

Vocational Education for All

▪ Poonam Agrawal

Introduction

In a unique way individuality and universality have to be achieved and maintained through a fine balance, in human life; education and excellence being no exception. While Mahatma Gandhi valued education as 'the basic tool for the development of consciousness and reconstruction of the society', in the modern context also it has been widely recognized that the aspirations and development goals of all the countries can be fulfilled only by assuring education to all the people, a right promised in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the constitution and law of most of the countries. But education does not mean only literacy; it means a functional competence which would lead to excellence in work and empowerment in life, enriching and improving the very quality of life. In forward thinking, the four pillars of education projected are learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, and learning to be. 'Learning to do' essentially addresses to Vocational Education and Training (VET). Universalization of vocational education thus becomes an essentiality. The mandate should be reaching all and building human resources for all areas of need within emerging global society, enhancing competitiveness of nations. This unit shall help you to undergo a critical journey on various dimensions of the concept of vocational education for all and to peep into the future with its probable and/or desirable designs.



Learning outcomes

After studying this unit , you will be able to:

- elucidate clearly the concept of vocational education for all;
- analyze the necessity and possibilities of its adoption;
- examine the considerations that need to be taken care of the achieve the universalization of vocational education; and
- justify the linkages of vocational education to economic, environmental and social aspects of sustainability.

The necessity of vocational education for all

The impressions of changes in one country are already being felt through out the world and in times to come no country would remain in isolation from others. The boundaries are dissolving to transform the world into a single huge market, wherein the nations compete for hold. It has been realized that the skills and competence of the workforce augmented with knowledge and technology determine the extent and magnitude of economic growth to a significant extent and provide opportunities to individuals to become part of the process. In such a scenario, superior skilled human resource and technology would dictate the terms, leading country/countries with such resource to be the super power, this, in effect, would reinforce the stage for Vocational Education for All.

The countries would have to suitably equip all the people capable of being productive, including the elderly population. Traditionally, the social security for the aged was the responsibility of the family. But this instance is changing fast and shall become more complex in years to come. Further, the concerns of social justice are significantly influencing the policies and initiatives the world over. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), universally accepted as the key to social justice, equity, socio-economic prosperity and development, could progressively play an important role. Most crucial would be the role of technical and vocational education in the formal sector for the young persons in schools and colleges. The infrastructure so created can be extended to other groups also, viz. adults, aged, skilled or unskilled willing to learn, underemployed, those in need of reorientation and upgradation of skills or those who need to acquire new skills.

Linking TVET to economic, environmental, and social aspects of sustainability has to become the critical concern of policy makers and curriculum developers and should be extended to the entire canvas of education. To supplement the formal sector, several attempts in the non-formal, private sector and through the open and distance learning systems have been made and are contributing effectively. The private sector has grown significantly in the areas of providing computer training even in rural, remote and far-flung places. It has to extend beyond computer related skills as well. A clear indication is of the need to expand the base of vocational education on a much wider canvas, taking all the people and social strata in its fold.

The prevailing education system

Formal academic education, also termed general education, has often kept in its central focus 'learning to know'. This, even today, aims to enhance the general proficiency, is mostly knowledge based and does not prepare the learner for any specific job or occupation. This is grossly inadequate when education is viewed as a process of learning which shapes life, helps a person to grow with increasing productivity and face life with a purpose. Education should not only build in a person a store of knowledge, to pick something up every now and then, but to help him/her bring out the best in oneself in terms of attitudes, skills, capacities and economic potential. Vocational education on the other hand, happened to be designed to develop competencies specially suited to identified occupation(s). Traditionally, in many countries, general education and vocational education are conceptually and operationally severed from each other, the vocational students not finding entry into the academic education. India, by and large, is no exception to this.

So far, universalization of vocational education has been a bottleneck. Vocational education could have achieved much higher targets of success had it been able to take under its umbrella the universe. The universe which includes all children (in and out of school) and the productive population as a whole. Its access has been 'patchy'. It is accessible to those who complete 8-10 years of school education. It is mostly accessible to those who want to continue in school after 10 years of learning, it is accessible to those who do not fall under the category of special groups (barring few exceptions), it is accessible to those who want to equip themselves for a particular area of wage/self earning. This has seriously hit the universality of vocation education. In its specificity, it has excluded a number of important social strata from its fold – the school drop outs, artisans, adult under- or un-employed, older population that can still be productive i.e. retired persons, those seeking part-time employment e.g. home-makers, those who are geographically challenged; the neoliterates, child labour and groups with special needs. A large population of those students who have opted for regular, 'academic' courses also need to be included in the fold. Severe gender disparities in its access are visible.

These dark spots have to be erased and in times to come, the philosophy of Vocational Education should be a philosophy in the context of equitable and sustainable development. The mandate should be reaching all and building human resource for all areas of need within emerging global society, enhancing competitiveness of nations. Let our aim be a world which ensures equity in terms of opportunities and benefits that guarantees a level playing field to all. In order to remove the patchy effect the 'oxygen of productive life' – vocational education - has to flow freely to all.

THE PEOPLE
UNIVERSITY

Universalization of vocational education at conceptual level

The concept of universalization of vocational education can be dealt with from two angles – the educational structure and the social structure.

From the stand point of social structure

Vocational education of good and comparable quality should be accessible with equal opportunities to all without any discrimination returning to caste, social class, gender, age, or achievement level. Universality could be used as an instrument to eliminate disparities and build social order. The motto should be Education (with vocational education included), Excellence, Empowerment and Equity. On the front of equity, for wholesome development it is necessary to ensure opportunities of fullest achievement to all the people in the country. Presently the stage is far from set as the floor is highly uneven in respect to flow of knowledge and skills and the benefits that accrue thereof. We must ensure unbiased flow of these to everybody, everywhere including the following:

Girls/women

There is sufficient evidence that education and economic empowerment are the key contributors not only to improve the status of women in the society but also to address a number of other issues such as productivity, sustainable growth of the economy, population explosion, infant mortality and morbidity, male alcoholism and may be even child labour and child abuse etc. A number of countries, India, Mexico, Kenya, Sweden, Turkey and Zambia to name a few, have both legislation and national policies that provide for equal access of Technical and Vocational Education to girls and women. In India, the National Policy on Education – 1986, rightly enumerates "Education will be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women. In order to neutralize the accumulated distortions of the past, there will be a well-conceived edge in favor of women. The national education system will play a positive, interventionist role in the empowerment of women". Further, "Major emphasis will be laid on women's participation in vocational, technical and professional education at different levels".

However, despite all this advocacy, the women's participation in education is not up to the expectations and is even lesser in the technical and vocational education. Under Article 45 of the constitution, free and compulsory education is committed to children up to the age of 14 but it has not been realized in practice as the system has not been able to enroll and retain girls to the desired levels. Moreover, compulsory education only up to the level of elementary does not bring any real benefit to the girl as an individual in making her a competitive and productive person because all the formal technical and vocational education starts after the elementary level.

In spite of the numerous incentives being given to the families for enrolling their daughters in school education, even the elementary level is not within reach of every girl child. Some of the well documented and well known reasons for this are:

- lack of schools in the vicinity
- parent's concern for girls safety
- lack of women teachers
- girls' involvement in domestic work and sibling care;
- absence of perception of girl child as a career person; and
- early marriage.

While the enrolment and pass out figures, and ratios of boys and girls in classrooms show one side of the story, the other side to be explored is as to how many girls of school going age (not restricted to primary level only) are out of the education system. These girls will also need to be targeted besides those who do not complete their education. We'll have to analyse as to where 10-12 years of basic education is pre-requisite for entrance into vocational, technical or professional education, how much of the girls' population, specially that from the rural background or from other disadvantaged strata are being addressed. Even when enrolled, the participation of girls in these areas of education is low and gender stereotyped.

However, some efforts made to include girls and women in the fold are worth mentioning here. The Women's Vocational Training Programme in the Ministry of Labour and Employment was launched in 1977, aiming at the social development and economic growth of women. The women's training directorate in the Ministry is responsible for designing and pursuing long term policies related to Women's Vocational Training in the country. To provide training facilities to women so as to enhance their participation in industry as skilled workers and/or to help them in acquiring skills for taking up self-employment, training programmes exclusively for women are being provided through the National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) and 10 Regional Vocational Training Institutes for Women (RVTI) under the Directorate in the central sector. The present training capacity of these Institutes is 3344 seats. A new initiative is the training in Business Services/Entrepreneurial Development to encourage self-employment. Under the state governments, a total of 48,014 seats are offered to women in 263 women-exclusive ITIs and 443 wings in general ITIs in the government. These figures for private ITIs are 93 and 84 respectively. State Governments reserve 25% of the seats for women in general ITIs (Ministry of Labour and Employment, 2006-07). Women are specially benefited by the short-term courses of 2-8 weeks duration with flexible timing. Around 2500 women receive training in these courses every year. These courses offer need based generic skills, and the opportunity to upgrade specific vocational skills, thus helping them to stay competitive in a rapidly changing world of work.

