
Strategic Emphasis On Vocational Education In India's National Education Policy 2020: A Paradigm Shift Towards Economic Autonomy And Global Competitiveness"-A Study

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Abstract

The article delineates the pivotal emphasis of the National Education Policy 2020 on vocational education within the Indian pedagogical framework. The overarching objective of the Indian educational schema is not solely to engender graduates in conventional realms of higher academia such as Master of Arts (MA) and Master of Science (MSc) but also to align with the global zeitgeist characterized by the triumvirate economic paradigms of Liberalization, Privatization, and Globalization (LPG). This paradigm shift has ostensibly metamorphosed the global landscape into a cohesive 'global village'. In response, India is ardently pursuing the cultivation of an autonomous economic and political milieu, underscored by a burgeoning imperative for entrepreneurial incubation, propelled by its demographic dividend and comparative labor market advantage on the global stage. The aspiration to ascend to the echelon of global superpower status necessitates an unequivocal focus on vocational education. The National Education Policy 2020 meticulously accentuates this necessity by allocating an exclusive section to vocational education within Part-II, aptly entitled "Reimagining Vocational Education." This segment elucidates the essence and quintessential importance of vocational education, articulating the rationale behind India's strategic prioritization of this educational domain, and delineating the global perception and implementation of vocational education. With the help of the descriptive method and also the National Education Policy 2020 how it will be trends the vocational education with the help of the councils and schemes to improve the nation development.

KEY WORDS: National Education Policy 2020, Vocational Education, Higher Education, Economic Development.

Introduction

Globalization has linked the world's economies, political systems, and cultures, precipitating profound transformations that have escalated the necessity for employment opportunities. Amidst these changes, although formal education remains pivotal in fulfilling employment needs, there emerges a conspicuous and escalating demand for vocational education. This paradigm shift underscores the paramount importance of skill acquisition; individuals possessing superior skills are more likely to secure employment promptly, and those with exceptional skills frequently embark on entrepreneurial ventures. This dynamic scenario prompts an inquiry into the essence of vocational education and the rationale behind its global demand. Recognizing the significance of education, both developed and developing nations, including India, are increasingly focusing on vocational education. The global marketplace's demand for skilled labor and entrepreneurial acumen is undeniable.

In response to this demand, the Government of India has undertaken substantial efforts to enhance Vocational Education and Training (VET), aiming at the modernization of vocational training—a legal initiative set into motion in 2009. ⁱ However, the question of whether it has been successful across all of India remains a significant concern. In the global context, countries that achieve higher exports than imports often emerge as superpowers. India, with its vast

geographical expanse and population only second to China, holds a demographic advantage with a substantial youth population. The key to harnessing this potential lies in skill development within their chosen fields, which can only be achieved through education. Focusing on the demographic aged between 15 to 54, it's crucial to tailor educational strategies that not only impart formal education but also prioritize vocational training and skill development to meet the evolving demands of the global economy. ⁱⁱ

How India push this situation want to turn back our history. Before that know what vocational education is. The vocational education is education that prepares individuals with the specialized skills demanded by various sectors, enhancing their job prospects. This contributes to lower unemployment levels and bolsters the efficiency of the labor market. An adept labor force plays a vital role in driving economic development.in this article discuss the vocational education need and how it develops in future through the NEP 2020.

NATURE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION:

Vocational education is designed to equip students with the necessary skills and knowledge for a particular profession. This form of education is conducted in various settings, including trade schools, technical institutions, and through apprenticeships. The curriculum is specifically tailored to prepare students for careers in various fields, such as plumbing, nursing, and architecture, and others. This educational pathway emphasizes practical training and real-world experience, providing students with a direct route to employment in their chosen field. ⁱⁱⁱ Enhance potential knowledge. Helps in carrier designs, economic advantages dropout rate, boosts confidence professional network different factors.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND THE INDIA:

Since 1991, India has embraced globalization, leading to significant changes in its economy. This shift enabled the establishment and expansion of various industries, attracting multinational companies (MNCs) eager to set up operations within the country. These developments created a demand for skilled labor, highlighting the importance of vocational education facilitated by the country's free trade policies. As a result, job opportunities opened up for the previously unemployed, marking a positive shift in the employment landscape.

However, as the 21st century progressed, globalization in India gained even more momentum. Now, over three decades into this era of global integration, the focus has shifted towards further economic growth and the aspiration for India to become a developed nation. India is home to a significant number of youths aged between 15 and 29, constituting a major asset for the country and surpassing the youth populations of other nations worldwide. This abundant labor market positions India on the path to becoming a superpower, contingent upon effectively harnessing this demographic dividend.

