

**CHALLENGES OF EDUCATION IN RURAL INDIA AND HOW GOVERNMENT
AND THE SOCIAL CHANGES CAN OVERCOME THE EDUCATIONAL
BARRIERS (With reference to depressed and SC ST students, In the Indian
Perspective)**

DR. DODDAHANUMAI AH B H

Associate Professor in Sociology

Gov't First Grade College Hosakote

Bangalore Rural, Karnataka- 562114

ABSTRACT

Education is an essential requirement for the social development of all the classes in the society, if any class is denied from the educational facilities can be called as depressed class, it can make way for the sociological and economic un-equality between the classes, With technology, courses from the best educator's e-libraries for research material and teachers will all be available in an instant. For the large majority of the population living in rural areas, education is highly dependent on government-run or aided schools and non-governmental organisations. But in rural areas the depressed classes still face various educational barriers that directly impact the country's literacy rate. The National Education Policy 2020 emphasises digital learning as an alternative to the conventional classroom model but implementing this in rural India will face some challenges in the various states in India, especially the depressed classes. To start with, meagre incomes lead to education taking a backseat. Parents tend to see education as an expense rather than an investment. They would rather have the children work and earn. When it comes to higher education, lack of good institutes close by means students have to look at shifting to cities, which adds to their expenses. This leads to low rates of enrolment and higher dropout rates, the article explains the challenges of education in rural India and how government and the social changes can overcome the educational barriers, with reference to depressed / SC ST students, In the Indian Perspective.

Key Words: Rural Education, SC/ST and the depressed, Rural India and the Government.

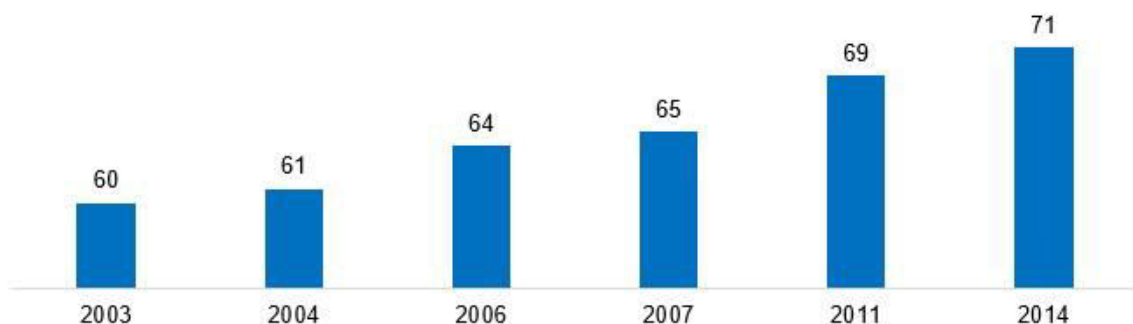
INTRODUCTION

Nearly 65.53% population of India reside in a rural area. There is a wide gap between urban and rural education system. The literacy rate of the urban area and the rural area are also wide, with the literacy rate of SC, ST people is lower than the other communities. According to ASER report, the survey was conducted and cover almost all rural districts; it was found that more than 50% of the children of age 3 to 16 years are not able to read and perform arithmetic abilities in the age group of 5to 16 years. However, the problems related to education in rural India are: Lack of availability of resources, lack of awareness of educational importance less availability of schools, digital dividend and financial condition. By increasing the modern teaching technologies, Modern technologies are very important in imparting education. Today in a globalised world where technology is rapidly emerging, it is necessary for every individual that they are updated with the current technology. Also, the focus of education should be on conceptual learning not on rote learning so that the students must use the applications of these new technologies.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Oprah Winfrey: “Education is the key to unlocking the world, a passport to freedom”

DATA / STATISTICS



Why is it important to educate rural India?

