 2000 in broadcast educational programs for school kids, university students and adults. Similarly Gyan Vani was another such important step with broadcast programs contributed by institution such as IGNOU and IITs. Under the UGC country wise classroom initiative, education programs are broadcast on Gyan Darshan and Doordarshan national channel every day. E-Gyankosh which aims at preserving digital learning resources is a knowledge repository launched by IGNOU in 2005. Almost 95% of IGNOU's printed material has been digitized by uploaded on the repository. The national programme for technology enhanced learning (NPTEL) launched in 2001 is another joint initiative of IITS and IISC which education through technology. Sristi, the society for research and initiatives for sustainable technologies and institutions is facilitating the use of ICT for strengthening the capacity of grass roots inventors, innovations and entrepreneurs engaged in conserving bio diversity and developing eco-friendly solutions to local problems.

Benefits of ICT in Higher Education

Use of ICT in education presents a unique opportunity to solve multitude of challenges quickly as well as at low rate. Here is an overview of advantages of an ICT:-

Motivating Factor:-

The internet can act as a motivating tool for many students. Young people are very captivated with technology. Educators must capitalize on this interest excitement and enthusiasm about the Internet for the purpose enhancing learning. For already enthusiastic learners, the internet provides them with additional learning activities not readily available in the classroom.

Fast communication:- The internet promotes fast communication across geographical barriers. Students can join collaborative projects that involve students from different states, countries or continents.

Co-operative learning:- The internet facilitates co-operative learning, encourages

dialogue and creates a more engaging classroom. For example, a LISTER V for our class will allow students to get involved in class discussions through e-mails in a way not possible within four walls of classroom.

Locating Research materials:- Apart from communication, research is what takes many people to the internet. There are many resources on the internet than the school library can provide.

Acquiring varied writing skills:- If students are required to publish their work on the internet, they have to develop hypertext skills. These skills help students gain experience in non sequential writings.

Recommendations

The quality of programs as measured by fitness for purpose should continue to grow, if the stakeholders perceive the various educational programs as meeting their needs and expectations. ICTs serve to provide the means for activities to realize the potential in human resources. Furthermore, adequate funds must be provided to initiate, develop, promote, review and implement ICT policies in the educational sector to bring about an improvement on ICT utilization, through computer apprentices courses taught in Nigerian tertiary institutions. In this period of economic recession, the price of ICT equipment and materials will continue to be astronomical. It becomes highly imperative for all stakeholders of education to entice industrial establishments, politicians, big businessmen and entrepreneurs, non-governmental organizations and the community at large to assist the institutions in the provision of ICT equipment and materials and well finished computer laboratories.

Conclusion

ICT play vital role as a strong agent for change among many educational practices i.e conducting online exam, pay online fees, accessing online books and journals. Thus ICT in Higher education improves teaching learning process, provides the facility of online learning to thousands to thousands of learners who cannot avail the benefits of higher education due to several checks, such as time, cost, geographical location etc. Once again ICT serve to provide the means for much of this activity to realize the potential it holds.

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