



A STUDY ON EMPLOYABILITY IN INDIA- RECENT INITIATIVES, ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT

This comprehensive paper deals with the efforts made recent trends in and critical issues and challenges pertaining to skill development in India. This paper argues that articulation of a national policy on skill development is a matter of priority. A task of skill development has many challenges. This paper further argues that the skill and knowledge are the driving forces of economic growth and social development for any country. Countries with higher and better levels of skills adjust more effectively to the challenges and opportunities of World of Work. This paper critically evaluates the concepts graduation, and employability, that have also been the subject of much recent debate. This paper also critically evaluates the claim made that developing these skills will enable students to become more effective learners and they are seen to be crucial to enhanced study skills, the personal development planning process and consequently to higher levels of attainment. This paper further argues that the students of higher education are not getting desired practical benefits of Education. This paper suggests various modes, modalities, methods of Industry and Academia Interaction for better results in the endeavor of skills development for sustainable and inclusive growth and development of India's Economy.

KEYWORDS : Policy on Education Skills Gaps and needs of Industries, Skill Development, UGC, Universities colleges, International Collaborations R&D etc.

1. INTRODUCTION

The real wealth of a nation is its people. And the purpose of development is to create the enabling environment for people to enjoy long healthy and creative lives. This simple but powerful truth is too often forgotten in the pursuit of material and financial wealth. It is now universally acknowledged that the goal of plan efforts is Human development. It provides both mirror, reflecting present patterns of global imbalance And telescope showing the more positive further possible. The central message of the human development report is clear that there is no automatic link between economic growth and human development, but when these links are forged with policy and determination they can be mutually reinforcing and growth will effectively and rapidly improve development. It is also seems difficult to substantially control the entry of unmotivated students in the higher educational systems, unless alternative and functional avenues of employment and carrier orient nation are provided to them. Growth of population will assert its own logic. The availability of adequate funds to cope up with this future expansion is likely to be much more difficult than what a today, unless something revolutionary and uncongenial is done about it.

The prime minister of India Hon'able shri Narendra modi in his Independence Day address (15 August 2014), stressed on the need to make in India and quote "Millions and Millions of Indian youth should go for acquisition of skills, which could contribute towards making India a modern country. Whenever they go to any country in the world. Their skills must appreciated. I also want to create a pool of young people who are able to create jobs and the ones who are not capable of creating jobs and do not have opportunities, they must in a position to face their counter p-arts in any corner of the world while keeping their heads high by virtue of their hard work and their dexterity of hands and win the hearts of people around the wo0rld through their skills. We want to go for the capacity building of such young people. My brother and sister having taken a resolve to enhance the skill development at a highly rapid place I want to Accomplish".

2. PRESENT STATE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

Higher education occupies an important in the educational process of a country. In Independent India higher education is considered as the important tool for nation development. Education is the process of the perfection of the humankind.

Education is for the comprehension of life enlightenment of the people. Higher education is the main instrument for development and change. It has important of preparing leaders for different walks of life, intellectual, political, cultural, scientific and technological etc. The intellectual dynamism resourceful and economic prosperity of a country are reflected in quality of higher education.

Higher education in India is being put to test now. In the changed environment of the day system of higher education faces major initiatives. They are need to cope with inadequacy of resources and (b) need to respond t the demand for providing competent manpower and high quality R&D support. In this backdrop the system of higher education should be prepared to respond adequately to the emerging challenges. Over the last five decades there has been phenomenal to respond adequately to the emerging challenges.

3. THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

The Constitution of a country is the basic document, which may be regarded as the source of legislation. The Preamble of the Constitution of India contains aims and objectives of our national policy. It is a guideline and a solemn pledge given to the nation. The Constitution has set forth the goals of our educational institutions. Its Preamble has reflected the national ethos, values and aspirations and enjoined the objectives of national policy. It has given the directions in which the nation would go ahead and achieve its aims.

Article 41 of the Constitution of India relating to the Directive Principles of State Policy reads, thus, 41. The State shall, within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, and in other cases of underserved want."

4. UNPLANNED EXPANSION AND IMPLICATIONS THEREOF

Looking back, during the last six decades, the Indian higher education system had undergone many important changes; the most significant being its unprecedented growth and its consequent transformation from an elite system to a mass system. Since Independence until 2015, i.e. in the last 68 years, India has developed a very large system of education and has created a vast body of highly skilled academicians equipped with scientific and technological capabilities, robust humanist, philosophical thought and creativity. India is the largest democracy in the World and India has the largest educational system as well. Indian higher education system is one of the largest in the world.

5. REORIENTATION AND VOCATIONALISATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The last three decades have witnessed cataclysmic changes in the socio-economic and cultural scenario everywhere. Globalization of the Indian economy and the enthusiastically acclaimed entry of multinationals have opened up new vistas of economic development in India. In the new syndrome of industrial liberalization and globalization, issues of utilitarian value of education, restriction of public funds, employment prospect of graduates and private contributions towards education have insistently conditioned the concepts, thoughts and views on Word of Studies (WoS) and Word of Work (WoW). It is well accepted that these two worlds (WoS and WoW) are self-contained and their functions differ in the details of social need, educational objectives, economics, valuation, etc.

