



Educational Empowerment Of Rural Women: A Comprehensive Analysis Of Digital Teaching Resources.

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ABSTRACT

Women often face numerous obstacles that prevent them from accessing education in rural areas, particularly in areas with limited resources. Limited school access, cultural norms, financial limitations, and traditional gender roles are some of these obstacles. Through the offering of adaptable and accessible learning opportunities, digital teaching resources have emerged as a promising solution for bridging these educational gaps. Digital technology recent rapid advancements have completely transformed numerous aspects of contemporary society, including education. The integration of digital teaching resources in educational settings has created new learning opportunities and offered creative and interactive tools to improve the learning process. However, despite the promising potential of digital teaching resources, their usage and accessibility are still unevenly distributed, especially in rural areas. To overcome the digital divide and promote educational equality, this research aims to shed light on how digital teaching resources can empower women in rural communities. The socioeconomic well-being of individuals and communities can be greatly impacted by having access to high-quality education, which is a fundamental right. However, women face significant obstacles when trying to access educational resources in many rural areas of the world. To address the educational disparities experienced by women in rural areas, the purpose of this research paper is to examine the application and efficacy of digital teaching resources. The goal of the study is to assess how these resources affect improving educational opportunities and advancing gender equality.

This study was conducted on 240 undergraduate and postgraduate students from arts, science, and commerce backgrounds. These students were selected from four colleges located in Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh, India, through equal allocation. The result revealed that most of the respondent had access to digital tool, mostly through their own personal devices (more than 50%) or those owned by their families (42%). Tablets (0.4%) and laptops (8.8%) were the next most popular digital devices to use, behind mobile phones (75%). 15% of respondents used no digital device at all.

Keywords: educational resources, digital technology, quality education, digital divide, women empowerment, gender equality.

Introduction:

Women have historically suffered more than men from these educational inequalities in rural areas. Opportunities for female students to pursue higher education are frequently restricted by gender biases and traditional social norms, making it difficult for them to gain the knowledge and skills necessary for both economic independence and personal development. To promote women's empowerment and gender equality, which in turn contributes to sustainable development on a larger scale, it is crucial to close the gender gap in education. The 2011 census shows that women in India have much lower levels of literacy than do men. The female literacy rate is (64.46%), which is lower than the national literacy rate (74.04%), according to data for the year 2011 literacy rate for men is 82.14 percent, while the female literacy rate in India is significantly lower

than the global average of 79.7 percent. For the targets of SDG- 4, the circumstance of Indian women is quite worrying.

According to statistics from 2011, the education situation for women in some Indian states, such as Rajasthan (52.12 percent) and Bihar (51.50 percent), is very upsetting. The main cause of this situation is the extremely low enrollment of girls in schools, and even those who are admitted are frequently required to drop out for a variety of reasons that are often accompanied by many restrictive cultural norms. Social attitudes are also to blame.

Approximately 39.4% of girls between the ages of 15 and 18 are not registered in any institution for school education, and many of them work as domestic helpers or beg, according to the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights' 2018 report. According to statistics, there are still approximately 145 million women in India (14 crore 50 lakh) who are illiterate. Furthermore, it should be noted that the situation is worse in rural than in urban areas. The fundamental difference in education between men and women can also be seen in digital form as a gender digital divide if the present educational status of women is highlighted in the context of digital technology. Despite this difference, women have made some progress with the help of technology, but educational efforts are needed for a satisfactory outcome.

The gender digital divide among professionals in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) is currently 12.5 percent, according to research by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). These previously mentioned differences can be attributed to numerous factors. For women, the issues of safety and access have always been incompatible, and both have a significant impact on the learning opportunities offered to women. Economic and social constraints exist concurrently. Many people have very low family incomes, and, for financial reasons, they do not prioritize their daughters' education. Through accessible Internet, e-learning is being promoted to lessen this financial hardship. A significant amount of human life is impacted by technology; as a result, if the technology does not reach its true representative, it becomes biased and leads to social inequality. Therefore, the reach of digital education must be needed for rural women.

Research Objective- To examine digital educational tools for rural women.

Methodology:

The purpose of this research paper is to investigate the role of digital education for rural women and their empowerment. The research study used quantitative approach, and primary data collection method. The study was conducted on 240 undergraduate and postgraduate students from arts, science, and commerce backgrounds. These students were selected from four colleges located in Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh, India, through equal allocation.

Sampling Procedure:

To ensure that the sampling procedure is random, a two-stage sampling technique was used. First, the four colleges in Jaunpur were selected randomly from the list of all colleges of Jaunpur. Sample size calculated was

$$n = \frac{\left(\frac{z}{d}\right)^2 \times p \times (1-p) \times e}{(1-r)} = \frac{\left(\frac{1.645}{0.075}\right)^2 \times 0.33 \times (1-0.33) \times 2}{(1-0.10)} = 237$$

~ 240 (in order to make equal allocation from four selected colleges)

(Here, level of significance = 0.05, so, the value of the standard normal variate at 5% level of significance for right tailed test (alternative being digital learning is more effective than classroom learning), was $z = 1.64$.

