

SKILL INDIA-2022: STATUS AND CHALLENGES AHEAD!

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Unemployment, unrest among youth, non-availability of suitable jobs for developing India is major threat on the one hand and scarcity of trained youth needed for developing economy on the other hand is a hard reality of present time in India. To resolve and address this issue at national level and targeting the development of skills for 500 million Indians upto 2022 is not only a matter of national urgency but also an astounding in its scale. It is because of the fact that today globally India is lagging far behind in imparting skill training. Situation become worse when only 10% of the total workforce in India is receiving some kind of skill training (2% with formal training and 8% with informal training) and more than 80% new entrants into the workforce without any opportunity for skill training. Another hard fact, like other top countries the employers of India are facing difficulty in filling up the jobs. For India, the difficulty to fill up the jobs is 48%, which is above the global standard of 34% in 2012. The lack of available applicants, shortage of hard skills and shortage of suitable employability, including soft skills, are some of the key reasons responsible for not-finding suitable candidates for the available jobs. To meet out this urgency, the skill development of the working population has got top which resulted in National Policy on Skills (2009). The objective of the policy is to expand on outreach, equity and access of education and training, which it has aimed to fulfil by establishing several industrial training institutes (ITIs), vocational schools, technical schools, polytechnics and professional colleges to facilitate adult leaning, apprenticeships, sectorspecific skill development, e-learning, training for self- employment and other forms of training. The government therefore provides holistic sustenance through all its initiatives in the form of necessary financial support, infrastructure support and policy support. This paper is a humble attempt to provide a status report on skill development from youth perspective by addressing some specific questions like; what are youth's goals, aspiration, challenges? Why does they seek any form of education? What capacities they are developing after completing their education? How this present system of higher education making them most-saleable in the market? The role of policies in shaping the skills of youth is of paramount significance and how present policies are addressing these issues and practical challenges along with practical solutions would be the main concerns.

Keywords: India-2022, Unemployment, Skill Development, Higher Education, Youth.

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Need for Skills

Skills and knowledge are the driving forces of any economy whether developed or developing and pivotal for economic growth and social development for any country. The required skills for any economy is not free from hurdles. With better level of skills any country can mitigate these challenges effectively and contribute to the world of work. As

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India, moves progressively towards becoming a 'knowledge economy' it becomes increasingly important that the country should focus on advancement of skills and these skills have to be relevant to the emerging skill India. In order to achieve the twin targets of economic growth and inclusive development, India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has to grow consistently at 8% to 9% per annum. This requires significant progress in several areas, including infrastructure development, agricultural growth coupled with productivity improvements, financial sector growth, a healthy business environment, ably supported by a skilled workforce. As per NSSO published in Economic Survey 2009-10, the agriculture sector accounts for about 20% of the economy. The secondary and tertiary sectors account for about 25% and 55% respectively. 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. Out of the current workforce of about 450 million, only about 8%-9% are engaged in the organised/formal sector. In India, only about 5% of the workforce has marketable skills, as compared to 50% to 60% in other countries. The magnitude of the challenge is further evident from the fact that about 12 million persons are expected to join the workforce every year.

Low labor-cost and a rich talent pool are distinct advantages available to India, clearly powering its global competiveness as a knowledge-based society. *Education and training* are both strategic necessities, which will deliver employment-enhancing skills, in turn increasing productivity and accelerating the future economic growth of the country. To further strengthen India's position of being a dominant service economy, it is imperative for the government to invest in skilling and training the available human capital, especially to provide for the knowledge intensive sectors.

Prime Minister, in his Independence Day speech spoke of his Skill India Mission to promote holistic development, showing very intent on placing renewed emphasis on skill development in the services and manufacturing sectors. Skill development plays a-vital role in improving labour market outcomes and economic growth. World leaders understand the emergent need of skilled development. At the G20 Summit in Brisbane, ILO Director-General Guy Ryder urged G20 leaders to focus on policies that drive growth through more and better jobs.

Indian pattern of employment and productivity reveals important mismatches. Ninety-three per cent of the workforce in India is in informal employment, which suffers from subscale enterprises and overall

low productivity. Fifty-eight per cent of the workforce is in agricultural employment that contributes only 15per cent of GDP. It has become a big challenge ahead as it is estimated that only 4.69per cent (NSS,2012) of the total workforce in India has undergone formal skill training as compared to 68per cent in UK, 75 per cent in Germany, 52 per cent in USA, 80 per cent in Japan and 96 per cent in South Korea (UNESCO, 2012).

