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Research Paper Title: **e-Proctored Exams in ODL**

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby would like to explicitly state that the write-up titled "**e-Proctored Exams in ODL**" is original and has not been published earlier, or that it is not under consideration for possible publication elsewhere.

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e-Proctored Exams in ODL

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Abstract

Due to technical and available resource constraints, conducting exams online through test-taking environments is complex. Therefore, finding effective and automated proctoring solution for online examinations and assessments can be a challenge. In proctored examinations, a software monitors student's computer desktop, webcam video and audio. Once examination is over, the data captured by the proctoring software is transferred to the proctoring department for review. Successful implementation of e-proctored environment for conducting online test will definitely increase transparency in the examinations and evaluation system.

Keywords: ODL, E-proctor, web-proctor, Live-proctoring, record-proctoring.

Introduction

While discussing about e-Proctored examinations in Online and Distance Learning, one should first understand meanings of terminologies used in title itself.

Online and Distance Learning (ODL):

Distance learning exists in two forms:

1. Distance learning with study material in a traditional way, such as books, notes, etc.
2. Distance learning with study material with direct lecture through online mode, recorded lectures of experts, eBooks, etc.

Online learning in traditional way of education:

- Due to pandemic situation throughout the world, online teaching, learning and evaluation became keywords in the field of education.

In both processes, the examinations and evaluations are important factors to issue certification. As e-Proctored examinations and evaluations are expected to be unbiased, there will be proper reflection of knowledge earned by student and increased transparency. These processes need to be well defined.

Methodology:

As the study is based on secondary research, this researcher went through studies already published related to this topic. Also, the knowledge shared by persons working in examination systems in various institutions is included in this paper.

e-Proctored Examinations – Meaning, Types and Problems:

e-Proctored examinations are mainly used in ODL mode as its teaching-learning method is online. Due to pandemic situation, both Distance Learning institutes providing study material to students and even institutions having traditional in-campus learning method required to take examinations through online mode. For these two traditional types in education system, it is a new challenge to conduct examinations through online mode. Because conducting examinations with this new mode has new challenges such as how to send question paper, how student will write, how student will submit answer book and most importantly how to monitor student's activities while he writes the answers. For them, the e-Proctored examination, even if new, is one of the solutions.

During the examination, monitoring of student's behaviour is usually done through supervision, i.e. under proctor. Meaning of proctor itself is:

"A proctor monitors tests and exams. The purpose is simply to provide accountability, making sure students do not cheat or manipulate the test in any way. They may also be assigned with some responsibility of explaining the guidelines or rules."

So questions comes in mind:

What is a Proctored Exam?

"A proctored exam is associated with having an individual (proctor) overseeing an exam and monitoring the students. A proctor significantly impacts an exam's validity and integrity with airtight invigilation. In case a student violates the code of conduct, a proctor can discontinue the test and report the matter to the institution conducting the assessment."

What is Subsequent Proctoring?

"Subsequent proctoring is when images and logs are captured, and a video is recorded while candidates take the test, like a webcam proctored test. A proctor can later assess whether examinees engaged in illicit activities, based on the evidence from the captured images. Such exams can be taken at a time of students' convenience. They just have to log in and commence the exam without prior scheduling."

What is Online Proctoring?

Online proctoring refers to a digital form of assessment, enabling candidates to take exams from any location. The proctored exam software is used during online proctoring to allow students and participants to take exams at a place of their choosing. It must be adequately reliable and cheat-proof.

Proctoring an online exam is no longer arduous. Monitoring software is employed to monitor the test-takers through audio and video, establishing the exam's credibility and authenticity."

Online proctoring can be done in following different types:

Live Proctoring – A human invigilator supervises the exam remotely via webcam.

Auto Proctoring – AI-based proctoring monitors the candidate's live webcam feed, auto-flags up to 18 digressions.

Recorded Proctoring – There's no proctor involved in monitoring the entire session in real-time. Instead, the candidates' audio-visual and screen-sharing feeds are recorded throughout the test and reviewed later at the proctor's convenience.

What is a Web Proctored Exam?

Web proctored exam is the same as an online proctored exam, meaning it enables test-taking and test-hosting from any part of the world. A web proctored exam negates instances of unwarranted activities by employing advanced anti-cheating technology. One can easily take a web proctored exam or an online proctored exam at home.

Controversy over e-Proctoring escalated during the COVID-19 pandemic in year 2020, when many universities, K-12 schools and standardized testing organizations turned to commercial e-Proctoring suppliers for services. Students across the world protested the use of commercial e-Proctoring services at their post-secondary institutions.

Challenges to conduct e-Proctored examinations in India are:

1. Non-availability of required kind of hardware infrastructure, software, etc.
2. Non-availability of network at various remote places.
3. Non-availability of electricity connections at remote places.
4. Also, mind-set of students, parents and even persons involved in conducting the examinations and evaluation.

Conclusion

e-Proctored examinations are nowadays essential, unavoidable, can be successful.

1. However, precautions need to be taken to overcome challenges by spreading awareness about required hardware and software as well as making use of it to students and parents right from admission stage.
2. Workshops/Training programmes may be arranged to increase awareness within all the stakeholders.

Successful implementation of e-Proctored examinations will surely increase credibility, unbiasedness and transparency in the examinations and evaluation system.

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