Despite the clear advantages, a major challenge lies in the realm of skill development. A pivotal question arises: Do all Indians possess specialized skills in their respective fields? This issue has become increasingly prominent, as recent reports indicate that only about 5% of students are pursuing vocational education. The reasons for this low uptake are multifaceted, including a lack of infrastructure, inadequately trained teachers, and insufficient academic linkages. These factors collectively hinder the progress towards fully utilizing India's youthful labor force to achieve its developmental goals and ascend to a position of global leadership. For the purpose India concentrates the vocational education. The skill labour only changes the skilled enterperuner that makes India moves to the self-economy nation. There are the 9583 schools importing 150 vocational courses of the two years duration brad area of the economy national inistut eof open schooling also imports vocational education in 80 courses.

NEP 2020 AND THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION:

The cureent BJP (Bharathiya Janatha Party) government wanted to strengthen a vocational education system to meet to meet the global challenges.The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), which was meticulously drafted by a committee under the leadership of Dr. K. Kasthurirangan, the esteemed chairman of the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), received cabinet approval on the 29th of July, 2020. This landmark policy serves as a replacement for the National Education Policy of 1986, thus signifying a monumental reform in the Indian education system after an interlude of thirty-four years. This update is poised to address the evolving educational requirements of the nation and align India's education system with contemporary global standards.

"The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) is designed to encompass four major parts: Part I: School Education; Part II: Higher Education; Part III: Other Key Areas; and Part IV: Making It Happen. This part focuses on action plans in the education field. In this article, we discuss Part II, which pertains to higher education. Higher education encompasses eleven points: Quality Universities and Colleges: A New and Forward-Looking Vision for India's Higher Education System; Institutional Restructuring and Consolidation; Towards a More Holistic and Multidisciplinary Education; Optimal Learning Environments and Support for Students; Motivated, Energized, and Capable Faculty; Equity

and Inclusion in Higher Education; Teacher Education; Re-imagining Vocational Education; Catalyzing Quality Academic Research in All Fields through a New National Research Foundation; and Transforming the Regulatory System of Higher Education. (Ministry of Human Resource Development, n.d.) These subtopics under Part II regulate higher education in accordance with the proposals of NEP 2020, outlining how the new education system will be implemented.^{iv}

The section titled "Re-imagining Vocational Education" within the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 addresses vocational education, unfolding across eight points from 16.1 to 16.8. This segment elucidates the comprehensive re-envisioning of vocational education, emphasizing its pivotal role and integration within the broader educational framework.^v

MAJOR CHALLENGES IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATIONAL:

In contemporary society, a pervasive misconception exists that vocational education is solely for individuals who do not excel academically. This erroneous belief must be eradicated to prevent the stigmatization of students who choose vocational pathways willingly. Such stigmatization engenders feelings of inferiority among these students, adversely affecting their self-esteem and academic performance. More critically, this misconception not only impacts the lives of individual students but also hampers national development. Vocational education plays a crucial role in preparing a skilled workforce, which is essential for various sectors of the economy. Therefore, by undervaluing vocational training, a society limits its potential for economic advancement and innovation. To foster a more inclusive and productive educational environment, it is imperative that societal attitudes towards vocational education undergo a significant transformation. 16.3 also strongly agree this "Vocational education is perceived to be inferior to mainstream education and meant largely for students who are unable to cope with the latter. This is a perception that affects the choices students make. It is a serious concern that can only be dealt with by a complete re-imagination of how vocational education is offered to students in the future."^{vi}

CONCENTRATION OF NEP2020 IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION:

During the plan period, a 'Skill Development Mission' was initiated, featuring a budget allocation of Rs. 228 billion, focusing on the advancement of skill development programs. This initiative aims to cultivate a reservoir of personnel equipped with the necessary skills, placing a significant emphasis on skill enhancement. Even though the next five-year plan, which means 12th five-year plan (2012–2017), the needs are not satisfied, that also gives only the age of 19–24, less than 5 % of the students get only formal vocational education. the point 16.1 "The 12th Five-Year Plan (2012–2017) estimated that only a very small percentage of the Indian workforce in the age group of 19–24 (less than 5%) received formal vocational education Whereas in countries such as the USA, the number is 52%, in Germany, it is 75%, and South Korea, it is as high as 96%. These numbers only underline the urgency of the need to hasten the spread of vocational education in India." This point in the NEP 2020 argues that the developed countries like USA (52%), Germany (75%), the developing country like South Korea (96%), and Indian education want to analyses why the country with more youth gets a lower number of students getting vocational education. This affect the development of the country and also the standard of living of the people in the Nation.

