

# UNIVERSITIES' DIGITAL ADVANCEMENT IN WORKPLACE CULTURE

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## Abstract

Digitalization is continuously and dynamically changing the way consumers utilize various services including higher education. In fact, it has become an integral part of higher education. The expectations of the students of digital generation have increased. They use electronic books, electronic reports and number of other electronic resources. In this era, they gain almost every information related to their education in seconds through online sources. Therefore, the integration of technology and education provides a way for universities to provide better knowledge at lesser cost and in effective and efficient manner for students in the advanced digital environment.

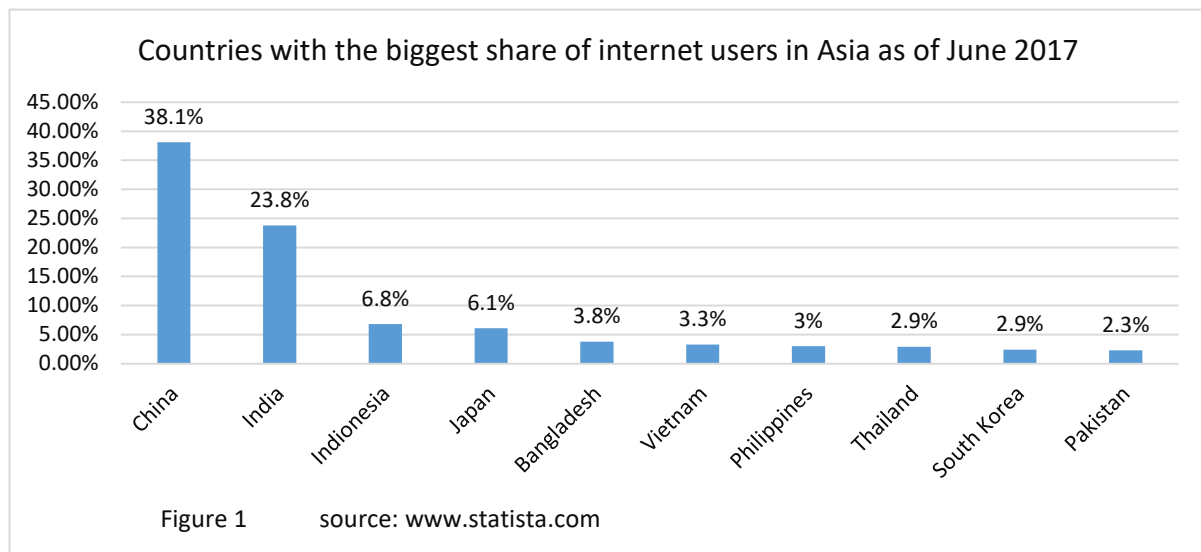
In the light of digitalized era, the present paper focuses on a qualitative approach to study the need, challenges and future prospects of promoting sustainable growth through the introduction of digitalization in the workplace culture of universities.

**Keywords:** universities, digitalization, workplace culture, digitalized workplace culture

## Introduction

Digitalization is continuously and dynamically changing the way consumers utilize various services including higher education. Digitalization has already made its way in earlier 1990s (Kahlon, 2009). Digitalization is a tool that transform the information into digital format which is accessible to number of stakeholders at one point. Internet and Communication Technology has turned the whole world into a single community. Number of internet users are increasing at fast pace. India is at second place after China in terms of number of internet users. Figure 1 shows the percentage of internet users in Asian countries. Large number of internet users in India provides an opportunity for promoting digitalization in the country. Digitalization has been gained a lot of importance in the boundaries of India. Three years ago i.e. on 1 July, 2015 Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi launched a campaign named “Digital India”. The aim of this movement includes three components: to increase digital literacy, to develop secured and speedy digital infrastructure and to provide the government services digitally to the citizens of the country.

