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PUBLIC OPINION ON IDEA OF DIGITALISING RURAL COMMUNITY

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Abstract

Today's basic amenity is digital connectivity. The main aim of the Digital India Programme is to expand the digital infrastructure to connect the entire country and provide a digital platform for banking, governance, healthcare and educational services. Smart Villages are places where rural communities are empowered and are taking the initiative to find solutions to the challenges they face. Digitisation can be a powerful force for change – as long as it is adapted to the rural context and implemented with the involvement of rural communities themselves. The research was conceded in the same areas around the villages surrounding Madurai, Chennai and Bangalore because these areas have a massive amount of villages from its nearby rural areas. Data was gathered by using online interview techniques so that correct and authentic information from the concerned people should be collected. This study, however, gives out some new findings regarding the idea of digitalising rural communities. The main route of information is gathered with the help of a set of questions through area research containing a set of questions that was designed according to Problems Faced by the Rural People Who seems it difficult to get used to the technologies. To save cost and time and to maintain the cooperation and goodwill of the respondents; the questions were kept simple and straight to the point.

Keywords : Rural, Urban, Technologies, Education, Old age people, Difficulty

Introduction :

A substantial part of the total net value added in many sectors, with an overall 46% contribution to our national income is done by Rural India. The Indian economy is predominantly rural with over two-thirds of its population and workforce residing in rural areas. The residents from rural areas who were mostly engaged in farming, and other small cottage based industries were visiting their nearest bank branch for withdrawing or depositing money, travelling over miles; similarly, to make electricity bill payments, they would need to go every month to the nearest collection centre, again which is a time-consuming factor . However, things have changed rapidly in the recent past with a new Digitalised Common Service opening up in every villages and rural communities, where not only are their banking and bill payment needs are getting conveniently fulfilled, but they can also now get top-ups for his mobile and DTH, book rail tickets, and get online motor insurance for their two-wheelers—all digitally and literally at their doorsteps. This is the new rural reality. Thus, For the purpose of inclusive development and overall growth of the country the growth and development of the rural economy is imperative. The purchasing aspirations of the rural residents are often constrained by the

easy availability of the items. The buying capacity of rural Indians has taken a sharp upward turn, due to the increasing contribution to the development and the exposure to the needs. However strong value-for-money orientation, significant local cultural affinity, and a more conservative financial outlook were noticed among the residents of rural communities. The easy access and availability of more and more services and the products will be made available to meet the rising aspirations of the unreached rural India by facilitating the digitisation and technology. The government's Digital India programme is strongly driving this factor. Some of the key needs of rural India including e-governance services, banking and financial services, educational and healthcare services, mobile/DTH recharge, e-ticketing services, online shopping, etc. are being facilitated by the digitalisation. The rural youth are seen providing digital services to their brethren, ensuring quicker adoption of the digital services. This is a rural awakening for the rural entrepreneurs.

Digitalisation also empowers women in rural India, especially when concerted efforts are made to equip them to return online in larger numbers. Today's basic amenity is digital connectivity. The main aim of the Digital India Programme is to expand the digital infrastructure to attach the whole country and supply a digital platform for banking, governance, healthcare and academic services. Rural citizens faced many hardships during the currency crunch, and had a crash course on the benefits of digital services during the demonetisation. Moving towards rural India, and especially rural women is the key to India's success. Both opportunities and challenges were offered by digitalisation.

Objectives :

- To understand about the people support towards technological development in rural areas

- To determine whether technology lead to doom

- To analyse the changes that will occur in rural areas due to technological changes

- To determine the rate of helpfulness and successiveness of digitalising rural communities.

Literature Review :

(Lekhanya 2018) The main primary purpose of this chapter is to present new established understanding and knowledge of the digitalization of rural entrepreneurship, how it can help entrepreneurial survival and growth in rural industries, and what are the theoretical and practical implications. The digitalization concept of businesses is the issue of interest in the world today; however, it is still of concern in the rural South African entrepreneurship sector. this survey revealed that the large number of participants are not using their digital technology for the business purpose, but rather they use it for other things such as private communications and social friendship.

