

Original Research Article

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Use of E-learning among Rural Youth of Udaipur District of Rajasthan

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ABSTRACT

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The advancement of internet technologies has been significantly observed in past decades and is proved most utilitarian in educational sector. Interaction with digitally delivered content, network-based services and tutoring support are the innovative approaches fore-learning. E-learning has the potential to improve the literacy rate in India especially in remote areas where situation is worse. The present study was undertaken with an objective to analyse the use of e-learning among the rural youth of Udaipur district of Rajasthan state. Sample of the study comprised of 140 rural youth (70 male and 70 female). Regarding use of e-learning tools, findings revealed that most of the respondents used internet (93.57%) and smart phones (92.86%) whereas more than half of the respondents (56.43%) used smart classroom. Other tools like personal computer, laptop, CD/DVD, audio videotape and interactive TV were used by 32.86- 47.86 per cent respondents. Various platforms such as YouTube, Gmail, Facebook, Instagram and Whatsapp were accessed for e-learning by the respondents. It was determined that half of the respondents (56.42%) were using e-learning tools to medium extent whereas 19.28 per cent were using them to high extent.

Introduction

India is a country where future as well as the present is in the hands of its youth has more than half of the country's population is under 25 years of age. The potential of the young population can be utilised if they are educated as education is an effective tool to change the attitude and mind-set of the population. It is disheartening to mention that India's literacy rate is about 71—64 per cent in rural areas as compared to 84 per cent in urban areas (Economic Times 2015). Government schools in rural India are overly crowded with

students, leading to an unbalanced teacher-student ratio so they do not get most of the facilities such as computer education, sports education and extra-curricular activities. Here, e-learning can prove to be the solutions to overcome existing barriers. E-learning refers to learning that utilizes electronic technologies to access educational curriculum outside of a traditional classroom setup. E-learning can be viewed as an innovative approach for delivering well designed, learner-centred, interactive, and facilitated learning environments to anyone, anyplace, anytime, by utilizing the attributes and

resources of various digital technologies along with other forms of learning materials suited for open, flexible and distributed learning environments. E-learning provides a scope of different media (text, pictures, graphs, audio files, movies), which can make learning much easier. Government of India has realised the potential of e-learning and number of resources and the quality time has been invested for promotion and implementation of e-learning. These initiatives are making difference in rural areas but not reaping effective results. So, the present study was undertaken to analyse the use of e-learning among rural youth so that further necessary actions can be taken to utilise e-learning for acquiring utmost benefits.

Materials and Methods

The present study was conducted in the rural areas of Udaipur district of Rajasthan. A sample of 140 rural youth studying in 11th and 12th standard (70 male and 70 female) from Badgaonpanchayatsamiti of Udaipur district was included in the study. Questionnaire was used for collecting the data. Frequency, percentage and mean per cent scores were used to analyse the data statistically.

Results and Discussion

Background information

As presented in Table 1 three fourth of the respondents (75 %) were in 17-18 years of age group and less than half of the respondents (46.42%) were from Other Backward Class (OBC). All the respondents were educated up to secondary level. Majority of the respondents (92.85%) possessed smart phones, television (82.14%) at their homes. More than half of the respondents (64.28%) had smart classroom, 52.14 per cent had personal computers whereas only 22.85 per

cent had laptops in their schools. Most of respondents (99.28 %) accessed e-learning. Less than half of the respondents (41.42%) had undertaken training regarding use of computer.

Use of e-learning among rural youth

E-learning has definitely made education and learning much easy than earlier. It is a new form of teaching device by which students, most especially the distant learners are provided access to the learning materials. E-learning is usually associated with the use of computers but generally, it is a form of instructional delivery which can be provided through any appropriate electronic media such as the mobile phone, television, radio, etc. Findings regarding use of e-learning among rural youth presented in Table 2 reveal that most of the respondents used internet (93.57%) and smart phones (92.86%) whereas more than half of the respondents (56.43%) used smart classroom. Other tools like personal computer, laptop, CD/DVD, audio videotape and interactive TV were used by 32.86-47.86 per cent respondents.