Initiative of the Government-Mission India: 2022

In recent times with there being a renewed push on existing schemes by the central and state governments, skill development has become a key policy issue, and more importantly, the National Skill Development Mission taking on the ambitious target of skilling and upskilling 500 million people by 2022 in India. To create skill environment, the government announced a National Policy on Skill Development in March 2009 with the framework within which it wanted skills-related training to be conducted and this policy is further succeeded by National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship 2015.Finance Minister in his 2015 Budget speech announced the creation of separate *Ministry for Skill Development* with fund allocation to the tune of Rs 1, 543 crore for the financial year 2015-16 that aims to provide an umbrella framework to all skilling activities being carried out within the country, to align them to common standards and link the skilling with demand centers as highlighted in the table below:

| Aspiration and Advocacy | Global Partnerships |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Capacity | • Outreach |
| Quality | • ICT Enablement |
| • Synergy | • Trainers and Assessors |
| Mobilization and Engagement | • Inclusivity |

Aim and Objectives of the Policy

"To create an ecosystem of empowerment by Skilling on a large Scale at Speed with high Standards so as to ensure Sustainable livelihoods for all citizens and to place India in the comity of front ranking entrepreneurial and innovative nations. **Mission:** Govt. has decided to launch and implement this mission in mission mode, with following aims:

- Create a demand for skilling across the country;
- Correct and align the skilling with required competencies;
- Connect the supply of skilled human resources with sectoral demands;
- Certify and assess in alignment with global and national standards; and
- Catalyse an eco-system wherein opportunity based and innovative entrepreneurship germinates, sustains and grows leading to creation of a more dynamic entrepreneurial economy.

Objectives:

The core objective of the Policy is to empower the individual, by enabling her/him to realize their full potential through a process of lifelong learning (enabling her/him to accumulate competencies throughout their lifetime as time and circumstances permit) through instruments such as valid certifications, accumulation of credits, etc they will be allowed and facilitated to grow into more important and rewarding roles. As they grow, the organization she happens to be working for, and the society and the nation of which she is a part, will also benefit from her productivity and growth. This will involve:

- i. Make quality vocational training aspirational for youth through the simultaneous shift in the mind-set by making skill training a matter of choice, and in the mind-set of employers that skilled manpower will lead to increased productivity and will involve a payment of premium.
- ii. Focus on an outcome-based approach towards quality skilling that results in increased employability of individuals to avail job opportunities.
- iii. Increase the capacity and quality of training infrastructure and trainers to ensure equitable and easy access for every citizen.
- Address the human resource needs by aligning supply and composition of skilled workers with the requirements of the industry and the country's strategic priorities including flagship programmes.
- v. Establish an IT based information system for aggregating demand and supply of skills to help align efforts towards bridging the existing and expected skill gaps.

- vi. Promote National standards in the skilling space through active involvement of the employers in creating curriculum, providing standards and paying skill premiums to workers.
- vii. Operationalize a well-defined quality assurance framework aligned with global standards to facilitate mobility of labour.
- viii. Leverage modern technology to ensure scale, access and outreach, in addition to ease of delivering content and monitoring results.
- ix. Recognise the value of on-the-job training, by making apprenticeships in actual work environments an integral part of all skill development trainings.
- x. Ensure that the skilling needs of the socially and geographically disadvantaged and marginalized groups (like the SCs, STs, OBCs, minorities, women and differently abled persons) are appropriately taken care of.
- xi. Promote commitment and ownership of all stakeholders towards skill development and create an effective coordination mechanism.

Create an ecosystem for entrepreneurship development that would include:

- i. Encourage both self-employment and entrepreneurship as a viable career option through advocacy.
- ii. Enhance support for entrepreneurs through mentorship, networks, provision of information, ease of doing business
- iii. Integrate entrepreneurship education in the formal education system
- iv. Foster innovation-driven and social entrepreneurship to address the needs of the population at the 'bottom of the pyramid'
- v. Facilitate access to finance through credit and market linkages
- vi. Broaden the base of entrepreneurial supply by meeting specific needs of both socially and geographically disadvantaged sections of the society.

