

Importance of Vocationalization of Education and Skill Development in India

Gunjesh Kumar

Research Scholar, Deptt. of Education, B.R.A. Bihar University, Muzaffarpur

ABSTRACT

The Vocational Education, Training & Skill Development sector is rapidly gaining significance in the present scenario. The Central Govt. has realized the direct correlation of skill based education and gainful employment for the youth of our country. The rising unemployment amongst youth educated in conventional streams has further accentuated the importance of Vocational Education and Skill Development. The present scenario around this sector is quite dismal and there is scope for significant reforms. During the course of over 3-4 years of in-depth research, the Researcher has been able to identify problems with the governance, regulation, administration, planning, policy, standards and other aspects related to the Vocational Education, Training and Skill Development sector. The study has given for each problem area with clear direction for implementation. Vocational Education, Training & Skill Development is a huge sector which is gaining tremendous importance in recent times. However not much research has happened in the past in India aspects related to this sector.

Keywords: Vocational, Training, Technologies, Learning, Opportunities, Quality, Teachers, Employment

Introduction

Vocational Education, Training and Skill Development (VETSD) means all forms and levels of the educational process involving, in addition to general knowledge and academic skills, the study of technologies and related sciences, the acquisition of practical skills, know-how, attitudes and understanding relating to occupations in the various sectors of economic and social life.

Vocational Education, Training and Skill Development is further understood to be:-

- a. An means of preparing for occupational fields and for effective participation in the world of work;
- b. An aspect of lifelong learning and a preparation for responsible citizenship;
- c. An instrument for promoting environmentally sound sustainable development.

Vocational Education and Training is an important element of nation's education initiative. For Vocational Education to play its part effectively in the changing global environment, it is imperative to redefine the objectives of vocational education and training and to make it flexible, contemporary, relevant, inclusive and creative.

It is important to recognize that with more than

35% of citizens aged below 15 years, 700 million young people below 35 years and population growing at 1.8% per annum, India is expected to become the global powerhouse of human resource by 2025. In the emerging era of knowledge-driven society, declining workforce and aging population in developed countries, India with its large young population has the opportunity to position itself as a quality source of skilled manpower for the world. The large population can reap rich dividend for the country through a focus on providing quality vocational education and training.

Changing Objectives of Vocational Education, Training & Skill Development

The immense scientific, technological and socio-economic development has led to a paradigm shift in the basic objectives of imparting education. While factors such as increasing competition, economic slowdown, poverty, illiteracy, population imbalances and political instability are adding pressures on the policy makers as well as common citizens, the importance of education and especially 'relevant education' is gaining significance as a viable solution to combat these issues in our society. In this present era, Vocational Education, Training & Skill Development thus has to become an integral part of

our general education system.

There is also a necessity for establishing new relationships between educations, the world of work and the community as a whole. In this context, Vocational Education, Training & Skill Development should exist as part of a system of lifelong learning adapted to the needs of the local community and to worldwide technological development. Different learning pathways – academic and vocational – that integrate formal and non-formal learning, notably learning in the workplace, and that offer vertical mobility from vocational to academic learning

National Skill Development Policy, 2009 (NSD)

The National Skill Development Policy has an ambitious plan to skill about 12-15 million youth each year. As part of this policy and to ensure execution, the Government of India has setup the National Skill Development Mission (under the aegis of the Hon.ble Prime minister of India), the Coordination Committee and the National Skill Development Corporation. The Policy amongst other things proposes to establish a National Vocational Education Qualification Framework.

Objectives of the Paper:

The objectives of this thesis are:-

1. To study the present system of regulation of the Vocational Education, Training and Skill Development sector in our country with special reference to Bihar and identify problems there in.
2. To investigate and review the present systems and methods available to students for obtaining vocational, industrial training and technical training certificates and skills in India and Bihar and identify problems therein.
3. To study the prevalent policies laid down by the Government for continuous training and development of faculty belonging to the Vocational Education, Training & Skill Development sector.
4. To study the problems associated with low industry participation in the Vocational Education and Skill Development sector.
5. To investigate the opportunities available for the unorganized workforce to obtain advanced skills, continuing education and life-long learning from the perspective of social acceptability.
6. To identify the scope of further work in the vocational education, training and skill

development sector in India.

Review Of Literature:

Vocational Education, Training and Skill Development courses are available in Bihar at secondary, higher secondary (school) and diploma level (including community colleges) in a variety of forms. This chapter gives details of the present Indian education system and the lack of vertical mobility for vocational students.

