

# Skill Development in Higher Education: Challenges and Opportunities

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**Abstract:** Education is more important but skill is most important. It is true that current generation needs to be skilled in order to get employment. It is very much important to get skills and only then a country can think about its bright future. Nowadays many countries especially India is facing these problems that a person is knowledgeable but not skilled enough to do a particular job. India has a demographic advantage of the largest youth population in the world. Integrating skills within the higher education holds the key to reaping the demographic dividend. Skill based courses should be made part of regular courses so as to increase employability. If skill based courses are made part of regular courses it will increase employment opportunities. A student can start his own industry or business after acquiring certain skills and provide services to society and it will enhance his economic life. Improving the skill development of students in higher education would contribute substantially to placing higher education as the foremost pillar on which our society is built. The academic world has serious doubts about where our society is going in many respects. However, the students going through higher education become the citizens who determine the nature of our society. Thus, higher education has a crucial opportunity to affect the future of our society through substantially improving the skill development of our citizens.

**Keywords:** Higher Education, Employability, Skill Development.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Education, Skills and employability are of paramount importance in today's context. Education positively influences various facets of growth and development such as poverty reduction, health, gender equality among others. Skilled workforce is necessary for economic development. Some sectors, such as agriculture, food processing, heavy industries, textiles, tourism, construction sector, healthcare, transportation and infrastructure etc. are vital for economy and engagement of skilled workforce in such sector is a major concern for any country. The urgent need of the hour is investing in skill training to create sustainable, inclusive development for all Indians. Skilling refers to the training, practical, theoretical and soft skill knowledge of current industry standards. It involves harnessing the untapped potential of the youth and making them employable with relevant skills for the current job market. The problem lies in the fact that we have the lowest proportion of trained youth in the world. There are many social inequalities that still plague holistic development as many Indians face a lack of opportunity and access to tools for improving their standard of living. "Skill is budding as the new currency across businesses globally and in India. Today's rapidly evolving economic environment makes up-skilling an imperative across job profiles and sectors.

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India is caught by both a skill gap and a higher education sector struggling to keep up. That is why it is critical to take proactive measures to transform the higher education system to create a new model that better aligns with industry imperatives.

The Indian executives surveyed believe that much of the nation's current higher education system fails to meet the needs of students, industry and society. 61 percent of India's surveyed educators indicate that the higher education system is unable to respond to changing societal needs.

New technologies, ever-changing skills requirements and outdated curricula are challenging India's higher education system in its efforts to equip graduates with job-ready skills. Between 2010 and 2030, India's working population is expected to expand from 750 million to almost one billion. With the proper education and training Indian youth can solve the problem of unemployability. In an effort to align India's educational activities with industry imperatives and demands, the study recommends a transformation of higher education system.

## A. Objective

1. To study the current scenario of skill based education in India
2. To study the challenges faced by the skill India program
3. To find out the solution to overcome challenges faced by the India regarding skill development

## II. METHODOLOGY

This research is solemnly based on secondary data and information which is collected from the related sources for the research purpose. The relevant books, documents of various ministries/departments and organizations, articles, papers and web-sites are used in this study.

## A. Benefits of Skill Based Education

- If individuals get educated through skill based learning they can produce better results and earn more money.
- Education and training improves an individual's employability and labour motility, and it also increases the individual's ability to adapt changing technologies.
- Ample education and great skills influence the path of national economic development attract investment from abroad and promote growth.
- Countries that have a greater share of educated and very skilled workforces have raised productivity at very higher pace.



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- Education and training generate other significant and great social benefits – reduced dependence on income support for the unemployed individual's, reduced incidence of crime, improved lawful behaviour and health awareness among them.

### B. Integrating Skill Development in Higher Education

Over the past five years, changes in the macro environment, and the experience gained through implementation of various skill development programmes in the country have necessitated changes in the policy. The creation of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship as the nodal Ministry for all skill development activities across the country as led to changes in the Allocation of Business Rules that have further necessitated the process. The new policy reflects the tenets of the Skill

India programme of the Government, which focuses on outcomes, based approach in terms of providing meaningful employment in the form of both wage and self employment. Accordingly, the National Skill Development Policy, 2015 has been formulated. The need of the hour is to develop an integrated outcome based skills development ecosystem, which would promote economic, and employment growth and social development through a focus on education, skill training and employment services.

The Schemes of Community Colleges and B. Voc programmes should be strengthened and liberal grants to be given to the eligible and higher education institutions which are committed to provide career-oriented skill development courses and which are interested in providing life-long community learning with age and qualification no-bar. Challenges faced by India.

### C. Government initiative - Skill India Mission

Skill India program will equip and train the nation's massive, enviable workforce with employable skills and knowledge. This will help them contribute substantially to India's industrialization and economic boom.

Over 400 million women and men in the country will be trained in various industrial and trade skills by the year 2022. Skill India program was launched on July 15, 2015 to enable Indian economy and industry to benefit from the country's young work force.

With these missions, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched

- National Skill Development Mission
- National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
- Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (Prime Minister Skill Development Scheme)
- Rural India Skill

### D. Why Skill India

India is one of the youngest nations in the world. Over 62 percent of its population is aged between 15 and 59 years. Over 54 percent of the country's total populace is below 25 years. It is estimated that average age of India's population by 2020 will range between one and 29 years. In comparison, the average age of population of US will be 40 years, Europe at 46 years and Japan, 47 years.

