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Skill Development in India

A Critical Review of National Policy and Initiatives

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Research Cell on Education

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Skill Development in India: A Critical view of National Policy and Initiatives

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1. Introduction

Both skill and knowledge act as a driving force of economic growth and social development of any economy. By 2020, it was projected that the median age in India will be just 28 compared to 37 in China and US, 45 in Western Europe and 49 in Japan. According to Ernst and Young, 64 percent of India's population is expected to be in the age group of 16-29 years by 2026. India has to provide quality education and develop skills of large young population to reap the benefit of this demographic dividend. India is expected to have the largest workforce in the world by 2025. By the same year, world is expected to face a shortage of 56.5 million skilled workers while India is projected to have a surplus of 47 million.

National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) 2013 defines skill as a marketable enterprise however acquired, irrespective of whether marketed or not, or whether the intention is to market or not. Skill development is just not vocational education but includes academic, problem solving and technical skills (Srivastava, 2008; World Bank, 2012; Mehrotra, 2014).

Creation of skilled labour force has been a challenge in many countries where there is a growing demand for a skilled labourforce which has remained unfulfilled (Tushar, 2013). To address this, creation of vocational education has been the prime objective of many national governments. It leads to mass employment, creates avenues for self-employment and local job opportunities and awareness on rural society (Tilak, 2002, Lillis&Hogan, 1983). It becomes equally important to focus on both the supply side and demand side of skill training. Supply side takes into consideration on where the focus of vocational education should be and the demand side concentrates on who should be vocationally trained (Tushar, 2013).

Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2017-18 states that only 1.8 percent of the population received formal training on technical aspects and employment ready skills, around 6 percent received informal training on job skills, self-learning among others. Based on the report of Business Insider, India, 2019, it is observed that out of 1.5 million people who procured skills and jobs under the country's Skill India Mission, only 7.2 million (21%) of the total trainees enrolled for the skill development programmes. In addition, nearly half of the youth that is not trained is not employed. About three in every five skilled women are not employed indicating alarming rate of unemployment in India.

Against this background, the skill development initiatives in India and the efficacy of these initiatives are discussed in the below sections. The skill development initiatives were introduced for the first time in 2009, and then in 2015, in between in 2013 the National

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Skill/Vocational Qualification Framework (NSQF/NVQF) came into existence. It is a known fact that skill is considered as an instrument to improve productivity and address the imbalances that exist in the labour market.

2.2 Vocational Education (VE) in India

Vocational education lays emphasis on occupation and employment and prepares workers for crafts and careers and precise trades at various levels. It is also termed as career and technical education (CTE) or technical and vocational education and training (TVET). The term technical education inculcates expertise in specific techniques and is equipped with practical courses imparting skills and experience linked to jobs in future.

The Report of the Kothari Commission of Education (1966), 'Education and National Development stated that secondary education needs to be vocationalised. This led to establishment of the Industrial Training Institutes (ITI) in India. Vocational training provides full time training through ITIs and part-time training through state technical boards or universities. In 2007, 1600 new industrial training institutes (ITIs) and polytechnics, 10,000 new vocational schools and 50,000 new Skill Development Centres were opened to ensure that annually, over 100 lakh students get vocational training. In 2011-12, there are 9000 ITIs/ITCs which had the capacity of training around 1.2 million students under the MoLE and 1244 polytechnics with a capacity of nearly 295000 students under the Ministry of HRD (Tushar, 2013).

Table 1: Percentage Employed (wage employment/self-employment/joined family business) among the Graduates of ITIs&ITCs in Select States

State	Graduating from ITIs	Graduating from ITCs
AP	41	22.8
Maharashtra	35	35.6
Orissa	16.2	21.3

Source: ILO, 2003

TVET developed human resource through a three-tier system:

- Graduate and post-graduate level through Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), National Institute of Technology (NIT) and Engineering Colleges
- Diploma-level graduates through Polytechnics as technicians and supervisors
- Certificate-level for higher secondary students in the vocational stream and craft people trained in ITIs as well as through formal apprenticeships.

National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT) is the advisory body and is chaired by the Ministry of Labour, members from central and state government departments, employers and workers organisations etc.

