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Teaching in rural schools: What it means and how to prepare

Well-prepared teachers play a pivotal role in building stronger communities, meeting diverse needs, and addressing the unique challenges of rural education, ultimately contributing to the overall progress of society.

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Teaching in rural schools: Why it matters and how to prepare (Credit: Getty images)

**Shruti Bansal**

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Living, teaching, and studying in a rural community can be great for several reasons. In small rural towns, we can really get to know students both in and out of school and build strong relationships. We might also have more freedom in the classroom, opportunities to collaborate with others, and a more diverse role, such as teaching different subjects or coaching sports.

Most importantly, we can have a significant positive impact on the students we teach.

NEED FOR GOOD TEACHERS IN RURAL AREAS



(Credit: Getty Images)

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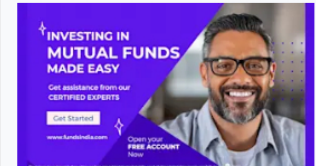


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Rural students deserve to have well-prepared teachers who are ready for the job and understand how crucial schools are in rural areas. This is especially true for schools that have students from different backgrounds and those from families with fewer financial resources, where finding teachers is the most challenging.

India Today spoke to a group of teachers who are dedicating time from their busy schedules to helping students. They are developing strategies to support students and enhance their future prospects, enabling them to thrive in a competitive world while also preparing themselves to teach in rural classrooms.

UNDERSTANDING RURAL EDUCATION

Rural education differs significantly from its urban and suburban counterparts. Smaller class sizes and limited access to resources are some of the things that come as barriers to education in these areas. To effectively address these conditions, teachers and students need specialised skills and knowledge.

"The 21st-century job market is constantly transforming. As industries change, new technologies develop, and the demand for skills evolves, it becomes increasingly important for people to upskill themselves to transform their careers," says Varun Gupta, Head of D2C Business (B2C Sales and Marketing) at Hero Vired.

PREPARING TEACHERS FOR RURAL CLASSROOMS



(Credit: Getty Images)

1. Building stronger communities

Rural educators often serve as pillars of their communities. They not only teach but also provide emotional support and engage with the community. Proper training helps teachers connect more deeply with students and families, fostering a sense of belonging and unity.

"High-quality education cannot happen without teachers. In an era characterized by rapidly advancing technology and resources, educators now possess the unique opportunity to deeply understand each learner's individual needs, learning styles, interests, and abilities, thus enabling the delivery of high-quality education," says Hari Krishnan Nair, co-founder of Great Learning.

2. Meeting diverse needs

Rural classrooms typically host students with diverse learning abilities and backgrounds. Teachers need strategies that cater to these differences. Training equips them with the tools to adapt their teaching methods, ensuring no child is left behind.

"In the past three years, the Indian education landscape has witnessed a remarkable transformation, driven by the significant integration of technology. This intervention has democratized education, increasing its access and impact. Yet, as we look ahead, it becomes imperative to prioritise the continuous growth and development of our educators," says Hari Krishnan Nair.

3. Addressing social isolation

Rural students can experience feelings of isolation due to geographic remoteness. Teachers must be trained to recognise and address the emotional needs of their students, fostering a supportive and inclusive environment.

NEED FOR RURAL EDUCATION



Educating underprivileged children, especially in schools, is a crucial social and moral imperative for several reasons: It is not just a matter of charity; it is an investment in the future of individuals, communities, and nations. It has far-reaching benefits, from reducing poverty and inequality to fostering social cohesion and driving economic growth. Therefore, addressing educational disparities and ensuring access to quality education for all is a pressing global priority.

1. Equal opportunity

"Education is a powerful tool that empowers young individuals, promotes gender equality, and cultivates a child's ability to overcome challenges and contribute to the progress of society. Compared to those who have not received a formal education, educated individuals are better equipped to navigate through difficult times and make meaningful contributions to society," says Shallu Babbar, Principal at GD Goenka High School, Gurugram.

2. Breaking the cycle of poverty

Education is one of the most effective tools for breaking the cycle of poverty. It equips children with the knowledge and skills they need to secure better job opportunities and improve their economic prospects.

"If we provide education to these children, it will not only instill confidence in them but also open doors to a brighter future, offering countless opportunities for personal growth and success," she adds.

3. Empowerment

"A well-educated workforce is essential for a nation's economic growth and competitiveness in the global market. By educating underprivileged children, a country can tap into a broader talent pool and enhance its long-term economic prospects," says Devyani Jaipuria, Chairperson of Dharav High School.

"With NEP getting institutionalised in the Indian education system to bring equitable and quality access to higher education, the focus on prioritizing the

education of underprivileged sections of our society has become crucial," says Khushboo Bharti, Assistant Professor at UPES.

4. Health and well-being

Education is closely linked to better health outcomes and overall well-being. Educated individuals are more likely to have access to healthcare, make healthier choices, and understand the importance of hygiene and disease prevention.

5. Innovation and progress

Education is a driver of innovation and progress. When underprivileged children receive quality education, they have the potential to contribute to scientific advancements, technological innovations, and the betterment of society as a whole.

"Technology is leveraged for online learning, and community engagement is encouraged through parent-teacher associations. Vocational training and skill development programs are also introduced to enhance future employment opportunities," Heena Sharma, TGT English, Seth Anandram Jaipuria School, Ghaziabad adds. ■

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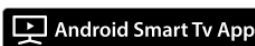
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