

# The Social EdTech Trend of 2025 you will find difficult to ignore – Are You Onboard?

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*Traces the historical evolution of Indian EdTech hardware — from early computer labs and projector-based smart classrooms to Smart TVs, Interactive Flat Panels, and pandemic-driven tablet and smartphone adoption — noting that none of these hardware shifts alone significantly closed learning gaps. Argues Personalized Adaptive Learning (PAL), which tailors content to individual student levels using data, is the key trend for 2025 that stakeholders should embrace.*

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Hi,

Hope you are well.

Just like we are seeing a change in the weather, we are also seeing a massive change within Social EdTech. By this, I mean that we are finally seeing the trend changing from providing hardware to schools to figuring out how students will interact with the devices. The stakeholders are now asking, "Where is the data on the learning outcomes?"

## From Hardware to Learning Outcomes: The Evolution of Social EdTech

Early 90s saw computers enter into our classrooms for the first time. By the early 2000s, the trend of smart classrooms had picked up. This was led by private schools which were equipping the classrooms with projectors, whiteboards, sound systems and extensive wiring. The government schools followed soon after and ICT policy ensured enough budgets were available for the government schools to set up desktop based Smart classrooms and computer labs.

But, did we see any shift in the learning outcomes?

There was no significant shift in learning outcomes observed over the years mostly due to non usage of the hardware because of both infrastructural and psychological barriers. The lack of local language content further hindered the impact. In 2017-18, with finer innovation, Smart TVs emerged as a more simpler solution for Smart Classrooms mostly because they were easy to set up and teachers were familiar with using them. It was supported by CSR and NGOs, but their use was short-lived. This is because the need for interactivity came in and the adoption of Interactive Flat Panels soon followed, which have now become the standard hardware for smart classrooms across most State Governments.

While we were seeing the transformation in the smart classroom space, there was some acceptance being built for tablets too inside the classrooms. You might also recall the 2018 ICT policy, which included tablets and laptops. But like Smart TVs, they, too, saw little adoption in the early years.

Then came Covid, and everything changed.

Suddenly, tablets and smartphones were seen as effective learning tools. Schools, teachers, and students who once overlooked them now recognized their potential. While adoption is still slow, it's happening much faster than before. What was once ignored is now making its way into the

classrooms and is enabling bridging of learning gaps.

Do you see the pattern? Social edtech has always been about hardware. But has that closed the learning gaps? Not really. In fact, they've only widened post-Covid.

ASER 2024 does show some progress, but mostly in junior grades.

The real challenge? Our classrooms and students still lack a solution that adapts to their unique learning needs and pace. A system that brings everything—learning paths, resources, and experiences—together in one seamless flow.

So, what's the way forward?

This is where Personalized Adaptive Learning (PAL) comes in as a very promising solution. PAL leverages an understanding of student's current learning levels and data analytics to tailor educational content to each student's unique needs. This approach not only addresses learning gaps but also enhances engagement and overall academic performance.

India dreams of becoming a developed nation by 2047—but how do we get there?

A skilled workforce will be the key. And that starts with one simple yet powerful goal: ensuring that every child in our government schools completes their education without learning gaps.

So the question is, "How ready are you to integrate PAL into your programs, state initiatives, and impact strategies?"