Present Scenario Of Vocational Education, Training & Skill Development in Industry

Industry plays an important role in the Vocational Education, Training and Skill Development sector. In the past, the Industry has not played an active role in the development of this sector. High cost of training, inability to afford downtime and increasing overheads and costs associated with poor efficiency are all factors which have driven the industry to demand skilled workforce. As compared to countries such as Korea where over 90% of the workforce is vocationally qualified, India has only 5- 7% of its workforce vocationally trained or qualified. Most skills obtained by workers are through an informal training system such as family inheritance or “guru-shishya parampara”. As a result, it is very difficult to measure the competencies of skills or create any standards of competency levels. Inability to measure competencies or establish any standards for occupation to skill mapping makes it difficult for industry to associate optimal wages for skills of workers. One of the major reasons for limited success and popularity of the VET sector has been the inability of the industry to emphasize formal vocation qualifications or training for its workforce. There is no focus from the industry for in-service training and as such skill upgradation is not taking place. These aspects need to be seriously addressed by the industry as productivity is directly linked to skilled manpower. In fact, along with good infrastructure and strong industry collaboration, a large pool of trained teachers will also be a critical component of the vocational education and training system. However, it is not just important to train large number of vocational teachers. It is equally important to focus on quality of teacher training, Institution liasoning through collaborative projects for skill upgradation of teachers and continuous development through life-long learning opportunities.

Hypotheses:

1. There is a progressive growth in Vocational Education, Training and Skill Development in India and Bihar. However the need for a unified system and a single regulatory authority towards qualitative development in this sector is imperative.
2. Creation of a clear, well defined vocational education and training system, providing vertical mobility from school to post graduation level will give birth to a popular alternate system of education.
3. Quality of the vocational teaching-learning pedagogy is dependent on continuous faculty training and development.
4. Active industry participation is critical for success of the Vocational Education, Training & Skill Development Sector.
5. Over 90% of the India's workforce is in the unorganized sector. For this large section of population, attainment of formal Vocational Education and Training is crucial.

Discussion:

This analysis fortifies what is already stated earlier – that there is urgent need to provide higher educational institutions in the form of vocational universities, which will have a Department of Teacher Training that provides faculty with opportunities for advanced skill development, research and specialized training or degrees in vocational pedagogy.

A large number of teachers – both ITI/ITC and VJC - have shown interest in consultancy work also. Such opportunities will enable faculty to acquire up-to-date and advanced skills by liasoning with the industry and also may generate an additional income opportunity for them. The consultancy work will also allow faculty to closely interact with industry there by taking up research/ joint collaboration projects benefitting both. The study feels that teacher training and quality of faculty is a critical component as far as the success of any vocational activity is concerned various means for faculty training and development.

Problem Areas in present Vocational Education and Training System

- Vocational Education is presently offered at Grade 11, 12th – however students reaching this Grade aspire for higher education. Since the present

system does not allow vertical mobility, skills obtained are lost. Enrollment in 11th & 12th Grade of vocational education is only 3% of students at upper secondary level.

- International experience suggests that what employers mostly want are young workers with strong basic academic skills and not just vocational skills. The present system does not emphasize general academic skills. The relative wages of workers with secondary education are increasing.
- Private and Industry Participation is lacking. There are no incentives for private players to enter the field of vocational education.
- Present regulations are very rigid. In-Service Training is required but not prevalent today. There is no opportunity for continuous skill up-gradation.
- There is a lack of experienced and qualified teachers to train students on vocational skills. In foreign countries Bachelors of Vocational Education (BVE) is often a mandatory qualification for teachers.
- Vocationalization at all levels has not been successful. Poor quality of training is not in line with industry needs.
- Social acceptability of skilled manpower is another issue which has affected the growth and popularity of this sector.
- Expansion of vocational sector is happening without consideration for present problems.

The scope of Vocational Education and Training Act should be:-

1. To achieve integration of Vocational Education, Training and Skill Development and create a Unified System.
2. To lay down policy and norms for development and coordination of Vocational Education, Training and Skill development at all levels.
3. To involve a mechanism to regulate and maintain uniform standard of quality, research and development, examinations, certification, affiliations, registration and accreditation across all levels of VETSD.
4. To provide for establishment of a regulatory body, namely, the National Council of Vocational Training Commission (NCVT).

The feels that the creation of such regulatory

bodies including the Commission, Accreditation Board and Quality Council will help in integrating the Vocational Education and Training sector. It will also enable the standardization of courses, curricula and certificates in this sector thus bringing about a qualitative change. In the long run, this model legislative and regulatory framework will help in creating large number of skilled resources in line with industry needs thus establishing a successful Vocational Education and Training system in the State of Bihar.

Secondary School Education Board

The following recommendations for implication:-

1. Students should be given choice of many more vocational subjects to opt for. It would be desirable to offer non-technical vocational subjects in the high growth sectors also.
2. The vocational subjects introduced at secondary school level are recommended to be credit based and modular in nature.
3. It is recommended that the vocational subjects offered at SSC level should be linked to high growth sectors and also to HSC level vocational groups. This mapping of vocational subjects offered at senior secondary (11th & 12th) level to the BSEB will enable students and their parents to clearly understand the vertical mobility available to them and will help in popularizing this scheme as an alternative to the academic sector.
4. Vocational subject option should be provided as an alternative to third language within the core group so as to take effect in the overall weightage of SSC marks.
5. The above proposed scheme will enable students to optional for vocational subject as an Elective / as an alternative to third language and should also carry weightage in the final SSC marksheet thus increasing their motivation to opt for such vocational subjects.

