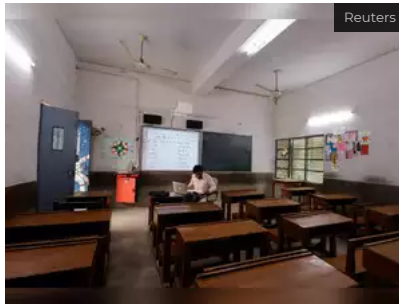


Back to Basics: How India Inc's using CSR to solve education

By Sreeradha Basu & Brinda Sarkar, ET Bureau • Last Updated: Feb 25, 2024, 09:06:00 AM IST

Synopsis

Corporate India is focusing on education and skilling initiatives at the school level to enhance digital literacy. Companies like L&T, P&G India, Dell Technologies, Mphasis, Infosys, and HUL are rolling out smart classrooms, learning centres, and STEM education programmes to improve learning outcomes for underprivileged students.



Reuters

[Corporate India](#) is stepping up [education](#) and skilling-specific endeavours at the school level, particularly on the [digital literacy](#) front.

Companies including Larsen & Toubro, P&G India, Dell Technologies, [Mphasis](#), [Infosys](#) and [HUL](#) are, through their corporate social responsibility ([CSR](#)) initiatives, rolling out [smart classrooms](#) and [learning centres](#) for the underprivileged; fixing [learning gaps](#) to enable improved outcomes; enhancing educational infrastructure; training teachers in techno-pedagogy; and driving digital inclusion.

L&T's STEM Education programme 'Engineering Futures', running in government and resource-poor trust-run schools, equips students with knowledge and skills in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). The programme has reached 38,545 students from 6th-8th grades across 205 schools and 713 teachers were trained in techno-pedagogy.

Mabel Abraham, Head - CSR, L&T, says they plan to scale up by introducing the programme to schools around L&T campuses pan-India and by integrating teachers' training through government training institutes.

P&G's flagship community initiative Shiksha, which has impacted over 3.5 million children so far, aims to remedy learning gaps in children by enhancing educational infra and empowering marginalised and underserved communities through education.

"We are strengthening impact by forging newer and deeper partnerships" said Enakshee Deva, Head - CSR, P&G India.

Flattening the Learning Curve

WHAT ARE COS FOCUSING ON

Educational infrastructure

Bridging digital divide by providing tech to schools

Training teachers

Fixing learning gaps

Empowering marginalised and underserved communities

Early childhood, girl child education

Tech/STEM education



Replicating successful models

"We are also leveraging innovative technology and solidifying the core programmes. We continue to collaborate with NGOs, government authorities, and communities to impact more and more children - building programmes with a long-term vision," said P&G India's Deva.

Mphasis CHRO Ayaskant Sarangi said they are scaling up education and skilling initiatives by identifying successful models and supporting their implementation in different states/aspirational districts. By collaborating with organisations with proven expertise in pedagogy, Mphasis wants to replicate successful models, expand partnerships, and reach a larger number of school students.

Edtech company Educational Initiatives (Ei) says it is seeing rising interest from corporates who have been engaged in education and now are keen to evaluate impactful and effective projects and improve learning outcomes.

Ei's personalised learning platform, Mindspark, is being offered to over 450,000 children in 500 government schools and 7,500 after-school centres across 17 states in English and nine other Indian languages. Mindspark is being implemented with the support of 20+ partners including 6+ CSR/Corporate Foundations - among them P&G, Amazon, Cognizant, and Kotak Education Foundation, said Pranav Kothari, CEO, Ei.

Digital focus

Infosys Foundation and eVidyaloka Trust signed an MoU last year to begin the Rural Digital and STEM Education programme also called Swadhyay to set up digital classrooms in 100 schools so that a minimum of 10,000 students from

the in-school programme and 5 million students across India can benefit from free digital STEM education. By providing access to quality education in Science, Mathematics, and English to students from grades 5-10, the programme aims to help them learn and develop beyond barriers.

Dell Technologies has long-term partnerships with NITI Aayog and Atal Innovation Mission for its three main programmes: Adoption & Establishment of Atal Tinkering Labs, Emerging Technologies and ShePreneur. These programmes have been designed to develop skills like creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving, and entrepreneurship.

“While our Emerging Technologies programme reached 2 million students across India, ShePreneur has helped establish 44 market-viable products and 17 patent applications,” said Archana Sahay, Regional Giving Manager, Asia Pacific, and Japan (APJ), Dell Technologies.

HUL is focused on driving behaviour change through interventions aimed at teaching school children the importance of maintaining health and hygiene, and waste management.

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