



Does introduction of vocational studies under NEP 2020 impact skill industry of India?

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NEP 2020 introduces school internships for skill appreciation and craft-centric learning where every student will take a fun course, during Grades 6-8, that gives a survey and hands-on experience of a sampling of important vocational crafts, such as carpentry, electric work, metalwork, gardening, pottery making, etc., as decided by States and local communities and as mapped by local skilling needs. This paper will try to assess the relationship between the impact of vocational studies on the skill industry of India.

The global education development agenda reflected in the Goal 4 (SDG4) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by India in 2015 - seeks to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” by 2030.

The National Education Policy was drafted keeping in mind the changing employment landscape and global ecosystem. It is becoming increasingly critical that children not only learn, but more importantly learn how to learn. With the introduction of NEP 2020, the India education is envisaged to make a move less content, and more towards critical learning, problem solving, and how to innovate, adapt, and absorb new material in changing fields. Pedagogy must evolve to make education more experiential, holistic, integrated, inquiry-driven, discovery-oriented, learner-centred, discussion-based, flexible, and, of course, enjoyable. The curriculum includes basic arts, crafts, humanities, games, sports and fitness, languages, literature, culture, and values, in addition to science and mathematics, to develop all aspects and capabilities of learners; and make education more well-rounded, useful, and fulfilling to the learner. Education must build character, enable learners to be ethical, rational, compassionate, and caring, while at the same time prepare them for gainful, fulfilling employment. The gap between the current state of learning outcomes and what is required must be bridged through undertaking major reforms that bring the highest quality.

NEP 2020 introduces school internships for skill appreciation and craft-centric learning where every student will take a fun course, during Grades 6-8, that gives a survey and hands-on experience of a sampling of important vocational crafts, such as carpentry, electric work, metalwork, gardening, pottery making, etc., as decided by States and local communities and as mapped by local skilling needs. Vocational education will be integrated into all school and higher education institutions in a phased manner over the next decade. Focus areas for vocational education

will be chosen based on skills gap analysis and mapping of local opportunities. MHRD will constitute a National Committee for the Integration of Vocational Education (NCIVE), consisting of experts in vocational education and representatives from across Ministries, in collaboration with industry, to oversee this effort.

NEP 2020: More focus on vocational studies in school- level

- Every child learns at least one vocation and is exposed to several more.
- Sampling of important vocational crafts, such as carpentry, electric work, metal work, gardening, pottery making, etc., as decided by States and local communities during Grades 6-8.
- By 2025, at least 50% of learners through the school and higher education system shall have exposure to vocational education
- A 10-day bagless period sometime during Grades 6-8 to intern with local vocational experts such as carpenters, gardeners, potters, artists, etc.



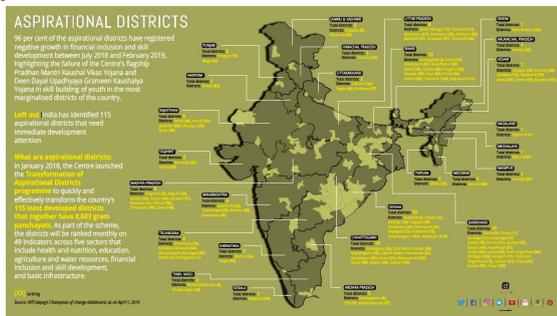
Lack of skills

In 2018, the number of people unemployed in India increased by nearly 11 million — India’s worst showing in the last 27 months¹. An important cause for high unemployment rates

¹<https://www.cmie.com/kommon/bin/sr.php?kall=warticle&dt=2019-01-08%2009:28:37&msec=666>

is the lack of skills required for jobs that are available.

A report by NITI Aayog on aspirational districts shows that 96 per cent of India's 'aspirational districts', that need immediate development attention, registered a negative growth in financial inclusion and skill development between July 2018 and February 2019. Low level of education, with 50% of the students dropping out before completing secondary education, creates a challenge of empowering them in new technologies in various sectors through lifelong learning in tandem with global standards. These changes also have connotations for the skill development ecosystem, as redundancies may be created in low-skilled jobs in the future². This challenge becomes enormous given that studies suggest that only about 41% of Indian professionals are found 'employable'. The report also states that the informal sector that composes 93% of the workforce has limited skilling mechanism in place as skill development takes place on the job.



