Indian Journal of Adult Education **ISSN: 0019-5006**
Vol. 83, No. 1 **January-March 2022**

SWAYAM-THE INDIAN MOOCS PLATFORM

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Abstract

This paper is about the new innovative initiative of Digital India Campaign – The MOOCs platform Swayam in Indian Education System. MOOCs started as a recent and widely researched development in distance education which were first introduced in 2006 and emerged as a popular mode of learning in 2012. Currently, there are more than 80 platforms that offer MOOCs. Majority of the leading universities are introducing their own MOOCs through their expert teaching faculties and other technical and industry experts in all subjects or disciplines of study. In India, under the initiative of Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), University Grant Commission (UGC), Consortium for Educational Communication (CEC), NPTEL, IGNOU, NCERT, NIOS, IIM and NITTR MOOCs platform named SWAYAM has been launched offering courses in all areas from 9th Standard to Post Graduate level. These course include diploma, degree, engineering and management courses. This program covers different subjects that may or may not be taught in the regular campus. Official MOOCs programmes in India are available through the single portal i.e., **SWAYAM** (Study Web of Active-Learning for Young Aspiring Minds) and it was declared in parliament in the budget speech in 2017. So SWAYAM is the Indian MOOCs learning platform.

Key words – Swayam, MOOCs, Education

Introduction

Massive Open Online Course (MOOCs) are the latest technological trend in education and have emerged as the most feasible model for imparting education, involving conventional and online education. MOOCs are online course aimed at unlimited participation and are openly accessible through web. In addition to traditional learning material such as filmed lectures, reading and problem sets MOOCs provide high definition e-tutorials, videos, references and web links .The courses on MOOCs are interactive with user forums to support community interactions among students, professors and teaching assistants. Learners have immediate feedback through quizzes and assignments. MOOCs were first introduced in the educational sphere in 2006 and emerged as a popular format in 2012. A Massive Open Online Course (MOOCs) is a global digital learning platform through a web based media which provides an access to online education with the best institutes or faculties of the world to unlimited number of students. SWAYAM is an integrated platform for online courses with a wide coverage from high school to all different domains of higher education and can be called as the Indian MOOCs Platform.

In MOOCs there is no restriction on enrolment, these course are open for any one, anybody can

join for the course with freedom of pace, place and time. Content is delivered online through a web based media using some learning platforms. Course means subject or part of subject or Unit of Subject under study. In India MOOCs courses are being run through SWAYAM. SWAYAM initiated with the idea of Learning through Television with a wide vision of using satellite education for providing high quality education to all. It became a mission and was declared in parliament in the budget speech in 2017.

The main motive of MOOCs is 3'A's, that is Anytime, Anyone and Anywhere. In India MOOCs is running through SWAYAM. SWAYAM is the integrated platform for online courses with a wide coverage from high school to all different domains of higher education and specially designed refresher courses for teachers. It can be called as the Indian MOOCs Platform. SWAYAM started with the idea of Learning through Television with a comprehensive vision of using satellite education for imparting high quality education to masses. It incorporates the Curriculum based course content covering different disciplines such as humanities, science, engineering and technology, yoga, law, medicine, agriculture, yoga and education.

We can say that SWAYAM is a great innovative step which has brought a revolution in the learning space of Indian classrooms and has changed the scenario of traditional Indian classrooms. This change is presently specially being realized in higher education. SWAYAM provides a wide range of courses in different areas and has changed the modality of transaction in classrooms. SWAYAM courses are the outcome of creative thoughts and ideas of the learned academicians, who transfers their thought into action by blending their cognition, reasoning and emotions in a creative manner. These courses delivered to a large audience in very effective form by high quality technical assistance.

India is considered to be a good educational hub among the various countries of world but still has a very poor enrolment in higher education in comparison to high profile countries of world like USA, UK or Australia. One important reason may be because of its population. SWAYAM courses can definitely help to overcome this issue by introduction of wide range of qualitative courses in different field .SWAYAM now offers Quality Education at fingertips and free of cost.

