



# IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON RURAL COMMUNITY

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## ABSTRACT

*Through this study, we aim to understand how rural India survived the pandemic and what are its effects on the different economic sectors of a developing nation like India. This study is significant to gain an overall perspective of the socio-economic impact of the pandemic on rural communities by gaining insights in depth. To analyse the impact of covid 19 pandemic on rural economy and how the rural India dealt with the effects, findings are State of women in the rural community. Women play important role in the rural economy because of their contribution as small business owners, and wage earners. Women in rural communities have always been neglected, even before covid -19 pandemic. They have faced many hindrances such as lack of education, unpaid working hours, social stigma and domestic violence. Impact of covid 19 on health-related well-being While the COVID-19, India's rural districts suffer from a shortage of qualified medical personnel and its health facilities were overwhelmed even without the pandemic*

**KEYWORDS:** *Covid-19, Economy Rural Community*

## INTRODUCTION

On 12 January 2020, the WHO confirmed that a totally unique coronavirus was the cause of a respiratory illness in of people in Wuhan, China, which was reported to the on 31 December 2019. On 30 January 2020, India reported its first case of COVID-19 in Thrissur, Kerala, which rose to three cases by 3 February 2020 with students returning from Wuhan. Beside from these, no significant rise in transmissions was observed in February. On 4 March 22 new cases were reported, including 14 infected members of an Italian tourist group. Transmissions increased later after several people with travel history to affected countries, and their contacts, tested positive. On 12 March, a 76-year-old man, with a travel history to Saudi Arabia, became the primary COVID-19 fatality of India.

Post this because the cases further continued to rise and reached approximately 500, on the evening of 24 March 2020, the govt. of India ordered a nationwide lockdown for 21 days, limiting movement of the full 1.38 billion population of India as a precaution against the COVID-19 pandemic within the country. It had been ordered after a 14-hour voluntary public curfew on 22 March, followed by enforcement of a series of regulations within the countries' COVID-19 affected regions.

As the cases showed a slow declining trend the lockdown was extended and new phases were imposed. Nationwide lockdown:

- Phase 1: 25 March 2020 – 14 April 2020 (21 days)
- Phase 2: 15 April 2020 – 3 May 2020 (19 days)
- Phase 3: 4 May 2020 – 17 May 2020 (14 days)
- Phase 4: 18 May 2020 – 31 May 2020 (14 days)

As the pandemic stuck, all of the planet came to a halt due to imposition of lockdown and restrictions. Every industry apart from a few like health care, essential services and similar continued to function.

While the stock exchange crashed, agriculture was also certainly the worst hit sector thanks to the pandemic and with more than 85% of the rural population engaged in the agriculture and allied activities as primary mode of earnings, their lives got hampered and therefore the savings did not suffice.

The first wave mostly did hit the prime cities of Delhi, Mumbai et al. . While the second wave, the more fatal one, did took a toll on the sub-urbs and therefore the Rural India particularly in parts of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan.

Among the worst hit were the agricultural areas of Amravati in Maharashtra, worst affected with an outsized number of new cases, and those of Nagpur within the same state have also become hotspots. The second wave has also hit the agricultural areas of Gujarat. The state reported 90 deaths in 20 days from one village alone, Chogath, having a population of 13,000. Two of India's largest and most populous states – Uttar Pradesh and



Bihar—also did witness a steep rise in COVID-19 cases in their rural districts. The steep rise in infections and deaths became news headlines, as images of mass pyres and other people queuing for free oxygen cylinders in temple grounds spread on social media.

Traditionally, the agricultural economy has been the backbone of India's economic growth, as long as two-thirds of its population and 70 per cent of the workforce resides in rural areas, and therefore the rural economy generates nearly 46 per cent of the national income. In times of economic distress, the agriculture and allied sectors are able to absorb the excess labour force released into the market.

However, all this took a turn when the second wave hit the state in 2021. The agriculture sector's labour absorbing capacity reached its threshold, with the monthly unemployment rates in rural areas touching an all-time high of 10.63% during May 2021. As cases began rising in Tier-3 and Tier-4 cities, the expenditure pattern of the agricultural households changed significantly due to increased out-of-pocket expenditure on healthcare, consumption and related services. This was compounded by disruptions in remittances sent by many migrant labourers to their native villages from metro cities, thus negatively impacting rural consumption, growth, and nutritional security. Disruptions in supply chains also adversely impacted sectors like FMCG, electronics, etc. that were booming in rural India during the primary wave when the pandemic hit.

Although there's no doubt that the pandemic has pushed the rural economy further towards a massive technology upgradation phase with e-commerce channels developing, low ticket electronic items becoming essential commodities, and mobile phones becoming household necessities for education and other purposes. While it might have been easy to assume that the rural economy's boom during the first wave would be enough to see India through the pandemic years, it's also clear that there is a need to strike a balance between the rural and urban economies so that the country's economic revival can be initiated in a manner that places it on the path of sustainable growth and development in the times to come.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

We have chosen to publish the research paper on the topic of 'Impact of Covid-19 on Rural Communities in India' in order to understand the problems faced by the people living in rural areas due to covid-19 and differentiate, compare and analyse problems faced in different sectors of the rural Indian economy from the urban Indian economy. As there is no economic activity which wasn't affected by covid-19, this study aims to identify and analyse the impact of covid-19 on various sectors of the rural economy, which were already performing at a nominal growth rate.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Through this study, we aim to understand how rural India survived the pandemic and what are its effects on the different economic sectors of a developing nation like India. This study is significant to gain an overall perspective of the socio-economic impact of the pandemic on rural communities by gaining insights in depth.

## OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To analyse the impact of covid 19 pandemic on rural economy and how the rural India dealt with the effects.
2. To understand the reason and causes behind the downfall in rural economy and reaction of different sectors to pandemic and halt in economic activities.
3. To understand the overwhelming condition of medical sector during the pandemic.
4. To explain the various causes of what lead to such cataphoric condition health, agriculture, education, banking other service sector in rural area.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### - Secondary Data

#### 1. Impact on Agriculture

The covid-19 pandemic has impacted all economic activities in some or the other way, but one of the most hit sectors is the primary sector, being majority of India's source for livelihood. About 263 million people are engaged in farming or more generally, the Indian agricultural sector and of these, 55% are migrant laborers and do not own their own land. The pandemic has affected both supply and demand sides of the agricultural produce. The demand for agro foods has affected the financial situation of 140 million Indian farmers. The rabi crops which are harvested every year in March, the same time as the lockdown was imposed, has to be kept in cold storages and warehouses and is supplied to wholesalers or directly to the local markets from there. Farmers were unable to access these facilities during the lockdown due to the ban of transport and this caused a disturbance in the supply chain which many of the farmers are still struggling to adapt back to. Supply chains stopped



working as the lockdown closed most of the mandis to normal business and large-scale procurement operations were immediately stopped by the government. This led to limited availability of vegetables in major cities and effected the food security and food chain of the nation. Due to the lack of storage, the rabi produce was overexposed to sunlight and kept on ripening and eventually the crop was damaged. It is estimated that every day during the first 19 days of the lockdown, the agricultural sector incurred a loss of INR 32000 crores across India during the pandemic. When crops are not able to reach the market from the cold storage or the warehouse, prices soar, making it very difficult for the farmers to procure the price that they deserve. In response to this, the government had launched relief packages which were not only critical to the survival of farmers but also brought a prediction wave for recessions in India and impacted on the GDP. To bolster the Indian economy against a potential recession, the government launched the economic stimulus package of Atma Nirbhar Bharat Scheme worth INR 20 lakh crores. The ministry of Finance announced a series of measures to strengthen the agriculture infrastructure logistics, capacity building, governance and administrative reforms for the agriculture sector during covid-19: On March 30, 2020, additional food grains were allocated under the PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana scheme, on April 9, 2020, food grains were provided to non NFSA beneficiaries with state ration cards at a rate of 5 kg/ person/ month by Food Corporation of India, on June 30, 2020, The PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana scheme was extended for five months, till November 2020, on July 9, 2020, under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Mission, the distribution of free food grains for migrant laborers was extended till August 31, 2020, on August 23, 2020, all eligible disabled persons were included under the National Food Security Act 2013 by all states and union territories as directed by the government.

## 2. State of Women

Women play important role in the rural economy because of their contribution as small business owners, and wage earners, Rural community women also largely contribute to the agriculture sector (70% of the agricultural labour force in the country). Rural women are employed in the agricultural sector by the majority throughout these years followed by manufacturing. Indian Rural women and are also working in the service sector as depicted in the graph above.

Women in rural communities have always been neglected, even before covid -19 pandemic. Women in rural communities have faced many hindrances such as lack of education, unpaid working hours, social stigma and domestic violence. A mere 27% of women have completed secondary education (10th) compared to 51% in urban areas, lack of education and poverty also lead to many other problems for example; According to NFHS(2015- 2016), teenage pregnancies are almost double in rural women (9.2%) compared to the urban community. As the pandemic hit India the rural community women already neglected and suffering were bearing a greater effect on the economic crisis as well.

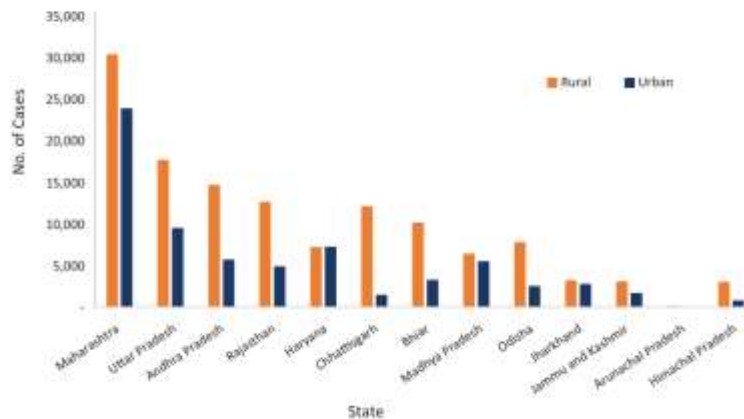
Women's health was also affected due to covid 19 because of the families being pushed into poverty by losing their sole male earners to covid 19 or by losing jobs, this made it very difficult for them to provide food and shelter for their kids and themselves. This led to worsening anaemia in Indian women and a report showed that is more prevalent in women of age 15-49 years old (50%). Maternity health care of rural women also degraded significantly expected noticed that during the 2nd wave of covid 19 women with the weaker immune system developed scarring after getting infected by the virus. Even though the maternal mortality rate dropped in the last decade even after the advancement in medical care and technology, it remains as high as 143 per 100,000 live births.

The pandemic created havoc in the rural community and it worsened the situation. Media also reported that women in rural India were not opting for institutional delivery due to the fear of getting covid 19 positive. Due to the mismanagement of uncertainties of pandemic like covid 19, the current inequality faced by rural women will only get exacerbated.

## 3. Poverty in Rural India due to Covid-19:

The number of cases of covid 19 came down in June 2021 down in big cities but the cases are fast spreading across rural India and the biggest increase being recorded in the states of Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Kerala.