(Panda et al. 2011) For the purpose of development and competitiveness of rural businesses it is extremely important to the digitalisation of rural entrepreneurship. In emerging markets of the world the Digitalisation is a highly effective strategic growth strategy for businesses, in many countries, It is the strategy to boost national productivity and job creation for the improvement of entrepreneurial activities and it also improves their economic independence.

("ROLE OF DIGITAL INDIA IN RURAL AREAS" 2017) It is a well-known fact that digital India is the outcome of many innovations and technological advancements. These transform the lives of people in many ways and will empower the society in a better manner. The 'Digital India' programme, an initiative of honourable Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi, will emerge new progressions in every sector

and generates innovative endeavours for geNext. The motive behind the concept is to build participative, transparent and responsive system. The Digital India drive is a dream project of the Indian Government to remodel India into a knowledgeable economy and digitally empowered society, with good governance for citizens by bringing synchronization and co-ordination in public accountability, digitally connecting and delivering the government programs and services to mobilize the capability of information technology across government departments.

("Website" n.d.) India is a land of villages. India cannot progress without prospering the villages. Various programmes have been initiated to develop Indian villages but failed. Indian villages look far behind in comparison to urban India. The coming age is of knowledge economy. With increasing use of smart phone, it is possible now to provide different services with one click. To bridge the gap of digital divide between rural and urban India, Indian government has launched a program Digital India on July 1, 2015 with well-defined objective of connecting rural areas with high speed internet network and improving digital literacy.

("Website" n.d.) Cisco and BT have established Life lines India. It is a telephone-based help line that provides advice and guidance to rural farming communities. Majority of the rural population is illiterate and therefore a voice based programe is highly useful to the farmers. Large number of farmers call on their helpline for problem relating to cattle or pest infestation to their crop etc and are getting benfitted by it.

(al. et al. 2019) Digital Technologies, which include Cloud Computing and Mobile Applications, have emerged as catalysts for quick economic growth and citizen empowerment across the globe. Digital technologies are being increasingly used by us in everyday lives, from retail stores to government offices. They help us connect with each other and also share information on issues and concerns faced by us. Honourable Prime Minister envisions transforming our nation and creating opportunities for all citizens by harnessing digital technologies. His vision is to empower every citizen with access to digital services, knowledge and information.

("[No Title]" n.d.) The Digital India programme is a flagship programme of the Government of India with a vision to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy. Digital India is a dream to ensure that government services are made available for all citizens electronically by improving online infrastructure and by increasing the effectiveness of Internet connectivity with one mission and one target that is to take nation forward digitally and economically. This initiative was taken to ensure that the citizens are getting engaged in the innovation process which is necessary for the economic growth and sustainable development of the country

("[No Title]" n.d.) It is obvious that the countries embracing technology for the benefit of citizens have recorded a radical change in all aspects which triggers GDP growth and leads to high national and per capita income. It is the obligation of the government to improve the living standards of citizen through initiating programmes which accelerates the economic growth. The Digitalization was propelled by the force 'Technology', which was the crucial part in 'Digital India Programme'.

(Muke et al. 2019) Digital technology offers opportunities to train community health workers to deliver psychological treatments towards closing the gap in existing mental health services in low-resource settings. This study explored the acceptability and feasibility of using digital technology for training community health workers to deliver evidence-based brief psychological treatment for depression in rural India.

(Anooja and Vivekananda Global University 2015) The E-Commerce is prospered and

stands for booming growth in Rural India. Their success depends on the understanding of the market, quantity of consumers and offering various features. This paper gives an impact of digital India in the future of E-Commerce in Rural India; represent the various opportunities for vendors, consumers, E-Commerce Industries and factors influencing trust in rural Indians. We found that the Overall E-Commerce will increase drastically coming years in the emerging market. While rural area availability of internet or broadband is lower as compare to urban area but Government's dream project Digital India will control or fixed this gap which increases the mass of consumers for E-Commerce world through spreading business using social commerce (Facebook Commerce, Twitter Commerce), mobile commerce etc. with adopting Digital India project features like creation of digital infrastructure and digital literacy.

