Role of Knowledge in the Development of Rural Areas of Jammu and Kashmir: An Insight

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Abstract

Some 50% of the people in the world live in rural areas while as per census of 2011, 70% of India's population lives in rural areas. The need for knowledge of how to improve living conditions is well documented. Knowledge on how to improve living conditions in rural areas and elsewhere is continuously being developed by researchers and practioners around the world. People in rural areas, in particular, would certainly benefit from being able to share relevant knowledge with each other, as well as with stakeholders like researchers and other organizations like NGO's.

A knowledge based society and knowledge sharing environment can make the department process sustainable and the goals of that development achievable. The long term goal is to contribute to a better life for vulnerable and exposed people in rural areas. To focus on targeted spending for bringing out certain sections of the population from clutches of poverty, ignorance and starvation the government shall conduct a detailed study of the per capita spending under various sectors. This will enable the Government to mainstream such people and better their living conditions. In this paper an attempt has been made to analyze the importance of knowledge in the development of rural areas of J&K and also how it can be used to bring these people living in hard areas in the mainstream of the society in this information and technology era.

Keywords: Knowledge, Knowledge transformation, Jammu and Kashmir, Rural areas, Development.

Introduction

According to Tagore "whatever is worth knowing, is knowledge. It should be known equally by men and women- not for the sake of practical utility, but for the sake of knowing. The desire to know is the law of nature."

As light unites, darkness separates; knowledge is the greatest factor in the unification of mankind. Knowledge helps to generate power of thinking and power of imagination. The capture of knowledge happened by observations and discussions, storage was in people's brain and sometimes in written formats and dissemination was primarily through discourses and discussions

Due to geo physical features, the state of Jammu and Kashmir has many remote and far flung areas. In the era of ICT it has become easiest to access any information necessary for the day to day life of a person. In this context modern libraries contribute more significantly than traditional libraries. The way the knowledge information is being passed to users; traditional libraries are changing into digital libraries. They are focusing on global perception. Ultimately it is the technology which is connecting the world of knowledge and making it easiest for everyone to access it, but the strata of population living in rural areas of Jammu and Kashmir is still far behind in this era of technology, obviously due to lack of knowledge.

Aims of the Study

From last 6 months I worked to complete this study and the study was designed and carried out to achieve the following objectives:

1. To know the knowledge and information needs of the people living in rural areas of Jammu and Kashmir
2. To know what is knowledge and how it can be used to bring downtrodden societies in the mainstream of society.
3. To know the value of knowledge in alleviating poverty.
4. To know the geo-physical features of Jammu and Kashmir.

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5. To know about the different social welfare schemes launched by central and state governments for upliftment of peoples living in the rural areas of Jammu and Kashmir.
6. To give useful conclusions for the benefit of the peoples living in the remote and rural areas of Jammu and Kashmir.

Review of Literature

To review the literature, search was conducted with combination of various key words such as knowledge transformation, knowledge development, Rural areas of Jammu and Kashmir, Role of knowledge in Development, Poverty Alleviation Programmes and other databases including search on the Knowledge generation.Jammu and Kashmir Population Census data 2011 taken from website ww.census2011.co.in/ census/state/Jammu+and+Kashmir.html. An article on "Rural Development in J&K" by Banarsi Lal and Pawan Sharma.(2017) Consulted for writing this paper from website http://www.dailyexcelsior.com/ rural-development-JK. An article by title "Jammu and Kashmir rural areas get community information centre" (2012) retrieved from http://www.ndtv.com/ Jammu- news/Jammu-and-Kashmir-rural ares-get-community-information-centers-481234.

P B Mangla (2006)"Information Society, Information Networks and National Development : An Overview". In Knowledge Organization, Information Systems and other Essays highlights the growing importance of information and information institutions in the socio-economic development of a country. Emphasizes the fact that the value of information is not intrinsic but lies in the use and application to which it is put. Suleman Al-Hawamdeh (2003) in "The Dawn of the Knowledge Economy" emphasizes how key to economic success is always linked to the advances in knowledge creation and innovation and the ability to translate that knowledge into products and services.

During this study I have taken data from census 2011 and whatever other latest data available from other sources.

What is Knowledge?

Knowledge is the sum total of known and unknown entities and is the result of human endeavors and past experience accumulated through generations. It is the fact condition or conditions of knowing something with familiarity gained through experience or association. It can be an acquaintance with or understanding of a science, art, or technique. The fact or condition of being aware of something or the range of one's information or understanding or the circumstance or condition of apprehending truth or fact through reasoning: or the fact or condition of having information or of being learned all or one or the other form of knowledge.

