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Quality of Education in Rural Areas: Present Status & Remedial Measures There to

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Introduction:

It is said that- “Heart of education is education of heart.” Schools and teachers should give priority to develop the personality of children which is even more important. The standard and quality of school / college is based on facilities, students’ background, educational expectations, teacher characteristics, school climate, education quality, parent involvement, curriculum implementation, availability of technology and infrastructural materials as these things are acknowledged as important indicators of school quality. These crucial factors influence the quality of rural education. The Lack of technology and lack of parental involvement are found to be the factors that might have an effect on the quality of today’s rural education. Since India’s Independence and thereafter too, economists, social scientists, and politicians have been suggesting that education has a crucial role in the social and economic development of a country. Today, there is a global and cut-throat competition in the marketplace. In this competitive world, in order to meet the expectations of the business and in order to make the future better than yesterday, quality of education is vital and significant.

The purpose of Education:

“Education is a spindle to support life. Education is a way of igniting and enlightening the thought of an individual. Education is to help you to seek and search your essential, to help you to grow it. The word “education” means to draw out; that which is in has to be brought out.” The education is to inculcate ethics and principles among students viz. Dignity of Manual work, scientific attitude, Gender equality, Social Sensitivity, National Integration, Patriotism, Respect for all religions and Secularism etc.

Objectives of rural education:

1. To ensure every child to receive quality education
2. To provide free and standard education to one and all
3. To support children for higher education
4. To guide and support research scholars to educational development

5. To implement new teaching methodologies and assessment system
6. To promote all schools / colleges to stress free environment

Present Scenario of education in rural areas:

In India and most particularly in the state of Maharashtra, condition of rural education is far from satisfactory; it is still improving. In slum areas, 'remote' and 'isolated' villages the condition of education there is still very poor. There are very few schools in the rural areas and children have to travel far away from their home-to-school and school-to-home. It's boring and tiresome. Students are exhausted as they have to walk on foot. Parents cannot provide bicycles to them; sometimes schools are far away from villages even roads are full of dust and stones etc. In schools children are made to sit on the floor due to non-availability of desks / furniture. Apart from the course curriculum rural schools are not able to involve children in other activities like sports, tournaments, co-curricular, extracurricular activities and competitions. Such healthy practices, events, activities are very essential for the over-all development of the children. In urban and city areas schools are well equipped with infrastructure, basic amenities, laboratory, library and healthy practices as compared to the schools in rural areas. In rural areas boarding schools or primary schools with hostels for students from remote communities are not found. Rural schools are inferior in facilities and the quality of teachers as well.

In some schools there are not basic amenities like pure drinking water, benches, etc. Electricity is either not available or limited. Sometimes because of load-shedding and unavailability of generators in schools in rural areas; it becomes impossible to both student and teacher to learn or teach respectively. The quality of education is also very poor. The teachers are not highly qualified and properly trained. Teachers are not selected and appointed purely on merit basis. As a result they found purchasing land, doing businesses before and after school for accumulating wealth by all means. The teachers do not teach properly with devotion, dedication. Some non educational duties are assigned to them. There are many initiatives taken by the government, but they are not implemented in the schools, so the present scenario remains the same. Teachers do not use advanced technology for effective and systematic teaching in rural areas. They are still using the old 'chalk and talk' method. Audio visual aids such as black boards, green boards, white boards, the Flannel boards, Pictures, films, film loop, filmstrips, Gramophone, Tape-Recorder, Radio, Television, Video, internet, OHP / LCD projectors for presentations and effective teaching etc. These aids are of immense value. This will definitely be of great importance.

In my humble opinion, if parents get involved in education, children will try their level best and will achieve more at school. Parents who help and encourage their children to learn at home, and who help develop positive attitudes toward school, contribute to the personal growth and academic success of their children. But parents and community in rural areas hardly involve in education; it is because the poverty of many rural communities limits parents' ability to

provide for their children and to augment their children's education with resources in the home. The government of Maharashtra should take innovative steps and strictly implement educational reform movements for parent-school partnerships to improve education and for enhancement of school success in rural areas. It will help increase in parent attendance at meetings and activities, quality and quantity of parent involvement at home and school, student self-esteem, and regular attendance. The main objective of parent-teacher-community involvement in education is to improve parents' self-confidence, increase parent-child interactions, improve home support for education, and strengthen the relationship between school personnel and families. In rural areas poverty is high, opportunity is low, and the economic benefits derived from education and training is limited.

Right to Education is the primary right of every citizen of India, whether a child resides in highly sophisticated society or in a slum area or secluded village of any part of India. Schools in rural areas are promoted to raise the standard and quality of education and literacy in rural India. The main objective of running these types of schools in rural areas is to increase the rates of literacy in rural areas. Research and studies have shown that more than 40 percent of India's population is still illiterate and cannot read or write. There are very few schools in villages and in rural areas and equivalent to being non-existent. The state and central government initiated to set up schools in rural areas so that India could become hundred percent literate. Thus, the conditions of rural education in India are improving steadily and the government is also providing full support and providing with many initiatives. The fee structure in these schools is also very low so that every child can study and afford it.

Though there are very few schools in rural areas, children and parents are showing interest and availing school facilities in these remote locations. Children have to walk miles to reach their school. Rural schools pay special attention to children in these locations so that each child gets an equal and important opportunity. They promote reading and writing and enhanced basic education. These schools also provide study material to every student apart from meals during school hours, uniforms etc. Rural village schools also have implemented library system, which provide books, newspapers and magazine to children. They not only provide science kits and equipment for hands-on-learning, but also notebooks, textbooks and pencils to poor children. Apart from that they also give scholarships to deserving students regularly, who wish to study ahead. They create community awareness, about the need for education and national literacy. Many indirect benefits of basic rural education include poverty reduction, disease control, enhanced employment opportunities and increasing rate of literacy. The curriculum includes English, Mathematics, General Knowledge and Drawing. Apart from that they also provide Value Education and Computer Education. With the help of rural education every family and child has access to basic primary education. Individual's special talents are recognized. The teaching methodology ensures that each and every student is exposed to educational experience in an active and dynamic learning environment, so that they can achieve excellence. Teachers also encourage every student to express their views, observations and experiences.

Remedial Measures

Rural education must not become “unequal” education. There is no doubt that primary schooling is a firm foundation for further education.

- Central ministries / state ministries of education, either at national / state / district level will provide isolated schools with computers, solar power, the new panacea of information technology or e-learning to rural schools and colleges.
- To fill up the gap with smooth co-ordination between the poor and undereducated in rural areas and their urban counterparts.
- Govt. of the state of Maharashtra in collaboration with community in rural areas to set up a national rural education infrastructure fund to speed up the rate of development of rural education in the country.
- Some need-based and skill-based educational courses should be provided for rural students to equip them to keep pace with urban or city students.

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