However, given the fact that majority of the workforce is placed in the informal employment coupled with low levels of literacy and numeracy, there is a need for a mechanism which would allow the large working force to enter the formal education system. The National Vocational Education Qualification Framework (NVEQF), 2013, launched by All India Council for

Technical Education (AICTE) and Ministry of Human Resources Development (HRD) mainly focused on general education element into VE, and vice versa. It included the vocational education program in schools that offered new career choices to students to make them better prepared for entering the job market.

The Scheme envisaged seven certificate levels with each certificate level consisting of 1000 hours. These 1000 hours are divided for imparting both vocational competency based skill modules and general learning modules. Diploma for vocational education after the certificate level five or leading to a Degree for vocational education after level seven in the university system, subject to their statutory approval, is highlight of the scheme.

The above mentioned framework was implemented in Polytechnics, Engineering Colleges and other colleges in the University systems. The programmes are sector specific and the sectors like Information Technology (IT), Media, Entertainment, Telecommunications, Mobile Communications, Automobile, Construction, Retail, Food Processing, Tourism, Hotels, Jewellery Design and Fashion Design and many other have been identified for implementation. The following are the benefits of this programme:

- This program entailed the student to get equipped both with general education and competency based skill learning without moving into a formal education system or vice-versa. This resulted in providing a complete multi-entry exist system between vocational education, general education and the job market
- AICTE provided the required statutory approvals to any institutions desiring to conduct these programmes from the academic year 2012 throughout the country. The institutions were giving the freedom of choosing a maximum of 500 students per institute in a total of five sectors, which included 100 students per sector
- This programme aimed to train at least 5 million students for vocational degree and diploma every year, so that self-employment opportunities or being meaningfully employed if even one-third of the institutions are approved to conduct these programmes

Critique of Vocational Education in India

Implementation of vocational education is beset with problems like high dropout rate at the secondary level, absence of private and industry participation, vocationalisation successful only in ITIs, not properly equipped with opportunities for continuous skill up gradation. There is a huge gap between demand and supply, as majority (90%) of the jobs in India are skill based and only 5 percent of the youth in India are vocationally trained. Vocational education has not been allocated to the Department of School Education and Literacy under the HRD but only Vocational Guidance is allocated. Development of standards for vocational education was developed by Central Institute of Vocational Education (CIVE), Bhopal, and was not approved by apex authority, National Skills Qualification Committee (NSQC) that is responsible for setting the standards. The schools which provide vocational training are not equipped with proper infrastructure, trainers who provide training are recruited on contractual basis and industry is not involved in the training programmes.

According to Skill Development Mission, the volume in the VET programme is 3.1 million students per year and the government has set a target of up-skilling 500 million people by 2022 (Mehrotra, 2014). This set target is unrealistic and not backed by any empirical evidence (Mehrotra, Gandhi, Sahoo, 2013). In addition, International Labour Organisation impact evaluation study of the ITIs and ITCs indicates that the labour market outcomes in Orissa, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh are not encouraging.

Further the report by World Bank (2008a) states that more than 60 percent of all graduates remained unemployed even three years after the completion of the course; training institutes are not in a position to impart skills that are useful for the informal sector. These institutes face various challenges like quality and financing of the system, mismatch between demand and supply factors and between labour market needs and vocational courses, ineffective funding model. The report concludes that there is a prerequisite for major improvements in diverse areas before expanding the VET system and making the system more approachable to the requirement of the labour market. Agarwal, 2012 observes that in the age group 15-29 years at the secondary level, rate of unemployment is high (11%) for VET holders, however, it is lower than that for the general secondary graduates. The study also states that the average daily wages are higher in case of VET holders both for regular and casual workers.

Skill Development Mission

Skill development policies in India are incremental rather than institutional or transformational. By only concentrating on skilled work force creation and not concentrating on demand side constraints is an attempt to correct macro policy distortions through micro interventions. This would lead to overcrowding and bumping out of low skilled workers but result in large pool of unemployed skilled as well as unskilled workers (Singh 2003).

In order to address the above mentioned issues, Skill Development Mission with an outlay of Rs. 228 billion was initiated during the Eleventh Five Year Plan. The major emphasis of this programme is to create employment opportunities, teaching skills for self-employment more specifically in the unorganised sectors and rural areas. Out of the seventeen departments that impart vocational education training programmes, Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE) and the Ministry of Human Resource Development are the foremost ministries. All the other ministries carry out skill development programmes despite not being their expertise (MSDE, 2016).

