THE ROLE OF DIGITAL PLATFORMS IN TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Understanding technology may be a powerful instrument for changing education. Relationships between teachers and students can be strengthened and advanced, learning and teamwork methods can be rethought, long-standing equity and accessibility gaps can be addressed, and learning experiences can be modified to accommodate the requirements of all students. In contemporary education, achieving authentic learning using digital media remains a key challenge. Because we utilize digital media on a regular basis, it becomes an important aspect of education. Teachers need to think of the digital media syllabus process as an experience that has been tailored for the classroom and as a learning model. This indicates that learning methods are just as important as learning content. This research shows how the use of digital platforms for media syllabus in conjunction with projects enhances college students' engagement with the full higher education process. Reconsidering how digital media might change higher education was the aim. In order to continue assisting students in becoming active participants and authors of their own identities and creative expression in higher education, educators must continuously assess and develop instructional strategies that support students in utilizing the tools in a purposeful manner and within a predetermined learning environment. Teachers must figure out how to use digital media technologies to their full potential so that students can develop well-informed global perspectives. The use of digital platforms for transformational learning, the main areas of the digital revolution, and the advantages and challenges of higher education will all be covered in this essay.

Keywords: Digital Transformation, Distance Education, Pandemics, Digitalization, Online Learning.

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Introduction

India has the world's second largest higher education system, behind China. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) reports that 63 million instructors in 165 countries were impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Globally, 1.3 billion pupils were unable to attend schools or institutions; in India alone, almost 320 million students are affected (National Statistical Office, 75th Round, 2017–18). Thanks to educational technologies, the traditional educational system has been replaced with an online teaching and assessment paradigm. The Indian government had declared that the lockout and closure of educational institutions as a legitimate measure to enforce social segregation within communities. All academic events, including competitive examinations, university entrance exams,

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school admissions, and exams, had to take place during this time. Since there wasn't a rapid cure for the pandemic, the nation's educational system was suffering greatly as a result of college and institution closures. Due to this, there had been a shift to online education, with a focus on virtual education, in order to meet the predefined goals and objectives. This has significantly changed how the Indian educational system is structured, as well as how teaching, learning, and assessment are done. The problem of digitalization in education is one that worries many parties involved. Because of this, one of the primary objectives of educational establishments is now to equip aspiring professionals with the necessary skill sets, including digital competence, to solve problems and find solutions. Information and communication technology skills are becoming more and more important in today's globalized world, particularly in the workplace. The education sector is witnessing a plethora of policy, program, and strategy proposals from the government to tackle the progress in educational technology.

Digital Platforms' Implication in Transformative Higher Education

Because digital platforms offer cutting-edge materials and tools that improve the learning process, digital platforms are essential to transformative learning. These platforms provide a wealth of features that accommodate different learning preferences and styles, increasing accessibility, interactivity, and engagement in education for students of all ages in higher education. With the use of digital platforms, students may engage with professionals and peers from across the globe, access a multitude of knowledge, take part in interactive activities, and get individualized guidance and feedback. The use of digital platforms in education has completely changed how people learn and get new information, giving them the ability to take charge of their own educational process.

Key Zones of Digital Revolution in Education

The advent of digital technology has had a significant impact on education, changing conventional teaching strategies and creating new opportunities for instruction.

The following are some important areas in which the digital revolution has significantly in advanced higher education:

- **Online Learning Platforms:** Learners worldwide can access a vast array of courses and educational resources through platforms such as Coursera, Udemy, Khan Academy, and edX. These platforms provide for scheduling flexibility and frequently award degrees or certificates upon completion.

- **Virtual Classrooms:** By facilitating remote learning and teacher-student collaboration, digital platforms like Zoom, Google Meet, and Microsoft Teams have completely transformed traditional classrooms. With the use of screen sharing, video conferencing, and real-time interaction, virtual classrooms bring the classroom experience online.

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Education:** Grading, content production, and individualized tutoring are just a few of the activities that AI-powered applications help educators with. AI chatbots, such as Woebot and IBM Watson, offer students assistance in areas including academic advice and mental health counselling.

- **Mobile Learning:** With the widespread use of smartphones and tablets, learning has become easier to access and more convenient. To accommodate learners' busy schedules, mobile learning apps provide anytime, anywhere access to instructional content.