Margin of error = $d = 7.5\%$.

As per the National Family Health Survey (2019-21), only one in three women in India (33%) have ever used the internet. So, p was taken to be 0.33.

Design effect for cluster sampling = $e = 2$; and

Non-response rate = 0.10)

Then, a list of all undergraduate and postgraduate students from arts, science, and commerce backgrounds was obtained from each college.

From each college, an equal number of participants (i.e, 60) were selected randomly to participate in the study.

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Result and Discussion:

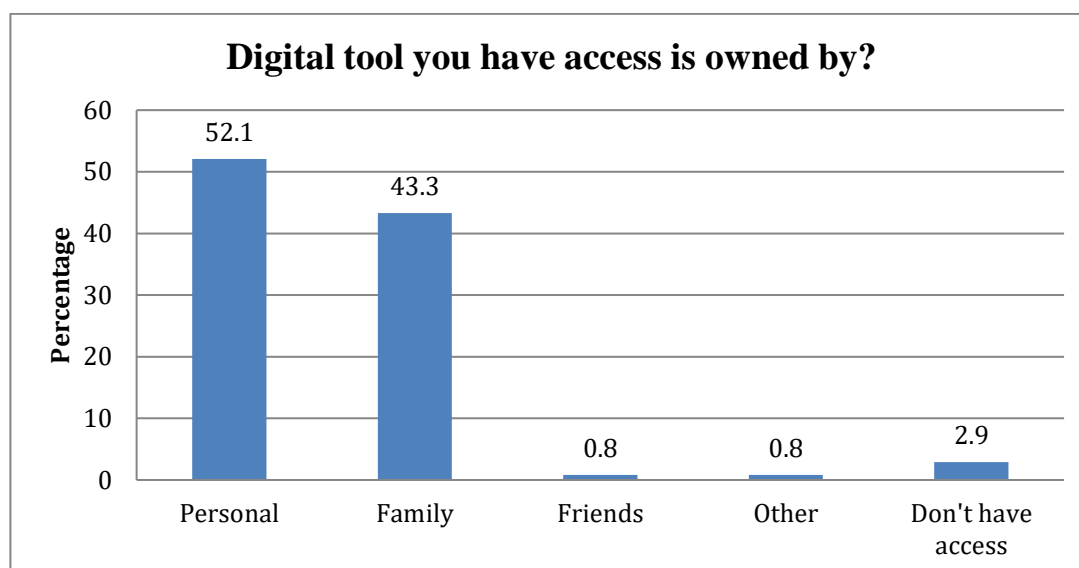
The result of the conducted study are presented through table and chart.

Socio-Demographic Profile of the respondents:

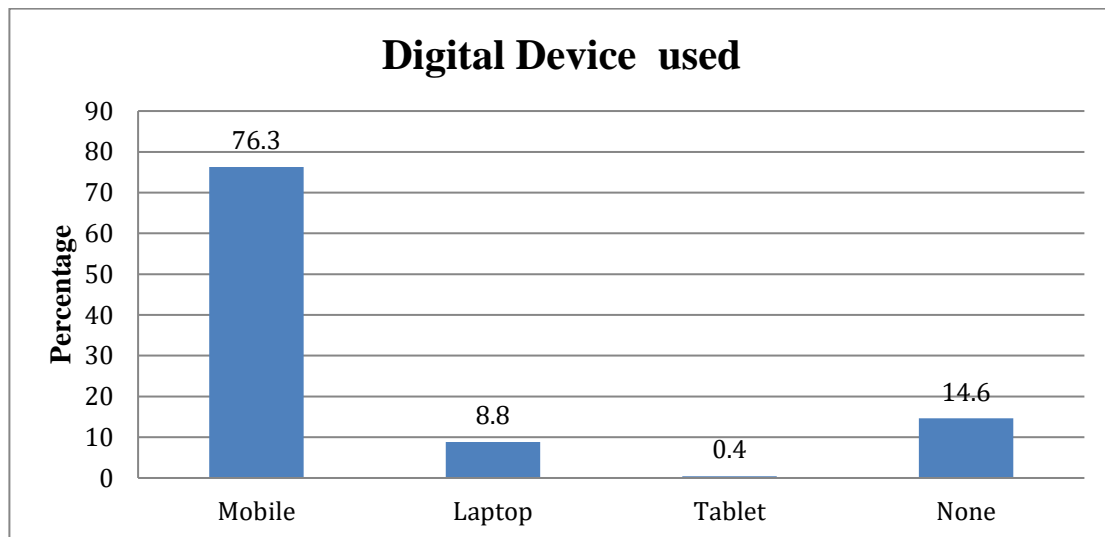
Majority of the respondents were in the age-group 15-19 and remaining were aged between 20-24 years. Most of the respondents were UG student studying arts subject. More than half of the respondents belonged to OBC category. Majority of respondents were unmarried, had joint family, and had educated Parents. Majority of respondents had two sisters, and more than half of the respondents had one brother.