Several alternate attempts have also been made, especially by NGO's, to provide training and skill development to a target group that falls outside the reach of the ITIs and other more conventional approaches.

These efforts, although significant, are not sufficient. Women's access to Vocational and Professional Education and Economic Empowerment has not yet attained expected dimensions. Some of the reasons that could be perceived for this scenario could be :

- women's education is mostly viewed not as a means to make them empowered but to groom them better for marriage;
- Society fears that a groom for highly educated girl would be difficult to find and would be more expensive;
- Some segments of the society still have prejudices and fears about educated girls and do not consider higher education of girls good for community norms.
- Some are fearful of the safety and security of girls in educational institutions and workplaces.

Hence, it has often been seen that even from the technical or professional courses, the parents pull them out as soon as they find a suitable match for marriage or for domestic and sibling responsibilities. This calls for not only creating opportunities and making the vocational and technical/ professional education accessible to girls but also taking into account the outcome, i.e., how many girls were really able to take the benefit of this accessibility. The success of any

initiative must be linked with the functional empowerment of girls, wherein, they become self-reliant.

Schedule Castes/Schedule Tribes, religious and ethnic minorities

These groups are socio-economically suppressed and neglected organs of the society. Each country, so far having a social order based on caste, class, color or religion must work on the philosophy of knowledge based social order in which nobody is side-lined, every person has the knowledge as to when, where and how to get the education (Vocational Education), must have access to it and have unblocked chances of making oneself competent to create a niche in the competitive world. These are all heterogeneous groups, with varied obstacles on their way needing strategic interventions.

Neoliterates

These could be children or adults, productive or non-productive who simply know to read and write but merely being able to recognize and pronounce the letters, words or figures is not enough. In other words, literacy is not enough, they have to be educated to such levels of knowledge and skills that they cannot be sidelined from the social, economic and developmental dynamics. This is not only a question of access but of dimension, the Vocational Education would have to add a new dimension to itself so as to take such persons in its fold.

Child labour

They are productive but not competitive because they are deprived of a natural process of learning and development. They are most often exploited and very easily could lose employment on account of changing technologies. They are mostly deprived of expressing their full potential, the society owes them their normal process of self and professional growth. Vocational Educational, again has to expand not only in terms of accessibility but type of programmes that it offers to cover this group.

People with disabilities

This differentially challenged group has to be paid special attention. Modes of teaching learning should be sufficiently diversified to accommodate persons with different types of special needs, their strengths identified and capacities built upon their strengths, as these are the people having their own strength areas and are not to be pitied but valued. Once again Vocational Education has to diversify a good deal to reach and equip such people made to shy away from the mainstream so far.

People left away due to geographical remoteness

We have to reach the unreached. This is a question of expanding length and breadth to touch the remote corners and erase the remoteness through shine of education. Distance Vocational Education of comparable quality, coming up in good measures, has to expand further to reach all that are still out.

Aged persons

As mentioned earlier, traditionally, the family was responsible to provide for and to take care of aged persons. This picture is fast changing. Life's expectancy has increased and so has the medical care, resulting in increase in the productive life of individuals. The infrastructure created for other groups, can however, easily be planned to extend to the aged people, with some desirable adaptations.

ACTIVITY 2



Visualizing the needs of various diversified groups, discuss, in about 150 words, the possibility of making good quality vocational education available to them.

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From the standpoint of educational structure

If we understand education resting on the four essential pillars, as mentioned above, one of these being 'learning to do' and if we decide to tread along the motto 'Education for all', put together we actually mean 'Vocational Education for all'. In other words anyone educated in whatever stream/area must also undergo Vocational Education.

Vocational education as 'the education'

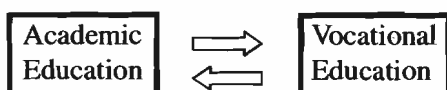
An educated person must be able to understand (understanding refers to having knowledge), nurture the knowledge, observe and invest the knowledge suitably to transform it into practice (that is, ability to do), command one's act, excel in it and thus go on understanding and performing better, reaching yet higher levels of excellence. Thus 'to do' is an integral part of meaningful education and must be taken as a vital organ of the body of education itself. It could be given a fixed, compulsory weightage as in case of languages(s), offering many options, free for all to choose from a wide range such that a person studying medicine might as well offer a course in handicrafts. This may be a unique combination but not impracticable as in a number of cases the doctors, engineers or scientists have excelled in the areas of music and art, people in fact can excel equally well in varied faculties that seem distant apart. It is often more satisfying and rewarding in life than living the monotony of developing a single faculty or faculties of similar shades. Alternatively or additionally, vocational and entrepreneurial education can be integrated with various existing faculties.

Futuristic Approach

In fact, so far in several societies people are labeled as intellectuals or workers, the intellectuals usually considered superior to workers, thus it creates a line of demarcation among individuals which although imaginary has severe repercussions in society. Dissolving this demarcation line between an intellectual and a worker or between academic and technical/vocational would also build social coherence.

Vocational education as a separate stream

Considering that presently Vocational Education is offered in a number of countries as a distinct stream at senior secondary level, to start with, the channel from academic to Vocational Education and vice-versa should be made 'bar free', that is, the students should be able to interchange between the two at any stage or age.



To facilitate this, some cases are enumerated below :

If a person has studied in academic stream at 11th, 12th, or degree level, and then wishes to join vocational courses, he/she should be permitted to do so, giving suitable exemptions.

If a vocational student wishes to join academic stream after 11th or 12th standard at senior secondary or degree level, respectively, he/she should be permitted to do so giving suitable weightage to previous learning and providing remedial credits if the need be.

The emphasis is that the distinction between academic and Vocational Education, if at all, should be more fluid. A similar design can be adopted for education at higher levels also

ACTIVITY 3



Critically analyze the possibilities and prospects of 'vocational education for all' from the angle of educational structure. Write in about 150 words.

[illegible]

Achieving universalisation of vocational education

While planning to achieve universalisation of vocational education functional aspects of implementation will have to be worked out taking into account the specific issues and requirements of each target group. Some enumerations are given below taking example of some specific groups.

Certain considerations for improving access of girls/women to vocational education

The issues of girls access to vocational/professional education could be tackled diversifying it at two target levels:

Target I – those girls/women who are illiterate/semi-literate and already working in unorganized sector

Target II – girl child starting her education

For addressing Target – I, the only answer at present is Non Formal Education which at some point may culminate into formal vocational education.

For addressing Target-II, a consortium of bodies concerned with education at different levels and girl child's development, empowerment and welfare should be formed to ensure enrolment, retention and achievement of girls through education, specially vocational & professional education. This could be a step to gradually intervene the trend of participation of girls in education which is not yet up to the expected level. One strategy to begin with could be to concentrate more on class VIII girls prevent dropout, give the direction at that very stage so that they could enter different levels of vocational/Professional education.

Further,

- Women's/girls participation and contribution in various sectors of economy and in the society should be made visible.
- A course on women empowerment should be introduced at suitable levels, for either sex, in order to create space in the society for the empowered women.
- Carefully designed projects should be taken up to intervene attitudinal discrimination by society and parents.

Certain considerations for ensuring vocational education to marginalized youth

Unless paid focused attention the under-privileged sections of social strata, discriminated so far on class, caste, color and ethnic grounds would remain so even in times to come. Special efforts have also to be made for street children, child labour, people left out due to geographical remoteness and people with special needs (disabled). People could be mobilized to join formal system making suitable adaptations to accommodate all. Non-Formal and distance education seem to be the other options. The efforts in NFE could however pave way to formal education at certain stages in order to maintain comparable quality.

Futuristic Approach

Further,

- we have to visualize that ‘equal opportunities to all’ would not really work. Lower the level higher would be the resources needed to address to the disparities existing.
- extending formal education to them as in usual manner for all would not bring them under the umbrella.
- it should not only be these groups who should adapt themselves to be identified with the mainstream, the system should also adapt itself to accommodate them
- equity does not mean equal opportunity to all, but extends beyond it
- the index of success on this issue should be the achievements by the marginalized youth not the possibilities made available to them.

ACTIVITY 4



In your view, is the vision of 'vocational education for all' necessary for a country like India. Also describe the functional aspects of its planning and implementation. Write in about 200 words.

