

EMPOWERMENT OF YOUTH THROUGH SKILL DEVELOPMENT - ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT:-

This paper reviews the current state of education, skills development, and employment for Indian youth, and considers the challenges facing India's skills development system. Drawing from the experience of Karnataka, one of India's most industrially developed states, the paper discusses recent initiatives to facilitate young people's transition to the world of work. In India, young people who will soon be entering the labour market, constitute the largest segment of the demographic structure. The majority of young people have limited access to education and training, and most find work in the informal sector. In recent years India has rapidly expanded the capacity of educational institutions and enrolments, but dropout rates remain high, and educational attainment remains low. While India has a well-institutionalized system of vocational training, it has not sufficiently prepared its youth with the skills that today's industries require. Thus, to speed its economic growth and take advantage of its "demographic dividend," the country has recently embarked on drastic policy reforms to accelerate skills development. These reforms have led to important changes, both in the national institutional framework and at the institutional level.

INTRODUCTION:-

Skill development refers to all the efforts to improve the effectiveness and contribution of labour to the overall productivity as well as production, which lead the economy to a higher trajectory. The skill development has been a hot topic in current times in our country. What triggered such focus? Mainly two things as follows: Demographic dividend Expansion of knowledge based economy

The changing demographic profile indicated that India has a unique 20-25 years window of opportunity. This opportunity comes to us because of increased ratio of young and working population, lesser dependency ration due to declining birth rates and improvement in life expectancy. More working people means more savings which, in turn, means more money for investments. As the number of working people grows, it also reduces the dependency ratio, which is the proportion of non-working population to the working. The expansion of the talent based economy worldwide indicated that global economy is witnessing an acute shortage of skilled manpower.

On the basis of an 11th plan recommendation for creation of a comprehensive National Skill Development Mission, a Coordinated Action on Skill Development was envisaged in regime. In 2009, the government launched a National Policy on Skill Development to train 500 million people by 2022 by empowerment all individuals through improved skills, knowledge and nationally and internationally recognized qualifications to gain access to decent employment and nationally and internationally recognized qualifications to gain access to decent employment and ensure India's competitiveness in global market. Despite its projected "demographic dividend" and its recent expansion of formal education at all levels, India suffers from a serious shortage of skilled workers: limited access to education and skills training, high rates of school dropout, and large mismatches in the labour market

PROBLEMS WITH SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES:-

The biggest problem that occurred was of lack of coordination. Government was preoccupied with financing and implementation lost track. The Employment Exchanges, NCVT SCVT etc. were not utilized properly for training and information dissemination. The skill development programmes were implemented by ministries, departments and state governments. For example.

- In 2004-14, 20 different ministries handled 73 different skill development schemes.
- There was not centralized curriculum or certification.
- NSDC was kept under the Finance Ministry. It had hardly succeeded in coordination among various ministries and departments.
- Involvement of Industry and employers in the skill training structures (such as ITIs) is almost nothing. They could not be brought forward to proactively participate in the skill development. They were not brought forward because this would entail larger autonomy to institutions.
- India has a fragmented vocational education system, managed by multiplicity of bodies under the NCVT, DGET and the SCVTs. Lack of coordination among them has resulted in ineffectiveness of any top down approach to skill development. The quality of vocational institutes is also low.
- Funding of vocational education in India is restricted largely to government, where little attention was paid to quality. Once an institution begins to receive funding, subsequent funds are assured regardless of the institution's performance. Moreover, Education being a state subject, the implementation of any vocational education would be in the domain of respective state governments. While the student fees in ITIs/polytechnics go to the State treasuries, the institution itself does nothing to cater to the market requirements.
- For now, far too much of young India learns on the job. It learns well but lacks the stamp of authority, and languishes in low-paid jobs or in the informal sector.

CHALLENGES TO SKILL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA.

