

# Role of Education in Rural Development

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## **Introduction:**

Rural development implies both the economic betterment of people as well as greater social transformation. Development of rural area means not only the aggregate development of the area but also development of the people living in the rural areas. It is the process of improving the quality of life and economic well-being of people living in rural areas.

The objectives of rural development are multi directional as well as multi dimensional. It aims at increased employment, higher productivity, higher income as well as minimum acceptable levels of food, clothing, shelter, education, health and building up of a sound value system which is in keeping with the high cultural heritage of the country. Thus rural development means all aspects of human development.

India is a land of villages. Around 70% of our population lives in rural areas. A vast majority of its people depends for their livelihood on farm and non-farm activities. Broadly, rural activities are grouped into three sectors viz agriculture and allied activities, village industries, rural artisans and service sector. Most of the village people do not have any means of earning. They are basically landless people. About 31 crore of rural people do not have adequate income, employment opportunities, fall short of demand, coupled with illiteracy, ignorance, infrastructural facilities do not match with the growth of rural population. In addition village population is unorganised. Further they do not have access to necessary food, shelter, drinking water and sanitation facilities, as a result of these they have been suffering day by day.

The main issues of rural development are growing poverty increasing population, inadequate infrastructure, lack of basic amenities, ill health, fragmentation of land, continued exploitation of rural poor, illiteracy, lack of awareness, ignorance, debased value system, under employment, unemployment lack of directions and motivation, social pressures and compulsions, social evils, superstition, destruction of eco system, blind urban imitation, lack of organized efforts etc.

Rural development is the main pillar of the nation's development. Because inspite of rapid urbanization, a large section of our population still lives in the villages. Secondly, rural India has lagged behind in development because of many historical factors.

In the post independence period the government (both central & state) is engaged in bringing about rapid and sustainable development and socio-economic transformation in rural India. Since rural development is necessary not only because an overwhelming majority of the population lives in villages but also the development of rural; activities is essential to accelerate the pace of overall economic development of the country. Rural Development is a part of the same process of economic and social change. The world bank had defined rural development as a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people the rural poor. In these group three categories of people includes mainly small farmers, tenants and the landless. Now it is recognized that the problems of rural development is by no means an agricultural or productivity alone, nor is it a technical problem, but major problems are illiteracy and ignorance.

## **Government Plan and Programmes on Rural Development in India:**

A number of rural development programmes have been experimented in the post independence period. In the fifties, the government launched community development programme. In the sixties government offered scope for improving agricultural productivity. It was believed that by raising the size of agricultural output, the benefits would trickle down to the poor. In this period the green revolution was started and government selected some areas by providing high yielding varieties of seeds in the farms.

In the seventies, the theory of "trickle down" was questioned. The government directed the agencies to conduct a sample surveys to confirm the situation. After finishing the survey the government confirmed that the rural development programmes had so far not made any direct influence on poverty. As result of this the growing disparities between various sections of the

population came out. It helped in identifying the vulnerable groups of the rural population. The small and marginal farmers, agricultural labourers and the artisans were the most affected sections. With these experiences of the past no benefit was seen thereof in isolation and therefore the goals of output growth and equitable distribution had to be pursued simultaneously.

The programmes have promoted subsidiary occupations such as diary, poultry, piggery, goat rearing, fishery, sheep rearing, sericulture etc. among small and marginal farmers. The programmes encouraged small farmers and agricultural labourers to participate in the above mentioned activities.

It is unfortunate that the schemes have not been successfully implemented. In view of this, the Government embarked on the programme of Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP). The main objectives of this programme to raise the income and employment opportunities through agricultural, animal husbandry practices, village crafts or services. It aims to serve the landless, marginal, farmers, rural unemployment, poor rural artisans and craftsman, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes through technical and financial support measures.

It is claimed that the concept of Integrated Rural Development was originally propounded by the World Bank. This concept was forwarded by C. Subramanyan, the then Finance Minister of India at the All India Science Congress in the year 1976. He opined Integrated Rural Development as “systematic, scientific and integrated use of all our natural resources and as a part of this process enabling every person to engage himself in a productive and socially useful occupation and earn an income would meet at least the basic needs” He also viewed that the use of natural resource is possible only through the application of science and technology, V.K.R.V. Rao defines integrated rural development “as the optimum utilization of the natural and human resources of a given rural area for the enrichment of the quality of life of the population.

There are various rural problems like widespread poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, exploitation, inequitable distribution of land, poor health condition etc. Here comes the concept of integrated rural development to address these issues. The concept of integrated rural development addresses itself to the aforesaid problems. It is significant that various facets of rural development are integrally connected. If we analyze the concept of integrated rural development then we find that it is holistic concept rather than a sequential one K. Om Prakash and G. Satyanarayan rightly observed that integrated rural development embraces all the activities of enrichment and betterment of the overall quality of rural life through appropriate development of man power, resources, infrastructural facilities and provisions of minimum needs and livelihood. It has far reaching socio-economic and political implications for the life of the ruralities.