National Skill Development Policy

Boston Consulting Group, 2007 predicted that India would have a surplus labor of 47 million by 2020 while there would be a shortage of 56 million workforce (BCG, 2007). Persisting skill gaps in Indian labour market pose a serious concern for both policy makers and industrialists (Mehrotra, 2012, Chenoy, 2012). Only 4.69 percent of the total Indian population has undergone formal skill training, gap between demand and supply will continue to widen.

To address this concern, National Policy on Skill Development was first formulated in 2009 with the aim of skilling 500 million by 2022. National Skill Development Council (NSDC) was established in the same year with an aim to facilitate private sector participation through innovative funding models. The major objectives of 2009 National Skill Development Policy are:

- To create opportunities for youth, women and disadvantaged groups to acquire skills throughout their life
- Promote commitment by all stakeholders to own skill development initiatives
- Develop a highly skilled labour force and entrepreneurs to suit the current needs
- Flexible delivery mechanisms
- Enable effective coordination between ministries

The policy further focuses on institution based, skill development including Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), Industrial Training Centres (ITCs), vocational schools, polytechnic and professional colleges. The policy further concentrated on building effective convergence between school education and various skill development efforts of government. It also focused on availability of public institutions above the high school level after class hours for skill development by the private sector without impinging the normal working hours. For this arrangement, required regulations would be brought in by the local management authority of the specific educational institution.

Later on there was a policy on provision of soft or life skills likes basic literacy, numeracy along with vocational skills which is an essential component of curricula. This policy laid emphasis on provision of vocational training for women by creating supporting infrastructure like women hostels, transport, financial support like scholarships and loans. Training materials were also provided. Along with women, school drop outs, child labour, out of school youth were given alternative education coupled with skill development opportunities to bring them into mainstream. This included multi-skilling, multi entry and exit, linkages to skill up gradation opportunities in the future. Formal educational requirements in accessing training were reviewed at regular intervals in order to facilitate easy access. To enhance the employability in the informal sector, skill development included components on literacy, basic education and soft skills.

Institutional arrangements consisted of National Skill Development Coordination Board, National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), National Council for Vocational Training. According to the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), skills can be classified into four levels based on the degree and duration of the training required.

- Skill Level 1 (semi-skilled) refers to skills that can be acquired through short-term courses, focused interventions and on-the-job training
- Skill Level 2 (skilled) refers to skills that are specific to the occupation and can be acquired through technical or vocational training
- Skill Level 3 (highly skilled) refers to skills involved in highly technical or commercial level operations and can be acquired through degrees, diplomas and post graduate education.

- Skill Level 4 (highly skilled with specialisation) refers to the skills with high specialisation involving research and design that can be acquired through doctorate or many years of work experience in a specific sector or area

The National Skills Development Agency was created in June 2013 to work with different state agencies to enable and upscale different skilling efforts in the states.

National Policy on Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (NSDE)

Skills-based education, in the existing perspective, replicates the neoliberal values through which educational programmes are gradually being organized and has been vindicated through arguments in the context of greater choice, flexibility and transparency beneficial to both students and employers. But, there is a large volume of literature that criticized how the above mentioned neo-liberal skilling shines over operational boundaries (Ainley and Corbett, 1994; Jackson & Jordan, 1999; Warhurst and Thompson, 1998) like jobless growth experienced in India.

Skills-based education, in the current context, reflects the neoliberal values through which educational programs are increasingly being structured and it has been justified through arguments regarding greater choice, flexibility and transparency afforded to students and employers.

In 2015, National Policy on Skill Development and Entrepreneurship came into existence with the main objective of skilling the target with speed, efficiency and sustainability. The policy linked skill development to employability with distinctive attention on encouraging innovation through entrepreneurship abilities so as to achieve inclusive growth in the country.

Critique of National Skill Development Policy

It becomes essential to make an exceptionally important reflection about those who are presently in the workforce that is skilled coupled with those who are furthermore vital to be skilled. However, there are two main complications with the prevailing workforce that is already supposed to be skilled. First, the poor quality of those who have general education up to secondary level or those with vocational training leads to the question of employability. Second issue focuses on the employers who complain about the mismatch between the skills that are presently accessible in the educated or trained labour force on the one hand, and the type of skills that are really in demand from employers, on the other.

