

PERCEPTION AND EXPERIENCE OF USERS ON MOOC'S SWAYAM - A STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS' OF BELTHANGADY TALUK

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ABSTRACT:

Online learning uses technology for delivering the courses. Education with technology is considered as the most promising development in education. With technology globalization, the concept of learning and teaching has undergone a tremendous change. Technological usage in education provides a global learning environment, which allows accessing the course material anytime, anywhere, connect other learners, and get access to the content without considering any geographical boundaries. The significant changes in the use of technology in online education have seen the emergence of the concept of Massive Open Online Course (MOOC). Massive Open Online Course (MOOC). SWAYAM platform is indigenously developed by Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) with the help of Microsoft and would be ultimately capable of hosting 2000 courses and 80000 hours of learning: covering school, under-graduate, post-graduate, engineering, law and other professional courses. University Grants Commission (UGC) has issued Gazette Notification dated 19 th July 2016, notified Regulation, 2016 regarding 'Credit Framework for Online Learning Courses through SWAYAM'. SWAYAM has been developed under four-quadrant approaches: (1) video lecture, (2) specially prepared reading material that can be downloaded/printed (3) self-assessment tests through tests and quizzes and (4) an online discussion forum for clearing the doubts. SWAYAM is an indigenous (Made in India) IT Platform for hosting the Massive Open Online Courses. The study is conducted among the Postgraduate students of Belthangady taluk to know the experience of users and to know the various challenges faced by the students while accessing the various courses.

KEYWORDS: Mooc's – Swayam, Higher education, Digital learning, Technology, Online course

INTRODUCTION

Education is the foundation for a successful life; it is a powerful weapon which can help one change the world. The Indian higher education system is one of the oldest and largest in the world with 917 universities including Institutions of National Importance, more than 45,000

colleges, 3.66 crore students and 12.84 lakh, teachers. This massification of higher education brings along with it many issues which confront the higher education of our country today like, the issues of access, equity, relevance, quality, management and financing.

The world is going digital, so should our learning. The phenomenal growth of ICT in the education system has had a tremendous impact globally. India has been quick enough to leverage technology for teaching-learning processes as ICT has facilitated the accessibility to education and promoting quality teaching and learning to learners of all age groups across the length and breadth of the country. Taking cognizance of such advancements, The Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India launched SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds), an indigenously developed platform aimed at providing learning opportunities to the learners through MOOCs (Massive Open Online Course) free of cost in a structured manner¹.

The MOOCs on the SWAYAM are high quality, curriculum-based, interactive content in different subjects across disciplines of social sciences, arts, fine arts, humanities, natural & mathematical sciences, linguistics, languages, technology, management, teacher training and skill sector². These courses are developed by the best faculty of the country carefully chosen from various educational institutions across the country from Secondary till Post-Graduation level. The basic philosophy of MOOCs on SWAYAM is free learning for anyone, anytime, Anywhere (AAA) with the facility of credit transfer for up to 20% of the courses in a programme. Although this programme is in the initial stage under the Mangalore university affiliated colleges. There may be a lot of problems and confusion among the student community and much more expectation towards the project so; the study is conducted in the Belthangady taluk to ascertain the experience of the postgraduate students, who are already enrolled under MOOC's SWAYAM.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- ❖ To know the satisfaction level about SWAYAM course among the graduate students
- ❖ To find out the various problems faced while accessing the course.
- ❖ To know the expectations of the users regarding the Swayam platform.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

According to **Kaveri et al. (2016)**, "The strength of SWAYAM lies in its qualitative evaluation systems as well as recognition of credits, equity of access and affordability. Traditional HEIs have a clear edge over global MOOCs and SWAYAM in terms of long term impact on citizen and society building and shaping individual opinions".

Kanjilal (2016), "Mainstreaming the SWAYAM initiative with the formal education system will go a long way in realizing the dream of the nation in universal access of education. With appropriate planning and implementation, SWAYAM can play a pivotal role in Digital India and Skill India missions of the government of India".

