Our Heritage

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Role of Science and Technology in Social Transformation of Rural India

Shobhna Sambyal (Associate Professor, GCW Parade Ground, Jammu)
Dr.Annie Jamwal (BAMS, Masters in Anthropology, IGNOU)

ABSTRACT:

Science and technology are greatest tools mastered by human kind in 21^{ist} century. It has taken millions of years to evolve and attain such status. The revolution of Science and technology has brought transformation globally irrespective of rural and urban subsets. In recent times science has emerged as a complex social phenomenon that moulds the social behaviour and helps in development of the rural communities. This recognition has gained currency because of the fact that technologies are being used frequently to bring about social change. Moreover, natural scientists and social scientists have agreed that science and technology can be used as an instrument of bringing about social transformation.

KEY WORDS: Science, Technology, social behaviour, Social transformation.

INTRODUCTION:

"Changing dynamics of rural India" is a common phrase rural studies in the last few decades. The diversity and uniqueness of rural areas is one of the peculiar features of rural Indian societies. Transformation of rural areas is often given economic perspective only. Bringing about social change comes late into the list. However, it is pertinent to mention that rural transformation cannot be a unidimensional concept it has to be brought under multidimensional concept if we want rural India to be the part and parcel of new India. The traditional Indian society is value-based society and forms the basis of concepts like varna, ashrama, and purushartha. These concepts are still relevant in rural India where sowing and harvesting seasons still begins with holy rituals. The incidents like female infanticide, child marriage, decision-making by khap panchayats, mob lynching etc are testimony to the fact that rural India is still far behind modern urban India that has aligned itself completely with westernised world. Hence the challenge lies in developing such a rural development policy that can bridge the significant social gap between the rural and urban India. Here comes the

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role of science and technology that has entered almost every rural household in form of televisions, mobile phones and various other machineries of daily use. This paper attempts to analyse the role of science as an agent of bringing social transformation while studying the rural population of village Sanoora in Samba district by opting for in-depth interviews using qualitative method. Depending upon the analysis, discussions are stated that science helps in bringing social change either directly via print and electronic media or indirectly via bringing about economic change that helps them in integrating with urban communities thereby bringing transformation in their social structure.

METHODOLOGY:

For the fulfilment of the research work doctrinal as well as non-doctrinal approaches were followed. In the research, in-depth interviews based on qualitative research method were conducted.120 participants were selected from different age groups who were permanent residents of village Sanoora. Data was collected through random Sampling method over the period of 6 months.

DATA ANALYSIS:

The questionnaire was focussed on two areas:

1)Analysing the role of technology in the daily life of the participants.

A) It was observed that most of the households had at least one kind of motor vehicle.

B) Frequent use of mobile networks can be seen among all age groups.

C) Use of print and electronic media is common.

D) Use of modern agricultural equipment can be found in population engaged in agriculture.

2)Change in social setup that has been brought because of awareness generated due to use of technology on daily basis:

A) Child Mortality rate is low. (IMR- 7.6/ thousand dist. Samba)

B) Maternal mortality rate is low. (MMR - 95/lakh dist. Samba)

C) Child marriage not found.

D) Sanitation is proper (ODF declared)

E)Exposure to epidemics reduced. (Not reported in last decade)

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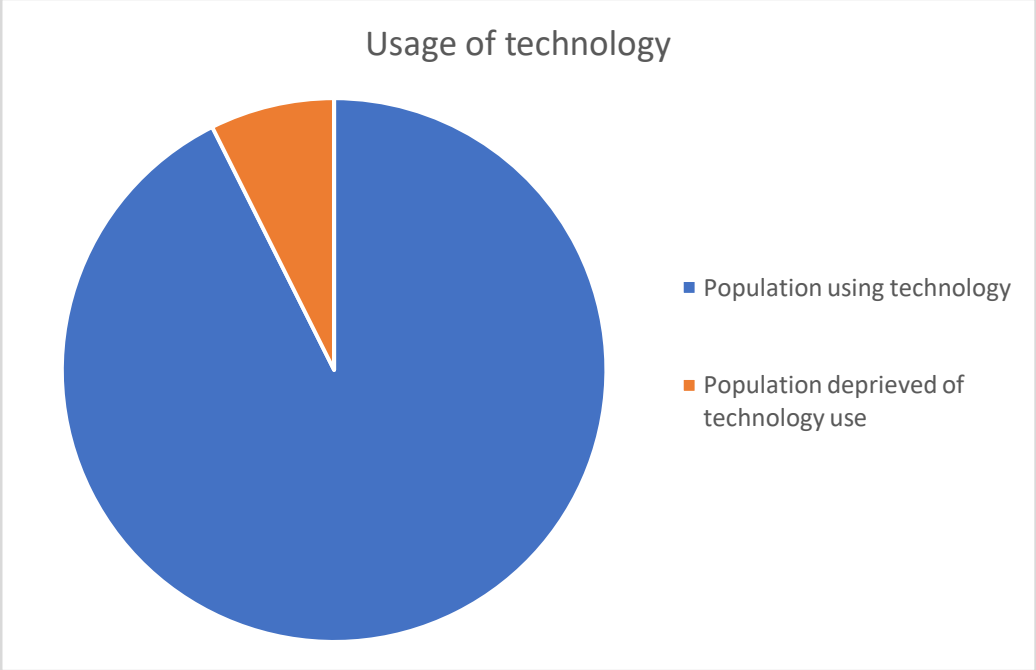
F) Health indicators are satisfactory.

