



## Vocational Education in India: New Initiatives

\* Dr. B. Venkatesula Reddy

\* Department of Pol.Sci. & Pub.Admn, S. V. University, Tirupati-517 502.

### ABSTRACT

*Vocational education is an education that prepares people for specific trades, crafts and careers at various levels from a trade, a craft, technician, or a professional position in engineering, accountancy, nursing, medicine, and other healing arts, architecture, pharmacy, law etc. Craft vocations are usually based on manual or practical activities, traditionally non-academic, related to a specific trade, occupation, or vocation. It is sometimes referred to as technical education as the trainee directly develops expertise in a particular group of techniques.*

### Keywords :

#### INTRODUCTION

Vocational education has diversified over the 20th century and now exists in industries such as retail, tourism, information technology, funeral services and cosmetics, as well as in the traditional crafts and cottage industries.

Vocational education (also known as vocational education and training or VET) is an education that prepares people for specific trades, crafts and careers at various levels from a trade, a craft, technician, or a professional position in engineering, accountancy, nursing, medicine, and other healing arts, architecture, pharmacy, law, etc. Craft vocations are usually based on manual or practical activities, traditionally non-academic, related to a specific trade, occupation, or vocation. It is sometimes referred to as technical education as the trainee directly develops expertise in a particular group of techniques.

Vocational education is related to the age-old apprenticeship system of learning. Apprenticeships are designed for many levels of work from manual trades to high knowledge work. However, as the labor market becomes more specialized and economies demand higher levels of skill, governments and businesses are increasingly investing in the future of vocational education through publicly funded training organizations and subsidized apprenticeship or traineeship initiatives for businesses.

The main terminal stages in the general education system are secondary and higher secondary education. This is because the students take important decisions about their career at these points. They have many options like to pursue higher education, join the work force, opt for technical training etc. Vocational education provides training for jobs that are based on traditionally non-academic, manual or practical activities, occupation, or totally related to a specific trade. In this system of education, the trainees get expertise by themselves in a specific group of techniques. So, the vocational education is also referred to as technical education. The practical courses included in the vocational education helps the students to gain experience and skills that are needed for their career in future. As soon as they finished the course, most of the students are offered placements in jobs. It is a fact that most of the employers look for candidates with work related experiences. The training in vocational education help the students to acquire such work related experiences.

#### OBJECTIVES OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

The goal of vocational educational in India is to enhance skilled manpower through various courses to meet the re-

quirements of the unorganised sector. It also aims at inculcating self-employment skills in people through several self-employment related courses. Vocational education in India is conveyed through polytechnics and Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs). Some of the vocational courses are Cutting/ Tailoring & Dress Making, Library Assistant, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning, Secretarial Practices, Typewriting, Computer Operator and Programme Assistant, Stenography, Electrical Technician, Plumbing, Fruit and Vegetable Preservation Programs, Architectural Draughtsman ship, Desk Top Publishing, Electronics (Radio/TV/Tape Recorder Mechanic), etc. Today, the Indian economy lacks skilled people. This happens mainly due to neglect of vocational education. On the basis of the recent survey, the main reason for unemployment is the shortage of marketable skills.

#### ADVANTAGES OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

The advantages in imparting vocational education and training are: (a) Build up a work force of international quality, (b) Reduce unemployment by providing world-class knowledge to people, (c) Prepare the youth for a career of their choice, (d) Provide skilled people thereby reducing cost and enhance the productivity of services and manufacturing and (e) Supply millions of trained people in floriculture, agriculture, sericulture, fishery, horticulture, tourism, healthcare and in the manufacturing sector.

#### IMPORTANCE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

The university degrees were not necessary for most of the occupations. These jobs could be performed by trained higher secondary aspirants. It should be made possible to divert at least half of the students completing their 10th to the vocational stream. Then only the pressure on the universities will get reduced. Besides, this will help the students for profitable employment. Every year in India, more than 6 lakh engineering degree holders and about two million graduates pass out of colleges. Among these engineering graduates, approximately two-thirds of the total need to be re-skilled. Otherwise they would not get any jobs in the industry. In the mean time, this developed world requires skilled workers and professionals. A survey report says that there will have a shortage of 40 million working people in the developed world. This shortage can disable the economic growth which in turn shoots up the wage rates thereby reducing the competitiveness of these countries.

#### ROLE OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS

Many private institutes offer vocational training accredited to recognised industry bodies by realizing the need for skilled

manpower in the country. These institutes also promise better placements for their students. In recent years, the government of India has given a lot of importance on streamlining vocational education. This initiative can fulfill the rising need of the market by aiming on employability skills. Vocational education in India is offered by polytechnics and industrial training institutes. In India, vocational training is widely referred to certificate level crafts training for the students who leave school after 10th or 12th standards. Compared to other countries, India has less number of industrial training institutes and polytechnics. Imparting vocational education at the secondary stage of schooling has achieved only partial success. This is because the students mostly prefer general courses like art and science at +2 level. These students constitute the major part of the qualified unemployed youth in India. A systematically planned and effectively implemented vocational education system will facilitate the unemployed youth to take up some useful career.

### VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN INDIA

In India the vocational education system offers vocational courses in school level classes such as 11th and 12th. The program named Vocationalization of Secondary Education was set up by the central government. The Vocational Education Program was set up in 1976-77 as a part of introducing vocational education in higher secondary schools. The project was set up to increase employability and to supply skilled labor. The Vocational Education is controlled by the Ministry of Human Resources Development.

Vocational training in India is provided on a full-time as well as part-time basis. Full-time programs are generally offered through Industrial Training Institutes (I.T.I.s). The nodal agency for grant the recognition to the I.T.I.s is National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT) which is under the Ministry of Labour, Govt. of India. Part-time programs are offered through state technical education boards or universities who also offer full-time courses. Vocational training has been successful in India only in industrial training institutes and that too in engineering trades. There are many private institutes in India which offer courses in vocational training and finishing, but most of them have not been recognized by the Government. India is a pioneer in vocational training in Film & Television, and Information Technology Asian Academy of Film & TV (AAFT). Maharashtra State Government also offered vocational Diplomas in various Trades. Vocational Higher Secondary schools are under MHRD in India. All the state governments runs vocational schools. In Kerala state 389 vocational schools are there with 42 different courses. Mainly six courses centered namely, Agriculture, Business, Engineering and technology, Health and Para-medical skills, Home science and Humanities.

A report published by the World Bank on the Vocational Education in India Says that the capacity in vocational education in India is very small and that too is under utilized. The main objective of MHRD was to place 25 percent of all 11th and 12th grade students. But unfortunately only five percent of them actually got into vocational education system. The report also says that there is a perception from the part of students and parents that the vocational courses are for those who perform poorly in the tenth grade exam.

### CONCERNS IN THE FILED OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING

The rising concerns are:

- The industry faces an acute shortage in the number of Tier2 and Tier 3 employees which should be over come in

the near future. The NVEQF should evolve a mechanism to provide a long term solution for this problem.

- Students lack motivation to select vocational courses and so proper steps should be taken to attract students to take up vocational education.
- The students passing from vocational and polytechnic institutes lack core competencies as required by the industry. It takes two to three years for the companies to train the employees to reach the required level of competency.

### NEW STRATEGIES LAUNCHED BY INDIAN GOVERNMENT

Recently, a new strategic partnership Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been launched to strengthen instructor training and vocational education curriculum in India. This collaboration focuses at the recognition of India's need in increasing the numbers of skilled and educated young candidates. These candidates are more suitable to compete in a knowledge-based and increasingly globalised economy. The objective of the MoU is to implement, evaluate, develop, and monitor a technical trade instructor training program and instructional related to them. The team aims to scale-up nationally. The partners of this association are the Jindal Education Initiatives (JE), Montgomery College, and the Wadhvani Foundation.

The Wadhvani Foundation will focus on faculty development, courseware and curriculum development, and facilitating technology platform. With a mutual agreement on cost recovery model, Montgomery College will provide the technical expertise. JE offers fully-equipped trade instructor training facility and recruitment. Jindal Education Initiatives had started many community colleges in various parts of the country. The OP Jindal Community College (OPJCC) colleges provide many diploma programmes and vocational education certificates. These diplomas and certificates are recognized by the Ministry of Human Resources and Development (MHRD). The college is registered under the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) Community College Scheme. The OPJCC aims to enroll more than 100,000 vocational education students over the next 5 years.

Jindal Educational Initiatives had launched a partnership with Montgomery College in USA. This partnership demanded workforce enhancement curricula in construction management, automotive technology, and building trades. This acted as an initiative to build significant capacity in the vocational education sector in India. A similar initiative was launched by Wadhvani Foundation in the recent year which is called "Wadhvani Skills Colleges." It focuses at creating capacity for vocational education of three million students linked to industry. The MoU was the recent launch signed at a glittering event in Delhi.

Vocational courses which were considered as simple and non attractive are not going to be the same any more. It was considered as a course which produces electricians, plumbers and mechanics. Kapil Sibal, minister for Human Resource Development has taken the initiative to introduce a new ambitious project, the National Vocational Education Qualification Framework (NVEQF) which aims to make the youth employable once they finish their school. This is as a part of the government's decision to make vocational course custom made and attractive for the job market. This project was officially launched on October 8, 2011 by Human Resource Development minister Kapil Sibal.

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