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## A STUDY ON THE USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY IN RURAL AREAS.

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### ***Abstract-***

In the last two decades, the technological advancements particularly in the field of Information and Communication Technology (i.e. ICT) have been so rapid that it has change the shape of all activities in the world and pushed the world towards globalization. However, there is no demonstrated serious efforts on the parts of the public or private sector to bring the benefits of ICT to the poor in terms of delivery of improved services like education, health care, agriculture and in equipping the poor with necessary information and skills to bring them into the mainstream of the society so that they can be a productive partner of globalization. In reality the information gap is increasing between the haves and have-nots resulting into increased power flow towards the elite who already possess the power and weakening those who are deprived of it which can result into increased poor population, enlarged poverty. The ICT can strengthen rural livelihoods, providing market information and lowering transaction costs of the poor farmers and traders. 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 on market prices or on extension services. Workers can also get information on availability of jobs to meet their day to day needs.

**Background of the study-** The research deals with the study about rural people in their different fields of life in scientific and technological enhancement of the present society.

**The aim of the study-** To makes aware among the rural people about the uses and advantages of information and communication technology the various fields of their life.

**Materials and method-** In the study here used simple survey method as well as descriptive and analytical techniques.

**Results-** Due to poverty and illiteracy the rural people are still unaware about the present advancement of the society.

**Conclusion-** In the present study it is seen that in spite of different rural development programmes launched by the government, the rural people are still unaware and unable to reap the benefit of these. Poverty, illiteracy and lack of awareness are still prevailing in the rural areas. The government and NGO should take keen interest to fight against these ill symptoms of the rural areas of the society.

### **Meaning of Information and Communication Technology:**

There is no any universally excepted definition of information and Communication Technology because the application and technology involved in this constantly keeps changing almost on a daily basis. The changes happen so fast which makes it difficult to keep us with them. ICT deals with digital data and the ways of storing, retrieval, transmission and receipt. More importantly ICT deals with the ways these concepts work when put together. According to the Oxford Online Dictionary, Information means facts provided or learned about something or someone, Communication means the imparting or exchanging of information by speaking, writing or using some other medium and Technology means the application of scientific knowledge for practical purpose.

Prof. G B Harrison defined ICT as “The use of information in order to meet human needs or purpose including reference to the use of contemporary devices such as the internet. However, in an ever changing world of video phones, mobile computing, blogs and skype we should no longer just include the internet, but leave the definition at Contemporary Devices”.

Thus, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) means the use of information for a definite purpose with the help of contemporary technological devices.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

1. To know the present situation of the use of ICT in rural areas.
2. To find out various problems of using ICT in rural areas.
3. To suggest the remedial measures for effective use of ICT in rural areas.

### **HYPOTHESES:**

Rural people do not use Information and Communication Technology properly though they use some technological devices.

### **METHODOLOGY:**

Here the investigator used simple survey method with the help of questionnaire and observation for collection of data. The present study is related with Burigang Gaon Panchayat of Biswanath Development Block under Sonitpur District, Assam. There are eight villages in this Gaon Panchayat but because of time constraint it is impossible to cover all the villages. Here only two villages, Japoriguri and Silamari are taken for study. Data were collected from 168 respondents of the study area.

### **ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS:**

This part of the present study deals with the findings of the field survey of the sample villages of Burigang Gaon Panchayat. To know the present situation of the use of Information

and Communication Technology and its problems of use, one hundred sixty eight respondents were selected on the basis of random sampling and interviewed them. In this regard the respondents were asked the following questions-

**1. Do you use landline telephone?**

In response to this question hundred percent of the respondents answered that they have no landline telephone and they do not think it necessary for them. Getting answer to this question the following question was asked to know another technological device of communication

**2. Do you use mobile phone?**

Regarding this question forty three percent respondents answered that they have no mobile phone and they don't want to use it. On the other hand the remaining fifty seven percent of mobile phone users were asked the following question to know its use.

**3. For what purpose do you use mobile phone?**

Here, it is found that generally they use it for listening music and enjoying movies and addition to making communication with others. Then they were asked the following question.

**4. Do you use radio?**

Here, only two percent respondents answered that they have radio and they sometimes listen to radio programmes particularly Hindi Songs. The remaining ninety eight percent respondents do not have radio and they were not interested to listen to radio.

**5. Do you have television at your home?**

Here, only thirty six percent respondents answered it positively. Remaining majority of the respondents answered that they have no television at their homes. Following question was asked to the majority of respondents not having television to know their willingness of buying and viewing it.

**6. Do you want to buy a television for your home?**

In response to this question around ninety eight percent of the respondents quite clearly unveiled their willingness to buy and view television at their homes but sorrowfully expressed their economic inability to do so.

**7. Do you have electricity at your home?**

In response to this question about twenty percent of the respondents replied that they have no electricity at their villages.

**8. Do you use computer in your home?**

The answer to the question was quite negative. Here, cent percent of the respondents expressed their views that there is no use of computer for them. Computers provided to some of their children by the Government for doing good result in the HSLC and HSSLC examination were sold outside because of poor economic condition and having no electricity in their areas. Finally they were asked the following question.

**9. Do you use internet?**

Here also, around forty five percent respondents answered that they use internet in mobile phones for amusements only

### **PROBLEMS BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE STUDY:**

The present study has brought out a number of problems of using Information and Communication Technology in the study area which are as under:

1. Lack of proper education is one of the main reasons of not using ICT properly in the rural area.
2. Illiteracy is another problem of not getting the proper knowledge of using ICT in the rural areas.
3. Majority of the people belong to the below poverty line and they always busy in earning for their daily needs it is another reason of inability in using ICT at a minimum level.
4. Government is also indifferent to their problems in getting providing proper education, electricity, roads etc.
5. Educated few of the rural areas no longer live in the villages. They generally prefer to live in the towns or urban areas as a result of which villagers do not get guidance.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

From the finding of the present study, the following recommendations can be made:

First, the investigation shows that the study area is facing education crisis. Conducive academic environment with good administration is most essential for good education.

Secondly, the illiteracy should be rooted out completely. For this, government should come forward with some workable policies for fighting with illiteracy.

Thirdly, poverty is one of the main enemies of the nation. Government should take it seriously and adopt some poverty alleviation policies and launch such programmes.

Finally, the educated few should not show their inclination to live in the towns. They should live in their villages so that others can get good guidance of each and every aspect of the society.

### **CONCLUSION:**

It is seen in the present study that in spite of different rural development programmes launched by the government, the rural people are still unaware and unable to reap the benefit of these. Poverty, illiteracy and lack of awareness are still prevailing in the rural areas. The government and the NGO's should take keen interest to fight against these ill symptoms of the rural areas of the society.

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