DISCUSSIONS AND RESULTS:

The use of technology is now a days not restricted to specialised needs in rural areas. Technology is being use from households to agricultural fields to ease the tedious jobs that are part of daily rural life. The overall population that was dependent upon technology in one form or other is 92.6%. This inevitable role of science and technology has brought tremendous transformation in rural economy which has further resulted in change in social fabric also.



Enhanced rural connectivity and shrinking of rural urban divide has resulted in frequent interaction with individuals in urban areas. It was observed that 24.2% of students come to urban areas on daily basis for seeking higher education.Moreover, 32.7% skilled youth is also employed in various sectors in urban areas.

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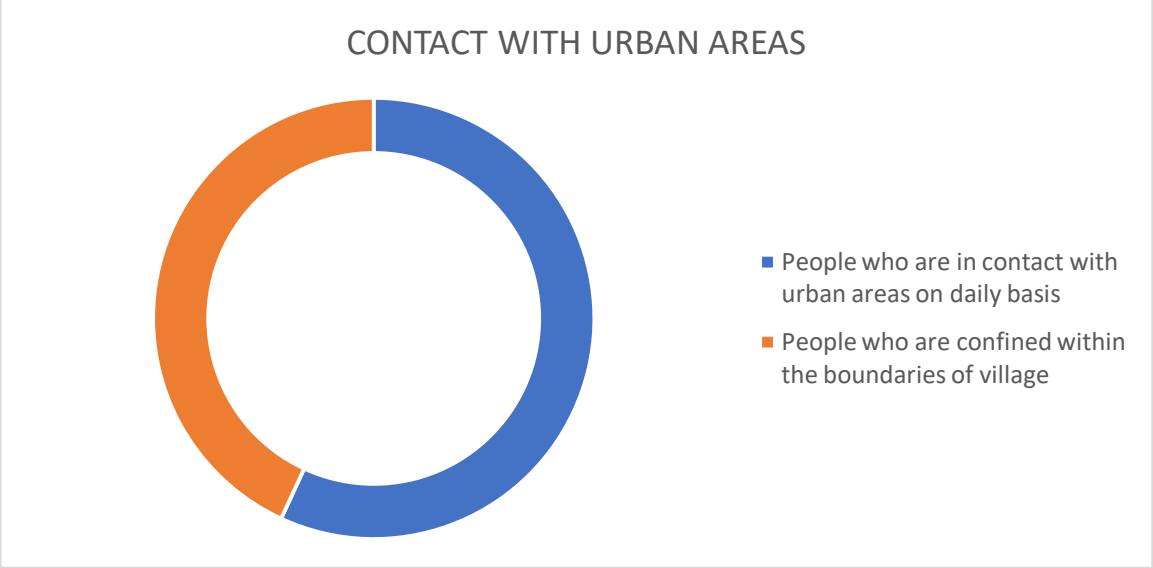
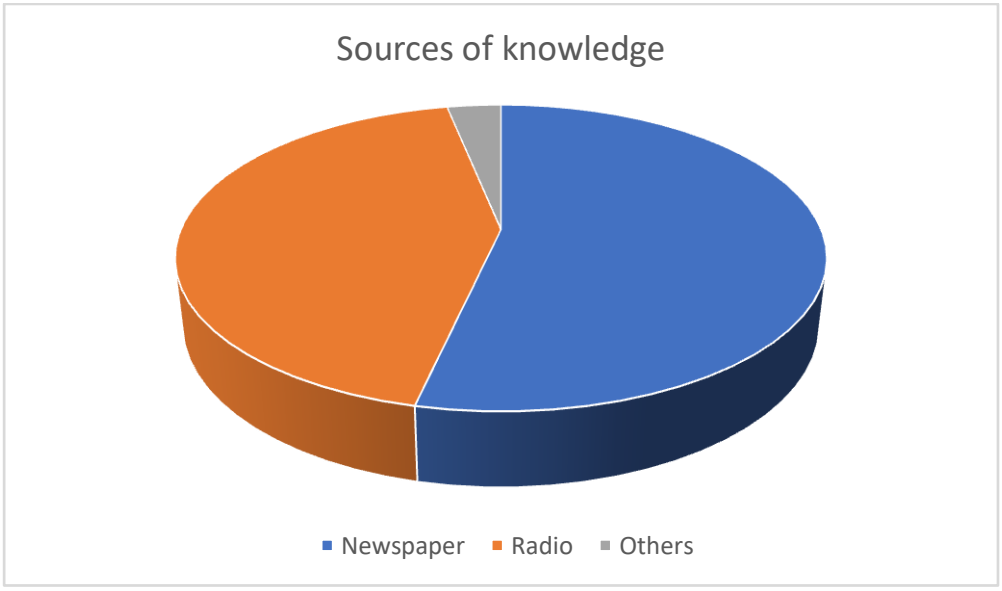