Methods and Materials :

The researcher obtained the primary source of data by conducting an empirical study on seeking responses from the general public based on a questionnaire and also relied on secondary sources of data such as books, journals, e-sources, articles and newspapers. The research method followed here is empirical research. A total of 200 samples have been taken out of which is taken through convenient sampling methods. The sample frames taken by the researcher are various students and their parents especially belonging to the rural parts of Madurai, Chennai and Tirunelveli districts. The independent variables are age, gender and occupation. The dependent variables are that, Are you from the rural area ? Do you support technological development? Will technology lead to doom ? Do you support technology development in rural areas? In what percentage do you rate that the idea of digitalising rural communities is helpful and successive. The statistical tool used by the researcher is correlation and graphical representation.
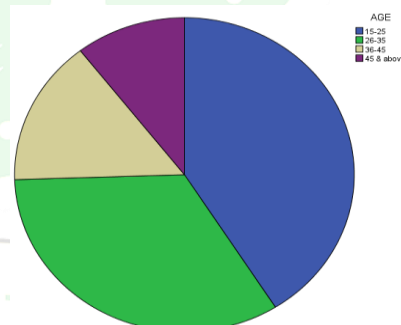
Analysis and Discussion :

GENDER FREQUENCY :
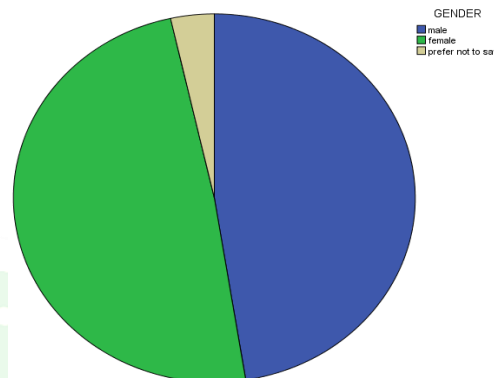
With respect to the current survey results, the frequency table is created out of the survey responses received from several people. The present frequency table is based on gender of persons who were taken as samples. Among the samples, the number of female responses are comparatively more when compared to the number of responses by male samples. Where the sample response from female person is 98 (49%) and the response from male is 95 (47.5%) in number and the sample response from people not prefer to say are 7 (3.5%) in number.Thus, on the whole there were about 200 samples taken for the present survey.
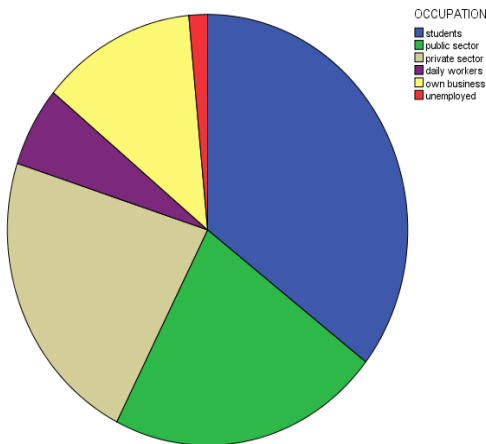
AGE FREQUENCY :

With respect to the current survey results, the frequency table is created out of the survey responses received from several people. The present frequency table is based on age of the persons. Among the persons who are between 15-25, there were 82 (41%) sample responses taken and between the 26-35, there were about 67 (33.5%) sample responses taken. Between

those who were between 36-45 there were 30 (15%) sample responses taken and between those who are 46 & above , there were 21 (10.5%) sample responses for this survey. Thus, on the whole there were about 200 samples taken for the present survey.

