

RURAL DEVELOPMENT : TRENDS, OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN 21ST CENTURY



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39. CONCEPT OF SMART VILLAGES**Dr. Mahadappa Gonda****ABSTRACT**

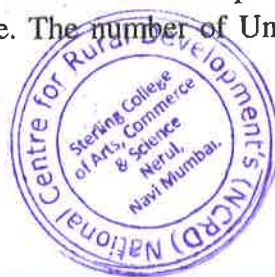
Smartness, whether it is a person, an organization, a village, a city or a country is most demanding and popular concept in globalized world. Those having smartness are in demand, accepted and entertained in global competition. Hence to survive and to sustain in the present global culture, smartness is the key element. Keeping this in mind Indian government, particularly the present prime minister has decided to make India a smart country through converting 100 cities in the country as smart cities within period of five years 2015-16 to 2019-20). To make India a smart country, Indian villages also must become smart villages simultaneously with smart cities and to achieve this it is decided by the government to develop 300 villages as smart villages by the end of 2019-20. As a part of it 132 villages have been selected for pilot projects to convert them to smart villages with the help of villagers, village organizations, professionals with government funding. There is separate Ministry of Rural Development at central government and state government for development of rural areas and there had been efforts from private sector for development of rural areas. Crores of rupees are being spent each year on various projects and schemes on rural development, but still 2/3rd of India has yet to develop. The fundamental objective of projects on rural development was to improve standard of living of villagers. And the concept of smart village is also on the same line of rural development to improve the basic services in villages. India has to face multiple challenges in the process of developing smart villages.

Keywords: Smart city, Smart Village, Rural Development, Urban India, Rural India.

INTRODUCTION:

There are two Indias within India, one is emerging India known as urban India and the second is neglected India known as rural India. These two Indias have basically two different faces (sides) in many aspects like in social, economical, political, educational, infrastructural, technical, resource availability and so on. And both the faces are opposite to each other. One face of India (aspect) is bright, prospering and making the community life comfortable by accepting and adopting new concepts, new thoughts and new ideas. Comparatively, a small part of total India is socially changing and developing by accepting and implementing the ideas and thoughts like gender equity, educating daughters, accepting inter-caste and inter-religion marriages, allowing female to make career as per her choice and so. Indian economy has been growing at a faster rate as compared to the growth rate of other countries in world and it has become the second fastest growing economy, growing at a rate of 6 –7 percent per annum after China. Number of millionaires has been increasing and there was around 0.02 (2.6 lacs) percent of the total population having income in millions during the year 2014-15. Literacy rate has gone up to 74 percent and gross enrolment rate (GER) in higher education has reached up to 15 percent of the related population in the year 2014-15. The number of premiere institutes like IITs and IIMs has been increasing with increased intake. The number of Universities and colleges has gone up to

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700 and 40000 respectively by 2014-15. India has become scientifically advanced countries by launching various types of satellites in the space. Around 30 percent of the total population stays in urban India with modern amenities and Indian government has decided to develop 100 cities (2 percent) as smart cities with smart facilities. This India is known as urban India or developed India.

However, other face of India i.e. second India is opposite to the first one and known as rural India. Rural India consists of around 70 percent of total population spread in more than 6,38,000 villages and hamlets. This India requires initiatives and resources for its development and improvement. The rate of dropouts at school and college is quite high in rural areas. The standard of school and college education is too poor to compete with the urban students. There are no good schools and colleges with all modern teaching aids to give quality education to the children of this area. There is paucity of good teachers and even the good teachers of rural areas reluctant to work in rural schools and colleges. Only around one or two percent of the rural rich parents send their ward to city or urban schools and city colleges for education and rest of the rural youths study at local schools and colleges and they become either just literates or simply degree holders without any employability skills. Large number of these rural youths is attracted and migrated towards nearby towns and large cities for their lively hoods. Such migration of half educated and unskilled rural youths to urban areas has been adding to many urban problems like social, basic facilities in urban areas and creating problems of scarcity of workforce in rural areas. More than 70 percent of rural population doesn't have toilet facilities and sanitation facility. 90 percent of the housewives in rural area still use traditional fuel wood for cooking for lack of gas connections. Large number of rural resources is transported to urban areas living very minimal resources of low quality for rural people. Rural milk, vegetable, fruits, pulses, food grains like wheat, rice, sugar, onion and other essential items of good quality is supplied to urban people for better price. Water from the dams constructed in rural areas, electricity generated from villages is supplied to urban area and no energy or drinking water is left for the rural people. And this India can also be called agrarian India where total population is dependent for employment only on agriculture and the activities related to agriculture

