

An Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis Approach Towards E-learning in Media Studies

Anwasha Sen¹ & Sushil Kumar²

¹ Research Scholar, School of Media and Communication Design, IMS Unison University, Dehradun, Uttarakhand, India

² Associate Professor, School of Media and Communication Design, IMS Unison University, Dehradun, Uttarakhand, India

Paper Number: 240004

Abstract: *There have been transformational changes across the Media Education industry especially after COVID-19 pandemic and the boom in E-learning platforms and skills. While Media studies have been a subject usually taught in classrooms (face to face learning), the recent changes in the education industry and the need for skill-based learning have given rise to students and teachers getting involved in e-learning. While courses are being available through platforms like Udemy, Coursera etc, colleges and universities also got involved in teaching courses in many different fields of media through the online course. While many studies were being done on students, research was necessary on the other stakeholders who are not only changing the industry but also were bringing in the change. The study aims to identify and understand the transformational changes in recent times and how e-learning has impacted the development of skills of students entering the Media industry in India using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). The study focused on important stakeholders in the e-learning industry, media academia and the media industry in India who are also part of the change. The research was conducted with 30 experts from the e-learning, media academia and media industry using semi-structured interviews for the collection of data and information. The conclusions were categorized under seven subheads referred to as “superordinate themes” based on the answers of the experts.*

Keywords: *E-learning, Online Learning, Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis, Media Studies, Media Education, Skill Development, COVID-19.*

1. Introduction

Education has always been important for students throughout the globe. Pupils have gotten their knowledge from ‘teachers,’ ‘educators’ and ‘gurus.’ As India pushes itself into the next millennium, it bears the burden of a large growing population (approx. 1.3 billion), which also includes a fast-growing young population. The last Indian census data also threw more light on the rapid

expansion in population. India now has a massive student population of more than 315 million. This includes not just the largest student body amongst all countries, but Indian students alone make for the fourth biggest country in the world, near the population of the United States of around 318 million. In slight contrast, China's student number is around 252 million according to UNESCO. This rise in young population has given rise to a boom in education all around. There has also been a quiet transformation in India when it comes to online education. With reduction in internet usage rates and growth in the overall consumption of smartphones, students are looking at websites and apps for help especially in times of the COVID pandemic. Also, people are creating content for online usage, including those with entrepreneurial interests in this area. India's internet users are set to cross 900 million (approx.) by 2023, this means that the usage of e-learning or otherwise, is only projected to increase. With an overall 62% internet penetration rate in India, e-learning entrepreneurs and education experts forecast that the next substantial change is going to take place in India. Researchers have estimated approximately 3 million students (about the population of Arkansas) are fully taking online learning for their higher education and the number is expected to rise. With the COVID pandemic, many students were forced and introduced to online learning. Overnight, students were learning through Zoom and Google Meet. Infact, since 2020, students in many parts of the world have only been studying online. They are not only conducting online classes but also undertaking certification courses from various platforms like Udemy, Coursera, Byjus, Simplilearn etc. Many reputed universities have also started giving online degrees like Amity and Manipal. Many more universities will follow suit.

Therefore, with the E-learning industry transforming the education system; it was empirical that exploratory studies should be undertaken to see the trends in the system. It is even more important to study these changes in students pursuing any type of Media course since Journalism and Mass Communication studies are heavily bridged with practical courses like Photography, TV production, Radio production etc. Effendi & Wahidy, 2019 mentioned that pupils in the 21st century are needed to have proficiencies in information, media, and technology, and learning capabilities, one of which is much needed creative thinking skills. Very few studies have been conducted over the importance and feasibility of taking online classes for such subjects in media and the role it plays in the skill development of students and requirements of the industry. Especially after COVID -19, the E-learning sector in India has seen transformative change and boom. While E-learning had been growing before the pandemic itself, contemporary trends have now emerged. Therefore, a qualitative approach through conducting interviews has been adopted to explore the trends

in a more in-depth manner. The exploratory study reveals several significant changes in the E-learning ecosystem spurred on by the growth in students enrolling in colleges and universities. Skill based learning has also increased after the Indian government has heavily invested in skills-based learning through MOOCS and the Skill India programme. This study supplies knowledge value to E-learning experts, academicians, and policy makers to understand the transformational changes and how E-learning has impacted the development of skills amongst students pursuing media studies. Therefore, it is essential to explore the need and importance of E-learning classes among Media students in India and its impact on skill development of students to understand the trends and develop E-learning techniques accordingly.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Definition and Scope of E-learning in India