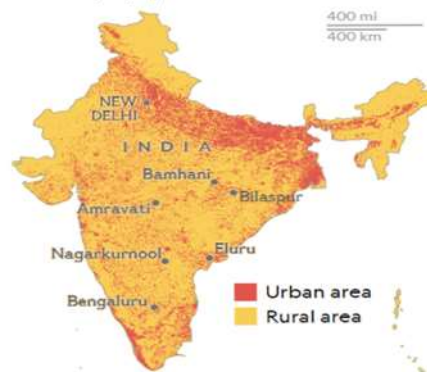
## COVID-19 case trends in urban and rural areas



Rural districts reported about 35% of all covid 19 deaths in Haryana, with the heaviest toll in Hisar (258), followed by Bhiwani (217), Fatehabad (159) and Karnal (150). The second wave has also hit the rural areas of Gujarat. The actual number of covid 19 cases in the rural regions of India could be much higher than the official figures and the reason for this could be because of low testing rates and people's reluctance to get tested because of the fear of getting positive. A report by the state bank of India (SBI) recorded that by mid-May, the rural districts accounted for 50% of all new cases in the country.

### COVID in rural India

In large cities throughout India, daily COVID-19 cases are decreasing. But outside India's dense urban centers the second wave is still battering the rural regions where two thirds of the country's population live.



Many workers who used to earn daily wages lost their jobs and migrated back to their villages and weren't able to help and support their families due to the pandemic. Significant proportions of the country's village population have been pushed to worse states of indebtedness. Economist Pronab Sen predicted that unlike in 2020 when rural India was the "bright Spot" in the national economy, these regions are going to be badly affected in 2021, that's because farmers were not able to access the market due to either fear of getting infected or a lockdown, this made the rural income fall even with a productive harvest. The national rural employment guarantee scheme (MNREGA) acted as a useful buffer keeping unemployment in check and ensuring social stability. Thirty-six million people sought work in May 2020 (25 million in May 2019). This went up to 40 million in June 2020 (avg. of 23.6 million during the 2013-2019 period). The government has ramped up allocation to the highest level ever, equalling 1 trillion rupees. 800 million people were covered under a special scheme and given a free supply of 5 kg of wheat/rice per person for 3 months was started abs since extended by another 3 months. There has also been a cash transfer of 500 billion rupees to women and farmers.

It was estimated that in the first wave of covid 19, almost 10 million people returned to their villages, half a million of them walking or bicycling. This led to a halt in all the activities which

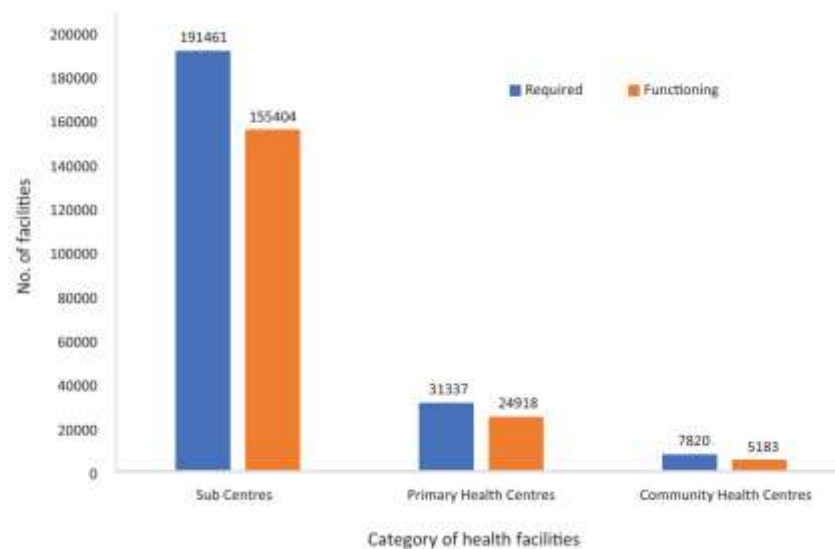
required labourers and daily wage earners. The international labour organization has projected that 400 million people in India risk falling into poverty.

The government has made significant macroeconomic policy (fiscal stimulus and monetary loosening) attempts to lessen the effects of adversity, but as fiscal space is becoming more limited, the World Bank and other international financial institutions must step in to assist prevent even worse hardship.

#### 4. Impact on Health

While the COVID-19 virus initially spread through urban regions within India. by late spring of 2021, it began quickly shifting into rural regions. India's rural districts suffer from a shortage of qualified medical personnel and its health facilities were overwhelmed even without the pandemic. According to Rural Health Statistics 2019-20, the average population covered by a Sub-Centre health facility in the rural areas is 5,729, as against the norm of 5,000; for Primary Health Centres (PHC), it is 35,730, while the norm is 30,000; and for Community Health Centres (CHC), it is 171,779 against the norm of 120,000. But we can argue that Indian rural health infrastructure has improved since the implementation of the national rural health mission and Ayushman Bharat programme in 2018 however it still lacks the necessary equipment and medical officials to tackle various health conditions and pandemics such as covid 19.