The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship³ has acknowledged that an estimated 4.69% of the total workforce in India has undergone formal skill training as compared to 68% in UK, 75% in Germany, 52% in USA, 80% in Japan and 96% in South Korea. Skills and knowledge are driving forces of economic growth and social development for any country. Countries with higher levels and better standards of skills adjust more effectively to challenges and opportunities in

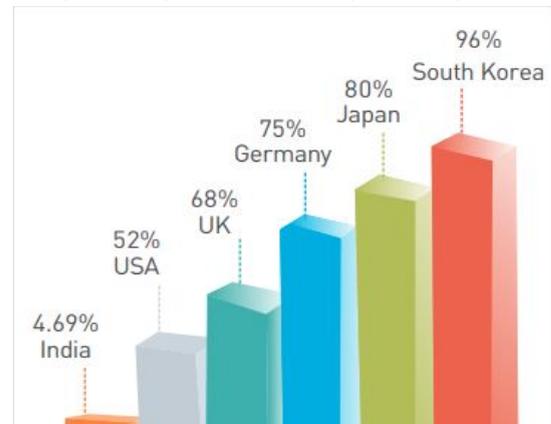
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<https://niti.gov.in/sites/default/files/2018-12/AspirationalDistricts-Book.pdf>

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<https://www.msde.gov.in/assets/images/Skill%20India/National%20Policy%20on%20Skill%20Development%20and%20Entrepreneurship%20Final.pdf>

domestic and international job markets. While the debate on the exact quantum of the challenge continues, there is no disputing the fact that it is indeed a challenge. On demand side, a skill gap study has been conducted by NSDC over 2010-2014, which indicates that there is an additional net incremental requirement of 109.73 million skilled manpower by 2022 in twenty four key sectors.

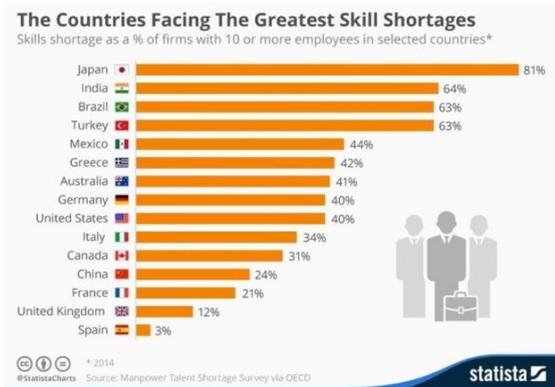


S. Ramadorai, former chairman, National Skills Development Agency and National Skills Development Council, penned an opinion piece on a leading online news portal called Live Mint⁴. There he mentioned how it is important that all stakeholders—the government, educational institutions, corporates, NGOs and a plethora of experts and practitioners from all associated fields—must collaborate to ensure its successful implementation. Equitable access to quality education and effective vocational education into mainstream teaching curriculum is enabled through the recognition of competency-based skills in subjects such as traditional arts, vocational crafts, entrepreneurship and agriculture. It states that the National Skills Qualifications Framework will be detailed for each discipline/vocation and it is expected that by 2025, at least 50% of learners in schools and higher education would have exposure to the vocational system.

With the introduction of NEP 2020, there is a creation of hybrid vocational ecosystem. A modular credit-linked skilling framework will further promote lifelong learning amongst the

⁴ <https://www.livemint.com/>

active workforce as well as provide an impetus to scale the apprenticeship ecosystem by enabling engagement of apprentices as per The Apprentices Act, 1961. Approximately 70 million additional individuals of working age (15-59 years) are expected to enter the country's labour force by 2023 – using the same estimation model, the total workforce will then include approximately 404.15 million people. This will include 59 million youth (individuals aged 15-30 years), according to our analysis of data from the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2017-2018. Strategies for reskilling and increasing the skills of the current workforce, as well as formal recognition of informally acquired skills, will also have to be reinforced. Against this backdrop, India is driving unique initiatives to convert its demographic potential into a dividend that will fuel the country's growth.



