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## Key approaches of Education for Rural Transformation

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### ABSTRACT:

Rural Transformation involves creating wealth, employment, good health services, water, roads, sanitation, education etc for the betterment of the rural people. Education is one of the key approaches for rural transformation. Education for rural transformation has been given from years but still there is lack of education in many parts of India. This paper talks about some of the key approaches in education that can be used for rural transformation. For proper education proper data is required to show which area lack, which resources like schools, teachers, technologies, literacy rate etc; for these extensive surveys are required. Based on the survey further planning of education can be done like change of curriculum, use of technologies, educational/vocational training, adult education, agricultural education, health education etc.

**Keywords:** *Education, Rural Transformation, Key Approaches – Same Curriculum, Use of technology, Adult Education, Agricultural Education*

India is a vast democratic country with diversified culture, languages, religions etc. However we all are facing similar problem irrespective of our religion, languages and culture, to start with Rural Transformation (RT). Rural development doesn't mean urbanisation of rural areas. It does not consist of creation of pucca buildings, metalled roads, electrified houses, TV and video sets in houses. In fact, some of these symptoms of development are noticeable in some villages and yet they cannot be called developed e.g., Kuwait, Sudan, with very high per capita income, cannot be called a 'Developed' country.

The real crust of development is that people living in the rural areas, develop the capability of live well – a life pattern which keeps them in good health, have adequate means to eat, to clothe, a reasonable shelter to live and access to various requisites to life which modern science and technology has made it possible to have, to enjoy life. This does not mean copying urban style of life but one evolved in the socio – eco – cultural milieu which they have inherited. Therefore, content of rural development will vary from area to area.

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Pumping in some symptoms of development from outside, lead to sustainable development that is why, perhaps, many of the measures undertaken by outside agencies have failed to create the desired impact on rural development.

Rural Transformation involves creating wealth, employment, good health services, water, roads, sanitation, education etc for the betterment of the rural people.

In many empirical studies, throughout the world, it is found that there is correlation between literacy and development. So for rural transformation education is very important. Today after 64 years of Independence, we have more than 336 crores of adults; who do not know reading and writing. Some of the reasons for this are apparent. To mention some, many children live in unhealthy, unhygienic, crowded conditions, amidst deep social tension and backwardness due to poverty. The caste system, untouchability, orthodoxy and many other social evils and the privileged class had kept the underprivileged illiterates, indeed, shamefully low during the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

As a result of this, out of every hundred children, even if they join the school, seventy five children drop out before they reach 8<sup>th</sup> standard or complete primary education and they remain virtually illiterate thereafter.

India currently has the largest population of illiterate adults in the world with 287 million. This is 37 per cent of the global total. While India's literacy rate rose from 48 per cent in 1991 to 63 per cent in 2006, "population growth cancelled the gains so there was no change in the number of illiterate adults." There are better tidings for India at the pre-primary and primary level. India features among the countries likely to achieve the pre-primary enrolment target of at least 70 per cent by 2015 along with countries like Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and United Kingdom. So, for rural transformation education is one of the most important aspects which are being discussed in this paper (UNESCO, 2013).

For rural transformation we first need to do detailed and extensive surveys to find out the area which requires transformation at the most and require attention immediately. For the surveys, students from Education, Psychology, Social work and other related branches can be chosen for the purpose of surveys and then some intervention through out the country can be done as part of their dissertation and PhD research work. Students can be sent to different regions for surveying and on the basis of results of the survey intervention plan can be prepared which the student with the help of some NGOs or organisation can implement as part of their PhD thesis e.g., Adult education, Training programmes for rural teachers etc.

On the basis of the results of the survey we can take some preliminary steps for Education for Rural Transformation (ERT).

Rural transformation requires three very important aspects that are:

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- Heavy investments are needed for inclusive, sustainable and diversified rural development to occur;
- Need for the right governance systems, institutions; and
- Policy processes and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of public policy and programmes. However these things require time and huge funds and we require immediate action i.e., some preliminary steps; so that when we fulfil the above three important requirements at that time we will be well prepared to use our resources as our planning for Rural transformation is already done. The initial steps for ERT that can be taken are:

### **Same curriculum throughout the country**

Same syllabus, same subject contents, same exam pattern and almost same teaching style throughout the country. The curriculum time table should also be same. Curriculum time table means monthly syllabus to be taught in one month should be the same in all the states and in all the schools. The reason is, in midsession if a student want to shift from rural to urban school then the student will not have any problem related to studies. The child can adjust well with the curriculum.

Different boards of education should have same curriculum and should follow the same pattern of questions, date and time of exam. The question paper should be prepared by Central examination body and distributed equally. They can have different sets of paper for different regions. This should be done only for convenience sake.

