

# CURRENT VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING INITIATIVES FOR THE YOUTH AND WOMEN

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**Abstract:** The need for Vocational Education is the order of the day as it is necessary for the reduction of unemployment, creation of small and medium enterprises for the increase in GDP and per capita income. To improve world class productivity and quality as well as bring out a surge in trade and commerce, the greatest challenge in Indian education system is to facilitate skill based education to youth and especially women. It is always an equation that job market requires the work force with at least a basic graduate degree and desirable vocational training. The new avenues of scientific and technological explosion have led to a paradigm shift in the basic objectives of imparting education. The factors such as increasing competition, economic slowdown, poverty, illiteracy, population imbalances and political instability are juxtaposed against the ICT revolution, relevant education and skill development for better career. This paper showcases the need to establish relationship between education, career and community. There is also a necessity for establishing new relationships between education, the world of work and the community as a whole. In this context, Vocational Education, Training & Skill Development should exist as part of a system of lifelong learning adapted to the needs of the students according to their relevant contexts. Few years ago vocational education was considered to be imparted to the people who do not show considerable aptitude in the academics and thus need specific skills to get employment. But as of today, people are opting for the skill related courses in addition to the regular academics so as to improve their job prospects. As the online and offline courses are lesser in cost, they make the students job ready, show success in career and promote entrepreneurship.

**Keywords:** Vocational Education, Skill Development, Employment, Training.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Education is the life source of human civilization and transforms the existence of human life. The ancient education and social systems provided skill based training for the survival and economic growth. As the theological and philosophical structure of the old education systems started getting replaced by science and technology, the theory gave way to the applied and experimental methods. The concept of universalization of primary education has resulted in more than 90% of the population completing the schooling. But, it is very pathetic to note that only less than 20% of the people complete graduation. Though there is a dire need for trained workforce in logistics, healthcare, construction, hospitality and automobile industries, the vocational education is neither given priority nor utilized as available. On the global scenario India has less than 10% vocational training Institutes when compared to the other countries.

It is always an equation that job market requires the work force with at least a basic graduate degree and desirable vocational training. The workforce with lower degrees and vocational training or the graduates without vocational training are not considered to be employable. Though employed initially they would soon become unsuitable for the work profiles as the requirement or the trends change. In both the informal and formal modes of education, the vocational courses are popular as they provide better employment opportunities. But it is a true fact that the skill training starts only at the

secondary and higher secondary level where there is a high dropout rate. National Policy of Education (1986) envisaged high importance to vocational education and training to increase the efforts for providing the higher secondary students with more vocational education courses. The National Skill Development Policy (2009) clearly stated that it is desirable to have competency based qualification, certification for learning achievement, national qualifications, avoidance of overlapping of qualifications, quality assurance, lifelong learning, open and flexible system of education.

## 2. THE REALM OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN INDIA AT PRESENT

The context in which vocational education is delivered is characterized by challenging situations, opportunities for self-discovery, authentic real-world experiences, and a place where students objectively self-evaluate and reflect upon their experiences (Davis, 2011). The vision 2020 aims at 100% literacy which is still not yet achieved. In fact the good governance and effective administration is possible only with the good literacy and understanding of the development. This is possible only by the vocational education training. But, there is every chance for dilution of the efforts as the quality and variety offered by the courses is not adequate. Small and Medium enterprises across of the world in many countries make 80% of their GDP. But when compared India is only sharing 0.50% of the world exports and tourism market. The composition of the Global Competitiveness Index produced by the World Economic Forum includes human capital components. In the 2007–2008 Global Competitiveness Index, 18 indicators or 15.9% of all indicators (Sabadié and Johansen 2010) were related to human capital which focuses on individuals' capacities to be developed through education and training.