The challenges are greater for developing countries like India, which have long suffered from a shortage of skilled labor. But today, developing-country firms and producers have become increasingly involved in the global value chains, requiring them to meet global standards of quality and efficiency. This, in turn, requires higher levels of skills in the workforce. Moreover, many countries today need more skilled workers to compete in attracting foreign direct investment (FDI), as it is a viable strategy for bringing advanced technologies to their domestic industries, expanding their foreign trade, and thereby boosting industrial and economic development; the availability of, and even the stock of, skilled workforce in a country is a key determinant for multinational firms considering investments.

By 2022, India will have the maximum number of working age population in the world. The FICCI-KPMG Global Skills Report has noted that if properly skilled, they can contribute to economic growth. But there are many challenges to skilling in India. Some of them are:

- **Issues in Employers' Buy-In.**

The employer does not distinguish whether an employee has picked up skills on the job or he has acquired them through formal training,

- **Problem in Mobilization.**
Student mobilization to get trained has been a major concern due to the traditional mindset, low willingness to migrate, low salaries at entry level.
- **Problems In Scalability.**
Scaling up aspirations to current jobs as well as getting the right kind of training partners and effective stakeholder management are important.
- **Mismatch between youth aspirations and jobs.**
Finding students to fill the classrooms and getting people to accept new kind of jobs have been difficult,
- **Ensuring Minimum Wages.**
At present, wages are linked with categorization of ‘skilled’, ‘semi-skilled’ or ‘unskilled’, but these have to be aligned with skill levels defined as per National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) and recognition of higher level of skills in terms of minimum wages is noted.
- **What can be done?**
 - With just about 2% of the country’s labour force having formal skill certification, government and industry must create pull factors to attract workers to get vocational training. For this, there is a need to create the macro and micro policies to encourage workers.
 - The government should include a minimum percentage of certified skilled work forces in the tendering process of every manpower intensive project and increase the minimum percentage every year.
 - At a local level, the industry can enforce it by ensuring that ancillary service providers like drivers, housekeeping and security staff have skill certification.
 - Minimum wages need to be re-looked and aligned to the levels defined in the National Skills Qualification Framework.

Education and Skill Development Capacity in India

Type of Institution	Type of Institution	1990/91	2009/10 onwards
Pre-primary schools	primary	15,877	67,822
Primary schools		560,9151,	823,162
Middle/upper schools		151,456	367,745
Secondary		79,803	190,643
Government ITI/ Private ITC	Technical, industrial, arts & crafts schools.	-	7,886
Technical, industrial, arts & crafts schools.		3,693 5,	465
Polytechnic institutes		879	3,292
Arts, science, and commerce colleges.		4,862	14,321

Professional degree colleges (medicine, etc.)	130	2,074
Teachers' training colleges		
Engineering, technology, and architecture .	474	3,357
Other professional colleges (law, management, agriculture, veterinary, etc.)		
Universities	282	2,894
Institutions of national importance	876	1,914
Research institution		
	184	350
	--	41
	--	140

Source: MHRD (2011). Ministry of Labour and Employment (2011)