### **Exchange of students and teachers**

Teachers who are posted in urban areas, atleast for few months/years they should be posted to rural areas in order to teach the students of rural areas in the same manner which they follow in urban areas. Same process can be followed by sending rural students to urban schools in order to learn the course content so that they can reach the level of students of urban areas. Similar kind of exchange programme can be done for foreign countries also.

### **Grade examination at every level**

There should be uniform grade of examination at primary, junior secondary, senior secondary and higher secondary levels. This will give an idea to the students of rural areas, the standard of urban areas and accordingly they can improve themselves with the help their teachers.

By doing grade examination students of both areas will prepare for common syllabus, this will create equality in rural and urban standards or we can say that this will decrease the curriculum gap between the rural and urban areas.

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### Technical and vocational education

**Teachers** - Educational/vocational training can be provided to teacher to gain professional skills and since it will be a National or International training programme every year or every six months, it will help in developing common skills in all teachers. The training programme will be organised by school or University concerned or a governing education body.

**Underprivileged Children** – Technical and vocational education and training can be provided to underprivileged students of rural areas. The training can be given in urban as well as rural areas. Places where technical and vocational educations are not available for that urban technical education/vocational institutes should be empowered to establish such educational and vocational institution in rural areas. This will also stop migration of rural students to urban areas and they will be self sufficient at their village level.

### Non – campus distance education

People who want to study but because of some reason like financial crisis, distance, job etc they are not able to join regular classes can get enrolled themselves for such education programmes and can learn staying at home.

Non campus distance programme for those also whose syllabus is different from other universities and after completion of graduation they want to join other university. So they can parallel study the course which other universities are teaching while studying the current syllabus of their own university. This will help the student to adjust better when he/she join the university which he /she wished to join.

### Stop Migration

Individuals rationally decide to migrate because they are attracted by the bright lights of the city which promise, in the long – term, to offer better economic opportunities than the countryside. The structuralist approach to migration, on the other hand, tends to portray migrants as victims rather than rational decision makers, since movement is determined by macro social, historical and dialectic processes such as the socio – spatial restructuring of production at the national and global levels. Push – pull factors are seen as a process of polarization with respect to access to resources, and migration as one of the new options available to the most vulnerable population strata.

Gender and generation also play a crucial role in migration, decision – making and selectivity (Chant, 1992). For example, women (either mothers or daughters) are more likely to feel responsible for the wellbeing of other house hold members than their male counterparts and this may be an important factor in migration decisions especially when women’s employment opportunities in home environments are limited. Migrations can also provide an escape from social and family constraints and give women a level of independence they may not easily have access to in their home areas (Tacoli, 1998). Young men with restricted access to family land

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waged work may also decide to move. While in all cases the impacts on areas of out – migration may be significant (in terms, for example, of labour availability, remittances, household organisations and agricultural production systems), they are also likely to vary depending on who moves and who stays. To stop such migrations from rural to urban areas we can start giving non – agricultural educational and vocational training to people of rural areas due to which they can start their own business in their village only. Non – agricultural rural activities include non – farm activities, which are carried out in the farm but are not related to crop production (such as furniture and brick making or beer – brewing, which are sold in both rural and urban markets) and off – farm activities, which are carried out away from the farm, and thus involve a special dimension, often revolving around urban centres. (Tacoli, 1998). To stop migration this adult education is necessary.

### **ADULT EDUCATION**

From the beginning of five year plans, the Government of India gave importance to Adult education. It has been launched a country – wide programme of adult literacy drive as a part of social education in 1950 under the Community development programme. Its success was limited because of many socio – economic reasons. There was less motivation for adults towards the programme and local resources and voluntary organisations did not involved fully.

For this first the NGOs or the organisations involved in the Adult Education plan must be feel enthusiastic for their work and Education counsellors should provide a motivational incentives whenever required to the adult people, so that their level of motivation do not go down. For example, Person with good performance will get job or will get vocational training or can work as supervisor etc in the industry established in village.

### **Dropouts from primary schools**

There is a large rate of drop – outs from primary schools even in States where primary education is free and supposedly compulsory. The root problem is the mass poverty in rural areas. In that situation a child becomes a helper in economic activities from young age. Tending to cattle, fetching firewood or water and helping parents in their field work are commonly seen in rural households.

For this NGOs and Government can give scholarship to those, whose children are coming regularly and scoring good marks in exams. This will motivate the parents to send their children to schools and also there will be some financial help.

### **Gender differences**

The literacy gap between males and females should be reduced so that there will be a sense of equality in terms of education in society.

