



## Right To Education in the Digital World

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Date of Submission: 05-04-2023

Date of Acceptance: 17-04-2023

### Abstract

The Right to Education in India laid the foundation for the need of one and all, every child between 6 to 14 years of age, free and mandatory education as per the Ministry of Education, Government of India, Act no. 35 of The Right of children to free and compulsory education, Act, 2009. A joint venture of the Ministry of Education and the National Council for Education Research and Training (NCERT) severed the necessity to change the pattern of the Education System in India for the upcoming generation with the help of technologically oriented techniques that substantiated to be an innovative step towards Right To Education via Digitalization. Niti Aayog (National Institute for Transforming India) launched Project SATH-E (Sustainable Action For Transforming Human Capital Education), identified and built three 'role model' States in the education sectors, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, and Jharkhand which aimed for diagnostic education of school going children. SEI (School Education Quality Index) checked the various educational policies in India with standard replanned indices, those were restructured and reframed to foster the competitive, cooperative, strengths and weaknesses of the various Educational Policies in India and to culminate for a better version of Right To E-Education, initiating Digitalization of Education or E-Education. International Learning Platforms like UNESCO defined E-Education as 'Digital Learning in Transformation of Education and promoted various educational projects and programs across the world to foster learning. Educational Institutions all over the World leveraged Technology with Education at various levels even during the remote phase of COVID-19. Among the other Organizations, non-profit

Organizations such as European Council For Steiner Waldorf Education, facilitated 827 Steiner Waldorf Schools across 28 European Countries for free education in Europe at school levels, through E-Education, and was age-appropriate. European Union (EU), Geneva 2022, took the initiative along with the African Union (AU) for the Digital Transformation of Education in Africa for enhancement of Education. Thus Digitalization of education marked the era of the 21<sup>st</sup> century across the world in the Educational Industry where Information Literacy and Media Literacy collaborated for a successful Digital world of Education with a proper raga of enlightenment toward Knowledge, in the world of education.

### Educational Rights in India

The Right to Education in India laid the foundation for the need of one and all, every child between 6 to 14 years of age, free and mandatory education as per the Ministry of Education, Government of India, Act no. 35 of The Right of children to free and compulsory education, Act, 2009 (RTE Act- Right To Education, 2010). According to the Ministry of Education, Government of India (GOI), the Right to Education Act (RTE) of the Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) 2009 inserted Article 21-A which promised to provide free and compulsory education for all children in the age group of six to fourteen years of age, as the Fundamental Rights of the children, in such a manner as the State may, by law, determine its Right to Education ( RTE Act-Right To Education, 2010). The Rights of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) according to article no.35 of Act 2009 meant that every child has



the right to full-time elementary education of satisfaction and equitable quality education, irrespective of girl or boy, in formal schools that satisfy certain essential norms and regulations. The rules of this act stated that children between 6 to 14 years should receive admission to government schools which would facilitate education, free of cost to every child. The private schools should furnish 25% reservation to children from low-income strata, refraining them from any chargeable amount, appraised as fees. The Right To Education (RTE) Act in India, became effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 which emphasized one more important parameter, known as compulsory education. This compelled children coming from every society, to make them responsible for imparting compulsory education (Right To Education, 2010). The advisory body of the Government, Niti Aayog (National Institute For Transforming India, 2022) played a vital role in the smooth running of Sustainable Development Goal 4, Ministry of Education, Government of India, which reflected vital amendments for the proper functioning of the educational system in India to bring a revolution in the field of education (Niti Aayog, Education Performance, 2021-2022).

#### ***Niti Aayog's Endowment to Educational Upliftment***

Niti Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India), is the topmost public policy think tank of the Government of India, established in 2015, reports on catalyzing various issues such as the Economic, Finance, Health, and Education system (Niti Aayog Annual Report, 2021-2022). According to Niti Aayog, Quality Education is the basic foundation of Sustainable Development which correlates with the UN Sustainable Development Goal 4 of ensuring inclusive and equitable education for school-going children by 2030. Its initiative in monitoring and evaluating the project SATH-E (Sustainable Action For Transforming Human Capital in Education), was an innovative path for achieving and succeeding SDG 4 (Sustainable Development Goal) in India for the successful implementation of inclusive and equitable education. The project SATH-E aimed at diagnostic education of school-going children belonging to Odisha, Jharkhand, and Madhya Pradesh that needed large-scale improvement outcomes and suggestions for path-breaking reforms like school consolidation, teacher rationalization, a huge amount of learning enhancement programs to improve the quality of education systems (Niti Aayog Education Performance 2021-2022). School