Academicians have defined and described the idea of e-learning in myriad ways. E-learning is often described as education via the internet or a digital network that creates an augmented learning environment. As per **WR Hambrecht (2000)**, “E-learning covers a wide set of applications and processes including computer-based learning, web-based learning, virtual classroom, and digital collaboration.” E-learning played a vital part to play even before the COVID-19 pandemic because of simple access and how much data is open to understudies due to internet. However, after the pandemic, the role of e-learning has become almost unavoidable in our societies. Many e-learning start-ups and companies such as BYJUs and Unacademy are thriving and even becoming unicorns. However, in a country like India, internet connectivity and penetration are still a major challenge in the growth of the e-learning business, especially in rustic areas.

2.2 E-learning in Other Nations

All over the world, e-learning and its platforms is boosting students' knowledge. Academicians and professional and industry personally are also availing skills through the internet (**Adams et al. 2018; Chopra et al. 2019**). Most of the colleges and schools have fostered an E-learning website for their academic members (**Moore et al. 2011**). A lot of growth has been reported in the domain of e-learning in countries such as Malaysia (Alind), in the United States by **Edelson and Pittman (2001)**, Korea (**Park, 2012**), and in Denmark by **Rytkønen and Rasmussen (2010)**.

2.3 Advantages and Disadvantages of E-learning

E-learning builds the adequacy of information and abilities by empowering admittance to an enormous cache of data, upgrades cooperation and reinforces relationship-based learning. Neroni deduces in his 2015 research that e-learning upholds communication of a few sorts of items to be utilized anyplace, whenever,

and on numerous gadgets. Furthermore, e-learning is powerful for developing students' higher-order thinking skills, one of which is understudies' innovative reasoning abilities (**Redhana, 2019; Asmoro et al., 2020**). In another study by **Lancu et al. (2021)**, researchers found statistical improvement in knowledge and technical performances of non-surgical trainees after exposure to online modules. Notwithstanding, there are numerous disadvantages of e-learning. The most significant of which is getting information just on a theory and with regards to utilizing all those students have mastered without applying practical abilities and skills. **Maatuk, A.M et al; 2021** mentioned that the up close and personal opportunity for growth and learning is missing, which might intrigue numerous students and instructors. Ongoing research by **Jæger and Blaabæk(2020)** uncovers that pupil have inconsistent and unequal learning opportunities as a result of discrimination against better family facilities. **Beaunoyer, Dupéré, and Guitton (2020)** explored digital disparities during COVID-19 periods. As per **Somayeh et al. (2016)**, the primary disadvantage of utilizing e-learning is the shortfall of key individual cooperation, among scholars and educators as well as among individual students. Simultaneously, high internet tariffs are an impediment to online-classes (**Adam, Kaye, and Habler, 2020**). **Baticulon et al (2020)** recognized the deterrents to e-learning in five parameters: mechanical, individual, families, institutional and networks.

2.4 Role of E-learning during the pandemic

UNESCO in 2020 said that the closing of colleges and schools negatively affected students, by disrupting learning. This in turn led to students and youth being deprived of better opportunities for growth and development. Accordingly, online advanced learning frameworks can resolve this issue with simple admittance to physical systems provided there is no shortage of internet access. Presently, because of a lack of learning approaches, both students and teachers face many difficulties and troubles including mental issues. (**Alam, 2020; Bao, 2020**). Furthermore, **Aguilera-Hermida (2020)** found that during COVID-19, students missed the infrastructural support from the colleges, as they need admittance to libraries and labs. In this way, these elements arose as critical boundaries to web-based learning. Few studies have also unveiled similar findings, where the domestic environment was a hindrance in online learning during COVID-19 (**Baticulon et al., 2020**). The arrangement of content, for example, video and high-level apps is as yet another new aspect for some teachers (**Aljawarneh, 2020; Lara et al. 2020; Lizcano et al. 2020**).