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http://www.mospi.gov.in/sites/default/files/publication_reports/Annual%20Report%2C%20PLFS%202017-18_31052019.pdf

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<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/10/india-skill-development-programme/>

Against this backdrop, India is driving unique initiatives to convert its demographic potential into a dividend that will fuel the country's growth.

Importance of Vocational Training

Vocational Education can be defined as the education that is based on occupation and employment. Vocational Education is also known as career and technical education (CTE) or technical and vocational education and training (TVET). It prepares people for specific trades, crafts and careers at various levels in all spheres of life. It involves various practical activities. It is sometimes referred as technical education because the trainee directly develops expertise in a particular group of techniques. Vocational education is related to the age-old apprenticeship system of learning. In other words Vocational Education may be classified as teaching procedural knowledge. Vocational education consists basically of practical courses through which one gains skills and experience directly linked to a career in future. It helps students to be skilled and in turn, offers better employment opportunities.

Vocational courses are typically more practical and skills-based than academic degrees, but they are often taught at universities as well as colleges and technical institutes. Vocational Education and Training (VET) is an important element of the nation's education initiative. Vocational education has to be viewed from different multi-layered practices. One is of course the hands on training component. The other is employment generation and sustainability.⁷

Government Role

In order for Vocational Education to play its part effectively in the changing national context and for India to enjoy the fruits of the technical fields, there is an urgent need to redefine the critical elements of imparting vocational education and training to make them flexible, contemporary, relevant, inclusive and creative. The Government is well aware of the important role of Vocational

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http://aei.pitt.edu/74136/1/Vocational_Education_and_Training_Reform_in_India.pdf

education and has already taken a number of important initiatives in this area. To stimulate and support reforms in skills development and to facilitate nationally standardized and acceptable, international comparability of qualifications, a “National Vocational Qualifications Framework” is being established by the Central Government. Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) has resolved to set up an inter-ministerial group which would also include representatives of State Governments to develop guidelines for such a National Framework.

Impact

One of the main reasons of bridging the employability gap is lack of skilled and trained manpower. In order to control the unemployment, it is necessary to provide the training and skill development program to both educated and uneducated groups. Bridging the employability skill gap through the various training and skill development programs and initiatives could make India a global hub for skilled manpower. According to the report published in BW People.in, skill gap is the difference between skills that employers want and skills their workforce offer⁸.

As we progress towards becoming a global knowledge economy, we must ensure that we meet the rising aspirations of our youth. This can be partially achieved through focus on advancement of skills that are relevant to the emerging economic environment. The challenge pertains not only to a huge quantitative expansion of the facilities for skill training, but also to the equally important task of raising their quality.

This is where National Education Policy 2020 tries to bridge the gap. The NEP intends to focus on developing industry linkages and demand driven vocational courses by engaging industry at various levels, including co-developed courses and development of incubation centres. Besides this, the policy

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https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338402317_Review_on_Strategies_for_Bridging_the_Employability_Skill_Gap_in_Higher_Education

also envisages alignment with international standards. The focus area for vocational education should be chosen based on skill gap analysis and mapping of local opportunities. The increased impetus for vocational education and lifelong learning in the policy is likely to provide comfort to employers as far as continuous supply of skilled manpower is concerned and will lead to improvement and recognition of vocational system.

The policy envisions a child to play a meaningful role in society. They should be employable, have basic ideas of issues, subscribe to basic ethos of our country, should have decision making skills, be creative and understand the world.

As stated in the document by released by the government⁹, the purpose of the education system is to develop good human beings capable of rational thought and action, possessing compassion and empathy, courage and resilience, scientific temper and creative imagination, with sound ethical values. It can be safely assumed that NEP 2020 aims at producing engaged, productive, and contributing citizens for building an equitable, inclusive, and plural society as envisaged by our Constitution.

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https://www.mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf