



## A study on the role of Education for Rural Transformation

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### ABSTRACT

Role of Education in the rural transformation is preeminent. Education is the doorway to the wider world and it encourages people to get acknowledge with the issues related to rural development, taking effective decision and acting on them. It also gives special attention to the realization of developmental goals set for rural transformation. The present paper articulates the role of education for rural transformation, performance of various educational theories and practices used for rural development and also examine the effectiveness of technology based learning used for rural masses. The results indicate that due to education, rural sector has witnessed a tremendous transformation in the recent year. At the end of the study, some suggestive measures are given to enhance the role of education for rural transformation in India.

*Keywords: Rural Transformation; Education; Rural People; Technology.*

### Introduction

Education for Rural transformation is a concept that conveys a vision of pro-active and positive chain of changes and development of rural communities in which education plays a key role for shaping and achieving the goal of rural transformation. The dynamics of rural transformation include the human development gap, the urban-rural distance, various economic, social, human & technological challenges, regional imbalances and inequalities. The focus on rural transformation demands the recognition of new factors in the criteria to judge the quality and relevance of various educational theories and practices.

As per the census (2011), 72.2% of the nation population resides in rural areas in about 638,000 villages and the remaining 27.8% lives in more than 5,100 towns and over 380 urban agglomerations. A transformative view of rural change is all about seeking to develop the rural area and to improve the living condition of the farmer, the artisan, and the landless people and of all other sections of the rural society. Rural transformation is not a denial of the general notion of rural development rather it is the network of rural development but in a simplified and improved way. It helps in enabling rural

masses specifically to women, youth and disadvantaged segments of the population to achieve more of what they required and desired.

The main agenda of the rural transformation is to improve the quality of life in rural areas. For this purpose, the major imperatives taken are as follows:

- Reducing poverty and inequalities by the process of rapid change.
- Ensuring food security and accelerating agricultural development.
- Securing relevant role and opportunities for small-scale producers and farmers in national and global economy.
- Creating better and more employment and economic self-sufficiency in rural areas.
- Meeting the climate change and environmental challenges by making efficient use of natural resources such as water & land and promoting renewable energy production.
- Stimulating the growth and infrastructure of rural towns, intermediate cities and their hinterlands.
- Managing the menace of rural-urban migration efficiently.
- Securing universal access to basic public facilities such as education, health, housing, fresh water, electricity, transport and communications.
- Efficient and sustainable financial services and capital.
- Promoting innovation, research and development based on the requirements of rural masses, producers.
- Ensuring better use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
- Promoting sustainable development.

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UNESCO (2010) stated that education could be the only measure to greater social mobility and a way out of poverty in Chinese society. The same belief can be implied to Indian society. As education play an important role along with financial support and industrialization in the poverty reduction and also in rural transformation

Under the constitution of India, education is a concurrent subject with a sharing of responsibilities between the Centre and States government. The last two decades have witnessed the emergence of a various education-specific support institutions including District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Block Resource Centres (BRC), and in rural areas, Village Education Committees (VEC) along with an increased involvement of NGOs. The establishment of Panchayati Raj has also proved important milestone in education sector in rural areas across the nation.

Education subsumes the core ideas of rural transformation which is primarily concerned with improvisation in the well-being of rural people by enhancing their skills, productive capacities, expansion of choices in life and raise voice against public practices or policies which creates discrimination. Emerging trends point out that the motto of education is consistent with the rural development literature that emphasize on agrarian change, integrated national development without marginalizing rural people and the interconnected political economy. (UNESCO-INRULED, 2012)

Education for Rural Transformation (ERT) has gained importance at the both international and national level as it highlights the discourse about how the majority of the world's poor can further improvise their quality of life through planned and concerned efforts. It also gives attention to the education and learning whether it is formal, non-formal or informal and addresses the hopes, needs and expectations of the rural majority poor. Emphasizing the role of education, the Education Commission (1966) titled its report as Education for National Development. The transformative role of education, for the nation and society at large, is valid enough in case of rural transformation, particularly since India lives in her villages.

## Review of Literature

In today's society, education has a significant role in generating individual level-changes, which in turn lead to a broader impact on society. (Shaw, 2011). To be more precise, in the UNESCO-INRULED (2001) study entitled: 'Education for Rural Transformation-Towards a Policy Framework', education is regarded as the major driving vehicle and proactive facilitator in the changing phase of rural transformation. The report also found that education could enable rural people better equipped, expand their choices and also could increase their capacity to adapt easily in the changing environment

According to Tilak (2011), Education for rural transformation is an effective instrument for poverty alleviation, redistribution of forces, improvement of equity, elevating occupational and social mobility. Rural areas and rural people are not homogenous in any country or regions. Hence, educational needs must be responsive towards the building of diverse skills, capacities for using economic opportunities, improving livelihood and improving the

livelihood and quality of life. (Chinapah, 2010; INRULED, 2012)

The active participation of students in various activities at school and in the classroom plays a critical role in generating the awareness among students (Wadhwa, 2017), particularly among students belonging to rural area. As per the views of Acker & Gasperini (2009), the instrumental usage of education as a vehicle for empowerment and mobilization in the process of rural transformation has been extolled for capacity building, increased self-confidence and better interaction / participation in social and economic changes.

