

The Role of RUDSET Organization in Rural Development: with Special Reference to Rural Karnataka: A Sociological Study

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Abstract:

Rural development in India has long been recognized as a key component of national progress, particularly because a large proportion of the population continues to reside in rural areas and depends on agriculture and allied activities for livelihood. Karnataka, like many other Indian states, faces challenges such as unemployment, underemployment, poverty, migration to urban areas, and lack of diversified income opportunities. In response to these challenges, innovative institutional interventions have emerged to promote sustainable rural livelihoods, among which the Rural Development and Self Employment Training Institute (RUDSETI) model has gained notable significance.

Rural Development and Self Employment Training Institute (RUDSET) have emerged as significant catalysts for rural transformation in Karnataka. RUDSET is promoting self-employment, enhancing livelihood opportunities, and enabling social mobility among rural youth. The RUDSET has successfully created sustainable income-generating activities, reduced migration pressures, improved social capital, and strengthened community participation. RUDSET has played a crucial role in enhancing skill acquisition, reducing rural unemployment, encouraging first-generation entrepreneurs, and empowering marginalized sections such as women, SC/ST communities, and youth. The institute's continuous support system, including credit linkage and mentoring, has strengthened entrepreneurial success rates and reduced migration to urban areas. Its training programs-ranging from agriculture-based vocations to service, manufacturing, and small business skills-are designed to be practical, demand-driven, and accessible to marginalized groups. RUDSET's unique model- comprising need-based skill training, motivation building, and post-training follow-up-contributes to sustainable self-employment. The study concludes that RUDSET has emerged as a significant institutional mechanism for rural development in Rural Karnataka by fostering self-reliance, socio-economic mobility, and community-based development. Further strengthening of outreach, digital literacy initiatives, and policy support can enhance its long-term impact. Using a sociological lens, the study analyses training programmes, entrepreneurship development, women's empowerment, and the impact on local economies. In Karnataka has undergone significant transformation with the establishment of RUDSETIs. The study concludes that RUDSET serves as an effective model of inclusive rural development in Karnataka. From

a sociological perspective, RUDSET plays a transformative role in shaping identities, aspirations, and socio-economic mobility among rural individuals. The institute not only imparts technical skills but also focuses on motivation building, personality development, and confidence enhancement, leading to a holistic empowerment process. The social implications of this intervention include enhanced community participation, reduced dependency on agriculture, strengthened social capital, and improved economic resilience. This study aims to analyze the role of RUDSET in rural development in Karnataka by examining its contribution to skill enhancement, employment generation, and social change. Through sociological analysis, the research explores how RUDSET's institutional framework, training methodology, and post-training support mechanisms contribute to improving the quality of life in rural communities. It also highlights the challenges, opportunities, and future potential of the RUDSET model in the broader context of rural development in India. Karnataka has been a pioneering state in rural development and entrepreneurship promotion.

Keywords: RUDSET, Rural Development, Karnataka, Self-Employment, Entrepreneurship, Skill Training, Social Mobility, Women Empowerment.

1. Introduction:

Rural development in India has long been recognized as a key component of national progress, particularly because a large proportion of the population continues to reside in rural areas and depends on agriculture and allied activities for livelihood. Karnataka, like many other Indian states, faces challenges such as unemployment, underemployment, poverty, migration to urban areas, and lack of diversified income opportunities. In response to these challenges, innovative institutional interventions have emerged to promote sustainable rural livelihoods, among which the Rural Development and Self Employment Training Institute (RUDSETI) model has gained notable significance.

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Background of the RUDSET : The Rural Development and Self Employment Training Institute (RUDSET), founded in 1982 jointly by Syndicate Bank, Canara Bank, and Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara Educational Trust (SDME) Trust, began its journey in Karnataka before expanding its model across India. Its vision is to empower rural youth through skill-based training and guide them towards sustainable self-employment. Understanding its impact of RUDSET on rural livelihoods, gender relations, community structures, and socio-economic mobility in Karnataka. Over the years, RUDSETI has expanded its presence across Karnataka and other parts of India, becoming a pioneering institution in skill development, entrepreneurship promotion, and rural empowerment. Karnataka hosts some of the oldest and most active RUDSET centres in India. These centres conduct a wide range of Entrepreneurship Development Programs (EDPs) such as, Dairy, poultry, and agri-based processing, Tailoring, embroidery, beauty culture, Computer training, mobile repair, Photography, driving, electrical works, Small-scale manufacturing. RUDSET in Karnataka is widely recognized for its high settlement rates, efficient follow-up mechanisms, and strong collaboration with banks and panchayats.