Handwriting practice lines for the activity response.

Summary

In our new philosophy of vocational education for the new millennium the philosophy in the context of equitable and sustainable development should be the forerunner, as much of the social unrest, crime and disorder is because of biased flow of the benefits of development and prosperity. If this paradigm has to change in the new millennium, universalisation of vocational education is a promising answer which would create a social order defined by knowledge, competence and economic potential to all, which if sustained would build social coherence. In view of this, the present unit focuses on the need for vocational education for all and seeks to justify universalization of vocational education from the point of view of social structure for obtaining excellence, empowerment and equity especially for the girls/women and other weaker sections of the society including the neo-literates, religious and ethnic minorities, people with disabilities etc.

Suggested Readings



Agrawal, Poonam (2007). Traditional and Transitional TVET systems. In *International handbook on TVET*. Paris: UNESCO.

Delores, Jacques, et. al. (1996). *Learning: the treasure within*. Report International Commission on Education for the Twenty first Century. Paris: UNESCO.

Education for All Summit of Nine High Population Countries (1993). *Report*. 12-16 Dec., New Delhi.

GOI (1986). *National policy on education (1986)*. New Delhi: Government of India.

Rajput, J.S., (2007). *The changing context of TVET for workforce in India*. Presented in UNESCO Conference in Australia.

UNESCO – UNEVOC (1995). International Expert Meeting on the Promotion of Equal Access of Girls and Women to Technical and Vocational Education. July 10-15, Korea.



Questions for critical reflection

- 1) Justify the universalization of vocational education in the present day Indian scenario.
- 2) What considerations can facilitate access of vocational education to women and the marginalized youth?
- 3) Critical reflect on how can vocational education be linked to economic, environmental and social aspects of sustainability?

Traditional Vocational Education and Reforms in the Current Context

▪ S.Z. Haider

UNIT

2

Introduction

Human ingenuity, supported by instinctive urge to explore and learn, manifests itself in dynamic creativity. It transforms into a mechanism of transfer of the 'acquired' knowledge and accumulated experience to future generations. The whole process of acquisition and evolution of knowledge and its transfer is covered under 'education'. It also covers various transitions, reforms and adaptations which are even more frequent and relevant in the current context. The fast pace of development is driving even the 'established' societies to a continuous review and reforms. With respect to vocational education, throughout the world, countries are constantly trying to adapt to a new economic and social order. However, something that had been a tradition may again find a place in contextual and futuristic systems. Tradition need not be discarded without scrutiny, similarly, transition cannot be deferred. In this unit you will have an overview of the manner in which education systems, with particular focus on vocational education, evolved with time. The discussion will focus on their relevance and reforms in the contemporary context.



Learning outcomes

After going through this unit you should be able to:

- explain the traditional system of vocational education existent in India;
- clarify how with development of culture and changed social set up of the concept of vocational education and training underwent a transition;
- specify the characteristics of VET which marked the transition from traditional system of VET;
- highlight the kind of change in VET, which was necessitated in the concept of VET as result of urbanization, industrialization and globalization;
- examine the impact of ODL strategy on VET citing examples from different countries of the world; and
- analyse the reforms in India and rest of the world that took place in the VET.

Traditional systems

Education, in its real sense, has always been perceived beyond literacy and numeracy. In India, in olden times, the education was imparted in the *ashrams* (*Gurukuls*) of *rishis* (*saints*). The students, irrespective of their socio-economic backgrounds lived together in Gurukul, from the age 5 –6 years till the Guru adjudged them (each individually) to be fit for the responsibilities of life. The education was wholesome, undemarcated into levels (primary, middle, secondary or higher) or forms (academic, religious, moral, career oriented). It included knowledge, character building and skill training through ashram's day-to-day work e.g. cooking, cleaning, farming, gardening,

cattle rearing and such others. The students were taught to develop qualities of self-reliance and respect mutual equality. This system also gradually had spread to small villages and continued for thousands of years. Some world famous universities of India, such as, Nalanda, Taxshila (now in Pakistan), Vikramshila were based on this system of education.

Besides this, the two age old methods of learning on the job (apprenticeship) and learning in family tradition also existed. In ancient and medieval India, the young children were exposed to skills relating to family vocation from childhood, leading to intensive training within the family which gradually made them experts in the vocation. It was also the responsibility of the elders in the family to educate children about the righteous conduct and behaviour, and initiate them into life such that they face the challenges of life and take responsibilities with the desired preparedness.

In ancient civilizations, before the advent of industrial era, home and the apprenticeship were the main systems of educating children, vocational education being an integral part of the system characterized by handwork (manual work). Some kind of vocational education systems existed in most Asian countries even in 19th century, certain countries like India being ahead than others. However, most of the countries including India had to start afresh after attaining independence.

ACTIVITY 5



Describe the characteristics of traditional approach to vocational education and training in India. Answer in about 100 words.

Transition

As the cultures progressed, demands of development necessitated formalization of education imparted outside homes in schools and colleges. The institutionalization of education, however, partitioned the societies into those who could take advantage of such institutionalized education and the others who remained disadvantaged and marginalized by exclusion due to various reasons. The people came to be labeled as intellectuals and the worker class, the latter remaining uneducated or educated to a lower level only. An overview of development of education in different parts of the world brings to prominence some characteristic features of institutionalization of education. Firstly, that the pace of development in education and the ideologies were not uniform through out the world. Traditionally, the TVET systems in a country were determined and influenced by

factors such as demography, culture, social set-up, extreme political turmoil (external rule, World Wars) and struggle for sustenance. These systems varied from one country to another, with some countries having more in common than the other. Secondly, that the integrated system of imparting knowledge with manual work (skills) gave way to two distinct systems of General and Vocational (or Technical) education.

The general education, even today, is knowledge oriented, is mostly theoretical and is not job or occupation specific. It aims to enhance the general proficiency. On the contrary, the vocational education develops competencies specially suited to identified occupation(s). The academic education and the vocation education have been differing from each other both in principle and implementation in many countries , the former often does not open entry to the vocational students. Vocational education is usually offered at secondary or senior secondary level (10 or 12 years of school education, respectively) and terminates there, leading to a certificate. Some options of continuing vocational education exist leading to diploma, but it still remains at the sub - university level without articulation with academic education.

Vocational education and vocational training have also distinctly differed from each other by their relative contents of knowledge and skills. The Vocational Education Programmes were designed to develop considerable knowledge base along with skill development while in case of training, often there has been very little, if any, theoretical content. The target groups, mode of delivery and management also differed.

Globally, barring few exceptions, vocational education was considered an alternate education meant for low achievers, school leavers/dropouts, less intellectuals or for the lower socio-economic strata. It aimed at preparing the workforce of the low or middle order inculcating occupation specific skills. However, shifts have taken place dissolving distinctions and boundaries during reforms. These will be discussed in detail under current context later in this unit.

In India, the deep rooted and celebrated system of education in family tradition and apprenticeship with focus on working with hands was strategically destroyed during the colonial rule. The implanted system emphatically propagated by the British, commonly known as the 'Macaulay system' intending to prepare the people 'to serve the British rulers' was not concerned with the growth and development of India as a nation. This was realized by the great thinkers like Mahatma Gandhi. His experiments in education in South Africa and India led him to conceptualize Basic Education (Nai Talim) in India. He visualized education as a basic tool for development of national consciousness and reconstruction of society. Character building by education through good deeds, development of virtues, ability to find solutions of the problems and development of intellect through craft were the main elements of basic education. Gandhiji stated – " In my definition of education, there is no wall of brick and cement separating intellectual training from vocational training, but the latter includes the former , that is, it provides scope for development of the intellect. The visionary thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi got reflected in recommendations of various commissions and policies and are relevant even today. In India, vocational education was perceived as a continuum of exposure, orientation, exploration and training. It was recommended that students should be exposed to a variety of work of practical nature, get oriented towards work, should be given time to explore various vocational options before they get to select their vocation for study. With a view to link education and productivity, Education Commission (1964-66), also called Kothari Commission, recommended that work experience should form an integral part of general education. This concept was essentially similar to the philosophy of basic education, although it was more broad based and included several modern productive activities. Consequently National Policy of Education (1968, 1986) in India reemphasized the work education in schools, introducing Work Education from classes I to VIII, prevocational education in classes IX and X

and vocational education as a distinct stream in XI and XII. The work oriented education offered at elementary level under one of the various nomenclatures, e.g. work experience/work education/life-oriented education/craft education/socially useful productive work is meant to prepare children to face life with proper attitude, knowledge and skills in relation to work. This is expected to promote socio-personal and vocational development and ultimately lead to smooth transition to the world of work (Agrawal, 2000).