Status, Aspiration and Advocacy:

The annual skill imparting capacity in the country was estimated at around 7 million in 2014. In the current landscape capacity is being created by private sector training, private and public organizations, industry in house training, government and private Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), Advanced Training Institutes (ATIs), and in schools, colleges and polytechnics. There is a need for upgrading all existing skill imparting institutions and add new ones. There is urgent need of inculcating skills among Indian children and youth and Government of India is working in that direction. Government of India is offering training courses for school drop-outs through a network of more than 5000 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) located all over the country. The duration of the training varies from trade to trade and time period ranges from 6 months to 3 years. About 0.75 million training seats are available at the ITIs throughout the country. Over 46,000 seats are exclusively created for the women. Reservation provision for SC/STs, Disabled, OBCs, quotas for Ex-servicemen, etc. has been created has also been made as per Govt. directives received from time to time. Apart from these, at least 25 per cent of all existing institutions of higher education would also offer add-on career oriented courses with specialized skills at an appropriate National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF) level within the next five years.

Quality of skill Development and it's Linkage with the Emerging Market:

In the era of globalized economy, quality of training must be in line of global standards for sustaining the international competitiveness on one hand, as well as improving an individual access to decent employment on the other. 'One Nation One Standard' should be the new mantra to ensure that national standards and quality for skilling are globally aligned and Indian youth can aspire towards securing local, national and international job opportunities. There is need to enhance the quality of trainer by adopting recruiting the experienced and, trained as craft persons and there must be special efforts to improve the gender balance among trainers. Following parameters have been identified for improving quality:

| Parameters: | | |
|--|--|--|
| Quality assurance framework embedded in NSQF | | |
| Marker relevant training programms | | |
| Recognition of prior learning | | |
| Curriculum alignment | | |
| National certification framework | | |
| Employability skills | | |
| Placements | | |

Ministry is working as an umbrella for all skill development programs of various ministries, and has been coordinating skill development efforts in the country, notifying common norms for rationalization of Central Government Schemes on Skill Development. Though, different ministries will be free to frame schemes at their discretion to meet local/sectoral needs while adhering to common norms. Government will also set up a *National Labour Market Information System (LMIS)* which will provide a socio-economic database and will provide:

| Supply side skilled labour force statistics | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| Demand of skilled/unskilled labour | | | |
| Marker trends like wage structures and distribution, economic growth trends across | | | |
| sectors, focus areas for skilled manpower, occupational shortages etc. | | | |

Global Partnerships:

Through global partnership, we leverage best practices from the world and enrich our domestic training programs to improve the quality of trainees and trainees. India enjoys the demographic advantage and with the prospect of global shortage of skills as the world population ages, means that country could be supplying skills to the world. As per US Census Bureau estimate, by 2022, countries like USA, UK and China will fall short of skilled labour by 17 million, 2 million and 10 million respectively while India will have surplus skilled workforce of almost 47 million in the age group of 19-59 years.

Outreach of Skilled Manpower with ICT:

Skill Development Initiative needs considerable amount of expansion of capacity and innovative delivery approaches, and Public Private Partnerships (PPP), KVKs and LMIS will play a pivotal role in identifying local employment opportunities and providing adequate training and post-training support according to needs of local areas such as migration support for skilled workers along with their certified skill levels that can help some of them to move to organized sector. Under the Apprenticeship Training Scheme, around 23,800 establishments are covered and imparting training to 2.58 lakh apprentices and there is an urgent need to revisit the existing Apprentices Act, 1961 to meet the desired target. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has great potential in connecting people and increasing efficiency. If the skilling process is amalgamated with the tools of ICT, then it can offer twin benefits that are on one side capacity building and capacity enhancing and on the other, leveraging in monitoring of Government schemes related to skill development. Entire ecosystem- from the Government agencies to the training provider and to the last man that is trainee can be connected. Financial transactions can be made possible at click of button and benefits distributed without delay. With the asset of approximately 900 million cell phone users in the country, of which 120 million use smartphones. The Government aims to promote matching online/mobile platform for connecting supply and demand of skilled workers. Private sector will be encouraged to develop mobile applications (apps) for aggregating informal sector workers such as plumbers, carpenters etc. for household services, through innovative commercial models.

Challenges to Skill Development in India By 2022:

Govt. is trying a lot to make this mission successful and three government institutions namely National Skill Development Agency (NSDA), National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and Directorate General of Training (DGT) are working with national mission of skill development to facilitate smooth functioning of the national institutional mechanism, but still following challenges are on the way to it's successful completion. 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:

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.

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.

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-ski lied' 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?

