

All you need to know about a career in Rural Management

For students contemplating between management and development studies, rural management might be an intelligent and socially conscious choice, writes **Rahul Ghai**

The COVID-19 pandemic and its economic impact have sharply brought to the intersection of public health and the economy as a policymaking challenge. The massive reverse migration of migrant workers has created an intense need to create new growth pathways in rural India. Rural India that houses 69% of India's population is suddenly experiencing a further overburdening of its already dissipating agricultural economy. However, a series of expenditure-based initiatives announced by the government for the rural economy such as raising of MNREGA allocations as well as recent Garib Kalyan Rozgar Abhiyan are bound to have a multiplier effect on investment, employment generation and consumption. A renewed impetus on food processing, livestock, fisheries, dairy, warehousing, and logistics and non-agricultural pursuits



such as light manufacturing, retail, construction, and financial services, rural India can glide into a promising future.

Rural Management education governs the study of managing and optimising agricultural resources effectively. It also includes plan-

ning and executing rural development programmes, promoting rural livelihoods, and engineering diverse livelihood opportunities outside agriculture for the rural population.

An estimated 30 lakh NGOs are operating mainly in rural India. The big multinationals outsourcing their processes to smaller towns is already reshaping the job landscape. Of a staggering 6.3 crore MSMEs manufacturing over 6,000 products, more than 50% operate in rural India. Add to this the massive government machinery that works in rural India. As Central and state governments, apart from multilateral organizations, would increasingly conduct feasibility/impact studies of schemes in rural areas, there will be a need for a vast number of rural development and management professionals.

(The author is dean, SDS, IIMR University)