6. SKILLS DEVELOPMENT: INITIATIVES OF GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

The Government of India (GoI) had formulated National Skill Development Policy in 2009. The policy was to be reviewed every five years. In 2014, the GoI reviewed the National Skill Development Policy. The GoI has set up a new Ministry for the gigantic task of Development of Skills & Entrepreneurship in India. The National Skill Development Policy has provided a robust framework of skill development and focus on outcome based approach in terms of providing meaningful employment in the form of both wage and self-employment. The GoI has emphasized that all people who are capable of reading and writing should essentially acquire soft skills to upgrade them. Soft skills are going to become an integral part of skills development capsule. The people who will have to be trained have to be identified. The Government of India is currently in the process of having a 'relook' at the 2009 National Policy on Skill Development which envisaged skilling of 50 crore Indians by 2022, a virtually impossible task. A skill gap exists between the industry requirements and the workforce available. To fill these gaps, the GoI is implementing about 73 skill development schemes, which vary across sectors through 22 GOI Ministries/Department. During the last two years around 127.25 lakh persons have been trained, (Business Standard, 2014d).

7. RECENT INITIATIVES IN SKILL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

Skills and knowledge are the driving forces of economic growth and social development for any country. For the economy to grow at 8% to 9%, it is required that the secondary and tertiary sectors grow at 10% to 11%, assuming agriculture grows at 4%. In such a scenario, it is obvious that a large portion of the workforce would migrate from the primary sector (agriculture) to the secondary and tertiary sectors. However, the skill sets that are required in the manufacturing and service sectors are quite different from those in the agriculture sector. This implies that there is/will be a large skill gap when such a migration occurs, as evidenced by a shrinking employment in the agriculture sector. This scenario necessitates skill development in the workforce. India is expected to be home to a skilled workforce of 500 million by 2022. About 12 million persons are expected to join the workforce every year. This talent pool needs to be adequately skilled. There are various sectors which are expected to drive the growth of the economy as well as play a significant role in employment, (PC, GoI, 2007, FICCI, 2010).

The employment in the manufacturing and services sector would be in excess of 250 million persons. While the school education sector is about 227 million in enrolment, the combined enrolment in higher education and vocational training is about 15.3 million. By limiting to this to the technically and vocationally qualified and skilled workforce, primarily comprising of ITI/ITC (1 million), BE (1.7 million), Polytechnics (0.7 million), we can observe that the current pool of skilled talent is around 3.4 million. This does not include other streams such as other forms of higher education and research and is limited to those who can fit in as workers, supervisors, entry to mid-level managers in large portions of the manufacturing and service sector, either organized or unorganized. It is thus estimated that the required capacity for training the new workforce as well as portion of the existing workforce would be about 15 million annually. Various steps are being taken towards meeting the above objectives, such as, the formulation of the National Skills Development Policy, delivery of Modular Employable Schemes, up-gradation of existing institutions through World Bank and Government of India funding, as well as up-gradation of training institutes under Public

Private Partnership mode, setting up of the National Skill Development Corporation, and the plan to establish 50,000 Skill Development Centers. Apart from these, several ministries/departments and state governments are engaged in skill development initiatives, (FICCI, 2010).

8. OBJECTIVES: OBJECTIVES OF NATIONAL POLICY ON SKILL DEVELOPMENT:

The objectives of the national policy on skill development are to:

- Create opportunities for all to acquire skills throughout life, and especially for youth, women and disadvantaged groups.
- Promote commitment by all stakeholders to own skill development initiatives.
- Develop a high-quality skilled workforce/entrepreneur relevant to current and emerging employment market needs.
- Enable the establishment of flexible delivery mechanisms that respond to the characteristics of a wide range of needs of
- stakeholders. Enable effective coordination between different ministries, the Centre and the States and public and private providers,(MoL, GoI, 2014).

9. INITIATIVES OF MINISTRY OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP:

- Increasing capacity & capability of existing system to ensure equitable access to all.
- Promoting lifelong learning, maintaining quality and relevance, according to changing requirement particularly of emerging knowledge economy.
- Creating effective convergence between school education, various skill development efforts of government and between government and Private Sector initiative.
- Capacity building of institutions for planning, quality assurance and involvement of stakeholders.

10. RECENT INITIATIVES IN SKILL DEVELOPMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

Education plays an important role in the all-round development of human being as well as the nation, (UGC, 2014a; UGC 2014c). It is a unique investment in the present as well as for the future. Every country develops its own system of education to express and promote its unique socio-cultural-economic identity besides meeting the challenges of time to leverage the existing potential opportunities. India, at present, is recognized as one of the youngest nations in the world with over 50% of the population under the age of 30 years. It is estimated that by about 2025, India will have 25% of the world's total workforce. In order to harness the full demographic dividend, India needs an educational system, which is of high quality, affordable, flexible and relevant to the individuals, economy and to the society as a whole. Presently, the country faces a demand – supply mismatch, as the economy needs more 'skilled' workforce and also the managers and entrepreneurs than created annually. In fact, majority of the contemporary institutions of higher learning remain almost disconnected with the requirements of the workplace, (UGC, 2014b; UGC 2014c).