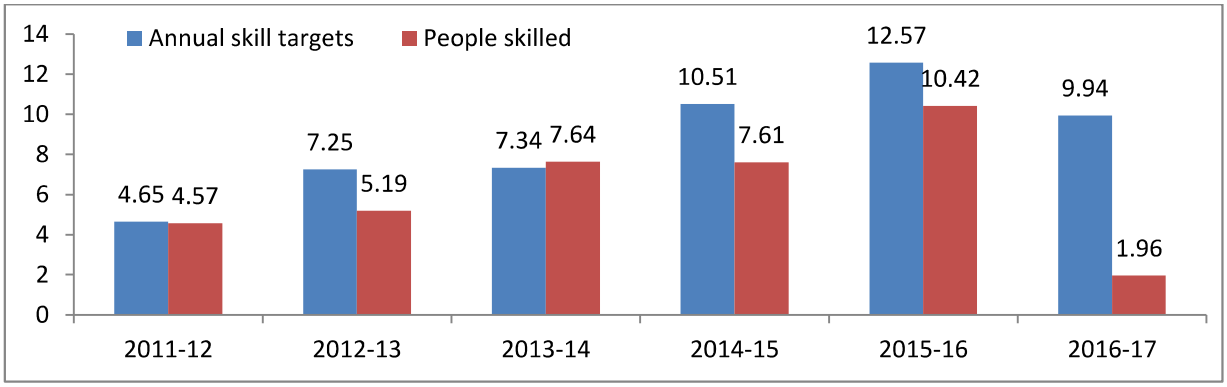
This supply-demand disparity and the quality problem have to be addressed with a very severe quantifiable increase in volume of those to be accomplished or vocationally trained. Henceforward, whereas the quantitative challenge might seem to be reduced from 500 million to 291 million by 2022, the quality-related challenge remains substantial (Mehrotra, Gandhi, Sahoo, 2013).

A major critique of the 2009 policy was that the goal of skilling 500 million people was fixed without any basis and this is the main issue with the 2015 policy as well. A report by the Committee for Rationalisation and Optimisation of the functioning of the Sector Skill Councils in 2017 stated that India's goal of skilling 402 million people is way too large, unnecessary and unattainable. It argued that like 2009, the 2015 target was set without any thoughtful consideration (Mehrotra, Gandhi, Sahoo, 2013)

Institute of Applied Manpower Research (IAMR), 2013 criticised the origin of target by government of skilling millions of people by 2020, minus an integrated definition of skill. For a country that supplements 12 million people to its workforce every year, less than 4 per cent of this population has received any formal training. Therefore, with the ambiguities in the policy and the mode it has been executed, the unemployment rate will only increase.

The 2015 National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship issued consequently projected the need to skill 402 million people over the next seven years, to train 104 million fresh entrants and re-skill/up-skill the existing 298 million farm and non-farm sector workforce. However, the annual targets set by various ministries and departments could not be met, for any but one during 2011-12 through 2016-17 (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Skill targets and achievements across ministries (in million)



*Source: National Skill Development Agency; Annual Report 2016-17. Note: *Figures up to December 2016; Achievement data for various ministries is not available for 2016-17*

The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship's estimate of the incremental human resource requirement during 2017-2022 is 103.4 million across 24 high priority sectors, as per the MSDE's annual report 2016-17.

