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SKILL DEVELOPMENT: THE KEY TO ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

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ABSTRACT

Skills and Knowledge are the driving forces of economic growth and development of any country. They have become even more important because of increasing pace of globalization and technological changes taking place in the world. As education is both a cause and consequence of development, Vocational education and industrial training may create and nurture a knowledge enhancing and skill development system. Skill Development is the key factor of increased employability and productivity which in turn leads to economic growth. It is an aid to individual's economic achievements as well as national development. India has the lowest proportion of trained youth in the world. 80% of entrants to workforce have no opportunity for skill training and development. This paper attempts to study the challenges for skill development and suggest some strategies regarding the phenomenon.

KEYWORDS

skills, knowledge, skillful development, vocational education, employability.

INTRODUCTION

Era of Globalization has brought tremendous transformations in all aspects of life. It has been a major force for social, economic, political and cultural development around the world. Globalization has created numerous jobs on one side but it has put several challenges for traditional service providers and receivers resulting in to unemployment of the workforce. New job opportunities have created higher demand of skilled workforce. Knowledge management and skill development can be viewed as an instrument to improve the effectiveness and contribution of workforce. It can be seen as a means to empower the individual and improve his employability.

OBJECTIVES

Some of the Objectives are:

- To study the background of skill development in India
- To study the challenges before the Employers as well as Govt.
- To analyze the role of vocational education & training centres in the field of skill development
- To suggest measures to improve employability in India

METHODOLOGY

This paper is the outcome of secondary data on Knowledge Management and skill development with special reference to Indian context. To complete this, annual reports, various books, journals and periodicals have been consulted, several reports on this particular area have been considered and internet surfing has also been done.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT MISSION

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has recently launched a project **Skill India Campaign** hopes to make India a hub of skilled manpower which included the launch of the National Skill Development Mission and unveiling of the new National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship to train 500 million people by 2022 by empowering all individuals through improved skills, knowledge and qualifications to gain access to decent employment and ensure India's competitiveness in global market. This mission is not only linked to skill but it is linked with entrepreneurship too.

In India, skill acquisition takes place through two basic structural streams- formal & informal. The formal structure includes vocational education in schools, technical & professional education imparted through professional colleges, technical training centres (polytechnics), apprenticeship training in factories etc. The informal structure includes the transfer of skills from one generation to another. For e.g. Traditional Crafts. Various NGO's, Krishi Vigyan Kendras and other institutions are also participating in imparting skills at various levels.

The Government of India having conceptualized the need of Skill Development has coordinated Three-Tier institutional structure consisting of-

P.M.'s National Council

National Skill Development Coordination Board

National Skill Development Corporation

CHALLENGES TO SKILL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

Our country presently faces a dual challenge of paucity of highly trained workforce as well as non employability of large sections of conventionally educated youth who possess little or no job skills. The challenge pertains not only to a huge quantitative expansion of facilities of skill training but also to equally important task of raising their quality. Some of the challenges to Skill Development in India are as follows-

LACK OF CO-ORDINATION

The biggest problem is lack of co-ordination because of tedious governance structures of regime. Govt. is pre occupied with financing and implementation work. Employment Exchanges are also not utilized properly for training and information dissemination.

ISSUE REGARDING MOBILIZATION

In India, people live with traditional mindset. So, Student mobilization to get trained has been a major issue due to unwillingness to migrate, low salaries at entry level etc.

NON-INVOLVEMENT OF INDUSTRIES

Involvement of Industry and employers in the Skill Training structures is almost nothing. They could not be brought forward to proactively participate in the field of curriculum development, training of instructors for skill development because this would entail larger autonomy to institutions.

MISMATCH BETWEEN YOUTH ASPIRATIONS AND JOBS

In the present scenario, it is very difficult to find students to fill the classrooms and getting them to accept new kind of jobs. There is a huge gap between their aspirations and available jobs.

FRAGMENTED VOCATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM

India has a fragmented vocational education system, managed by multiplicity of bodies. Lack of coordination among them has resulted in ineffectiveness of the approaches to skill development. Quality of vocational institutes is also very low.

LOW ENROLMENT IN VOCATIONAL COURSES

A large number of students with vocational education need to look for placement in private organizations or for self employment. The condition of private industrial employments and self employment are inferior in India in comparison to other countries. Subsequently, only a smaller fraction of students opt for vocational education.

POOR PERFORMANCE OF VOCATIONAL INSTITUTES

Funding of vocational education in India is restricted largely to Govt. where little attention was paid to quality. Once an institution begins to receive funding, subsequent funds are assured regardless of the institution's performance. Such institutions itself do nothing to cater to the market requirements.

SUGGESTIONS

The focus of the Skill Development Mission is to suggest bold ideas, concrete policies, initiatives and interventions to help in development of employability skills on a large scale to meet the needs of the industry and to help youth enter the job market. It is an effort to enhance skill development among the youth of India and give them an opportunity to contribute towards nation building. Some of the suggestions are as follows-

- The ultimate aim of vocational training is employment. Therefore, education system has to be linked to the job market. In this way, the socio-economic relevance of education can be enhanced.
- The competence of the teacher should be measured in terms of theoretical knowledge, technical and pedagogical skills as well as being abreast with new technologies in the workplace. Industry leaders should be asked to teach.
- Private organizations should be given full liberty to impart education and skills by working hand-in-hand with the industry. They have funds, are flexible and innovative. There should be policies and incentives that will support increased private sector participation in Training delivery.
- There should be wide and easy availability of computers, softwares, tools, gadgets, machines, equipments etc. in technical institutes for the practical exposure of the teachings. Training for high-quality skills requires appropriate training equipment and tools, adequate supply of training materials, and practice. Other requirements include relevant textbooks and training manuals and qualified instructors with experience in enterprises.
- Equal importance should be given to the vocational skills comparably with academics as they are equally required in the modern job scenario.
- The curriculum must be prepared jointly by the industry and the educators simultaneously. It should be regularly updated to ensure that youth are exposed to the latest technology. It should include more of practical learning than theoretical.

CONCLUSION

In brief, the building blocks of any skills strategy must be solid foundation for skills and stronger links between the worlds of education and work. This in turn requires good quality in childhood education; good information on changes in skill demands; responsiveness of the education and training system to structural changes; and recognition of skills and competences. To be effective, connecting vocational education and training and skills development to the world of work is the need of hour. Broad and continued access to training and skills development fosters opportunities and benefits of initial and lifelong learning to all, meeting the aspirations of people. Dedicated policies and measures are required to facilitate access to training and skills development. Timely information enables the world of learning to monitor the match between the supply of skills and the demand. The pace of change of the world of work, set by innovation, technology and markets, is high. Keeping up with this pace of change is a continuing challenge. Most importantly, skills by themselves do not automatically lead to more and better jobs. Skills policies must be part of a broad set of policies that are conducive to high rates of growth and investment, strong employment generation of high quality, investments in basic education, health and infrastructure, respect for workers' rights.

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