Education opens up new opportunities to access new information and technology that enables an individual to make the right decisions in both personal and professional life. It allows children to understand policies, rights, laws from the young age which will be helpful in the future. As 65% of the population of India is situated in rural areas, emphasizing on rural education will help boost the overall economy. Furthermore, it will also help in reduce migration of people from rural areas to cities of employment and create new opportunities.

INDIAN CONSTITUTION AND PROVISIONS FOR SC (scheduled castes) and the ST (scheduled tribes)

The Constitution recognised the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes as the two most disadvantaged sections of Indian society. There are several provisions in the Constitution which not only ensure equality to all but also makes special provisions for the weaker sections of the society, in particular, the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and the other backward groups. The relevant provisions of the Constitution are given below: Equality to all irrespective of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them (*Article 14, 15*) prohibits discrimination against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste and sex. Equality of opportunity in public appointments for all is a fundamental right (*Article 16*). State to make special provisions for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward group (*Article 15 (4)*). *Article 16(4)* empowers the state to make provisions for reservation in appointments or post in favour of any backward class citizens. Un-touchability is abolished and its practice in any form forbidden (*Article 17*). Cultural and educational rights are granted to all alike (*Article 29*) The Constitution enjoins the State "to promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of people, and, in particular of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation" (*Article 46*) Reservation of seats for the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes in the democratic institutions (*Art. 330*) and in services (*Art. 335*)

THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION IN RURAL AREAS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

➤ To Decreases Poverty

Education of the rural youth directly leads to employment. Employed youth earn a decent living thus eliminating poverty.

➤ To Increases Productivity

Education and employment lead to the productivity of youth in the rural areas. Youth will now be occupied in the labour sector and will therefore be productive.

➤ Education Eliminates Vices

Good education of the youth in rural, as well as urban areas decreases the possibility of picking up immoral values and habits. Educations develop skills, knowledge, values and moral habits.

➤ Bridges the Gap of Unemployment

Educating the youth bridges the gap between the employed and the unemployed.

Education levels of SC, ST, OBC rising. A new study looks at caste gap in jobs, income too

Data from NSSO 2004-05 and Periodic Labour Force Survey 2017-18 show that the education level of those belonging to OBC is now similar to General Category young men in urban India.

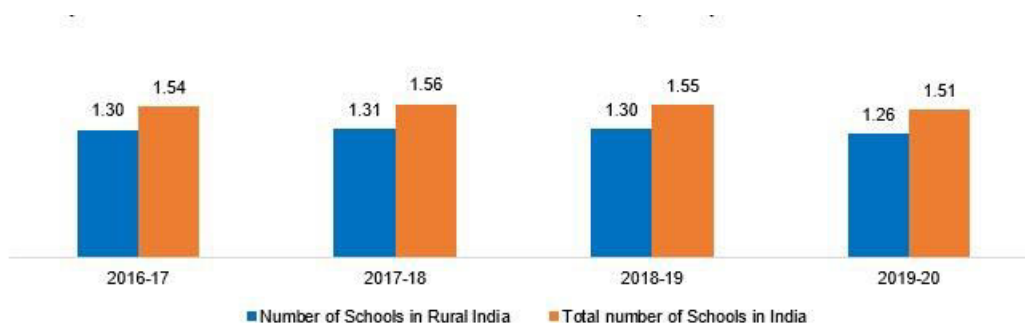


Source: Dhiraj Singh/Bloomberg

- In a growing economy, a frequent question that is asked is whether the workforce is truly inclusive. In India, we have made significant progress in the education levels of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes. But is the improvement reflected in employment and income potential?
- In this article in the workforce series, we explore the changes in the education and employment pattern of young urban Indian men (25-35 years) by focusing on the inclusiveness of opportunities by caste groups. The well-established vast inequality in terms of income and wealth among Indian households belonging to different castes has often been discussed. But to truly capture the progress, if any, towards inclusiveness, we need to compare the outcomes for the younger age group. It is here that any impact of the affirmative public policies such as reservation and a general move towards breaking the caste barriers can be noticed. Further, the change is likely to be faster in urban areas and among young men.