Point 16.2 articulates a significant limitation within India's vocational education system, wherein its focus is predominantly directed towards students in grades 11 and 12, as well as those who have ceased their academic education after grade 8. This observation, disclosed by the National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) in 2013, reveals the absence of a structured pathway for these individuals to further their vocational education. Consequently, this leads to a constrained vocational curriculum that predominantly equips learners with skills suitable for labor-intensive roles, rather than fostering a broader spectrum of competencies necessary for them to emerge as skilled entrepreneurs. This emphasis on a narrowly defined skill set not only curtails the potential for individual career advancement but also limits the capacity for innovation and entrepreneurship within the national workforce. Why do these problems arise? Because less care in skill based teaching.

INCIATIVES THROUGH NEP 2020 FOR STREANTHERN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION:

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, specifically in Section 16.4, underscores a transformative approach towards vocational education beginning at the secondary school level. This policy aims to dismantle the hierarchical perception of educational pathways by integrating vocational education seamlessly with academic learning. The intention is to cultivate a new generation of students who, by engaging with both vocational and academic education in higher education institutions, emerge as highly skilled professionals. This integration is designed to foster innovation across

various domains, transforming students into innovators, skilled artists, and workers equipped with novel ideas. For these advancements to have a meaningful impact, it is crucial for society to recognize and value the contributions of vocational education. By doing so, the policy seeks not only to enhance individual skill sets but also to enrich the broader socio-economic landscape. The acknowledgment of vocational education as a vital component of the educational ecosystem is fundamental to achieving these goals. This refined approach is expected to contribute significantly to the development of a skilled workforce that can navigate and shape the future with creativity and innovation.

In anticipation of the year 2025, there is a strategic imperative to significantly expand vocational education access among students, with an ambitious target set to ensure that at least 50% of learners engage in vocational training programs. This objective marks a substantial increase from the current baseline, necessitating a comprehensive reform strategy to achieve a forty-five percentage point enhancement in vocational education participation rates. Integral to this strategic vision is the alignment with the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which advocates for inclusive and equitable quality education and promotes lifelong learning opportunities for all. The proposed reforms underscore the necessity of integrating vocational education within the broader educational framework, emphasizing its potential to equip students with practical skills and competencies that are immediately applicable in the labor market. The introduction of elective vocational education on a larger scale is envisioned to enhance the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER), thereby facilitating a more inclusive and adaptive educational environment that caters to diverse learner needs and aspirations.

To further this agenda, the draft policy advocates for the expansion of Online Digital Learning (ODL) platforms and the introduction of certificate courses in higher education, thereby increasing accessibility to vocational training. The draft highlights the continuation and enhancement of the Bachelor of Vocational Education (B.Voc) programs, including the introduction of short-term soft skill courses aimed at bridging the skill gap and elevating the stature of vocational education within the academic and employment sectors. Furthermore, the policy draft suggests adopting a hub-and-spoke model for vocational education, promoting collaboration with private institutions to facilitate practical, hands-on learning experiences. This model is designed to not only enrich the vocational curriculum with industry-relevant knowledge and skills but also to foster a deeper understanding of market dynamics among students. In conclusion, these reformative measures are poised to significantly contribute to the elevation of vocational education, ensuring it becomes a cornerstone of the educational system. By aligning vocational training with the imperatives of SDG 4, the policy aims to empower students with the skills and knowledge necessary to secure employment or pursue entrepreneurial ventures, thereby enhancing their career prospects and personal development.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE INTEGRATION OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (NCIVE):

Established by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Government of India, the National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET) emerged as a pivotal regulatory body on August 1, 2020. Its establishment marked the amalgamation of the erstwhile National Skill Development Agency (NSDA) and National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT), consolidating their functions and responsibilities. As a comprehensive national regulator, NCVET assumes the crucial role of setting standards and crafting regulations within the vocational education, training, and skilling ecosystem to enhance quality and efficacy. With a mandate to oversee the development, enhancement, and regulation of entities involved in both long and short-term vocational education and training, NCVET is tasked with establishing minimum operational standards. Its overarching objective is to harmonize the fragmented regulatory landscape, thereby instilling quality assurance throughout the vocational education, training, and skilling value chain. By doing so, NCVET aims to bolster the availability of highly skilled manpower, thus fostering improved employability and driving accelerated growth within the Indian economy.^{vii}

NATIONAL SKILLS VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (NSQF):

The National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF) is structured as an outcome and competency-based framework. It categorizes qualifications based on varying levels of knowledge, skills, aptitude, and responsibilities, all defined in terms of learning outcomes. These outcomes are essential for learners to attain through a blend of formal, non-formal, or informal learning pathways. These pathways encompass academic education, vocational training, skilling initiatives, and experiential learning, which may include relevant experiences and professional proficiency levels achieved, contingent upon assessment.

