



Rural Education in India

KEYWORDS

Education System, India, Rural Education Problem, Education Objective

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ABSTRACT *Literally and from the social, economic and political perspectives, the statement is valid even today. Around 65% of the State's population is living in rural areas. People in rural areas should have the same quality of life as is enjoyed by people living in sub urban and urban areas. However, this is not the reality. The paper discusses how the Indian educational system, especially sectors that cater to the rural poor, continues to be plagued with a host of enormous problems.*

India is home to the largest number of illiterate people in the world. Although it is claimed that literacy rates in the country are rapidly increasing, vast numbers of Indians who are officially counted as literate are hardly so in the true sense of the term. The paper discusses how the Indian educational system, especially sectors that cater to the rural poor, continues to be overwhelmed with a host of enormous problems. A plethora of government initiatives to provide access to primary education may be underway, but issues of equity, quality, and access remain areas of concern — particularly in rural schools. Children in rural areas continue to be deprived of worth education owing to factors like lack of competent and committed teachers, lack of textbooks or teaching-learning materials, and so on. Childhood is a time of development – mentally, socially, physically, morally, and intellectually. Education should include all aspects of development that are extremely important for proper and adequate development in each child. Along with it, development of curiosity is vital as an answer to the brainwashing that is all too common in education. The paper also discusses the Annual Status of Education Report or ASER, which means impact in Hindi.

India lives in its villages –this statement of Mahatma Gandhi is valid today literally and from the social, economic and political perspectives. In India, around 65% of the State's population live in rural areas. As such, people in rural areas should have the same quality of life as is enjoyed by people living in sub urban and urban areas. Further there are cascading effects of poverty, unemployment, poor and inadequate infrastructure in rural areas on urban centres causing slums and consequential social and economic tensions manifesting in economic deprivation and urban poverty. Hence, Rural Development, which is concerned with economic growth and social justice, improvement in the living standard of the rural people by providing adequate and quality social services and minimum basic needs, becomes essential.

Teachers are the backbone of the educational system in India. Government has set up a permanent body for the selection of the teachers known as N.C.T. i.e. National Council of Teachers Education. It conducts the training and selection of the teachers and provides certificate/degree for the teachers that are an essential qualification for the teachers who seek the employment in teaching schools known as B.Ed, or Shastri education.

State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) are set up in all the states to look after the training and research work on the lines of NCERT which is at all India level. Its refresher courses, even modifies the curriculum of the schools and textbooks are written for the secondary level standard in the state. It also arranges seminars, discusses and refresher courses for the teaching staff.

There are a number of educational institutions at the District level. A Distt. Officer/ Inspector of schools looks after the ed-

ucational institutions in his/her district. They also coordinates the different activities up to the Commissioner, State level in each district. Under this scheme, a college (Inter) 10+2 on the Government expenses is to be spent in each District and other schools are under his observation. Besides, a training centre for Primary teachers, or other refresher courses also opened in the district. The recruitment institute for the teachers, examination centers and the Boards offices are also on the line, such as Minorities schools.

Local educational institutions play an important role in the area of education. As our country is poor and cannot afford the heavy expenses of Educational institutions, local education body's are allowed opening their schools and Government recognizes these institutions at par with the Government institutions. Minority institutions have their own schools with their own expenses or Government grants in-aid. However, they fill the gap and help the Government to reduce its burden.

Right to Education is the primary right of every citizen of India, whether a child resides in a high profile society or in a far away not so developed secluded village. Schools in rural areas are promoted to raise the level of education and literacy in rural India. The main aim of running these types of schools in India is to increase the rates of literacy in rural areas. More than 40 percent of India's population is illiterate and cannot read or write. Moreover, schools in rural areas are inadequate and often equivalent to being non-existent. Thus, government's initiative to set up schools in rural areas came into picture. The conditions of rural education in India, is improving steadily and the government is providing full support and providing with many initiatives. The fee structure in these schools is also very low so that every child can study and afford it.