In India, the 83rd Constitutional amendment has made 8 years of elementary education compulsory, however it is yet to be achieved. A policy of 10 years of common school curriculum is followed, after which streaming into general and vocational or technical education begins. However, Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) take both VIII and X pass-outs and train them according to needs of specific industry offering certificate courses of varying duration. Some states in India e.g. Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh also run technical schools after lower secondary stage (VIII) in which in addition to common curriculum, one vocational subject is offered. These schools mainly feed the polytechnics. India has a chain of polytechnics (more than 1300) providing broad based education after X standard in engineering and some non-engineering areas. The polytechnics usually offer 3 year programme leading to diploma (International Encyclopedia of National Systems of Education, 1995). The vocational education in India is generally severed from the academic (general) education and does not enjoy a reputable status except for higher education in engineering and technology but the feeding for these comes from the academic stream.

Traditionally, history, culture, political and sociological features affected the TVET systems, later pace of urbanization and industrialization, technological revolution and labour demands set the pace of expansion and reforms. However, in the last one to two decades, globalization, emergence of knowledge society, liberalization and employment equations in free economies have necessitated rethinking on the policies and long-existing structures of education and training. Concerns for gender equity, social equilibrium and justice exercise demands on policies and programmes for specific social groups. India has been no exception to these trends (Agrawal, 1999).

ACTIVITY 6



Outline briefly the socio-political and/or environmental factors led to a transition in the concept and approach of VET. Answer in about 100 words.

Reforms in the current context

There is a renewed emphasis on development of skilled but adaptable human resource in the international arena. In the present context, the TVET is being seen as a major human resource development strategy. In Asian region, there is a common realization of the importance of skills in the socio-economic development as reflected in the conference report on case studies on TVE in Asia and the Pacific in 1996 – "The future international competitiveness in trade and increases in national productivity will only occur by having a skilled work force capable of meeting the technological changes of the 1990s and beyond". (NIER / UNESCO, 2002).

These days merely acquiring knowledge and skills is not enough. The liberalization, globalization and rapid technological changes have substantially changed the world of work. Traditionally, training aimed at preparing a trained worker for lifetime employment. Now the trend is towards frequent and multiple career changes, part-time and causal work. This necessitates continued lifelong learning and training strategies coping up with changing technology and employment demands. The work force needs to be flexible and adaptable. The emphasis is on competitiveness, inter personal skills and ability to sustain employment by delivering in changing job requirements and circumstances. The traditional concepts are being redefined and the relationship among and between the knowledge, information, training, learning, qualifications, skills and employment are being understood afresh. The distinction between education and training is not as sharp as it used to be.

The training also has to address the concerns of the informal sector. ILO (1999) suggests that training and employment generation efforts should aim to create an environment conducive to income generating activities, provide skill training, business training and access to credit particularly for socially disadvantaged groups.

Offering opportunities for initial and further vocational training according to the needs of industry is in the interest of both the employers and the employee. These days not only the vocational training but regular and appropriate further training and life-long learning through the entire working life is crucial to maintain efficiency, productivity and the employee's employability. (ECEG, EMCEF, 2004).

ACTIVITY 7



What is the concept of 'work education' as enunciated by Mahtma Gandhi and further recommended by the National Education Commissions and Committees? Answer in about 100 words

Handwriting practice lines consisting of multiple horizontal lines for text entry.

Open and distance learning (ODL) strategy

ODL, mainly referring to the pedagogical aspect of education, has wide ranging implications not only on the delivery but also on the instructional design, reach, impact and quality. Besides being advocated as a means to reach a large number of learners at a time, it is also viewed as a strategy for gender equity and social justice. The flexible mode of delivery offering possibilities of lifelong learning, learner centered approach and high adaptability to changing demands are added advantages. However, issue of quality has been a concern with the ODL and has to be paid special attention if the ODL is to accrue real benefits.

Australia is a country with probably maximum courses and degrees offered through distance learning. The Australian Flexible Learning Framework for Vocational Education and Training 2000-2004, a collaborative commonwealth-state strategy, elaborates nationally agreed goals, principles and actions designed to give a boost to flexible learning (DETYA Annual Report, 2000-01)

India initiated correspondence courses in teacher education in early 1960s. Now a strong network of ODL through central open university (Indira Gandhi National Open University) and state level open universities has been established which offer vocational programmes also. At school stage, National Institute of Open Schooling offers about 70 vocational courses of various levels and duration through correspondence-cum-contact mode.

This in fact, has been the global trend. The ODL started primarily with correspondence courses and got a boost with the satellite system. With the advent of the era of information technology, e-learning has been made possible which is being seen as a strong strategy to bring within the folds of education those who have been left out of the regular education system due to various reasons and for training and retraining the employment seekers and the employed, according to the changing job profiles.

ACTIVITY 8



What impact does ODL strategy have on VET in the current context? Answer in about 100 words.

The reforms in India at a glance

The National Knowledge Commission (NKC) constituted in 2005, as a high level advisory body to the Prime Minister of India, states while Higher Education enrolment has to increase markedly,

the skill requirement of the growing economy means that a large proportion of our labour force needs to be provided vocational education and be trained in adequate skills. This skill element has to be integrated with the higher education system to ensure maximum mobility. NKC's recommendations focus on increasing the flexibility of vocational education and training (VET), within the mainstream education system. While the resource allocation for vocational education needs to be increased, capacity needs to be expanded through innovative delivery models. Strong Public Private Partnerships (PPP) are also advocated. PPP framework needs to be well thought out and devised keeping in mind the specificities for the sector. Given that only 7% of the country's labour force is in the organized sector, enhancing training options available for the unorganized and informal sector will be critical for enhancing the productivity of the bulk of our working population. It is necessary to ensure a robust regulatory and accreditation framework, along with proper certification of vocational education and training. This will allow easier mobility into higher education streams, enhancing the value of such training and providing continuous opportunity for up-gradation of these skills (National Knowledge Commission, 2007).

Task Force on Skill development (2007) emphasizes on a shift from a supply to a demand driven policy. It states that a distinction needs to be drawn between Vocational Education (VE) and Vocational Training (VT), which would help eliminate the prevailing policy overlap. However, an interface between VE and VT has been envisaged at different levels. One single formula may not be applicable for the whole country. Within a broad framework the State Governments can work out their priorities.

Vocational education can be provided in schools either by 'weaving' the subjects into the curriculum or by providing separate 'optionals' at the School and College level. VT and VE programmes can be made available to students after Class VIII at any time and after Class V for those over 15 years of age in order to cater to dropouts from the formal education system. As regards 'streaming' of students into VT, this could begin after class X, given the Government of India's intention to universalize elementary education and expand opportunities for secondary education.

The Framework for vocational education and Training in India (2007) proposes various qualifications, right from secondary level to Ph.D. level, interweaving academic education, vocational education and skill training, to be linked for vertical mobility. The framework provides a mechanism to prepare human resource both in formal and informal sectors, through competency based , modular, multi entry-multi exit approach. Flexibility in delivery modes and diversity in courses and training options with credit accumulation and transfer are the other key features. It also enumerates bodies/ agencies for governance.

Based on these documents schemes and missions are being developed to be launched in the XI Five Year Plan.

Summary

The society constantly reinvents itself through education. It is a process by which the young generation builds its roots and gets prepared for the future. In a dynamic surrounding, nothing that is growing or facilitates growth and development can be static. Education is a facilitator of growth and development, hence, cannot afford to be static. It demands a constant change without compromising with continuity. The key is to strike a right balance between ancient and modern, ideal and real, while neither the key nor the balance would ever be static. Consequently, designing education is a continuous endeavor of exploration, experimentation, invention and reinvention; with a pace that the society demands. (Agrawal , 2006) .

The proverbial rigidity of education systems reflected in resistance to change has to vanish in the face of fast global changes. Education is the key to get an edge in the current scenario, but it has to be relevant and effective. While knowledge is necessary, it becomes functional only when supplemented with competencies and responsive skills. Never before was there as strong a need as today for the TVET to adapt itself to serve as a critical binding force between the society, productivity and sustainable development.

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Questions for critical reflection

- 1) "While knowledge is necessary, it becomes functional only when supplemented with competencies and responsive skills". Discuss and justify your stand.
- 2) What know of public private partnership is necessary for effective implementation of the policy of VET and why?
- 3) "In India and globally as well vocational education and training is seen as a major human resource strategy". Discuss the implication of the statement.