In Karnataka: It was established in 1982 in Ujire, Karnataka, as a joint venture of Syndicate Bank, Canara Bank, and the Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara (SDM) Educational Trust. The core idea behind RUDSET emerged from the need to address persistent rural unemployment, lack of vocational skills, and the weak entrepreneurial culture among rural youth. Karnataka, being predominantly agrarian at the time, faced challenges of seasonal employment, limited industrial presence in rural areas, and outward migration in search of jobs. RUDSET pioneered a unique model of **short-term, intensive, demand-driven entrepreneurship training**, which combined skill development with personality building and post-training mentoring. This approach soon gained recognition for its high success rate in self-employment creation. The success of the Karnataka-based RUDSET model led to the establishment of RUDSETIs across India, supported later by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India. Over the past four decades, RUDSET in Karnataka has trained lakhs of rural youth in various domains including agriculture and allied activities, small manufacturing, service sector trades, and micro-enterprise development.

Methodology Used: It is descriptive research, and the research methodology used in this paper is based on secondary data collected from sources such as survey reports, research publications, and RUDSET web-based resources for the analyses

Objectives of the study:

1. To know the aims and objectives of the of RUDSETs
2. To Evaluate the role of RUDSETs in Rural development through sociological lens

Aims and objectives of the RUDSETs: The main aims of the RUDSETs are, a) Identification of Training Needs of the rural people. RUDSET adopts a need-based training system, where courses are designed after assessment b) Provide Short-Term, Intensive Skill Training programme of 1–6 weeks. The Training is conducted by experienced resource persons c) Motivation and Personality programmes, d) Provide Entrepreneurship Development trainings. e) Post-Training Follow-Ups of trainees. f) Provide Credit Linkage Support to rural needy people who got training. Linking trainees with financial institutions. g) RUDSET encourages trainees to develop values such as: Self-reliance, Discipline, Social responsibility, Ethical entrepreneurship, Community participation

Statistics on RUDSETs achievements : It was established in 1982 in Ujire, Karnataka, as a joint venture of Syndicate Bank, Canara Bank, and the Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara (SDM) Educational Trust. The core idea behind RUDSET emerged from the need to address persistent rural unemployment, lack of vocational skills, and the weak entrepreneurial culture among rural youth. Karnataka .As of 31 March 2025, the network of RSETIs and RUDSETIs comprises 609 institutes (including 27 RUDSETIs). This network has cumulatively trained about 55.53 lakh (5.553 million) rural unemployed youths as of 2025. Around 40.27 lakh have been “settled. women candidates trained is reportedly “above 70%” across the .

in Karnataka - 1992, it has conducted 887 training programmes benefiting 28,253 candidates. In the financial year 2022–23 at RUDSETI Mysore, out of 784 candidates trained, and 628 candidates settled under various ventures. trained about 1.13 lakh unemployed youths through 3,568 self-employment training programmes; among them there were significant number of women (27,868), SC/ST (22,512), minorities (11,280), and differently-abled (1,117). Out of these trained candidates, about 74,332 ($\approx 65\%$) reportedly established self-employment projects.

Role of RUDSET in Rural development:

The study on the role of RUDSET in rural development in Karnataka carries considerable academic, social, and policy relevance. As rural communities continue to face challenges such as unemployment, poverty, and limited entrepreneurial exposure, institutions like RUDSET serve as crucial interventions for sustainable livelihood creation. Understanding its impact from a sociological perspective provides valuable insights into how such initiatives transform individuals and communities.

Main Rural development programmes in Karnataka, are,



Promotion of Self-Employment : RUDSET plays a key role in converting unemployed rural youth into micro-entrepreneurs. Short-term, practical training covering 50+ trades equips trainees with employable skills. The follow-up support for two years significantly increases sustainability of enterprises.

Social Mobility and Livelihood Enhancement : The institute has contributed to upward social mobility by improving income levels, economic stability, and social status of beneficiaries. This is particularly significant in rural Karnataka, where unemployment and underemployment remain major concerns.

Women Empowerment : A substantial portion of trainees in Karnataka are women. Through training in tailoring, beauty culture, food processing, and computer applications, women gain economic independence, decision-making power, and enhanced participation in community development.

Strengthening Rural Economy : RUDSET-trained entrepreneurs support local markets, generate employment for others, and stimulate small-scale industries. This helps diversify the rural economy away from agriculture alone.

Reduction of Rural–Urban Migration : By creating local opportunities, RUDSET reduces distress migration and keeps families economically stable in their home villages.

Social Capital and Community Development : RUDSET fosters strong networks among trainees, alumni, banks, and local institutions. These networks promote cooperation, knowledge sharing, and community-based initiatives.

