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# IMPLEMENTING DIGITAL IDEAS

With a network of more than 1.4 million schools and 18,000 higher education institutes, the market for digital education in India is enormous. Today, learning is no longer a luxury but implementation of digital tools has become a necessity in schools. According to Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler, the total e-learning industry in India has grown at a healthy pace of 25 per cent in the last five years and its size is currently estimated at \$ 700 million.

The key factors leading to growth of digital market in India are rising demand from various segments, growing number of personal computers, smart phone users, improving penetration of Internet, and increasing participation at the government level. Further, launch of a plethora of information technology related platforms has generated huge entrepreneurship opportunities and many education startups have been coming up with their new and improved versions of e-learning modules in line with the demands and ever changing needs of the students. These contents are designed to present a holistic picture with audio supplements, which makes it lot more interesting as learn-

ONLINE EDUCATION WILL PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN DEMAND AND SUPPLY OF SKILLED MANPOWER, WRITES MONICA MALHOTRA KANDHARI

important role to bridge the gap between demand and supply of skilled manpower.

To be optimally effective, skill based education should ideally be imparted right from the school level, in order to prepare the learners to excel in his or her chosen field. Today, with computers taking over, training for skillful jobs is on ascend. Providing skill based education with practical hands-on-sessions at the school level will also arouse interest and foster innovative thoughts in the minds of young students. Such education system that focuses on flexible dual learning at the school level will also help lay the foundation for development of large pool of skilled work force for the future.

Technology is the backbone of e-learning as a facilitator and the medium for creation and dissemination of content. As connectivity only improves from here on, more students will join the online format to learn and train in their chosen vocation. The technological advancement will also pull down training costs in the medium to long run. Rapid advancements made in the field of technology also requires promoters and providers of e-learning in evolving area of vocational training to be constantly on their toes and deliver content that is latest and relevant to learners. Since vocational training is being imparted online, the lessons too need to be precise with ample visuals detailing the processes so that learning is not hampered.

A strong vocational education system is



ers now utilise both visual and audio senses.

The use of e-learning tools to impart vocational training to the country's youth has picked up momentum with the launch of a number of government initiatives like "Skill India", "Digital India" and "Start Up India." With Internet and broadband connections now reaching even villages in the hinterland, companies have started to harness technology to reach out to students in far flung areas, communicate with them and help them acquire new skills. These e-learning modules cannot only impart theoretical lectures but thanks to the visual medium, also stream videos demonstrating and explaining the processes in a particular vocation.

Thus, online learning is making a difference in vocational and skill development education with a practical and hands on approach as opposed to a purely academic approach. As per a government report, by 2022, around 119 million additional skilled workforce will be required by 24 sectors such as construction, retail, transportation logistics, automobile, and handloom. Any shortfall in skilled manpower has the potential to seriously impede the future economic growth of the country. This is where online education will play an



required to ensure the availability of skilled manpower to meet future requirements. Here, technological innovations like virtual reality and 3D printing has the potential to drive e-learning to the next level. Many institutes make every effort to introduce and make available the latest technology solutions among students and teachers across the country through various mediums.

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