- The data is used from the Employment and Unemployment Survey of National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) for 2004-05 and from the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) for 2017-18. Indians are divided into four broad categories in official statistics — Scheduled Caste (SC), scheduled Tribe (ST), Other Backward Class (OBC), and General Category (GC), which includes the ‘upper’ castes. Among the age group of 25 to 35 years in urban India, OBC and GC accounted for around 40 per cent each, along with SC population of around 16 per cent and ST less than 3 per cent in 2017-18.

Government initiatives for rural education



Source – Department of School education and Literacy

The above chart shows the data on schools in rural parts of India. As per this, more than 83% of the total schools are located in rural India. As of 2019-20, India had around 42,343 colleges and about 60.56% of these colleges were located in the rural parts of the country the biggest proponent of rural education is the government. How the structure is formed, schemes are launched and the plans are executed entirely depends on the government initiative. By understanding this, the government of India has launched many initiatives to promote education in rural areas.

- **Shiksha Karmi Project**

The project launched in 1987 in Rajasthan works for universalization of primary schools and socio economically backward villages in the state where the existing primary education is dysfunctional. The project works to improve and adapt the type of education suiting the local needs and conditions.

- **Lok Jambish Pariyojana**

The initiative, also formed in Rajasthan in 1992, works for universalization of elementary education through mass mobilization and participation of people. It works to enroll children in regular schools and ensure they regularly attend. The project also emphasizes on active learning, child centered process and women empowerment and equality through education.

➤ **Digital initiatives**

To combat issues such as declining student attendance, lack of committed teachers, proper infrastructure and quality and access to education, the government has taken several digital initiatives. These digital platforms, namely e-PATHSHALA, Diksha, MOOC, SWAYAM PRABHA, and National digital library can be accessed through any part of the country.

➤ **Samagra Shiksha**

There is an integrated scheme for schools education launched in 2018-19 by the Indian government, covers pre-schools to class XII. It aims to ensure an equitable quality of education at all levels of school education across India. It works to strengthen infrastructure, gender equality, improving education quality, digital initiatives and the right to education for every child.

WAYS TO BOOST RURAL EDUCATION IN INDIA

We need to overcome the above said obstruction to boost education in India. In order to boost up this, we need to adopt the following measures:

- Encourage free education
- Increase the number of schools
- By adopting modern teaching technologies
- By providing scholarships
- Proper infrastructure and availability of resources

One of the most important ways to boost rural education is boosted up free education. Our constitution provides the right to education to all citizens of India. The government should focus on how they can increase the enrolment of children who reside in rural areas. This can be done by establishing more schools, providing proper infrastructure and resources. The government should also ensure that the number of children who are attending school must

retain education up to elementary level. Another reason for encouraging free education is that people of rural India don't have much income so they can't afford high school fees and eventually drop out the school.

- Increase the number of schools

The government should set up more school in rural India to boost up education. Most of the children have to leave their education due to the large distance between the home and the school. This is the case, especially for girls. Most of the girls drop out of school due to non-availability of transport. If the schools are set up at every village, it will aid in increasing the enrolment percentage and decrease the drop -out rate of rural children.

CONCLUSION

The problems faced by rural India in achieving the education are less number of schools and resources, less availability of teachers, religious and societal norms, the large distance between the school and home, lack of awareness of education. According to the reports SC and ST category people are deprived more in rural areas. The way to improve the present scenario of education in rural India is the construction of schools in every village, providing proper and adequate infrastructure and other resources, using modern technologies in education, creating awareness about the importance of education and rights. Another way to boost up the education in rural India is by providing proper infrastructure and resources. The objective of education is the all-round development of the individual. Availability of resources is also important for providing education. Resources include textbooks, stationery, laboratories, playgrounds, and benches should be in good condition and available for all the students. This will aid in achieving the objective of education and retaining the number of students in education. The government should make provisions and schemes to boost up education in India, especially focusing on rural India

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