



Original Article

Role of E-Learning in Value Transformation in Indian Society: A Sociological Perspective

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Abstract

In the wake of rapid development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and the COVID-19 pandemic, e-learning is becoming an important part of the Indian education system. The impact of this change has led to a massive change in the teaching methodology, learning process and social, cultural and moral values of Indian society. Sociological analysis of the interrelationship of e-learning and price change is therefore necessary. The objective of the study is to conduct a sociological analysis of the role of e-learning in Indian society and to explain how the impact of digital education has changed equality, social inclusion, self-reliance, digital citizenship, collaboration, individualism and cultural values. The present study is qualitative and explanatory in nature. The study has analysed secondary data from the book, research papers, National Education Policy (2020), UNESCO, OECD, World Bank, AISHE, TRAI, SWAYAM, DIKSHA and other national and international reports. It is clear from the study that the impact of e-learning promotes democratization of knowledge, access to education, women's education, skill development and lifelong learning. On the other hand, the digital divide, social isolation, screen-dependency, cultural distance and technological inequality emerge. As a result, a new interaction and readjustment between traditional and modern values has developed in Indian society. It is clear from the study that it is necessary to understand e-learning as an effective medium of social change along with technological innovation. A policy based on inclusive digital infrastructure, value-based education, digital literacy and integration of Indian cultural values can make the education system of the future more equitable, inclusive and effective.

Keywords: E-Learning, Social Values, Value Change, Indian Society, Digital Society, Digital Education, Socialization, Digital Citizenship.

Introduction

1. Education, Society and Value Change: An Introduction

Education is the basic basis of social, cultural and economic development of any society. It is a continuous process of building and reconstructing the attitude, behaviour, morals and social values of the individual as a means of acquiring knowledge and skills. From the sociological point of view, education is a major social institution, which introduces the individual to social norms, cultural traditions and responsibilities through socialization. According to Durkheim, education is the medium of social integration and the development of collective consciousness (Durkheim, 1956). According to Bourdieu, education is an important means of transfer of cultural capital and social reproduction (Bourdieu, 1986). Indian society has undergone many value changes over time through education. The main purpose of education in traditional society was cultural preservation, moral discipline and development of social responsibility. In contemporary society, the values of equality, democratic participation, scientific temper, gender justice, digital literacy and lifelong learning have gained more importance. Globalization, liberalization and the expansion of information and communication technology have given new impetus to this transformation (Yogendra Singh, 1973).

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As a result, education is reaching a wide section of the society through digital medium, going beyond the boundaries of school and university. This has made the process of price change more comprehensive, dynamic, and participatory (UNESCO, 2023).

2. Origin and Development of E-Learning in India

The growth of e-learning in India is driven by the expansion of information and communication technology, increasing availability of the internet and strengthening of digital infrastructure. In the initial phase, the foundation stone was laid for distance education, educational broadcasting and technology-based education through EDUSAT. Subsequently, online education has been institutionalized through the National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology, National Technology-Enhanced Learning Programme

(NPTEL), Swayam, Swayam, Swayam Prabha, DIKSHA and PM e-Vidya programme (Ministry of Education, 2020; AICTE, 2023). In the National Education Policy (2020), digital education, blended learning, multilingual digital learning and technology-enabled learning are considered as the main basis of education reform (Government of India, 2020). With the closure of schools and universities during the COVID-19 pandemic, e-learning became an essential requirement of education. This period saw widespread use of online classes, digital learning materials, virtual assessments and open online courses. This resulted in a structural change in the nature of education and the learning process became more flexible, technology-enabled and learner-centric (UNESCO, 2021; UNICEF, 2021).

Table No. - 1

Major Government Initiatives related to e-Learning and Digital Education in India

Year	Plan/Program	Key Objectives	Relation to price changes
2002	National Technology-Enhanced Learning Programme (NPTEL)	Online Courses for Higher Education	Democratization of Knowledge
2004	EDUSAT	Distance learning	Expansion of Rural Education
2009	National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NMEICT)	Technology-based higher education	Digital Equality
2015	Digital India	Digital Infrastructure and Services	Digital Citizenship
2016	SWAYAM	Free Online Courses	Equal Opportunity
2017	SWAYAM Prabha	Satellite-based educational broadcasting	Inclusive Education
2017	DIKSHA	Digital platform for school education	Teacher and Student Empowerment
2020	PM eVIDYA	Multi-Medium Education	Continuity of Education in Crisis Times
2020	National Education Policy	Promotion of Digital and Blended Education	Value-Based and Inclusive Education

Source: Ministry of Education, Government of India (2020); National Council of Educational Research and Training; All India Council for Technical Education; self; initiation.

It is clear from the observation of Table No. 1 that the growth of e-learning in India is not the result of the development of any one programme. This is the result of a policy and institutional process that lasted for more than two decades. Democratization of education, digital inclusion, equal opportunity and universal access to knowledge are promoted by various initiatives from the National Technology-Enhanced Learning Programme to the National

Education Policy (2020; UNESCO, 2023). From a sociological perspective, this initiative has led to a transition from traditional teacher-centered education to a learner-centered, flexible and participatory education system. At the same time, the new social value of digital citizenship, self-sufficient learning, and lifelong learning has also been reinforced (Castells, 1996; OECD, 2023).

3. Internet and Smartphone Revolution in India: The Basis of E-Learning

The most important basis for the rapid expansion of e-learning in India is the widespread spread of internet and smartphone technology. In the last decade, the nature of education has been fundamentally changed by the expansion of digital infrastructure, affordable data services, the expansion of fourth generation (4G) telecommunication networks and the increasing availability of smartphones. In the initial period, online education was limited to a limited institution, whereas in the present time, e-learning is being widely used in school education, higher education, skill development, preparation for competitive examinations and vocational training. The National Education Policy (2020)

describes digital technology as the mainstay of quality, inclusive and flexible education (Government of India, 2020). With the proliferation of internet and smartphones, the teaching-learning process has been able to break free from the constraints of space and time. Students can access digital study materials, video lectures, e-books, virtual classrooms and free online courses from any location. From a sociological point of view, this change encourages the democratization of knowledge, the universalization of education, digital citizenship, and the new social value of self-sufficient learning (Castells, 1996; UNESCO, 2023). At the same time, new educational opportunities have also developed for rural and urban society, women, and socially disadvantaged groups (World Bank, 2018).