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A study conducted by the Centre Science and Environment (CSE), Delhi in Himalayan village in Chamoli, UP unfolds that women spend 59%, children 36% and men 15 % work hours every year confirming back breaking work load on rural womenfolk. These are perhaps the alarming indicators about the Indian rural women, whose work is filled with drudgery and hardship – leading to feminization of poverty, thus, in real sense excluding them from full participation in development efforts to eliminate poverty. Though rural women produce upto 80% of food in the developing countries, yet, studies include they have little to only a fraction of farm land, and access to just 10% of credit and 5% of extension advice. (S.K. Agrawal, 2005)

For this women from villages should be given educational and vocational training. Also they will be given job opportunity in their village so that they can take care of their family, children and can earn money too. For example, small scale business, dairy products, handicrafts etc. They can also become the broker or the agent who can help their village women to sell their products to different parts of the world so that they will get money for their hard work.

### **Incentives to the farmers**

Make a Policy which says that, those who will complete their formal education or those who have done their matriculation and cleared the exam will get some % reduction in their loans or will get seeds and fertilizers at much subsidised rates.

Those whose children are studying technical or vocational or teaching field and working for the development of village they will get seeds and fertilizers free of cost or at very subsidized rates etc.

### **Agricultural Education**

Greater stress has to be given on the Agricultural colleges to bring about an integrated approach to education, research and extension. Provide training to the farmers. Demonstrate and train farmers about the improved agricultural facilities and organise village cooperatives and Panchayats. The programme will include Cattle development, High Yielding Varieties programmes, Agro – area etc. Young students must be trained about the importance of land and the rivers, flora and fauna of the countryside.

Though there are 73 Agricultural colleges with annual admission strength of about 10,000 as compared to 18 Agricultural colleges with strength of about 1,000 in 1951. 8 Agricultural Engineering colleges have been set – up in different parts of the country with a total annual admission strength of about 250 students. There are Veterinary colleges, Fisheries Colleges, rural oriented Home Science Colleges and Forest Colleges. But for higher economic returns from agriculture, technical educational programme is essential. We need to restructure our educational curricula and course to meet these basic requirements of the country. We need to increase the number of such colleges and number of seats so that more number of students can be benefitted from these colleges. Also for this we need to motivate farmers and their children to

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get enrolled in such educational / vocational programmes as they are the future of our Country's Rural Transformation.

Colleges in rural areas can have reservation for only rural students. They will be given job opportunity to work in the rural areas, so that they have interest in developing their own village. Infrastructure and funding can be provided by State government and Private agencies. The main focus of these colleges will be research and development in the field of agriculture e.g., preparing good and healthy seeds, organic fertilizers and manures etc.

### USE OF TECHNOLOGIES

**Training for how to use computers and internet** – There are so many areas within India where internet connection and computers are available but people do not know how to use these technologies. Training must be provided to people living in rural areas so that they can utilize internet and computers for the purpose of learning and also for doing work related to their job or business. For example, Sending designs of handloom sarees to designers and buyers located in different parts of the world, to learn different ways of domestic animal farming with the help of translated version of videos available on internet, Seed technology, Biotechnology etc. For this purpose; if the people are not comfortable with the language, then a person from the village can be chosen who knows English language better and that person can explain these techniques in their local language. For this the person will be paid by NGO or State government.

**E – Resource facilities** – Electronic books, journals, articles, and magazines should be available on internet in different languages so that the areas where there is no library or no source of information, the people of that area can surf internet to get information.

**Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)** – ICT facilities can be used for rural transformation. Same syllabus, same subject, same content can be accessed by everybody including children and teachers so that the pattern of education can be maintained and if students want to come to the urban areas; they will be already aware with contents of the subject. For this, syllabus will be displayed on internet; the contents will be prepared and explained in detail in a particular format by different Professors and Teachers of Universities and Schools.

Also the content will be in three languages; English, Hindi and local language so that it will be accessible by all.

The clever deployment of ICT for creating connectivity in thousands of colleges and hundreds of universities is therefore not a luxury but a necessity. This would bring in free flow of information, which would give access to various good elements of teaching and learning at places of eminence, which would enhance the academic ambience at far places across the country. Much more than that, it would expose vast number of youths in rural, semi – urban and urban areas to best teachers and best of academic infrastructure in India and abroad. This is not only cost effective approach but would reduce migration of students to cosmopolitan cities. This

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would also have impact on research in universities. The information and communication connectivity would help to propagate concept of digital repository of research material thus making it possible to have an access to wider breadth of 'knowledge' at low cost (Sharma, 2006).

ICTs can work as a useful tool of learning and expression. The common problem is expanding access to ICTs and developing their use to enhance basic education. The Dakar framework for Action articulates the dilemma that their increasing use 'may tend to increase disparities, weaken social bonds and threaten cultural cohesion'. This dilemma applies also to the promotion of literacy and context – sensitive Education for Sustainable Development, and includes the question of how use ICTs relates to traditional learning tools (paper and pen, chalk and talk, for example). This is an area where common cause should be made by advocating strongly for local input into how ICTs should be used.