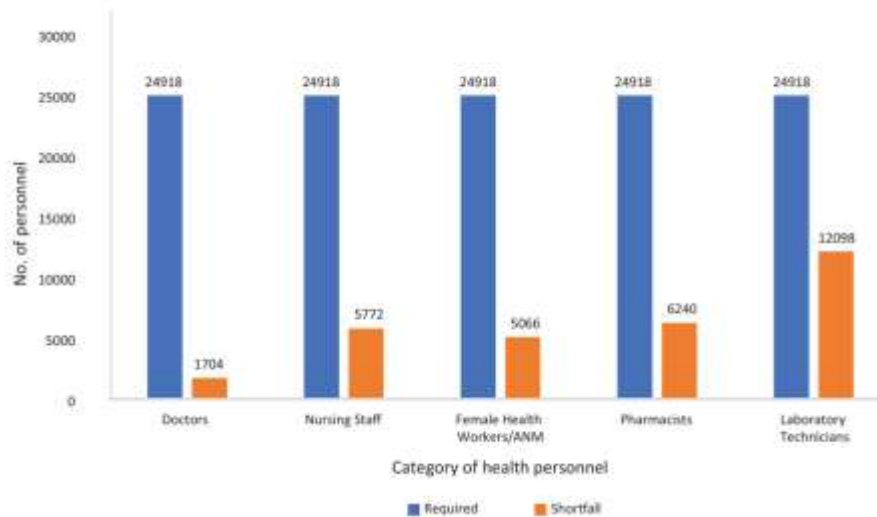
### Basic Health Infrastructure in Rural India



As we can see in the figure the required centres are more than the functioning centres in rural India. In the Subcentres, there are presently 14.1% of open positions for health workers (female)/auxiliary nurse midwives and 37% of open positions for health workers (male), according to Rural Health Statistics 2019-2020. Additionally, there are 1,704 vacant vacancies for doctors and nursing personnel in primary health centres located throughout rural areas. Human Resources in Rural Primary Health Centres Ministry of Health and Family Welfare 30 women who work in healthcare (5,066), pharmacy (6,240), and lab technicians (12,098). It is clearly depicted in the bar graph that there is a huge requirement of medical professionals in India to tackle health issues of 138 crore (2020) Indians.



## Human Resources in Rural Primary Health Centres



The Hindu newspaper has estimated that 65% of new cases through the beginning of June 2021 are in rural and semi-rural areas. As of June 18, India officially had 794,493 active cases and 16,546 deaths in the last 7 days- most were in the rural region. It was calculated by experts these numbers are highly estimated and this might be 6 times higher than the actual number recorded.

Many doctors in the rural area because of their incompetence and lack of required equipment misdiagnosed covid 19 as typhoid and gave patients the wrong medication. The global burden of disease report, published by the medical journal the lancet, reported that India is among the worst affected countries when it comes to this covid 19, India had 5.8 million cases and 52,552 people died. But these test very not fully reliable because they took a few days to get the results and by that time patient might have become negative again and these tests could also produce false positives. Even when a sick patient has tested positive in a rural area, instead of following the standard procedure of medication for covid 19, they were prescribed antibiotics. “People in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar also turned to harmful medications that fail to treat the virus and worsened their condition” says Amir Ullah Khan, a health economist at the centre for development policy and practice.

	2018	2019	2020
<b>Doctors</b>	24 899	24 676	22 827
<b>Paramedical Staff</b>	77 203	85 194	80 920

Source: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare<sup>32</sup>

As we can see in the figure the number of doctors has decreased and paramedical staff has increased from 2018 to 2019 but it decreased again in 2020. This shows the lack of people working in the health care sector and the shortcoming faced in the pandemic.

Due to the excessive demand for medical attention during covid and every few professionals to provide the same, the prices of medicines and hospitals were skyrocketing and many rural people didn't have that sort of resources to fund them and neither they were enough educated to know about life and medical insurance. So, they had to take out a loan to pay off their hospital bills. It was also noted that only 35% of Indians have any kind of health insurance, and the majority spend money out of pocket to pay the healthcare service provider directly at the time of service. “During the last wave and the lockdowns of last year, even those who were reasonably better off completely ran out of cash,” says Khan. “when the second wave hit, there was no cash to fall back upon”. Apart from the resources, the social stigma associated with testing positive for covid 19, mistrust of the government and disease denial also were major issues in India during the pandemic.

The government of India were helping the poor and the rural people who lacked facilities of hospitals and treatment by setting up affiliate centres under the Jan Swasthya Sahyog (People's Health Support Group), or by asking for help from the health workers who were making daily visits



to the villages. When they needed more advanced care, the patient's family was advised to take them to the Jan Swasthya Sahyog hospital, which was more than 40 miles away.

##### 5. Impact on Rural Banking Services

The banking sector is of great importance to the livelihood of rural residents. Increase the population by providing basic banking services such as deposits, withdrawals, loans, etc. For example, the availability of timely loans through Kisan A farmer credit card (KCC) in the form of working capital is a key factor determining the output of the agricultural sector. Therefore, the poll understanding the impact of COVID-19 and the resulting lockdowns of various banks services KCC, temporary loans to the agricultural sector, basic banking services, District example recovery and digital banking at the India-wide level.

**Access to Basic Banking Services:** Access to basic banking services such as Deposits, withdrawals, etc. were reported to be adversely affected in nearly 50% of cases. Indian test zone. Possible Reasons for the Negative Impact on Basic Banking Service was social distancing requirements and movement restrictions. Limit your ability to contact your bank. Some of the big states Reports of a high percentage of districts being adversely affected include Chhattisgarh (78%), Jharkhand (75%), Maharashtra (68%).

**Term Lending by Banks:** Term Loans Granted by Banks Reported Different states in India will be most severely affected. Almost all India level Eighty-nine percent of the districts in the sample reported negative impacts on bank lending. A few One possible reason was the restrictions on passenger transport during the period. Embargo period, difficulty in conducting on-site visits for evaluation by bank officials Declining repayment capacity of households due to current challenges of the project Postponement of new investments/projects due to worsening economic conditions Health uncertainty. A&N Islands, many small states including Arunachal/UT Pradesh, Manipur and Puducherry reported negative impacts across samples district. Major states in India report high proportions of districts with negative impacts Influence includes Haryana (100%), Himachal Pradesh (100%), Bihar (95%) and Punjab. (95%), Rajasthan (95%), Maharashtra (94%), Madhya Pradesh (91%).

