

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY

Dr.Ritu Tiwari

Head, Department of Economics
Dayanand Arya Kanya Mahavidyalaya,
Nagpur

Abstract: *In the 12th Five-Year Plan (2012–2017) estimated that only a very small percentage of the Indian workforce in the age group of 19–24 (less than 5%) received formal vocational education Whereas in countries such as the USA the number is 52%, in Germany 75%, and South Korea it is as high as 96%. These numbers only underline the urgency of the need to hasten the spread of vocational education in India.*

However, as the labor market becomes more specialized and economies demand higher levels of skill, governments and businesses are increasingly investing in the future of vocational education through publicly funded training organizations and subsidized apprenticeship or traineeship initiatives for businesses. At the post-secondary level vocational education is typically provided by an institute of technology, or by a local community college.

Vocational education will be integrated in the educational offerings of all secondary schools in a phased manner over the next decade. Towards this, secondary schools will also collaborate with ITIs, polytechnics, local industry, etc. Skill labs will also be set up and created in the schools in a hub and spoke model which will allow other schools to use the facility. The objective of the paper is to analyze role of NEP and vocational training program to develop Skills anticipation is a deliberate and systematic process through which labour market force identify and prepare to meet future skills needs, thus helping to avoid potential gaps between skills demand and supply.

Key words: *NEP, youth, Vocational Education, Labour market, skill*

Introduction:

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, anticipated for some structural transformational refinement in the whole Indian education system. It is about the education system that highlighted on experiential learning along with a focus on 21st-century skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, etc. The policy expects that by the year 2020, at least 50% of learners through the school and higher education system shall have exposure to vocational education. Vocation and career are used exchangeability. Vocational education might be assorted as teaching procedural knowledge. This may be contrasted with declarative knowledge, as used in education in a usually broader scientific field, which might concentrate

on theory and abstract conceptual knowledge, characteristic of tertiary education. Vocational education is perceived to be inferior to mainstream education and meant largely for students who are unable to cope with the latter. This is a perception that affects the choices students make. It is a serious concern that can only be dealt with by a complete re-imagining of how vocational education is offered to students in the future.

According to ILO 2021 Report many countries are encountering a persistent gap between the skills needed in the labour market and those offered by the workforce. Skills anticipation is a deliberate and systematic process through which labour market force identify and prepare to meet future skills needs, thus helping to avoid potential gaps between skills demand and supply. A skills anticipation tactic enables training providers, young people, policy-makers, employers and workers to make better educational and training choices, and through institutional mechanisms and information resources leads to improved use of skills and human capital development.

As we all aware that in the end of the twentieth century, vocational education attentive on specific sectors such as for example, an automobile mechanic or welder, and was therefore related with the activities of lower social classes. As a consequence, it attracted a level of stigma. Vocational education is related to the age-old apprenticeship system of learning. This paper try to understand the efforts and provision of NEP for filling the gap between demand and supply of skilled labour.

Scope and Objective of the study:

The objective of the paper is to analyses the various provisions of vocational education in NEP and its viability to make youth eligible to avail their livelihood while learning and might be able to produce constructive value addition to the country. This will help to develop forward looking approaches to adapt skills development to the labour market demand and to respond to industrial, sectoral, trade, technology and environmental policies and challenges.

One of the very important reasons for the small numbers of students receiving vocational education is the fact that vocational education has been focused largely on Grades 11–12 and on dropouts in Grade 8 and upwards. Moreover, students passing out from Grades 11–12 with vocational subjects often did not have well-defined future planning to continue with their chosen vocations in higher education. The admission criteria for general higher education were also not designed to provide openings to students who had vocational education qualifications, leaving them at a disadvantage relative to their compatriots from ‘mainstream’ or ‘academic’ education. This led to a complete lack of vertical mobility for students from the vocational education stream, an issue that has only been addressed recently through the announcement of the National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF) in 2013.

The main objective of this paper is:

- To understand the role of NEP in skill development among the youth.
- To evaluate importance of NEP in vocational education perspective.

Methodology:

This paper is a theoretical research paper which is based on secondary data of Govt. of India, Ministry of Higher Education. For gathering various types of information, books, journals as well as websites have been explored by the researcher, which has been mentioned in references section.

Major research work reviewed:

After much deliberation and an expansive consultation process, the National Education Policy (NEP) of India has finally seen the light of day, providing India with an education policy after 34 years. India has one of the youngest populations in the world and an asset called the “demographic dividend,” which has been extensively studied by researchers and academics alike. In a free market economy like India, albeit with some socialist characteristics, education is largely seen as an investment for economic growth, especially vocational education.

