

Role of DIKSHA and SWAYAM Platforms in Supporting Skill-Oriented Learning in Higher Education Under NEP 2020

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Abstract

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has introduced transformative reforms in the Indian education system with a strong emphasis on skill-oriented, multidisciplinary, and technology-enabled learning. The policy recognizes the need to equip students with practical competencies, digital literacy, critical thinking, and employability skills required in the twenty-first century. In this context, digital learning platforms such as SWAYAM and DIKSHA have emerged as significant tools for democratizing education and enhancing skill development. These platforms provide access to high-quality educational resources, online courses, vocational content, teacher training modules, and interactive learning opportunities. This paper examines the role of DIKSHA and SWAYAM in supporting skill-oriented learning in higher education under NEP 2020. It analyzes their features, contributions, opportunities, and challenges while highlighting their significance in promoting accessible, flexible, and learner-centered education. The study concludes that these platforms have become instrumental in achieving the objectives of NEP 2020 by bridging educational gaps and fostering lifelong learning.

Keywords: NEP 2020, DIKSHA, SWAYAM, Skill Development, Higher Education, Digital Learning, Online Education, Employability.

Introduction

The rapid advancement of technology and the emergence of a knowledge-driven economy have significantly altered the requirements of higher education. Traditional education systems that primarily focused on theoretical knowledge are no longer sufficient to meet contemporary workforce demands. Students today require practical skills, digital competencies, problem-solving abilities, and entrepreneurial thinking to succeed in professional environments.

Recognizing these changing needs, the Government of India introduced the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which seeks to transform education through flexibility, multidisciplinary learning, and skill development. One of the central goals of the policy is to create an educational ecosystem that promotes employability and lifelong learning.

Digital platforms have become crucial in realizing these objectives. Among the most important initiatives are DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing) and SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring

Minds). These platforms provide learners with access to quality educational content regardless of geographical location and socio-economic background. They support online learning, skill acquisition, teacher development, and vocational education, thereby contributing significantly to the implementation of NEP 2020.

National Education Policy 2020 and Skill-Oriented Learning

NEP 2020 emphasizes the integration of academic knowledge with practical skills. The policy advocates a holistic and multidisciplinary approach that enables learners to acquire competencies relevant to modern industries and society.

Key objectives of skill-oriented learning under NEP 2020 include:

1. Promoting vocational education from early stages of learning.
2. Enhancing employability and entrepreneurial capabilities.
3. Integrating technology into teaching and learning processes.

4. Encouraging critical thinking, creativity, and innovation.
5. Facilitating lifelong learning opportunities.
6. Expanding access to quality education through digital platforms.

The policy recognizes digital technology as a powerful instrument for achieving educational inclusion and excellence. Consequently, platforms such as DIKSHA and SWAYAM play a strategic role in fulfilling these goals.

Overview of DIKSHA Platform

DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing) is a national digital education platform developed by the Ministry of Education. It provides digital resources, learning materials, teacher training programs, assessment tools, and interactive content for students and educators.

Originally designed to support school education, DIKSHA has expanded its scope to facilitate skill-based learning and digital education initiatives across different educational levels. The platform is available through web and mobile applications, enabling learners to access content anytime and anywhere.

Major Features of DIKSHA

Digital Learning Resources

DIKSHA offers a vast repository of educational materials, including:

- E-books
- Videos
- Interactive lessons
- Practice exercises
- Assessments
- QR-code-enabled textbooks

These resources support self-paced learning and help learners acquire practical knowledge.

Teacher Professional Development

Teacher quality directly influences educational outcomes. DIKSHA provides online training modules, certification programs, and professional development courses that help educators adopt innovative teaching methods and technology-enhanced pedagogy.

Multilingual Accessibility

The platform provides content in multiple Indian languages, making education accessible to diverse

learner populations. This aligns with NEP 2020's emphasis on inclusivity and linguistic diversity.

Personalized Learning

DIKSHA supports individualized learning experiences through adaptive content and learner tracking mechanisms. Students can progress according to their learning pace and interests.

Digital Assessment

The platform includes assessment and feedback tools that enable continuous monitoring of learner performance and skill acquisition.

Contribution of DIKSHA to Skill-Oriented Learning

Development of Digital Literacy

Digital literacy is one of the most essential skills in the modern world. Through online learning tools, multimedia resources, and digital assessments, DIKSHA enhances students' technological competencies and digital engagement.

Self-Directed Learning

The platform promotes independent learning by allowing students to access educational content according to their needs. Learners become active participants in the educational process rather than passive recipients of information.

Capacity Building of Educators

Teachers trained through DIKSHA can effectively integrate skill-based activities into classroom instruction. This improves the quality of skill-oriented education and encourages innovative teaching practices.

Inclusive Learning Opportunities

Students from remote and underserved regions gain access to quality educational resources, thereby reducing educational disparities and promoting equitable learning opportunities.

Continuous Learning Environment

The platform supports lifelong learning by enabling users to continuously update their knowledge and skills beyond formal educational settings.

Overview of SWAYAM Platform

SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds) is India's national online education platform designed to provide free

access to high-quality courses from leading institutions.