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Profile of the respondents

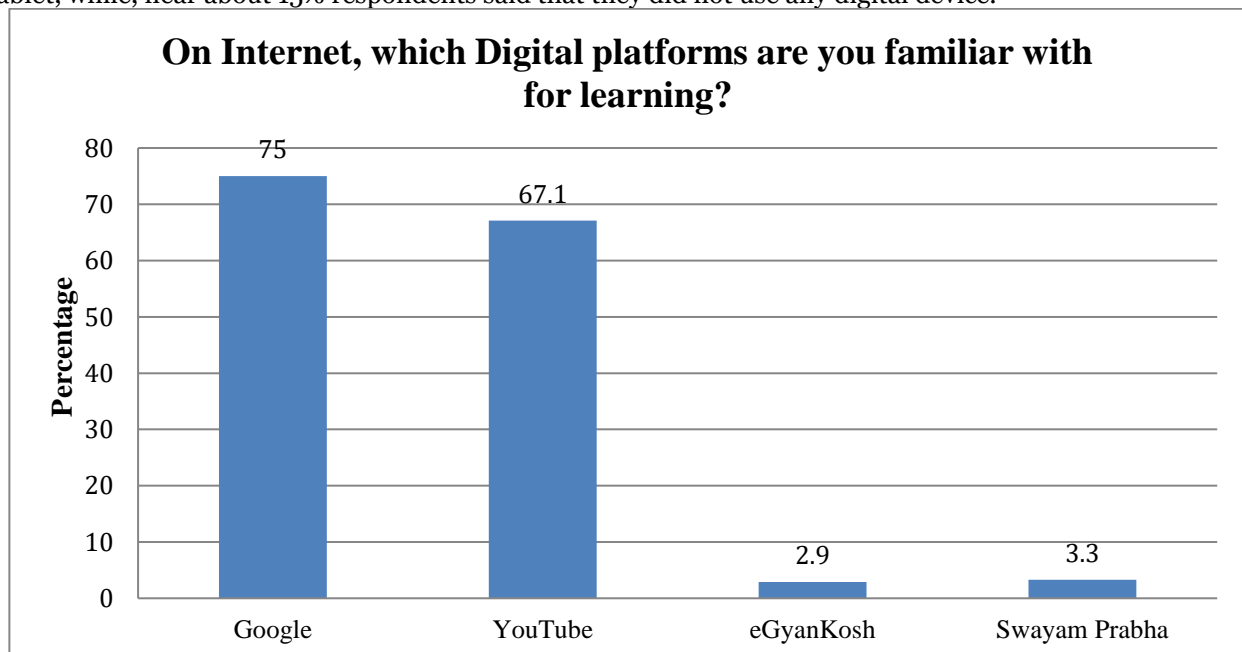
Socio-Demographic Variables		Frequency	Percent
Age	15-19	169	70.4%
	20-24	71	29.6%
Class	UG	201	83.8%
	PG	39	16.3%
Subject	Arts	104	43.3%
	Commerce	40	16.7%
	Science	96	40.0%
College	Sultanat Bahadur P.G College	60	25.0%
	TDM PG College	60	25.0%
	Raja Krishna Dutta PG College	60	25.0%
	TD PG College	60	25.0%
Category	General	89	37.1%
	OBC	127	52.9%
	SC	24	10.0%
	ST	0	0.0%
	Other	0	0.0%
Marital Status	Unmarried	224	93.3%
	Married	16	6.7%
Type of family	Nuclear	94	39.2%
	Joint	146	60.8%
Mother's Educational Status	Uneducated	68	28.3%
	Educated	172	71.7%
Father's Educational Status	Uneducated	20	8.3%
	Educated	220	91.7%
Number of Brothers	None	31	12.9%
	One	130	54.2%
	Two	59	24.6%
	Three or More	20	8.3%
Number of Sisters	None	44	18.3%
	One	61	25.4%
	Two	70	29.2%
	Three or more	65	27.1%



Majority of respondents have access to digital tool while around 3% does not have access to any digital tool. Among those who had access to digital tool, more than half had personal digital tool, while 42% had digital tool owned by family, 1.6% had digital tool owned by friends and others.



Nearly three-fourth of the respondents used mobile, 8.8% used laptop, and only one respondent (0.4%) used tablet, while, near about 15% respondents said that they did not use any digital device.