Education Quality Index (SEQI), initiated by Niti Aayog, focused on evaluating the performances of States and UTs in the school educational sectors to put forth the outcomes of implementing the various educational policies, their strengths, their weaknesses, and amendments, if necessary. The SEQI Index provided information on the school educational status of the States and the UTs of India, depending upon its set of parameters for evaluation which consisted of Learning Outcomes, Access Outcomes, Infrastructure and Facility for Outcomes, and Equity Outcomes (Niti Aayog, Education Performance, 2021-2022). The New Educational system of India ensured that within a short period, SEQI indicators were checked, amended, and regulated, to obtain a better version of Education that formulated the fact that the Right to Education in India, showcased improvement in education and learning outcomes in the Reign of Digitalization.

#### ***Boon of Technology Emanating Digitalization of Education***

Technology can be defined as the application of scientific knowledge and techniques for the betterment of human life, bringing changes in the human environment, and upliftment of society with various inventory tools, reflecting instant technology (Technology, Britannica, 2023). UNESCO defined Education with Technology as E-Education or 'Digital Learning and Transformation of Education' applied for the betterment of the field of knowledge and education. Technology, being a driving tool for advancement in human life has deliberately proved to bring about significant changes in human societies in the past, right from pre-historic times such as the Invention of Stone Age Tools, Invention of Fire, the growth of the Human Brain, and the Evolution of languages during the Ice Age Period. Thereafter, the Invention of Wheels in the Bronze Age Period along with discoveries of more complex machines aided human life with the use of various multi-purposed technologies such as the printing press and telephones. The most prominent among them was the 'Digitalization' or use of the internet for all activities that facilitated and contributed massively to the boon of Technology for human beings (Wikipedia, Technology, 2023). Emanating Digitalization of Education promoted the worldwide availability of Quality Education, via Technology, accessing educational projects, and programs across the world that fostered E-Learning and which helped to address personal and professional challenges in the world of Education. Digitalization of Education



innovatively glorified education and transformed it towards the fulfillment of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 4) that facilitated and promoted education for universal quality of Learning, Strengthening, Administration, and proper Management of Education (E-Learning – UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2022-2023).

### ***Prerequisite For E-Education***

In the era of Technology, imparting education is almost impossible without the Digitalization of Education, which becomes the need of every child and forms the integral and impartial process of the efficient educational system for the Right to Education. Innumerable types of research revealed that there was an urgent need to change the pattern of the education system in India to face the various upcoming challenges of the future generation with the help of extensive knowledge, and full-fledged technologically oriented techniques. This was of utmost importance to meet the educational challenges for the future generation. The study was conducted in India by the National Achievement Survey of the Annual States of Educational Report, Government of India (2001) with a joint venture of the Ministry of Education and the National Council for Education Research and Training (NCERT) (Niti Aayog, Education Performance, 2021-2022). The report highlighted the fact for the urgent need for interventions in the field of education, aided with various innovative ideas and policies to be grounded at each level in different educational systems of India across various schools. Formation and formulation of new Educational Policies helped the upliftment of the educational system which was of utmost importance to meet the educational challenges for the future generation. Thus the New Education System of the Right to Education added to the Old System of Education, with the advent of Electronic Learning to provide, promote and facilitate pedagogy and indoctrination to every child, especially from the disadvantaged sections of society for the betterment of the future generation and hence a prerequisite for E-Education.

