



10. Analyzing Inequities in Schooling Pattern- Addressing Educational Problems of Rural India

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Abstract

This paper conjectures the drawbacks in rural education & debates on issues concerning rural schooling. Rural schools in India re facing problems of enrollment, quality education & improved learning outcomes. Students of rural schools are failing to compete with the students of urban centers in facing the challenges of global job market. They suffer from lack of exposure to science & technology & they are miles apart in getting access to quality education. All these lacunas are affecting their learning outcomes. All governmental activities to ameliorate rural schooling have been in vain & stake holders are not satisfied with the meager support systems provided. Community at large is under pressure these days to provide quality education to the children. With complete absence of non formal education & pre-school education rural children are becoming victims of social exclusion & disparity. This paper addresses all these issues & provides strategies for making rural education a healthy base for community development.

Key words: Rural Education, Shortfalls of rural education, Effects on Learning Outcomes. Community Development

" Basic education links the children, whether of the cities or the villages, to all that is best and lasting in India" .**Mahatma Gandhi**

Introduction

Indian rural education scene is pathetically suffering from several issues. Indian rural population is more than 70% where nearly 50% of the population is illiterates. Due to several governmental propositions universal education is spreading fast. Still nearly 40 % of the rural children dropout of schools before

reaching secondary level of schooling. Nearly 80% of the schools are not having sufficient infrastructure, nearly 75% of the rural schools are not having proper drinking water & sanitation facility. Nearly 58% of the rural schools suffer from shortage of teachers. Steps to help with inclusive education have been suffering from several



pitfalls. Poor & marginalized rural people have no access to education & social disparities keep them away from schooling even though state government & central government have taken measures to ameliorate schooling facilities still lacunae are found in rural education.

Problems of Rural Education

Lack of proper transportation: Most villages have poor connectivity and that is often the main reason why rural education is suffering. Despite efforts by local governing bodies to build schools with proper road connectivity there is a lacuna in providing educational facilities. Often children have to walk miles to reach these government funded schools and this often demotivates them to attend school on a regular basis. (Indian Education Sector Outlook 2014).

Meager income levels: People belonging to remote rural areas have meager incomes, which is very less to sustain family needs. Expectedly children from these

families do not send their children to schools even though there are schools in the vicinity. They instead demand their children to assist them in earning livelihood. Rural children often cooperate with their families in work. (Indian Education Sector Outlook 2014)

Lack of proper infrastructure:

A high shortage of infrastructure in rural schools is also a big concern these days. Most of the schools don't have proper classrooms, teaching equipment, playgrounds and even basic facilities like clean toilets. Thus, the poor condition of schools is big reasons to drive away students. Most of the parents wish to send their children to school in a close by urban center instead of a school in their own locality. (National Council of Educational Research and Training. 2012).

Lack of teaching faculty: most of the rural schools suffer from shortage of teachers. Teachers who are appointed by the government often find it difficult to stay in their place of work as



there are multiple problems of housing, sanitation, drinking water etc. Most of them work for 2-3 years in rural areas & get themselves transferred to urban or semi urban center. These vacant positions are not filled by Government immediately. Hence rural schools suffer from deficiency of teaching hands & finally rural students undergo loss in learning.

Management lacuna of private schools:

Some rural areas have come up with starting primary schools. These schools run parallel along with government schools. But in these schools the faculty is poorly salaried, schools are poorly staffed & absentee management. Sometimes the schools shut down without prior notice. Hence all these affect the leaning of rural children.

Lack of quality education:

Rural students do not get quality education as compared to urban students. These schools lack quality learning equipments & tools of education. Some time these schools lack teachers in

science & mathematics subjects which are tuff subjects. Urban students are provided with computer knowledge, internet browsing facilities, technical knowhow where as rural students have no exposure to these technical knowledge (National Council of Educational Research and Training. 2012).

lack of co-curricular activities:

Unlike urban students rural children do not have access to co –curricular activities such as sports, cultural competitions ,science quiz, Maths quiz ,orientations on eco conservation , speeches on social science , special lectures on English pronunciation, group discussion, elocution etc. As these activities assist in proper comprehending curricular subjects, rural students are bereft of these co-curricular activities. (National Council of Educational Research and Training. 2012).

Prospective strategies

1. Strengthening Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaana program can make



- wondrous support to the rural children.
2. Evolving partnerships with NGOs & community to strengthen rural schools should be taken up seriously
3. Supporting participatory learning for rural students with group discussion, extra coaching classes, evening tutorials, one to one teaching etc can make a big leap in stepping up learning outcomes.
4. Integration with main stream learning so that each rural student can compete with the global challenges should be the top priority.
5. Decentralized administration so that gram panchayat & zilla panchayat can channel into the problems of schools with instantaneous solution, proper planning & complementary decision making. (World Development Indicators Participation In Education World Bank Report 2014).
6. Choice of multiple levels of leadership learning which assist the rural students to imbibe good qualities of leadership & prepare them for prospective challenges of career.
7. Steps such as setting up early childhood centers, opening up non formal schools, vocationalising school curriculum etc can be implemented through government. (World Development Indicators Participation In Education World Bank Report 2014).
8. Steps to reduce gender disparity in rural areas with the help of education can mainstream education in an appropriate way.
9. Program to supplement quality education, enrollment & improved learning outcomes should be made to reach all rural area children.
10. Retaining focus on elementary education for children aged 6-14 under the right to free &



- compulsory education should be given further legal standing.(Desai & others - India Human Development in India challenges for a society in transition).
11. Accelerating measures for implementation of the right to education act would assist in enhancing student enrollment(Sripati, V. and Thiruvengadam, A.K. (2004), "India: Constitutional Amendment Making The Right to Education a Fundamental Right).
 12. Steps to mobilize community stake holders as a whole to demand equitable access to quality education should be augmented. (World Development Indicators Participation In Education World Bank Report 2014).
 13. Steps to reduce gender & social disparity with establishment of more secondary schools will help to avoid several social issues such as child marriage, proxy marriage, girl child negligence , adolescent issues etc
 14. Enhancing the capacities of the teachers with more trainings & orientations towards capacity building will amplify the chances to better learning outcomes in rural schools.(Desai & others - India Human Development in India challenges for a society in transition)
 15. Government with the help of NGOs should seek better hygienic facilities in school zones good drinking water , sanitation, hygiene & healthy practices.
 16. Rural academic support system has to be linked to learning outcomes of the children.
 17. Insistence on non formal schools such as balawadi aanganawadi can augment student enrollment in elementary schools & later in secondary schools. This pre schooling habits should be



made mandatory in rural areas.

Conclusion

Rural education is suffering from several problems which have to be addressed immediately as Mahatma Gandhi desired "Education should be so revolutionized as to answer the wants of the poorest villager" our present education should benefit the rural poor & marginalized children to face the challenges of global career market. Persistent questioning & healthy inquisitiveness should be promoted through quality education. Only steps as these can bring rural masses to streamline themselves to advanced benefits of learning.

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