**Digital Banking/Digital Financial Transaction:** In aspects, digital financial transactions were the only aspect reported 27 Nearly 63% of the sample districts had a positive impact. This is, The fact that even those who do not like digital financial transactions can May have been processed digitally due to restrictions during lockdown Seek help from others. Larger federal states report higher proportions of rural areas Positive effects are seen in Kerala (92%), Punjab (91%), Rajasthan (90%), Haryana (87%) and Bihar (81%).

**Banks' Recovery:** Bank recovery was the biggest casualty at 94% A negatively affected sample area. Due to the implementation of lockdown, Restrictions on vehicle movement and pricing system were serious General agricultural sector and poultry, dairy, especially fishing and gardening. As a result, the income of many households has affected during this time. In addition, factors such as are mitigated. Decrease in producer prices, livelihood means, and remittances continue the ability of farmers and rural residents to repay is undermined. Many large states Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, and West Bengal all report negative impacts model district.

##### 6. Impact on Rural Education Sector

UNESCO data reported (20th June 2020) that in more than 114 countries nationwide schools and colleges were shut down which affected more than 1 billion students. In India 321 million students were affected by this, schools and colleges tried to overcome this hindrance by introducing online classes but online classes created a digital divide between the students. A survey "school children's online and offline learning (SCHOOL) survey" (August 2021) found that only 8% children were studying regularly and 37% were not studying at all in a rural area, in urban area situation was little better as 24% children were studying regularly online. The reason for this situation or digital divide was the lack of facilities in rural areas such as; No smartphones, less electricity availability and no internet access. The graph below depicts the percentage of rural households who have access to the internet across India. This online teaching-learning method creates a big gap between rich vs poor and urban vs rural students.

The other factor which led to the negative impact on the Indian education system was the fee hike by some of the private schools, many parents raised their voices against the hikes and reached the supreme court to stop these hikes and make education accessible for the students, the state government of Delhi, Assam and Maharashtra took action to stop the fees hike. For e.g.: the Maharashtra government imposed a penalty on schools that were rising their fees. The education available to rural children will hamper their future as they would not be able to get work in organized



sectors and might have to work as labour in future creating a long-term problem for the future of India. Due to COVID-19 Some faculties and employees in the private education sector faced the obstacle of job losses and salary cuts; bonuses and increments were also postponed or reduced. Schools, colleges and other institutions and universities faced shortcomings of the slowdown in admissions, internships, training, apprenticeships and placements of the student. As per the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, unemployment shot up an estimated 8.4% in mid-March to 23% in early April and the urban unemployment rate to 30.9% (ET Government.com, 2020). when unemployment rates rise then, as people struggle, education steadily declines.

#### 7. Impact on Environment

Whatever be the hit of the pandemic on the economy and therefore the health sector of the country but there was also good that happened to the country. The GOI quoted that, The Covid-19 lockdown is healing the earth in a way never seen before in living history! Following are a number of the most vital environmental changes seen in India after the Covid-19 lockdown:

**Improvement in air quality:** New Delhi was ranked as the most polluted city in the world by WHO in May 2014. Its standard air quality according to the air quality index used to be 200. When the pollution level hit its peak, the pollution level soared to 900 and more sometimes. While 200 itself is 25 percent above unsafe level as deemed by WHO, but as Delhi's 11 million cars, factories and construction were taken to a halt, AQI levels have regularly fallen below 20. The skies are suddenly a rare, piercing blue. Even the birdsong seems louder. In the capital, government data shows the typical concentration of PM 2.5 plunged by 71 percent within the space of a week -- falling from 91 micrograms per cubic meter on March 20, to 26 on March 27, after the lockdown began.

**Dolphins spotted near Kolkata ghats:** Critically endangered, South Asian River Dolphins also referred to as Ganges Dolphins have been spotted back in the Ganga river after 30 years. Thanks to the reduced pollution in water, the South Asian River Dolphins are spotted at various Ganga Ghats of Kolkata.

**The number of flamingos increased in Mumbai:** As a result of the lockdown imposed due to Covid-19, tens of thousands of flamingos have gathered within the city of Navi Mumbai. The birds normally migrate to the place every year, but residents have reported that this year they have seen a massive increase in the bird's arrival.

**Ganga fit drinking in Haridwar:** The Uttarakhand Pollution control panel Water from Har-ki-Pauri in Haridwar was tested and the results from the tests reveal that the water here has been classified as 'fit for drinking after chlorination', for the primary time in decades. It's assumed that due to the lockdown, the drainage of commercial waste into the river water has stopped and brought a significant change in the water quality.

#### 8. Measures taken by the Government to help the Rural Community

The government of India introduced many policies and programmes to help the rural communities to cope with the covid 19 daunting effects. these policies helped the rural economy to come back on track and provide relief to villagers.

Ministry of Finance, Government of India, on 26th March 2020, announced a relief package under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY) for the poor to help them fight the battle against Corona Virus.