Thus there is a wide gap between these two Indias, and to reduce this gap sincere and honest efforts from all the organizations and by individual from both the India is very much essential. An attempt is made through this article to study the efforts made, initiatives taken by the governments, private organizations and unorganized people to reduce the gap between two Indias and make the villages better like smart villages. There have been large number of schemes, programs of the government and projects by private organizations and individuals to improve the rural life but still noticeable change and improvement is not achieved, an attempt is made to analyse and understand the reasons for not achieving desired improvements and development in rural India.

CONCEPT OF SMART VILLAGES:

The concept of Smart Villages is initiated by the government on the line of Smart Cities. The concept of Smart city is evolved by the Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India in June 2015, which explains "comprehensive development of Institutional, Physical, Social and

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Economic Infrastructure". The present era of globalization considers smartness whether it is a nation, a city, a village or a person. Thus the central government decided to develop 100 smart cities in the country over a period of five years (2015-16 to 2019-20). On the same line the Ministry of Rural Development of Government of India has developed a mission to develop smart villages in India.

The central government has prepared a plan to transform rural areas economically, socially, and physically sustainable through a mission "Shyama Prasad Mukharji Rurban Mission" (SPMRM) and financial provision of ₹ 5142 crores has been made in central budget of 2014-15 to set up 300 rural clusters across the country by 2019-20. The mission aims at development of rural areas through cluster of smart villages. This is a government initiative through providing grants. The state governments are expected to identify the cluster villages with a population of 25,000 to 50,000 in plains & coastal areas and with a population of 5,000 to 15,000 in the desert, hilly and tribal areas. The ministry has suggested 14 components of ensure development of rural area under the concept of smart village. The components include, Skills Development Training, Agro processing units, Digital literacy, Sanitation, Piped water supply, Solid and Liquid waste management, Village streets & drains, Street Lights, Mobile health unit, Upgrading schools, Inter-village road connectivity, Public Transport System, LPG gas connection and Citizen service centres for electronic delivery of citizen centric service.

N. Vishwanadham Sowmya Vdula, a professor of Indian School of Business, Hyderabad, has explained in his article Design Smart Villages as 'Smart Village is a bundle of services which are delivered to its' residents and businesses in an effective and efficient manner'.

RURBAN VILLAGE:

The concept of Rurban Village is similar to the concept of smart village. This term is used in Syama Prasad Mukharji Rurban Mission, and the meaning is converting rural cluster like urban means and once such clusters are developed can be classified as Rurban. The Rurban mission follows the vision of development of cluster of villages that preserve and nurture the essence of rural community life with focus on equity and inclusiveness without compromising with the facilities perceived to be essentially urban in nature, thus creating a cluster of "Rurban Village".

State governments have to prepare Integrated Cluster Action Plan (ICAP) based on the study and survey of the cluster's requirements. The process of preparing a plan includes 14 steps starting from selection of a cluster till preparing five year plan for the cluster. There are basically three levels of institutes involved in the mission of Rurban Village. At national and state level the ministry of rural development act as nodal agencies, at the district and cluster level district project management implements the projects. The role of gram panchayat is very much important in this mission. Gram panchayat sabha should accept the mission of Rurban Village and each member of gram panchayat should be included at all stage of the project from planning to implementation to evaluation and re-planning.

HISTORY OF SMART VILLAGES:

Though the term Smart Villages is recently evolved by the government but it existed in India in ancient period and during pre-independence period. Mahatma Gandhiji during British rule

initiated the concept of self-reliant village (swayampurn gao) which means self sufficient village. He himself made efforts in this direction and developed certain places like Champaranya, Sevagram, and Wardha etc. as a part of making self-reliant village. His programs in these villages were constructive work like economic self-reliance, social equity and decentralized political system. As per Gandhiji, the ideal village was the village which promotes village industries to become self-reliant, roads are clean, wells are clean, harmony among the different communities. The idea of Swaraj was that a village is a complete republic, independent of its neighbors for its wants. Every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs itself. Village swaraj was man-centred, non-exploiting, decentralized village which will provide employment to each individual.

