Chapter 2

University Outreach Through Resource Sharing and Technology Platforms for Regional Development

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ABSTRACT

There are examples of how university outreach and engagement concept can help rural areas that are lacking in economy, talent, investment and resources (infrastructure). Many rural areas of India are poor and have very few resources leading to migration of youth and others to urban and semi urban areas. Though the rural areas have more of natural resources compared to their urban counter parts, there are several issues including low educational attainment and capacity building which hinders rural development. There is also tendency of governments to focus on the development of cities and towns (smart cities). Like the concept of smart cities there is a need to develop a concept for holistic development of villages to make them more attractive. What villages need may be entirely different from what cities and towns need. There is a need to analyse the needs of rural areas in terms of education, skill development and competencies. There is a need for going well beyond use of technology and creating an atmosphere of innovation, motivation and positive look. The mission should be transforming knowledge into practice with engaging approach to education and preparing scholars to be leaders in their fields and communities. To illustrate this, we look at different models of learning that can reach out to educate the students/youngsters in the rural areas. This talks about how advances in technology and online platforms can help in developing different educational programmes in various fields. It is also argued that the focus should not be on the use of technology but on achieving the objective of the programme using various means available. It is necessary to follow a professional approach to develop new courses and curricula that can be put to practical use. In addition to improving infrastructure, wireless technology and trained labour, industries should be provided with incentives to move to Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities. Short-term training courses in areas that can help create skilled manpower for these industries that will eventually draw more investment and help continue develop and maintain those particular towns and cities. This chapter looks at how educational programmes can be developed using online technology platforms, collaborations, partnerships and educational pedagogies.
