Scope of "e-learning" in India in future and how it is being accepted in Indian markets today

India has history of ICT that saw rise in the 1990s. If we look at the market size, intuitively, with introduction of State-led initiatives such as Digital India, the scope is further expected to rise, however, the environment supporting e-learning in its various forms such as digital content, distance education etc. remain un-researched and in infancy. The presence and usage of e-learning platforms has risen, number of students as a result have increased access and participation, however since the content and curriculum is not culturally responsive and designed as per the regional needs of the diverse country, India is yet to expand phenomenally in the arena of e-learning.

Not just private sector, but the acceptance is also observed in the government system through introduction of various ICT/e-learning initiatives for teachers and students. The recent example of this could be teacher Certification by NIOS through online ODL, e-Pathshala, Swayam, Diksha and NROER.

Being a knowledge economy, led by the rapid growth in service sector, India stands at the crossroads where the most talked about demographic dividend to be reaped are contingent upon the quality and skills of the future labour force. Adding to this, in face of rapidly changing landscape of global economy with respect to education and skills, Indian education system too must ensure that it is apace with the dynamic changes in how knowledge is transacted and conceived.

The ripple effect of changing technology has opened doors for various possibilities for country like India; these possibilities pose the potential to mediate few major challenges. The general instance of the use of technology in simplest sense is seen as increasing audience base, reduced cost, self-paced and flexible learning and certification, peer learning, better learning management and cost-effective in face on numerous challenges to the public allocation of resources.

In addition to this, the scope of

SHALENDER SHARMA
VP - EDUCATION & SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, IPE GLOBAL

technology in context of India is much vast and compelling- as India constitutionally and with recent introduction of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) commits to quality education that is equitable and inclusive, e-learning is the solution to critical issues of mediating

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disadvantages having implications on equity and inclusive education. For e.g. gender related barriers to girls education where distance matters, hard to reach areas including difficult terrain and conflict areas etc. and much larger implications for mediating positively high opportunity cost of education participation.

India has experienced significant increase in the per capita use of internet and this could be seen as potential to shape the future of e-learning in the country. The future of e-learning in India looks promising as online education industry is expected to hit $1.96 billion

by 2021. E-learning must be seen as an important pathway to reach the unreached in the system at all levels of education. Immediate scope of e learning in India could be to address the falling quality of education, improving the learning outcome of students and for continuous professional development of teachers. The specific scope of e-learning could be identified in terms of:

- Short-term courses related to teaching and learning for in-service teachers
- Learning management system for more interactive learning
- Development of digital content for teachers and students
- With increasing number of mobile users, promotion of m-learning is more feasible than ever
- Individualised and personalised instruction
- Development of professional learning communities, where teachers can get the answer to their queries and adjust their instructional strategies accordingly
- Expansion of access to open resources at affordable cost to students belonging to disadvantaged section of the society
- Most importantly adaptive learning through e-learning is the need of the hour in India as majority of the students are falling behind the expected level of learning. This would allow these students to learn at their own pace.
- Last but not the least, e-learning in education can add significant value to the government's efforts in improving quality of education. The government of India has been making significant investments in promoting e-learning through various efforts such as DIKSHA and e-Pathshala. Integration of ICT in the teaching learning process is however a major area which requires content contextualisation, adequate and quality training of teachers.

(The views presented in the article by the author are personal, not representing the organisation's views)