To achieve the massive target of skilling in next couple of years, it is of utmost importance to have quality trainers who are capable of training people in several fields. Similarly, quality assessors in sufficient numbers are also required to ensure consistent outcomes of assessment and certification process. Setting up of Centers of Excellence under the proposed National Skills Universities would also ensure continuous supply of quality trainers in each sector. Special training programs would be developed for training of trainers meant for overseas employment, including language training in collaboration with the concerned country. This could be clubbed together with exchange programs, industry visits and simulated training. MSDE is also planning to provide future livelihood opportunities to the retired government officials specially in defense sector where 50,000 armed forces retire every year with retired

personnels' age ranging from of 35-45. This labour force is a valuable resource and can be utilized as trainer and assessors.

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.

Special focuses on Marginal Segments:

Government can keep a watch on the implementation of reservation policies and gender composition to promote skill development initiatives that will ensure inclusivity irrespective of gender, location, caste, sector etc. One of the key objectives is to safeguard the skilling needs of marginalized groups viz. Women, SCs, STs, OBCs, minorities, and differently able persons, as well as those living in difficult geographical pockets. Special attention needs to be given to youth residing in North Eastern states, J&K, and the hilly forested areas of central and eastern India regions to address their needs for employment and employability. The government must promote the institutes for entrepreneurship such as Rural Development & Self-employment Training Institutes (RUDSETI).

The need for skill development / vocational training in various trades, ranging from traditional to modern skills, to absorb the drop-outs. Given the majority engagement of ST workers in agro-based activities, there is a need to find innovative solutions to make agriculture sustainable activity. Ministry of Tribal Affair, Government of India launched the VanbandhuKalyanYojana (VKY), on 28th October 2014, mainly focuses on bridging infrastructural gaps and gap in human development indices between Schedule tribes and other social groups. Through VKY, Vocational education and formal technical education are promoted in tribal area and at least 50% of such activities to be oriented for women, such as computer training, office management, hospitality, paramedics, Ayurveda and tribal medicines & medical practices, modern skills etc. through the digital India program, government encourage tribal people to be a part for their skill up gradation and vocational

trainings. Through convergence from concerned Ministries / Departments, it is proposed to set up vocational training centre in 206 EMRS and 4477 Ashram Schools, and skill development of 5 Lakh beneficiaries per year.

Scheduled Castes:

The National Scheduled Castes Finance & Development Corporation (NSFDC) was set with the objective of financing income generating activities of SC beneficiaries living below Double the Poverty Line limits (presently Annual Family Income Rs.81,000/- for Rural Areas and Rs.1,03,000/- for Urban Areas). NSFDC assist the target group by way of loans, Skill Training, Entrepreneurship Development Programs and Providing Marketing Support through State Channelizing Agencies (SCAs), RRBs, Public Sector Bank & Other Institutions.

NSFDC has an important role to play in skilling people from schedule caste and with consorted efforts along with government, non-government players and industry, there can be remarkable contribution even from the most marginalized. There exists Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry which promotes businesses by the people belonging to Scheduled Caste. Being the people engaged in arts and crafts, they are valuable source of traditional knowledge which can be exchanged, assimilated and propagated for maximized returns.

Targeted Areas: The marginalized Groups:

Nobel laureate Peter Diamond's work on search costs in labour markets is very important in the context of emerging economies like India where matching labour demand and supply become difficult because most employment is in the informal sector, largely in agriculture, and the labour force has low levels of education and skills. Diamond points out that just as measured unemployment does not fully reflect the availability of workers to be hired, so too the measured level of vacancies does not fully reflect the availability of jobs (Diamond 2011). The challenges for matching are broad and deep in India.

Thus, we can say that the informal sector, school drop outs youths and adult and seasonal labour force in agriculture are the main target groups for skill development mission. The informal sector in India consists of workers in micro enterprises, unpaid family members, casual labouroers, home based workers, migrant laborers, school drop outs, domestic workers, street vendors, etc. with limited professional skill, low income and low productivity. As per the 66thround of NSS survey (2009-10), approximately 92.8 per cent of the total work force in 2009-10 constituted of informal workers. To strengthen the informal sector government is committed for developing new money-making job skills through education

and training. Thus, it is important to train this group to increase their productivity and contribute sustainable economic growth.

School dropout is a global phenomenon of education system among the developing countries. India is also facing the same problem across all the socio-economic class of population. Schedule caste (SC) and schedule tribes (ST) are vulnerable section of the societies, drop out among SC and ST are above the national average. Table 1.1, depict the tribals' dropout rates which are still very high at 35.6 percent in Classes I to V; 55 per cent in Classes I to VIII; and 70.9 per cent in Classes I to X in 2010-11 and significantly higher than the all India figures.