The use of print and electronic media has resulted in awareness generation. Most of the farmers had knowledge of various government initiatives and are in regular touch with agriculture and various other departments. In this category23.5% people used newspapers as source of information while 19% people were using radio and mobile networks to attain knowledge regarding daily happenings. 37.8% women in the area are availing benefits of maternal and child health care schemes. Moreover, the sanitation in the village is proper and the village has been declared open defecation free.



The use of technology in field of agriculture by 84.6% in form of better irrigation facilities, improved methods of farming, use of pesticides and fertilizers has resulted in better agricultural output that has further raised the economic status. There has been usage of

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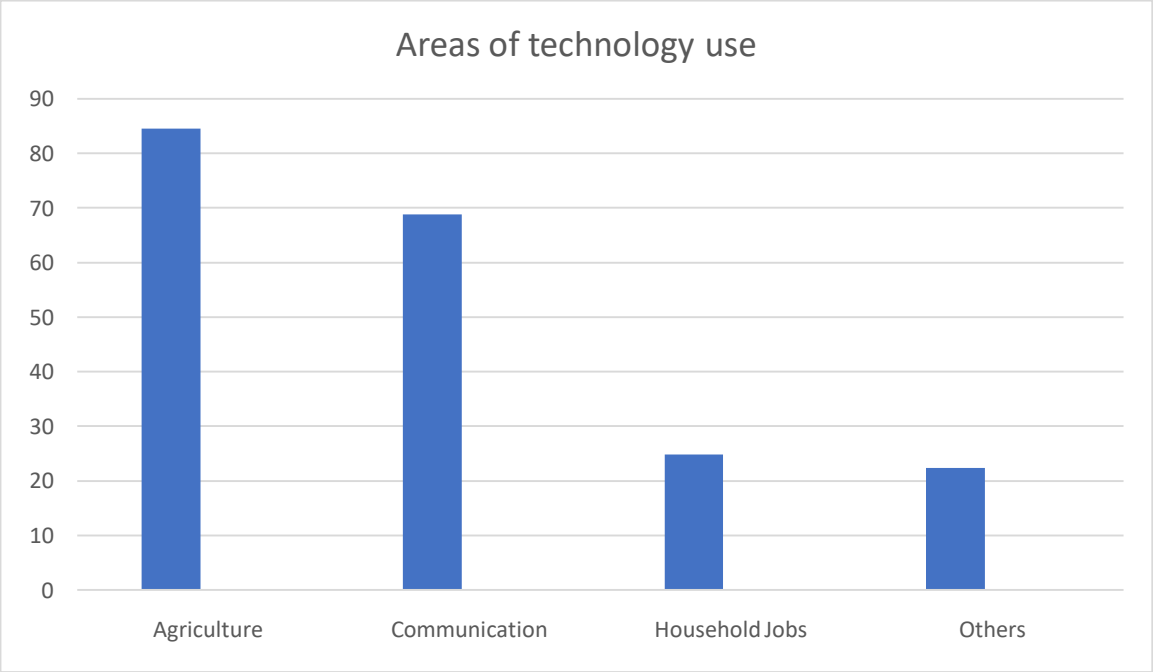
technology in other areas also such as animal husbandry, rural cottage industries, health, energy, water management, rural housing, roads and communication and rural education. These individuals who raise up economically tend to integrate them with urban communities as the result of which the social change takes place. It was observed that there are no instances of child marriage in the area and people are spending a good part of their income in educating their children.



CONCLUSION:

Technology in rural areas is an instrument of learning, planning and implementing. The multiple uses in technology in every sphere of life have resulted in overall progress and development of rural areas. The main problems faced by the rural areas are the problems of poverty, illiteracy and unemployment. With the development of technology in rural areas, the rural masses are able to learn and generate employment opportunities for themselves. Technology has enabled the rural masses to establish communication links, carry out exchange and business transactions, and it has generated awareness, knowledge and information amongst the rural individuals. The benefits of technology have resulted in an improved socioeconomic status of rural population and along with facilitating social equality. The status of women in society gets improved when they contribute to family income which is possible only when they are skilled. Technology helps in imparting skills and making them self-dependent. Technology helps in integrating society when individuals from different backgrounds come in regular contact with each other. Thus, technology uplifts the individual economically as well as socially.However,it is pertinent to mention that rural India is still facing severe technology deficit and there is serious shortfall of various facilities like health, education, roads etc. Topics like rural urban divide and digitally divide are often widely spoken and researched but on ground implementations are still far from adequate.

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