### **Role of Education:**

Education has been considered to be the most important instrument of social, economic and political change. Education plays a pivotal role in society. It is fact that a well supported, easily accessible education system is an efficient means to make people economically conscious and thereby it makes them actively participate in their economic prosperity and cultural development. Hence, education should be given first and foremost place in the exercise of democracy which individual would take part on decision making in society in a positive way. Education is a continues process. It encourage individual from erode to grave. There is a dialectical relationship between education and society. Rural Development and educational development are inseparable.

### **The Role of Education in Rural Development can be summaries as follows:**

1. **Education as principal development strategy:** From the economic point of view a number of economists believe that education is primary means of promoting economic development in rural area. Since education system needs to be change to make it more appropriate to their national priorities. According to their opinion, any person who has received an education will make an effort in improve his/her way of life and to develop his/her intellectual development by making reasonable use of their educational experience. In the past time there were many instances that many children in the rural areas have become professionals only because of education provided to them. They have been termed as a “model person” not only to their immediate community but also for the other communities.
2. **Education makes people conscious:** Rural areas are today faced with various socio-economic and political problems which has created a hindrance for the growth of industry, agriculture, education and trade etc. Although many developmental programmes are adopted by the government for rural development still then, the rural-urban gap is widened between the rural and urban areas. It is a factor for political instability in many developing countries of the world. A good quality of education helps the individual to prevent the misinterpretation of information with good reasoning. Education can lead to many positive outcomes, such as an improve ability to understand rights, duties, government policy, procedure, schemes, legislation available benefits and laws of protection.
3. **Education help increase functional ability of rural people:** Now-a-days education is viewed not only to fill up the intellectual gaps but also for strengthening people’s critical abilities to make them enable to diagnose their own needs, assert their own right and to have control over the decisions that affect their lives. The ability to think and act enables them to greater political consciousness which paves the way for action to their communities.

- 4. Education provides trained man power from rural areas:** Educated man power with a rural back ground is essential for the rural development. But undoubtedly, almost all the rural areas or regions of the developing countries are lacking highly trained manpower. Enough manpower is required for specific occupations in rural development. Higher level of cultural understanding is important for the activities of rural development. Skilled manpower can be produced from the rural school. More schools imparting technical and vocational education should be established for the purpose of accelerating rural development.
- 5. Education links rural and urban sector:** Education helps rural people to modify their physical and social environment and thereby making steady progress for the fulfilment of the needs of the rural people. No rural community or rural programme based on the self-help activities can be isolated from the urban sector or the nation. Rural development occurs as a result of inter-dependence between the urban and rural sectors.
- 6. Education increases productivity of rural labour force:** In accordance with technological and organizational progress rural labour force must also be improved so that the skilled labour force can be applied profitably in production activities.
- 7. Education develops leadership:** Education in the widest sense is in fact both an investment and a form of consumption which increases an individual's capacity for production and simultaneously develops his/her personality and satisfies his/her needs to understand. Usually leaders in rural areas play a leading role in rural development, since they have the support of the people, necessary knowledge, skills and experience for such work.

#### World Literacy Scenario:

The present position of literacy rate of India shows that out of the 179 countries in the world, India stands at 147<sup>th</sup> position with 66% in literacy (Source: UNDP Report, 2009). According to the 2011 census the literacy rate of India is 74.04%.

Since Independence the Govt. of India have been formulated a number of different educational schemes and policies in order to eradicate the illiteracy such as NAEP, NLM, TLC, DPEP, SSA. Apart from these Right to Education Act, 2009 came into force from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2010. Almost nine years have already been elapsed. Even then, it still remains as a distant dream particularly in rural areas.

The present paper endeavours to analyse the role of education and implementation of Right to Education Act, 2009. In the tea garden area with special reference to Biswanath district of Assam.

According to the RTE Act, 2009 the pupil teacher ratio is to be 30:1 for lower primary section. But in rural areas of Biswanath district it is not implemented. The pupil teachers ratio in some schools of rural areas of Biswanath district is shown in table No. 1

**Table No. 1: Pupil-Teacher ratio in some schools of rural areas of Biswanath district:**

Sl. No.	Name of School	No. of Students/ Pupils	No. of Total Teachers
1	Naya Ghogra T.G. L.P. School	157	3
2	Gohpur T.G. L.P. School	120	3
3	Nirmala T.G. L.P. School	285	3
4	Brahmajan T.G. L.P. School	472	5
5	Dufflagarh T.G. L.P. School	234	5
6	Helem T.G. L.P. School	327	5
7	Buroi T.G. L.P. School	487	5
8	Bedeti T.G. L.P. School	124	2
9	Laharijan T.G. L.P. School	77	2
10	Pabhoi T.G. L.P. School	102	3

Source: Primary Source field study.

#### Conclusion:

This paper describes the most important role of education in rural development. It is through education that the rural people would become aware for their better social life. In order to accelerate the process of rural development, more emphasis should be given on useful education of rural masses so that they can participate more efficiently at all levels of developmental activities and acquire the benefits.

In conclusion, in order to achieve the goal for real development it is suggested that the rural people must be aware, involved in planning, implementation of various schemes conducted by government. Since education is the most effective instrument for moulding the human personality, therefore, the need to develop such human resources as skill, functional literacy, health care and hygiene, environmental knowledge, nutrition, education, social behaviour, attitudinal change, home science, self-confidence and decision making power, political structure and value system - all these are related to the life-style of the rural people and should form part of their education curricula.

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