Mahatma Gnanthiji wrote about self sufficient village (smart village) in Harijan on 18th January 1922 "the best, quickest and most efficient way is to build up from the bottom (village). Every village has to become a self sufficient republic. This doesn't require brave solutions. It requires **brave, corporate and intelligent work**" Mr. N. Vishwanadham professor of Indian School of Business, Hyderabad has interpreted the above three terms as under:

Brave: Entrepreneurial and risk taking attitude.

Corporate: Setting and meeting strategic goals and objectives.

Intelligent work: Adoption of Information & Technology (IT) enabled governance models.

NEED FOR SMART VILLAGES:

Indian economy is more dependent of agriculture and agricultural land is located in villages, not urban areas. And 70 percent of Indians are dependent on agriculture for jobs and for their livelihoods and they stay in villages. Indian urban people also depend on villages for all their basic needs like food grains, vegetables, fruits, milk, drinking water supply, supply of manpower, electricity generation and so on. Thus urban area depends on villages for satisfying their basic daily needs. To make urban life happy and comfortable villages must become self sufficient so that they generate surplus quantity of resources to supply to urban population. Unplanned and faster growth of urbanization has been creating many problems not only for urban population but also for the villagers. There is a limit on urban development and to make India a developed country Indian villages must also develop not only just urban cities. It said by the experts 'if India's rural economy is developed then only Indian economy will develop'. Villagers require comparatively less quantity of natural resources like water to live a happy and healthy life as compared to urbanites. Villages help in protecting the environment by different ways like producing minimum pollution, minimum use of fuel, growing greenery. Thus to make India, a developed country and smart country first Indian villages must become smart and this will reduce village migration to urban areas which will help the cities to become smart city without much efforts and much resources. How can a country which is known as a country of villages be made as a smart country in the world without making the village smart? Thus to make the country (India) smart and to make Indian cities smart, making villages smart is more useful and most important.

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INITIATIVES TO MAKE VILLAGES SMART:

There have been many efforts and schemes from both the governments, central and state for develop rural area (villages) during the post independent period. Organizations from private sector and individuals also have been undertaking various activities for improving rural area and rural life. The efforts from governments and from private sector were focused on certain specific activities or projects like health related, education related, specific village related and so on. However, the basic concept of the projects and activities of government and private initiative was rural development or eradication of poverty. The concept of Smart Village is new and more comprehensive. It is presumed in the present study that the fundamental objective of projects on poverty eradication and rural development was to improve the standard of living of villages like urbanites. And the basic concept of smart village is also to make village life as comfortable as urban life.

INITIATIVE FROM GOVERNMENTS:

Both governments, central and state, have a separate ministry known as ministry of rural development with a separate minister and a set of organization which is exclusively working for rural India. There has been a budgetary provision in annual budget of respective governments for the projects and schemes for rural development. Some of the projects and schemes of central government for developing rural area (making smart villages) are given as under:

- **PURA:** Provision of Urban Amenities for Rural Areas (PURA), the scheme was approved by the government of India in 2014 and Ministry of Rural Development implemented the scheme on a pilot basis in seven clusters for a period of three years (2004-05 to 2006-07) to provide livelihood opportunities and urban amenities to improve the quality of life in rural areas. It was based on philosophy of undertaking the projects on Public Private Participation (PPP). The scheme was restructured during 11th five year plan (2007-2012)
- **PMGSY:** Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana is the scheme to construct new roads and repair existing roads in rural areas which will connect to the nearby towns or cities for easy and quick transportation of rural goods to urban markets. The scheme was launched in 2000 as fully funded by the central government. It aims at connecting all habitants with a population of 500 persons and above in plane areas and 250 persons and above in hill states, the tribal and desert areas
- **IAY:** Indira Awaas Yojana was launched by the central government in 1996 to provide financial assistance to the rural poor under below poverty line (BPL) for construction of house. The objective is to help financially to the rural poor to have good shelter with all basic facilities including toilets
- **MGNREGA:** Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act is revised name of National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005. It aims at providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in each financial year to very household of rural area. The scheme has two objectives, one, to provide job to the rural youths at their place for their livelihood and to bring some development in rural areas.