3. Research Methodology

For this research study, a qualitative approach has been applied to explore and examine the E-learning trends among university students pursuing Media

education in the Indian context. The IPA method is used since it is flexible and useful for analysing people's experiences while they are living and breathing (**Smith, 1996**). This technique is derived from the essential principles of hermeneutics, phenomenology and ideography (**Smith et al, 2009**). Nowadays, modern researchers are using this technique to assess qualitative research investigations and translate their lived experiences or observations of people who have analogous (similar) experiences (**Alase, 2017**).

Researchers in this field recommends that limited and small homogenous sample sizes are used in IPA techniques to get data on the lived experiences of the chosen respondents. **Trede and Higgs, 2009; Alase 2017** mentioned that this sample size of respondents can traditionally be between two and 25 respondents. In this way, considering e-learning has boomed in growth in the last few years because of COVID and financing by worldwide financial backers, the current research utilises IPA method to gain profound understandings into trends of e-learning especially among experts who are working in the media, academia, e-learning industry or are media professionals.

3.1 Sampling

The study was conducted among 10 well known experts from the field of E-learning, 10 well known professionals from the Media Industry and 10 Media academicians from top media departments of Universities and Colleges. Therefore, a total of 30 experts were selected for the interview. Since IPA techniques were used, these experts were either working in the media industry, or were E-learning experts in organisations offering various media-based online courses. Well known media academics were also contacted to get a ground level understanding of the phenomenon. Purposive sampling techniques have been used in this IPA technique research; **Smith and Osborn, 2007 says "a homogenous and similar sample of participants with common features and experiences is needed, and all participants should have experienced more or less a familiar and similar phenomenon in their lives."** The respondents were selected after their profiles were analysed considering those who were working in organisations of repute.

3.2 Data Collection

The data was collected through interviews. (Due to COVID, virtual and telephonic interviews were conducted). Pen and paper were used to note important observations during the interviews. Few respondents gave their interviews through Google Meet, which was recorded and saved for transcribing. Due consent was taken for participation for both audio and video recordings for analysis. As said by researchers **Smith and Osborn (2007)**, open-ended questions are taken to gain understandings and insights for the aims of the study. Few questions enquired the role of e-learning in skill development of

media students pursuing university education, key driving factors in the adoption of e-learning of media students, how has COVID-19 pandemic impacted e-learning among media students pursuing university education, the main barriers of e-learning among media students pursuing university education, how impactful is e-learning on skill development of media students who are pursuing education at higher education level and what is the viewpoint of recruiters in terms of skills acquired by the students who have undertaken online education. In the IPA technique, the duration of the interview should vary between 60 and 90 mins; however, in this research, time varied between 30-45 minutes.

3.3 Data Analysis

As per suggestions of Smith (1996) and Smith and Osborn (2007), the steps of Data analysis were:

Step 1: The whole word for word records (interview records) was perused to acquire knowledge for investigating any arising topics on the patterns and trends in E-learning in the media industry.

Step 2: Exhaustive notes and data were gathered, and preliminary themes that appeared related to the trends in E-learning in the media industry were noted on the transcripts.

Step 3: The preliminary themes were edited, established, remedied, and written down separately in the verbatim transcripts. Further investigation was done to see the associations from groups based on the themes.

Step 4: The themes were grouped together and given a title based on similarities between them to produce a list of super-ordinate themes on trends in e-learning in the media education sector.

A table was drawn and composed on these superordinate themes and subtheme was prepared. The process was repeated again with the other data. To protect the anonymity of participants/contributors and to support confidentiality, aliases were given against them. Since experts had given their views and answers, detailed IPA techniques were used to name themes and show answers of the partakers as mentioned by **(Smith, 2011; Tracy 2010)**.

