

## The Internet & Rural Development

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**Abstract:** Internet is been widely used nowadays and has become a buzzword these days, it has shown a rapid increase in the developing countries like India, even though this development is still chiefly an urban phenomenon, rural population embodies the “last sphere of connectivity” in both developing and developed countries with regard to access to Internet services and the telecommunication. Due to the poor access to the connectivity the people in rural areas suffer as they are unable to take advantage of the services available to their urban counterpart. Initiatives for rural development through internet need to be loomed with a great degree of care. We cannot expect farmers and food-insecure residents of rural communities to use computers and digital telecommunication services as high-priority items for improving their lives. However, there are various mediators who serve these populations which, along with small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in rural areas, could take advantage of these technologies to perk up their work, improve communication capacity, gain efficiencies and reduce costs.

**Keywords-** rural, development, internet, advantage, efficiency

**Introduction:** Internet can change the rural infrastructure, education and standard of living dramatically, only if it is implemented and timely managed by people in authority, duly catering to any kind of problem and hindrance in communication and usage. The rural population should be forced and persuaded to use this technology to their benefit, which requires immense honesty on the policy formulators’ part. The mere set up shall not do wonders. It will be the timely management and service to offer help and guidance to the rural areas. Use of Internet can be a big boost in encouraging community participation in decision making and help in agricultural researchers, extension managers, technical experts, farmers and others in sharing information. In order to achieve this parity it is very important to fill the gap between the information rich and information poor in villages. For this many NGOs and governmental organizations have taken measures.

### Internet Benefits in Rural Areas

- **Improved standard of living-**if rural communities had access to information that could improve their livelihoods
- **Access to information-** Initiatives such as e-Choupal have successfully been able to leverage the Internet to empower small and marginal farmers. The program provides farmers with know-how, services, timely and relevant weather information, transparent price discovery and access to wider markets
- **Risk Management-** access to information will help farmers to manage risk in.
- **Education-** technology, and its effective deployment of a network enables academic information to flow to rural areas brought millions of children access to better education, result improve scores on literacy and employability
- **Learning opportunities** -a recent effort towards this has been made by several IT majors who have come together for a District Learning Centre initiative at Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh, to

provide learning opportunities and IT training to the youth of the district. Thus leading to skill development and more employability.

- **Employment opportunities** -Access to high-speed internet services could make rural BPOs a viable option, offering attractive employment opportunities to village youth. This in turn would decrease the current migration rates of rural population to urban areas, reduce rural India's dependency on agriculture, and contribute towards inclusive growth.
- **Delivering services through internet**- State Govt. endeavors to use technology in setting up systems for processing information and delivering services to enable the citizen-state interface for various services like electronic file handling, public grievance systems, and routine transactions such as payment of bills and tax dues.
- **Growth**- if inclusive growth is our goal, India needs to treat the Internet and telecom connectivity as critical infrastructure, just like roads, airports and power.

### **The challenges and barriers to rural broadband access**

Despite this huge potential, researchers believe that growth and adoption of internet is coming from urban pockets and the rural penetration of broadband continues to remain abysmally low. "The key challenges in achieving a high broadband penetration in these areas include limited access, low relevance and high cost," says eminent researcher Ashok Jhunjhunwala.

The major barriers to provide rural internet access in India is the geographic location, financial cost and power. There are some parts which will be difficult to connect to internet networks due to their remote, mountainous or island-based location. In some cases the problem may stem from issues with securing planning permission in national parks or areas of outstanding natural beauty. This means that there are inevitable disparities between different member states and different regions when it comes to gaining access to broadband.

Power is very much unstable and most of the day it is not available in many parts of India. It can be solved by putting more power backup.

Under the Digital India initiative, National Rural Internet and Technology Mission, the government said it will allocate Rs. 500 crore for its 'Digital India' initiative to set up broadband network in villages and promote local manufacturing of hardware and Indian software products. However, this might be not enough to cover all of the costs involved with the remainder needing to be found through private sector funding, something that is not always easy to obtain.

**Conclusion:** Internet service is becoming a tool for development communication, however most rural communities are not yet able to board the internet flood. Therefore, an integrated approach is required to facilitate Internet Services and application to rural areas. Technological advancement is necessary for every nook and corner. Information is power and power is information. Without information there can be no growth. Now information is penetrating into rural areas as well, because without its presence there, we cannot think about development of the entire country. Rural India is expected to account for 40% of the 250 million new wireless users as per a recent study conducted by FICCI and Ernst and Young. If these subscribers had access to broadband and high-speed Internet, every citizen would truly be able to participate in - and benefit from - the global information revolution and contribute to a balanced growth of the nation.