Table No. - 2

Growth of Internet Users in India

Year	Internet Users (Million)	Internet Penetration (%)
2015	30.2	24
2018	48.3	36
2020	62.2	45
2022	75.9	53
2024	Approximately 95.4	About 67

Source: Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI, 2024); Internet and Mobile Association of India and Cantor (*India Internet Report*, 2023); *Data Reportal* (2024).

It is clear from Table No. 2 that between 2015 and 2024, the number of Internet users in India has increased almost three times. This growth is a sign of technological expansion and also a testament to the democratization of education, communication, and access to knowledge (UNESCO, 2023). The widespread availability of the internet

has given social acceptance to e-learning and accelerated the process of building a digital society. However, the disparity in digital access between rural and urban areas and different social classes continues to be a significant challenge (IAMAI & Kantar, 2023; TRAI, 2024).

Table No.- 3

Number of Smartphone Users in India

Year	Smartphone Users (Million)
2016	29
2018	40
2020	54
2022	75
2024	About 88

Source: GSMA Intelligence (2024); *Statista* (2024).

With the proliferation of smartphones, e-learning has become more practical and accessible. Mobile phones are the major medium of online education for most learners in India. Digital study material, video lectures, e-books and virtual classrooms have become widely available. The result is self-directed learning, skill development, and lifelong learning (OECD, 2023). On the other hand, the unequal availability of devices and the gap in digital efficiency also affect social inequality (World Bank, 2018).

4. COVID-19 and the Digital Transition of Education

In the year 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the global education system in an unprecedented manner. Traditional classroom-based teaching was almost completely disrupted due to the prolonged closure of schools, colleges and universities. In this situation, e-learning became a necessity rather than an alternative system of education. In

India too, the widespread use of online classes, video conferencing platforms, Learning Management System (LMS), SWAYAM, DIKSHA, PM eVIDYA, SWAYAM Prabha and other digital mediums started. This resulted in a shift in the teaching-learning process to the digital environment (UNESCO, 2021; Ministry of Education, 2021). From a sociological point of view, the impact of COVID-19 led to significant changes in the structure of education, teacher-student relationship, family engagement and the process of knowledge acquisition. On the one hand, the continuity of education was ensured through digital education, on the other hand, the digital divide, the unavailability of equipment, unequal access to the internet, and the lack of digital literacy were also revealed (UNICEF, 2021). Thus, the pandemic illustrates both the potential and the extent of digital education in Indian society.

Table No. - 4

Impact on Education during COVID-19

Index Number	Generally Pl. figures
Number of countries where schools are closed	More than 190
Affected Students (World Class)	About 1.6 billion
Students Affected in India	About 32 crore
Schools that adopt online education	In most states
Use of Digital Education Platform	Unprecedented growth

Sources: UNESCO (2020–2021); UNICEF (2021); Ministry of Education, Government of India.

It is clear from Table No. 4 that the digitization of education across the globe has gained unprecedented momentum due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With about 32 crore students affected in India, online education became a national necessity (UNESCO, 2021). As a result, the use of digital platforms, virtual learning and open online resources has grown exponentially. At the same time, it became evident that in the absence of digital infrastructure, internet availability and equal access to technological resources, the goal of inclusive education is difficult to achieve. Social inequality also emerged with digital transformation due to the impact of the pandemic (UNICEF, 2021; World Bank, 2023).

5. Study Need, Objectives and Research Questions

The rapid expansion of e-learning has brought about significant changes in the nature of education, social relations and value systems in Indian society. Most studies focus on the technical, educational, or psychological aspects of e-learning, while sociological analyses of social values, socialization, cultural change, and its impact on social structure are relatively limited (Yogendra Singh, 1973;

UNESCO, 2023). That is why the need for the presented study is felt.

Objectives of the Study

1. To analyse the growth and expansion of e-learning in Indian society.
2. To carry out a sociological study of the change in social value through e-learning.
3. To evaluate the positive and negative impact of digital education.
4. To present policy suggestions for value-based and inclusive digital education.

Research Questions

1. What kind of impact has e-learning had on social value in Indian society?
2. What are the changes brought about by e-learning in education, family, socialization and cultural values?
3. What is the role of social, economic and technological inequality in the expansion of digital education?
4. Which policy is necessary to strengthen inclusive and value-based e-learning in Indian society?

Conceptual and Theoretical Basis

1. Concept and Nature of E-Learning

E-learning refers to the teaching-learning process in which knowledge, skills, and experience are exchanged using information and communication technology (ICT), the Internet, computers, mobile devices, and other digital media. It is also a flexible, learner-centred and participatory education system as an alternative to traditional classroom-based learning. Through e-learning, learners can study at any time and from any place as it is a more accessible, inclusive and flexible process (Anderson, 2008; UNESCO, 2023). The major forms of e-learning include online learning, blended learning, mobile learning, open online courses, virtual classrooms, and the Learning Management System (LMS). In the Indian context, SWAYAM, DIKSHA, NPTEL, SWAYAM Prabha and PM eVIDYA are prime examples of e-learning. Through this, education becomes more democratic, accessible and technology-enabled (Government of India, 2020; Ministry of Education, 2023).

2. Concept of Social Values and Value Change

Social values are ideals, beliefs and behavioral norms that society considers desirable, appropriate and acceptable. These values guide an individual's behavior, decisions, social relationships and collective life. Integrity, equality, cooperation, tolerance, accountability, justice and mutual respect are considered to be the basis of stability and unity of society. According to Radhakamal Mukherjee, social values are the basis of the moral organization of society, while Talkut Parsons considers it to be an essential element of social order and social integration, while according to Yogendra Singh, social values play an important role in establishing a balance between tradition and modernity (Mukerjee, 1949; Parsons, 1959; Yogendra Singh, 1973). Value change is the process through which the accepted value of society changes through the effects of time, social conditions, technological innovation, economic development and cultural contact. With the impact of industrialization, urbanization, globalization and digital revolution in Indian society, new values have developed along with traditional values. E-learning is emerging as an important medium. It encourages equitable access to knowledge, self-reliant learning, digital citizenship and a global outlook. At the same time, competition, individualism, and digital dependence also expand new social trends (Castells, 1996; UNESCO, 2023).

