POLICY, IMPLEMENTATION AND TECHNOLOGY: Impacting Mathematical education in India

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The education scenario is very diverse and complex in India. In the last two decades government policies have seen a very high enrolment of first generation learners in school. The challenge now is to provide quality education to do justice to the aspirational levels. Mathematics and Science Education play a key role in this as these subjects are gateways to other streams of higher education that are seen as easy avenues towards employment.
Policy, implementation, Leveraging Technology.

India is a vast country with a very heterogeneous population. The governance structure has a Central Government while the regions have State Governments. As per the Indian Constitution, Education is a subject that is in the Concurrent list, i.e. comes under the common yet separate purview of the Centre and the State. In recent years, the Government of India has been working towards reforming the Education sector, with the view of making best use of the strong demographic figures in the country. The Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) was a flagship programme that has resulted in high levels of enrolment of school children in India. However, the regional and linguistic diversity, combined with the geographic spread has meant that overseeing effective teaching and education presents a tremendous challenge.

The National Knowledge Commission was set up by the Government of India between 2005- 2009, its mandate was to provide recommendations on a broad range of issues that would enable the country to compete effectively in a changing globalised economy. Education of course is of vital importance in this endeavour. Issues of equity and access combined with a huge shortage of trained teachers are serious obstacles in imparting basic education and literacy. However the increased enrolment and exposure has led to higher aspirational levels among the general population.

The Government of India is also taking steps to bring out broader levels of connectivity, especially in rural areas of India. There are plans to leverage modern ICT methods to provide access and address questions of equity. Some states are trying to ensure effective participation of the citizens and other stake holders while trying to provide better access to educational material, especially in mathematics and sciences. We shall share some of the experiences on the ground in this regard.