



# THOUGHT PAPER



## CONTEXT OF THOUGHTS

**Diversifying the occupational paradigms in order to expand the aspirations of rural children beyond the bookish and spoken professions. Thus, helping them in expanding the horizons of their aspirations**

### **Background:**

Aspirations of children are often influenced by their surroundings. Their ecosystem plays a vital role in shaping their aspirations. The paper on “Educating 'surplus population': uses and abuses of aspiration in the rural peripheries of a globalising world” (Ansell, 2020) mentions how the aspirations of children are often surrounded around four occupations namely teacher, police, nurse and soldier. These roles are what they called the “socially valued roles” which are chosen by the children with a view of serving their communities (Ansell, 2020).

But these are also influenced by the child’s exposure in the community, school or general environment in which the child spends their maximum amount of time. What if their surroundings had individuals carrying out a different activity than usual? Something that the child wouldn’t rather think of, that isn’t generally mentioned by teachers in the school or a profession/occupation that the child’s community wouldn’t discuss over tea and informal meetings.

But a profession/occupation that is easily accessible or that is at least recognized by children in the urban areas or areas that have a wider exposure of pursuing such occupations. This puts an aspect of diversifying the activities or occupations taken up by people in the rural set ups.

## Possibilities

§ Diversifying occupations in a village or a community where the students reside will be influential in shaping their aspirations.

§ Introducing the children to diverse streams over their educational timeframe will eventually lead to their choice of a distinct occupation.

## Diversification- A way towards expanding aspirational horizons

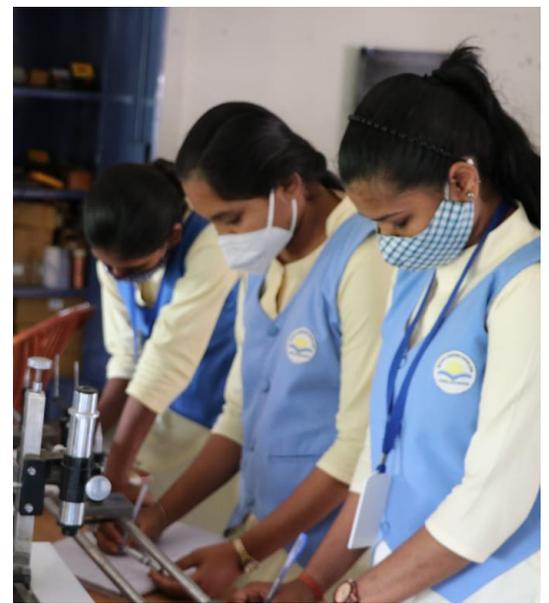
Diversifying the kind of trainings that are given to the youth and women for employment generation or self-employment will help in expanding the horizons of aspirations among the rural children; something that is different from tailoring or the common business activities. Initially it might be difficult or alien for them to adopt but there might be a possibility of at least one such youth or women who would take up the activity. This would serve as an example for the children or especially the girl children to shape their aspirations. They will have a live example of someone following a non-traditional occupation or an occupation that isn't generally listed in the books or is spoken about.

We can also present examples for the children that aren't commonly known professions. For example, in the high school transformation programs, when Honourable CM of Odisha asks the children what they wish to be in future, some of them said that they want to be an IAS Officer. One of the many reasons for them to aspire to be an IAS officer might be their presence and the one to one interactions of the Officers with the students through activities such as the high school transformation programs.

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## Bibliography

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## Way forward..

Inviting people from various streams to the schools for interactions, to present an example of what they can possibly aspire about, is a way forward to generate diverse aspirations. A simple example would be a child's interaction with a hockey player that might inspire a girl child to explore her possibilities of being a national champion some-day.

