

A SURVEY REPORT ON AWARENESS AMONG LIS PROFESSIONALS/STUDENTS ABOUT SWAYAM: A GOVERNMENT OF INDIA INITIATIVE ON E-LEARNING

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Abstract: - *MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) is a popular platform now a day with the advancement of internet, India is not also an exception. As a result of that, SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active-learning for Young Aspiring Minds) programme was initiated by Government of India. The objective of the programme is to take the best teaching learning resources to all with no costs. To enquire the awareness among LIS professionals/students about SWAYAM and the popularity of SWAYAM, an online survey has been conducted among Library and Information Science (LIS) professionals and students using social media platforms. The results show that most of the professionals/students are interested in SWAYAM and most of them are registered for the LIS courses available in it. It also shows that they prefer video lectures and digital library course. Further, the results reveal that the numbers of LIS courses are less in number with respect to other courses. The paper concludes that more awareness is required and more LIS courses should be added..*

Keywords : E-learning, LIS courses, LIS education, LIS professional, MOOCs, SWAYAM.

1. Introduction

In India, MOOCs platform was first started by IIT Bombay, Mumbai. According to a study it is seen that students from India being the second largest in terms of enrolment in MOOCs after US. So, more and more students from India are looking forward to utilize the MOOCs. As a result of that, SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active-learning for Young Aspiring Minds) programme was initiated by Government of India. The objective of the

programme is to take the best teaching learning resources to all. SWAYAM platform is developed by Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) with the help of Microsoft. Currently, it is in developing stage covering various courses include school, certificate, diploma, under-graduate, post-graduate courses. In future, they're going to introduce engineering, law and other professional courses.

2. Background

SWAYAM is a web based and mobile based platform. It coverage is from school level to post graduate level. The SWAYAM platform is specifically designed benefit students from remote/backward area, working professionals, college dropouts. Government of India started SWAYAM for the benefit of students/researcher/faculties. It is growing day by day as UGC started credit programme through SWAYAM. Its courses cover four quadrants like e-content, e-tutorial, web resources, and self-assessment. Presently seven hundred and fifty four programs have been initiated. Out of which forty five programs under school category, fifteen certificate programs, twenty nine diploma programs, three hundred and eighty six undergraduate programs and two seventy nine post graduate programs are in progress. SWAYAM will provide great opportunity to Indian students to learn without fearing from failure.

3. Literature review

- According to Kaveri et al. (2016), “The strength of SWAYAM lies in its qualitative evaluation systems as well as recognition of credits, equity of access and affordability. Traditional HEIs have a clear edge over global MOOCs and SWAYAM in terms of long term impact on citizen and society building and shaping individual opinions”.

- According to Kanjlal (2016), “Mainstreaming the SWAYAM initiative with the formal education system will go a long way in realizing the dream of the nation in universal access of education. With appropriate planning and implementation, SWAYAM can play a pivotal role in Digital India and Skill India missions of the government of India”.
- According to Bharti (2014), “SWAYAM is a platform for new India where quality education is affordable and self-learning is fruitful not only for enrolled but also for professionals and dropouts. With quality content, best online lectures, great discussions, knowledgeable assessment quizzes, SWAYAM will provide great opportunity to Indian students to learn without fearing from failure.”

So, from here we can predict that SWAYAM has a great future indeed. Now what is the view point of library professionals about SWAYAM? How much it will benefit us? What are the areas to be developed? So, from the view point of a library professional a study is required to find the solution of above mentioned questions.

4. Objective of the study

The objective of the study is to know

- The popularity of SWAYAM.
- The awareness among LIS professionals/students about SWAYAM.

- Most interesting teaching process of SWAYAM.
- Recommendations for improvement of SWAYAM.

5. Methodology

An online survey was conducted among LIS professionals/students about the awareness of SWAYAM following a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was made using Google Form. The questionnaire link was distributed through social networking sites and platforms like (Lislink, Lis forum, different LIS groups in Facebook, different LIS groups in WhatsApp, Twitter, and LinkedIn etc.). The social media platform has been selected because LIS professionals and students of LIS are mostly connected with social media to each other. So, it is expected to get more response in least time. As a whole, total 125 responses were received and most of them are library professionals.

6. Limitations of the study

Due to lack of time only online survey methods have been used. All the respondents have not responded all the answers correctly. Though the online questionnaire was distributed among so many group of professionals and students, but received very few number of responses.

7. Results and analysis

7.1 Gender:

It is seen that most of the respondents are Male (64.8%). The female respondents are not very less in percentage (35.2%).

Table 1: No. of respondents

	Number	Percentage
Male	81	64.8
Female	44	35.2
Total	125	100

7.2 Designation:

The online survey questionnaire was distributed among LIS field related professionals only and the results show that most of them are Library Professionals (56%) and Students of LIS (19.2%). Teachers are also there with 17.6%.

Table 2: Designation of the respondents

	Number	Percentage
Library Professionals	70	56
Students of LIS	24	19.2
Teachers of LIS	22	17.6
Researcher	9	7.2
Total	125	100

7.3 Minimum qualification:

It is seen that the minimum qualifications of the respondents have Master’s Degree (48%) in LIS and some of them have also higher degree like MPhil (15.2%), and PhD (17.6%). So, it is clear that most of the respondents are well educated.