Digitalized workplace culture plays notable role in the operational activities of every organization. Culture means ideas, ethos and beliefs of a particular social group which has inordinate influence on the behavior of that group. Integration of digitalization in workplace culture of a particular organization will result into digitalized workplace culture where information is accessible to employees in seconds with the use of digital devices. According to Step Two,” the digital workplace consists of a holistic set of tools, platforms and environment for work, delivered in a coherent, usable and productive way.” Any change in workplace culture of an organization requires strenuous efforts on the part of management of that organization. Sometimes, employees resist to adopt new culture. Therefore, management has to inspire its employees to adopt novel culture in their organization. Similarly, if a university wants to promote digitalized culture while ensuring sustainable growth, it has to make a lot of efforts to create an urge among its stakeholders to adopt such culture.



Education is a basic requirement which is necessary to achieve the development goal of a nation (Tiwari, 2013). It provides different ways by which individual's talent is developed which ultimately leads to bringing desired improvements in fast changing environment.

Universities build a nation by polishing the youth of that nation. Higher education is usually assumed to cover teaching and research. If we critically investigate the various concepts of higher education, we will find number of roles played by higher education in the society. Higher education is a foundation of all the sectors of a nation as it supplies human capital in every sector (Shrivastava, 2014). A large number of higher education institutions are available throughout the world for supplying knowledge. In India, there are 47 central universities, 367 state universities, 123 deemed universities and 282 private universities. According to latest report on All India Survey on Higher Education, there are about 39701 colleges in India. These higher education institutions impart knowledge to Indian students as well as foreign students.

Digitalization has changed the way of learning. Digitalized workplace has gained its importance in every sector as it is helpful for employees to get processed information efficiently and effectively. Technology has also entered in the sector of

higher education. Digitalization in terms of tertiary education means institutions should create knowledge that is virtually accessible (Wikramanayake, 2005). The digitalized education has created new options of teaching, has added variety of new courses and has led to surge in enrollments in many universities (Kulkarni, 2013). In this era, academic institutions can satisfy their stakeholders only by bringing digitalization in their workplace culture. In the light of digitalized era, the present paper focuses on a qualitative approach to study the need, challenges and future prospects of promoting digitalization in the workplace culture of universities.

### **Revolution through Digitalization in Workplace Culture of Universities**

Globalized digitalization has brought revolution in the management of all the sectors including higher education. Digitalization has been embedded in higher education with the effect of raising expectations of students of digital generation. In the era of Information and Communication Technology, updated version of knowledge has been brought in education system which is accessible to everyone and in any part of the world (Joshi & Patel, 2016). It has become challenging for academic institutions to survive without adopting digitalized culture. Culture plays an important role in the decision making of every organization. Administrators are aware that they can take some action in a particular organization but they cannot take the same action in others. This is the reason of cultural variations among various organizations (Tierney, 1988). Shifting from traditional culture to digitalized culture also requires a lot of efforts on the part of institutions. Besides this, they have to promote digitalization to satisfy the community of students of digital era. They can promote digitalized workplace culture through adoption of electronic learning/teaching, electronic libraries and electronic governance.