Table Showing Comparative Dropouts Rates

| Class | Boys | | Girls | | Total | | |
|------------------|------|------|-------|------|-------|------|------|
| | ST | All | ST | All | ST | All | Gap |
| Class I- V | 37.2 | 33.7 | 33.9 | 25.1 | 35.6 | 27.0 | 8.6 |
| Class I- VIII | 54.7 | 40.3 | 55.4 | 41.0 | 55.0 | 40.6 | 14.4 |
| Class I- X | 70.6 | 50.4 | 71.3 | 47.9 | 70.9 | 49.3 | 21.6 |

Source: Statistics of School Education 2010-2011

As depicted in table, it is worth of observing the alarming drop out and the question is being addressed under Mission India: 2022 and govt. is trying to cope the situation, other it would be very difficult to cope it in coming years. In order to reduce wastage and improve the efficiency of education system, the educational planners need to understand and identify the social groups that are more susceptible to dropout and the reasons for their dropping out. Within the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) framework, education and training policies play a crucial role in reducing poverty and ensuring an equitable distribution of economic resources.

| Parameter | Number of | Percentage | |
|---|-------------|------------|--|
| | People | | |
| Overall | | | |
| Population of India (in age group15–59 years) | 711,109,338 | 100.00 | |
| Potential learners (in age group15–59 years) | 363,546,589 | 51.12 | |
| Classification by age group | | | |
| Learners in the age group (15–18 years) | 39,876,844 | 10.96 | |
| Learners in the age group (19–23 years) | 87,208,589 | 23.98 | |
| Learners in the age group (24–59 years) | 236,461,156 | 65.04 | |
| No. of SC/ST learners | | | |
| Learners in the age group (15–18 years) | 10,275,360 | 25.76 | |
| Learners in the age group (19–23 years) | 22,562,933 | 25.87 | |
| Learners in the age group (24–59 years) | 69,313,759 | 29.31 | |

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Source: Ministry of HRD, 2009–10

About one-quarter of all children of primary school age live in urban areas and the remaining three-quarters in rural areas (Hueber, 2007). Absence of skill development courses and lack of employability with present school education has been observed among the poor people quite often. It becomes the ultimate goal of the government to strengthen education system to reduce the school dropout and revisit the school syllabus to make them job oriented by introducing short term, market oriented, demand-driven programs suited to the characteristics and circumstances of the target group.

| Recommendations: | Players | Target | What it means for | |
|--|---------------------------|--|--|--|
| Recommendation | responsible | learner | the learner? | |
| Provide voucher-based support to the learner to pursue skill training | Government | XII th class pass or below XII th | Continued financial support to facilitate the learner's employability skills | |
| CollaboratewithNGOs/panchayatstoinform women and theirfamilies regarding VET | Government and private | Women | Increase women participation in VET, in turn increasing economic status of women | |
| Introduce regional career and counselling windows | Government | All groups of learners | Informed decision making at the learner level | |
| Provide learner-centric training | Government and private | All groups of learners | Customized training programs to meet long-term aspirational needs of the learner | |

The need of the hour is to synergize the efforts and resources to provide a feasible platform for vocational education and skill development. The ideal way forward will be to seek partnerships that will strengthen the process of quality and inclusive education. More than 50% of the total population in the age group of 15–59 years are potential learners and require some type of skill training. The need of the hour is to synergize the efforts and resources to provide a feasible platform for vocational education and skill development.

Conclusion

Government is committed for the skill enhancement program through 'Skill India Mission' in order to provide better quality of skill training and reduction in supply demand mismatch by 2022 to achieve the target of skilled work force. MSDE gives umbrella for programs run by different ministries for the promotion of skill development; through the Digital India people of hill area and marginalized section of society are connected to upgrade their skill. Success of this mission depends on three main factors:

1) Inclusion of marginalized groups as discussed above;

- Inculcating marketable skills. By marketing skills it not only means emergent domestic market but also the high standards of global market for better contribution to national economy.
- 3) Creating channels for connecting market and human resource. That includes building on strengths and weeding out weaknesses. These channels would be helpful in imparting market viable skilling, employability of skilled worker (Human Resource) development of marketable products and services and marketing produced products and services.

The channels need to be responsive which can foster tailor-made solutions for changing employment market for maximum returns. This can only happen at behest of government agencies and private players where other actors such as civil society, NGOs, independent institutes and even independent actors are connected.

Market has its own dynamics and imparted skills must cater to that. Now that market is dynamic and keeps evolving, it is important to keep pace with times, this can happen only through proper policy vision. Government on India seems to be committed in that direction and is showing its commitment through various policies and programs.

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