Benefits of the new proposed SSC scheme

1. By introducing vocational subject as an Elective vocational subject carrying weight age in the final SSC mark sheet, the students will be motivated to option for the vocational stream at secondary level. Further, the linkages to HSC (Vocational) stream will enable them to pursue vocational stream as a viable alternative.

2. It will lead to introduction of vocational education at school level similar to education models in other foreign countries like China.
3. Introduction of vocational electives at school level will enable promotion of vocational education and expose the parents to alternate streams of education.
4. It will provide students with an opportunity to understand and make the right choices in selecting vocational courses at senior / higher secondary or tertiary levels during their academic tenure.
5. It will provide students with an opportunity to pursue new streams in Vocational Education at higher education level and get exposed to the world of work.
- 6.. Vocational education at school level will provide students some basic pre- vocational skills which can be further developed at higher secondary level.
7. It will help expand the vocational education base at school level and will be in line with the national policy of skill development of Central Government and Vocationalization of secondary education policy of the Government of India.
9. It will enable integration of academic and vocational education and training systems.

Liasoning with Sector Skill Councils of National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), to engage industry and community is recommended to be carried out. PPP models with incentives for industry participation may be encouraged. The HSC Vocational pass out should be given parity (declared as alternate qualification) to ITI and Polytechnic pass out students for the purposes of recruitment in Govt. and Non-Govt. organizations. The recruitment rules of the Public Service/ Govt. / Semi-Govt. Departments should be suitably modified to recognize HSC Vocational qualification for employment purposes.

Teacher training is required to orient the vocational teachers to the new teaching learning methodology, scheme and curriculum.

Benefits of the new proposed HSC scheme

1. The above recommendations will provide an impetus to the enrollment of students in the vocational education sector.
2. The changes and enhancements to the HSC Vocational syllabus will improve the employment opportunities to students. The inclusion of general

academic skills and industry liaisoning will result in better acceptability of students within the local industry.

3. The change in recruitment rules will provide guaranteed employment options to vocational students.
4. The options of vertical and lateral mobility will also popularize and expand the vocational sector amongst students and thus facilitate higher enrollment into this sector.
5. Popularization of vocational education will lead to increase in GER at the 10+ level.
6. Higher enrollment into the vocational sector will reduce the burden on conventional colleges and universities and will open new opportunities of learning for students.

Information and Computing Technology

(ICT) allows the teaching of commerce/office skills (keyboard skill, word processing, spread sheets) which at present are found in the most advanced parts of the commerce and industry. Thus, ICT skills may be seen as part of vocationalization and as geared to a small but growing niche in the modern sector. But ICT is also a tool of growing importance for learning and communicating more generally.

Conclusion :

There should be a unified system of vocational education, training and skill development in the State offering standardized courses/programs at all levels for the benefit of students, industry and community as a whole. There should be a single regulatory body such as, the proposed National Council of Vocational Training (NCVT) to plan, promote, regulate, develop, co-ordinate and standardize vocational education, training and skill development at all levels in the in the India. There should be an accreditation board such as, the proposed Bihar Vocational Education and Training Registration and Accreditation Board for registration, recognition and accreditation of all vocational training providers in the State. The State should encourage establishment of one or more Vocational Universities in the State to popularize this sector, create opportunities of higher vocational education and for providing vertical mobility to students from this stream. The World Links Project, which connects secondary schools in many countries

with each other, is an example. Teaching science, ICT can be used in lieu of the older mode of specialist laboratories. In schools that are generally short of teaching and learning materials, there is potentially a role for ICT as a tool for accessing supplementary sources. Basic skills in computer applications will also increasingly be required of students in higher education as tools their academic work.

References:

1. Skill Development in India, the Vocational Education and Training System, World Bank Report, 2006; 13 Dec 3010; 4:23 pm
2. National Policy of Education 1986 (as modified in 1992); 11 May 2011
3. Human Resource and Skill Requirement in the Education and Skill Development Services sector (2022)– A Report by NSDC, India; 30 Dec 2011
5. Central Advisory Boardn for Education (CABE) Committee report on Universalization of secondary Education 2005; 10 Jan 2011
6. Evaluation of Vocational Education Scheme by Institute of Applied Manpower Research; IAMR Report No.8/2000; 04 Jan 2011
7. National Workshop on Equivalence Vertical Mobility of vocational course at 2 level & placement prospects of vocational students, 13th May 2010
8. National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Bill 2010; 13 Dec 2010
9. National Knowledge Commission Report, December 2006; 09 Dec 2010
10. Skill Development: Bridging Skills Deficit & Promoting Employability, PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry; 26 September 2008 New Delhi; 28 Jun 2011
11. Dr. Anand Y. K. - National qualifications framework in TVET for India– Issues and Challenges presented in International Conference on “Harnessing Qualifications Framework Towards Quality Assurance in TVET” December 1-2, 2009
12. India Non-formal education, Country profile prepared for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report, 2008 by Amit Mitra, UNESCO; 6 January 2011