3. Education, Socialization and Value Creation

From a sociological point of view, education is the organized and institutionalized process of socialization through which the individual learns the values, norms, traditions, roles and cultural practices of the society. After the family, the school is considered to be the most effective formal agency of socialisation. According to Durkheim, the main objective of education is the development of social discipline, moral consciousness and collective responsibility in the individual (Durkheim, 1956). According to Parsons, education is the key medium for the distribution of social roles and competency-based social mobility (Parsons, 1959). With the impact of e-learning, the traditional process of

socialization has been linked to the digital environment. Students are continuously learning from teachers, classmates, global knowledge resources, virtual communities and digital platforms. As a result, the process of value creation is becoming more multidimensional, interactive and global. At present, the objective of education is to impart knowledge as well as to create responsible, ethical, technically proficient and socially sensitive citizens (Giddens, 1991; UNESCO, 2021). From a sociological point of view, e-learning is also reinforcing social responsibility, collaboration, digital citizenship and lifelong learning values along with the dissemination of knowledge.

Conceptual and Theoretical Basis

4. Digital Socialization and Network Society

The rapid development of digital technology has reshaped the process of socialization called digital socialization. Digital socialization is the process through which an individual acquires knowledge, values, behaviours and social experiences through the internet, social media, e-learning platforms, online communities and other digital mediums. Today, students are continuously learning from families, schools, communities and global digital platforms. As a result, the traditional boundaries of socialization have expanded to a global level (Giddens, 1991; UNESCO, 2023). According to Manuel Castells's network society theory, modern society operates through information and communication networks. Knowledge, information and social interaction in society are conducted through digital media (Castells, 1996). E-learning networks are an important expression of society where collaborative learning, knowledge-sharing and global dialogue evolve into new social values. At the same time, digital socialization also develops new dimensions of social identity, cultural diversity and civic participation through the impact of socialization (UNESCO, 2021).

5. Traditional and Contemporary Values of Indian Society

Indian society is known for its cultural diversity, family structure and moral tradition. Traditional Indian social values include nepotism, collectivism, cooperation, tolerance, guru-disciple tradition, moral discipline, social responsibility and community life. Due to this value, social cohesion and cultural continuity are maintained in Indian society (Mukerjee, 1949; Srinivas, 1966). In contemporary times, globalization, information and communication technology, urbanization and the expansion of e-learning have led to the development of a lot of new values along with the traditional value. Equality, gender justice, digital literacy, innovation, critical thinking, global citizenship, personal responsibility and lifelong learning serve as important parts of the modern education system (Yogendra Singh, 1973; Government of India, 2020).

6. Twenty-first Century Learning Values and Digital Culture

Education in the twenty-first century aims to impart thematic knowledge as well as develop skills and

values that enable an individual to become effective citizens in a digital, global and knowledge-based society. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the World Economic Forum, collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, effective communication, digital literacy and lifelong learning are the core learning values of modern education

(UNESCO, 2021; OECD, 2023; World Economic Forum, 2023). Digital culture leads to the development of new paradigms of learning, communication, engagement and knowledge-sharing. E-learning translates this value into practice as it provides an opportunity for the learner to become self-reliant, innovative, responsible and global-minded citizens. Digital culture thus represents an active process of rebuilding social value (UNESCO, 2023).

Table No. – 05

Key Learning Values of the Twenty-First Century According to UNESCO

Learning Value	Contribution of E-Learning	Sociological Significance
Cooperation	Online Group Work & Co-Learning	Social Participation and Collaboration
Critical Thinking	Problem Solving and Analysis	Logical and Scientific Approach
Creativity	Innovation and Project-Based Learning	Knowledge Creation and Innovation Culture
communication	Global Dialogue and Digital Engagement	Social Capital and Network Expansion
Digital Literacy	Effective use of Information and Communication Technology	Digital Citizenship and Inclusion
Lifelong learning	Continuous and Self-Directed Learning	Development of a knowledge-based society

Source: UNESCO. *Reimagining Our Futures Together* (2021); UNESCO. *Global Education Monitoring Report* (2023).

It is clear from Table No. 05 that the focus of education in the twenty-first century is not just information gathering. Its major objective is to develop collaboration, innovation, critical thinking, and digital competence (UNESCO, 2021). E-learning provides an opportunity for the

learner to become an active member of the global knowledge community while imbibing this kind of value. From a sociological perspective, this change contributes significantly to the creation of a knowledge-based, participatory, and democratic society (OECD, 2023).

Table No. – 06

Key Dimensions of Price Change in Indian Society

Traditional values	Emerging Digital Values	The Role of E-Learning
Teacher-Centered Education	Learner-Centered Education	Promotion of Self-Directed Learning
Classroom-Based Learning	Learning Anywhere	Transcending the limits of time and space
Mass Studies	Personalized Learning	Speed of Personalized Learning
Limited knowledge sources	Free Knowledge	Access to Global Knowledge
Book-Based Study	Multi-Medium Learning	Use of Diverse Learning Resources
Local Perspectives	Global Perspective	Engagement with International Knowledge and Culture
Formal Education	Lifelong learning	Continuous Skill Development and Re-Learning

Sources: UNESCO (2021, 2023); OECD (2023); Government of India (2020).

It is clear from Table No. 06 that the impact of e-learning has led to a massive change in the nature of

education and social value in the Indian society. The traditional teacher-centric and classroom-based system has

been replaced by a learner-centred, flexible and digital education system. This change, apart from being limited to the teaching methodology, also reinforces the new values of knowledge, social participation, cultural exchange, and civic responsibility (Yogendra Singh, 1973; UNESCO, 2023). As a result, a balanced harmony between tradition and modernity develops in Indian society.

Literature review

1. Global literature

There has been extensive research work on e-learning and digital education at the global level, which has analysed various dimensions of quality of education, equity, inclusion and social change. According to the Global Education Monitoring Report (2023) of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), digital technology expands access to education, but its benefits can only be widely realized if equal access to digital resources is ensured (UNESCO, 2023). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)'s *Education at a Glance* (2023) report considers digital efficiency, critical thinking, and lifelong learning to be the cornerstone of modern education (OECD, 2023). The World Bank's *World Development Report* states that human capital, teacher training and digital infrastructure are essential for the effective use of technology in education (World Bank, 2018). According to Manuel Castells's network society theory, information and communication technology restructures social relations, knowledge production, and cultural exchange (Castells, 1996). Anthony Giddens offers an explanation of global interaction and institutional change in the context of modernity (Giddens, 1991). It is clear from the study that e-learning is not only a technological innovation but also an effective medium of comprehensive social and cultural change.