Vocational education and skills in NEP 2020:

Vision for balanced education – Socially meaningful and aspiration “No hard separations between arts and sciences, between curricular and extra-curricular activities, between vocational and academic streams, etc. in order to eliminate harmful hierarchies among, and silos between different areas of learning.”

Re-imagination of Vocational Education and sensitization for building competencies “Vocational education is perceived to be inferior to mainstream education and meant largely for students who are unable to cope with the latter. This is a perception that affects the choices students make. It is a serious concern that can only be dealt with by a complete re-imagination of how vocational education is offered to students in the future.”

Inclusive, Interoperable, interdisciplinary and outcome-based education

“The fourth vertical of HECI will be the General Education Council (GEC), which will frame expected learning outcomes for higher education programs, also referred to as ‘graduate attributes’. A National Higher Education Qualification Framework (NHEQF) will be formulated by the GEC and it shall be in sync with the National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF) to ease the integration of vocational education into higher education.”

For 21-century capacity building “A holistic and multidisciplinary education will help develop well-rounded individuals that possess critical 21st-century capacities in fields across the arts, humanities, languages, sciences, social sciences, and professional, technical, and vocational fields; an ethic of social engagement; soft skills, such as communication, discussion and debate; and rigorous specialization in a chosen field or fields.”

School internships for skill appreciation and craft-centric learning “Every student will take a fun course, during Grades 6-8, that gives a survey and hands-on experience of a

sampling of important vocational crafts, such as carpentry, electric work, metalwork, gardening, pottery making, etc., as decided by States and local communities and as mapped by local skilling needs.”

Discussion:

This policy aims to overcome the social status hierarchy associated with vocational education and requires integration of vocational education programmes into mainstream education in all education institutions in a phased manner. Beginning with vocational exposure at early ages in middle and secondary school, quality vocational education will be integrated smoothly into higher education. It will ensure that each and every child learns at least one vocation and is exposed to several more. This would lead to promote the dignity of labour and importance of various vocations involving /Indian arts and artisanship.

By 2025, at least 50% of learners through the school and higher education system shall have exposure to vocational education, for which a clear action plan with targets and timelines will be developed. This is in alignment with Sustainable Development Goal 4.4 and will help to realize the full potential of India’s demographic dividend. The number of students in vocational education will be considered while arriving at the GER targets. The development of vocational capacities will go hand-in-hand with the development of ‘academic’ or other capacities. Vocational education will be integrated in the educational offerings of all secondary schools in a phased manner over the next decade. Towards this, secondary schools will also collaborate with ITIs, polytechnics, local industry, etc. Skill labs will also be set up and created in the schools in a hub and spoke model which will allow other schools to use the facility. Higher education institutions will offer vocational education either on their own or in partnership with industry and NGOs.

Vocational education will be integrated into all school and higher education institutions in a phased manner over the next decade. Focus areas for vocational education will be chosen based on skills gap analysis and mapping of local opportunities. Individual institutions that are early adopters must innovate to find models and practices that work and then share these with other institutions through mechanisms set up by NCIVE, so as to help extend the reach of vocational education.

Indian standards will be aligned with the International Standard Classification of Occupations maintained by the International Labour Organization. This Framework will provide the basis for Recognition of Prior Learning. Through this, dropouts from the formal system will be reintegrated by aligning their practical experience with the relevant level of the Framework. The credit-based Framework will also facilitate mobility across ‘general’ and vocational education.

The policy says students should get hands-on experience in important vocational crafts, such as carpentry, electric work, metal work, gardening or pottery making, as decided by states and local communities and as mapped by local skilling needs. A practice-based

curriculum for Grades 6-8 will be appropriately designed by the National Council of Educational Research and Training.

Conclusion:

VET is popularly embedded in the Human Capital Theory. This emphasizes investment in human capital for economic growth, and often blames individuals and education institutions for the skill shortages in the economy. Hence, the social problems of unemployment and under-employment in a country are attributed to these shortages. This is also the prevailing discourse in the skills community — that companies cannot find enough skilled labour from Indian education institutions. Technical support provided by this area of work includes assistance in building systems and institutions to anticipate skill needs and minimize skills mismatches. It also develops, adapts and applies knowledge and tools on skills anticipation and improved labour market outcomes of learning. On the other hand, it is also necessary to provide the provision of horizontal credit transfer at each corresponding level, so as to help a candidate hailing from outside the formal system integrate into the qualifications system. However, NEP aim at including higher level skills and the government is facilitate the same by introducing ways to acknowledge them.

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