Definition of Knowledge

The concept of knowledge is quite divergent in nature and it varies from man to man, subject to subject, period to period and still more from region to region. With the passage of time it took various phases and thus a no of definitions of knowledge are known available in literature. Some of them are as follows;

1. "It is sum total of information conserved by civilization." (Dr. Ranganathan).
2. "Knowledge is a consequence of a filterized process through intellectual system". (Dr. Shera).
3. Webster's New International Dictionary of English language defines knowledge as, "Familiarity gained by actual experience, practical skill, and technical acquaintance".
4. The most relevant definition of knowledge provided in Oxford English Dictionary are;
a. Intellectual acquaintance with perception of, fact or truth; clear and certain mental apprehension; the fact, state or condition of understanding".
b. "Acquaintance with a branch of learning, a language, or the life; theoretical or practical understanding of an art; Science industry, etc".

From the above definitions it is clear that what is known to human being is called knowledge. It is acquired from generation to generation and civilization to civilization. It is the wisdom which enlightens the brain and minds of human beings. In short knowledge is the totality of what is known. The whole body of truth, facts, principles, belief or other objects acquired by mankind, knowledge may be false or true, fact or fiction, within the reach or beyond the reach of senses, it is still knowledge.

Characteristics and Classification of Knowledge

The world "knowledge" can mean three things by our use. First we use it to refer to a state of knowing, by which we also mean to be acquainted or to be aware of, to recognized or approached facts, methods, principles and so on. The common usages corresponds to what is often referred to as "know about", Second, we use the word "knowledge" to refer to "the capacity for action", an understanding of facts, methods in the course of making things happen. This corresponds to "know how".Third, we use the term "knowledge" to refer, to codified captured and accumulated facts, methods, principles, techniques and so on. When we use the term in this way, we are referring to a body knowledge that has been articulated and captured in the form of books, papers, manuals, computer code and so on. Data and information fit within the third category above and that is the notion of a body of knowledge that exists apart from people. Knowledge is broader, deeper and richer than data or information.

There are two basic kinds of knowledge;

1. The kind that is reflected in a person's internal state as well as that same person's capacity for action; and
2. The kind that has been articulated and frequently recorded. This brings us to the concept of explicit, implicit and tacit knowledge.

Explicit Knowledge

Explicit knowledge is that contained in documents or other forms of storage other than the human brain. Explicit knowledge may therefore be stored or embedded in facilities, products, processes, services, systems, texts, tables, diagrams, and so on.

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Implicit Knowledge

Its existence is implied by or inferred from observable behavior or performance. This is the kind of knowledge that can often be teased out of a competent performer by at ask analyst, knowledge engineer or other person skilled in identifying the kind of knowledge.

Tacit Knowledge

Tacit knowledge is knowledge which is stored in the human brains and it cannot be articulated. It can strongly implicate in organizational innovation. People develop and use tacit knowledge before they are able to formalize or codify it.

To conclude knowledge can be defined as "all that is known or learned; the sum of what is known".

Jammu and Kashmir at a Glance

Jammu and Kashmir State is 6th largest state of Indian union. It lies between 32-15' and 37-05' north latitude and 72-35' and 83-20' east longitude. The total area of the state is about 2, 22,236 sq. km. of which 78,114 sq. km. are under illegal occupation of Pakistan and 37,555 sq. km. under China. In addition to this, 5, 180 sq. km. of J&K were illegally handed over by Pakistan to China. This leaves the state with an area of 1,o1,387 sq.km. (Census2011) The Indian state Jammu and Kashmir comprises of three natural regions; Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. Administratively the state of J&K is divided into 22 districts, 82 tehsils, and 142 blocks. The total population of state is 1,25,48,926 persons with its density being 124 and sex ratio 883 in census 2011. The state ranks 8th among states and union territories in terms of population density. Nearly 70% of state population lives in rural areas.

Meaning of Rural Areas and Rural Population

The term rural may be defined as mostly those places which are not having basic amenities. In other words we can say the places where there is lack of transfer and application of modern technologies or there is lack of proper control, organization and transfer of information and inadequate access to information and knowledge.

Concise Oxford English Dictionary defines the term rural as characteristics of country side rather than the town and rural people means the persons who are living in these areas.