According to **Bharti (2014)**, "SWAYAM is a platform for new India where quality education is affordable and self-learning is fruitful not only for enrolled but also for professionals and dropouts. With quality content, best online lectures, great discussions, and knowledgeable

assessment quizzes, SWAYAM will provide a great opportunity to Indian students to learn without fearing from failure.”

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

As per the New Higher Education policy, the Government is planning to render the education based on equity, quality, and relevance and to promote the Life-Long Learning. The MHRD department has come up with the new platform called SWAYAM, where learners can choose from hundreds of course and every course is taught by the best teacher of various prestigious Institutions. As per the new education policy, 2019 proposed by the government gives special importance to the MOOC's course and the SWAYAM platform. Although this programme is in beginning stage, there is a lack of knowledge among the students' communities and academicians, on the same even though there are students who have already enrolled for the courses under SWAYAM website. The study is mainly based on those enrolled students to know the experience of the usage, problems and expectations regarding the online courses.

METHODOLOGY:

The paper employed a survey method to acquire information regarding the students' experience with MOOC's SWAYAM. The target of the study is in Belthangady Taluk. The samples are students from different colleges. In an online survey, 43 students have responded to the study. The non-random sampling method is used. To provide the theoretical background and strengthen the discussion books and the journals were referred. The collected data is presented in the form of tables.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS OF DATA COLLECTED FROM THE ONLINE SURVEY:

Table 1: Period of Usage

Duration	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
One month	34	79
One year	07	16
More than a year	02	05
TOTAL	43	100

Source: Survey

From the above table, it is clear that out of 43 respondents 34 are using the platform from last one month because the colleges are recently giving much importance towards the SWAYAM initiative. 7 respondents are using since one year and rest 02 respondents using from more than a year. This shows that students are coming to know about the programme very recently and they are enrolled under the same.

Table .2: Acquiring the use pattern of SWAYAM

Use pattern	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
Personal effort	04	09
Lecturers	22	51

Library staffs	09	21
Orientation	08	19
TOTAL	43	100

Source: Survey

The table shows the information regarding the source of awareness regarding the SWAYAM among the users. It is clear that 51% of the respondents are come to know about SWAYAM through their lecturers and 21% from the library staff and 19% respondents opine that through orientation they got the idea, here we can understand that the lecturers are encouraging the students towards the online courses.

Table .3: Reasons for usage

Reasons	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
Different kind of courses	23	53
Anytime learning	08	19
Experience Faculty	05	12
Video/Audio / Pdf content	06	14
TOTAL	43	100

Source: Survey

The above data clearly shows that the various reasons to use SWAYAM platform by the respondents. 53% of respondents opine that there is the availability of a large number of courses so the students can opt any of the interested courses without any regulations. 19% of respondents are opined that it facilitates any time learning without the four walls and chalk and talk system. 12% feels that the platform has experienced faculty and 14% says the course method is good.

Table 4: College under Swayam Local chapter

Opinion	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	17	40
No	26	60
TOTAL	43	100

Source: Survey

From the table, it is clear that only 40% of Respondents College is in the SWAYAM Local Chapter list that means they get all the information in an up to date manner. Remaining 60% of the respondent's college is not in the SWAYAM local chapter list.

Table 5: Duration of time spent

Duration	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
Daily	05	12
Weekly	29	68
Once in a two days	08	19
TOTAL	43	100

Source: Survey

The above table deals with the duration of time spent for a particular course by the users.68% respondents weekly went through the topics and submit the assignments whereas 19% of the respondents are accessing the once in two days and only 12% of the students are daily go through the course and read related topics.

Table .6: Problems while accessing the course

Reasons	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
App breakdown	11	26
Difficult interface	17	40
Connectivity issues	09	20
Registration/ login	06	14
TOTAL	43	100

Source: Survey

From the table, it is clear that respondents face various problems while accessing the SWAYAM platform through App or Website. 40% of the respondents state that there is a difficult interface and it is difficult to surf the various courses. 26% of the respondents face the problem of breakdowns of website and app. 20% of the respondents face connectivity issues and rest 14% of the respondents face the problem of registration/login.