- **Virtual and Augmented Reality (AR/VR):** These two technologies combine to produce realistic, immersive learning environments. These technologies enable students to study difficult subjects in a virtual environment, which is especially helpful for fields like physics, engineering, and medicine.

- **Adaptive Learning Technologies:** Personalized learning for students is achieved through the use of algorithms and data analytics in adaptive learning platforms. These platforms evaluate each student's unique learning needs and modify the curriculum and instructional style to meet those needs, which enhances student performance.

- **Open Educational Resources (OER):** Online resources and freely downloadable educational materials are included in OER. Textbooks, lecture notes, and other educational materials are freely available for usage and adaptation by educators and students on platforms such as MIT Open Course Ware and OpenStax.

These important areas highlight the various ways in which the digital revolution has changed education, giving students all across the world more access to, customization options for, and interesting learning experiences.

Digital Transformation's Benefits for Education

Numerous benefits result from the digital transformation of education, which transforms conventional teaching techniques and improves the educational experience for both teachers and students. Here are a few main benefits:

- **Cost-Efficiency:** Digital transformation can result in long-term cost benefits, even though an initial investment in digital infrastructure and resources may be necessary. It eliminates the need for traditional teaching materials like paper-based tests and textbooks, as well as the related expenses of printing and shipping.

- **Interactivity:** Interactive elements on digital platforms, like discussion boards, simulations, tests, and multimedia content, encourage learners to actively engage and participate. This interactive element improves the educational process and encourages teamwork and information exchange.

- **Engagement:** Through the use of immersive technologies, social learning tools, and gamification strategies, digital platforms provide dynamic learning environments that inspire students to remain motivated, engaged, and inquisitive throughout their academic careers.

- **Personalization:** Digital platforms offer individualized learning experiences based on user needs and preferences by utilizing artificial intelligence and data analytics. Learners can progress at their own speed with personalized content, suggestions, and feedback depending on their performance.

- **Future-Readiness:** In a world going digital, being able to use digital technology is crucial for success in both higher education and the workforce. Students who receive instruction in digital literacy and technology fluency are better prepared to succeed in the twenty-first century.

- **Accessibility:** Resources for education are available anytime, anyplace thanks to digital platforms that eliminate geographic restrictions. Distance education allows students to participate in webinars, online classes, and virtual classrooms without being restricted by location.

- **Sustainability:** By using less paper and generating less carbon dioxide from traditional educational activities like traveling to traditional classrooms, digital learning can help the earth stay sustainable.

Digital Platforms' Difficulties for Transformative Learning

- **Assurance of Quality:** The volume of digital content available online raises questions regarding the reliability and calibre of teaching resources. To effectively promote learning outcomes, it is imperative to ensure that the material offered on these platforms is reliable, accurate, and relevant.

- **Digital Divide:** Because of infrastructure deficiencies, socioeconomic inequalities, or low levels of technical proficiency, certain students do not have equitable access to digital platforms. For everyone to have fair access to high-quality education, closing the digital divide is crucial.

- **Security and Privacy:** Since digital platforms gather a tonne of information about learners' interactions, actions, and preferences, there are privacy issues about how sensitive data is protected. Retaining confidence in digital learning settings requires protecting user data and making sure cybersecurity safeguards are in place.

Advantages of Digital Learning Compared to Conventional Teaching Approaches in Higher Education

Comparing digital learning to traditional teaching methods reveals several advantages. Teachers can create curricula and courses based on each student's aptitude thanks to digital learning. The wealth of knowledge on the Internet and the simplicity with which parents, instructors, and students can share information are two other advantages.

Conclusion

Upon entering the realm of digital education, it is evident that significant transformations are occurring. The digital era is changing education through global connectivity and individualized learning.

Accepting these changes will allow us to create new opportunities and support educators and students in thriving in our dynamic world. In summary, digital platforms are essential to transformative learning because they provide a multitude of advantages such flexibility, engagement, customisation, accessibility, and interactivity. These platforms have the potential to improve education and give learners all around the world more power, but in order to fully realize their transformative potential, issues with quality assurance, privacy, security, and the digital divide must be resolved.

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