Vocational Education and Human Development

UNIT

3

■ S.Z. Haider

Introduction

Vocational education and training should be dealt and approached within the comprehensive concept of 'Human Development' (HD). It is in this context that following remark from 'Human Development in South Asia' (UNDP, 1998) report can be appreciated

"The challenge for the South Asian region today is to travel the vast distance between its performance and its promise. On the one hand, it has emerged as the poorest, the most illiterate, the most malnourished, and the least gender sensitive region in the world. On the other hand, it has all the potential to become the most dynamic region in the twenty-first century, if there is massive investment in human development. The most critical components in any such investment plan are:

- i) basic education for all, and
- ii) relevant technical skills" (read, vocational and technical skills).

Developing people is the essence of any human development effort and it is an important goal of all other development activities. All forms of development (economic, technological, agricultural, industrial, etc.) are ultimately meant to serve people in terms of adding to their happiness through better quality and standards of life.

It is a widely accepted fact that HD plays a crucial role in the development of a nation. Those countries, which have developed their people by investing in sectors such as education, health, science and technology have achieved considerable success. Most developing countries, on the other hand, due to constraints of resources tend to make human development choices haphazardly, rather than in a continuous and planned manner, especially in terms of identifying development sectors and target groups and in choosing appropriate processes. They need to prepare a framework for action - a comprehensive one - keeping in view the requirement of all people. The concept of HD as discussed by Rao (1997) includes the process of development of peoples' competencies (knowledge, skills, attitude and values), as also enabling them to apply these competencies to improve their own lives and those of the others. The impact will be on the overall economic growth and social development. Seen in this way, it is apparent that human development results in economic development. The only consideration here is that the benefits of development should reach all people rather than only to a segment of population. When we analyse the situation India is facing, and apply this concept of human development, keeping education as an important instrument for development, the only visible remedy or alternative is to go for vocational education and training in a big way along with investment in basic education.

In this backdrop the present unit is developed to highlight the significance of vocational education in human development and needful a massive programme of VET to achieve the aim.



Learning outcomes

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- elucidate with examples the concept of human development;
- identify the factors that are responsible for India's low ranking on human development dimension;
- highlight and describe the need for a massive programme of VET in the country, to ensure that people, in general, have a decent life and live with dignity.

Human Development

Human development is a vital ingredient for building a nation. It may be appreciated that the purpose of all development is to bring happiness in the lives of their people by improving their quality of life and standard of living. Thus, human development by itself is the end of all developmental activities; at the same time it accelerates the purpose of development. There are different dimensions of human development, such as poverty elimination, health care, employment, wage and income generation, reducing child mortality, reducing maternal mortality, empowering women, enhancing enrollment in schools, reducing gender gap, availability of water, long and healthy life, decent standard of living, decent work to do for earning livelihood, etc. These aspects are concerned with individuals' growth, society's development and finally with national development.

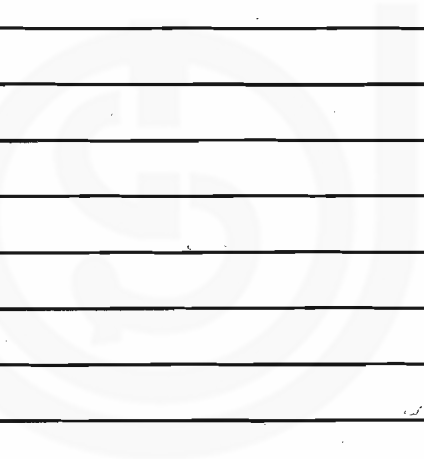
At individual level, what is needed is developing capabilities for ensuring a happy and healthy living. Dimension of this development may vary from individual to individual, depending upon what makes one happy. Some dimensions related at individual level are: (i) a good income base (ii) self-respect, (iii) security, status and recognition in society, (iv) supportive family, and (v) a sense of belongingness to a group or society.

At society/community level, the developmental aspects may include cohesive society, peaceful living, general prosperity amongst its members, good living conditions and comfortable environment, availability of water, electricity, transport, health services, housing, roads and safety and security of all its members. Other aspects may include availability of work opportunities for its members as per their potential and capabilities without any discrimination because of gender, caste, religion, enabling them earn wages or generate income, etc.

At national level, development means economic development, wealth generation, prosperity of the people, enhancing employment, conducive environment for people of the country to live together, and happily, free of disease and hunger, have sense of belongingness, have pride and participate in their own destinies, etc.

Every aspect of the societal or national development requires human force to manage and implement it. For example, for health care and health services, doctors, nurses and to her paramedical personnel are required to manage hospitals, nursing homes, pathological services, etc. For providing water, electricity, housing, roads, transport, etc., a large number of professionals and persons with relevant skills and knowledge are needed to maintain and manage these services. Similar is the case with other sectors. Thus, for the overall development what is required is development of individuals' capabilities as per his/her potential, and application of these capabilities for his/her own benefit and for the benefit of others, resulting in the development of society, and finally the development

Examine briefly are the different dimensions to judge a country's performance with respect to 'human development'. Write in about 150 words.



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The first "Human Development Report (1990) prepared by Mehhub-ul-Haq used Human Development Index (HDI) to measure a country's average achievement in three basic aspects of human development:

- opportunity to lead a long and health life
- opportunity to acquire knowledge
- opportunity to have access to resources needed to a decent standard of living.

If these essentials are non-available, the report says, then many other opportunities remain inaccessible. Here, health is measured by life expectancy at birth, knowledge is measured by a combination of adult literacy and combined primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrollment ration and standard of living by GDP per capita.

Human Development Index (HDI) for India is 0.619, which gave the country a rank of 128th out of 177 countries (Human Development Report 2005). This shows poor achievement as far as Human Development dimension is concerned inspite of the reported economic growth in the country. It implies that economic growth itself is not enough, unless it takes place alongwith distribution of economy amongst people in general.

An examination of various factors contributing to India's low performance with regard to human development is essential to think of possible steps to be taken to improve it.

Factors responsible for low HDI

As indicated above India's performance on HDI has been evaluated as considerably low, despite the fact that the country has great potential to raise the HDI to much higher standards well comparable to many of the developed countries. Let us reflect on the factors that are responsible for the low HDI.

Opportunity to acquire knowledge

India has large network of educational institutions. In some sectors, its performance is second to none; especially in information technology. However, we still have a large number of adults, who are illiterate, specially in rural areas and amongst women. We are still struggling to achieve 100 per cent enrolment at primary level. Enrolment at secondary and higher secondary stage is much less than what is desirable. Large number of children drop-out at different stages in school. Out of those enrolled in class V, about 50 per cent leave school by the time they reach class VIII, 70 per cent between class I and X. Less than 100 per cent go for higher education including professional courses.

The projection is that by 2015, about 20 per cent of those enrolled in class I, will join higher education. it implies that about 80 per cent will leave school

All these children, whose number is estimated to be more than 1.5 crore, join the workforce. Majority of them are in rural areas and this is happening every year, and unfortunately will continue for many more years.

What types of jobs they will be doing; What income they will be generating; What standard of life they will be having! Only one has to work around the crowded streets in a city, around alums, travel by road to nearby villages, to see that children are working in small shops, restaurants, road-side dhabas, workshops, etc. or are just roaming around. Majority of these children come from poor families, SCs, STs, minorities. Their percentage in rural areas is high. Child labour, which has been on the priority agenda of all government, is the result of failure on this front.

ACTIVITY 10



Using the Census 2001 data (either the from internet, or any other source) estimate the number of children in the age group of 14 to 20, who might have joined the workforce, after leaving school during the last five years . Approximation in estimation will be good enough for this activity).

According to International Labour Organization (ILO), "Child labour includes children prematurely leading adult lives, working long hours for low wages under condition damaging to their health and to their physical and mental development, sometimes separated from their families, frequently deprived of meaningful educational and training opportunities that could open up for them a better future".

Actually child labour is becoming an all-pervasive phenomenon in the country, with children working everywhere, from factories and tea stalls to roadside shops and in hazardous work also.

Health

The latest Human Development Report (2007) shows that 47 per cent children (age 0-5) are under weight. Mortality rate among young mother is quite high.

30

According to the new WHO disease classification system, the diseases as a result of extreme poverty are on the increase. The poverty related diseases are increasing because extreme poverty is on the increase.

Most of the national budget and private investment in health sector go to high technology institutions catering to the needs of limited number of citizens, while primary and community health services suffer because of limited resources and lack of qualified personnel.

Deprived groups

There are various groups that can be put under socially deprived groups - like SC, ST, disabled persons, women, backward castes from amongst minorities, economically poor people especially from rural areas and those living in urban slums. Majority of them are having a life which is far below the human dignity.

