

# Technical Education and Employment Opportunities in Rural Perspective

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**Abstract:** The real meaning of employment opportunities in rural perspective is that most of the people living in rural areas should have enough opportunities to earn so as to take care of themselves, their families, their neighbors, their animals, lands, forestry, and all the natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations. The main occupation of people in this area is agriculture. Agriculture provides the principal means of livelihood for over 58.4% of India's population. This is not a full-time occupation so people undertake many other non-agricultural activities so as to utilize their spare hours and earn some extra money. The best strategy to enhance employment opportunities in a rural area would be to improve the quality and quantity of agricultural produce and production of existing cottage industries to meet the international standards and keeping the cost of inputs as low as possible. Besides this, new ways of earning are to be explored. Agriculture and non-agricultural activities are just like any other production units and service industries, which require good technical and managerial skills to be competitive in the market. In fact, agriculture is one of the most difficult production processes. It is done outdoors; involves living things not the materials depends on many factors such as monsoon, soil condition, humidity, temperature; danger from rats, insects, pests and cattle. The produce is to be of high grade keeping the investment as low as possible. It is perishable commodity requiring good storage and preservation facilities and time bound distribution. Production in the other parts of the country and world affects the profitability of this occupation. The land is to be taken care of for further use. Agriculture is not a kind of profession to be undertaken by anyone lacking in technical knowledge. Technical education plays a vital role in economic development of rural areas. It will train the workers in technical skills and equip individuals with entrepreneurship so that they can create local business and jobs for others. The technically trained workforce will be able to get a high return and to expand market share by quality management. They will become more innovative, competitive and will be able to solve their problems and explore new possibilities for further growth.

**Keywords:** Agriculture, rural, industries, economy, domestic products.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In India about 65 percent of the total population lives in rural areas. Agriculture provides the principal means of livelihood for over 58.4% of India's population. It contributes approximately one-fifth of total gross domestic product (GDP). Agriculture accounts for about 10 percent of the total export earnings and provides raw material to a large number of industries. It has always been India's most important economic sector. Non-agricultural activities like animal husbandry, sericulture, forestry, dairy, fishery and other village industries are other sources of income in rural areas.

India had the world's largest economy from the first to the 11th century, and in the 18th century, with a (32.9%) share of world GDP in the 1st century to (28.9%) in 1000 AD and in 1700 AD with (24.4%). Though ancient India had a significant urban population, much of India's population resided in villages, whose economy was largely isolated and self-sustaining. Agriculture was the predominant occupation of the populace and satisfied a village's food requirements besides providing raw materials for hand-based industries like textile, food processing and crafts. Besides farmers, other

classes of people were barbers, carpenters, doctors (Ayurvedic practitioners), goldsmiths, weavers etc. There were peace and prosperity in rural areas.

A number of farmers who have committed suicide during 1997 and 2007 - is staggering 182,936 as many as 8 million people quit farming between the two censuses of 1991 and 2001 and the large-scale survey shows that given a chance almost 40% farmers are willing to quit farming permanently. From the above facts, it is easy to understand the effect of using modern technologies in agriculture such as hybrid seeds, chemicals, fertilizers, agricultural machinery.

Now we can see that the approach adopted after Independence to restore the rural economy, deteriorated during British rule, was not correct. More old technologies and few new technologies would be the correct approach in reinvigorating the rural economy.

## 2. EMPLOYMENT IN AGRICULTURE

A Recent trend is to go for those crops, which are sold at good prices, use improved seeds from the market, use chemical fertilizers, pesticides and use modern machinery such as tractors, harvesters. Sowing same crop repeatedly and use of chemicals makes the soil infertile for further use. Modern machinery is replacing bullocks and causing unemployment for many workers. New seeds from the market are more prone to be affected by harmful insects forcing farmers to use expensive pesticides. Seeds from the market, chemical fertilizers and pesticides increase the cost of inputs for which farmers take loans. Good amount of profit is paid as the payment of loans. Because of all this agriculture is not a lucrative occupation anymore.

Without making the agriculture a sustainable and profitable occupation, it would be a daydream to create employment in rural areas. Technical education to be imparted to the farmers should train them in the use of various old technologies such as the method of preparing vermin-compost, pest repellent from mixture of neem extract, garlic paste and kerosene; process of cutting and burning weeds and wild plants for making the soil fertile, storage of seeds from good crops for further use and method of integrated organic farming. Such technical education can make the farmers adopt these techniques and become prosperous because in this type of farming the cost of inputs is very low, everything is interdependent, utilization of available resources such as waste food, earthworms, cow dung, weeds, wild plants, dried leaves, is maximum.

Technical knowledge of drip irrigation and rainwater harvesting can help them cope with irrigation problem. Precision farming and crops like Jatropha and Pongamia require knowledge of new technologies.

## 3. EMPLOYMENT IN NON-AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES

This is not correct to think that with some technical education and training the workers in rural areas can produce articles, which can compete with the similar products of urban areas. There will always remain a great difference in infrastructure facilities, supporting industries, technical expertise along with many other factors. Rural areas have some advantages over urban areas such as cheap labour rates, large workforce, more open space, availability of fresh raw material for agro-based industries, free or at cheap rates food for animals; waste from one activity is useful for other activity. They should try to go only for those activities for which either there is no competition from urban areas or they are at an advantage. Technical education plays a vital role in the development of any industry by making the workers competent, understand the various processes of production, and innovative so that they can improve the production process, quality, and quantity.

Use of that kind of machinery, which helps the individual labour, is good for rural areas, not that which replaces many labours and creates unemployment. They need to be given that kind of technical education which will help them to utilize the available resources either as it is or with some modifications. They will learn to use cow dung for heating and lighting, their automobiles as motors by attaching pulley on the wheel, make machines using wood, stone, handmade ropes and use animals to drive them. Therefore, they can develop alternative low-cost ways to achieve the desired actions. This will reduce the cost of inputs and increase profits.

With the availability of technically trained workforce, there are more chances of getting work from urban businessmen along with raw material and machines as the labour rates are cheaper than in urban areas. This type of work with no investment of their own is very safe for people in rural areas.

#### 4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TECHNICAL EDUCATION

The aim should be to impart only that much technical knowledge which they need to run a successful business in rural areas and not more than that. With the more technical knowledge, they will be either tempted to opt for jobs in urban industries or go for more sophisticated enterprises in rural areas which require heavy investment on setup and almost no advantage of resources available there to reduce the cost of inputs. The teachers are to be trained in the kind of technical knowledge, which is actually required for the development of agriculture and other activities in rural areas. Their training should be based on the ancient practices prevalent in the country when India was prosperous and consultations with those farmers who are successful. Along with the above, the teachers should also know selected new technologies.

Technical education for students in rural areas is to be included in the school curriculum after primary classes. To avoid extra expenses on books, technical education needs to be oral than printed. Factors like low literacy rate, distance, fuel costs, lack of public transport, lack of childcare facilities, work commitments, seasonal climatic cycles and weather influence access to education and training in rural areas. Often roads are poor quality and make travel difficult at any time, but particularly in bad weather. For informal training of technical education, mobile units and workshops are to be used. Training by showing videos is very effective in rural areas.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

If enough care is thus taken in imparting technical education in rural areas, the villages, most of them as good as dead or dying, will hum with life and exhibit the immense possibilities they have of generating employment opportunities. Every village will have its own carpenters, shoemakers, potters, builders, mechanics, farmers, engineers, research workers, weavers, teachers, merchants, traders, and artists. There will be nothing in life worth having which will not be had in the villages.

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