### ***Electronic- Learning, and India***

The New School System of Education includes classroom learning methods and online learning techniques of education. High-quality professionals and teachers are availed and hired not only for having mastery over the subject but also to have proficiency and knowledge of

computers and technology or Information Media Literacy for successful teaching of the subject involved in digital literacy progress and evolution in schools. It has been observed that Indirect media education is equally important to direct media education observed in schools where both provide crucial ground for a healthy environment of teaching and learning for the students. According to UNESCO, E-Education glorified itself with various innovative educational projects and programs aided with new tools and technologies that enabled people all over the world to come close and work collaboratively, thus exchanging their ideas, views, and knowledge about any particular subject. This mode of education has the potential to strengthen and reform new educational policies, thereby fulfilling the goals of SDG 4 for Universal Learning. This also leads to an enormous increase in access to high-quality knowledge of Education among the students aided with power-impacted technology, which was practically impossible prior and the world connected itself internally with higher proficiency. Digital transformation or Digital Education upgraded the teaching-learning processes where E-Education along with the Right to Education is used as a tool to upgrade the Education Systems of the world for enormous access to knowledge and fixing up the various upcoming challenges in the field of health, finance, economy, etc.

According to the report produced by Niti Aayog (Niti Aayog, Education Performance, 2021-2022), like other developing countries, India also faced challenges of exclusion, poverty, and inequality in education. But with the advent of digital technology amidst education, both in rural and urban India, it was observed that 65% of the population in rural areas has picked up the speed of the internet in the last few years. Digital devices reach every nook and corner of the country, resulting in ample access to the Right To Education, but rural people have less access to digital devices such as computers, tabs, mobiles, and smartphones, than the urban where the Digitalization of Education at times remains a standstill in extremely remote areas (Niti Aayog, Education Performance, 2021-2022). Access to the vast knowledge of education is only possible with the help of technology, reinforced in the particular field of education. Hence Digitalization of the Right To Education reframed various educational policies and pinpointed the improvement in learning outcomes, access to various educational programs via E-Learning, improvement in the infrastructure of the schools, and Equity and Right to Education for all. Thus, E-Learning in Indian School Systems,



formulated a raga of enlightenment toward knowledge, for the Right To Education.

#### **United Nations and European Union (EU) Reports on E-Education**

According to United Nations Report on E-Education, the attitude of E-Learning for the Right To Education, aimed at initiating Distant Education to every inhabitant of the world, free and Compulsory Qualitative Education. Digitalization of Education responded to the needs of every person for the betterment of technology in Education, as an empowering tool to gear up toward a brighter future and bring about enormous changes in the quality of education (E-Learning – UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2022-2023). European Council For Steiner Waldorf Education<sup>7</sup> which is an International non-profit Organization, succeeded in promoting 827 Steiner Waldorf Schools across 28 European Countries for free education in Europe at school levels, through Digitalization of Education, which was age-appropriate (ECSWE Education, 2022). UNESCO, part of the United Nations, stated that Educational Institutions leveraged Technology with Education at various levels and attempted to address the learning losses of children even during the remote phase of COVID-19. This method of education helped in enriching the children with knowledge even from remote and socially backward areas. To promote E-Learning, UNESCO established the Global Education Coalition for supporting learning with three central themes – gender equity in education, access to knowledge via E-Education, and imparting proper teachers for conducting online classes in rural and urban areas (E-Learning – UNESCO International Bureau of Education, 2022-2023).

According to the delegation of the European Union (EU) and other International Organizations in Geneva, in 2022, the African Union (AU) took a stand for the digital transformation of Education in Africa for improvement and access to Qualitative Education even from the marginalized sections of the society inclusive of women, girls, and people with special needs. This propaganda could be only fulfilled through various educational technologies by strengthening digital competencies to protect and promote the Right to Education, all over the world to have ample access to Education for reliable, affordable, and Inclusive Education through Digitalization (Realizing The Right To Education Worldwide through Digital Transformation, 2022). A few other prominent instances where the non-profit Organization played an important role were

USIDHR (The US Institute of Diplomacy and Human Rights), a top-rated non-profit think tank from the US, with its evidence of vigorous work in education across the globe that played a comprehensive role by furnishing E-Learning for the school-going children and upgrading their educational levels even during the pandemic of COVID 19 (USIDHR Annual Report, 2022). Thus Right to Education in the Digital World is a boon in the Educational Industry where the vast knowledge of bodies is generated, evaluated, discussed, and interchanged across the world for upgrading, enhancing, and creating an epitome of knowledge in the field of education.

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