Table 3: Educational qualifications of the respondents

	Number	Percentage
Bachelors	24	19.2
Masters	60	48
MPhil	19	15.2
PhD	22	17.6
Total	125	100

7.4 Do you know about MOOCs (Massive open online courses):

The result shows that 70% of the respondents are aware of MOOCs .The reason may be most of the respondents have studied about MOOCs in their LIS syllabus and some of them also participated in MOOCs.

7.5 Have you heard about SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active-learning for Young Aspiring Minds)?

This study shows that almost (66%) have heard about SWAYAM. This indicates that it is a successful initiative from Government of India. The promotion of SWAYAM was not a big event. But as we moving towards digital India, everybody now a day’s aware of online events.

The LIS professionals are also not an exception. They grabbed the opportunity and try to learn new things.

7.6 Are you interested in SWAYAM?

The results show almost everybody is interested in SWAYAM (98%). This interest reflects that there is a massive movement from conventional courses to online ICT based study. Due to lack of time and other constraints most of them specially working professionals prefers online courses.

7.7 Have you seen the courses available in SWAYAM?

About 68% of the respondents are aware about the courses available in SWAYAM. This means that LIS professionals are aware of the present e learning scenario in India.

7.8 Have you registered for any courses in SWAYAM?

It is observed that 72.4% of the respondents are registered for different courses in SWAYAM. So, it shows that LIS professionals are also interested in other courses, specially in IT related courses.

7.9 Have you seen the courses available on LIS in SWAYAM?

About 63% of the respondents are registered for LIS courses in SWAYAM. This implies that they eager to learn new things and as it is online and free of cost so, most of them are interested in doing this courses. This can be predicted that library professionals are interested in SWAYAM, the reason may be that they wants to learn new techniques as well as they will get certificates

from these courses, which will lead to promotion from their current position.

7.10 Which course is most interesting including LIS?

It is observed that Digital Library is most interesting course among LIS. Almost everybody prefers this course. This shows that present generation is moving towards ICT based applications in Library and they prefer digitisation. This is a very positive movement towards digital library.

7.11 Which teaching process is most interesting in SWAYAM?

There are four types of teaching process is used in SWAYAM. But most (46.4%) the respondents prefers all of the teaching processes mentioned in the below table and among them video lecture is the popular one (20.8%).

Table 4: Most interesting teaching process in SWAYAM

Teaching Process	Number	Percentage
Video Lectures	26	20.8
Self Assessments	17	13.6
Specially prepared reading material that can be downloaded or printed	15	12
An online discussion forum for clearing doubts	9	7.2
All of the above	58	46.4
Total	125	100

7.12 How much you rate SWAYAM?

In the questionnaire, it was asked to rate (5 to 1) usefulness of SWAYAM. More rank means more usefulness. The respondent ranked SWAYAM like Rank 5 (32%), Rank 4 (23.2%), Rank 3 (21.6%) and so on. So it can be predicted that it is a well structured initiative and everybody likes it.

Table 5: Ranking of SWAYAM

	Number	Percentage
Rank 5	40	32
Rank 4	29	23.2
Rank 3	27	21.6
Rank 2	16	12.8
Rank 1	13	10.4
Total	125	100

8. Recommendations for improvement of SWAYAM:

There are so many recommendations received from the respondents for improvement of SWAYAM. Major points have been listed here. The recommendation shows that LIS professionals are very much interested for improvement of SWAYAM. They got benefited from the available courses and further interested in other courses.

- Provide new technology and trends techniques updated information about subject related.

- More topics like current as well as traditional should be added in the field of Library Science.
- Users and subject expert's participation can make it more reliable.
- If public library can afford this kind of courses, it can be helpful for young generation.
- The initiative has to bring forth in every educational institution by various schemes.
- It is good platform to learn and gain knowledge. It should reach every student. Government should advertise on media like Radio and TV channels.
- Recommendation system/alert service is necessary like coursera. More advanced courses should be started. Resource person from world's top 30 universities must be given opportunities.
- SWAYAM authority can give proposal to make an option to include choice in semester credit system in courses running in universities.
- Need of covering more topics on latest trend of Library and Information Science education.
- Need more details regarding this in all institutions to create awareness among students.

9. Conclusions

This study gives an idea and information about awareness of SWAYAM among LIS professionals

in India. MOOCs has multiple advantages, keeping the fact in mind Government of India started SWAYAM for the benefit of students/researcher/faculties. SWAYAM will provide great opportunity to Indian students to learn without fearing from failure. The results of this study reveal that most of the LIS professionals are very much interested in SWAYAM but the numbers of LIS courses are less in number with respect to other course, so it is not possible to pursue all LIS courses. Those who wished to pursue his or her studies in MOOCs platform, SWAYAM is a massive platform to them. The paper concludes that more awareness is required and more LIS courses should be added time to time. Some more interactive and innovative teaching techniques should be introduced. Not only conventional topics, some recently developed topics should be added. Government should promote SWAYAM through advertisements on media like Radio and TV channels, social networking sites and other platforms. In near future, SWAYAM would hopefully also bridge the digital divide gap between rural and urban students of India. This would help them to gain the mainstream knowledge. In spite of all these we can conclude that in promoting MOOCs like SWAYAM, library professionals have the major role to play. Libraries/library professionals can promote MOOCs to a great extent as they have storehouse of best resources, plenty of information's, technical skills, knowledge of subjects and IT expertise. This responsibility will

lead this profession towards a new horizon and a platform like SWAYAM will have a grand success in near future.

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