11. SKILL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES OF UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION

The University Grants Commission (UGC) of Ministry of Human Resource Development of Government of India (MHRD) has been encouraging, since 1993-94, implementation of skill-based and career-oriented courses in colleges and universities through several new schemes. A scheme called 'Vocationalisation of First Degree Education' was launched in 1993-94. This scheme was an effort for tackling the problems of unemployables due to the lack of skills amongst the students of conventional courses, namely, B.A., B.Com. and B.Sc. In the afore-stated dismal situation, vocational education at the first-degree level promised to be an effective remedy in as much as it imparted that type of education to our graduate as would render them more employable than they would otherwise be. Thus viewed, the UGC's scheme became quite laudable in the 90's. The introduction of vocational courses in 1993-94 was a very large and

complex proposition. It was career education and had to have a working approach with inculcation of marketable skills and preparation for further advanced career training. However, to evaluate the same critically, it was often asked by the critics: Did the nature and status of UGC package envisage the working approach with inculcation of marketable skills and preparation for further advanced career training? It was argued that this scheme had the approach of integrating the WoS and WoW as a part of its instructional programme; it offered extensive career guidance with curriculum linked to occupational requirements; it offered a great diversity of programmes and is a scheme of career education. However, despite all its theoretical contents and ancillary advantages on one hand and critical evaluation on the other hand, this UGC's scheme had a very restricted area of introduction and operation, practical on the job training and introductory base. Perhaps it was being introduced with too many reservations about its outcome. So it was only the time, which could have determined its impact on our otherwise docile and inane post-secondary system in the colleges where expansion was the democratic law with least concern for quality and relevance, (Bajaj KK, 1998), (Gandhi, 2013b).

12. CHALLENGES IN SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

India's workforce, the second largest in the world after China, needs to be trained across four levels, from the 'White Collar' workers to the 'Rust Collar' workers, linking them to job opportunities and market realities.

The skills challenge becomes acute for India considering that the country has a large portion of its population below 25 years of age. This young population can be transformed into a productive workforce giving the Indian Economy a 'Demographic Dividend'. Currently a major proportion of this population is not productively engaged in economic activities due to a 'skills v/s jobs requirement' mismatch.

The skills v/s jobs mismatch often leads to economically inactive working age group people. This not only affects the economy, it also has serious consequences for the society. Social unrest such as insurgency, red belt has been witnessed in several areas of India should be heeded with a measure of urgency, (FICCI, 2014).

13. OPPORTUNITIES AND STRATEGIES IN SKILL DEVELOPMENT

The world (both developed and developing economies) is experiencing an ever-widening gap between the demand and supply of skilled labour. The world's population is growing old. By 2050, the world population of people above 60 years will hit the 1.3 billion mark. This trend will lead to the widening of the demand-supply gap, especially in the developed nations like America, Germany and France. On the other hand, India is emerging with one of the youngest populations in the world comprising of a highly mobile, English speaking population. India will have a 2 billion sized English-speaking work force by the end of 2020. Training such, a workforce will imply that India can become the major exporter in the services sector as well as an exporter of manpower itself. It is estimated that by 2022, India will face a demand of 500 million skilled workers, (FICCI, 2014).

India could look at preparing the workforce for global opportunities so that it can utilize its premium position as the human resource reservoir. Given the dynamic labour markets it also important the workforce learns and readies itself as quickly as possible.

14. CONCLUSION

Since time immemorial, education has been considered a very powerful instrument of social, economic and cultural development. If education is to achieve this supreme end, it should be so planned and designed as to enable every individual in a society to develop his or her capacity and aptitude to the maximum extent. All our developmental programmes and schemes would be doomed to frustration if our human resources are not fully developed and utilized. India is steadily shifting to a fast tract of economic and industrial development, which leads to mounting demands on education and calls for a highly diversified human resource.

Educational process is to be linked with production and employment. Re-orientation of the educational programme should be undertaken in such a manner that it helps to produce self-reliant and self-dependent citizens. India has recognized the need for fundamental educational reforms & restructuring of various courses. However, there is ill planned restructuring and sudden introduction of Vocational Courses at first-degree stage. Basic problems emanating from economic growth prevent of technology and the effect of globalization cannot be countered by restructuring and vocational education alone.

In a democracy the worth and dignity of every individual is to be recognized. The endowed potentialities of every individual must be discovered and developed fully to enable him or her to become a potential worker and a creative citizen contributing to the allround progress of the society of which he is a member. No country can achieve full economic growth if it fails to make the most of all the talents of its citizens. The progress of a country largely depends on the fullest utilization of its manpower. Hence, it is high time to restructure and reorient the entire higher educational system, however, in a planned manner.

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