Though there are very few schools in rural areas, children and their parents are showing interest and availing school facilities in these remote locations. Children have to walk miles to reach their school. Rural schools pay special attention to children in these locations so that each child gets an equal and important opportunity. They promote reading, writing, and enhanced basic education. These schools also provide study material to every student apart from, meals during school hours, uniforms etc. Rural village schools also have implemented library system, which provide books, newspapers and magazine to children. They not only provide science kits and equipment for hands-on-learning, but also notebooks, textbooks and pencils to poor children. Apart from that, they also give scholarships to deserving students regularly, who wish to study ahead. They create community awareness, about the need for education and world literacy. Many indirect benefits of a basic rural education include poverty reduction, disease control, enhanced employment opportunities and increasing rate of literacy. The curriculum includes Eng-

lish, Mathematics, General Knowledge and Drawing. Apart from that, they also provide Value Education and Computer Education. With the help of rural education, every family and child has access to basic primary education. Individual's special talents are recognized. The teaching methodology ensures that every student is exposed to educational experience in an active and dynamic learning environment, so that they can achieve excellence. Teachers also encourage every student to express their views, observations and experiences. The main objective of rural school's is to ensure that every child in rural India receives quality education, which prepares them to compete in the competitive global environment.

Rural education should have the following initiative objective:

- To provide free standard education to rural children
- Supporting children for higher education
- Guiding and Supporting Research scholars in Educational Development
- Implementing new teaching methodologies and Assessment system
- Promoting all schools to stress free environment.

Problems faced in rural education in India

- Teachers of rural schools in villages and small towns receive low income so there is a possibility that teachers give less attention to children.
- Most of the schools do not have proper infrastructure. Therefore, they do not get most of the facilities such as computer education, sports education and extra-curricular activities.
- There are no proper transport facilities so children do not like to travel miles to come to school.
- There is no excess to supplemental education.
- Problems of Rural Schools Teacher Compensation
- School Employees
- School Buildings
- Technology Funding
- Promoting Technology Private endowments from private and public businesses
- Creative fund raising by the school district
- Solving the Problems of Funding Centralize school finance so that the state, rather than local districts, has the primary responsibility for funding schools
- Base school funding on a explicit assessment of the actual costs of educating a child

Present Scenario of rural education in India is quite pathetic. Condition of rural education is still improving, the conditions of these rural schools is still very poor. There are very few schools in the rural areas, children have to travel far away distances to avail these facilities, and most schools in these locations do not provide drinking water. The quality of education is also very poor. Either the teachers get very less income so, most of the time the teachers are absent or they do not teach

properly. There are many initiatives taken by the government, but they are not implemented in the schools, so the present scenario remains the same.

Mahatma Gandhi observed that India is not to be found in its few cities but in thousands of its villages. This is equally true today as it was during Mahatma's lifetime. It is in rural India that overall literacy and specifically literacy of women and their empowerment is particularly crucial for the transformation of India. At present most rural women's lives are limited to taking care of their homes, husbands, families and farms, a role that requires little or no formal education. The challenge of rapid development of India's villages can be accomplished only with the education, empowerment, and emancipation of these women, and their full and equal participation in society.

India is the largest democracy with remarkable diversity among its population of 1.2 billion which makes up about 17% of the world's population. Almost 70% of Indian population is rural. The adult literacy rate stands at about 60% and this is significantly lower in women and minorities. Education in India comprises of government, government aided and private institutions of which nearly 40% are government. With the population growth rate of 1.5%, there is tremendous pressure on the education system to provide quality education at affordable price and improve the literacy rate.

Education in India faces many challenges. Maintaining standard of education in more than a million schools nationwide, offering training programs to teachers, and keeping good balance with education system worldwide is a big challenge. Schools vary in size and resources and are forced compromise in the all round development opportunities they must provide to students. Having infrastructural constraints and social issues, it becomes harder to make education accessible to all segments of the society (women, minorities, poor). The cost of education is very high even for the people and places where it is accessible. e.g. the competitive pressure on students & parents forces them to opt for private tuitions & trainings to supplement the school education.

The ethnic diversity in India poses challenges to implement consistent education nationwide. There are more than 300 languages spoken in the country and makes it difficult to offer education tailored to specific social segment. Educating women in some societies is also a big issue. Children of poor families are forced to work and miss out the learning opportunities. Illiterate adults have very limited opportunities to get educated at later age in their lives.

Thus, rural education in India is a big challenge that we are facing today and will continue to face in future. Only a holistic and fully dedicated approach by Government and non-Government organisations can to some extent lead towards a educated rural India.

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