

"A Comparative Assessment of Technical and Communication Skills among Rural and Urban Students in SPSR Nellore District, Andhra Pradesh"- A Review

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the disparities in technical and communication skills between rural and urban students in SPSR Nellore District, Andhra Pradesh. With globalization and technological advancements influencing employability, communication and technical competencies are vital for career readiness. Through a literature-based analytical framework, the study explores various national and international efforts to assess and enhance these skills. The findings highlight a significant gap in exposure, training access, and skill development among rural students. The research concludes with recommendations for curriculum redesign, targeted interventions, and policy-level support to bridge the urban-rural divide. This work contributes to ongoing discussions on SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth).

Keywords: Communication Skills, Technical Skills, Urban-Rural Divide, Student Competency, Skill Development, Andhra Pradesh, SPSR Nellore

INTRODUCTION

Technical and communication skills are foundational for educational and professional success in the current knowledge economy. However, access to skill development opportunities often varies significantly across urban and rural geographies. This disparity is especially prominent in districts like SPSR Nellore, where infrastructural, socioeconomic, and pedagogical factors influence educational outcomes. While urban students benefit from exposure to ICT tools, trained faculty, and English-medium instruction, rural students often struggle with outdated curricula, poor internet access, and limited English proficiency. The review of existing literature from India and other countries shows a recurring theme: targeted interventions, policy changes, and customized training programs are essential to bridge this skill gap.

Objectives

1. To compare the communication and technical skills levels among rural and urban students in SPSR Nellore District.
2. To identify the key factors contributing to skill disparities.
3. To contribute to policy formulation for inclusive skill development.

Scope of the Study

This study is geographically focused on SPSR Nellore District, Andhra Pradesh, targeting higher education students across various disciplines. It primarily examines technical and communication skills, drawing comparative insights from national and international literature. The study aligns with India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 objectives and supports UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 4: Quality Education and SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth)

Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive research design through a systematic literature review. The objective is to synthesize key findings from prior research on communication and technical skill disparities among rural and urban students in India and globally.

Limitations

The reviewed studies reveal significant disparities in skill development among rural students, particularly in communication and technical competencies. Key limitations of this review include its primary focus on rural Indian contexts, restricting broader generalizability. Most studies are cross-sectional, lacking longitudinal insight into long-term outcomes. There's also potential publication bias due to the reliance on English-language and published sources. Finally, the rapidly evolving educational landscape following policy reforms like NEP 2020 may not yet be fully captured in existing literature.

LITERATURE REVIEW

S.no.	Authors & Title	Research Methodology	Findings	Conclusion	Research Gap
1	Bonhu, A.R. & Manipatrani, V.R. (2022). Approaches for Improving Communication Skills of Rural Engineering Students	Qualitative analysis through classroom observations and interventions	Rural engineering students lack exposure to communication skills training	Emphasizes integrating communication skills into the engineering curriculum	Need for longitudinal studies to assess long-term impact
2	Pasupathi, M. (2020). Assessing the English Language Proficiency of Rural Students for Better Employment Opportunities	Standardized English proficiency tests	Rural students exhibit low to intermediate English proficiency levels	Highlights the necessity for targeted English language training programs	Limited to specific regions; broader studies required
3	Rajendran, M. et al. (2016). The Relevance of Communication Skills to Technical Students	Pre-test and post-test design assessing LSRW skills	Improvement in communication skills post-intervention	Validates the effectiveness of LSRW-focused training	Need for diverse demographic representation
4	Sowmiya, L.M. (2015). Learning English in Rural India: Difficulties and Remedies	Literature review and qualitative analysis	Identifies challenges like lack of resources and trained teachers in rural areas	Suggests remedial measures, including teacher training and resource allocation	Requires empirical validation of proposed remedies
5	Sikdar, S. & Prakash, S. (2025). Students' Communication Skill Training Preferences	Survey of 100 students at Dr. Rajendra Prasad Central Agricultural University	Students prefer practical, interactive training sessions	Emphasizes aligning training programs with student preferences	Limited to agricultural students; applicability to other disciplines needs exploration
6	Kaistha, A. (2018). Inter-Personal Skills among Urban and Rural Distance Learners	ANOVA on 655 postgraduate learners	Rural learners exhibit higher interpersonal skills than their urban counterparts	Suggests leveraging rural students' interpersonal strengths	Further research is needed on causative factors
7	Das, S. (2023). Inequality in Educational Attainment: Urban-Rural Comparison in India	Sopher index and fixed-effect panel data regression	High educational inequality in states like Andhra Pradesh	Identifies factors reducing literacy disparity	Calls for targeted policy interventions
8	Manickam, R. et al. (2014). Methods for Improving Communication Skills of Rural Students in Pharmaceutical Education	Case studies and intervention analysis	Practical training enhances communication skills in rural students	Advocates for integrating communication skills in pharmaceutical education	Limited to pharmaceutical students; broader applicability needs study
9	Guo, S. et al. (2022). Remote Co-teaching in	Semi-structured	Remote co-teaching enhances	ICT integration is beneficial for rural	Applicability in different cultural

	Rural Classrooms: Current Practices, Impacts, and Challenges	interviews with teachers in China	educational quality in rural areas	education	contexts needs exploration
10	Das, U. & Singhal, K. (2021). Solving it Correctly: Prevalence and Persistence of Gender Gap in Basic Mathematics in Rural India	Analysis of large-scale educational datasets	Persistent gender gap in mathematics performance in rural areas	Highlights the need for gender-sensitive educational interventions	Further research is needed on effective intervention strategies
11	Vaidehi, R. et al. (2021). Explaining Caste-based Digital Divide in India	Non-linear decomposition analysis using survey data	A significant digital divide exists between caste groups	Educational and income disparities contribute to the digital divide	Calls for policies addressing socioeconomic inequalities

DISCUSSION

From the reviewed studies, several observations emerge:

- **Communication Skills Deficit in Rural Areas:** Bonthu & Manipatrani (2022) and Pasupathi (2020) highlight how rural students often lack structured training in communication, especially in English. This is echoed across multiple national studies.
- **Training Preferences:** As per Sikdar and Prakash (2025), students respond better to practical and interactive communication modules, a strategy that could be adopted across disciplines.
- **Technical Skill Inequality:** Das (2023) and Guo et al. (2022) point to persistent inequalities in educational access and technology-enabled learning between rural and urban students.
- **Gender and Social Disparities:** Studies like Das & Singhal (2021) and Vaidehi et al. (2021) highlight gender and caste-based digital and educational divides, which also impact skill acquisition.
- **Rural Strengths:** Interestingly, Kaistha (2018) finds that rural students exhibit stronger interpersonal skills in specific contexts, which can be leveraged positively.

These findings suggest a multi-pronged approach is needed—combining curriculum reforms, teacher training, digital literacy, and contextualized teaching tools—to create an equitable learning environment.

CONCLUSION

The comparative literature review underscores a consistent pattern of skill disparity between rural and urban students, primarily driven by infrastructure, pedagogy, and socioeconomic conditions. Addressing these gaps requires collaborative efforts from educational institutions, government bodies, and industry partners. Interventions such as localized communication labs, vocational training centers, digital literacy programs, and faculty development initiatives can empower rural students. The findings can guide targeted policymaking and institutional strategies to promote inclusive and equitable education by aligning with national priorities and global sustainable development goals.

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