3.4 Findings and Discussion

This section talks about the outcomes of this study. It also gives the description of seven primary subordinate themes that was drawn from the analysis, which were:

As per suggestion of **Smith and Osborn (2007)**, both discussion and results have been compiled in this section given below:

Theme 1**Table 1****Role of E-learning for Media Students**

| Factors | Sample Answer |
|---|---|
| Interactive | <i>E-learning is very interactive. We have seen students develop their software editing skills or photography skills due to E-learning. They were able to learn in their own pace and join courses too where they could upload these assignments. Many software-based subjects are being learnt by media students.</i> |
| Enable to add content to classroom lecture | <i>We have seen it plays an important role as it adds to the knowledge base of the students. They want to learn more and are willing to explore more e-content nowadays available online.</i> |
| Future of education | <i>I think the future of learning is E-learning. No one can say they cannot study anymore online. Even foreign universities are coming and giving courses now to Indian students which shows there is a huge demand for such courses.</i> |
| Has momentum and improves skills of students | <i>I think e-learning is creating a lot of impact in our life, both for teachers and students. As a concept, it was developed long back and now it is getting a lot of momentum because of the COVID situation. It gives a lot of flexibility to study and e-content has a lot of visual appeal. It helps in improving the skills and capacity of students. Content can be accessed from anywhere, from your homes.</i> |

Response by experts: Experts felt that E-learning has a positive role to play for Media students in India. Most experts agreed that the future of education is e-learning with blended learning the new norm. Most experts agreed that it impacts skill development of media students since they can pursue many courses online. Also, social, and economic factors have a role to play in E-learning for media students.

Theme 2**Table 2****Factors facilitating E-learning among Media Students**

| Factors | Sample Answer |
|--|---|
| Social and Economic factors | <i>Social, economic, and a lot of issues are involved. I have studied in Uttarakhand and so I am aware of the problems there. The geographical location also plays a role. The level of adoption of technology in Chamoli could be different from that in Rishikesh and further, in metro cities, it could be totally different.</i> |
| Flexibility | <i>It gives a lot of flexibility to study and e-content has a lot of visual appeal. It helps in improving the skills and capacity of students. Content can be accessed from anywhere, from your homes.</i> |
| ICT development | <i>Initially it was the pandemic that drove the adoption. There are so many infrastructural developments that have taken place in this direction. So many learning management systems have been developed and over the years, cloud server storage and AI has also helped give a push to E-learning.</i> |
| Management Pressure | <i>As a teacher, we are just facilitators. Initiatives have to be taken by university or college administration. They have a very big role.</i> |
| Upskilled professors | <i>People who don't know about technological aspects of e-learning won't be able to hold good classes and won't be able to enforce discipline</i> |
| Upskilling oneself | <i>So many platforms have come up. A lot of people want to learn something that they wouldn't be able to learn even in a regular college. A lot of people now realise that the course content in colleges is not enough. Many students have realised that they can undertake foreign courses online. So many foreign establishments have started collaborating with E-learning platforms for certification courses. Upgrad has started a study online and a simultaneous foreign degree program. Such factors motivate students to explore online learning because of so many benefits.</i> |
| Cheap data and internet proliferation | <i>Most of the students have cell phones nowadays. The Internet is also not that expensive. Therefore, students in urban areas are able to access information and attend classes online easily.</i> |

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| along with handsets | |
| COVID Pandemic | <i>Students were definitely forced to adopt E-learning due to COVID lockdown</i> |

Response by experts: From the overall interview, experts felt that factors like social and economic status, flexibility of timings, ICT development along with management pressure were found to be facilitating media students to adopt E-learning practices. Few experts mentioned that they observed students using E-learning more especially after the COVID pandemic as they were forced to adopt these techniques due to closing of all schools and colleges and availability of cheap data and mobile handsets.

Theme 3

Table 3

E-Learning barriers among Media Students

| Factors | Sample Answer |
|---|---|
| Less penetration of internet and connectivity problems | <i>I think the major issues are related to connectivity. With advancements taking place and so many initiatives announced, I think this is one of the issues that will be improved.</i> |
| Less technological infrastructure | <i>I think the major issues are related to connectivity. With advancements taking place and so many initiatives announced, I think this is one of the issues that will be improved.</i> |
| Management doubts over e-learning viability | <i>As a teacher, we are just facilitators. Initiatives have to be taken by university or college administration. They have a very big role.</i> |
| Teachers with less exposure to e-learning platforms | <i>People who don't know about technological aspects of e-learning won't be able to hold good classes and won't be able to enforce discipline.</i> |
| Language barriers | <i>There is a lack of course material in Hindi or some regional languages spoken in the remote areas of Uttarakhand.</i> |
| Reluctance to adopt technology amongst local | <i>In Uttarakhand, first of all, we need universities and schools to develop different</i> |