In the coming two decades, labor force of industrialized nations is forecast to decline by four percent. In sharp

contrast, India will witness a boom of some 32 percent during this time span.

Skill India aims at tapping this vast potential of indigenous manpower. For over seven decades since India's independence, no such initiatives were taken to tap the potential of the country's workforce.

### III. FEATURES OF SKILL INDIA

- Train Indian citizens of all ages, especially youth, to get employment or launch own MSMEs.
- Provide training, technical and financial support for various trades including leather crafters, blacksmiths, healthcare workers, fashion designers, Khadi and handloom artisans and others.
- Skill India will also focus on core sectors including construction, gems and jewellery, banking and finance, transport and tourism and entrepreneurship.
- Training provided to enrolled citizens will conform to international standards. To do so, India will partner with various countries and foreign educational institutes.
- Trained citizens are expected to fulfil the demand for skilled manpower. Skill India also looks at training Indians for employment in industrialized countries of the world.
- An internationally accepted standard of training Indian living in rural areas of the country is being undertaken under Skill India. This project is called Rural India Skill.
- Courses offered under Skill India consider various factors such as age, geographical location, native language and financial status. It trains people in communications, troubleshooting, management, behavioural, entrepreneurial and social skills, among others.

### IV. SKILLS COVERED BY SKILL INDIA

- **Agriculture:** including floriculture, horticulture and all related branches.
- **Automotive:** for all technologies related to motor vehicles, from concept and design to manufacture and maintenance.
- **Beauty and wellness:** every skill required to provide body and beauty treatments to all sections of the Indian society.
- **Banking, Finance, Stocks and Insurance:** development of skills to get employment in the financial sectors of India. These skills also promote entrepreneurship. This is a further boost to 'Pradhan Mantri Dhan Jan Yojana' for financial literacy and its related projects.
- **Capital goods:** provides training on all aspect of design, development, manufacture and maintenance of capital goods such as machinery and equipment for home, office and industry.



- **Construction:** for design to construction of all civil, industrial and military infrastructures such as buildings and complexes, bridges and subways among others.
- **Electronics:** skills needed for designing, manufacture and maintenance of vital electronic equipment for home, office, industry and military.
- **Gem and jewellery:** keeping in mind the huge domestic and international demand for Indian designed and made jewellery. Skills also include cutting, polishing and certification of gemstones.
- **Healthcare:** primarily focused on providing healthcare at home and hospitals. Focus sectors and women and children, basic healthcare too.
- **Plumbing:** for learning skills vital to providing sanitation and hygiene in all parts of India. These skills are required for ongoing 'Swachh Bharat' movement.
- **IT and ITES:** courses will focus on further boosting the IT infrastructure of India, IT exports and IT enabled services, call centre and related training. Extremely important skills for Smart Cities and e-government projects as well as move to cashless economy.
- **Leather:** as leading exporter of leather and its products, these skills are being imparted at places known for its leather industries.
- **Media and entertainment:** aimed at keeping the nation well informed with news. Skills in this sector also involve production of high quality media for educational purposes and entertainment.
- **Retailing:** vital skills to sustain the boom of India's e-retailing and physical retail for goods made under 'Make In India'.
- **Rubber:** with North East states coming under focus, rubber production is expected to boom. Skills involve everything from rubber tapping, synthetic rubber and production of high quality rubber products.
- **Security:** skills vital to start your own security company or work in military, Para-military forces and police. Security skill is key to defend the country against wanton acts of terrorism sponsored by hostile neighbours.
- **Telecom:** India has a booming telecom sector with over half a dozen mobile services providers and two state-owned telecom companies. Skills needed to keep the telecom sector flourishing and boost connectivity with remote parts of India.

## V. SUGGESTION

1. Skill based courses that are locally and globally in demand could be made regular courses with multiple choices to increase personal, professional and self-employment skills for employability.
2. Imparting training to the newly recruited and existing faculty on integration of skill based courses with main or core subjects for meaningful development of skills and knowledge.
3. Conceptual, technical and research orientation have to be developed by academic bodies in colleges and universities regularly and are to be evaluated periodically.

4. Industries and Institutions linkage has to be supported by financial assistance from Central and State agencies for furthering newer and relevant skills and knowledge
5. Evaluation system is to be revamped periodically in collaboration with industries, academicians and the learner for courses related to industries.

## VI. CONCLUSION

It is very much important to get skills and only then we can think of the bright future of our country. Nowadays, we usually face problems regarding jobs. We can see peoples who have knowledge but are not skilled enough to do that particular job. Therefore skill is more important than knowledge. Practice is the way we can acquire skills which are more important in our lives. Skills are practicing while knowledge is theoretical. If we all unite and spread this message that it will change the society which thinks that knowledge is more important than skill. Skill based education is important as if we have only knowledge and don't possess skills then there will be no value of that knowledge. Skill development should also integrate into the higher education so that after completion of their studies youth can get job with the combination of knowledge and skill. India can be skilled nation in coming years with the integration of skill and knowledge in university's curriculum. It is time to bring change that will give us the strength to stand in the global scenario for this, Government and public both should work together to upliftment of education. Use of latest technology and skill based curriculum can increase the standard of higher education in India and it can enhance job opportunities.

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