Rural and remote areas exhibit one or more of the following characteristics:-

1. Scarcity or absence of public facilities such as reliable electricity supply, water, roads and transport;
2. Scarcity of technical personnel;
3. Difficult topographic conditions, e, g lakes, rivers, hills, mountains, or disserts which render the construction of telecommunication networks very costly;
4. Severe climatic conditions that make critical demands on the equipment;
5. Low level of economic activity mainly based on agriculture, fishing, handicrafts, etc.;
6. Low per capita income;
7. Underdeveloped social infrastructure (health, education etc.);

8. Low population density.

Rural Development

Rural areas are facing major challenges today which are mainly from globalization, demographic changes and the rural migration of young, well trained people. The world is know a knowledge society, and the global gap between know and know not is growing, therefore the only way to give poor the chance to catch up is pump in more knowledge with computers and through the internet. In the developing world, information and communication technologies are providing formidable and cost effective quality development tools, and opening fresh pathways for transforming the way we live, work, learn and communicate. They contribute to the construction of true knowledge societies based on the sharing of information and incorporating all socio-cultural and ethical dimensions of sustainable development.

While urban India is relatively well connected to multiple knowledge gateways, rural India lags far behind. The gap between people who are able to use and benefit from technologies and those who are not, is referred to as "digital divide". Only 10% of the world population uses the internet and this access is skewed.

Rural development implies both the economic betterment of people as well as greater social transformation. Increased participation of people in the rural development process, land reform and greater access to credit and inputs go a long way in providing the rural people with better prospects for economic development. Improvement in health, education, drinking water, energy supply, sanitation etc facilitate in the development of any region.All the district in the state have different developmental prospects and resources to support their efforts in contributing to the regional as well as national economy. Rural poverty is inextricably linked with low rural productivity and unemployment.

Poverty Alleviation Schemes Launched for Welfare of Rural Population of the J&K State

To bring the poor and downtrodden people of state in the mainstream, state govt has launched various welfare schemes like Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), Pardhan Mantri Awas yojna (PMAY), Community development and Panchayat Sector, Model Villages under (Prime minister's Re-construction Programme), Deen Dayal Upadhaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojna, Digital India PRogramme, Rajiv Awas Yojna, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna, Swaranajayanti gram Swarozgar Yojna, and various other schemes were brought by central and state govt for giving benefit to the needy and deserving population, but due to lack of proper knowledge the benefit of these schemes could not reach up to the deserving population.

Community Information Centre

Further to provide information and communication technologies services at the doorsteps of the people living in rural areas , State Govt. has set up khidmat centre's and community information centre's (CIC's) in the state. As per officials of state

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information technology department CIC's have been set up in 135 blocks and 646 khidmat centers are functional in J&K to provide common services to the people. CIC's have been provided with state-of-the-art equipment and internet connectivity, enabling access to database containing wide range of information regarding agricultural marketing, disaster management, employment opportunities, public health etc.

Khidmat Centre

Traditionally khidmat means to help out and this centre is committed towards devising ways to make information and knowledge available to all. Khidmat centre will offer over 30 services including digital loan documentation, core banking facilities, Govt. form submission, death and birth certificates, property tax payment, gas booking etc.

Rural India is at critical stage. It is large in size, problems are aplenty, the challenges are daunting and thus present a scary picture to an outsider.

Conclusion

Various efforts have been undertaken to bring communities closer to ICT including organizing ICT awareness programmes and ICT related workshops; establishing public internet access centers in villages; and even developing web-based and online applications such as Agribazaar. In developing web based applications for rural communities; information needs such as those associated with their socio-economic activities and daily lives are highly important. Identification of information needs is essential to the design of information system in general and to the provision of effective information services in particular (Davidson and Lingam 1996).

These communities could also benefit from having a community portal which features local news, discussion forums, links to local business and organization websites etc. Such a portal could collect and integrate relevant information on the community, so that its members can better discover, search, query, and track interesting community activities (Rose et. al. 2007).

A community portal helps in disseminating information about community meetings, neighborhood gatherings, etc. Rural human development projects such as ishakti (Patel et al. 2006) and community information centers (CIC's) (chaudhri and dash 2007) both in India have shown excellent results in helping rural communities to improve standards of living.

Jammu Kashmir state has made considerable headway in economic growth and development since 1947.The programmes for restructuring of the economy were initiated through series of agrarian reform measures which radically altered the basic structure in the rural areas. In the state rural development programmes have proved to be very useful in catering the needs of the people living in rural areas. However the extreme inherited backwardness of the state, geographical location of various areas and above all, political factors have constrained the full harnessing of the economy. The gains have not succeeded in substantially eradicating

the poverty. Unless these areas are made fully potential to knowledge their development remains a unfulfilled dream.

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