Chapter 67
Integration of Web 2 Technologies for ODL

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ABSTRACT

The world today is a complex one with issues and concerns emerging that were absent even a generation ago. Education and technology in the present millennium is not a luxury but commodity for survival in the present knowledge driven tech innovative society. In today's online era, the concept of a traditional classroom teaching extends beyond a walled room with desks and chairs and into the realm of cyber space. The Research findings presented here are derived from a systematic researches conducted to know the effectiveness of various modes of online learning and face-to-face instruction for teaching various subject /courses at different level. The goal of such studies as a whole is to provide policy-makers, administrators and educators with research-based guidance about how to implement different platforms of online learning for school/ higher education and teacher preparation. The locus of such researches was students studying in different institutions at different levels in India.

BACKGROUND

The world today is a complex one with issues and concerns emerging that were absent even a generation ago. One of the significant changes that have taken place is the role of education in this knowledge driven tech innovative society. Education has become indispensable not only for its own sake for making people literate and knowledgeable, but also as a means of empowering them and for the development of society. Without education, the technological revolution that continues unabated would not have been possible in our lives. In every field like agriculture, housing, health services, manufacturing, transportation and of course in education, we find that technology has transformed these fields and our lives beyond imagination.

During the last ten years between 2003 and 2014, the developing world gained more than one-quarter of a billion internet users and almost half a billion mobile phones. India ranked to be the second after china in the world for Internet user-ship, in 2013, India had 167.2 million internet users, and this figure

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is projected to grow to 283.8 million internet users in 2016. (www.statista.com) and the most active age groups are 15-24, 25-34 and 35-44.The heaviest users overall being 15-24 year are the social media users. This group usually uses social media platform for various purposes like for making friends or sharing media like photos, videos and music etc. These new technologies are growing much faster than older information and communication technologies (ICTs) such as television, radio, mainline telephones, and newspapers. Mobile phones have overtaken mainline phones in coverage in many parts of the world.

With this rapid technology advancement in the world, there are 72 million children worldwide that are not in school and lack access to the facilities, teachers and the technology they need for a better education. The objective of most countries across the globe is to universalise education up to the age of 14 or 16 years and subsequently to allow people to choose the level and type of education that suits their needs, aspirations and resources available with different countries. Education and technology in the present millennium is not a luxury but commodity for survival in the present knowledge driven tech innovative society.

In today's online era, the concept of a traditional classroom teaching extends beyond a walled room with desks and chairs and into the realm of cyber space. Computer screens are replacing the blackboard and keypads are replacing chalk. Internet users can take advantage from Social Networking sites in social, educational, economical and other minor means. Technology changes everything. Now knowledge is everywhere, for everyone, Experience a new way of learning through the innovative online experience. E-Learning or technology in learning has become very common in the education industry and today it caters to the needs of modern-day learners. Infusing technologies in classroom learning have added to stimulus and enhanced learner's interaction within the classroom. E-Learning has a vast presence in almost every field.

Teaching is one such field where technology has taken over and improved the ways of learning. It is believed that access to education and technology is not a luxury, but a necessity. That's why we have to work at global level to close the learning gap and give young people the power to discover better possibilities. Young people have an innate appetite for learning - be it, alone, in the school system, or with peers. Their curious minds harbour an immense, untapped potential for innovation capable of defying the most limiting situations. Today, young people learn differently. The adoption and widespread use of increasingly sophisticated technologies and applications that is available on smart phones, tablets and personal computers make learning more effective and joyful experience.

E-learning has also changed the perspective of distance learning. The distant learning students can be equally interactive like someone present physically. The role of technology in the educational sector is increasing at a phenomenal rate and has revolutionised traditional forms of teaching-learning processes. Different types of technological tools have been developed to cater to the diverse backgrounds and demands of learners of higher education. One of the important technological innovations is e-learning which may be described as the application of broadband internet and computers to assist teaching and learning. Online learning—for students and for teachers—is one of the fastest growing trends in educational uses of technology.

Today's students are "digital natives" (Prensky, 2007), and make increasing use of Web 2.0 technologies in their daily lives. The vast majority of educators, on the other hand, still have little or no experience with these new tools. Teachers and instructors need to understand what opportunities Web 2.0 tools provide for teaching and learning, what kinds of barriers they may encounter when using them, and how to effectively implement the new tools in their teaching. The adoption and widespread use of