Table 2: Incremental Human Resource Requirement Across 24 Sectors

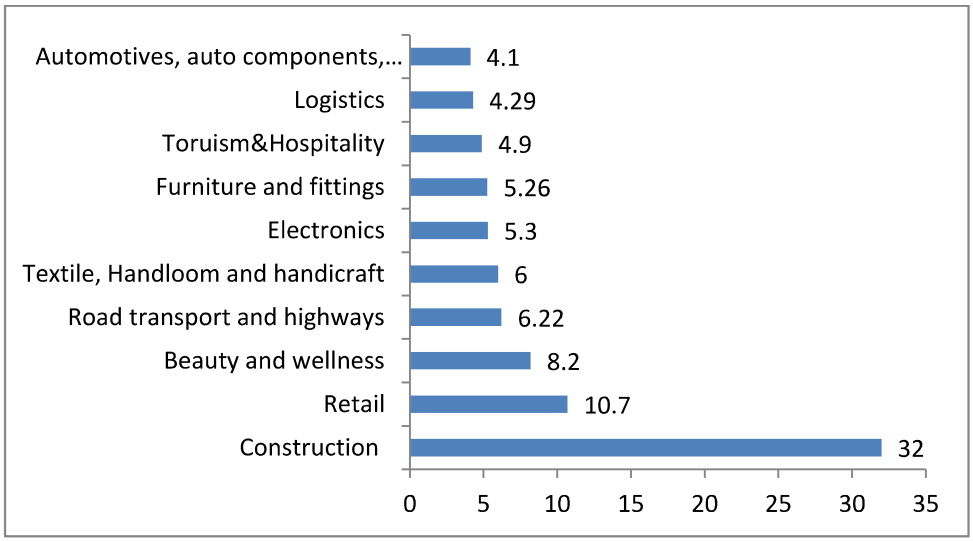
Sr. No	Sector	Projected Employment		Incremental Human Resource Requirement
		2017	2022	(2017-2022)
1	Agriculture	229	215.5	-13.5
2	Building Construction & Real Estate	60.4	91	30.6
3	Retail	45.3	56	10.7
4	Logistics, Transportation & Warehousing	23	31.2	8.2
5	Textile & Clothing	18.3	25	6.7
6	Education & Skill Development	14.8	18.1	3.3
7	Handloom & Handicraft	14.1	18.8	4.7
8	Auto & Auto Components	12.8	15	2.2

9	Construction Material & Building Hardware	9.7	12.4	2.7
10	Private Security Services	8.9	12	3.1
11	Food Processing	8.8	11.6	2.8
12	Tourism, Hospitality & Travel	9.7	14.6	4.9
13	Domestic Help	7.8	11.1	3.3
14	Gems & Jewellery	6.1	9.4	3.3
15	Electronics & IT Hardware	6.2	9.6	3.4
16	Beauty and Wellness	7.4	15.6	8.2
17	Furniture & Furnishing	6.5	12.2	5.7
18	Healthcare	4.6	7.4	2.8
19	Leather & Leather Goods	4.4	7.1	2.7
20	IT & ITeS	3.8	5.3	1.5
21	Banking, Financial Services & Insurance	3.2	4.4	1.2
22	Telecommunication	2.9	5.7	2.8
23	Pharmaceuticals	2.6	4	1.4
24	Media and Entertainment	0.7	1.3	0.6
	Total	510.8	614.2	103.4

Source: Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Annual Report 2016-17

Out of the top 10 sectors requiring skill training, construction stands first followed by Retail and Beauty and Wellness (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Sectors requiring skill training (2017-22) (million)



Source: Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Annual Report 2016-17

According to the study conducted by Sector Skill Council (The Committee for Rationalisation and Optimisation of the Functioning of the Sector Skill Councils), the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship achieved 58 percent of its total skills training target in 2015-16, while the remaining 19 ministries together met 42 percent. The report further concluded that significant ministries accountable for substantial employment generation such as human resources development, textiles, commerce and industry, and tourism have not been allotted the work of skill development. Some ministries have been allocated role of employment generation implying that they are not bound to take up skill development activities. The report pointed out abundant inadequacies in India's vocational education and training systems (i) absence of nation-wide Vocational Education and Training standards (ii) lack of an integrated on-site apprenticeship training (iii) inadequate industry interface (iv) insufficient financing of the Vocational Education and Training system (v) scarce training capacity along with poor

quality outcomes and shortage of qualified trainers. It found that many ministries imparting skills training are lacking infrastructure facilities and qualified trainers, and leading to insufficient training.