| | |
|--|---|
| population | <i>programs for this state because here we can be more reliable on e-learning with more remote areas.</i> |
| Remote areas lagging with schools temporarily closed because of less Internet penetration | <i>Social, economic, a lot of issues are involved. I have studied in Uttarakhand and so I am aware of the problems there. The geographical location also plays a role. The level of adoption of technology in Chamoli could be different from that in Rishikesh and further, in metro cities, it could be totally different. Background training for students of Chamoli will also be different from that in Dehradun, which is another important factor.</i> |
| Less exposure to technology | <i>For states like Uttarakhand and the North East, as I said, exposure to technology is less. This is one of the main barriers. But with the proliferation of the Internet and YouTube, this is changing. While Dehradun is far better than other parts of the state of Uttarakhand, other regions are suffering in this respect.</i> |

Response by experts: Many experts felt that lack of internet connectivity was hindering the use of E-learning especially in rural areas. News reports were filled with stories of students who had to sit on top of a hut to access the network. Even teachers who were lacking E-learning skills were a barrier to students adopting E-learning. Language barriers were also a hindrance especially for students who did not have access to core English education. The experts have also noticed that there was reluctance among the students to adopt E-learning and many were forced only due to COVID.

Theme 4

Table 4

COVID Impact on E Learning

| Factors | Sample Answer |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Forced migration to e-learning | <i>Initially it was the pandemic that drove the adoption. There are so many infrastructural developments that have taken place in this direction. So many learning management systems have been developed and over the years, cloud server storage and AI has also helped give</i> |

| | |
|---|---|
| | <i>a push to e-learning.</i> |
| Tough adaptation to technology in the beginning of pandemic | <i>For e-learning, I think it has been a positive thing. However, people who were forced to adopt technology found it difficult in the beginning.</i> |
| New courses opening due to greater acceptance of e-learning in general after COVID | <i>Many new courses are opening up. I have also done a lot of workshops. How to develop a character, how to pick the right content for your channel and a lot of aspects of storytelling. I think these are very helpful.</i> |

Response by experts: COVID was found to have made an enormous impact on E-learning. Experts mentioned that there was forced migration to E-learning due to the pandemic. However, after COVID, students were adopting E-learning as their new courses started opening.

Theme 5

Table 5

E-learning for Media Students

| Factors | Sample Answer |
|--|---|
| Technical skills related to software easy to learn through e-learning | <i>In the case of media students, there are some technical skills based on software and visualisation skills that are needed to be developed. However, from that perspective, I think tools such as OBS are quite easy to learn through e-learning.</i> |
| Other technical skills difficult to hone through e-learning | <i>The drawback though is that hands on things like camera handling and recording in the studio for radio could become a problem.</i> |
| Interpersonal skills can't be acquired online | <i>There are so many things that are directly related to personality development which can only be improved through interpersonal interaction. This is the main drawback of e-learning. And PR is based on interpersonal skills.</i> |
| Skill development dependent on | <i>Most of the students are learning online during the pandemic. There are so many tutorials on various websites and the possibilities are vast. It depends on the student's capability</i> |

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| student's keeness | <i>and how much he can gain from these sources.</i> |
|--------------------------|---|

Response by experts: Since the curriculum of Media students are heavily reliant on developing and learning skills required for the industry. The experts mentioned that E-learning skills based on software was easy to learn since they just need a computer and Internet connection. However, many experts mentioned that it was difficult to hone skills like camera handling, developing interpersonal skills and other subjects which need the use of equipment and devices. Also learning online was dependent on students' keeness to learn.

