

## ATTITUDE OF SCHOOL TEACHERS ON E-LEARNING: A CASE OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH

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Human society is significantly shaped by technology. Undoubtedly, technology can be a blessing for some and a disadvantage for others though it is undeniable that technology has helped to minimize manual workloads. In the field of education, technology has brought a tremendous shift from the traditional way of teaching to Information and Communication Technology (ICT)-based teaching. The question to ponder on *how much the teachers are willing to adapt to the new teaching methods* is not fully explored. As e-learning is one of the contemporary approaches to teaching, the present study focuses on the awareness and attitude of school teachers towards e-learning. The primary aim is to ascertain: a) the level of awareness of e-learning among school teachers; b) the differences in attitudes of male and female school teachers toward e-learning; and c) the potential for e-learning in Arunachal Pradesh. The state of Arunachal Pradesh was chosen as the study region. Data were collected through an online survey from the teacher-instructors of Arunachal Pradesh. Out of 100 total samples considered, 70 were finally selected for the purpose of analysis. Our findings suggest that the majority of the school teachers in Arunachal Pradesh are well aware of the notion of e-learning, including its various forms and modes. However, insufficient communication channels and a lack of experience in e-resources and ICT among school educators make it less feasible to implement e-learning programs.

**Keywords:** Awareness, attitude, school teachers, e-learning

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## **Introduction**

Due to breakthroughs in science education, and in the field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), teaching approaches have undergone a paradigm shift from a traditional mode to an e-learning space. In a nutshell, the e-learning concept refers to learning via electronic sources, which provides interactive distance learning. It is the fusion of technology with education. E-learning uses a Web System as a way to access information available, disregarding time and space. In other words, e-learning is where cognitive learning is made possible through technology.

The origins of learning can be traced back to the Roman Empire (200 A.D.) when teaching and learning began using writing slates for the first time (Viso, 2013). In the United States of America (USA), the idea of e-learning was introduced at the Computer Based Training (CBT) Systems Seminar in Los Angeles in 1999 (Bisson, 2004). Since then, the idea of e-learning has taken on different incarnations where e-learning can be thought of as assisted learning or teaching with the aid of learning aids or machines. The reason for the significant shift in the teaching-learning process is primarily the development of computers and later the internet technology. One of the most established and widely used Learning Management Systems (LMSs) in the United States is Blackboard (Wiles & Naimi, 2011).

Adopting e-learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century among school teachers is challenging because of several associated factors such as attitude, geographical location, gender, etc. Krishnakumar and Rajesh (2011) in their study on the “Attitude of Teachers’ of Higher Education toward e-learning” found that teachers with knowledge of computers and ICT show a positive attitude towards online learning. Further, the study shows that the ‘attitude’ of teachers is highly crucial and serves as a powerful tool for change. Another study by Minj (2023) shows that trained, male teachers, especially of unaided schools and urban areas, exhibited more positive attitudes towards e-learning compared to those of their counterparts i.e., untrained, female teachers, government and assisted schools, and rural areas. Hence, developing a good attitude among teachers toward e-learning and ICT must be the emphasis of programs at higher education institutions.

The idea of e-learning is broad and ongoing. Well-designed, learner-centred, interesting, interactive, economical, effective, conveniently available, flexible, and meaningful Teaching-Learning scenarios have been made possible through e-learning. In India, the national Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)

platform is the Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM). The MOOC and SWAYAM portals offer a variety of online and remote learning courses and programs that facilitate teaching and learning. Additionally, other online platforms such as the Unacademy, KhanAcademy, etc. are examples indicating how e-learning is expanding in India.

### Objectives

The present study aims to fulfil the following objectives:

- i. *To know the awareness of school teachers on e-learning*
- ii. *To understand the attitude of male and female school teachers towards e-learning*
- iii. *To investigate Arunachal Pradesh's potential for e-learning*

### Methodology

The present study was conducted across 26 districts in the state of Arunachal Pradesh, India. Adopting a descriptive cum survey method approach, 70 school teachers (25 males & 45 females) were randomly selected for the purpose. Self-prepared questionnaires were administered through a Google form survey. The questionnaire comprises 4 sections viz., the *first section* for collecting the respondents' details, the *second section* on the awareness of e-learning, the *third section* was divided into positive and negative statements to study the attitude of respondents, and the *fourth section* on the possibilities of conducting e-learning in Arunachal Pradesh. For analysis purposes, descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage were used.

