

SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION: AN INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Today, India is one of the largest growing economies in the world. India also enjoys a demographic dividend. To become a developed nation, we need skilled manpower and more importantly we need to train our youth. However, today India lacks a formally trained manpower in a variety of industry required skills as compared to other countries. India's skill training programs should not only equip the youth with marketable skills, but also make them employable and train the youth for self-employment or entrepreneurship. A skills gap exists between the inputs required by the education system and the industry. The vision of 'Make in India' has given major impetus to skill development over the last year. The government plans to skill over 150 million youth by 2022, which means skilling about 45,000 youth each year for the next ten years (Source: NSDC website). This ambitious goal can be achieved only when industry, academia and government come together to form a golden triangle.

Skill development is not an additional course that can be added to the university curriculum, but it needs to be integrated into the training and education of youth who are easily employable and able to be part of the machinery that drives the country's industry. It is fruitful to take a look at the National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) in this state. The NSQF defines levels and credits for each competency-based vocational skill. It goes on to establish a credit transfer framework that allows for the creation of pathways between formal and vocational education. The NSQF in India was notified on December 27, 2013. All other frameworks, including the NVEQF (National Vocational Educational Qualifications Framework) issued by the HRD Ministry, have been superseded by the NSQF. Under NSQF, the learner can obtain certification for the required qualifications at any level through formal, non-formal or non-formal education. It is a quality assurance framework.

Keywords: Skill development, Industry, Growth, NSQF, HRD, Vocational education.

Introduction

The process of education is not just about digesting books. It is also about carrying out many co-curricular activities which give a wider meaning to life in general and education in particular. The

opportunities for such holistic development are not enough in India. The facilities for the same are lacking or not easily accessible in India. Even, where the facilities exist, there is a lack of information about the same. There should be community based program and work on social issues. Community participation refers to the collaboration between higher education and their larger communities for a mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in the context of partnership and reciprocity. Communication skills, problem solving, interactive skills, civic responsibilities are enhanced when students become familiar with the life situations of the people in the community.

In India's growth story, becoming the world's number one knowledge production hub is not optional. It is imperative to fulfill this because unless knowledge is produced according to the needs of the 21st century, India will never become an economic superpower. Increasingly, economic development is being directly linked to the kind of education provided to its youth.

The first and foremost issue regarding skill development in India is to define or redefine it. While there are policy papers by the Planning Commission, the National Skill Development Council and the National Skill Development Corporation, the exact meaning of what skill development is and should be is not clear. In fact, we are yet to produce a policy document in India that clearly delineates the skills to be trained by the youth. We are yet to come up with a policy document which defines the urgency of skill development in certain aspects and skills.

The World Bank suggests that not only are these soft skills important but today they are critical to 'labor productivity' and employers are looking for these skills for their companies. Secondly soft skills are not embellishments or grooming as some might suggest in India but they are 'high level cognitive skills'.

Enabling an efficient ecosystem in India

Our vision is to skill people by facilitating interactions between key stakeholders – industry, training partners, academia, trainees/students and the government. The website presents news, stories, events, best practices, case studies, research reports that address the challenges of engaging, enabling and empowering people through education and training. We are inspired by the cause of the aspirational value of skilling and upskilling and that can make a difference in one's life, society

and economy.

Vocational Education and Training (VET) is a vital element of the nation's education initiatives where there is an urgent need to redefine the critical elements so that training is flexible, contemporary, relevant, inclusive and creative.

India has a population of over 1.267 billion and a workforce of 474.1 million, of which 336.9 million are rural workers and 137.2 million are urban workers as per the last NSSO survey conducted in 2011-12. There were 40.17 million registered in the unemployment register in 2010. Providing meaningful employment to all with unemployment rate at 8.8 percent and population growing at around 1.5 percent every year is indeed a daunting task. In terms of demographics, about 35 percent of Indians are under the age of 15, and about 50 percent are under the age of 25. The average age of India is 24 years, making it one of the youngest populations in the world.