2. Indian literature

In the Indian context, most of the studies available on e-learning focus on the expansion of digital education, online learning, technological infrastructure and education policy. The National Education Policy (2020) has made digital education clear as an important means of developing a quality, inclusive and multilingual education system (Government of India, 2020). Data from the All India Survey

on Higher Education (AISHE 2021–22) underscores the increasing use of digital resources in higher education and the acceptance of technology-based learning (AISHE, 2024). The study based on SWAYAM, DIKSHA, NPTEL and PM eVIDYA clearly shows that through such initiatives, digital access has expanded significantly in the field of higher education, schooling, and skill development (Ministry of Education, 2023).

Among Indian sociologists, Yogendra Singh presents an analysis of the interrelationship between tradition and modernity, propounding that social change often develops through the coordination of traditional and modern values (Yogendra Singh, 1973). M. N. Srinivas's views on social change and André Bette's analysis of social inequality provide important theoretical foundations for understanding the social impact of digital education (Srinivas, 1966; Bételle, 1996). Despite this, the research available on the direct relationship between e-learning and social value is relatively limited.

3. Key Findings on E-Learning and Price Transformation

It is clear from the available literature that the impact of e-learning has strengthened the concept of access to education, democratization of knowledge and lifelong learning. Through digital platforms, new educational opportunities are developed for women, rural areas and socially disadvantaged sections. Collaborative learning, self-directed learning, digital citizenship and global knowledge-sharing value are also encouraged (UNESCO, 2023; OECD, 2023). On the other hand, different studies have mentioned challenges such as the digital divide, technological inequality, screen-dependence, social isolation, and cultural distance (World Bank, 2018; UNICEF, 2021). It is also evident from international and Indian reports that the success of e-learning is not limited to technological infrastructure. Social inclusion, teacher training, digital literacy and effective policy support are equally essential (Government of India, 2020; UNESCO, 2023). Therefore, it is more appropriate to evaluate e-learning as a process of social change, cultural restructuring and value creation along with teaching techniques.

Table No. – 07

Comparative Summary of Major International and Indian Reports

Report	Key Focus	Key Findings	Relevance to the Research Topic
UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report (2023)	Digital Education and Equality	Technology is effective only when equal access is available	Digital Inclusion and Social Justice
OECD – <i>Education at a Glance</i> (2023)	Twenty-first Century Skills	Emphasis on Digital Skills, Critical Thinking and Lifelong Learning	Price Conversion and Skill Development
World Bank – <i>World</i>	Education &	Coordination of teachers, technology and	Quality e-learning



Report	Key Focus	Key Findings	Relevance to the Research Topic
<i>Development Report</i>	Technology	human capital is essential.	
National Education Policy (2020)	Digital and Inclusive Education	Promotion of ICT-based, multilingual and blended learning	Value Changes in the Indian Education System
AISHE (2021–22)	Higher education status	Expansion of Digital Resources and Online Learning in Higher Education	Institutional Acceptance of E-Learning

Source: UNESCO (2023); OECD (2023); World Bank (2018); Government of India (2020); AISHE (2024).

It is clear from Comparative Table No.07 that the international and Indian reports acknowledge the role of digital technology in education. At the same time, all emphasise the fact that the purpose of technology is not just to digitize education but also to make education more inclusive, equitable and quality. UNESCO and OECD prioritize social equity, digital efficiency, and lifelong learning, while the National Education Policy (2020) and AISHE outline the institutional expansion of digital education in the Indian context. It is evident that e-learning is playing an important role in reshaping social values, access to knowledge and civic responsibility.

4. Research Gap

It is clear from the study of the available literature that most of the research focuses on the technical, educational or psychological impact of e-learning. In the Indian context, there are ample studies available on digital infrastructure, online teaching and education policy, but the overall sociological analysis of the social values, process of socialization, cultural change, family relationships and changes in digital citizenship of Indian society due to the impact of e-learning is relatively low (Yogendra Singh, 1973; UNESCO, 2023). The present study fills this research gap and analyses e-learning as a dynamic process of social change and value reconstruction.

Research Methodology

1. Nature of the study

The present study is qualitative, descriptive and analytical in nature. It aims to analyse the value changes generated in the Indian society through e-learning from a sociological perspective. The study attempts to understand e-learning as a dynamic process of social change, socialization, cultural restructuring and value creation along with technological or educational innovation. The nature of study is interdisciplinary, combining approaches from sociology, education, information and communication technology, and public policy.

2. Research design

Interpretive and documentary research designs have been adopted in the study. The basis of the research is comparative and critical analysis of various national and international reports, policy documents, research papers,

books and government publications. The study explains the concepts related to e-learning, social value, digital socialization and value change in the light of sociological theory. The theoretical approach of Durkheim, Max Weber, Pierre Bourdieu, Manuel Castells, Anthony Giddens, Yogendra Singh and M.N. Srinivas has been used for the analysis.

3. Data Sources and Methods of Analysis

The present study is entirely based on secondary data. The study was conducted in the National Education Policy (2020), UNESCO's *Global Education Monitoring Report*, OECD's *Education at a Glance*, World Bank's *World Development Report*, AISHE Report, TRAI's Annual Report, *India Internet Report* (IAMAI), SWAYAM and DIKSHA's Annual Report and Ministry of Education. Various publications of the Government of India have been used. In addition, references have also been made to books, research papers and peer-reviewed journals related to sociology, education and digital studies. The study is presented through content analysis, comparative analysis and explanatory analysis of the data obtained. Its credibility has been ensured by mutual verification of facts received from various sources. The study uses statistical data for descriptive and analytical purposes to illustrate the relationship between e-learning and price changes.

4. Limitation of the study

The study is mainly based on secondary data and available literature. Therefore, its findings are dependent on the quality and availability of the source used. The study does not include a primary survey or field research. The impact of e-learning in the diverse context of Indian society may vary according to region, class, gender, age and cultural context, which was not possible to include in this study as a whole. Despite this, efforts have been made to ensure the credibility and academic relevance of the study using various authentic national and international sources.

E-Learning and the Process of Value Transformation in Indian Society

1. Democratization of Knowledge and Equality of Education

The proliferation of e-learning has given impetus to the process of democratization of knowledge in the Indian education system. In the traditional education system, access

to quality education was often dependent on geographical location, economic resources and institutional availability. This situation has changed significantly through digital education. Internet, open online courses, digital libraries, video lectures and e-learning platforms have made knowledge more accessible to the wider society. As a result, education is not limited to a specific class but is reaching all sections of society (UNESCO, 2023; Government of India, 2020). From a sociological point of view, democratization of knowledge promotes social equality, equality of opportunity and social mobility. According to Bourdieu's cultural capital theory, education influences social opportunity (Bourdieu, 1986). New opportunities for the acquisition of cultural capital arise through e-learning. The National Education Policy (2020) considers equal access to education, multilingual content and technology-enabled learning as the basis for building an inclusive society (Government of India, 2020). Thus, e-learning plays an important role in strengthening social justice and democratic values.

