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Education & Research (CSIBER)**

(An Autonomous Institute)

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**Chhatrapati Shahu Institute of Business
Education and Research (CSIBER)**

**South Asian Journal of Management Research
(SAJMR)
Special Issue**

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**South Asian Journal of Management Research
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Technological Innovations in Indian Higher Education Institutions: A Regional Study of the Indian Subcontinent

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Abstract

This paper explores the determinants of online education adoption in higher education, with a particular focus on India. It investigates the implications of this adoption for the digital economy and entrepreneurial initiatives within the country. Using empirical analysis conducted through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS), the research identifies five key factors via factor analysis. The study highlights the importance of online education platform usability and examines how user satisfaction, ease of use, technological infrastructure, quality, facilitating conditions and cost-efficiency contribute to its adoption. The findings suggest that expanding accessible and inclusive online education in India could significantly advance sustainable development goals, stimulate entrepreneurial ventures, and ultimately boost economic output and per capita income in the region.

Keywords: Online Education Adoption, Higher Education, India, Digital Economy.

Introduction

The onset of COVID-19 has profoundly transformed online education, pushing higher education institutions to adapt rapidly to online formats to curb the virus's spread. This abrupt transition, especially in countries like India, has exacerbated existing social and digital exclusion issues, impacting device accessibility and affordability. The pandemic has severely disrupted education, particularly in under-resourced areas with limited technology access (Khan et al., 2012). Online education, involving internet-mediated instruction through various technologies (Dabbagh and Bannan-Ritland, 2005), has become essential. However, developing countries face greater challenges in implementing these systems compared to their developed counterparts (Dawadi et al., 2020; Uddin, 2020; Saeed, 2020). Flexi-learning, e-learning, and blended learning are now standard in higher education, offering benefits like accessibility and affordability (Becker, 2017; Castro & Tumibay, 2021; Dhawan, 2020). Yet, challenges such as a lack of policies and guidelines persist (Mohammadi et al., 2021). Technology can overcome barriers of space and time, but its application remains difficult in resource-constrained settings (Baldwin, n.d.; Stantchev et al., 2014). Recent studies show that job-relevant online content with localized support enhances program completion rates, and automated feedback improves performance and reduces instructor workload (Littenberg-Tobias & Reich, 2020; Cavalcanti et al., 2021). The shift to online education, accelerated by the pandemic, addresses temporal and spatial challenges (Panigrahi, Srivastava, and Sharma 2018). Approximately 10 million academic hours were lost due to COVID-19 (Dutta, 2020). The University Grant Commission of India has promoted open-access tools, with many institutions using platforms like Google Meet, Zoom, and YouTube for live and recorded lectures. Despite its long-standing existence, online education's prominence has surged, particularly in postgraduate education (Allen et al., 2016). Gurunath et al. (2022) highlight that India's semester system faced significant hurdles during the pandemic, making the selection of effective online platforms a current priority for institutions (Gurunath et al., 2022).

Literature Review

The integration of online learning systems in higher education has expanded significantly worldwide (Allen, 2007). The acceptance of online learning by students and entrepreneurs varies with the nature of the course, whether theoretical or practical. Al-Adwan et al. (2013) found that the technology adoption model (TAM) effectively predicts e-learning acceptance. Despite the growth of online education (Seaman et al., 2018), challenges remain, such as high non-completion rates among students and entrepreneurs (Rovai, 2003; Simpson, 2010, 2013; Vossensteyn et al., 2015). Student satisfaction is crucial for evaluating online learning environments and often differs between Asian and Western cultures (Krouska et al., 2021; Parahoo et al., 2015). Satisfaction influences student retention and course quality (Alqurashi, 2018; Bolliger and Martindale, 2004). Research indicates that satisfied students are more likely to continue with the same instructor (Devinder and Datta, 2003). The literature supports that self-confidence, grit, self-efficacy, ease of use, and perceived usefulness are key predictors of digital tool adoption (Pagan, 2014; Hamid et al., 2016). Edumadze et al. (2022) highlighted that awareness and perceptions of online education are crucial for its acceptance and utilization. Digital education, facilitated by various ICT tools, overcomes traditional barriers of distance and location,

enhancing educational access (Oriji and Torunarigha, 2019; Renes, 2015). While online learning offers advantages such as accessibility and affordability (Castro & Tumibay, 2021; Dhawan, 2020), it cannot fully replace traditional in-person learning, which is essential for holistic development (Ahmed, 2022; Yiwen Li et al., 2021).