In spite of government's efforts in the form of reservations for SCs & STs in educational institutions and in government jobs resulting in benefits for some of them, for the majority life still is miserable.

The groups make the major component of those who are below poverty line.

Inequality traps

Though children could hardly be held responsible for their family circumstances; their caste, their parents income, their urban and rural location their place of residence, but the fact is that these predetermined background variables make a major difference for the lives they lead. The opportunities these children face to reach their full human potential are vastly different from the outset. Some get the benefit because of their birth, while many children suffer, though no faults of theirs.

In India, this inequality between children because of their birth is very pronounced.

Sixty percent of population lives in rural areas. Most of the poor live in rural areas. A percentage of people from rural areas have migrated to urban areas; and make the poor in urban areas; in addition to those poor are were already living in cities. Children from these poor facilities, for no fault of theirs, suffer. They do not get good food, their living environment remains poor, they do not get opportunities to join good schools, the quality of education they get remains poor. They may leave school at different stages. This is what is happening in India as reported in an earlier para.

The adverse effect of inequality are all the more damaging. These disadvantaged children from poor families can expect to earn less as adults, like their parents. they will also suffer in their life, poor living conditions, malnutrition, diseases, etc.

As a consequence, their future generation will also undergo the same cycle. This is what

World Bank Report (2006)., calls as "Inequality Traps" in which generations of poor end-up.

Poverty

Poverty is at the root of most of the problems people face. Poverty can be alleviated only when there is economic growth. The paradox is that even with economic growth, poverty may not be eradicated; if the gains from economic growth remain in a few hands and not equitably distributed among people at large.

Poverty is not related to economic aspect, it is multi-dimensional. it is related to powerlessness, to not being counted, to be excluded, to be unheard. Poverty is related to exploitation, oppression, victimization and violence. It is also related to migration, forced displacement, raising urbanization, loss of livelihood.

Poverty is defined in contemporary times "as the denial of opportunities and choices most basic to human development - to lead a long healthy and creative life, and to enjoy a decent standard of living, freedom, dignity, self-esteem and the respect of others", (UNDP 1997)

In India, sustainable proportion of population live in poverty with different degrees of deprivation and social exclusion. In India 25 per cent of population live below poverty line i.e. on an earning of one dolar a day. Others estimates it higher using other parameters for defining poverty. Using any parameter to define poverty, the fact remains that in India about 25 per cent live below poverty line and quite a large number who are above poverty line are slightly better of. To eradicate poverty, people should get employment and generate enough income on sustainable basis.

A point of view

We are witnessing violence all around, especially the Naxalite problem which has spread to nearly 150 districts in the country. One can look at it as a law and order problem. The other way is to consider it as a human problem, problem resulting from deprivation, exploitation, generation after generation. Majority of poor live in these areas infected by Naxalites.

The present economic scenario in the country reflects a system of economic apartheid, that allows 5 to 10 per cent of country's population to live like kings, consume most of the countries resources, learning more than 80 per cent of the people at the threshold of poverty and quite a large number to live in absolute misery.

If on the human development dimension the country's performance is to improve, then the development paradigm must have a human face. What millions of people throughout the country need and want is, what everyone everywhere needs and wants for the well-being of those they love, a better future for them and their children, an end to injustice and an revival of hope.

ACTIVITY 11



On the basis of the discussion given in the preceding pages, critically examine the factors which are responsible for the poor performance of a country like India with respect to human development dimensions. Write in about 150 wrods.

Education: an instrument for human development

The instrument for human development is education. It is education that helps in building human capabilities. Rather, it can be said that education is the human development process. It helps individuals grow as per his/her potential.

World Declaration on 'Education for All' at Jontien in 1990, followed by Dakar Framework for Action at Senegal in 2000 (UNESCO, 2000) shows the commitment of the countries of the world to the 'Education for A;' (EFA) - "that all children, yound people and adults have the human right to benefit from an education that will meet their basic learning needs in the best and fullest sense of the term, an education that includes learning - to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be. It is an education geared to tapping each individual's talent and potential and developing learners' personalities, so that they can improve their lives and transform their societies". Dakar Framework further states - "But it is unacceptable in the year 2000 that more than 113 million children have no access to education - and the quality of learning and acquisition of human values and skills fall short of the aspiration and needs of individuals and societies. Youth and adults are dined access to the skills and knowledge necessary for gainful employment and full participation in their societies". It further states - "education is a fundamental human right. It is key to sustainable development and peace and stability within and among countries, and thus an indispensible means for effective participation in the societies and economics of the twenty-first century, which are affected by rapid globalization". To achieve these goals, it recommends various steps: e.g. "Provide EFA policies within a sustainable and well - integrated sector framework clearly linked to poverty elimination and development strategies (Proposal 8, ii) and "Ensure the engagement and participation of civil society in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of strategies for education development". (Proposal 8, iii).

The Dakar Declaration, while setting the framework for achieving the goals, restates that "basic learning needs comprise both essential learning tools and the basic learning content required by human beings to be able to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decision, and to continue learning".

The various recommendations and strategies of the Dakar Declaration indicate that due attention is required on the following points:

- An education that includes learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be.

- An education geared to tapping each individual's talent and potential so that they can improve their lives and transform their societies.
- Accessibility to the skills and knowledge necessary for gainful employment and full participation in their societies.
- To live and work in dignity.
- To participate fully in development.
- To improve the quality of their lives.

The importance of education for development is not a new realization. It has always been recognized. The point, which requires consideration, is "What form of education should be provided, which help individuals to do, to improve living standard, to acquire skills and knowledge necessary for gainful employment, to live and work with dignity, to participate fully in development and to improve the quality of their lives".

There is a general agreement that basic education is essential for the personal development of a child. Higher education, on the other hand, provides opportunities to increase the frontiers of knowledge. Thus at one end, all children of school going age should have the right for basic education", on the other, a small percentage of youth get the opportunity to acquire higher education. In between there is a large number of children and youth who are left in a state, where they do not get opportunities to acquire the skills and knowledge to enhance their potential enabling them to live and work with dignity and participate fully in development. It is here that vocational education and training is required to play an important role.

The figure A explains the impact of vocational education, when implemented on a massive scale, on the lives of individuals, on the life of people in general.

We are considering a vocational education and training system which is comprehensive, and "inclusive" in design, that is anyone and everyone desirous to acquire skills and competencies in any vocation should get the opportunity to do. A massive system, utilizing the facilities available in many existing schools and institution in the country as well as creating a large number of vocational education and training institutes at cluster of village level, block level, district level and state levels has been visualized as presented in National Curriculum Framework (2005).

To cater to the needs of such a large number of children, meeting their aspirations, taking into consideration the constraints of many children coming from poor families and other deprived groups including girls, a flexible approach in the form of modular courses has been proposed with provision for multi-entry and multi-exist.

Such a VET system will provide large number of knowledgeable skilled workers for different socio-economic sectors. With these skills, the individuals will be able to take-up some decent work, either as a job or as a self-employed person. Having acquired the skills, he/she will feel empowered, will get self-confidence; and hopefully will life with dignity.

Availability of knowledgeable skilled workers will improve the productivity as well as services in various social and economic areas. For example, availability of large number of health workers, health technicians, nurses and mid-wives in villages and small towns will improve the health related services resulting in improved health of the people, reduced child mortality and maternal mortality during birth of a child. In agriculture related activities, improvement in farming, value addition for agriculture equipment etc. will result because of availability of skilled workforce.

Such a knowledgeable skilled work force will therefore, be benefited as a result of different work related activities they are capable for undertaking, thereby enhancing their income. This will reduce poverty, improve wellbeing of household members and over all prosperity in the country.

On the other hand, the society will be benefited because of the quality of services and products it will get from these skilled persons. It will thus usher in an overall development era, where prosperity will be visible all around. Thus, better quality of life for people in general.

ACTIVITY 12



- i) *Identify groups each consisting of 4 or 5 youths. You in one group, should be those who have left school before or after completing class X, but not acquired any employable skills either informally or through training in any institutional setting.*

You in other group should also be those who have left school before or after class X, but have undergone training to get employable skills in any trade, informally or formally. Compare their performance.

- ii) *What jobs are they doing?*

- iii) *How much income they generate every month?*

- iv) *General impression about their living conditions. (exclude potential family support)*

v) *What is their general attitude towards life?*

Summary

This unit gives a different perspective to the vocational education programme. Vocational education has to be seen as a major requirement for human development. It enhances individuals' capability, enabling one to take-up some decent work which results in enhancing self-confidence and self-respect and dignity to live with. Enhanced income generating capacity, will reduce poverty, improve well being of family members. Availability of knowledgeable skilled manpower in various sectors benefit the society by having better services and better quality of products. This will result in national development. Fruits of development will thus reach the people and not confined to a small segment of population.

In keeping with this, unit highlighted the factors responsible for low human development index in India and suggests measures to over come these factors. On the basis of all these the need and justification of vocational education has been dealt with.

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Questions for critical reflection

1. What is the concept of human development? How is it related to other forms of development?
 2. "If the country's performance on the human development is to improve, the development paradigm has to have a humane face". Comment.
 3. How is VET related to human development?
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Lifelong Learning: Vocational Education and Training

UNIT

4

▪ S.Z. Haider and Asfa M. Yasin

We learn as long as we live. An individual or a society which has nothing to learn, is dead".

- Swami Vivekanand

Introduction

Lifelong learning is a broad generic term. It overlaps with other closely related concepts such as continuing education, adult education etc.. The concept of lifelong learning is further strengthened with the development of new ideas like 'learning society' and 'learning organization'.

The ever increasing enrolment in open universities is an indicator of the need people feel for lifelong learning. The centers of continuing education and 'distance education' opened in many universities and institutions (especially technical institutions) were meant to meet the lifelong learning need of different target groups. The emphasis in these initiatives was on providing opportunities for further education and training to those who already had a qualification and were working in different institutions/organizational set-ups.

With the opening of open schools and open universities, a change in this trend has taken place whereby opportunities for education and training are made available to people at large; irrespective of age, gender, previous qualification, etc. However, with regard to vocational education and training (VET), the concept of lifelong learning has not yet found its roots in the overall educational development paradigm.

Significance of having an all pervasive and inclusive vocational education and training system which has an in-built provision to cater to the lifelong learning needs of a large number of people (youth, adult men and women) who make the workforce in the country, can be appreciated if you analyze the data and information given in earlier units.



Learning outcomes

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- define the concept of and need underline for the lifelong learning in the context of Vocational Education and Training (VET);
- justify the need for designing and implementation of a flexible VET system, which will have inbuilt provision for lifelong learning; and
- illustrate with examples the concepts like credit, credit accumulation, competence certification, multi-entry and multi-exit, which are essential ingredients for the success of the proposed VET system.

Characteristics of lifelong learning

Education is vital for human development. Essentially, human brain remains active throughout life rather as long as nerve cells are alive, there is life. Human body is meant to think and work. This is why, characteristics of lifelong learning for human beings are peculiar. Although there may be variation in the level, types, choice and reasons for learning may vary from individual to individual and as per socio-economic factors. In brief quality of life of individual, is directly related to lifelong education. Given below are some dimensions of lifelong learning.

- (i) All education can be obtained if lifelong learning is imbedded in the system.
- (ii) Accessibility, opportunity, and motivation are essentially required for people at large to bring about awareness for lifelong education and its benefits.
- (iii) The nature and design of lifelong learning should be flexible, and diversified with respect to contents, contexts, time and pedagogy.
- (iv) Lifelong education lead to acquisition of competence and qualifies a person for longitudinal and vertical mobility in the chosen field.

VET and lifelong learning

Vocational and technical education is a passport to better employment opportunities. This is the experience of Japan and the East Asian industrializing tigers where unemployment rates have remained considerably low both because their populations possessed employable technical skills and because of the high economic growth rates that these skilled populations engineered. (Human Development in South Asia 1998)

Lifelong VET is required to meet the demand and face challenges such as demographic change, globalization of economics and societies, the widespread use of information and communication technologies and the changes in labour market structures. We should believe that there is a need to enhance investment for human resource development based on perception of challenges of economies the societies that they are facing. This involves policy directives, researches and previous experiences to find ways and strategies to increase investment in training for human resource development. The lifelong learning programme need suitably designed and flexible delivery system. This involves convergence of VET programmes to provide single, multi, horizontal and vertical mobility system to offer flexible VET courses of short to long-term duration.

Objectives of lifelong learning and continuing education and training

Providing lifelong learning opportunities for sustainable development of nations is a paradigm shift from age-bound limited educational opportunities. The attempt to provide comprehensive basic education and training as preparation for working life has given way to the goal of making lifelong learning a preparation for targeted occupation preparation and ongoing continuing training. The objectives of lifelong learning for the VET system are to:

- equip professionals with the advanced technologies;
- enhance employability of individuals at different stages of life;
- develop multi-skilled human resources;
- meet the skill demand of a vocation in view of its modernization;

Futuristic Approach

- ensure quality of VET in one or more areas;
- explore areas of interest and exposure to new areas of learning, and
- opportunities for unfolding of potential and scope for creativity and innovations.

With regard to continuing education in VET, it holds true that continuing learning/training is to:

- adapt employees specific skills to a conform to short term needs;
- prepare employees for a forthcoming major change in their forthcoming technical or organizational environments;
- direct to acquisition and extension of skills and accords with employers recognition of initial training;
- integrated closely with production; and pays better (CEDEFOP, 1998)

Target groups for lifelong education and training

The target groups for lifelong learning and training include the following:

- Existing traditional workforce in an area for obtaining advanced training.
- New entrants for acquisition of multi-skills.
- Advance skill development of existing technical workforce.
- In-plant training/continuing vocational training of employees for increasing productivity of industries.
- Persons taking voluntary retirements and aspiring for self-employment.
- Persons aspiring to change their jobs.

ACTIVITY 13



Comment upon the salient features of VET and the target groups/beneficiaries of lifelong learning(i.e. the triple 'L' effect on national productivity and human development) in about 150 words.

Dynamics of VET system for lifelong learning

Education and training systems propose differentiated and inter-connected pathways, each of which can be broken down to a series of programmes for horizontal and vertical mobility. Thus, learner centered and flexible multi-entry and multi-exit VET systems will be able to accommodate a varied and large target groups. This VET programme will provide a comprehensive skill development system. This will also ensure access to education and training resources, improvement of language and cross cultural skills and promotion of innovations.

Vocational education has been understood as an education designed to prepare skilled personnel at lower levels, qualified for one or more groups of occupations, trades or jobs. The concept has changed with the need for having highly skilled personnel in Hi-tech areas also.

The MHRD, Government of India has proposed to introduce a comprehensive VET system in the country so as to provide VET to more than 2 crores youth per year who intends to enter the world of work. In the existing system of education, most of the youth are entering the world of work without any formal training. As a result they are either facing the problem of gaining suitable employment or even if they get any employment they are not able to sustain in the employment market. There is a mismatch between the skill demands and supply. Therefore, there is a need for providing competency based vocational education and training through a large integrated network of institutions and courses in the country in tune with the competencies desired by the market forces.

Design of curricula and delivery mechanism

Modular competency based curriculum indicating the framework of objectives of the course, the syllabus, performance standards, instructional methods to be followed during teaching and training, evaluation methods for competency testing need to be developed for vocational courses to attract a sizeable section of student population to vocational stream. Thus, development of competency based courses will enable to obtain gainful employment in various sectors of economy.

Requirement for providing lifelong learning includes suitable articulation of the VET system at various levels – elementary, secondary, and tertiary levels to allow individuals to proceed on to higher vocational studies if they so desire. To enhance employability of people, components of lifelong education should include generic skills such as communication skills, numeracy skills, social skills, inter-personal skills, self-management skills, etc.

The above mentioned skills can be included with in the modular structure of VET, to be offered in flexible mode of delivery system as self-contained independent modules.

The National Curriculum Framework (NCF), 2005 of NCERT has envisaged that "the VET shall offer flexible and modular certificate or diploma courses of varying durations (including short durations) emerging from the contextual socio-economic scenario. Decentralized planning of these courses at the level of individual VET centers/institutions and/or clusters thereof would have to be kept in mind in to the contexts of the ongoing rapid changes in technology and patterns of production and services in a given area, along with the diminishing access to natural resources and livelihoods for the vast majority of the people. The courses would provide multiple entry and exit points with in-built credit accumulation facility". This system will also be the gateway to lifelong education in VET.

Multi-entry and multi-exit systems

A comprehensive, flexible and responsive system of VET should be set up to cater to the needs of a wide variety of target groups viz., early school leavers, informal sector workers, self-employed people, rural workers, unemployed youths, etc. The flexibility of VET system and modular approach refers to the offering of large number of customized modular courses to provide basic skills or upgrading of skills, for job transfer, training and retraining, to fulfill learning needs of the target groups.