### Results

#### ***Awareness of School Teachers on E-learning***

Our findings show that 97.14% of the respondents are familiar with e-learning, whereas 2.86% of them are not. A majority (94.29%) of them considered the SWAYAM portal as a good example of e-learning and understood (85.71%) that e-learning is a basic requirement in the teaching-learning process. In other words, our results clearly indicate that most (92.38%) of the school teachers are aware of e-learning concepts though few of them (7.62%) are not fully aware of the e-learning concept.

#### ***Attitude of Male and Female School Teachers towards E-learning***

To examine the differences in attitude between male and female teachers towards e-learning, we considered six statements i.e., Three positive (1, 2, & 3) and three negative (4, 5, & 6) viz., *Positive Statements*: 1) E-learning saves

time for both the teacher and the student, 2) Through e-learning, teachers can provide rich resources, and 3) E-Learning provides massive education for learners. *Negative Statements*, on the other hand, were: 4) E-learning is complicated, 5) E-learning is an extra burden for teachers and students, and 6) E-learning is not required for school education (*Table 1*). The assessment was based on the 5-point Likert Scale for each question where the responses were recorded as Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD).

*Table 1: Attitude of male school teachers towards e-learning*

<i>Statements</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Male</i>					
1	4	13	5	3	0
2	4	15	3	3	0
3	6	13	3	3	0
4	0	8	8	9	0
5	1	5	6	11	2
6	0	1	6	12	6
<i>Female</i>					
1	10	28	6	0	1
2	9	27	7	2	0
3	6	31	6	2	0
4	0	7	20	17	1
5	2	2	10	30	1
6	2	1	7	23	12

The present study indicates that in general, female and male school teachers have positive attitudes towards e-learning though among female school teachers, the neutral attitude surpasses positive and negative attitudes. Specifically on the question of the *complexity of e-learning*, male and female school teachers show neutral attitudes towards the same. Overall, the study shows positive inclinations toward e-learning by male and female school teachers.

### ***Potential for E-learning Arunachal Pradesh***

Both open-ended and closed-ended questions were administered to understand the necessity and potential of e-learning in Arunachal Pradesh. Whereas open-ended questions draw the teacher's views on adopting e-learning, closed-ended questions, on the other hand, emphasise specific

areas i.e., *necessity of e-learning training, willingness to adopt e-learning, teacher's support of e-learning*, etc.

Our findings show that the majority of the school teachers find that adopting e-learning in Arunachal Pradesh is not feasible primarily due to poor internet/network facilities in several areas (both rural and urban) of the state. Most respondents (91.4%) were willing to opt for e-learning in order to ease and boost the teaching-learning process given the condition that school teachers must be properly trained on the utilization of ICT and e-learning. Similarly, a majority (95.7%) of school teachers realized that despite connectivity/network issues across the state, e-learning is the need of the hour in the state of Arunachal Pradesh and can be implemented partially (blended online-offline mode) if not fully.

With respect to *teachers' support of e-learning*, many of them (62.9%) were in favor of e-learning regardless of the issues and difficulties associated with it, whereas, some (27.14%) supported e-learning for other reasons. Few of them (10%) were not in their favor and believed that e-learning is taxing. Overall, about 90% of teachers in schools support e-learning.

### **Conclusion**

It is widely understood that e-learning is an important innovation in the present digital era and is coherently increasing in the field of education worldwide. The present study shows that the majority of the school teachers in Arunachal Pradesh are well aware of the notion of e-learning, including its various forms and modes. However, insufficient communication channels and a lack of experience in e-resources and ICT among school educators make it less feasible to implement e-learning programs. It may be noted that as technology advances, so also the process of teaching-learning should be. Considering these aspects, there is scope for the district administration and the government of Arunachal Pradesh to consider technological advancement as vital as the learning itself. Should education be prioritized and considered as the backbone of a society, proper equipment and enhancement of digital services be done in various parts of the state? No doubt, apart from the expansion of the curriculum in schools, more work possibilities must be created in the state to improve the economic situation of the populace which will consequently help the student community of the state to be at par with other students from across the country. Few schemes can be initiated to enable students and teachers to get access to e-learning resources and other materials/

devices such as a laptop or, at the very least, a smartphone. Above all, since this is the foundation for utilizing e-learning, teachers and students must be technologically proficient.

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