2. Digital Inclusion and Social Justice

Table No. - 08

Digital Divide in India

Index Number	Rural	Citizen
Internet Usage (%)	About 44	About 72
Smartphone Availability (%)	About 58	About 82
Digital Literacy	Relatively low	Relatively high

Sources: National Statistical Office (NSS); National Family Health Survey-5 (NFHS-5); *India Internet Report* (IAMAI, 2023); TRAI (2024).

It is clear from Table No. 08 that access to digital resources in India is still not equal. The status of internet, smartphones and digital literacy in rural areas is comparatively slower than in urban areas. As a result, the benefits of e-learning do not reach all social classes equally. This situation gives rise to a new form of social inequality i.e. the digital divide (IAMAI & Kantar, 2023). Therefore, the successful operation of inclusive e-learning requires the expansion of digital infrastructure, affordable internet service, and digital literacy (UNESCO, 2023).

3. E-Learning Platforms and Social Transformation

SWAYAM, DIKSHA, NPTEL, SWAYAM Prabha and PM eVIDYA have played an important role in the institutional development of e-learning in India. Through such a platform, quality digital learning material is made available for school education, higher education,

Digital inclusion means providing equal access to digital resources, internet, technological tools and digital services to every person in the society. E-learning can only be effective if it provides equal access to the digital medium to all classes of students. Digital India, BharatNet, PM eVIDYA, DIKSHA and SWAYAM initiatives in India promote digital inclusion. Through this initiative, new opportunities for education are created, especially for rural areas, women and socially disadvantaged sections (Government of India, 2020; Ministry of Education, 2023). Despite this, the digital divide is still a major challenge in Indian society. Due to income, area of residence, gender disparity, availability of language and technical resources, all citizens are not equally able to access the benefits of e-learning. From a sociological point of view, this situation influences the concept of social justice, equal opportunity, and inclusive growth (World Bank, 2018; UNESCO, 2023). Therefore, digital inclusion is a question of technological availability as well as a question of social equity and educational justice.

vocational training and teacher training. In particular, SWAYAM provides access to open online courses to university and higher educational institution students, while school education is strengthened through schooling, teacher training, and multilingual digital content through DIKSHA (Ministry of Education, 2023; NCERT, 2023). Students determine the pace of study, repetition and learning according to their convenience. From a sociological point of view, the impact of such a platform has reduced the centralization of knowledge and made education more democratic. At the same time, the value of digital citizenship, self-directed learning, collaborative learning, and lifelong learning is also encouraged (Castells, 1996; UNESCO, 2023). Thus, e-learning platform is not only a technological platform but also an effective medium of social change.

Table No.- 09

Achievements of SWAYAM

Index Number	Attainment
Beginnings	2016
Available Courses	More than 3,000
Nomination	Millions of learners
Participating Universities and Institutions	More than 300
Study Level	From school to research level

Sources: *SWAYAM Annual Report*; Ministry of Education, Government of India.

It is clear from Table No. 09 that higher education has become more inclusive and accessible through SWAYAM. The open online curriculum has reduced the impact of economic and geographical boundaries and

expanded access to quality education. As a result, democratization of knowledge, lifelong learning, and skill development received a significant boost (Government of India, 2020; UNESCO, 2023).

Table No. - 10

DIKSHA Platform

Index Number	Generally Pl. Figures
Beginnings	2017
Key Users	Teachers & Students
Available languages	Over 35
QR based digital content	Expansion to all states
Major Uses	School Education and Teacher Training

Sources: *DIKSHA Dashboard*; National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT); Ministry of Education, Government of India.

It is clear from Table No. 10 that the **digitization of school education** through DIKSHA got a strong foundation. Multilingual content, teacher training and QR based learning resources have made education more inclusive and accessible. This has resulted in enhancement of quality of teaching, digital literacy and technical proficiency of teachers and students. The platform proved to be a significant initiative towards strengthening equal opportunity and digital inclusion in education (NCERT, 2023; Government of India, 2020).

4. Self-Reliant Learning and Skill Development

The proliferation of e-learning has strengthened the concept of self-reliant learning in the Indian education system. In the traditional teaching system, students mainly relied on teacher-guided learning. Through digital education, they have got the freedom to study according to their pace, interest and need. Online courses, video lectures, digital libraries, open educational resources and vast open online

courses have made learning more flexible and learner-centered (UNESCO, 2023; OECD, 2023). Through SWAYAM, NPTEL, DIKSHA and other digital platforms, students got opportunities to develop communication skills, digital skills, problem-solving, critical thinking and innovation skills along with thematic knowledge. From the sociological point of view, this change is not only employable but also helps in becoming an active member of a self-reliant, responsible and knowledge-based society. Thus, e-learning reinforces the concept of Atmanirbhar Bharat at the social and educational level (Ministry of Education, 2020; UNESCO, 2023).

5. Changes in Family, Teacher and Student Relations

The expansion of e-learning has led to significant changes in the traditional relationship between family, teacher and students. In the traditional education system, teachers were the main source of knowledge and the center of the classroom. The role of the teacher in digital education

evolved as a guide, mentor and learning collaborator along with a knowledge provider. Now the responsibility of the teacher is not limited to the teaching of the subject but also to develop critical thinking, digital competencies, and moral responsibility in the students (UNESCO, 2023). There has also been a significant change in the role of the family. Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, parents acted as direct participants in the learning process of children. The availability of digital devices, the creation of a conducive learning environment and monitoring of online learning became important responsibilities of the family. This resulted in a stronger relationship between family and education (UNICEF, 2021).

There is also a change in the nature of students' learning. They are now emerging as active knowledge-creators instead of passive knowledge-seekers. Collaborative learning, virtual group discussions, project-based learning and global dialogue have led to the development of new dimensions of social engagement. Although challenges such as screen-dependence, lack of direct social interaction, and digital fatigue exist, the impact of e-learning as a whole has led to a restructuring of the educational role (OECD, 2023).