- **NSAP:** National Social Assistance Program was launched in 1995 to extend financial assistance to rural poor. The program includes the schemes like old age pension, widow pension, disability pension, family benefit scheme on death of breadwinner, maternity benefit etc.
- **TRYSEM:** Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment has been mainly to develop basic technical and entrepreneurial skills among the rural youths having age group of 18-35 years. The scheme has been implementing since 1999 with an objective to make rural you employable.
- **CAPART:** Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology is an organization of the government launched in 1986 to promote voluntary actions to implement the projects for enhancement of rural prosperity by funding the local non-government agencies.
- **DRDA:** District Rural Development Agency is basically for co-ordinating the local organizations like Gram Panchyat, Banks, Non-government Organizations in implementing the anti-poverty programs of Ministry of Rural Development. It was launched during the year 1991
- **PMRFS:** Prime Minister's Rural Development Fellows Scheme is a fellowship to rural youths who possess some level of academic or professional expertise and who can serve the district administration in improving the implementation of government schemes on rural development.
- **Aajeeika:** The scheme is also known as National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) launched in 2011. The scheme is also named as Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana in 2014 which aims at creating efficient and effective institutional platforms for the rural poor enabling them to increase household income through sustainable livelihood enhancements and improve access to financial services.
- **DDU-GKY:** Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana is part of National Rural Livelihoods Mission with a special project to build the capacity of rural poor youth through skills development activities. This is placement related project in which jobs are provided to 75 percent of the youth who acquire skills through this scheme.
- **SAGY:** Saansad Adrash Gram Yojana also known as Parliamentarian's Model Village Scheme. The scheme was announced by the prime minster in August 2014 aiming that each parliamentarian (MP) is mandated to adopt three rural villages and ensure that these villages are transformed in to smart villages by 2019 (2014-19). The scheme is based on the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi on model village. This is comprehensive scheme includes all aspects of rural development like improving quality of life through amenities, job opportunities, access to rights, enrichment of social capital, skills development and so on. Special fund is made available by the central government to each Saansad (Member of Parliament) for developing model village.

INITIATIVES FROM PRIVATE SECTOR:

Individuals and private organizations are also the participants in the process of rural development (smart village) activities. Individuals who are committed for social work for the



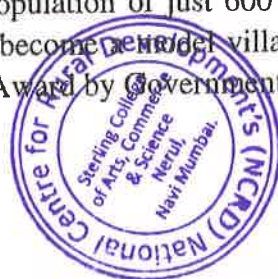
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rural areas took initiatives and have been working for specific village with certain projects. These individuals with the help of local people, local organizations and government agencies started implementing the government projects and schemes on rural development. Some of the private sector initiatives on developing villages are given as under:

- **Ralegan Sidhi:** It is one of the model villages developed by a retired Indian soldier Mr. Anna Hazare in Parner Taluka of Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra state. He started implementing the activities/projects on watershed development of agricultural department of the government with the help of villagers. He concentrated on the activities on increasing agricultural output like milk production, vegetables, food grains, rural sanitation, enhancement of school education, mass marriages to curb expenditure, no alcohol. All these projects improved the economic condition of villagers and their per capita income increased from ₹ 255 to ₹ 25,000 during 10 years period from 1990 to 2000. And the village has become a role model (smart village) for rural India and many villages have started working on model of Ralegan Sidhi.
- **Hiware Bazar:** Hiware Bazar is another ideal (smart) village in Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra state. The village has become one of the richest villages in the state of Maharashtra having 60 millionaires during the year 2012. Hiware Bazar defines the term below poverty line as "the families those who can't spend ₹ 10,000 a year". Per capita income of the villagers has increased from ₹ 830 in 1995 to ₹ 30,000 in the year 2012. There were 168 families in this village in below poverty line out of total 180 families in 1995 and the number of families in BPL in 2012 was just 3. Thus poverty eradication has come down from 93% in to just 1.6% during 19 years period. Milk production increased from 150 liters per day to 4000 liters during the same period. The village sarpanch Mr. Popatrao Pawar started certain schemes in 1990 like ban on addictive substances, investment in water harvesting, cattle farming, ban on tree cutting, stopped overgrazing. The village has not only become self sufficient in many aspects but also helping nearby cities by supplying basic necessities.
- **Punsari Village:** Punsari village is in the State of Gujrat and declared as model village by the Gojrat state government. The village presently has 24 hours Wi-Fi connectivity, installed CCTVs cameras in primary schools, solar power lamps, independent bus service, clean drinking water by implementing government schemes. Each home has toilet, not a single case of school dropout, primary health centre facility in the village, public address system with 1400 loud speakers in the village. Majority of the work is done with the help of villagers through shramdaan (voluntary work).
- **Kathewadi Village:** The Art of Living foundation, NGO has adopted this village in the year 2008 and it was transformed into a model village (aadras gao) with in a period of 18 months. The village is in Degloor Taluka of Nanded District of Maharashtra state. The Art of Living foundation with the help of villagers constructed toilets in each family and alcoholism is totally banned. Kathewadi has population of just 600 people in 100 households. There is a shop without shopkeeper. It has become a model village without any external funding. The village is awarded Nirmal Gram Award by Government of India

