

Despite being world's youngest country in terms of demographic dividend, India has only 2% of the workforce skilled compared with 96% in South Korea, 45% in China, 50-55% in USA & 74% in Germany. All these years, we focussed on building Higher Education and very little did we think of enhancing the Employability Quotient (EQ) and produce skilled manpower through skill training Interventions.

Indian Education sector has seen rapid growth in nos. of Institutions and students over last few decades. As per UGC report, in 1950-51 there were approx. 750 colleges affiliated to 30 universities, which has grown to over 727 universities, 35000 colleges & 13000 standalone Institutions in 2014-15 and counting.

Regardless of the tremendous growth, higher education has not proved too efficient to make youths of the country employable as per need of the employer due to low Skill Quotient (SQ).

In today's world of Globalisation, Skill Training is an Integral component of increasing efficiency & productivity for sound economic development of any economy, In India, it's still at a nascent stage, however the demand for skilled manpower is huge and to cover this gap, it is very pertinent to re-engineer the skill ecosystem.

As India paves its path to be a Global Economic Powerhouse, it is imperative to equip its working population with employability skills. Today, India is one of the youngest country in the world with more than 62% of the population in the working age group (15-59 years) and more than 54% of the total population below 25 years of age.

Skill based learning focuses on increasing employability through series of inputs to:

- Equip students with appropriate hands-on skills which helps them to be job- ready.
- Core focus on job role based skills leads to comprehensive specialisation, thereby increasing efficacy of the candidate.

Skill Training interventions raises confidence, improves productivity & competency of an individual through focussed outcome based learning.

In 2014, Skill Development started getting booster from the Govt. under the visionary leadership of our Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri. Narendra Modi-he encouraged Skill India Mission and also formed Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship Skill (MSDE) to coordinate all skill development activities, capacity & technical/ vocational training framework building, assessments framework. The Ministry is dedicated to skill 400 million workforce by 2022.

MSDE has launched Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) which is the flagship outcome- based skill training scheme, the objective of this skill certification and reward scheme is to enable & mobilise a large no. of Indian youths to take up outcome based skill training & become employable and earn their livelihood.

National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) is a central nodal agency under MSDE responsible to build strong skill training capability through funding training partners.

NSDC has been working to define and align all the training nationally under National Skill Qualification Pack (NSQF) as defined in the National Skill Development Policy which aims at bringing standardised ecosystem well- recognised by the industry across the Globe.

India is poised to stand out as one of the Skilled nations in coming years and it's time for Higher Education & Skill Training to exist in same space with seamless Integration as part of curriculum. To enable this, it is very important for the Industry and Academia to work together to generate focussed hands- on candidates with right blend of learning and employability traits.

When we refer to Skill Education, we have to look at it from two perspectives-one where children and youngsters have been exposed to formal education and school and college

level, yet do not possess the required skills to be employable and; second those who have never been exposed to any kind of formal education and need to acquire certain skills to be employable.

Understanding the gaps

According to educational experts, today, employers look for some mandatory attributes in their employees. These are over and above knowledge of core subject that a student may have acquired over a period of study. These skills include many attributes like good communication skills, positive approach towards challenge, general awareness, approach to lifelong learning, self discipline and time management, sense of initiative, sharing and teamwork, stress management and much more. It is therefore important that schools and colleges educate children and youngsters about these attributes that are paramount to securing a well paid job.

In India, both these categories in skill education are met by two ministries- the Ministry of Human Resource and Development and the Ministry of Labor and Employment. The former looks after skill development at school and college level while the latter caters to industry oriented training and education. Owing to the fact that almost 60 percent of skilled jobs are not to be manned by white collars, there is dearth of skilled manpower in the country. For one, a huge percentage of these citizens, coming from lower income groups, don't have access to any form of formal education; and even if they have, they are not able to reach the senior secondary levels leave alone study in a college. The result is that psychological and sociological development is crippled much before time.

India's economy is growing and needs its workforce to be quickly trained across all levels, whether it is a white collar job or that held by the rust collar worker, linking these citizens to ideal job opportunities and market scenario.

Learning realities

The fact of the matter is even before enrollment acquirement of any vocational skill needs

a certain level of educational qualification. This is indeed a dampener for many hopeful youth, men and women who may never have had an exposure to formal schooling. Narendra Modi's promising Skill India project was started precisely to bridge this gap, but has not garnered much appreciation. The hiccups in implementation have been evident and the results have seen sluggish increase in number of employable manpower. To add to this challenge are others of misconceptions reeling around the aspect of taking up a vocational skill as a profession. For one, it is awarded a lowly status in the hierarchy of jobs; for another, there is an ideology that such jobs are fit for school and college dropouts. Also, popular thought is that such jobs befit those who low learning capacities. The result is that vocational training does not get its due and is a neglected aspect of skill development effort in India.

Road ahead

There is an urgent need to take this part of manpower development very seriously, unless we want to see a nation full of unemployable and disappointed youth. The Modi government has allocated a sizable amount to revamp skill development in the country but implementation is the need of the hour. Institutes and governing bodies must put special mechanisms in place that can deliver training and create more participation by women, including mobile training units, extension schemes, and in-plant training. Progress needs to be monitored both for men and women. Let there be training in non-traditional fields for women through various training programmes and pilot support schemes. Over and above all, there is a need to increase the volume of work-based learning and linking exposure of those trained with mentors and trainers, who are already experienced in the field of entrepreneurship.

Conclusion

Hence India will become the great skillful country in coming years..

Thank You

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