The National Policy on Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, 2015 laid out Skill India Mission, and envisaged the creation of Sector Skill Councils (SSCs) by NSDC. Priority sectors have been identified based on the skill gap analysis. The SSCs have been authorized with the following functions:

- Preparation of a catalogue of types of skills, range and depth of skills to enable individuals to choose from them
- Development of a sector skill development plan and maintenance of skill inventory
- Determination of skills/competency standards and qualifications and getting them notified as per NSQF
- Standardization of affiliation, accreditation, examination and certification process in accordance with NSQF as determined by NSQC
- Skill-based assessment and certification for Qualification Pack /National Occupation Standards aligned training programmes.
- Participation in the setting up of affiliation, accreditation, examination and certification norms for their respective sectors
- Plan and enable the implementation of Training of Trainers in collaboration with NSDC and states
- Promotion of academies of excellence
- Paying particular attention to the skilling needs marginalised groups, differently-abled and minority groups
- Ensuring that the persons trained and skilled in agreement with the norms laid down are guaranteed of employment at decent wages

The critique against SSCs which are responsible for developing and conducting programmes as well as assessing trainees, is that they themselves were established randomly. One of the criteria for establishing SSCs, that a sector has one million existing workforce was itself not firmly followed. There are about 40 Sector Skill Councils covering high-growth sectors such as automotives, retail, healthcare, leather and food processing, and informal sectors such as beauty and wellness, security, domestic work and plumbing. SSCs proposed huge physical targets of training and certifying institutions and people (both trainee and trainers) on a random basis without articulating sectoral labour market evidence and sector specific skill development plans.

Table 3: Growing skill gap (the expected shortfall in industries in 2022)

S.No	Industry	Gap (million)
1	Infrastructure	103
2	Auto and auto components	35
3	Building and construction	33
4	Textile and clothing	26.2
5	Transport and logistics	17.7
6	Organised retail	17.3
7	Real estate service	14
8	Health care	12.7

9	Food processing	9.3
10	Education and skill development services	5.8

Source: NSDC

Large physical targets of training and certifying trainees and trainers on an illogical basis was the major lacuna of the Sector Skill Councils. Further, there was no proper formulation of a sectoral labour market information system and sectoral skill development plan. Fund provision to Sector Skill Councils was based on accomplishment of these targets. Representatives of many Sector Skill Councils were of the opinion that these high targets were allocated arbitrarily by the NSDC. As a consequence, the quality of training, assessment and certification suffered even as targets were shown to have been achieved.

STAR and PMKVY

The National Skill Certification and Monetary Reward Scheme or STAR was launched in 2013 by the National Skills Development Corporation. NSDC further launched the Prime Minister Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) in July 2015 with an outlay of Rs 1500 crore. The objective of STAR and PMKVY 1.0 Scheme was to encourage skill development of youth by providing monetary rewards on successful completion of training. Of the 1.8 million people trained under PMKVY during 2015-16, 12.4 percent received employment; 8.5 percent of the 1.4 million people trained under STAR were provided with job opportunities.

The Prime Minister Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) was articulated by the MSDE and was implemented by the NSDC. The major aim of this programme is to impart industry relevant training to around 24 lakh youth so as to enable them to join the workforce with the required skills. As on May 13, 2019, 2013029 candidates were enrolled in Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) under PMKVY and 1405592 candidates have already passed the RPL training. Under short term training (STT) programme, out of the 2128764 trained candidates nearly 54 percent have been employed by 13 May, 2019. Under the Special Project component of PMKVY, out of the total 100525 enrolled candidates, 78547 are trained and nearly 43 percent of these trained candidates are employed (MDSE, 2020).

In 2017, a government-appointed committee led by Sharda Prasad concluded that the targets under the programme were highly ambitious and funds spent on the programme were not scrutinised properly. Though the mandate of PMKVY was to provide training free of cost, only 16 percent of the youth who were trained were funded by the government while the remaining youth had to bear the cost of training. In case of training period too more than half of the youth received training for more than a year while nearly 30 percent underwent training for more than two years. In March 2018, under PMKVY, only 15 per cent of the trained people got a job and only 24 per cent of trained people started their own business.

National Skill Development Agency (NSDA) reported that the training provided by STAR has shortcomings ranging from operational inefficiency to poor training outcomes. The study also stated that there is no equity and inclusiveness in this programme. Further, the study reported that out of the 72 percent candidates who appeared for assessment, only 24 percent obtained their results.