It is a known fact that 70% of the Indians are less than 35 years of age. The employment opportunities and entrepreneurship should be enhanced so much that it would make the youth self-supportive and contribute more for the development of the nation. But, it is also necessary that we understand the requisites for more empowered programmes viz., the course syllabus to be revamped with a vision for future, the competency based education for the global job prospects, vocational education and training, entrepreneurship skills development. These factors would in turn increase the productivity and make India competitive.

The vocational subjects and courses to be offered at the secondary and Senior Secondary level classes can be classified in to commerce based, engineering based, health and paramedical based, home science based, hospitality and tourism based, agriculture based, logistics management, library sciences, life insurance, etc. In India National Skills Development Council, Ministry of Human Resource development, Department of School Education and literacy, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Labour and Employment, Directorate General of Employment and Training, Directorate of Technical Education, Private sector and NGOs are the agencies involved in technical and vocational education.

The present system offers vocational education at +2 level, which helps in developing a specific competency or generating self-employment. The vocationalisation of Secondary education scheme provides for the financial assistance to the States/UTs to set up administrative structure, area vocational surveys, preparation of curriculum, textbooks, teacher training programmes, etc.. The 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students have access to around 160 vocational courses offered in about 6,000 schools of the states and union territories of the country. In terms of practical skills acquisition, it is very appropriate to adopt a teaching method that can bring out the manufacturing process and exploration of materials into the classroom situation (Yinusa, 2014).

The advantages of the Vocational Education Training are that the duration of the course is short, it is cost effective, gives hands on experience, there is an immediate labour market outcome as the courses are career oriented. Still the disadvantages are many as the structure is not very flexible and might lead to some add-on costs which makes budgeting very constrained. As there is dearth of institutions and the curriculum is narrow there is a need for catering to the students with more intervention in the vernacular medium of language as sometimes the dropout rate is consciously affecting the continuation of education.

In the present vocational education system there is problem with the high dropout rate of students in secondary education. The employers want employees with good academic skills and not just vocational skills. As the private and industry participation is lacking, the trained teachers are inadequate and the regulations are very rigid. As the vocationalization of education is not in line with industry needs, there is a dearth of opportunities for continuous skill development. There is no clear provision of certifications and degrees for the sector. Challenges faced by ITCs and ITIs are poor quality trainers, lack of flexibility and outdated infrastructure. Teaching methods utilized by teachers in technical and vocational education

programme must also improve in line with the changing needs of the contemporary society (Okoye, 2010). The 16 Stake Holders who need to know about the importance and advantages of Vocational Education Training and Entrepreneurship Skill Development for Nation Building namely Media, Politicians, youth organizations, All India Business Organizations, Chambers of Commerce, SMEs, management Organizations, Economic Ministries of Centre and State, Universities, Colleges, Schools, Management Institutes, Engineering Colleges, Medical Colleges, Banks and Other Financial Institutions, NGOs, Religious organizations, Etc.,

### **3. NEW INITIATIVES WITH REFERENCE TO THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR YOUTH AND WOMEN**

The National Skill Development Mission (2015) is promoting the creation of convergence across the sectors and states in terms of skill training activities. overall objectives of the Mission. The Mission has been developed to create convergence across sectors and States in terms of skill training activities. Key institutional mechanisms for achieving the objectives of the Mission have been divided into three tiers, which will consist of a Governing Council for policy guidance at apex level, a Steering Committee and a Mission Directorate (along with an Executive Committee) as the executive arm of the Mission. Mission Directorate will be supported by three other institutions: National Skill Development Agency (NSDA), National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), and Directorate General of Training (DGT) – all of which will have horizontal linkages with Mission Directorate to facilitate smooth functioning of the national institutional mechanism. Seven sub-missions have been proposed initially to act as building blocks for achieving overall objectives of the Mission. They are: Institutional Training, (ii) Infrastructure, (iii) Convergence, (iv) Trainers, (v) Overseas Employment, (vi) Sustainable Livelihoods, (vii) Leveraging Public Infrastructure. In lieu with the NSDM the following initiatives have been introduced for the Skill development, vocational education and Entrepreneurship:

1. PMKVY - Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) is the Skill Certification Scheme which enables a large number of Indian youth to take up industry-relevant skill training that will help them in securing a better livelihood. Individuals with prior learning experience or skills will also be assessed and certified under Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). Under this Scheme, Training and Assessment fees are completely paid by the Government.
2. SANKALP - Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP) project aims to implement the mandate of the National Skill Development Mission (NSDM), which strengthening institutional mechanisms at both national and state levels, building a pool of quality trainers and assessors, creating convergence among all skill training activities at the state level, establishing robust monitoring and evaluation system for skill training programs, providing access to skill training opportunities to the disadvantaged sections and most importantly supplement the Make in India initiative by catering to the skill requirements in relevant manufacturing sectors. SANKALP is an outcome oriented project supported by World Bank. The project will focus on the overall skilling ecosystem covering both Central (MSDE, NSDA and NSDC) and State agencies, and outcomes will be measured through Disbursement Linked Indicators (DLIs) agreed between MSDE and the Bank.
3. UDAAN is a Special Industry Initiative for Jammu & Kashmir in the nature of partnership between the corporate of India and Ministry of Home Affairs and implemented by National Skill Development Corporation. The programme aims to provide skills training and enhance the employability of unemployed youth of J&K. The Scheme covers graduates, post graduates and three year engineering diploma holders.
4. Standard Training Assessment and Reward (STAR) Scheme - The National Skill Certification and Monetary Reward Scheme, known as STAR (Standard Training Assessment and Reward), NSDC is the designated implementing agency of the scheme and is working through various Sector Skill Councils (SSCs), Training Providers (TPs) and independent Assessment Agencies (AAs).
5. Polytechnic Schemes – Convergence of Central Skill Development Schemes and MSDE with a special onus on the setting of women's polytechnic colleges and hostels
6. NSQF - The National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF) is a competency-based framework that organizes all qualifications according to a series of levels of knowledge, skills and aptitude. These levels, graded from one to ten, are defined in terms of learning outcomes which the learner must possess regardless of whether they are obtained through formal, non-formal or informal learning. NSQF in India was notified on 27th December 2013. All other frameworks, including the NVEQF (National Vocational Educational Qualification Framework) released by the Ministry of HRD, stand superseded by the NSQF.

7. Vocationalization of Education - The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Vocationalisation of Secondary Education of Ministry of HRD, Government of India lists out a crucial role for NSDC and its Sector Skill Councils (SSCs) in implementation of NSQF. The trainings conducted in the scheme are based on the National Occupational Standards set by NSDC through its Sector Skill Councils. The scheme also mandates the SSCs to conduct assessments and certification jointly with the State Board. In order to bridge the industry academia gap – NSDC has developed a unique model to integrate skill based trainings into the academic cycle of the Universities. These are based on National Occupational Standards set by industry through sector skill councils. The job roles offered are designed to be progressive in nature – from Level 5 – level 7 on National Skills Qualification framework.
8. Swadhar – A scheme for women in difficult circumstances (destitute and deserted women, widows, women ex-prisoners, victims of sexual abuse)
9. Special Education Loans for Women by several state governments for pursuing higher education UG/PG./Doctoral/ Post Doctoral in the country and abroad.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Vocational education is a distinct stream in higher secondary education. It was during the period of 1970s to 90s the concept of vocational education was considered seriously to diversify educational opportunities, enhance individual employability and reduce the mismatch between the supply of and demand for a skilled labour force. Vocational programmes provide necessary knowledge and prepare students to work in various occupations, teaching them to be problem solvers and engage in lifelong learning. The progress of a nation completely depends upon the optimum utilization of the resources and manpower. The re-structuring of our educational system is giving scope to re-orient the students on career front and there in foster a new generation of self-reliant individuals.

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