OCCUPATION FREQUENCY :

With respect to the current survey results, the frequency table is created out of the survey responses received from several people. The present frequency table is based on occupation of the persons. Among the persons who are students, there were 71 (35.5%) sample responses taken and among the public sector , there were about 45 (22%) sample responses taken. Among those who have a private sector there were 44 (22.5%) sample responses taken and among those who are daily workers , there were 25 (12.5) sample responses taken and among those who have their own business , there were 12 (4.5%) sample responses taken and among those who are unemployed , there were 3 (3%) sample responses for this survey. Thus, on the whole there were about 200 samples taken for the present survey.
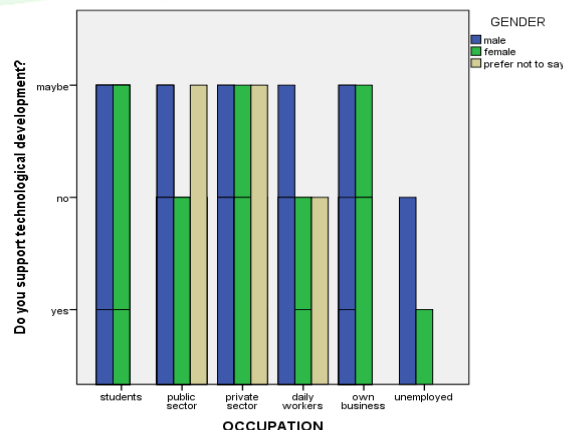
Question 1 ;
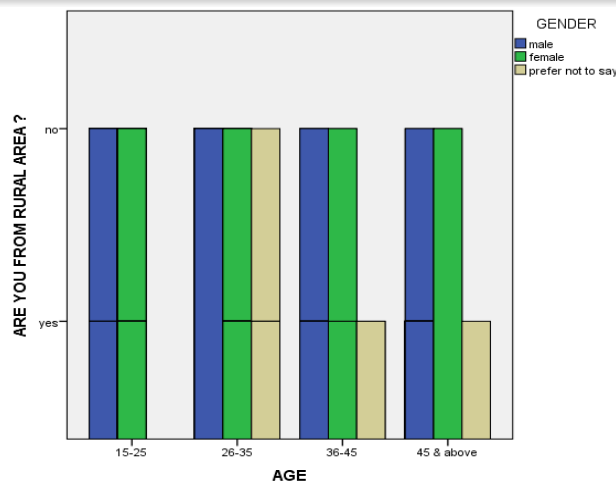
GRAPH 1

Legend :

From the graph, it is observed that it exhibits the age distribution of the respondents among different genders of the respondents and their opinion on whether you are from rural area

Results :

From the survey : in graph 1, it is observed that it exhibits the occupational distribution of the respondents among different genders of the respondents and their opinion on whether you are from a rural area. The maximum number of responses were collected from female respondents who are unemployed and carrying out their own business

Question 2 ;

GRAPH 2

Legend :

From the graph, it is observed that it exhibits the occupational distribution of the respondents among different genders of the respondents and their opinion on whether you support technological development .

Results :

From the survey : in graph 2, it is observed that it exhibits the occupational distribution of the respondents among different genders of the respondents and their opinion on whether you support technological development. The maximum number of responses were collected from female respondents who are unemployed and carrying out their own business

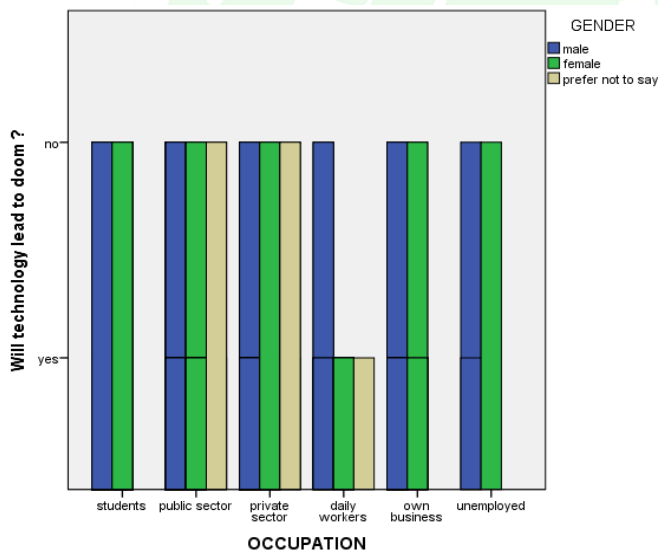**Question 3 ;**

GRAPH 3

Legend :

