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SKILL GAP PITFALLS AND CAUSES: AN ASSESSMENT AMONG SKILL TRAINERS IN CHENNAI CITY**DR. K. R. DHANALAKSHMI****ASST. PROFESSOR****BHAKTAVATSALAM MEMORIAL COLLEGE FOR WOMEN****KORATTUR****ABSTRACT**

The present study indicates that the training methodologies need a revamp to result in more efficient skill development process. There is a need to offer training to the trainers to impart quality skills. The infrastructure and the curriculum design need to be redefined and updated to be in line with the ongoing market and industry requirements. The commitment for developing the skills necessary for the future workforce does not lie on the employer alone but the employees need to be equally committed towards their self development. Corporates, employees and training institutes should shift their attitude towards overall skill development rather than on developing job based skill set.

KEYWORDS

skill development, training to trainers, quality skill.

INTRODUCTION

Skill is the set of competencies essential for carrying out specific tasks within available time and efficiency constraints adhering to certain set of standards. Skill development is the process of harnessing the talents and ability of the employable workforce to be on par with industrial requirements. The current market scenario is skill intensive and demands workforce with exemplary skills while the available workforce fails to meet this there is skill shortage or skill gap. Today's situation necessitates skill development process to be a demand driven one rather than supply driven.

India has a well-institutionalized system of vocational training but has not adequately geared up its youth with the skills that today's industries call for. Thus, to speed its economic growth and take advantage of its "demographic dividend," the country has recently embarked on drastic policy reforms to accelerate skills development. (Aya Okada, 2012)

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. 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.

NEED FOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT

The demand for skilled manpower is expected to increase to 50 million by 2022, and due to increasing urbanization, 50 million non-farm employment opportunities are expected to be created during the 12th five year plan period and same number of people would be provided certified skill training. (National skill development policy march 2009). India's total population is 1.21 billion according to the 2011 Census (Government of India (GOI) 2011) and out of this more than 672 million people are of working age (15 to 59).

According to eleventh five year plan of India, out of the entire population, only 10% of the workforce has undergone formal skill training programme in educational institutions or vocational training centers.

The present availability of 4.3 million of skilled workforce is almost below 20% of industry requirements. The benefits of skill development are not explicit and accumulate to a single person, the organizations tend to invest a very less amount in training and skill development programmes. The Bureau of Labour Statistics reports that eight of the 10 top growing occupations do not require an undergraduate degree alone, Instead, skills certificates, on-the-job training, and apprenticeship programs are relevant and practical methods are preferred for developing middle skills.

Yadapadithaya and Jim Stewart (2003) assessed the international scope of training and development such as key responsibility function, corporate commitment to T&D, major drivers and key result areas of training and development, its purposes, levels, instruments, timing, and designs of evaluation, major perceived deficiencies and challenges of T&D function. The study found that more than 71% of Indian organizations felt that the responsibility of training function lies with HR or training specialist, 55% of staff sent for training and an amount of Rs. 253.3 was spent on an employee as training investment; 78.6% of Indian companies provide training with an objective to improve productivity, quality and innovation among employees; 89.3% of organizations conduct training evaluation to determine effectiveness of the training process.

The report of Asian Development Bank (2008) states that developing countries, and all major international organizations concerned with education, have shifted their focus, away from basic education to technical and vocational education and training and higher education.

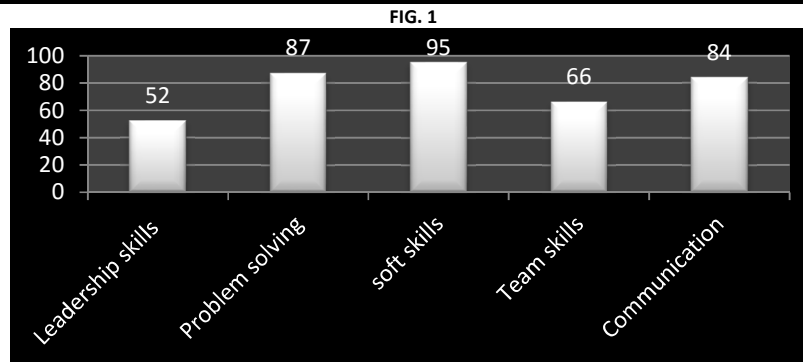
Different persons assist to decide the needs for a development programme. They can be top management in the organization, staff personnel in the organization such as personnel managers, supervisors and subordinates to be trained, outsiders such as consultants, psychologists, research specialists and training and development specialists (Kirkpatrick 1983).

During the skill development process the persons in a group interact with each other, not in just the physical proximity sense but also as a support to solve problems, attain goals, alleviate co-ordination, reduce tension and strike a balance (Scott 1967).

