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By Vandana | July 11, 2015



Shantanu Rooj, Founder and Managing Director of Schoolguru

For 20-year-old Swapnil Mahato, education was a distant dream. Coming from an extremely poor family in Burdwan, about 100 kilometres off Kolkata, Mahato had to till land with his father to make ends meet. And even though he was passionate about studies, he had to drop out in the first year of graduation because he was not able to attend classes regularly.

A chance meeting with a Schoolguru partner helped Mahato realise his education dream. He got himself admitted to Netaji Subhash Open University and with Schoolguru's smartphone enabled learning, could finish his studies as well as help his father. Now, he works in the fields in the afternoon and studies in the evening on his smartphone.

Such is the impact of technology! While there are several firms catering to the K-12 segment in technology enabled learning, very few have looked at higher education. And inspite of a large number of public and private colleges being added every year, a vast section of students remain untouched of access to higher education. Technology, therefore is much needed to bring higher education to their doorsteps.

Distance courses and open learning were introduced to make higher education more accessible. But their impact too, has been limited.

Schoolguru plans to revolutionise the distance education scenario in India through technology. It works simply by offering content loaded

on an SD card to students. The SD card when inserted in a smartphone plays lecture videos, pdf content etc.

Once the students register for a correspondence course, they get the SD card free along with books for the particular course. “ We get high quality professors from across the state to lecture on a particular subject. The platform is quite interactive and students, if they are online, can also post questions or feedback”, says Shantanu Rooj, founder and Managing Director of Schoolguru.

Some of the notable universities Schoolguru has tie-ups with include Karnataka State Open University, B.R. Ambedkar Open University and Yashwant Rao Chavan Maharashtra Open University. These colleges enroll 2.5 to 3 lakh students annually.

Schoolguru is currently present in eight states and 1,50,000 students are using its technology enabled platform. It has a revenue share model with the universities wherein it gets as much as 60 per cent of the fees in some cases.

The company raised \$4 million in April 2014 from a clutch of HNI investors based out of US, Bangalore and Delhi. It plans to raise another round of funding in next few quarters.

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