Theme 6

Table 6

E-learning suitability for employers from the media industry

| Factors | Sample Answer |
|---|--|
| Lack of exposure/practical knowledge in general | <i>In terms of practical knowledge, I think they never got the exposure that students usually get from a media college. But a lot of people who even do regular courses, they realise that a lot of things are different from what they study online.</i> |
| E-learning can add extra, valuable information | <i>But, as far as the knowledge base is concerned, e-learning can add useful extra information. However, online can't be a substitute.</i> |
| Employers doubtful because of the newness of e-learning | <i>The volume of people wholly studying online has only increased since last year. I think we need to wait more before making any conclusions.</i> |
| Technical skills can be acquired more effectively through e-learning | <i>I think with respect to video editing, e-learning can be very helpful. Many new courses are opening.</i> |
| Fieldwork a necessity | <i>A large part of the work has shifted online and this is a medium that is going to stay. However, for journalism students, while online courses can equip them with theoretical knowledge, fieldwork is very important and that cannot be replaced with online learning. The skills need to be tested on the ground.</i> |

| | |
|--|---|
| E-learning helpful for software-based courses | <i>We have so many departments when it comes to production. I am involved with editing. So, I think with respect to video editing, e-learning can be very helpful.</i> |
| Lack of special, targeted programs or modules | <i>In certain states for example Uttarakhand, first, we need universities and schools to develop different programs for this state because here we can be more reliable on e-learning with more remote areas.</i> |

Response by experts: Many experts from the industry cited the fact that new entrants to the industry were not familiar with the equipment, especially those working in production houses. They mentioned that E-learning cannot be a substitute and can only be added on to physical classes. Many mentioned doubts about the new batch of students who have been exposed to only online learning due to the shutdown of colleges and universities. However, few mentioned that software based technical courses like editing etc can be learned online.

Theme 7

Table 7

E-learning continuation after pandemic

| Factors | Sample Answer |
|---|--|
| More content uploaded online after pandemic | <i>We are now in the habit of accessing e-content more but even before the pandemic, at least my students used to tell me about certifications they were getting online. Now, it is only going to rise because of the factors mentioned earlier, since it is so easy and more content is available online.</i> |
| More platforms available online after pandemic | <i>Absolutely. So many platforms have come up. A lot of people want to learn something that they wouldn't be able to learn even in a regular college.</i> |
| E-learning now a market demand/trend | <i>After the pandemic, e-learning in the field of media is a necessity but it is also a market demand.</i> |
| Less infrastructure needed with e-learning | <i>A lot of infrastructural cost was saved due to e-learning after the pandemic. E-learning is the future of medical education.</i> |

Response by experts: Experts have positively affirmed the fact that E-learning will play a key role even after the pandemic with schools and colleges reopening all over India. This is because students will want to keep upskilling themselves

and thus it will create a market demand. Students have realised that there is varied content online and will continue accessing them to further their careers.

4. Implications

4.1 Theoretical Implications:

The research considers all important stakeholders for the development of E-learning in the domain of Media studies. New courses should be developed keeping in mind the requirements of students who need to be taught skill-based courses. More e-content should be developed which is industry need-based. While software-based courses are popular, more changes need to be addressed for the PR and TV production industry. Also, this study has implications for educational policy makers too as COVID pandemic has created and brought into force the different problems students, e-learning experts, and academicians face.

4.2 Practical Implications:

The findings have practical implications for e-learning experts, media academicians, and media industry professionals. At the end of the day, a student getting hired based on the skills learnt through a e-learning course and to be able to sustain the job is a hallmark of success of the course. India is trying to implement skill-based learning so that more graduates can be hired. This study shows that some subjects in media can only be studied in a physical class. This study further highlights the needs and wants of the media industry in changing times and if and how e-learning has any impact on the skill development of media students. Even the concerns of potential recruiters need to be addressed instead of proliferating e-learning courses without understanding the employability and skill development of students. Connectivity and language issues also need to be addressed including management issues. However, experts say that students will continue accessing online education because of innumerable benefits.

4.3 Social Implications:

The current research holds ground for e-learning platforms as the online higher education and lifelong learning market in India is poised to reach \$5 billion by 2025 according to a new report. This shows that skills-based learning will grow and therefore, these concerns must be addressed especially for media students who constantly need to upgrade themselves and seek current trends and tools, apps and software that keep pouring into the market. More sophisticated trends and techniques should be implemented so that Media students do not feel unskilled especially in the areas like Digital Photography, TV, and camera handling etc. Even subjects like Public Relations which require strong interpersonal skills can only be developed in a social setting. Therefore, educational institutes and E-learning platforms should collaborate with each

other and develop strong and flexible learning experiences for students and teachers too by participatory pedagogical approaches.