Majority of the respondents were familiar with Google (75%) and YouTube (67%) for digital learning, while only 3.3% were familiar with Swayam Prabha and 2.9% were familiar with e- GyanKosh.

Most survey participants have access to digital tools, while only about 3% do not. More than half of those with access to digital tools had their own devices, compared to 42% who owned them for their families, 1.6% who had them for other people, and only 5% who did not. Only one respondent (0.4%) reported using a tablet, while one respondent (nearly three-fourths) said they did not use any digital device. Meanwhile, 8.8% of respondents said they used a laptop, and 15% said they did not use any digital media at all. Only 3.3% and 2.9% of respondents, respectively, were familiar with Swayam Prabha and e-GyanKosh, while the majority of respondents (75%) and YouTube (67%) were familiar with Google for digital learning.

A sizable portion of respondents (75%) and YouTube (67%) users indicate that these platforms are essential for digital learning in rural areas. Using these well-known platforms to spread educational content can have a significant impact. On the other hand, the low awareness of platforms like Swayam Prabha (3.3%) and e-GyanKosh (2.9%) highlights the need for extensive awareness campaigns and training programs regarding the variety of available digital learning options. The accessibility and potency of digital teaching resources may be improved by these initiatives.

It is crucial to provide digital accessibility, content personalization, and awareness campaigns in top priority to achieve educational equality in rural areas. The inclusion of digital teaching resources in the educational

system has the potential to significantly increase the level of empowerment of women in these areas, providing them with better learning opportunities and a more promising future.

Research data highlights several critical aspects related to the use of digital teaching resources. Let us examine the results and implications in more detail.

It is important to note that 3% of respondents do not have access to any digital tools. The digital divide that still exists in rural areas is highlighted potentially limiting educational opportunities. More than 50% of respondents own a personal digital tool, indicating a rising ownership of equipment necessary for gaining access to educational content. However, a sizable portion relies on family-owned digital media, indicating shared access and potential constraints. In the context of device use, Mobile usage is quite common (74%) and is a significant factor in the necessity of educational content that is mobile-friendly. The lack of use of laptops and tablets suggests that educational resources need to be designed for mobile platforms. and the importance of using Google and YouTube for the distribution of educational content is highlighted by the high familiarity with both services (75% and 67%, respectively). In contrast, low familiarity with websites like Swayam Prabha (3.3%) and e-GyanKosh (2.9%) indicates a need for increased education and training regarding a variety of digital learning options.

The information points to the need for specialized strategies to close the digital divide. Policy advocacy, public-private partnerships, and community involvement should all be prioritized. To ensure equal opportunities, policies should encourage digital literacy and accessibility in rural areas. Stakeholder collaborations may result in shared ownership of digital media or subsidized access. A further way to maximize the impact of the digital tools at hand is to promote community-based initiatives for sharing digital resources within families or communities. Here are some Suggestions regarding this-

- ❖ **Content Customization:** Given the prevalence of mobile usage, creating educational content that is compatible with mobile devices is essential. On a range of screen sizes, the information should be easy to access and understand.
- ❖ **Education and Awareness:** Efforts should be made to increase understanding of a wider array of digital learning platforms. Training programs can enable women to effectively use a range of platforms.
- ❖ **Public-private partnerships:** By offering subsidized or shared ownership of digital media devices, cooperation between government agencies, NGOs, and private entities can close the digital divide.
- ❖ **Community Engagement:** Those without personal digital device can gain access to educational content by supporting community-based initiatives to share digital resources within families or communities.
- ❖ **Advocating for policies that support digital literacy and accessibility in remote areas is crucial for long-term empowerment and educational equality.**

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the findings highlight the need for comprehensive strategies that make device accessibility, content optimization, digital literacy, and community engagement into account to truly empower women in rural areas through digital teaching resources.

The results of this study shed light on the accessibility and usage of digital learning tools among women in rural areas as well as their familiarity with digital learning platforms. The conclusions drawn from these findings are crucial in understanding how digital teaching resources can be used to advance educational equality in such areas.

According to the study, 3% of respondents reported having no access to any digital learning tool, illustrating the digital divide that exists in rural areas. Through extensive initiatives aimed at granting access to digital devices, this gap which is a significant contributor to educational disparity must be closed. Many respondents (57%) who reported having personal digital devices points to the need for strategies ensuring individual ownership, through financially feasible government initiatives or partnerships with for-profit businesses.

According to study Mobile-friendly educational content is essential, as evidenced by the respondents' high mobile phone usage (74%). This is consistent with the current digital era, in which smartphones are pervasive. It is necessary to adapt educational materials for mobile platforms, though, given the relatively low usage of laptops and tablets. To accommodate the widespread use of mobile devices, it is essential to develop user-friendly, mobile-compatible educational applications or websites.

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