

Digital education: reforming learning or deepening divide

Date: _____

1) Introduction

2) Digital learning reforming education in following ways:

2.1) Digital learning enables students to balance academic and personal life.

2.2) Digital education enhances the quality of education

2.3) Digital education helps the government to increase the accessibility of education

2.4) It enhances the productivity of students through availability of lectures

2.5) It is breaking social stereotypes of women education

2.6) It enables the circulation of knowledge that helps the students to learn on demand skills.

2.7) Digital education reduces the favoritism by minimizing subjective bias in academics

2.8) Digital education provides centralized administrative system in education sector.

3) Digital education is deepening divide in following ways:

3.1) Digital education is deepening divide between privileged and underprivileged through accessibility factor.

3.2) It is also a major factor behind spread of misinformation.

3.3) It also deepens divide between students by affecting their health.

3.4) Digital education deepens economic divide by creating long term inequalities in learning demanding skills.

4) Conclusion

The bloom of internet in the era of 90s gives rise to usage for general public. By time it became key tool to communicate and circulate knowledge. This acceptability gave birth to the concept of digital education. The advancement of technology made digital learning a revolution in the field of education. Because it offers balance in academic and personal life, it enhances the quality of education and make it accessible for every learner. Moreover, it increases productivity, curb gender inequality in education and fosters the circulation of knowledge. All the mentioned factors highlights the reforming nature of digital learning. However, there are some issues that are making digital learning, a key factor of deep deepening divides. Such as it increases the gap between privileged and underprivileged societies and becoming the major factor behind the misinformation. Digital learning is a great break through in reforming education, however, some of it's factors are deepening divide.

First, digital education offers learning flexibility, enabling students to balance academic and personal life. In traditional education system, the mostly classes commence in morning and take 6 to 8 hours of the day. Resultantly, students feel burden and became lazy to participate in

personal life. Due to which most of the students grow with minimum social interaction. According to the Harvard University's report on time management of students, those having tight schedule of personal commitments like work, are unable to continue study. In that case, digital education help them to manage academic and personal life.

Second, digital education enhances the quality of learning by connecting students with highly proficient teachers. In digital learning process, the platform provide the plenty of options to students for selecting teachers according to their needs. Because every teacher have passes different teaching style and in traditional system ~~even~~ every student does not adopt the teaching technique, that hindered their learning. According to the study of Sabah University Malaysia on 108 students, 62 choosed the teachers according to their needs for physics on online learning platform. After two months, these 62 students performed much better in physics than others. Therefore, digital education is reforming the learning quality.

Third, digital education system helps the government to increase the accessibility of education. Due to the lack of proper learning infrastructure in many countries, particularly in farmost areas, people are unable to get education. In this scenario, digital education provide solution. For example, in 2012 Rajasthan government in India initiated mobile school system. It requires one screen, proper connection of internet and electricity and one operator. This helped the government to reach in farmost areas. Resultantly, the 18% rise in literacy rate was recorded. Thus, digital learning is revolutionizing the education by increasing accessibility.

Moreover, it enhance the productivity of students through availability of lectures anytime. Some students in class lacks in understanding the lecture due to different reasons. That makes them This thing lowers their productivity. To solve the problem, South Korea introduced Ed-tech platform in 2008. Every student can access the lectures anytime. Resultantly, the "World Economic Forum" highlighted that with in 10 years the 80% productivity of students increased. This shows the digital education is reforming learning by enhancing student productivity.

Furthermore, digital education is breaking social stereotypes of women education. In some extreme societies women is considered as immoral due to the misinterpretation of religion. However, online education is breaking these social stigmas. Platforms like Edx or Khan academy offers degrees directly linked with universities. Using such formula, Egyptian government launched the scholarship program for women in rural areas. Resultantly, the graduate women ratio rise to 16% from 9%. Therefore, digital education is reforming the society as well.

Additionally, it enables the circulation of knowledge that help the students to learn on demand skills. Most of schools and universities, mostly focuses of theoretical learning but does not provide skills to students. However, digital education allow students to focus on theoretical as well as learning on demand technical skills like coding, machine learning and web developement. As per the study of Corbett Cornell University on impact of Information technology and communication project (ITC) in Pakistan's education sector, showcases that students that uses online learning platforms for study, mostly ending in learning technical skills, demanded by market.

Besides, digital learning reduces favoritism by minimizing subjective bias in academics. It ensures transparent grading. Each student have equal opportunity to demonstrate their ability. This creates merit, rather than personal and social status, determines academic success. The American education department of North Carolina, conducted the study on 478 instructors and found the problem of favoritism. To ensure fairness, they introduced digital grading system powered by artificial intelligence to ensure fairness. This shows that by reducing favoritism in education digital learning is ~~seen~~ reforming the system with transparency.

Last but not least, digital learning system to centralize the administrative work in education sector. One of the most complex system on administrative level is to maintain the student record in centralized way. Means, the record must be maintain directly by one authority on higher level to eliminate any type of forgery and error. For instance in 2016 "Centralized administrative system" using virtual records was launched in the USA. The system not only maintains the record but automated the enrollment process. The 61% burden on schools lower and chances of

forgery eliminated. This is one of the prime example of digital education reforming learning.

Despite, it's out-standing performance in reforming education, like every system it comes with some challenges deepening divide.

Digital education, while ~~trans~~ is deepening divide between ~~privi~~ privileged and underprivileged societies. In wealthier communities, students have reliable internet, ~~den~~ devices and well trained teachers who can integrate technology effectively. In contrast, students from underprivileged to society lack in every mentioned factor. As a result, digital education magnifies pre-existing inequalities. For instance, during Covid-19 in India, the students from private schools shifted smoothly to online classes. Meanwhile, million of students from rural ~~areas~~ areas had no access to education. Resultantly, the statistics of India's education department highlighted the 15% ~~of~~ dropout. On one side digital learning is transformative, but also deepening divide.

Digital learning is also major factor behind spread of misinformation. In Due

to its decentralized nature in the form of private platforms, it sometimes lacks factual accuracy. Those students who mainly rely upon online sources of learning like "Youtube" are exposed to unverified facts that appeals their sensational emotions. This creates a learning environment where conspiracy, and biased opinions circulate easily. For example in India, there are many history channels working independently portray history through religious lense. Students consuming education from them are becoming the tools of deepening ethno-religious divide.

Additionally, it also deepens the divide between students by affecting their health. Increased screen time often lead to eye strains, headaches and mental fatigue. Students those have strong financial support use the technology in a way that minimize these health hazards. However, students those have limited resources are mostly affected.

According to the study of Pharmacy education organization, 93% students in Bangladesh using digital education and coming from weak financial background faces physiological problems. This shows that digital education somehow affecting health of students from different backgrounds and deepening divide.

Lastly, digital education also deepens economic divide by creating long-term inequalities in digital skills. In modern time, job market demands digital literacy for every work. Particularly in technological fields. Students coming from traditional learning process are unable to compete with those having access to competitive digital learning environment. According to "World Bank" study on digital learning in developing underdeveloping countries found that students from low income households in Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Pakistan were far less likely to develop digital skills during schools, which ended up in pursuing minimal income careers, deepening the economic divide.

In a nutshell, the digital education is reforming learning through enhancing quality education, balancing academic and personal life and curbing gender gap. Moreover, it is also reducing favoritism and centralizing administrative work in education. However, like every system it comes with some challenges, that are deepening divide, likewise, it is a major factor behind misinformation and affecting the health of students. Digital education is reforming learning, however, it also poses some challenges.