From the graph, it is observed that it exhibits the occupational distribution of the respondents among different genders of the respondents and their opinion on whether technology leads to doom.
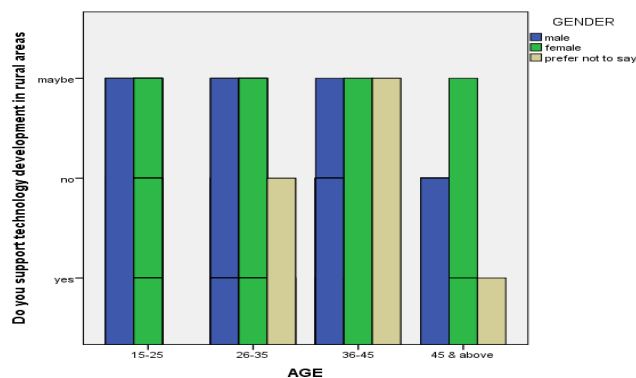
Results :

From the survey : in graph 3, it is observed that it exhibits the occupational distribution of the respondents among different genders of the

respondents and their opinion on whether technology leads to doom. The maximum number of responses were collected from female respondents who are unemployed and carrying out their own business

Question 4 ;

GRAPH 4

Legend :

From the graph, it is observed that it exhibits the age distribution of the respondents among different genders of the respondents and their opinion on the idea of supporting technology development in rural areas.

Results :

From the survey : in graph 4, it is observed that it exhibits the age distribution of the respondents among different genders of the respondents and their opinion on the idea of supporting technology development in rural areas. The maximum number of responses were collected from female respondents who are unemployed and carrying out their own business
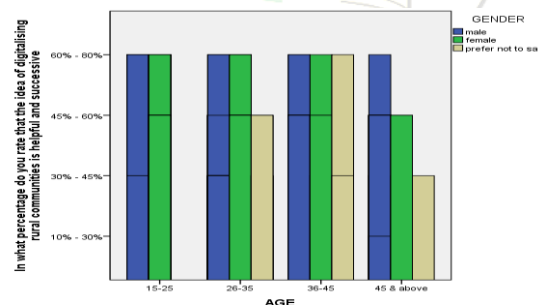
Question 5 ;

GRAPH 5

Legend :

From the graph, it is observed that it exhibits the age distribution of the respondents among different genders of the respondents and their opinion on in what percentage do you rate that the idea of digitalising rural communities is helpful and successive.

Results :

From the survey : in graph 5, it is observed that it exhibits the age distribution of the respondents among different genders of the respondents and their opinion on in what percentage do you rate that the idea of digitalising rural communities is helpful and successive. The maximum number of responses were collected from female respondents who are unemployed and carrying out their own business

Recommendations :

Due to the various challenges in many rural places, such as lack of broadband availability and electricity I would like to recommend that there are a lot of improvements that need to be done to improve rural business and livelihood of rural communities. It has been found that rural populations were faced with various barriers including poor telecommunications infrastructure, management incompetence, lack of marketing skills and insufficient entrepreneurial knowledge, so I strongly recommend that governments and the private sector should be encouraged to work together to improve rural communities with the technology, co-ordination and its policy development for the rural places. The governments should establish steering agencies which are responsible for championing and ordinating rural entrepreneurial digitalisation and modern technologies networking systems for rural communities.

The entrepreneurial knowledge skills will be improved by Digitalisation , which will help them to know their customers better and to know their customers' needs, who they are, where they buy, when they buy and how they buy.

Conclusion :

After the inception of the Internet throughout the world, the use of the new technologies such as social media and social networks have shown rapid growth from the business and social sectors in the communities. However, it has been noticed that many rural populations are still not using the modern technologies in promoting their businesses and carrying out their works which simplifies their day-to-day works. Hence, the cost benefits and importance of digitalisation of rural populations must be clearly understood and should be encouraged as this will be an important promotional tool for strengthening their service. The concept of digitalisation will improve and bring new changing trends in emerging markets including rural industries and scale up product development and product diversification, and also promote idea generation through use of technologies and social media .

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