

'ROLE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT'

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Abstract:

Country destitution in India is a perplexing sensation and there clearly can't be one overwhelming approach for its easing. Numerous examinations in Asian nations appear to have succeeded in easing neediness in more diminutive pockets (groups of villages). These examinations were concerned with changes in micro level arranging, viable supply of credit to the poorest of poor people, enhanced administration of government-run neediness easing systems, and the work of some nongovernmental conglomerations (Ngos) in building systems of self improvement around the country poor. Generally succeeded in view of grass root intercession. New approach drives sat down for a bit to time have had the capacity to give more amazing assets for destitution turned systems, training, health or family welfare.

KEYWORDS:

perplexing sensation , nongovernmental , Information Technology .

INTRODUCTION

Nonetheless, it is broadly affirmed that there is an extraordinary arrangement of waste in the way these assets have been used previously. Information Technology (IT) is frequently distinguished as a key to enhance the asset allotment transform and to all the more effectively actualize programs. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) are in reality producing new potential outcomes to strike issues of rustic destitution, bias, and ecological corruption. Old methods for working together regarding conveying significant administrations to natives are, no doubt, being tested and off and on again abrogated in both industrialized and improving nations. Yet the inquiry of the worth of IT for country advancement is joined by this problem for leaders and multilateral subsidizing organizations: might as well the precise constrained assets for provincial improvement is connected to advancing ICT limits, or would they say they are best utilized for other high necessities, for example schools, clinics and dispensaries? Unmistakably, there is a grave worry about the plausibility of squandered, inadequately used or generally unspent assets in ICT provisions for provincial improvement.

INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY:

Information Communication Technology includes any communication device or application, encompassing – Telephone, Radio, Television, Cellular phone, Computers, Networks, Satellite systems, Hardware and software, The Internet and its applications, WWW, Portals, Various services and applications, video-conferencing and distance learning. The Internet is one of the most important and complex innovations of mankind. It is a powerful means of communication, dissemination and retrieval of information. Now the facility of Internet has been increasingly used for development of rural people.⁵ Information and communication technology can be harnessed to generate incentives for knowledge-rich, economically poor people to share their knowledge without exhausting their intellectual property rights

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and creating fear of being robbed of their only resource. It can do so by providing a global registration system such as the International Network for Sustainable Technological Applications and Registration (INSTAR).⁶ ICT also can conserve institutions, particularly when communities facing different challenges greatly need a horizontal flow of information. The more specific the environmental challenges, the more likely it is that local knowledge systems will be isolated and fragmented. Yet analogical learning systems thrive precisely on such dissimilarities and discontinuities. Knowledge fragmentation happens because of social divisions and cleavages and discontinuities between generations in traditional functional knowledge. Fragmentation also can arise if contemporary innovations for resource use are not shared widely. This either may be due to the dominance of external knowledge systems or to contempt for local and familiar knowledge, as happens in many communities and societies.

Analogical learning can help overcome many of these discontinuities, through searching for solutions in different contexts, providing clues about the kinds of relationships that can be pursued, and enriching the repertoire of local communities and innovators so that they independently can locate ideas for solutions as well as alternative materials. The basic idea of such analogical learning systems, for example, is that even if fish are not found in dry regions, knowledge about another community using plants to numb fish before catching them may trigger some other uses of toxic plants in a pastoral community, such as for veterinary medicine. Although ICT can provide a mechanism for abstracting and exchanging information on the heuristics underlying innovations, it has its limitations. For instance, along with the ethical values that encourage the local sharing of knowledge, many societies have indifference or general contempt for local innovations.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT:

Rural people in India constitute the greater part of the population and often lack access to basic needs such as water, food, education, health care, sanitation and security. These conditions, considered harsh by the majority of the rural population, result in their migration into urban areas, often in search of formal employment opportunities. The urban slums populations in which they find themselves are often not food secure either. A large number of agencies including Government are involved in rural development. In spite of substantial expenditures in rural areas in the last 60 years, there are number of regions which are still backward and significant proportion of the population continues to live below the poverty line. The Government is increasingly aware that they have a major responsibility for rural development, but lack the capacity and solutions to meet the challenge.

Rural development implies both the economic betterment of people as well as greater social transformation. In order to provide the rural people with better prospects for economic development, increased participation of people in the rural development programmes, decentralization of planning, better enforcement of land reforms and greater access to credit are envisaged. Initially, main thrust for development was laid on agriculture industry, Information communication technology (ICT), education, health and allied sectors but later on it was realized that accelerated development can be provided only if governmental efforts are adequately supplemented by direct and indirect involvement of people at the grass root level. The Information Communication Technology revolution is one intervention that has been identified as having the potential to meet the increased employment demands and to contribute to alleviating poverty of rural people.