The government of India launched the Garib Kaylan Rozgar Abhiyaan (GKRA) on 20th June 2020 for 125 days to boost employment and livelihood opportunities for returnee migrant workers and similarly affected citizens in rural areas, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

PMGSY (Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana) was launched in the year 2000 as a measure towards alleviation of poverty in the rural area by providing access to basic services to the rural population by providing them good quality roads for connecting rural areas to urban and making transportation easy. During covid 19, states accelerate the pace of work to generate more employment opportunities and boost start the rural economy. From 1st April 2020 to 25th November 2021, a total of 60,992 km of roads worth Rs. 40,572 crores have been sanctioned.

DAY – NRLM (Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana- National Rural Livelihoods Mission) was established to help and organize rural poor women into Self Help Groups (SHGs). This Yojana aimed to reduce poverty and support economic activities till they attain a stable increase in income over some time. During the FY 2020-21, the loan disbursed to SHGs had been Rs.84,143 crores. During the FY 2021 – 22 (till September 2021), a total of 21.65 lakh SHGs have been credited linked with an amount of Rs. 43093 crores.

An area of 21,909 square feet was assigned for Prime Minister Krishi Sinchayee Yojana's watershed development component throughout the COVID-19 term (FY 2020–21 and through Q2



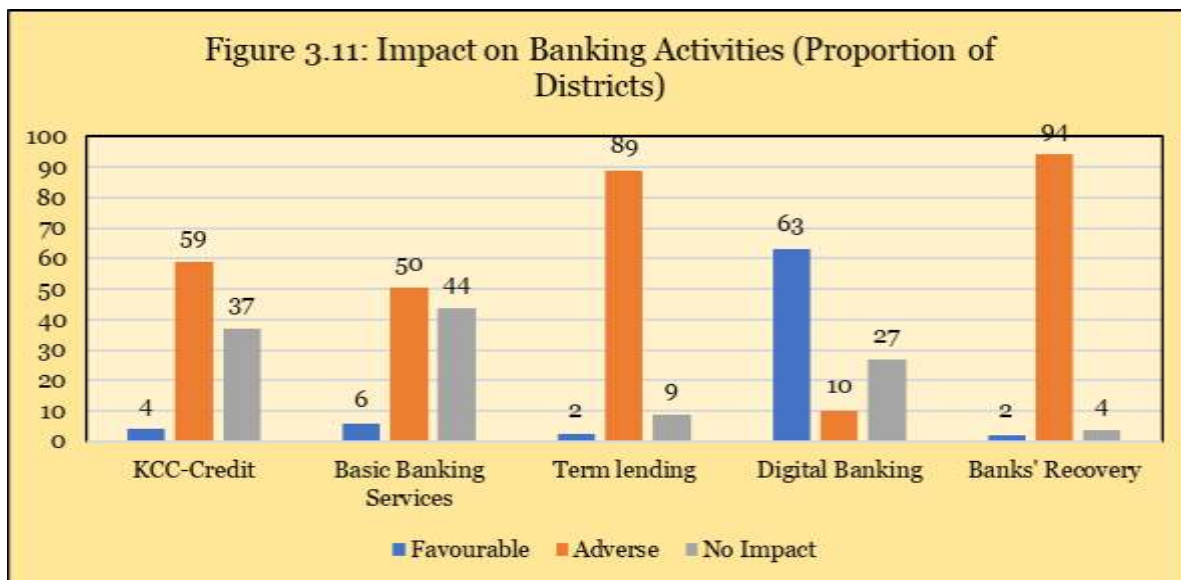
of FY 2021–22). A further 1,86,727 square feet have been planted on 6 hectares (horticulture afforestation). A total of 72,546 square feet, or 9 hectares, have been covered with protected irrigation. A total of 117.60 lakh man-days of employment have been produced, 5.32 lakh farmers have benefited, 80,722 water harvesting structures have been built, and 41 hectares of wasteland have been rehabilitated and rendered cultivable.

## STATISTICAL TOOLS

Statistical tools used are bar graphs, percentages & figures (in Indian Rupee) wherever necessary, INR is specified.

## DATA ANALYSIS

Impact on Banking Activities



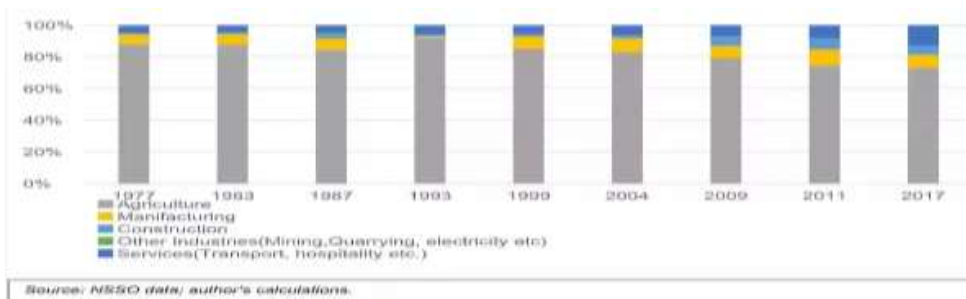
Major findings of the survey relating to these banking aspects have been discussed in following paragraphs:

