

Smile Foundation mulls AI-integration and more Digitization in Mission Education

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[Foundation](#), an Indian development organization, is known for its life-cycle approach of development centered around children and their families. The organization has been piloting projects focused on integrating relevant technological applications in the areas of child education, especially in remote rural areas and underserved urban communities.

The recent pandemic might have brought devastation and uncertainty across the globe. However, it did fast-track some disruptions and prepone significant opportunities which might have taken longer time to be adapted. India seems to have gained the most from the disruptions, most prominently in the area of education.



A Mission Education smart classroom is in progress in India

“

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In the meanwhile, estimates have put India as the world's most populous country. This has also brought up the necessity to harness the demographic dividend. It begins with children, and their education.

India seems to have found a homegrown, new formula. Digitization and the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 have every potential to further the reach and efficacy of

child education in India. With 1.5 million schools and 250 million children, India's education system is one of the largest in the world too.

The government in India swiftly and diligently responded to the COVID-19 induced lockdown and used digital wherewithal to ensure continued schooling for children. The Indian government also launched a plethora of apps, channels, portals and other tools to facilitate online learning.

Smile Foundation, like a few other civil society organizations, also explored and researched the available options in government and private sectors, with an objective to complement the governmental efforts. Undoubtedly, digitization in education continued to find prominence in the endeavour to create access as well as efficacy for quality education in a revolutionary way.

Digitization of education in India is going to be in the scheme of things in the realm of the future of learning. In the meantime, the Government of India has defined different channels and taken several initiatives to disseminate educational and pedagogic means and sources across the country.

Even the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes digitization as well as the use of technology in education. Another focus is on education technology for further training, especially in rural areas. This initiative is primarily meant to provide quality education, especially within tier-2 and tier-3 towns, and villages. What looked like a distant dream in the recent past seems to be a reality soon.

Even though digital mode of education in India is booming, there are a few major challenges that might come on the way of its growth. Places with low internet connectivity may find it difficult to access the facilities. Training the teachers swiftly in such a large country may need more resources and collaboration. Only those teachers and administrators who are technically sound can conduct digital classes and also make it effective for the students. Uniformly and quickly, all schools require to have proper facilities for digital classrooms too.

However, on the brighter side, there is a way forward for the future of digital education in India. Developing e-content in local languages would help teaching and learning more effective, going



An India primary teacher conducts a digital classroom



Children getting familiar with digital education and smart classes

by the diversity of the linguistic map. Virtual labs and skill development courses may also be added to schools. Priority will gradually be given to getting access to digital education anytime, anywhere. In order to get the best e-learning resources; however, teachers have to upskill themselves accordingly.

“Application of AI (artificial intelligence) in the areas of personalization of education and experiential learning in the near future will bring exciting outcome,” opines [Santanu Mishra](#), Co-founder & Executive Trustee of Smile Foundation. He adds, “Government-corporate-civil society collaboration in the area of education is going to be more synchronized and need-based in the coming days as child education will continue to remain a common cause and one of the national priorities.”

“Education technology and digitization of education has given us an opportunity to reimagine the teaching-learning process within [Mission Education](#) initiative of Smile Foundation.” says Seema Kumar, Education Specialist at Smile Foundation. “Education technology and digitization of education have the potential to transform the way we approach education by enabling personalized learning, expanding access to education, and promoting collaboration and creativity. These will play a crucial role in the future of education, and it will likely continue to evolve and shape the way we teach and learn in the years to come.”

Smile Foundation has been working in 26 states of India, benefitting more than 1.5 million children and their families every year through various welfare projects focusing on children, their families and the communities.

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