Based on the above literature review, we propose the following hypothesis:

HA1: Satisfaction influences Adoption of Online education significantly

HA2: Ease of use influences Adoption of Online education significantly.

HA3: Technology influences Adoption of Online education significantly.

HA4: Cost influences adoption of online education significantly.

HA5: Facilitating Conditions influences Adoption of Online education significantly.

HA6: Quality influences Adoption of Online education significantly.

Conceptual Model

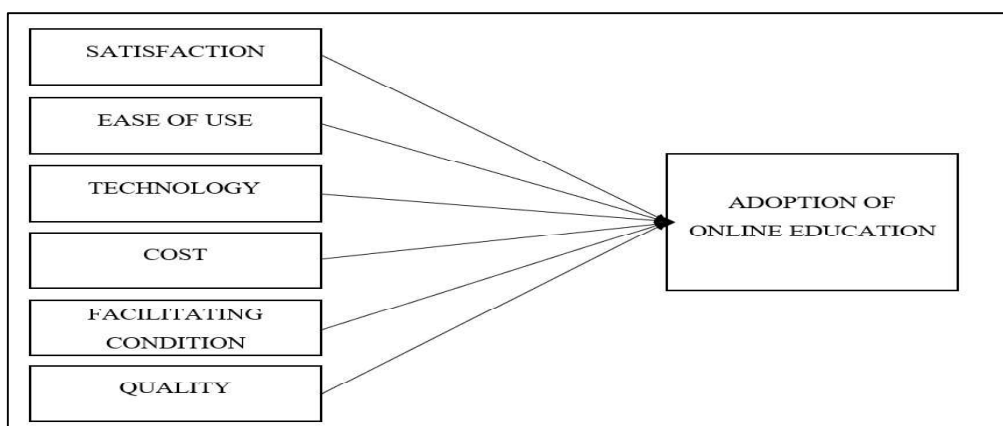


Figure 1 Conceptual Model

Source: Authors Own Compilation

Research Methodology

This study employs an empirical research design to explore relationships among variables and develop a framework for understanding the factors affecting online education and its role in enhancing the digital economy in India. Primary data is collected through a structured questionnaire, crafted based on a thorough literature review. This design supports the study's objectives by focusing on direct observation and measurement of phenomena, with findings rooted in real-world experiences. The study will gather data from 250 respondents, including students and entrepreneurs from higher education institutions in Delhi, using a structured questionnaire addressing five factors: Satisfaction, Ease of Use, Technology, and Cost. Random sampling will be used, with the sample size justified by Kline's (1998) recommendation of $21 \times 10 = 210$.

Data Analysis

Factor Analysis was run to obtain the results. Respondents included students of higher education institutes.

The adequacy, reliability and validity of the data were measured through KMO & Bartlett's Test and Cronbach Alpha. The following results are obtained as presented in the table below.

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.752
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	6030.221
	Df	210
	Sig.	.000

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Source: Authors Own Compilation through data analysis

The KMO test showed the value greater than 0.60 which is considered acceptable. The Bartlett 's test of sphericity provides a significant χ^2 value of 6030.221 ($p < .000$, $df = 210$). The sampling adequacy value of KMO was found to be 0.752, indicating that the sample was sufficiently decent.