- i. Farmers' Access to Credit through KCC:** At the across-India level, almost (59%) districts report a negative impact on farmers' access to credit through the KCC. The positive impact of Covid on KCC credit was (4%). The district (37%) was unaffected. Several north-eastern states such as Manipur, Mizoram and Sikkim reported negative impacts in all sample districts. Other large states reporting a high proportion of adversely affected districts are Kerala (100%), Assam (75%), West Bengal (76%), Uttar Pradesh (75%), Bihar (73%) and Maharashtra (71%).
- ii. Access to Basic Banking Services:** Access to basic banking services such as deposits and withdrawals was reportedly impaired in almost 50% of India's sample districts. Possible reasons for the negative impact on basic banking services were the need for social distancing and restrictions on people's movements, limiting their ability to contact banks. (6%) and unaffected or unaffected areas (44%). Some of the larger states reporting high proportions of adversely affected districts are Chhattisgarh (78%), Jharkhand (75%) and Maharashtra (68%).
- iii. Term Lending by Banks:** Bank lending has been hit hardest in various states in India, according to reports. At the All-India level, almost 89% of the districts in the sample report negative impacts on bank lending. Only a few districts were positively impacted (2%) and Covid-unaffected (9%). Many smaller states/UTs such as A&N Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Puducherry report negative impacts in all the sample districts. The major states of India are Haryana (100%), Himachal Pradesh (100%), Bihar (95%), Punjab (95%), Rajasthan (95%), Maharashtra (94%), Madhya reported the highest proportion of adversely affected districts. Pradesh (91%).
- iv. Digital Banking/Digital Financial Transaction:** Among the various aspects of banking, digital financial transactions were the only aspect reported to be positively impacted by nearly (63%) of the sample districts. This suggests that even people who otherwise don't like digital financial transactions are doing so due to the restrictions imposed during lockdown, possibly with the help

of others. negative digital impact (10%) and no impact area (27%). Large states reporting a high percentage of positive impact districts include Kerala (92%), Punjab (91%), Rajasthan (90%), Haryana (87%), Bihar (81%).

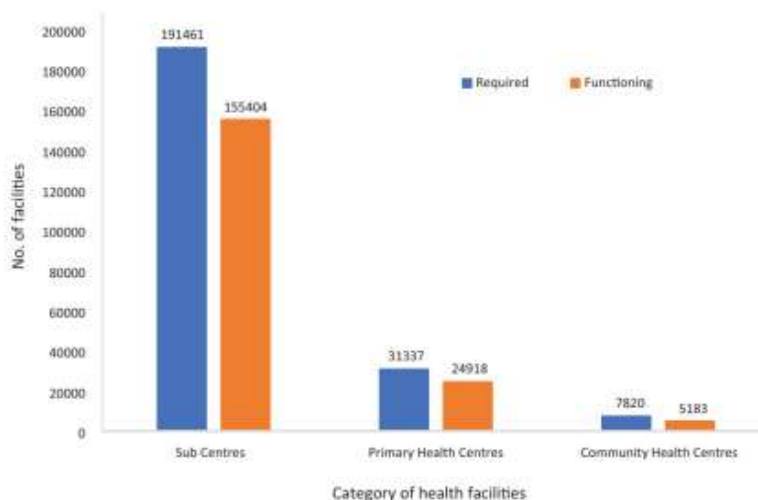
- V. **Banks' Recovery:** Bank recovery was the biggest casualty, as (94%) of the sample districts were adversely affected. Many large states including Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, and West Bengal reported adverse impacts on all the sample districts. The implementation of curfews and vehicle traffic restrictions has severely impacted price discovery mechanisms in the general agricultural sector and related sectors such as poultry, dairy, fisheries, and horticulture. As a result, the income of many households may have been adversely affected during this period. Positive impacts were (2%) and areas of no impact (4%).

### Employment by sector for Rural Females



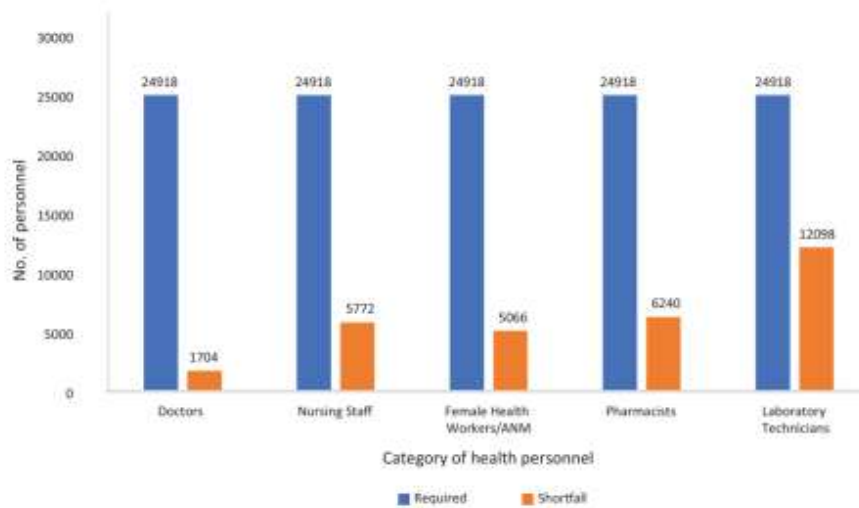
Data in the above bar graph shows the employment in different sectors for rural females. Agriculture was the sector which provided the most employment to females in the country, it started to decrease in 1999 but it still is the majority sector in which rural females are employed. Manufacturing fluctuated throughout the years and it was the lowest in 1993 but then it started to increase. Construction has also increased throughout the years and was the 2nd largest employer in 2017. The service sector saw a boom in India and its employment also increased after 2004 because of the female education that took place in rural India but it still has very little female employed compared to agriculture and manufacturing.