Educational channels on various e-learning platforms such as YouTube are now providing a lot of knowledge, and there are several video lecture series on various platforms and different e-courses are also available online. Regarding use of e-learning platforms Table 3 shows that most of the respondents (82.86%) accessed YouTube and 45 per cent used gmail. Respondents also used various social networking platforms for e-learning which were Facebook (67.14%), Instagram (67.14%) and Whatsapp (69.29%). Similar findings were reported by Madhumita (2016) that e-mail was frequently used by 73.33 per cent of the respondents while more than half of the respondents used Youtube (56.67 %) and Facebook (60%) whereas only 11.67per cent used Quora.

Table.1 Background information of the respondents

S No.	Items	Male (n ₁ =70)	Female (n ₂ =70)	Total (n=140)
1.	Age of the respondents			
a.	15-16 years	10.00	25.71	17.85
b.	17-18 years	78.57	71.42	75.00
c.	19-20 years	10.00	2.85	6.42
d.	21-22 years	1.42	0.0	0.71
2.	Caste			
a.	General	18.57	22.85	20.71
b.	ST	12.85	12.85	12.85
c.	SC	18.57	21.42	20.00
d.	OBC	50.00	42.85	46.42
3.	Availability of e-learning tools			
	At home			
a.	Landline telephone	12.85	10.00	11.42
b.	Smart Phone	97.14	88.57	92.85
c.	Computer	20.00	18.57	19.28
d.	Laptop	28.57	14.28	21.42
e.	Radio/Transistor	18.57	8.57	13.57
f.	Television	84.28	80.00	82.14
g.	Cable connection	81.42	74.28	77.85
	At school			
a.	personal computer	37.14	67.14	52.14
b.	Laptop	20.00	25.71	22.85
c.	Smart classroom	68.57	60.00	64.28
d.	audio-and videotape	28.57	47.14	37.85
e.	CD/DVD	44.28	47.14	45.71

Table.2 Use of various e-learning tools by the respondents

S No.	Tools	Male (n ₁ =70)	Female (n ₂ =70)	Total (n=140)
		%		
a.	Personal computer	37.14	58.57	47.86
b.	Laptop	47.14	37.14	42.14
c.	Smart phone	100.00	85.71	92.86
d.	Internet	100.00	87.14	93.57
e.	Smart classroom	64.29	48.57	56.43
f.	CD/DVD	35.71	30.00	32.86
g.	Audio-and videotape	28.57	47.14	37.86
h.	TV	24.29	45.71	35.00

Table.3 Use of various e-learning platforms by the respondents

S No.	Platforms	Male (n ₁ =70)	Female (n ₂ =70)	Total (n=140)
		%		
a.	YouTube	84.29	81.43	82.86
b.	Quora	17.14	17.14	17.14
c.	Gmail	58.57	31.43	45.00
d.	Facebook	77.14	57.14	67.14
e.	Instagram	77.14	57.14	67.14
f.	Whatsapp	81.43	57.14	69.29

Table.4 Percentage distribution of respondents on the basis of extent of use of e-learning

S No.	Extent of use	Male (n ₁ =70) %	Female (n ₂ =70) %	Total (n=140) %
1.	High	22.85	15.71	19.28
2.	Medium	64.28	48.57	56.42
3.	Low	12.85	35.71	24.28

On the basis of extent of use of e-learning the respondents were categorised into three equidistant categories. Table 4 reveals that more than half of the respondents (56.42%) were using e-learning to medium extent with MPS ranging between 33.34 and 66.66 whereas 19.28 per cent were using it to high extent. About one fifth of the male respondents (22.85%) were using it to a high extent whereas only 15.71 per cent female respondents were using it to high extent.

It can be concluded from the study that e-learning has reached rural areas because of easy availability of internet, laptop, computers and smart phones at lesser price. Also digitisation of the almost every sector has made it a need of the hour for every youth to know how to use various digital technologies for future survival. Initiatives should be taken to increase the use of e-learning among rural

youth to make learning available to every citizen of the country living even in the remotest areas.

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