5. Limitations and future scope

The study has some limitations. The present study focussed on the experts of Media and E-learning experts of Media studies. More such studies need to be conducted on students of Media education who are the beneficiaries of the system. The study did not tap into other domains of education and was also limited to experts with knowledge of higher education and the E-learning sector. Hence, the study lacks generalisation. The findings of the current study offer novel insights into trends in the E-learning sector with reference to Media education; therefore, researchers must explore the perspectives of students and speak to specialists in other disciplines and domains. This is even more important since newer courses are coming up with emphasis on skill-based learning which some may argue can only be learned through hands-on learning. Future stakeholders may use this data to develop comprehensive courses and address the issues to develop the role of E-learning in the media education sector.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the e-learning sector in Media studies is here to stay. The findings of the study clearly show that E-learning plays an especially key role in the dissemination of information among Media academia. However, experts feel that connectivity issues, less exposure in hilly areas and inability to develop targeted programs are an issue. However, COVID pandemic was cited by the experts as the biggest factor for promoting E-learning among students and teachers. Students were also attracted by the ease of getting certificate courses and degrees online, often from foreign universities. Many useful skill-based courses were also attractive for students to explore media-based courses online. COVID is a huge factor in changing trends in the media industry. While experts and teachers feel pressured to adapt E-learning techniques, students were seen to have been forced to learn E-learning at the beginning of the pandemic with reluctance. The Government of India has introduced the New Education Policy (NEP), to establish digital technologies for better learning outcomes. Therefore, it is imperative for all policy makers and stakeholders to build a solid infrastructure to develop and grow even though they can meet the challenges and adaptability across Media institutions and Media curriculum in all spheres. One issue that has cropped up with E-learning is that Media experts feel that since media studies are practical intensive, many students were found not to be adept in technical skills. Few experts feel that since it is a new phenomenon, a wait and watch approach needs to be undertaken. After the

pandemic also, experts feel that E-learning will grow and spread and blended learning will become the new norm.

References

- Adam, D. (2020). *Special report: The simulations driving the world's response to COVID-19*. *Nature*, 580(7802), 316-319.
- Adam, T., Kaye, T., & Haßler, B. (2020). *The Maldives and Sri Lanka: Question and Answer Session*. (EdTech Hub Helpdesk Response No 18) Available under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International.
- Adams, D., Sumintono, B., Mohamed, A., Noor, N.S.M.: *E-learning readiness among students of diverse backgrounds in a leading Malaysian higher education institution*. *Malaysian Journal of Learning and Instruction* 15(2), 227-256 (2018)
- Aguilera-Hermida, A.P. (2020), "College students' use and acceptance of emergency online learning due to COVID-19", *International Journal of Educational Research Open*, Vol. 1, p. 100011.
- Alase, A. (2017), "The interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA): a guide to a good qualitative research approach", *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies*, Vol. 5 No. 2, pp. 9-19.
- Aljawarneh, S. A. (2020). *Reviewing and exploring innovative ubiquitous learning tools in higher education*. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education*, 32, 57-73.
- American society for engineering education annual conference & expo, austin, TX AC, Vol. 1873 (2009), p. 2009
- Baticulon, R. E., Alberto, N. R. I., Baron, M. B. C., Mabulay, R. E. C., Rizada, L. G. T., Sy, J. J., Reyes, J. C. B. (2020). *Barriers to online learning in the time of COVID-19: A national survey of medical students in the Philippines*. medRxiv, 2020.2007.2016.20155747.
- Beaunoyer, E., Dupéré, S., & Guitton, M. J. (2020). *COVID-19 and digital inequalities: Reciprocal impacts and mitigation strategies*. *Computers in human behavior*, 111, 106424.
- Chopra, G., Madan, P., Jaisingh, P., Bhaskar, P.: *Effectiveness of E-learning portal from students' perspective: A structural equation model (SEM) approach*. *Interactive Technology and Smart Education* 16(2), 94-116 (2019).
- Ebner, M., Schön, S., Braun, C., Ebner, M., Grigoriadis, Y., Haas, M., ... & Taraghi, B. (2020). *COVID-19 epidemic as E-learning boost? Chronological development and effects at an Austrian university against the background of the concept of "E-Learning Readiness"*. *Future Internet*, 12(6), 94.