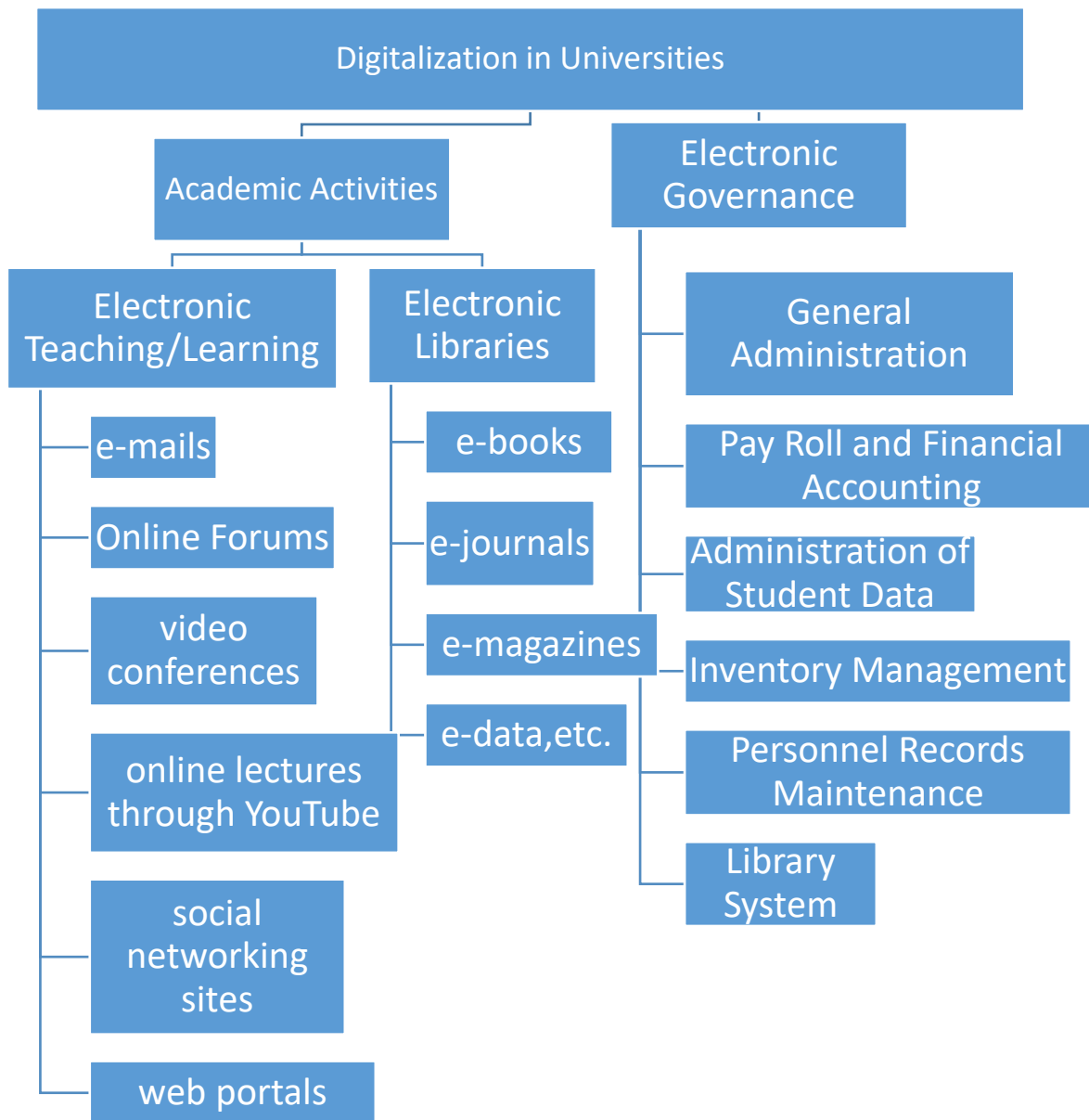


Figure 2

**Electronic Learning/Teaching:**

Teaching and learning methods are changing with the passage of time. Figure 3 shows different methods of learning. Electronic learning/teaching involves the use of electronic devices like computers, laptops, mobile phones to learn or teach something new. The present era involves increasing trend of e-learning among the students of this generation. E-learning is possible only if its users have knowledge about digitalized technologies. Number of academic institutions provide e-classes

through videos, Skype and U- tube technologies. Many other tools that are used by institutions to provide e-material includes e-mails, blogs, web portals, video conferences, social networking websites and learning portals (Joshi & Patel, 2016). So if an institute wants to survive in this competitive era, it is essential for it to develop such a digitalized culture which can even help the students belonging to rural areas who can't afford to take admission and attend classes. This type of digitalization in higher education is not only beneficial for universities but for the whole country as it is helpful in providing knowledge to those who otherwise would not afford to get costly education. It must be taken into consideration that management of different institutions should use both traditional approach of learning and electronic learning and teaching (Mbengo,2014). Only this type of blended learning approach will provide a way to universities to serve their consumers well.