Despite STAR mandate that the publication of results must be in two working days after the completion of assessment, 67 percent of the candidates had to wait alteast for 20 days. Out of those who obtained their results, certificates were awarded only to 24 percent of the candidates and a little less than 18 percent received monetary awards, in spite of the fact that
Majority of the candidates had bank accounts and were having Aadhaar numbers.

Conclusions

According to the India Skills Report 2015, of all the students applying for jobs in the labour market, a meager 1/3rd of the number was equipped with appropriate skills that are in tune with the requirement of the employers. Despite the manpower being large, they are not skilled enough to get a job.

On an average, 8 million new job seekers enter the job market every year. In 2017, only 5.5 million jobs had been created, only 1.8 percent of the population reported receiving formal vocational/technical training while 5.6 percent reported receiving informal vocational training and on the job training in 2017-18. Nearly 40 percent of the youth (15-29 years) who received formal technical training were not employed or looking for employment opportunities. Among youth, who did not undergo formal training, 62 percent were out of the labour force. About one third of the trained young men and a little more than a third of the young women were not provided with employment opportunities. There was a huge difference in the training received by men and women and there was a clear segregation of fields marked for men and women. For instance, fields of agriculture & food processing, telecom, media & mass communication were dominated by men while the fields of beauty & wellness, hospitality and healthcare were dominated by women.

The skill development system in India needs to catch up with the vocational skilling both for young people and also the workers engaged in the informal economy. Along with imparting of skills, there should also be upgrading of skills so as to have inclusiveness in the economy. Added to this, in India it is observed there is a shortfall in cognitive/foundational skills, non-cognitive/transversal or vocational skills (Mehrotra, 2014). High quality skills are only one supply side factor, whether young people join the formal workforce in the orgnaised sector of industry and services. On the other hand, on the demand side there are many aspects like the growth pattern and the labour market institutions that influence the decision by employers whether to give formal employment with social insurance (Mehrotra, 2014).

The training infrastructure and educational infrastructure is inadequate to train the large number of youth seeking employment opportunities. There is also a lack of trained and highly skilled trainers. Train the Trainer is another challenge as the concerned person has to update his knowledge based on market requirements and should be in a position to offer both theoretical and practical learning experiences. The enrolment of the students for vocational education and training has become an exceptionally challenging chore as the insight of the people linked with the skill development is very traditional. Added to this, some of the students may not be in a position to pay the fee and also are conscious of the schemes run by the government. This

results in low flexibility towards such programs. Majority of the companies impart own skill training programmes and do not take into consideration the previous skill training programmes undergone by the youth. Though the Skill Development also focuses on the Public Private Partnership Model, it needs a lot of effort from both in development of skills.

Huge capital investments are required to establish the skill development model and the challenges related to inaccessibility of infrastructure, sluggish dispensation of bank loans often discourages the entrepreneurs. In rural region, it becomes all the more difficult as the people are not aware of the credit facility and the different schemes supported by the government. In urban areas high operational cost of training centres discourages entrepreneurs to come forward.

The Vocational Training Centres in India is focusing on developing technical skills only while according to employers, there is a need for people being acquainted with behavioural skills. The employers also focus on skills like Domain Expertise, Communication, a culturally fit person, values on Honesty and Integrity, Adaptability, focused on Result, Interpersonal skill and Learning attitude. Skills like communication, honesty and integrity, learning attitude and interpersonal skills are not covered as an essential part of the skill development.

Courses conducted on skill development are not comparable across different training institutes as there is no standardisation of course curriculum or training delivery systems. Further, there is a lack of appropriate career guidance to the students due to the insufficient placement statistics and weak industry connections of the training institutes. The institutes are frequently set up in rural areas but the placements to the trainees are in urban areas. Lack of information on the nature and location of the job leads to ignorant skill attainment choices.

Way forward

There is an imperative need to offer quality training to the students in order to improve their employability. In addition to providing grants to training institutes, NSDC should also develop some methods to assess the performance of such institutes, like, providing incentives to the training institutes based on their performance. In order to assess the skill training programmes, employers' surveys need to be undertaken to find the precise skill requirement. This would enable designing course structures of the training programs resulting in standardized course curriculum and developing appropriate training delivery systems. Students should be made conscious of the prevailing training institutes, courses offered and career opportunities after course completion. This will enable the students to select the accurate institute and also course based on their interests and demand in the market.

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