Swayam is an important initiative of Digital India scheme of our government. MHRD has designated higher learning institutions for production and delivery of online courses in specific sectors. They are known as National Coordinators. National coordinators in different sectors are as below

National Coordinators of SWAYAM

Sl. No.	National MOOCs Coordinator	Sectors
1	University Grants Commission (UGC)	Non Technology Post Graduate Degree Programmes
2	National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL)	Technical/ Engineering UG/PG Degree Programmes

3	Consortium for Educational Communication (CEC)	Non Technology Under Graduate Degree Programmes
4	Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)	Diploma and Certificate Programmes
5	National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)	School Education Programmes from Class 9 to 12
6	National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS)	Out of School Children Educational Programmes from Class 9 to 12
7	Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Bangalore	Management Programmes
8	National Institute of Technical Teachers Training and Research (NITTR), Chennai	Teacher Training Programmes

The National Coordinators has the whole sole responsibility for the conversion of MOOCs, such that there is complete coverage of all the courses in a subject/programme. National Coordinator should ensure that each course in a subject should be awarded to a reputed faculty from an institution of importance. The faculty chosen to convert a course into MOOCs should follow curriculum prescribed by UGC or AICTE or other regulatory body and should cover all recent developments in that field. It should ensured that best of subject experts in the country are engaged in conducting SWAYAM Courses.

Swayam courses are available from high school to Post Graduate level. There are basically two different types of courses credit courses and non-credit courses. Credit Course means a course which is taught for at least one semester as a part of as subject/programme. Non-Credit Course include courses like awareness programme, continuing education programme or training of specific skill set as independent course, which are not part of any set curriculum. These courses can be of shorter duration. Four Quadrant pedagogical approach is used in SWAYAM as given below-

Quadrant-I is e-Tutorials

Quadrant-II is e-Content

Quadrant-III is the Discussion forum

Quadrant-IV is Assessment

The SWAYAM courses are notified on SWAYAM website on 1st June and 1st November every year. These are the list of the online learning courses going to be offered in the forthcoming Semester. Institutions can give freedom to their students to opt 20% of the courses for the

programme for which they have enrolled, through SWAYAM portal so as to entitle the privilege of credit transfer in Choice Based Credit System. All the Institutions which permit their student to opt for specific courses after taking permission through their competent authority should notify the students within 4 weeks from the date of notification by SWAYAM to enroll in the course. The online learning courses being offered through the SWAYAM should be offered keeping in view institutes academic requirements and the courses shall permit for credit transfer. While allowing the online learning courses offered by SWAYAM, it should be ensured that the physical facilities like laboratories, computer facilities, library etc. essential for pursuing the courses are provided free of cost and in adequate measure by the institution. The Institution has to give the equivalent credit weightage to the students for the credits earned through online learning courses through SWAYAM platform and this should be given in their official transcript. No university shall refuse any student for credit mobility for the courses earned through MOOCs.

One of the major initiative of SWAYAM is Annual Refresher Programme in Teaching (ARPIT) launched by Ministry of Human Resource Development. It is a major and unique initiative of online professional development of 1.5 million higher education faculty using the MOOCs platform SWAYAM. For implementing ARPIT, discipline-specific National Resource Centres (NRCs) have been identified which are given the task to prepare online training material with focus on latest developments in the discipline, new & emerging trends, pedagogical improvements and methodologies for transacting curriculum.

Annual Refresher Programme for Teaching (ARPIT) is the first attempt in Indian higher education system to provide training to the entire faculty through a web based programme along with the conventional programmes in HRDC's. This is an innovative step to orient faculties with the latest developments in technology. National Resource Centre is a collaborative movement of IITs, IIMs, Central Universities, HRDC's and other Institutions of Eminence in India. The most salient feature of this programme is that, it provides admission to all faculties of any discipline and cadre. The special feature of ARPIT is that programmes like teacher training courses are available specially focusing on training modality. The main benefit for the higher education faculties through this course is that this course is equivalent with one Refresher Course which normally faculty has to undergo for their CAS promotions as notified by latest UGC Regulation .

The courses on Swayam portal are managed by faculties from high profile institutes like IIT, IIM & Central Universities with exposure in the real- time setting of classrooms. These courses are selected through different stages of technical and academic reviews, it has the facility of credit transfer and is compatible with choice based credit system (CBCS) where learners can choose best course from a basket of related courses. SWAYAM courses are available from class 9th to post graduation level, courses are totally free and only nominal fee for certification is there. Online examination centers are there across the country, courses are not restricted by your previous educational qualification and this platform offers a varied learning experience through specially focused e-tutorials

Conclusion

SWAYAM is an integrated platform for online courses with a wide coverage from high school to all different domains of higher education in India. The Digital India Campaign SWAYAM is the latest innovation in Indian Education System and has taken a prominent position specially in higher education in a short span of time. It has definitely benefited and will continue to benefit masses of all age groups in coming years in our country.

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