

● A DECADE OF TRANSFORMATION

Edtech sector, today and tomorrow

Thanks to research and innovation, educators have finally been able to show the door to rote learning



Beas Dev Ralhan

THE INDIAN EDUCATION sector has witnessed massive changes in the last decade, and it only makes it likely that the changes in the coming decade are going to be all the more grand and mind-boggling. Thanks to these changes collectively, which are nothing short of a revolution, educators have finally been able to show the door to rote learning. A lot of research and innovation has gone into trying to make learning fun and interactive, with the motive of making students lifelong learners. The ground has been prepared and it's time to reap the benefits.

Last 10 years

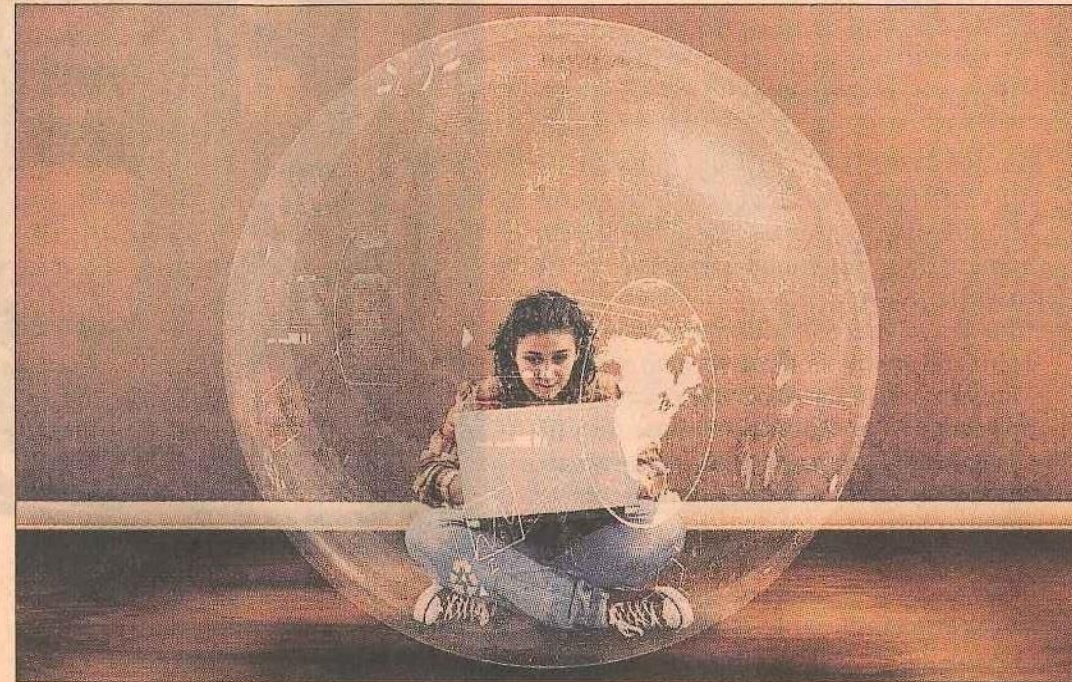
Outlook overhaul: First, the approach to education has changed in the last 10 years. For instance, the government has shifted its focus from just literacy to quality education.

Students gather degree after degree without gaining the required skills to be employable. This situation has propelled the need to bring forth a change in the approach to education. Now, students have started playing a proactive role in their education, and the teacher's role has shifted from being the sole arbiter of knowledge to a mentor.

Technology penetration: Technology has been a late entrant in the education sector. But it has steadily sown the seeds of effective personalised learning and improved the accessibility of education. Almost every household has a smartphone, and with adaptive learning technology, students can learn at their own pace.

The next 10 years

Simulations, VR and AR will rule: The digital classroom has found a strong foothold in the education sector in the last one decade, and audiovisual content has found a way to the classroom to hold the student's attention for longer. The rote learning method had only catered to auditory learners; audiovisual content caters to auditory and visual learners too. In the next 10 years, you can expect educational content to be more interactive. Virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR) videos and simulations will be the primary modes of content. Digital games will soon be made exclusively to impart lessons. Now, students learn a thing or two about history and ancient civilisations from video games like Civilisation. In the fu-



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ture, they will be able to learn about, say, the Indus Valley Civilisation, while having a virtual stroll in the city.

Technology will take over teachers' mundane tasks: Evaluation of assessments, in particular, makes teachers' tasks cumbersome. Assessing each assignment of each student, all through the year, can take a toll on their motivation. They end up spending a lot of time and energy on this task, which, if saved, can be invested in building a one-to-one relationship with students. The good news is that technology has already come to their rescue, and is set to become far more advanced in the coming years. Objective-type answers can be assessed by computers.

Moreover, computers can also detect grammatical and spelling errors. Grammar tools will soon be able to check essays for discrepancies in style issues and correct semantics, too. There will be tools to check the essays for facts, plagiarism, flow of text, etc. Such technological advancements will help in improving students' speaking skills too, by improving their pronunciation.

Education to get social: Ten years ago, Facebook was the brave new social world. Now, that world has widened enough to include Pinterest, Instagram, etc. And, over the next 10 years, the definition and boundary of the social world is going to expand even further, with hardware becoming cheaper and internet access costs slated to reduce, and thus social media access becoming easier. Some of the experiential learning labs are now hosted on a computer. Soon, there will be apps for all such activities. Students will connect with each other on social media platforms to collaborate on projects and exchange learnings, thus leading to crumbling of geographical boundaries.

Amazing innovations will gratify the education sector. For instance, each student might have robots as companions, which, among other things, will have all the knowledge and information about one subject fed into them. These bots will take personalised learning to a new level altogether.

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