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INITIATIVE BY CORPORATE SECTOR:

Many companies have been involved on their own in the activities of helping the rural and underprivileged population to bring them into the main stream line. Government of India has made it mandatory to corporate sector having a net profit of ₹ 500 crores and above have to invest 2% of the net profit for development of underprivileged, particularly development of rural area as a part of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Based on the self initiative of corporate and government compulsion many companies have undertaken various projects on the direction of making villages smart. Few big companies have established separate foundations (Not for Profit Organizations) exclusively for betterment of the underprivileged. However their projects are not focused only on villages and not for making smart villages. But the projects like rural health, education, rural sanitation, rural entrepreneurship, drinking water facility, construction of houses, etc. will definitely help the villages to become smart village. Usually these activities work on the philosophy of Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) with the help of stakeholders.

INVOLVEMENT OF ACADEMIC INSTITUTES:

Based on the appeal made by the prime minister to educational institutions on Aadrash Gram Yojana, many academic institutions have come together and have taken initiative to involve in the process of developing villages. Prime Minister announced that after identifying 100 cities in 2015 to convert them as smart cities, 132 villages will be identified in 2016 to make them smart villages. And for this around 125 government funded institutes like IITs, NITs, IIMs, Indian Council for Agricultural Research, Indian Institute of Science and few central universities are identified and will be involved in the project. Indian Institutes of Technology having rural technology action groups are working together on identifying the villages and developing workable solutions to develop these villages into smart communities.

IIT Delhi will be the Nodal Office for the project and IIM Bangalore will be creating a network of Institutions to rollout the plan. 10 institutes will work on 10 different aspects of the concerned (identified) villages. 132 villages have been identified for pilot projects by 16 institutions. (dna, 31st Dec. 2015, New Delhi)

CHALLENGES IN MAKING SMART VILLAGES:

It is a reality that India will become a developed country only when Indian villages develop. Governments, private organizations and individuals have been involved in the process of improving the quality of rural life and to achieve the emerging concept of Smart Villages, there is still lot of work needs to be done in this direction. The following are some of the important challenges in the process of making smart villages:

- **Political Parties and Politicians:** India is the only country in the world having hundreds of political parties from local, regional to national level. Each political party has its own agenda prepared and implemented mainly to create and retain vote banks. Agenda of each political party is focused on the benefits of politicians and people close to them. Their main aim is to exploit the national resources as much maximum as possible for their welfare not for the welfare of common

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citizens. There is lot of confusion in their working, in their policies and lot of discrimination among the people based on caste, religion, region, language and so on. In spite of having separate ministry of rural development at Central and state governments spending crores of rupees each year on various schemes of rural development, rural area still facing all the basic problems like quality education, health, drinking water, sanitation, electricity, housing, etc. There has been some development mainly in road construction and infrastructural developments. Political parties and politicians have been creating many social problems in rural areas due to which there has been misuse and wastage of huge quantity of national resources. It is a biggest challenge how to bring all the political parties and politicians towards common direction of developing smart villages.

