Challenges before Information and Communication Technology in Education: With Special Reference in Rural Areas of India

Hilal Ahmad Bhat (Researcher)
School of Comparative Languages and Culture
Devi Ahilya University
Indore, Madhya Pradesh, India

Abstract

The present paper focuses particularly on the possibilities of recent forms of technology, often known as Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Information and Communication Technology refers to technologies that provide access to information through telecommunications. Since modern education was introduced in developing countries, efforts have been made by various countries including India to universalize basic education. Information and Communication Technology is one of the rapid development technological fields in the global society. Among the developing countries India reached a significant position in development of Information and Communication Technologies. Particularly in the field of education its development is tremendous. There is no doubt in the near future's development will based on Information and Communication Technologies. However benefits of Information and Communication Technologies are not reached expected level in the rural areas still the rural population living with minimum level of Information and Communication Technologies facilities especially the poorest of the poor.

Key words: *Information and Communication Technology, Education, Challenges, Rural Area.*

1. Introduction:

The world's populations in the underdeveloped countries are living the life of poverty. This area encompasses South-east Asia, Africa and Middle-east. These countries were for many years/centuries under foreign rule and subjected to exploitation. As a result, state of ignorance, superstitions, unhealthy environment and illiteracy took roots in these countries. India is also one of these countries, which was under foreign rule. In India, 60% people are in the grip of poverty and about 67% people are illiterate. Population, in India is increasing continuously and land ratio per person is decreasing. The total land area of India is 143 million hectares of which 108 million hectares is dependent on annual rainfall and from this type of dry land only 42% of total agricultural production is produced. According to the census report of 2011, 72.2% of the population lives in rural areas about 638,000 villages and the remaining 27.8% lives in more than 5,100 towns and over 380 urban agglomerations. Among all the above mentioned educations techniques adequate in rural India have to change according to the 21st Century. The main aim of this study is to elevate the Scope, Purpose and Methodology adopted for computer education in Rural India. Today Information and Communication Technology has been become a revolution in all walk of life in general and in education in a particular. The Information and Communication Technology revolution has changed the learning process of new generation up to the real world. By Information and Communication Technology new generation may be enabled to develop a self concept; develop basic decision for making skills. Students require higher level of education to succeed in the new, knowledge based society. Information and Communication Technology is one of the rapid development technological fields in the global society. Among the developing countries India reached a significant position

in development of Information and Communication Technologies. Particularly in the field of education its development is tremendous. There is no doubt in the near future's development will based on Information and Communication Technologies. However benefits of Information and Communication Technologies are not reached expected level in the rural areas still the rural population living with minimum level of Information and Communication Technologies facilities especially the poorest of the poor. Both Central and State Governments and Non-Government Organizations are allocating huge amount for the development of Information and Communication Technologies and rural education. However the level of improvement in accessibility of Information and Communication Technologies in rural schools did not reached the expected level.

2. Methods of Education

The Information and Communication Technology revolution brings particular challenges to education systems around the world. These challenges are in three broad areas. The first has to do with participation in the information society; the second is Information and Communication Technology impact on access, cost-effectiveness and quality of education, while the third is to do with the way that Information and Communication Technology changes the education process.

The various types of learning noted by researchers and educators fall into three general categories:

(i) Informal Education

It is the never-ending process by which an individual learns through daily experiences and exposure to environment at home - at work, from friends, radio, television, papers and books etc.

(ii) Formal Education

It is institutionalized, chronologically graded and well-structured system of education, which starts from schooling to the higher education.

(iii) Non-Formal Education

It has been a well organized, systematic educational activity that is carried on outside formal educational system in order to provide certain selected type of learning to the selected group of individuals which include adults, young as well as the children. Included in the non-formal education are subjects on the various aspects of agriculture and related fields, like training programs for farmers, farmwomen and rural youth. Training has been provided on skill development of various aspects, which may help in generation of employment. Farmwomen clubs, self help groups, Home Science activities such as health, nutrition, childcare, sanitation and fruit and vegetable preservation etc.

3. Challenges before Information and Communication Technology

A) Low Literacy

The literacy rate in rural areas is poor as compared to its urban area. Because of agricultural based economy and most of the population lives in rural area. The other reason is insufficient availability of educational facilities. Unavailability of skilled people is a crucial problem. It is found that expert people are not interested in working in rural areas due to inadequate wages. They are interested in work at district level or metro cities.

B) Availability of Technology and Electricity

Technical resources such as computers and related devices are essential for Information and Communication Technology. In rural areas it is difficult to avail and use these resources due to transportation and financial problems. Electricity is essential for Information Technology. Now-a-days we are facing the problems of lack of electricity not only in rural areas but urban areas also. This may affect the implementation of e-learning system.

C) Finance -
For making an e-learning system setup, large finance is required. It is very difficult in rural areas small organizations / trusts to avail the finance for

such work from Government and Non-governmental (GO & NGO) organizations.

D) Unavailability of Computer Education in Schools

In India, there are about 1303996 or more than one million rural schools among 6, 38, 000 villages in India. In present age, condition of rural education is still very poor. In some villages, there are very few Government schools, children have to travel far away distances to avail these facilities and most schools in these locations do not provide computer education.

E) Absence of Native Language

The Information and Communication Technology applications are written in English language. This is one of the major reasons for the least acceptance and adoption of Information and Communication Technology. English language in rural areas is very low as compared to urban areas. Therefore, the Information and Communication Technology applications must be written in native language so that public may accept and adopt these applications very easily.

4. Research Methodology

The present paper based on secondary sources. Books, journals, research papers and also other secondary sources are used in present paper.

5. Conclusion

This paper gives ideas to improve the rural education through Information and Communication Technologies, especially the computer related technologies. Also provide some suggestions for effective implementation of the national policy for Information and Communication Technology in education in rural areas.

Information and Communication Technology is essential for everyone. The increased rate of literacy will push the nation towards development. Information and Communication Technology is a useful way to provide education. Considering India's rural areas, problems create difficulties to implement the e-learning system but strategies can be developed and implemented. Before the actual implementation of Information and Communication Technology system, the understanding of different components and their functions is necessary. A policy should be developed to implement the functions and to maintain the quality of system. With introduction of Web Based Education at school level rural children and youngsters will grow as "Computer kids". Their exposure will get increased due to which the Knowledge level will get definitely improved.

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