6. Digital Citizenship, Ethics and Responsibility

Education in a digital society aims to develop technological competencies and build responsive digital citizens. Digital citizenship refers to the safe, ethical, responsible and judicious use of digital medium. With the proliferation of e-learning, the importance of cybersecurity, digital privacy, intellectual property rights, online etiquette, and ethical use of information for students is increasing (UNESCO, 2023). According to UNESCO and OECD, the development of digital ethics is also necessary along with digital education. If learners have technical proficiency but lack moral responsibility, then the misuse of digital medium can increase. Cyber harassment, misleading news, plagiarism, data privacy violations, and digital violence underscore this challenge (OECD, 2023; UNESCO, 2023).

In the Indian context, the National Education Policy (2020) lays special emphasis on the development of constitutional values, ethics, responsibility and digital literacy among students. From a sociological point of view, digital citizenship is the new dimension of social responsibility in modern society. It inspires the individual to become democratic, responsible, sensitive and conscientious citizens along with the consumer using the digital medium. Therefore, the success of e-learning depends on technological achievement as well as the development of digital ethics and social responsibility (Ministry of Education, 2020).

7. Convergence of Indian Knowledge Tradition and Global Values

The Indian education tradition has always been based on the values of knowledge, morality, self-discipline, co-existence, compassion and public welfare. From the Gurukul tradition to the modern education system, knowledge is considered to be the basis of intellectual development as well as personality formation and social

responsibility. In the digital age, there is a new opportunity to connect such traditional value with the global knowledge system through e-learning (National Education Policy, 2020). The National Education Policy (2020) emphasizes on the preservation of local knowledge, Indian languages, cultural heritage and moral education by considering the Indian Knowledge Tradition as an integral part of modern education. On the other hand, UNESCO and OECD recognize global citizenship, sustainable development, cultural diversity, cooperation and human rights as universal values essential to modern education (UNESCO, 2021; OECD, 2023).

E-learning acts as a bridge between these two streams. Through the digital platform, students get acquainted with Indian philosophy, culture, yoga, Ayurveda and traditional knowledge. At the same time, they have access to global research, innovation and multicultural experience. From a sociological point of view, this process establishes a balance between local and global values. As a result, a value shift is developing in Indian society, in which new values of modernity, scientific temperament, digital citizenship and global participation are also being strengthened while preserving cultural identity. This coordination is the cornerstone of the future inclusive and value-based education system (Singh, 1973; UNESCO, 2023).

Sociological Analysis of E-Learning on Value Transformation of Indian Society

1. Positive Effects of E-Learning

The proliferation of e-learning is accelerating the process of rebuilding social value in Indian society. The most significant impact of this is reflected in the democratization of access to education. The Internet and digital learning platforms are reducing geographical, economic and institutional barriers, thereby increasing opportunities for quality education for remote areas, women, learners with disabilities and socially disadvantaged groups. This change reinforces the value of social equity, inclusion, and educational justice (UNESCO, 2023; World Bank, 2023). The impact of e-learning is also promoting self-reliant learning, critical thinking, problem-solving abilities and innovation. Through the digital platform, students are not only gaining knowledge but also becoming active participants in creating and sharing knowledge. Collaborative learning, open educational resources, and global dialogue are fostering democratic participation, mutual cooperation, and multicultural understanding (OECD, 2023; UNESCO, 2023).

The positive impact of e-learning is also evident in the field of women's education. Despite many social and geographical barriers, women and girls continue to participate in higher education, vocational training and skill development programmes from home. Similarly, due to the digital platform, the culture of lifelong learning is being strengthened, due to which the person is continuously developing himself according to the changing social and economic situation. From a sociological point of view, this change signals an important step towards building a more

inclusive, knowledge-based and participatory society

(National Education Policy, 2020).

Table No. – 11

Positive Social Impact of E-Learning

Field	Major changes	Sociological Influence
Teaching	Equal Opportunity and Wider Access	Democratization of Knowledge
Family	Increased parental engagement	Shared Responsibility
Women	Education and Skill Development Opportunities	Gender Empowerment
Rural Society	Digital Inclusion	Social mobility
Youth	Digital Skilling and Innovation	Development of Human Capital
Employment	Online Training and Certification	Skill-Based Economy
Society	Lifelong learning	Knowledge-based society

Source: UNESCO (2023); National Education Policy (2020); SWAYAM; DIKSHA; World Bank (2023).

It is clear from Table No. 11 that education is becoming more inclusive, flexible and democratic due to the impact of e-learning. Social equality, gender justice, skill development and wider access to knowledge are being promoted. From a sociological point of view, this change strengthens social mobility, development of human capital and democratic participation. Therefore, e-learning is an important driving force of educational change as well as social change (UNESCO, 2023; World Bank, 2023).

2. Negative Effects of E-Learning

While e-learning is bringing about many positive changes, it is also having some serious social impacts. The most prominent challenge is the digital divide. Due to economic inequality, limited access to internet, lack of digital tools and differences in technological proficiency, all sections of the society are not able to get equal benefits of e-learning. As a result, new patterns of social inequality in

education are emerging (UNESCO, 2023; OECD, 2023). The expansion of e-learning also sees a decrease in direct social interaction. Due to prolonged online learning, there is a decrease in face-to-face interaction, group activity and school social experience among students. This affects the quality of social isolation, emotional distancing and group-based learning. Additionally, excessive screen time adversely affects physical and mental health (UNICEF, 2021).

With the increasing use of digital medium, challenges such as cybercrime, data privacy, misinformation, plagiarism and online abuse are also increasing. The impact of consumerist digital culture has also reinforced the trend of commercialization of education and certificate-centric learning. Therefore, sustainable and inclusive development of e-learning is possible only when social justice, ethics and digital responsibility are given equal importance along with technological expansion (World Bank, 2023; UNESCO, 2023).

Table No. – 12

Negative Social Effects of E-Learning

Field	Major Impacts	Sociological consequences
Family	Lack of direct communication	Changes in social relationships
Pupil	Screen-Dependence and Mental Pressure	Behavioral changes
Society	Social isolation	Reduction in social capital
Culture	Lack of local cultural engagement	Cultural distance
Economy	Digital inequality	Asymmetry of Opportunities
Teaching	Inequality in the quality of learning	Educational imbalance
Cyber Sphere	Privacy and Security Risks	Digital Ethical Challenges

Source: UNESCO *Global Education Monitoring Report* (2023); UNICEF (2021); World Bank (2023); OECD (2023).