- Edelson, P. (2001). *E-learning in the United States: New directions and opportunities for university continuing education*. *Indian Journal of Open Learning*, 10(2), 123-134.
- Ferri, F., Grifoni, P. and Guzzo, T. (2020), "Online learning and emergency remote teaching: opportunities and challenges in emergency situations", *Societies*, Vol. 10 No. 4, p. 86
- Hambrecht, W. R. (2000). *Corporate E-learning: Exploring a new frontier*. Retrieved July 23, 2005.
- Jæger, M. M., & Blaabæk, E. H. (2020). *Inequality in learning opportunities during COVID-19: Evidence from library takeout*. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, 68, 100524.
- Lara, J. A., Aljawarneh, S., & Pamplona, S. (2020). *Special issue on the current trends in E-learning Assessment*. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education*, 32, 1-8.
- Maatuk, A. M., Elberkawi, E. K., Aljawarneh, S., Rashaideh, H., & Alharbi, H. (2021). *The COVID-19 pandemic and E-learning: challenges and opportunities from the perspective of students and instructors*. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education*, 1-18.
- Mailizar, M., Burg, D., & Maulina, S. (2021). *Examining university students' behavioural intention to use e learning during the COVID-19 pandemic: An extended TAM model*. *Education and Information Technologies*, 1-21
- Moore, J.L., Dickson-Deane, C., Galyen, K.: *E-learning, online learning, and distance learning environments: Are they the same?* *The Internet and Higher Education* 14(2), 129-135 (2011).
- Neroni, J., Gijsselaers, H. J., Kirschner, P. A., & de Groot, R. H. (2015). *The Adult Learning Open University Determinants (ALoud) study: Biological and psychological factors associated with learning performance in adult distance education*. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 46(5), 953-960.
- Park, K. A. (2012). *E-learning System in STI*, Statistics Korea: Statistical Training Institute, Statistics Korea. Workshop on Human Resources Management and Training in Statistical Offices, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, 05 - 07 September 2012. www.unece.org
- Rytkönen, M., & Rasmussen, P. (2010). *E-learning capacity at the East African STRAPA universities*. Copenhagen: University of Copenhagen / Faculty of Life Sciences (UC/LIFE), Denmark.)
- Smith, J.A. (1996), "Beyond the divide between cognition and discourse: using interpretative phenomenological analysis in health psychology", *Psychology and Health*, Vol. 11 No. 2, pp. 261-271.

Smith, J.A. and Osborn, M. (2007), "Pain as an assault on the self: an interpretative phenomenological analysis of the psychological impact of chronic benign low back pain", *Psychology and Health*, Vol. 22 No. 5, pp. 517-534.

Smith, J.A., Flowers, P. and Larkin, M. (2009), *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, Method and Research*, Sage Publication House, London.

Somayeh, M., Dehghani, M., Mozaffari, F., Ghasemnegad, S. M., Hakimi, H., & Samaneh, B. (2016). The effectiveness of E-learning in learning: A review of the literature. *International journal of medical research & health sciences*, 5(2), 86-91.

Sun, P.; Tsai, R. J.; Finger, G.; Chen, Y. and Yeh, D. (2008). *What Drives a Successful E-learning? An Empirical Investigation of the Critical Factors Influencing Learner Satisfaction*.

The provision of content such as video and advanced applications is still a new thing for many educators, even at the higher education level in developing countries (Aljawarneh, 2020; Lara et al. 2020; Lizcano et al. 2020

Trede, F. and Higgs, J. (2009), "Framing research questions and writing philosophically: the role of framing research questions", *Writing Qualitative Research on Practice*, Brill Sense, pp. 13-25.

W. Bao, COVID-19 and online teaching in higher education: A case study of Peking University, *Human Behavior and Emerging, Technologies*, 2 (2) (2020), pp. 113-115