"Make in India" and Skills

Thousands of PhDs are required per year but with mandatory research that helps deliver the industry. A clear imperative research that helps the industry. A clear mandate for CSIR/DRDO laboratories, IITs need innovations that help in job creation. There is a need to develop multiple IPR-patented-entrepreneur cells in each of the above institutions. It links with the national agenda along with research potential. Promotion of net technology sectors like oil exploration, mining, agriculture, power, water resources and infrastructure should be high on priority and get the best funding.

Promoting sustainable development for the environment, climate change and conservation through innovation in energy, bio-sciences, bio-engineering and genetics should be the next level of priority. Several downstream activities should be carried out in each area of innovation. The 100 model cities under the new government are the masterstrokes for the growth of the infrastructure sector and creating new job markets. This in turn will modify the skill market.

National Skill Development Mission

The National Mission for Skill Development was launched on July 15, 2015, to rapidly implement skill development efforts across India.

Mission Statement: "To accelerate skill development efforts in India, by creating an end-to-end,

results-focused implementation framework that will lead to a well-trained skilled workforce in line with the aspirations of Indian citizens in a sustainable manner.

End-to-end implementation framework for skill development, which provides opportunities for life-long learning. These include, incorporating skilling into the school curriculum, providing opportunities for quality long-term and short-term skill training, providing gainful employment and ensuring a career profession that meets the aspirations of the trainees. Modify employer/industry demand and workforce productivity with trainees' aspirations for sustainable livelihoods, by creating a framework for employ-centered training.

National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship 2015

The National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship 2015 influences the 2009 policy. The primary objective of this policy is to meet the challenge of scaling up with speed, standard (quality) and consistency. It aims to provide an umbrella framework for all skilling activities taking place within the country, to align them with common standards and link skills with demand centres. Apart from setting out the objectives and expected outcomes, the policy also identifies the overall institutional framework which will act as a vehicle to reach the expected outcomes. Skill development is a shared responsibility of key stakeholders. Government, Corporate Sector, Community Based Organisations, entire spectrum of outstanding, highly qualified and dedicated individuals who have been working in the field of Skills and Entrepreneurship for many years to industry and trade organizations and other stakeholders.

Skill development and Economic progress

Skill development can be defined as proficiency which is acquired or developed through training or experience. Global leaders have recognized the role and impact of skill development through their national policies. It strengthens the ability of individuals to adapt to changing market demands and benefit from innovation and entrepreneurial activities. Apart from the primary determinants of skill development, it is also necessary to address the opportunities and challenges to meet the new demands of the changing economies in terms of competitiveness. The future prosperity of countries ultimately depends on the number of individuals in employment and how productive they are at work. This is a dynamic scenario where the most successful or progressive nations will be the ones

that can counter the VUCA (Instability, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity) (Abidi& Joshi, 2015). Therefore, skill development can be linked to the development of comprehensive development, employment and government intervention.

Need for educated and skilled workers

The overarching principles for a better educational governance have to do with better regulation of quality, incentives that are aligned and create an ecosystem where the preparedness of educated and skilled workers is in line with the needs of the future. There are major challenges facing the education system at different stages of education. About 35 percent of students who start school, 10 out of 10 lakh take the exam, 10 out of 10 don't pass the 10th standard. Eight out of 16 million who do not take the Grade 12 exams fail to pass them. Only 5 million out of 8 million who successfully clear 12th class previous exams go to college. Raising a strong pool of educated and skilled workers and professionals requires rated reform and change at the lower levels of education.

Conclusion

Globalization and trade liberalization in India has brought about many changes in the labor market of India. The direct result is the influx of technology, spurred by economic reforms, and its impact on the development of a skills-based workforce, opening up a whole new window of opportunity for even small enterprises in the informal sector. Skilling is a method of improving human capital, which ensures income security to workers, especially for poorly educated workers in developing countries like India, and therefore a key to enriching this vast workforce which is directly and indirectly it can help in promoting the market. The informal segment of the workforce is defined by several common characteristics: limited professional skills, low on income, low productivity and low capital investment. Developing new marketable employability skills through education and training can disrupt cyclical poverty by increasing productivity and employment opportunities in the informal economy and formal-sector employment of workers. Thus, it is important to train this group to optimize their productivity and for the upliftment of the nation.

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