### Basic Health Infrastructure in Rural India

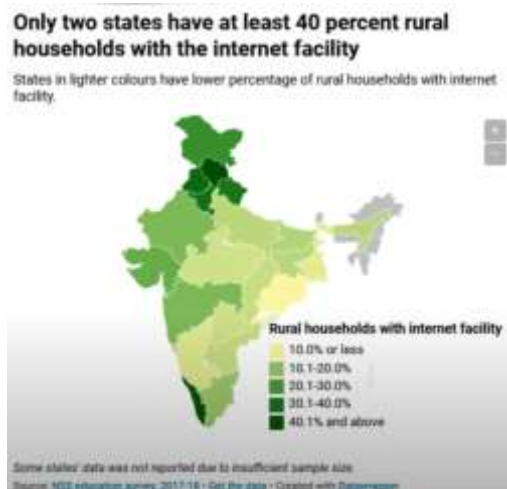


This bar graph depicts the basic health infrastructure required and functioning in rural India. The sub centres required in rural India are 1,91,461 and functioning are only 1,55,404, required primary health centres are 31,337 and working are 79.5% of required. Community health centres are also short of 2,637 centres. This data explains why Indian medical facilities were overwhelmed at the time of covid 19 pandemic.

## Human Resources in Rural Primary Health Centres

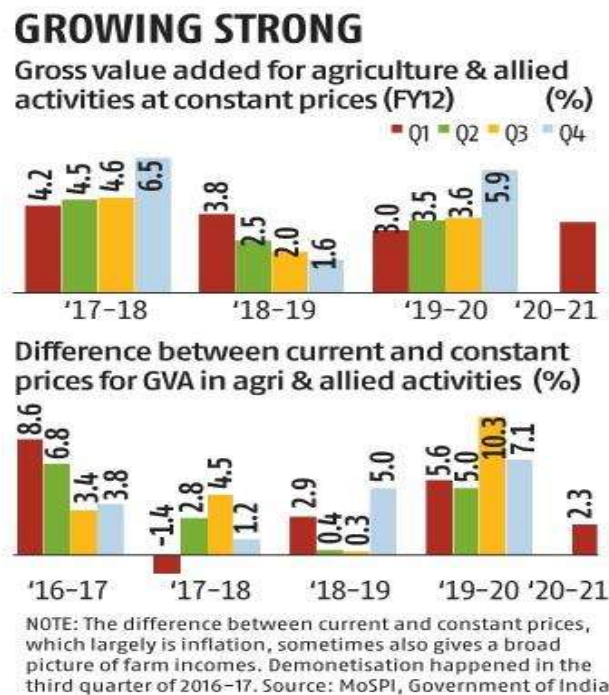


This figure shows the shortfall of medical professionals working in rural primary health centres. The gap between the number of people required and the shortfall is huge as compared to health facility centres. The doctor shortfall is 1704, the nursing staff 5772 which is 23.16% of required, females' health worker shortfall is 20% approx., pharmacist's shortfall is 6240 and laboratory shortfall is 48.5% of required and this caused a lot of inconvenience during the testing of covid. This shortfall in human resources lead to catastrophic effects at the time of covid 19 and made the prices shoot up for medical services.



The above map shows the percentage of rural households across the states who have access to the internet. In Rajasthan 20.1% to 30% of rural households have internet access, in Madhya Pradesh the percentage is lower ( 10.1% - 20%), and in areas of Punjab, Haryana and Delhi this percentage is higher compared to other (30.1% - 40.1% and above). This map helped us to understand how the majority of rural Indian households lack the basic facility of internet and how it acted as a barrier to the education of their children.

In agricultural GDP in India, growth of between 2.4% and 3.7% from fiscal year 2019 (FY19) to fiscal year 2020 (FY20) was expected before COVID-19, according to the National Statistical Office of India. A decline of about 5% in the first quarter (Q1) of FY20 due to the lockdown has replaced the expected growth.



## FINDINGS

1. State of women in the rural community. Women play important role in the rural economy because of their contribution as small business owners, and wage earners.
2. Women in rural communities have always been neglected, even before covid -19 pandemic. They have faced many hindrances such as lack of education, unpaid working hours, social stigma and domestic violence.
3. Impact of covid 19 on health-related well-being While the COVID-19. India's rural districts suffer from a shortage of qualified medical personnel and its health facilities were overwhelmed even without the pandemic.
4. Many doctors in the rural area because of their incompetence and lack of required equipment misdiagnosed covid 19 as typhoid and gave patients the wrong medication.
5. In India 321 million students were affected by pandemic, schools and colleges tried to overcome this hindrance by introducing online classes but online classes created a digital divide between the students.
6. Government policies helped the rural economy to come back on track and provide relief to villagers.

## CONCLUSION

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a mega 20 lakh crore rupees package for the Indian economy on 12th May 2020 which is 10 per cent of total GDP. the present package is inclusive of the past package (PMGKY, RBI liquidity measures, interest cuts) which was around 4 per cent of GDP. the main focus of the package is land, labour, liquidity and laws which can cater needs of cottage industries, MSMEs, laborers and bourgeoisie . In the long-run to reduce inequalities of income, regional imbalance and share of migrant workers, localization of industries and employment is that the need of the hour. aside from providing credits, there's also a need to work on institutional factors such as law and order, corruption etc. for effective implementation of the policies.

In the manufacturing industry, migration or migrant laborers are the engine of growth. In COVID-19 or post COVID, manufacturing goods will always be demanded. Therefore, the govt has to work on the mechanism of how these migrant laborers are brought back to their respective jobs. The localization of industries and employment can release pressure from the agricultural sector.

There should be a comprehensive plan for structural transformation from the first to the modern sector. Agricultural reforms like competitive credits, modern farm inputs and better producer price to be taken to form agriculture profitable. On the opposite side testing of COVID-19 should be increased to contain and community spread. In the short-run, measures like cash incentives should be given to the migrant laborers, and marginal farmers to save lots of them from poverty and starvation. Similarly, wage subsidy should be given an off-the-cuff sector. Above all, mass corruption within the system is the biggest challenge in the effective implementation of plans.



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