Trainer performance has a great impact not only in attracting trainees towards goals of program, but also to the entire effectiveness of training. In spite of the fact that training goals are formulated to suit, training aids, methods are on par with excellence, the trainer performance is major determinant of the success and if it turns out to be wrong, the entire training program will eventually turn ineffective. (Rama Devi V, Nagurvali Shaik, 2012)

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**TABLE 1: SHOWING OPINION ON PITFALLS OF SKILLS NEEDED**

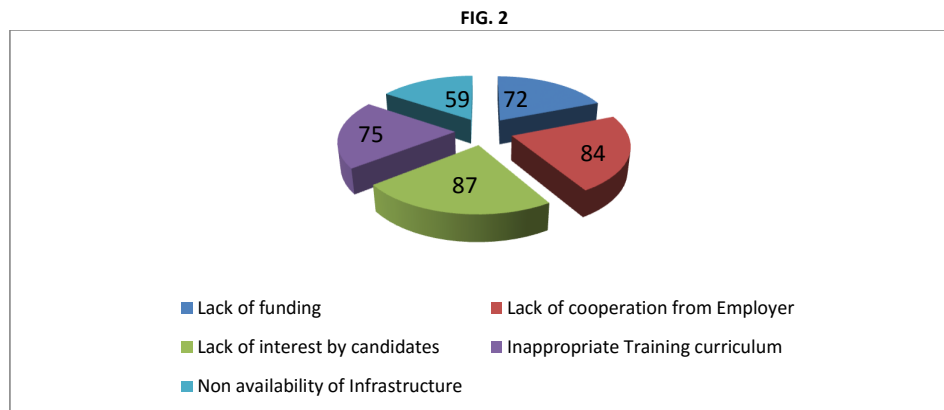
SKILLS	Yes (%)
Leadership skills	52
Problem solving skills	87
Soft skills	95
Team skills	66
Communication skills	84



It is evident from the above table that trainers feel that the problem solving skills, soft skills and communication skills of the candidates are lacking and need to be improved to a great extent. The results correlate with the reports of the skill development commission. According to a recent survey on employability of engineering graduates, it was found that only 3 out of every 1000 candidates possessed the employability skills. The results of the present study substantiate the fact that the trainers feel the importance of soft skills and problem solving skills.

TABLE 2: SHOWING PROBLEMS OF SKILLS TRAINING

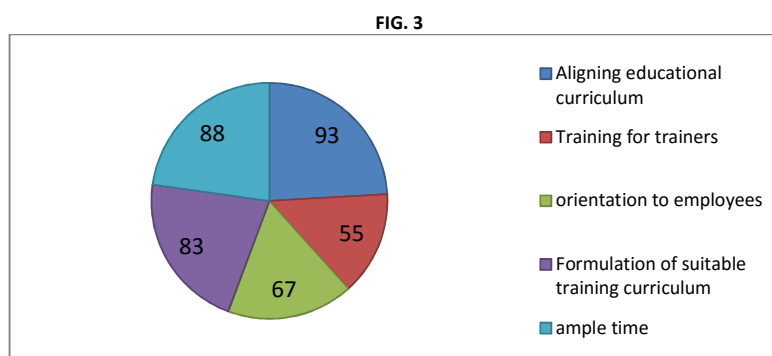
Problems	%
Lack of funding	72%
Lack of cooperation from Employer	84%
Lack of interest by candidates	87%
Inappropriate Training curriculum	75%
Non availability of Infrastructure	59%



87% of the respondents opined that lack of interest by the candidates serve as a major hindrance in rendering effective skills training. Developing skills is a part of implicit knowledge and it cannot happen effectively unless sincere response shown by the candidates. Similarly the trainers also feel that non cooperation by the employers in allowing their employees to attend skills training is a major problem and can also be a root cause for the lack of interest by the employees. Inappropriate training curriculum that deviates from current job needs poses major threat in offering training. Non availability of ample and appropriate infrastructure hinders the development of skills and practicing it at work.

TABLE 3: SHOWING MEASURES TO OVERCOME PITFALLS

SUGGESTED MEASURES	%
Aligning educational curriculum with skill requirements	93
Training for trainers	65
Orientation to employees	57
Formulation of suitable training curriculum	83
Provision of ample time for training process	88



It is widely felt among the respondents that aligning the educational curriculum in line with the industry requirements could create a significant shift in the skill development process. It is also felt that the training schedule should provide ample time for the trainers to impart the skills as this is a specialized training and not

like a general training. Similarly offering orientation to employees and employers about the necessity of skills could create better awareness among the concerned people.

IMPLICATION AND CONCLUSION

The study clearly indicates that the training methodologies need a revamp to result in more efficient skill development process. There is a need to offer training to the trainers to impart quality skills. The infrastructure and the curriculum design need to be redefined and updated to be in line with the ongoing market and industry requirements. The commitment for developing the skills necessary for the future workforce does not lie on the employer alone but the employees need to be equally committed towards their self development. Corporates, employees and training institutes should shift their attitude towards overall skill development rather than on developing job based skill set.

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