Method	Teacher	Student
Verbal explanations	Dictate	Listen and copy
Writing during class	Blackboard / whiteboard & Chalk / Pen	Copy notes
Pre-written transparencies	Overhead Projector	Copy notes
Pre-prepared slides	Multimedia projector & computer	Printed material
e-learning	Provide learning material	Learn through participation

**Source:** Wikramanayake, G.N. (2005)

Figure 3

### Electronic Libraries:

Higher education libraries will decrease in terms of size as not all institutions have sufficient space to store large number of books (Kahlon & Tse, 2009). Digitalization provides a way to keep large quantity of e-content. E-libraries are the collection of digitalized objects. These digitalized objects may be electronic books, e-journals, e-magazines and many more electronic data which can be used by the consumers of

higher education. The concept of digitalization of libraries has gained momentum as digitalized objects are considered as long-lasting stable resources. With the help of digitalized libraries, students can access electronic resources from every nook and corner. In the early years, digitalization of libraries involve huge cost but in this era, infrastructure cost of digitalization has been reduced with the increase in expertise and with the developments of softwares like DSpace and GSDL (Mittal & Mahesh, 2008). This has made easy process of digitalization of libraries for universities as compared to earlier.

### **Electronic Governance:**

E-governance is a practice of information and communication technology to bring transparency and efficiency in the operations of an organization. In simple words, e-governance means delivery of services and information through electronic means. Stakeholders of higher education require variety of information. Higher education institutions provide information about their mission, vision, admissions, fees, curriculum, results, development services, infrastructure, budgets, annual reports, information about research and development, etc. through their web-portals which brings transparency in the operation of institutions. (Shrivastava, Raizada & Sexana; 2014) points out following areas suggested by (Ben-Zion Barta et. al. 1995) where computer can be used for the effective management of student administration system:

- General Administration
- Pay Roll and Financial Accounting
- Administration of Student Data
- Inventory Management
- Personnel Records Maintenance
- Library System

Students can use e-governance system to solve their queries regarding admissions, results, etc. which will increase enrollments in institution. Moreover, it is helpful for educational institutions for NAAC accreditation.

### **Necessity of Digitalized Workplace Culture in Universities**

Educated human capital is a great asset of every country. Due to stiff competition, the demand for knowledge workers has been increased in this knowledge based economy. Physical space of universities is limited to full time students only. But there are number of students who acquire knowledge through e-learning programs. Digitalization also allows to provide information about administrative activities to the stakeholders of higher education. In order to improve the quality of higher education system, the introduction of digitalized workplace culture is necessary (Shrivastava, Raizada & Sexana; 2014). Digitalized workplace culture is not only helpful in efficient learning and teaching but it also provides a way for administrators of institutions to administrate the operations in progressive way and to provide solution to the current demands of stakeholders in better ways.

### **Challenges for Promoting Digitalized Workplace Culture in Universities**

The process of promoting digitalized workplace culture in universities involves person-specific issues and institution specific issues. Technological developments are taking place at very fast pace but human ability to adopt these changes requires time (Rosenblit, 2006). Digitalization promotes independent acquisition of knowledge and any other required information but instructors have to constantly motivate those information seekers to use digital means who resist to use these devices. People resist to use digitalized devices due to lack of expertise and knowledge of digital technology. Other factors like technical problems, continuous learning also discourage people to adopt digitalized culture. These are the person-specific issues that create hurdles for institutions to promote digitalized culture. Further, there are also institution-specific issues that possesses challenges to promote digitalized culture. Most of the institutions have lack of infrastructure and human resources to



promote digitalized workplace culture. Moreover, many institutions resist to adopt this new culture as it is add-on function in higher education and it does not replace teaching/learning practices prevailing in the institutions.

Global digitalization is driving folks to become lifelong learners which provides a big opportunity to universities. Digitalized workplace culture will keep universities in touch with its stakeholders and build long-lasting relationships with students which is crucial for success of an academic institution.

### Conclusion

In digitalized age, it is essential for universities to convert their workplace culture into digitalized workplace culture. Institutions have adopted digitalization in their culture to some extent but it is still at emerging stage. Universities cannot adopt digitalization through a single step. It is a continuous process. It depends upon universities to take the advantage of digital capabilities to provide solution to the demands of digital generation.

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