Table 7: Satisfaction level of Users

Opinion	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	31	72
No	12	28
TOTAL	43	100

Source: Survey

The table shows the satisfaction level of users, in the above table, it is clear that 72% of the respondents are satisfied with interface and courses offered by the SWAYAM website, whereas 28% of the respondents are not satisfied with the platform.

Table .7.1: If No. Specify the Reasons

Reasons	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
High fee structure	05	42
Low connectivity	02	17
Exam centres	03	25
Confusions regarding start/end date	02	16
TOTAL	12	100

Source: Survey

The above table clears that the various reasons for the dissatisfaction, out of 12 dissatisfied respondents 5 respondents opine that they have to pay high charges for the certificate and it is not affordable in the rural area colleges. 3 respondents say that they have to travel a long distance to write the exams and the rest of the respondents gives the reasons of low connectivity and confusions over the course.

Table .8: Expectations of the users regarding SWAYAM

Reasons	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
Nominal charges	13	30
Web-based examination	04	09
Easy Search Interface	05	12
More Orientation	21	49
TOTAL	43	100

Source: Survey

The table indicates the various expectations by the users regarding the Swayam. 49% of the respondents believe that there is a need for more orientation regarding the same, 30% of respondents expect the lower charges for the examination and certificate. 12% and 9% of the respondents opined that the website should use easy interface and it should conduct the web-based examinations.

FINDINGS:

- ❖ From the study, we found that 79% of the respondents are using and enrolled for the course under SWAYAM platform because of the continuous orientation and encouragement by the lecturers and institutions.
- ❖ The study clearly shows that 51% of the respondents came to know about online courses under Swayam from their lecturers whereas others from the library staffs and through orientations.
- ❖ Among the respondents 53% use the website/app because they get plenty of courses in different areas, 19% of respondents opine that it facilitates any time anywhere learning.
- ❖ From the study, we found that 60% of Respondents College is not in the Swayam local chapter list that means out of 3 colleges in the belthangady taluk only one college which is enrolled under Local chapter.
- ❖ The study clears that 68% of the respondents are accessing the course on a weekly basis; they study the content and submit the assignments per week.
- ❖ We found from the study that 40% of the respondents face the problem of a difficult interface, whereas 26% were facing the problem of breakdowns rest 34% face the problem while login.
- ❖ The study reveals that 28% of the respondents are not satisfied with MOOC's Swayam because of the high fee structure for examination, unavailability of exam centres and confusions over start and end of the course.
- ❖ From the study, it is clear that 49% of the respondents expect an orientation in the part of usage and regarding the courses, whereas 30% expect to decrease the fees for the examination.

SUGGESTIONS:

- ✓ The respective departments of MHRD and educational institutions need to provide more orientation to the student community and also should advertise the course in the social and print media.
- ✓ The website and app of SWAYAM should be redesign in such a manner that the users may not find any difficulties while surfing the courses and other course-related information.
- ✓ The examination charge should be kept nominal so that the students from rural colleges can afford and also the colleges should enrol themselves in the local chapters so that they can apply for the fee waiving facility.

CONCLUSION:

The MOOCs are the future of today's distance learning. They have made the education easily accessible to anyone anywhere anytime around the globe and made people's life more improved by providing flexible and quality learning as it was earlier. They have made a difference by providing free courses and enabled people and students' world around to participate, interact, discuss and learn from the renowned faculty of this world thereby improving people's lives and bring out the real change to communities as a whole. As per the UGC guidelines, the colleges now started to encourage the students towards the online courses, though the students are aware of the platform still various technical problems create difficulties to the users so the respected stakeholder needs to improve the quality and interface of the SWAYAM platform.

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