Summary of Reliability Analysis of Individual Constructs				
S No.	Variables	Items	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient	Reliability Results
1	Satisfaction	4	.896	Good
2	Ease of Use	4	.929	Excellent
3	Technology	4	.992	Excellent
4	Cost	5	.928	Excellent
5	Facilitating Condition	5	.897	Good
6	Quality		.867	Good
7	Adoption	4	.990	Excellent

Table 2: Summary of Reliability Analysis of Individual Constructs

Source: Authors Own Compilation through data analysis

The overall α for all factors are above .8 which is considered to be excellent for the study.

Factor Analysis

Factor analysis (FA) is generally used to discover the factor structure of a measure and to examine its internal reliability. EFA tries to uncover complex patterns by exploring the dataset and testing predictions (Child, 2006). The total variance explained showed the cumulative percentage of 88% which is considered good as per Hair et.al.,2006. Also the factors were rotated through varimax rotation and 7 factors or components were drawn out of them. Statement below 0.5 were deleted at this stage and the above were retained.

Structural Equation Modeling

Structural Equation Modeling is a multivariate statistical analysis technique that is used to analyze structural relationships. The metrics that ought to be reported are listed below, along with their acceptable thresholds. The table 3 below shows the recommended value of each indices.

Model Fit Indices	Author	Recommended Value
CMIN/DF	Marsh & Hocevar1985	<5 indicating a reasonable fit
	Kline 1998	< 3 indicates an acceptable fit
GFI	Byrne2001, Hair et.al2006	> 0.7 indicates an acceptable fit
CFI	Bentler 1990	close to 0.9, indicates a relatively good fit
	Hu and Bentler 1999	>0.80 is permissible, >0.90 indicates a good fit, >0.95 indicates a great fit
RMSEA	Bentler 1990	<0.05 indicates a good fit, 0.05-0.10 indicates moderate fit,
SRMR	Sharif & Nia2018, Bentler 1990	< .09 acceptable fit

Table 3: Model Fit indices recommended by Authors

Source: Authors Own Compilation

MODEL FIT INDICES				
CMIN/DF	CFI	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR
3.327	0.954	0.912	0.064	0.0356

Table 4: Model Fit indices for the above conceptual model

Source: Authors Own Compilation through data analysis

The Table 4 represents the model fit indices for the figure 2. All the indices are in the range as per table 8. Hence the model is considered to be fit. Also, the factors were found to be significant i.e., $p=0.000$

Path Analysis

MODEL FIT INDICES				
CMIN/DF	CFI	GFI	RMSEA	SRMR
4.658	0.997	0.997	0.080	0.0087

Table 5 :Model Fit indices for above conceptual model

Source: Authors Own Compilation through data analysis

The Table 5 represents the model fit indices for the figure 3. All the indices are in the range as per table 3. Hence the model is considered to be fit. Also, the factors were found to be significant i.e., $p=0.000$

Conclusion

The abrupt onset of COVID-19 and the ensuing lockdown caused a major disruption in traditional pedagogical approaches, leading to a swift transition to online learning. This study critically evaluates the impact of this shift on Indian students and entrepreneurs in higher education. The closure of educational institutions forced educators to adopt e-learning models to prevent academic loss. However, this rapid transition, without adequate infrastructural support, undermined key aspects of traditional pedagogy, such as learner engagement, access to study materials, attentiveness, time management, and assessment.

In India, where many individuals already face social exclusion, the sudden move to e-learning heightened digital exclusion issues, particularly in terms of device accessibility and affordability. This added to the stress experienced by students and entrepreneurs unfamiliar with the required technology. While online education was initially viewed as a means to boost the digital economy, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated its adoption. This study aims to identify the key factors influencing the adoption of online education by students and entrepreneurs in the post-pandemic era.

Cost has emerged as a significant factor in this adoption, along with satisfaction, ease of use, and technology. While online education has provided a workable solution during the crisis, it cannot fully replace traditional in-person learning, which remains vital for the holistic development of students and the cultivation of a promising future.

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