

Research Paper

RURAL EDUCATION IN INDIA**Dr. Ruchi Dubey**Lecturer, B. Ed. Deptt.
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Allahabad**ABSTRACT**

Education is the most powerful weapon in the fight against rural poverty and sustainable development. Schools in rural areas are promoted to raise the level of education and literacy in rural India. The paper discusses the problems faced in rural education in India and also points out the differences between rural and urban education and it is highlighted that rural-urban educational inequality exists in terms of means, ways, process and attainment. As a result of education imparted in rural and urban areas, the characteristics of students in urban and rural areas also varies because education acts as a foundation stone for them.

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 in rural areas.

Education is the doorway to the wider world and an exposition on rural infrastructure is incomplete without an assessment of the extent to which we have been able to open this door for the children of rural India. In the era of globalization, if India has to compete at international level, then it is imperative that Indian system of rural education needs attention from all squares. Various programmes were launched by the government which for various reasons could not keep pace with urban areas. In conformity with this commitment of the government, the Ministry of Rural Development has taken several initiatives in the recent years for overall rural development. So far as rural education is concerned after going through the several reports, we can easily deduce that almost all indicators of rural educational development have been touched upon by our planners squarely but when we see the practical scenario of overall rural development after 64 years of independence then situation seems something different and have many reasons to worry.

Right to education is the primary right of every child of India, whether a child resides in a high profile society or in a far away not so developed secluded village. A multi sectoral education approach involving all ages and all forms i.e. formal, non-formal and informal education is necessary for rural development. According to Setumadhavrao (1995), education plays an important role in village development. There are high number of rural people in developing countries. They require non-formal education so that they can avail education. Education and training are two of the most powerful weapons in the fight against rural poverty and sustainable development. Schools in rural areas are promoted to raise the level of education and literacy in rural India. Right to education is also a step towards development of rural education. The main aim of running these types of school in India is to increase the rate of literacy in rural areas. In urban areas, schools tend to be viewed as vehicles for bringing about societal change; however, in rural areas schools are seen as mechanisms for community cohesion and

continuity (Boyd & Immegart, 1977). More than 40% of India's population is illiterate and cannot read or write. Schools in rural areas are inadequate and often equivalent to being non-existent. Thus, governments' initiative to set up schools in rural areas came into picture. As a result the condition of rural education in India is improving steadily and the government is also providing full support. The fees structure in these schools is kept very low so that every child can study and afford it. The main objective of rural school is to ensure that every child in rural India receives free quality education which prepares them to compete in the competitive global environment. The government has started mid-day meal programme in order to provide food to children in schools. This has attracted poor students of rural areas to approach school but the main objective behind this programme has hardly reached its goal. In order to fulfill the demand of teachers, the government had also started special BTC and Shikshamitra programmes but the sad plight is that the programme is a success only on paper but not in terms of real execution. Special BTC teachers hardly go to schools where they are allotted. They are just concerned with their salaries.

Problems Faced in Rural Education in India

1. Teachers of rural schools in villages and small towns receive low income so there is possibility that teachers take less interest and give less attention to students.
2. Most of the schools do not have proper infrastructure so they do not get most of the facilities such as computer education, sports education and extra-curricular activities.
3. There is no proper transport facility so children have to travel miles to approach the school.
4. There is no excess to supplementary education.
5. Most of the schools do not provide drinking water.
6. Quality of education imparted in rural schools is very poor.

Rural Education vs. Urban Education

Popular cultures view rural education as a deficit model (Hopkins, 2004) whereas others hold the view that there is no difference between rural and urban education (Howley, 2002). Urban and rural education varies from each other on the following points-

1. There are many schools in cities and towns whereas, there are very few schools in villages and rural areas.

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2. There are transportation facilities like bus pick and drop in urban schools whereas children in rural areas have to walk miles to reach their schools.
3. Basic amenities like no drinking water are provided in some of the schools in villages.
4. Level of education in urban schools is far advanced as compared to the basic level taught in rural schools.
5. Computer education is given high importance in urban areas whereas very few schools in villages give computer training.
6. Group classes are taken by using video conferencing and audio conferencing in urban schools whereas no such facilities are provided for students in rural schools.
7. The teachers are given tools like laptops, printers etc. to provide notes and other important notices to the children in urban schools while there are no such facilities in rural schools.
8. School infrastructure is case of cities and urban areas is much more advanced as compared to that in schools in rural areas whereas sometimes children are made to sit on the floor due to non-availability of furniture.
9. School education in urban areas is more advanced especially because there is lot of computer aided teaching.
10. Apart from the course curriculum, rural schools are not able to involve children in other activities like sports, co-curricular activities and competitions. Such events and activities tend to help in the over all development of the children.

Thus, rural-urban educational inequality exists in terms of means, ways, process and attainment. This inequality depends upon the legal system, degree of stability, geographical characteristics etc.

One of the aims to provide education is to enhance learning and achievement. School location is a variable in achievement and rural students tend to manifest more simple relationships than their urban counterparts, probably due to greater interpersonal ties in rural settings. According to Swanson (1988), school climate and school culture affects pupil's achievement. Various studies had been done on comparison of urban and rural schools/ students/ education. Mishra (2005) reported that schools in rural areas are more open than their counterparts in urban areas. Kenth (2009) found that pupil-teachers belonging to urban areas get more intellectual climate and more academic orientation than rural pupil-teachers. Rural and urban students slightly differ in their choice of subjects, with rural students studying in the areas of health, home science and agriculture more frequently than their metropolitan peers. Rural and urban residence has been shown to be related to the educational and occupational aspirations of youth (Moore, Baum & Glasow, 1984; Cosby & Picou, 1973). Barcinas (1989) concluded that urban students have higher educational and occupational aspirations than rural students. Mc Cracken and Barcinas (1991) found that a higher percentage of urban students were in the vocational (27%) and academic (64%) curricula than rural students (19% 7 58% respectively). Pandey (2007) found that secondary level girls of urban area are more aware of different professional courses, admission procedure in vocational courses, and vocational guidance facilities than rural girls. Rural students were found to have low career awareness than urban students (Pandey, 2008). Computer and internet are the need of the hour. They are essential for technological advancement. But the plight is that rural students lag behind in this aspect also. Loan (2011) reported that urban students are more frequent users of internet than their rural counterparts.

As a result of education imparted in rural and urban areas, the characteristics of students in urban and rural areas

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