Recent Development in Skills Development for the Youth:-

Drawing on data collected in several rounds of fieldwork conducted in India, this section discusses recent changes in the policy, institutional frameworks, and practices at national, regional, and institutional levels. Reframing the National System of Skills Development Recently, India has finally become serious about skills development, introducing a series of education and training reforms. Its 11th 5-year Development Plan (2007—2012) focused on skills development as a priority issue for the first time. The prime minister's Independence Day speech of 2006 emphasized the need for a vocational education mission. In his Independence Day speech of 2007 he announced that 1,600 new ITIs and polytechnics, 10,000 new vocational schools and 50,000 new skill development centers would be established to provide access to vocational training for over 10 million students (GOI 2011a). In 2009, India's government announced its first skills development policy and set up a new institutional framework involving close coordination among government, industry, and training institutions to facilitate skills development efforts at the central level. First, it set up the Prime Minister's National Skills Development Council (NSDC) to coordinate various schemes provided by various ministries. The creation of the NCSD in charge of skills development directly under the Prime Minister's Office helped show that the government was seriously committed to promoting skills development and raising awareness about skills development among policymakers, industry leaders, training institutions, and the general public. Also, it has made it easier to coordinate among various line ministries and concerned agencies. This new national-level institutional framework has changed the way TVET is governed in India. Moreover, in 2010, the first national manufacturing policy was issued, with emphasis on skills development as a strategy to strengthen India's manufacturing. After completing their training, the Regional Director of Apprenticeship Training awards the MES trainees a certificate for the skills they have learned. This ensures that their skills are portable and will be recognized by the appropriate industry in India or even abroad⁶ . However, MES is currently offered on a limited scale. Now individuals can have their skills recognized regardless of their educational and employment paths. India is experiencing an acute sense of urgency, given its serious shortage of skilled labor in the face of the potential "demographic dividend," the need to sustain rapid economic growth, and an interest in making its young

skilled workforce “exportable” to global labor markets. Such external support and pressure has helped the Indian government make institutional reforms. Projecting that by 2022, India’s working-age population will reach 700 million, of whom, 500 million will need to be skilled, the government set a national target of skilling 500 million people by then, allocating increased budgets for skills development.

State-level Initiatives: Experience in Karnataka: State-level Initiatives: Experience in Karnataka Reflecting the central government’s growing interest in and commitment to skills development, the various state governments have also recently accelerated their efforts in that direction. The experience of Karnataka, one of the most industrially and educationally advanced states, is of interest. To expand access to skills development for less advantaged social groups, the Karnataka government formulated a well-defined affirmative action program. This scheme tries to improve access to skills development at ITIs for women, disadvantaged groups Skills. Development for Youth in India, Challenges and Opportunities (SC, ST, and OBCs), minorities, the disabled, and economically challenged people. In Karnataka, 50% of students may be selected on the basis of general merit, and the other 50% are reserved (15% for SC; 3% for ST; and 32% for OBCs). One third of the total seats must be reserved for women, and 3% for the physically disabled. Moreover, though general-merit trainees now pay tuition of Rs.1,200 per year, SC/ST trainees are fully reimbursed. These arrangements have improved their access to training at ITIs. Moreover, infrastructure, facilities, and equipment are often outdated and inadequate, seriously affecting the quality of teaching, despite some efforts to modernize and upgrade. In 2012, the Government of Karnataka, one of India’s largest IT hubs, introduced a system of on-line admission throughout the state. As the system allows applicants to choose courses offered at ITIs in any location, this system has improved matching between demand for and supply of training courses in specialized trades.

SUGGESIONS:

- Based on the discussion above, some suggestions for policy may be offered here. First, for India to promote industrial development and achieve sustainable growth, it must increase its investment in education and training for youth. In particular, to move further into a knowledge-based economy and move up the value chain, it is indispensable for India to improve the quality of education at every level.
- Second, the focus of India’s skills development system does not correspond to either the level of skills demanded by industry or the overall levels of education of most young people. Thus, the government must ensure that most young people at least finish lower secondary school (i.e., 10th grade).
- Third, to open training opportunities for youths who have not completed secondary education, it would be helpful to create more courses at ITIs with lower levels of educational requirements.
- Fourth, training for the informal sector needs to be strengthened. Generally, it is difficult to reorient formal training institutions toward the informal sector.

CONCLUSION :-

This paper has examined the opportunities for Indian young people to develop their skills, and the constraints that challenge them. Today, India faces complex and enormous challenges in fostering skills development for youths, for several reasons: the size of the youth population, and the hierarchical and segmented nature of both the labor market and society as a whole. The majority of Indian youth enter the labor market without adequate vocational

skills, leading to unstable, informal, low-wage employment, such as casual labor and various forms of self-employment. In India, the bulk of employment is in However, access to education, training, and employment opportunities is still largely determined by youth's socioeconomic backgrounds, gender, and geographic locations.

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