NEP 2020 AND ACTION ORIENTED POINTS:

Section 16.6 outlines a progressive strategy for the integration of vocational education into both secondary and higher education institutions over the next decade. This approach is predicated on adapting curriculum and course offerings based on local geographical context, in conjunction with fostering partnerships with industries. This localization and industry collaboration aim to ensure that vocational education is relevant and responsive to the needs of the local economy and labor market.

Section 16.7 details the regulatory framework to be established by the National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET). This framework is designed to not only facilitate but also encourage innovation and invention within vocational education through partnerships with private vocational organizations. Recognition and accreditation by the NCVET will be contingent upon the establishment of institutional incubation processes aimed at the continuous improvement of vocational education programs. Finally, section 16.8 delves into the enhancement of practical skills through the adoption of the National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF). This framework is intended to standardize skill-based education in India, aligning it with the International Labour Organization's (ILO) occupational standards to achieve international recognition. Such alignment is anticipated to modernize vocational education, making it more inclusive and focused on practical, hands-on learning. This paradigm shift is expected to dispel any lingering misconceptions about vocational education and make it a more attractive option for students, thereby improving their career prospects through a credit-based education system. National Education Policy 2020 has laid down a very few action oriented points to strengthen the vocational education institutions in India

SCHEMES FOR THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION:

The Government of India has implemented multiple initiatives to enhance vocational education across the country, among which the Samagra Shiksha scheme stands out prominently. This comprehensive scheme, overseen by the Ministry of Education, endeavors to ensure universal access to high-quality education spanning from preschool to senior secondary levels. Notably, within this framework, vocational education is made available to students beginning in the ninth grade. This initiative is part of a broader goal to bolster educational infrastructure, foster an inclusive learning environment, and elevate the overall standard of education.^{viii} The National Vocational Education Qualification Framework (NVEQF) has been established to offer a structured set of competency-based qualifications. This framework is designed to align the skills and knowledge acquired by students with the specific needs and demands of various industries, thereby ensuring their employability and relevance in the job market.^{ix} Furthermore, the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) represents a significant public-private partnership aimed at providing vocational education and training across a myriad of sectors. This corporation plays a crucial role in equipping students with the necessary skills and competencies to thrive in diverse vocational fields.^x

CONCLUSION:

NEP 2020 plays a pivotal role in fostering the growth of local industries and empowering individuals across various occupations. Such an inclusive approach to vocational education is essential for driving economic, political, and cultural development within the country. By equipping young individuals with entrepreneurial and vocational skills, India can progress towards becoming a self-sustaining economy.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 articulates several strategies aimed at revitalizing vocational education, alongside initiatives such as the Samagra Shiksha scheme, which are designed to encourage student engagement with vocational training from a young age. A critical initial step involves raising awareness among school students about the value of vocational education and the myriad opportunities it presents for personal and professional development.

Implementation of NEP 2020's proposals promises to produce a workforce composed of skilled students and entrepreneurs, thereby significantly contributing to India's economic and national development. This vision for vocational education necessitates a coordinated effort to ensure that students are not only aware of but are also motivated to seize the opportunities for vocational advancement, thereby aligning India's educational strategies with its broader developmental goals. And also strengthen vocational education it needs to give more scholars ship to the vocational learning students. To improve the vocational field.

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END NOTES:

ⁱ MATHHIAS PLIZ and JULIA REGAL, "Vocational Education and Training in India: Prospects and Challenges from an Outside Perspective," *THE JOURNAL OF APPLIED RESERACH*, n.d., <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0973801020976606>.

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^{iv} MINISTRY OF EDUACTION, "Draft of National Education Policy 2020," 07 2020.

^v MINISTRY OF EDUACTION.

^{vi} MINISTRY OF EDUACTION.

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^{viii} "Education for All in India."

^{ix} "Education for All in India."

^x "Education for All in India."