It is clear from Table No. 12 that the impact of e-learning is not limited to positive achievement. The digital divide, social isolation, cyber risk and cultural distance are further reinforcing social inequality. From a sociological point of view, the expansion of digital education must be in line with the principles of social justice, digital ethics, mental health, and cultural sensitivity so that technological advancement serves as a real medium of social development (UNESCO, 2023).

3. National Education Policy (2020) and Value Changes

The National Education Policy (2020) is an important transformative document of the Indian education system that provides a clear direction to make education knowledge-based, inclusive, value-driven and technology-enabled. The policy recognizes e-learning as an effective medium to strengthen the quality, equity, innovation and lifelong learning of education along with alternative methods of teaching. The policy lays special emphasis on development of digital infrastructure, multilingual digital content, virtual labs, online and blended learning, teacher

training and responsible use of technology (Ministry of Education, 2020). From a sociological point of view, the National Education Policy (2020) provides a new direction to the process of value change in Indian society. Equal opportunity, social justice, inclusive education, gender equality, critical thinking, creativity and development of constitutional values are considered to be the integral

objectives of education. At the same time, efforts have been made to establish a balanced relationship between tradition and modernity by emphasizing the convergence of Indian knowledge tradition and global knowledge system. Thus, the National Education Policy (2020) considers digital education as an effective tool for social transformation and value creation along with technological innovation.

Table No. - 13

Digital Education in National Education Policy (2020)

Provision	Aim	Relation to price changes
Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing	Quality digital education	Democratization of Knowledge
Virtual Lab	Experiential and Experiential Learning	Scientific Approach and Innovation
Online and Blended Learning	Continuity and Flexibility of Education	Lifelong Learning and Self-Reliance
Teacher Capacity Building	Digital Efficiency and Learning Quality	Responsive and efficient teachers
Multilingual digital content	Inclusive and accessible education	Linguistic Equity and Cultural Inclusion
Integrated Use of Technology	Effective use of Information and Communication Technology	Digital Citizenship and Innovation

Source: Ministry of Education, Government of India. *National Education Policy*, 2020.

It is clear from Table No. 13 that the National Education Policy (2020) sees digital education as an effective medium for social equality, democratization of knowledge, cultural inclusion and value-based education using it as a technological facility. Inclusive education is promoted through digital infrastructure, teacher empowerment and multilingual content. From the sociological point of view, this policy is an important initiative towards strengthening democratic, responsible and knowledge-based social values in Indian society .

4. Comparative analysis of rural-urban and youth society

The impact of e-learning has not been uniform across different sections of Indian society. The impact of e-learning in urban areas is more widespread due to better internet access, availability of digital devices and higher digital literacy. On the contrary, access to e-learning has been affected due to limited digital infrastructure, economic disparity and lack of technical resources in rural areas. Despite this, government initiatives, increasing use of smartphones, and the expansion of the internet are increasing the acceptance of digital education even in rural society (TRAI, 2024; IAMAI, 2023). The youth are emerging as the most active users of e-learning . Self-directed learning, skill development, innovation, entrepreneurship and global outlook are being promoted through digital platforms. At the same time, challenges such as screen dependency, information overload and digital distraction are also emerging. Therefore, it is imperative to reduce the digital disparity that exists between rural-urban and social classes through inclusive digital policies and value-based education (UNESCO, 2023; National Education Policy, 2020).

Analysis in the Light of Sociological Theories

1. Emil Durkheim: Education and Social Integration

According to Emil Durkheim, education is an organized process of socialization whose main objective is to connect the individual with the moral values, social norms and collective consciousness of the society (Durkheim, 1922/1956). In the context of e-learning, this approach makes it clear that digital education contributes to the development of collaboration, accountability, discipline and social engagement along with the dissemination of knowledge. If e-learning is inclusive, value-oriented and accessible to all sections, it can strengthen social integration. On the contrary, unequal access to digital resources is widening social divides and opportunity disparities. Durkheim's approach thus inspires us to see e-learning as an important tool for social cohesion and moral development.

2. Max Weber: Rationalization and Modernity

According to Max Weber, modern society is based on a process of rationalization in which efficiency, rationality, regularity and formal organization are of particular importance (Weber, 1922/1978). E-learning is a powerful example of this process where teaching, assessment and learning are conducted through digital platforms, data and technological systems. This is making education more flexible, systematic and accessible. At the same time, Weber's analysis also indicates that excessive technological dependence can limit human interaction, direct communication, and emotional interaction. Therefore, it is necessary to maintain a balance between technical proficiency and human value in digital education.

3. Pierre Bourdieu: Cultural and Digital Capital

According to Pierre Bourdieu, education is the main means of transfer of cultural capital and social

reproduction (Bourdieu, 1986). Students who have more cultural resources available are relatively more successful in the education system. In the digital age, this concept is taking the form of digital capital. The Internet, smartphones, digital literacy and technological proficiency are today acting as important resources influencing social opportunity. Students who have this facility available benefit more from e-learning while resource-deprived groups are relatively left behind. As a result, unequal distribution of digital capital can reproduce social and educational inequality. This disparity can be reduced by providing inclusive digital policies and equitable resources.

4. **Manual Castells : Network Society**

According to Manuel Castells's network society theory, contemporary society is governed by information and communication networks where knowledge, power, and social relations are created and operated through digital means (Castells, 1996). E-learning is the main expression of this networked society. Through this, students, teachers and educational institutions remain in constant touch beyond geographical boundaries. It encourages global knowledge sharing, collaborative learning and digital citizenship. At the same time, there is a risk of social exclusion of communities deprived of digital networks. Therefore, equal digital access in a networked society is an essential condition of social inclusion.

5. **Anthony Giddens: Modernity and subjectivity**

According to Anthony Giddens, modernity is a process of subjectivity and constant reappraisal in which a person constantly reconstructs his or her judgment and lifestyle based on available knowledge and experience (Giddens, 1991). E-learning reinforces this subjectivity as it provides learners with self-directed learning, diverse knowledge sources, and easy access to global information. It leads to the development of critical thinking, self-reliance, innovation and lifelong learning. On the other hand, the challenge of information overreach, digital dependency and information reliability is also a reality of the modern digital society. Therefore, the development of rational information use and ethical responsibility in digital education is equally important.

6. **Indian Sociological Perspectives**

Indian sociologists explain social change on the basis of the Indian social and cultural context. According to M. N. Srinivas, culturalization, westernization and modernization are the major processes of change in Indian society (Srinivas, 1966). Through e-learning, such a process has received a new digital direction as it is accelerating the dissemination of new knowledge, technology and social behaviour. According to Yogendra Singh, the synergy of tradition and modernity is the dominant feature of Indian society (Singh, 1973). E-learning strengthens this synergy by establishing a dialogue between the Indian knowledge tradition, local language and global digital culture. This also maintains cultural continuity with modern technology. According to André Béte, education is an important basis for understanding social stratification and inequality of

opportunity (Béteille, 1996). In his view, e-learning can become an effective means of social justice only if equal access to digital resources is ensured. Otherwise, the digital divide could lead to a new pattern of education and social inequality. Thus, the Indian sociological approach makes it clear that the impact of e-learning is linked to social structure, cultural change, equality of opportunity, and social justice.

Challenges, Policy Suggestions and Future Direction

1. **Major challenges**

Despite the rapid expansion of e-learning in Indian society, there are many structural, social and technological challenges to its effective implementation. The most prominent challenge is **the digital divide**. There is a clear disparity in the availability of internet, smartphones, computers and other digital resources between rural and urban areas, different economic classes, gender groups and socially disadvantaged communities. As a result, the benefits of e-learning do not reach all learners equally (UNESCO, 2023; World Bank, 2023).

The second important challenge is **linguistic diversity**. Despite India's multilingual social structure, most digital educational content is available in English or a limited number of Indian languages. This adversely affects the learning of students pursuing education in mother tongue or regional languages. Similarly, in many areas, high-speed internet, uninterrupted power supply and lack of adequate digital tools hinder effective e-learning (National Education Policy, 2020). With the expansion of e-learning, **cybersecurity** is also a matter of serious concern. Data privacy, cybercrime, misinformation, cyber harassment and digital fraud pose new challenges to the learner. Further, the expected inclusion of **value education** in digital education is still limited. If education is limited to technical proficiency and does not include morality, social responsibility, constitutional values and human sensibilities, then the broader social purpose of education cannot be fulfilled (UNESCO, 2023; OECD, 2023).

2. **Policy suggestions**

Multi-pronged and inclusive policy interventions are necessary to make e-learning an effective tool for value change in Indian society. Firstly, value-based e-learning **should be prioritized in digital education**. It is necessary to give due place to ethics, democratic values, social responsibility, environmental consciousness and constitutional ideals in digital textbooks (National Education Policy, 2020). Second, **digital literacy** should be developed as a social movement at the national level so that students, teachers, parents and communities can use digital resources safely, responsibly and effectively. Third, regular digital training programs should be conducted for teachers so that they can become proficient in digital teaching and value-based teaching with the use of technological tools (UNESCO, 2023).

Fourth, **inclusive education** should ensure access to digital infrastructure, affordable internet services and

multilingual digital content for rural areas, tribal communities, economically weaker sections, students with disabilities and women. At the same time, it is necessary to integrate the Indian Knowledge Tradition with modern digital education. Education can be made more culturally relevant and more socially responsive by effectively presenting Indian philosophy, local knowledge, folk tradition, moral education and Indian language on a digital platform (Ministry of Education, 2020; UNESCO, 2021).

3. Future Prospects

In the future, e-learning will evolve further with advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, virtual reality and data analysis. Artificial intelligence-based education will enable personalized learning tailored to each learner's need, interest, and pace of learning (UNESCO, 2023). At the same time, the importance of digital ethics will increase as with technological advancements, questions related to privacy, fairness, transparency and accountability will also become more important. In a changing knowledge society, lifelong learning will become an essential need of every citizen. Therefore, the education system of the future should aim not only to be limited to technological proficiency but should not be limited to technological proficiency but should be the creation of an ethical, inclusive, culturally sensitive and socially responsible digital society (OECD, 2023; World Bank, 2023).

Conclusion

1. Key findings

It is clear from the present study that the impact of e-learning is changing both the Indian education system and the social structure. It is emerging as an alternative method of teaching, as well as an effective medium for democratization of knowledge, universal access to education and social inclusion. Digital education is getting a new direction due to the expansion of information and communication **technology, increasing availability of internet and policy initiatives of the National Education Policy (2020). Through SWAYAM, DIKSHA, NPTEL and PM eVIDYA**, quality education has become more widely available beyond geographical and economic boundaries (Ministry of Education, 2020; UNESCO, 2023).

It is also clear from the sociological analysis that the impact of e-learning is promoting self-reliant learning, digital citizenship, collaborative learning, lifelong learning and global outlook. On the other hand, the digital divide, technological inequality, cybersecurity, screen-dependency and cultural distance are also emerging. From this, it is concluded that the impact of e-learning is not linear but its nature manifests in different forms according to the social, economic, cultural and technological situation. Therefore, it is more appropriate to understand e-learning as a dynamic process of social change (OECD, 2023; World Bank, 2023).

2. Sociological implications

From a sociological point of view, the impact of e-learning has given a new direction to the process of value

change in Indian society. This has resulted in the transformation of traditional teacher-centric and institution-centric education into a learner-centred, flexible and digitally immersive, digital immersive education system. Education is now a medium for knowledge transfer and is also an important foundation for social mobility, digital citizenship, cultural dialogue and democratic participation (National Education Policy, 2020; UNESCO, 2023).

Durkheim's theory of social integration, Weber's rationalization, Bourdieu's cultural and digital capital, Castells's network society, and Yogendra Singh's theory of tradition-modernity coordination prove to be very useful in explaining the social change produced by e-learning (Durkheim, 1922/1956; Weber, 1922/1978; Bourdieu, 1986; Castells, 1996; Singh, 1973). The study clearly shows that digital education, developed on the basis of equal opportunity, social justice, ethics and cultural inclusion, is an important foundation for inclusive and sustainable social development in Indian society.

3. Direction of future research

As the field of e-learning and price change is constantly evolving, there is a huge scope for empirical and comparative research on this subject in the future. The next study will provide a comparative analysis of the impact of e-learning between rural and urban areas, across different social classes, gender groups, tribal communities and economic strata. In addition, in-depth studies are also required on artificial intelligence-based education, personalized learning, digital ethics, cyber citizenship, mental health, and the social impact of digital inequality (UNESCO, 2023; OECD, 2023).

Research related to the integration of Indian Knowledge Tradition, local language, cultural diversity and value-based digital education is also of special importance in the future. Such studies will provide a useful foundation for policymakers, academicians and sociologists to develop an inclusive, equitable and culturally responsive digital education ecosystem. Future research will thus contribute significantly towards understanding e-learning as a technological innovation as well as an impactful process of social change, cultural reconstruction, and sustainable development.

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