## Objectives

The main objectives of the study are as follows:

- To study the role of education for rural transformation.
- To study the performance of various educational theories and practices used for rural development.
- To examine the effectiveness of technology based learning used for rural masses.
- To provide some suggestive measures to enhance the role of education for rural transformation in India`.

## Research Methodology

The study is mainly based on secondary data which has been collected from the various documents, reports, magazines, journals, internet and other sources. For analyzing the data, simple statistical method i.e. descriptive and analytical method is used.

## Results

### Role of Education for Rural Transformation

Education has been considered as an instrument of social change in the world. There are many new emerging trends in education which are used for rural transformation. One of them is to educate the rural people about the new emerging concepts that would benefit them in achieving the qualitative life. It includes education on health, shelter, food security, sustainable development, organic farming, agriculture development, economic self-sufficiency, climate change & environmental challenges, renewable energy production, infrastructure development, managing finance, crops production, use of fertilizer, small family norms, women empowerment, etc. Education on these matters has increased the awareness level of the rural people in the nation.

In most of the villages, with the devolution of power to the Panchayats (Local Self-government), there is some movement and hope for better education and rural transformation. The role of non-governmental social organizations also occupies an important place in the education and rural transformation initiatives.

### Performance of Various Educational Theories and Practices Used for Rural Transformation

Education is empowering the rural individuals. It empowers villagers to find solution, be it in health, agriculture, finance, food, etc. Steadily, the demand for education among the rural masses has been increased. Now, more and more people wants to send their children to the school and many want to educate themselves.

The government has given importance to technical and vocational education. Various scholarships used to be granted to the poor rural students. The school curriculum has been reformed to meet the labor market demands. Resources of the schools are also utilized to provide training for rural migrant worker; various local income generation programs are also taught. Meanwhile, informal and non-formal education also plays an indispensable role. Educational programs are reformed to address diverse learning needs.

Various educational interventions have led to the agriculture advancement, income increase, building the idea of democracy at grassroots level, mainstreaming rural migrant worker. Although the outputs varies but one cannot deny the somehow improved performance of various educational theories and practices used for the different variables of rural transformation. It is within this context that various educational theories and practices become a strategic interventions used by many educationists to describe the transformative process enabling individuals to get education and facilitate economic, social mobility and personal development.

There is also an another side regarding the performance of these educational practices as even after six decades of independence, states like Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan and many others are still struggling to achieve universal enrolment, retention and quality education. Schools in rural areas are promoted to raise the level of education and literacy. But today also, around 30 percent of India's population is illiterate and cannot read or write. Schools in rural areas are inadequate and often equivalent to non-existent. Government's initiative to raise literacy is giving results but steadily.

### **Effectiveness of Technology Based Learning Used for Rural Masses**

Technology based intervention is a powerful tool for rural transformation. It helps in easy and better learning. The ultimate goal of technology based education is to cultivate new types of skillful, well-educated and capable individual in rural areas. It not only prepares rural people to reduce risks and seize the opportunities but also reinforces transformation process through providing qualitative human resources.

Education enables people to develop their human potential and to exercise the choices to live productive and dignified life. The new communication technologies including satellite, TV, cellular phone, Internet and others have offered help even in the remotest rural areas in developing countries. It has also helped in reducing the "digital divide" between the rural and urban sections of the society.

Due to many developmental activities in education sector, rural schools are improving in infrastructure. But the development is not uniformly in all rural areas; still ICT facilities in many schools are not working properly (Bhalla 2018). The new Information and communication technologies (ICT) pose an enormous challenge of translating the potential for education and empowerment into reality.

Thus, despite the many advantages of technology, its effectiveness remains vague. Moreover, often what is described as good technology, in actuality the frequency of learners is not high. Benefits of technology based learning have not reached the expected level in the rural areas where mostly population is living with minimum availability of ICTs facilities.

## **Conclusion**

There has been remarkable progress in ensuring rural transformation particularly over the past few years. Of course, several problems such as irregular attendance of children and teachers, issue of how to ensure a quality life and quality education for all is paramount. But these challenges are being addressed and there are positive signs in major government programmes such as SSA is shifting its attention from achieving universal enrolment to universal retention and quality.

Education itself is a right but it is also a means to uphold and fulfill all human rights. The role of education in promoting the rural transformation and inclusive development of rural people has to be more responsive to contextual sensitivity and more flexible in delivery model; motivating learners as well as taking care of their spiritual, cultural well-being in dealing with the changes (Mincu, 2011). In other words, adapting to varying contextual practices than the tailored practice is more result-oriented and accessible.

## **Suggestions/ Recommendations**

Some suggestive measures to enhance the role of education for rural transformation in India are as follows:

- Rural-Urban disparities need to be reduced.
- More diversification and dispersal of employment opportunities towards rural areas should be done.
- The most admired practices such as Bangladesh's Grameen Bank and Brazil's Bolsa should be adopted in relevant contexts and conditions.
- Poverty reduction must be at the core of any rural related initiative.
- Rural people should be taught how to utilize education to facilitate the socio-economic and well-rounded development.
- Better infrastructure for providing effective rural education should be built.

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