To resolve this issue we can in advance make sure that the all contents are explained by the teachers before students can surf the net and get information. Also ICT contents can be explained by the teachers using Chalk – Talk – Interaction. Teachers can motivate students to give more examples related to the content and to prepare street plays, flash cards, skits and many other things based on the contents of ICTs which will be the part of their examination procedure. Also there will be paper – pen exams which will be subjective in nature and students have to write answers in detailed based on what they have studied as part of their syllabus throughout the year.

### **Health Education**

The issues of development, environment and health are closely entwined, reflecting the complex links between the social, economic, ecological and political factors that determine standards of living and other aspects of social well – being that influence human health. A healthy population and safe environments are important pre – conditions for sustainable development. However, the education of many children and young people around the world is compromised by conditions and behaviours that undermine the physical and emotional well – being that makes learning possible. Hunger, malnutrition, malaria, polio and intestinal infections, drug and alcohol abuse, violence and injury, unplanned pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections are just some of the problems that have enormous implications for health. Health education activities should be organized at different parts of the States where people are not aware of their health conditions and causes of it. This can be done by Health practitioners, Psychologists, Social workers, AIDS counsellors etc.

### **Physical education**

For better health and for better well – being physical education is very important. For this course is being run in 7 Universities and 22 colleges spread over 13 states in the country, where UGC is providing assistance to these institutions for approved items of expenditure like salary of the



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staff, books and journals, equipment and laboratory building. But there are still many activities that can be done to provide physical education.

In many parts of the country people have capability and skills to show good performance related to any kind of sports like tracking (desert, Forest), Cycle Safari on plain, Mountainous terrain /rocky terrain, water sports, skiing, malkham, boxing etc. Such extra ordinary people must get proper training and must get proper motivation so that they can prepare themselves for National and International game, tournaments and can make country, their parents and their village proud. For this they must get proper Boarding and Lodging, Honorarium, TA/DA, Equipments etc. This will not only promote Indian games but also help people to shine and earn money.

### **Human Rights Education**

Most of people are not aware of their rights whether the individual is from urban or rural areas. Human rights education should be provided by social workers, students of law, teachers etc so that people who are not aware of their rights can use their rights to progress and to stand confidently on their feet to achieve their goals without being cheated.

### **Internships**

Internship can be introduced as part of curriculum of the B.Ed and M.Ed students. As part of B.Ed and M.Ed internship students can be sent to Municipality schools or the schools having poor academic performance, for teaching and educating the children. At the end of the year based on the school children's performance grades can be given to B.Ed, M.Ed students. This will serve two purposes: improvement in teaching style of Municipality school and Training of B.Ed, M.Ed students to deal with worst teaching systems and how to improve it.

### **Children University**

In Gujarat the first Children University of India has opened recently. The motto of this University is diverse yet much focused. It will work in the field of research, education and training, and some extensive services. The university with the help of trained and experienced teachers, consultants they will provide education and training to the students of B.Ed and M.Ed. Then these trained students will provide training to other teachers located in different rural and urban areas. The training and education will also be provided to special/disabled children. Education related to health, vocational, physical etc will also be provided. Also trained psychologists will help in diagnosing children with difficulty in learning and based on that proper intervention plan will be prepared to help those children.

We should encourage such University to grow and spread its network not only in Gujarat but also in different parts of the country where transformation is required urgently and needs more attention. We can get associated with the Children University and help them reach to achieve their goals. This will help in better and much faster rural transformation.

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### **Assessment**

Time to time assessment should be done to find out whether the planned strategy is working effectively or not. For this a governing body can be made who will do this assessment part every 6 months or 1 year. Also psychological assessment should be done by a team of psychologist in order to find out, if there is any difference in Quality of life and well – being of people or not. This will help in deciding whether the strategies are working properly or not. Time to time psychological assessment will also help in finding the motivational level of the governing body and the rural people so that; if there is any problem proper intervention can be given to both members of the governing body and rural people. This will help in maintaining the motivational level of the system and goal achievement.

### **Role of Media**

Media can play a very important role in Education for rural transformation by making people aware of different policies, their rights, and importance of education. If this awareness is spread like a fire then education for rural transformation will become much easier that we cannot think of.

### **Unity**

The above mentioned points can only be achieved if all of us understand our responsibilities and duties. It's our responsibility and duty to teach others. It does not matter from which discipline we belong. Anyone can help in Education for rural transformation and ultimately the rural transformation. Whether we are from education, law, psychology, social work, health, medicine, political science etc we all can give our favours to the society to improve it. And for this we have to work together as a team.

### **CONCLUSION**

Education for Rural Transformation is very important. Though funds, right governance, efficiency and effectiveness of policies are very important but still as an educator, psychologist and social worker, we can do many things for rural transformation. If these key approaches like educational/vocational training, information about and use of latest technologies, physical, health education etc are being followed and provided effectively then we can achieve our goal that is Rural Transformation.

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