The platform hosts Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) developed by renowned universities, colleges, and educational organizations. Learners can enroll in courses covering various disciplines, including science, technology, management, humanities, vocational education, and professional development.

SWAYAM represents a significant step toward achieving equitable access to quality higher education.

Major Features of SWAYAM

Extensive Course Offerings

SWAYAM provides thousands of courses across multiple disciplines. Learners can choose courses based on their academic interests and career aspirations.

Flexible Learning

Students can access course materials at their convenience, enabling them to learn without the constraints of traditional classroom schedules.

Credit Transfer Facility

NEP 2020 encourages academic flexibility through credit transfer mechanisms. SWAYAM courses can contribute to academic credits under approved institutional frameworks.

Expert-Led Instruction

Courses are developed and delivered by faculty members from prestigious institutions, ensuring high academic standards and quality learning experiences.

Certification Opportunities

Learners can earn certificates after successfully completing courses and assessments, enhancing their academic profiles and employability.

Contribution of SWAYAM to Skill-Oriented Learning

Enhancing Employability Skills

SWAYAM offers courses focused on communication, entrepreneurship, digital technologies, data analysis, project management, and professional development. These skills are highly valued in contemporary labor markets.

Supporting Vocational Education

The platform includes vocational and industry-oriented courses that align with NEP 2020's

objective of integrating vocational education into mainstream learning.

Encouraging Lifelong Learning

SWAYAM facilitates continuous skill enhancement by enabling learners to update their knowledge throughout their careers.

Bridging Industry-Academia Gaps

Industry-relevant courses help students understand current professional requirements and develop competencies demanded by employers.

Promoting Multidisciplinary Learning

Students can enroll in courses beyond their primary field of study, encouraging interdisciplinary learning and broader intellectual development.

DIKSHA and SWAYAM in the Context of NEP 2020

NEP 2020 emphasizes flexibility, accessibility, multidisciplinary education, and skill development. Both DIKSHA and SWAYAM contribute significantly to achieving these objectives.

Access and Equity

The platforms ensure that quality educational resources reach learners across geographical and socio-economic boundaries. This supports the policy's goal of democratizing education.

Technology Integration

Both platforms demonstrate effective use of digital technology in teaching, learning, assessment, and professional development.

Academic Flexibility

SWAYAM's credit-based courses and DIKSHA's self-paced learning resources provide flexibility that aligns with the learner-centric approach advocated by NEP 2020.

Skill Development

Through vocational courses, professional training modules, and competency-based content, these platforms facilitate the acquisition of practical skills necessary for employment and entrepreneurship.

Lifelong Learning

The platforms support continuous education and reskilling, enabling individuals to adapt to evolving economic and technological environments.

Challenges in the Effective Utilization of DIKSHA and SWAYAM

Despite their significant contributions, several challenges affect the effectiveness of these platforms.

Digital Divide

Many students in rural and economically disadvantaged regions face limited access to internet connectivity and digital devices, restricting their participation in online learning.

Technological Literacy

Some learners and educators lack sufficient digital skills to fully utilize online educational resources.

Language and Content Gaps

Although multilingual resources are expanding, there remains a need for more localized and specialized content across diverse disciplines and skill areas.

Learner Motivation and Retention

Online courses often experience lower completion rates due to limited learner engagement, self-discipline challenges, and lack of direct supervision.

Assessment and Skill Validation

Practical skills sometimes require hands-on experiences that are difficult to assess entirely through online platforms.

Infrastructure Constraints

Educational institutions require stronger technological infrastructure and support systems to effectively integrate digital learning into mainstream education.

Recommendations

To maximize the contribution of DIKSHA and SWAYAM toward skill-oriented learning under NEP 2020, several measures can be adopted:

1. Improve digital infrastructure in rural and remote regions.
2. Expand affordable internet access and device availability.
3. Develop more industry-oriented and vocational courses.
4. Strengthen collaboration between educational institutions and industry partners.
5. Enhance multilingual content and localized learning materials.

6. Introduce advanced interactive learning tools such as simulations and virtual laboratories.
7. Provide continuous digital literacy training for students and educators.
8. Improve learner support systems to increase course completion rates.
9. Strengthen assessment mechanisms for practical skill evaluation.
10. Promote awareness regarding the educational opportunities available through these platforms.

Conclusion

The implementation of NEP 2020 has accelerated the integration of technology and skill development within India's higher education system. DIKSHA and SWAYAM have emerged as transformative digital platforms that support the policy's vision of inclusive, flexible, and skill-oriented education. By providing accessible learning resources, professional development opportunities, vocational training, and multidisciplinary courses, these platforms contribute significantly to enhancing employability and lifelong learning.

While challenges related to digital access, infrastructure, and learner engagement persist, the continued expansion and improvement of these platforms can strengthen India's educational ecosystem. As higher education increasingly embraces digital transformation, DIKSHA and SWAYAM are likely to play an even greater role in preparing learners for the demands of the knowledge economy and the future workforce. Their contribution represents an important step toward achieving the broader goals of quality, equity, and excellence envisioned by NEP 2020.

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