
SKILL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA: NEEDS AND CHALLENGES

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Abstract

Globalization, knowledge and competition have enlarged the must for highly skilled labour force in both the developing and developed nations thereby it enables them to enlarge their growth rate towards higher path. For India, skill development is critical from both socio-economic and demographic point of view. Therefore, the paper attempts to study the present skill capacity, challenges in front of skill development initiatives in India along with their solutions. The study also found that both the Government and its partner agencies have undertaken various method/initiatives for the effective functioning of the skill development system in the economy, but still faces some unsettled issues/challenges that need direct attention of the policymakers. Hence, skill development initiatives of the government should focus on these obstacles and develop the programs accordingly to resolve these hurdles for the complete success of the skill development initiatives.

Keywords: Skills development, Challenges, initiatives.

Introduction

Globalization, knowledge and competition have intensified the need for highly skilled workforce in both the developing and developed nations as it enables them to accelerate the growth rate of their economy towards higher trajectory. Today all economies need skilled workforce to meet global standards of quality, to increase their foreign trade, to bring advanced technologies to their domestic industries and to boost their industrial and economic development. Thus, skills and knowledge become the driving force of socio-economic growth and development for any country. As it has been observed that countries with highly skilled human capital tends to have higher GDP adjust more effectively to the challenges and opportunities of the world of work. For India, skill development is also critical from both socio-economic and demographic point of view.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the present skill capacity of India.
- To analyse the challenges and issues faced by skill development system in India.

Data and Methodology

The proposed study mainly is descriptive. It solemnly based on secondary data and information is collected from the concerned sources as per the necessity of the research. The

relevant books, documents of various ministries/departments and organizations, articles, papers are used in this study.

Challenges before Skill Development Initiatives in India

Despite various concentrated efforts, there is still a long way to bring the skill development to completion due to the presence of serious challenges in the path of the mission. Some of these hindrances along with their possible solutions are outlined below:

Demand & Supply Mismatch: The demand made by the industries and supply of labour-force mismatch leads to aggravating all types of skill development initiatives of the Government and its partner agencies as:

- The number of people formally trained in a year is only 1,100,000 by Ministry of Labour and Employment and approximately 3,200,000 by 17 other central government ministries.
- According to the Manpower Group (USA), in Germany, USA, France, and Japan, the percentage of employers who find it difficult to fill jobs is 40%, 57%, 20% and 80% respectively as compared to Indian employers (67%).

Geographical Problem: It is another problem plaguing the labour market and has a more serious impact in larger economies like India as the outreach of the people for skills in India are uneven and in dismal share: The states with much higher economic growth rates have more new jobs with lower rate of labour-force while on the other hand; the states with slower economic growth rates have higher population growth rates with fewer new jobs. Thus lagged states need to rely on migrant workers so as to cope with this challenge.

Most of the institutions are located in urban areas when compared to rural areas and even private sector institutions are also unwilling to operate in rural areas. Hence, large proportions of rural population do not have any formal vocational training institutions. Districts notified as backward have serious scarcity of formal skill training as majority of skill development institutions in these locations emphasized only on basic employment skills. The training programmes are also provided by NGOs or by other agencies as a part of social development programs. Therefore, these types of skills are often not formally assessed and as a result these are not recognized for employment by industrial sectors.

Low Educational Attainment: Though the country has made advancement on educational attainment as reflected below: There are about 1.5 million schools in India with a total enrolment of 250 million students from pre-primary to high and senior secondary levels i.e. schools comprise the maximum number of enrolments. Higher education sector include around 20.7 million. The total number of students enrolling for open universities and other diploma courses amount to 24.3% of the total students. Vocational training in India is primarily imparted through the government and private industrial training institutes (ITIs). Current annual training capacity of India is 4.3 million, which is 20% less than the industrial requirement of 22 million skilled workers a year.

Vocational Training: India is gradually moving towards knowledge economy, where skills are widely accepted as the important level of economic growth, but the observation about

vocational education is still doubtful. It is generally meant for those who fail to get admission in the formal system gets in to the vocational training. Thus, it still need time to be considered as a possible substitute to formal education.

Skill development for women: In India, women also form an integral and substantial part of the workforce; but the working percentage rate of women in total labour force is declining.

Private sector participation: The private sector is not involved adequately in curriculum development and policy formulation related to educational and vocational training. Mostly private sector institutes are located in urban areas therefore rural population remains lags behind. Due to high cost of these institutes the weaker or disadvantaged section are also unable to get proper skill training.

Placement-linked Challenge: A major problem of India's existing skill development system is lack of linkages between education and placement of that trained workforce. In India, the vocational training is offered nearly in 120 courses which is given for one to two years. Whereas in China, there exist approximately 4,000 short duration modular courses, which provide skills more closely united to employment needs. In India, as compared to large firms, the micro, small and medium enterprises find it difficult to invest in skill development institutions and this result in deployment of semi-skilled workforce in many firms.

Training of Trainers: Training of trainer is one of the important key of the skill development structure. And absence or inefficiency of the same would result in serious bottleneck in the functioning of skill expansion projects.

Conclusion

To make India internationally competitive and to increase its economic growth, a skilled workforce is essential. As more and more India moves towards the Knowledge economy, it becomes progressively more important for it to centre of attention on advancement of the skills and these skills have to be applicable to the rising economic environment. For transforming its demographic dividend, an efficient skill development system is the need of the hour. Therefore to achieve its determined skilling target, it is vital to have holistic solutions of the challenges instead of slowly interventions.

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