The Role of ICT in Rural Development:

There are many examples about the role of ICT in strengthening rural livelihoods, providing market information and lowering transaction costs of poor farmers and traders. One of them is the Grameen Bank. Grameen Bank, best known as a micro-credit institution, has also pioneered in ICT related activities with the rural poor. Grameen Bank started with the mobile telephone program called Grameen Phone and has become the largest mobile operator in Bangladesh, having 70 per cent of market share. It has lately expanded to other ICT sectors, becoming the largest Internet Service provider. Grameen Communication has set up Internet kiosks in villages in Bangladesh and Grameen Software and Grameen Star Education are franchising IT education all over Bangladesh to build human resource base for the growth of IT businesses. (Yunus Mohammed (2001) - Key Note Speech for the Conference on Making Globalisation Work for the Poor – the European Contribution, Sweden.) As poor people are often unaware of their rights, entitlements and the availability of various government schemes and extension services, ICT can also improve their access to the information they need. Through info kiosks or with the help of mobile phones farmers can access information on market prices or on extension services. Timing is often crucial when it comes to the sale of produce. Workers can also get information on available jobs and minimum wages. In a tribal district

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in Marathwada the most commonly used services related to various grievances, market information and land records.

The lack of systematic and transparent recording and public documentation of government data needed by the poor has a negative effect on development outcomes. This is the case, for example, with land records. Without land records as collateral, they cannot apply for loans, and often they cannot get assistance from government poverty alleviation programs intended for small farmers. Often for the poor, getting access to even the most common type of government information or documentation can be a nightmare requiring multiple visits and bribes as well as wasting their time. ICT can be used to address such malpractices and to speed up processing of documents. But it is not a simple process to get access to such documents at village level. ICT can help in this process, but it alone without active organizations and supportive measures will not be able to make the required information easily available.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY APPLICATIONS IN RURAL AREAS:

Electronic mail is the most commonly used in ICT and has caused a cultural revolution in the way individuals and organizations interact, in terms of time, cost and distance. The second most significant use of new ICTs is the World Wide Web (www), which enables rural people to access information on millions of other computers. The Internet can also enable the remotest village to access regular and reliable information from a global library. Different media combinations may, however, be best in different cases - through radio, television, DTH service, video conferencing, computer programmes, print, CD-ROM or the Internet. Rural areas also get greater visibility by having the opportunity to disseminate information about their community to the whole world. The research challenge here is to build cost-effective IT based suggestions to improve the living standards of the rural populations.

EMPLOYMENT AND SELF-EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES TO RURAL PEOPLE:

ICT can generate rural employment opportunities. Basic training in ICT can provide employment in electronic repair centers and information handling and training services. ICT can also be used to train field workers located in rural areas through innovative designs or programs. Through the establishment of rural information centers, ICTs can create employment opportunities in rural areas by creating Computer Centers, Mobile Services Centers, Tele-centre, Cyber Cafes, Information Centers, Training centers etc. Such centers help bridge the gap between urban and rural communities and reduce the rural-urban migration problem. ICT needs to be further deployed to train physically and socially disadvantaged groups. The centers can also provide training and those trained may become small-scale entrepreneurs. ICT can be used to deliver such information to the people located in rural areas.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ICT:

Rural areas need ICT for improving Employment generation, Agriculture counseling, Entrepreneurial activity, Marketing opportunities, Access to education and knowledge, Addressing health Challenges, Rural empowerment and participation, Social empowerment of women, Good Governance etc. ICT offers many promises and opportunities, even while posing serious threats and uncertainties. Harnessing ICT for development requires a strategic framework that takes advantage of the various roles of ICT and that helps integrate the options made possible by this technological revolution into the design and implementation of country and sector development strategies. As such, ICT is not just a sector or pillar of the knowledge economy, but a lens through which new possibilities and modalities of comprehensive development can be realized. Thus, ICT should be viewed not only as a sector in competition with others for scarce resources, but also as a cost-effective tool to enable all sectors to meet human needs better than through traditional means alone.

By focusing on the rural poor and their needs and challenges rather than on ICT per se, the discussion is directed to the specific needs and priorities of the rural poor and the contribution of various strategies, institutions and actions by individuals, communities and other actors in addressing these needs and priorities. ICT are then viewed not as an end in themselves but as tools to facilitate a range of information, communication and transaction services that contribute to improving rural livelihoods. They can also then be viewed as a tool to strengthen the effectiveness, transparency and responsiveness of a range of institutions – public, private and non-profit that serve the needs of the rural poor.

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CONCLUSIONS:

There is need to connect rural communities, research and extension networks and provides access to the much needed knowledge, technology and services. The information revolution is another intervention with the potential to ensure that knowledge and information on important technologies, methods and practices are put. ICTs can empower rural peoples and give them a dignity that permits them to contribute to the development process. Use of ICTs can provide up-to-date information on markets to producers, thus increasing their bargaining power. Information and communication technologies (ICT) are indeed generating new possibilities to attack problems of rural poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation. ICT and Web technologies could make such knowledge visible to large rural communities. Through the establishment of rural information centers, ICTs can create employment opportunities in rural areas by creating Computer Centers, Mobile Services Centers, Tele-centre, Cyber Cafes, Information Centers, Training centers etc. ICT can be used to deliver such information the people located in rural areas.

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