- **Lack of Value Education:** The present education system has become degree/certificate oriented education. The system is paralyzed with value education, like human values, ethics, sense of self responsibility, sense of optimum use of national resources, sense of responsibility towards society, sense of conservation of natural resources, environmental protection and so on. Literacy rate has increased, number of degree holders has been increasing but very few of these are really valuable for the nation and for the society due to lack of value based education. India being geographically huge country requires large number of people with value education to make the villages smart.
- **Demographic Dividend:** India has become youngest country in the world having around 50 percent of its population below 35 years of age as per 2011 censuses. Majority of these workable age group youths are either underemployed or unemployed due to lack of certain employability skills and due lack of poor quality of education. Important challenge is how to exploit them for the activities and projects on developing smart villages
- **Social Structure:** India is the only country in the universe which is made up of different cultural, multi religion, multi linguistic, multi regional and multi casteism society. Indian social structure is difficult to understand and each component of the social structure has its own culture and subculture which is different from the culture of others. This has created several social groups in the country and many a time these social groups do not coordinate properly in creating and developing smart villages.
- **Attraction of Urbanization:** Cities and towns have become places of attraction for the villagers mainly for employment, education, entrepreneurship, entertainment, career and amenities. Rural rich migrate to urban area for better quality of life and better education and rural poor migrate for jobs. Thus, rural population is decreasing and urban population is increasing. Rural migrants are unwilling to go back to their rural natives and take innovative and better projects for betterment of the villages. Even rural poor are reluctant to take jobs in rural areas and they want jobs in urban belt. Thus who will take the responsibility of implementation of projects on making smart villages?

• **Attitude of Stakeholders:** Main stakeholders in the process of smart villages are the governments, organizations, village organizations like gram panchyat, professionals and villagers. The ultimate stakeholders are villagers and majority of them have an attitude that it is the responsibility of government to develop smart villages and we will take only the benefits. And governments, central, state and local and politicians believe that their work to spend thousands of crores of rupees on rural development. Villagers think more on government subsidies and grants to individuals rather establishment of sustainable projects. Hence, involvement of local villagers will be limited to self benefit but not in the process of developing smart villages.

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40. SKILL DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL INDIA: A ROAD MAP TO EFFICIENT UTILIZATION OF RURAL HUMAN RESOURCE

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Ms. Pranita Burbure

ABSTRACT

The need for emphasis on rural India is based on the fact that almost three fourth of the populace lives in villages. Needless to highlight the expanse of rural India, majority of the country's landmass is within rural landscape. These areas not only produce bread and butter of the nation but also are highly awash with rich natural resources. However, a multidimensional deficiency in almost every facets of development has plagued these areas, dragging its populace to urban locales in search of livelihood and employment. Such migration in return brings in numerous complicacies to the entire system. The rural populace being deprived of education, financial support, infrastructure and employment turns to a sheer wastage of human resource.

Skills and knowledge are the driving forces of economic growth and social development for this kind of populace. The human resources with higher and better levels of skills adjust more effectively to the challenges and opportunities of world. This paper discusses the skill development in the rural India to utilize the rural human resource. There is a clear case for arguing for a stronger focus on issues of rural development. The Paper focus on the strategies for adoptability of skill development by the society and the industry by promoting the skill based education in the rural area to bridge the gap. It is also high time now measures are taken to improve the physical and mental development of the youths of the rural India so that none of them remains unemployed and the country's unemployment problem also gets reduced.

Keywords: Demographic dividend, Economic development, Skill development, Rural human resource, Vocational training.

INTRODUCTION:

India has been a homeland for almost 17.5 percent of total population of the world. The distribution of Indian population is concentrated more in urban landscapes throughout the country. After almost seven decades after independence, though India is gradually moving to be among economically developed nations, the pace of development can be accelerated largely with a right approach to an all-inclusive progress. Diversity has been a unique physiognomy of the nation, but the populace is largely diversified being clustered based on multiple verticals such as economy, education, location, caste and community.

As per the 2001 census 72.2 percent of the total population in India is distributed in about 6,38,000 villages while the remaining 27.8 percent lives in more than 5,100 towns and over 280 urban agglomerations. According to National Higher Education Mission, 2013, 54 percent of 1.2 billion populations in India are under the age of 24, India is the youngest country in the world. We can compare this with 30 years in China, 38 years in Europe, 40 years in USA and 47 years in Japan. India is on the cusp of a demographic opportunity. It is today one of the youngest nations

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