"The Indian way of life has inherent system of development of human resource through which our farmers, craftsmen, potters, weavers, masons, carpenters, carpet makers, toy makers, gold smiths, black smiths, cobblers, folk musicians, folk painters, folk stage artists, decorators, cooks, tribal medicine men, ayurvedic medicine practitioners and a host of others learn their craft including their science and technological and skills" (Guru 1999). These potential learners will also be able to get advanced skills to upgrade their vocations through multi-entry and multi-exit systems. This system is primarily based on a criterion approach to offer cluster of modules in different areas and of different durations. There will be flexibility of entering into the system, any time, without any age or qualification restriction. The focus of these courses will be on the development of skills and overall competency attainment.

Development of national vocational qualification (NVQ) system

The multi-entry and multi-exist systems in built in the NVQ system which is on the agenda of Government of India. NVQ system is based on accumulating credits and suitably awarding certificate for different levels of competency attainments. The NVQ system refers to the competency based training programmes, enabling unified system of VET, based on national skill standards. The objectives of NVQ are as follows:

- (i) To upgrade and recognize the competence of experienced semi-skilled/skilled/middle level technician through testing and certification so that they can seek employment or attain upward mobility.
- (ii) To upgrade the performance of semi-skilled/skilled/middle level technician in the occupations under pursuit through continuous learning and certification process.
- (iii) To induce a continuous learning process and education reforms by introducing the much desired academic flexibilities, consistent with the educational needs of the workers and industry.
- (iv) To empower semi-professionals with multi-skills by providing cross-functional courses in a profession.

- (v) To provide suitable entry points for short-term competency based vocational courses to those who have attained general education, but lack appropriate skills necessary for obtaining employment.
- (vi) To create more opportunities for neo-literates and school drop outs to enable them to learn a trade and upgrade themselves by offering short duration courses.

(VEP: Issues and Imperatives for Future Planning, NCERT, 23-25 July, 1998)

Need for accreditation and certification and recognition

Non-government organizations, accredited or accreditable group of institutions, and training institutions of various government and semi-government departments offering or capable of offering vocational programmes of varying duration to a large variety of target groups, are facing problems with regard to availability of standard curricular instructional materials and even trainers. These institutions are also facing recognition and certification problems. However, National Open School has provided some help to the institutions, lately, on these aspects.

Moreover, millions of youth acquire skills informally and such people have no access to certification of any kind and therefore, also suffer from recognition. Industrial workers and people engaged in a variety of jobs do not have access to programmes for up-gradation of skills which may to upward mobility in their career or workplace.

(VEP: Issues and Imperatives for Future Planning, NCERT, 23-25 July, 1998)

Lifelong learning through distance VET programme

Open learning and distance education system is an alternative approach for providing lifelong education both in the field of VET and general education. The flexible multi-entry and exit system can be designed on the basic premise of modular package delivery system. The transaction of the courses through nodal centers such as Accredited Vocational Institutions (AVIs) of NIOS and IGNOU, would be an added facility for recognition, and certification purposes. The open learning and distance education Programmes have potential to absorb influx of a large number of persons aspiring for training for wide variety of vocations.

ACTIVITY 14



What is the concept of NVQ? What problems many people face in regard to accreditation and recognition. Answer in about 150 words.

Bridging the cleavage between formal, non-formal and informal systems of VET

The NCF (2005), by suggesting modular curriculum approach with provision for credits and credit accumulation has tried to overcome the cleavage between formal and non-formal VET programmes. Recognition of prior-learning, that is acquisition of vocational skills at any place other than a VET institutions, is an important recommendation to give due respect and recognition to those who acquire skills and proficiency on their own, by learning on the job, in an industry or any other enterprise. Thus, informal learning of vocational skills also finds a place in this proposed paradigm for VET.

Once the concept of developing such a system is accepted, and developed on the lines proposed with the concurrence of all sub-systems involved, then the country will, witness a healthy, all pervading, powerful system of VET, which can provide opportunities, dignity confidence and better living conditions to practically all the people in the country on a sustainable basis. The system by design will automatically cater to the lifelong learning needs of the various target groups.

VET system as recommended in NCF, 2005

A gigantic and urgent task of building up an effective and dynamic programme of vocational education is long overdue. VET should be conceived as a major national programme in the mission mode.

The proposed VET programme will offer the following:

- Flexible and modular certificate or diploma courses of varying durations in livelihoods and/ or vocations carved out of the contextual socio-economic scenario.
- The courses will provide multiple-entry and exit points with in-built credit accumulation facility and will have adequate academic component to facilitate vertical and horizontal linkages in to the academic, vocational and technical programmes.
- Standardization, accreditation and equivalence will not be used as tools for rejecting/ disqualifying the VET centers, especially those of the backward regions of the country. Yet a creative, just and decentralized mechanism will have to be developed to accredit/ certify the quality of various institutions and their courses as part of an accreditation and equivalence programme.

Salient features of the system

Modular courses: The courses will be offered in modular form. Each module will have certain credits, based on the level of competence and the time expected to complete the module successfully.

Credit based: Based on the desired competency each module will contain certain competencies to be acquired. Duration will not be a binding, instead acquiring competencies will be a requisite for completion of that module. Prescribed credits will then be awarded.

Provision for accumulation: Credit based system of VET module will lead to accumulating credits by completing different modules having various competencies of the same vocation. After completing a bunch of modules and thereby accumulating credits they will be awarded certificate/diploma by the accredited agency/institutions.

Provision for credit transfer: Credit transfer system will enable a student for vertical or horizontal mobility for equivalence purposes. In this system provision for transfer of credits obtained in a module or bunch of modules in one organization to another, to qualifying for next level or same level in other organization, will be made to switch over to different institutions and allied vocational/technical courses.

Multi-entry: Multi-entry system provides flexibility to the target learners for getting into the VET system any time, and any number of times to offer a module/number of modules by repeated/multiple-entry. This system attracts adult learners who along with their jobs, can enhance and develop new skills or multi-skilling.

Multi exit: This provision helps learners to exit the VET system any time after obtaining certain credits/certificate. They may make a come back to complete another module and can leave again. Multi-exit system provide flexibility of time duration, modules, etc.

It may be noted that in multi-entry and multi-exit system, focus is on the development of skills and competencies. If in 3 months duration a person does not acquire the competencies then he/she may desire to leave the module. Later, the same module may be taken up again to acquire the required competency and qualify for certificate/credits.

Awards of:

- competence certificate on completion of a module successfully;
- certificates of level I and II on having acquired the credits prescribed by completing the requisite number of modules;
- diploma/advanced diploma by completing additional modules of higher level competence in the trades of interests;
- Provision for assessment centers for competence certification.

To recognize prior learning, it is necessary that of the existing VET centers, some may be accredited to act as assessment centers based on the availability of resource persons, infrastructural facilities, and willingness to take the responsibility with accountability. Since a large number of persons are already working in various occupations and have acquired skills and competences in different trades asking them to go for training in the same area is wastage of time and resources. On the other hand this target groups will need some certification for earning social recognition as well as to enhance their mobility in the job market. Through assessment centres, their competence can be

tested and certified. This can then form the basis for further training if they so desire. With accumulation of credits in the way, they can also move up the ladder of qualification as proposed in the NVQ system.

ACTIVITY 15



Explain the concept of 'flexibility' as proposed for the VET programme. Explain any three dimensions of this flexibility. Answer in about 150 words.

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Summary

In the present unit an attempt has been made to articulate complexity and comprehension of lifelong vocational education. Pertaining to different dimensions and characteristics, lifelong vocational education has many facets related to age, stage, profession, hobbies, community needs, retraining, etc. In this chapter, VET has been given central theme of lifelong education, as it involves both knowledge and skills.

Planning, designing and operationalisation of lifelong VET programme is the need of the hour for the countries like India. There is treasure of culture, workmanship, natural resources and above all the human resource, which if given opportunities for lifelong learning specially through skill development programmes, the nation can firmly face the challenge of unemployment.

Lifelong vocational education and training provide opportunities for attainment of high order skills besides acquiring multi-skills, at any point of time, stage of education and age. Flexible VET for lifelong learning enables a person, move horizontally and vertically in a vocation or

intra-vocation by developing required skills, thus, making a person more employable, creative/innovative self oriented worker. This epilogue demands to genuinely think and consider that every human being should remain a learner and active throughout one's life. The lifelong education system will also help in changing mind set and enable people to do work or learn throughout their life, thus affirming the dictum that there is nothing like retirement or age prescription for any work.

Suggested Readings



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Questions for critical reflection

- 1) Reflect on the quote from Swami Vivekanand given the beginning of the unit and justify it in the cont ext of VET.
- 2) Illustrate the concept vertical and horizontal mobility in the context of VET.
- 3) Justify the need for multi-entry and multi-exist approach in regard to VET in Indian situation.