Entrepreneurship Development: RUDSET plays a vital role in promoting micro-level entrepreneurship by offering skill-based training that is aligned with local market needs. Its courses empower rural youth to start viable income-generating activities, reducing dependence on wage labour and agricultural work.

Skill Development for Rural Youth: The institute provides a wide range of training programmes-dairy farming, tailoring, agri-based enterprises, electrical work, computer skills, handicrafts, food processing, and more. These courses meet the diverse economic needs of Karnataka's rural regions.

Women's Empowerment: RUDSET's targeted programmes for women help enhance their economic independence, social status, and community participation. Many women trainees have successfully launched home-based and small-scale enterprises.

Inclusive Development: A major focus is on socially disadvantaged groups, including SC/ST youth, the economically weaker sections, and school/college dropouts. RUDSET's inclusive approach makes it a credible institution for promoting equitable rural development.

Employment Generation & Migration Reduction: By encouraging local self-employment, RUDSET helps reduce distress migration to urban areas. The support provided during and after training increases the chances of sustainable livelihoods.

Post-Training Support: One of RUDSET's unique strengths is its comprehensive follow-up mechanism. Trainees receive guidance in loan procurement, market linkage, business management, and troubleshooting during enterprise setup.

Contribution to Rural Economy: The institute's activities contribute to rural economic growth by strengthening micro-entrepreneurship, supporting local markets, encouraging innovation, and facilitating skill-based diversification of income.

Understanding Entrepreneurship Promotion in Rural Areas: The research highlights the role of RUDSET in cultivating entrepreneurial attitudes among rural youth. It demonstrates how motivation building, skill training, and post-training support influence the development of first-generation entrepreneurs—a critical factor for rural economic diversification.

Insights into Social Empowerment and Mobility: By examining RUDSET's impact on women, SC/ST communities, and economically weaker sections, the study sheds light on issues of social inclusion and empowerment. It reveals how participation in RUDSET programs contributes to increased confidence, improved social status, and enhanced decision-making power within households and communities.

Policy Relevance for Skill Development Initiatives: The findings of this study offer practical guidance for government agencies, NGOs, and financial institutions engaged in rural development. Insights into RUDSET's successful model can inform policy formulation under schemes such as NRLM, PMEGP, and other skill-development programmes.

Evaluation of Training and Follow-Up Processes: The study critically assesses RUDSET's methodology, including its need-based training, motivation enhancement, and rigorous follow-up system. This evaluation helps identify strengths, gaps, and potential improvements, contributing to the enhancement of future training programs.

Implications for Reducing Rural Migration: By enabling sustainable self-employment in villages, RUDSET plays a role in reducing distress migration to cities. This study helps explain how rural livelihood opportunities can help achieve balanced regional development.

Practical Value for Development Practitioners: For rural development officers, NGOs, financial institutions, and training institutes, the study provides actionable insights into the factors that determine the success of entrepreneurship training. It may guide replication or adaptation of the RUDSET model in other regions.

Contribution to Sociological Understanding of Institutional Change: The study examines RUDSET not only as a training institution but as a social institution shaping values, aspirations, and community dynamics. This sociological perspective broadens the understanding of how institutional efforts influence social structures, norms, and rural livelihood patterns.

Skill Development and Capacity Building: RUDSET plays a crucial role in enhancing the employability of rural youth by offering short-term, demand-driven training programmes. These include:

Agriculture and allied activities, Tailoring, beautician courses, food processing Electrical, motor rewinding, and technical skills, Computer and digital literacy, Small manufacturing and service enterprises

These skills enable youth to adopt diverse economic activities, leading to income diversification within rural households.

Conclusion : The RUDSET institute's inclusive approach—focusing on women, SC/ST communities, economically weaker sections, and youth lacking formal education—has significantly contributed to social empowerment and equitable development. The high settlement rates achieved through RUDSET's rigorous follow-up mechanism demonstrate the effectiveness and sustainability of its training model. By linking trainees with financial institutions, strengthening local markets, and promoting micro-enterprise development, RUDSET has played an important role in invigorating the rural economy of Karnataka. From a sociological perspective, RUDSET's impact extends beyond economic outcomes. It has fostered confidence, leadership, community participation, and upward social mobility among rural populations. The institute has also contributed to reducing distress migration and enhancing the overall quality of life in rural areas. The success of the Karnataka model has further laid the foundation for national replication through RSETIs across India. In conclusion, RUDSET stands as a successful and replicable model of rural development and entrepreneurship promotion. Strengthening its resources, expanding digital and market-oriented training, and deepening community partnerships can further enhance its long-term contribution to rural development in Karnataka. The institute continues to be a significant instrument for creating sustainable livelihoods, empowering marginalized communities, and driving inclusive rural progress.

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