



## VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TRAINING: AN OUTLOOK ON INITIATIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS IN INDIA

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### **Abstract**

Vocational Education and Training (VET) is an important element of the nation's education initiative. Vocational education consists basically of practical courses through which one gains skills and experience directly linked to a career in future. It helps students to be skilled and in turn, offers better employment opportunities. According to a National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) report, there are two types of vocational trainings available in India, they are formal and non-formal. There is little capacity in vocational education in India and even that is under-utilized. World Bank Report suggests that the enrolment figure is less than three per cent of the students attending Grades 11-12. This implies that between 350,000 to 400,000 students are enrolled in vocational education, which works out to less than three per cent of the 14 million students or more in Grades 11 and 12, implying that less than one per cent of students who had entered Grade 1 over the last decade.

### **PROBLEMS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM**

- There is a high dropout rate at Secondary level.
- Vocational Education is presently offered at Grade 11, 12th however students reaching this Grade aspire for higher education. Since the present system does not allow vertical mobility, skills obtained are lost.
- The present system does not emphasize general academic skills. The relative wages of workers with secondary education are increasing.
- Private and Industry Participation is lacking. There are no incentives for private players to enter the field of vocational education.
- Present regulations are very rigid.

### **GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION**

- Guidance for individuals in their choice of training and career planning;
- Comparability of general educational and vocational qualifications at appropriate levels;
- Nationally agreed framework of affiliation and accreditation of institutions;
- Multiple certification agencies/institutions will be encouraged within NVQF;
- Developing a national TVET system and national strategies with respect to vocational education,
- Ensuring close interaction between industries and TVET providers
- Developing effective training market for public and private needs and

The industrial and labour market trends clearly indicate the necessity of strengthening of vocational education in India. The introduction of vocational education at secondary level through bivalent schools and SSC (vocational) will enable us to broaden the vocational education base at secondary level of education. A clear pathway for vocational students to enter higher education streams is the way to move forward.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Vocational Education and Training (VET) is an important element of the nation's education initiative. Vocational Education plays effectively in the changing national context and for India to enjoy the fruits of the demographic dividend, there is an urgent need to redefine the critical elements of imparting vocational education and training to make them flexible, contemporary, relevant, inclusive and creative. Throughout the post-independence period there have been many attempts to reform the Indian vocational education system and make it more applicable. The list of vocational education policy reforms that have been attempted over the last 60 years is quite extensive. Without raising standards, efforts have been made to go forward with market-oriented reforms to the vocational education system.

Vocational education consists basically of practical courses through which one gains skills and experience directly linked to a career in future. It helps students to be skilled and in turn, offers better employment opportunities. These trainings are parallel to the other conventional courses of study (like B. Sc., M. Sc. etc.). Time management and meeting deadlines play an important role in success in a vocational course and during their studies students normally produce a portfolio of evidence, which is taken as a demonstration of students' capabilities for a job. After finishing the courses, students are often offered placements in jobs. Vocational trainings in a way give students some work related experiences that many employers look for.

### TYPES OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TRAINING

According to a National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) report, there are two types of vocational education trainings are available in India:

#### Formal

Formal vocational training follows a structured training program and leads to certificates, diplomas or degrees, recognized by State/Central Government, Public Sector and other reputed concerns.

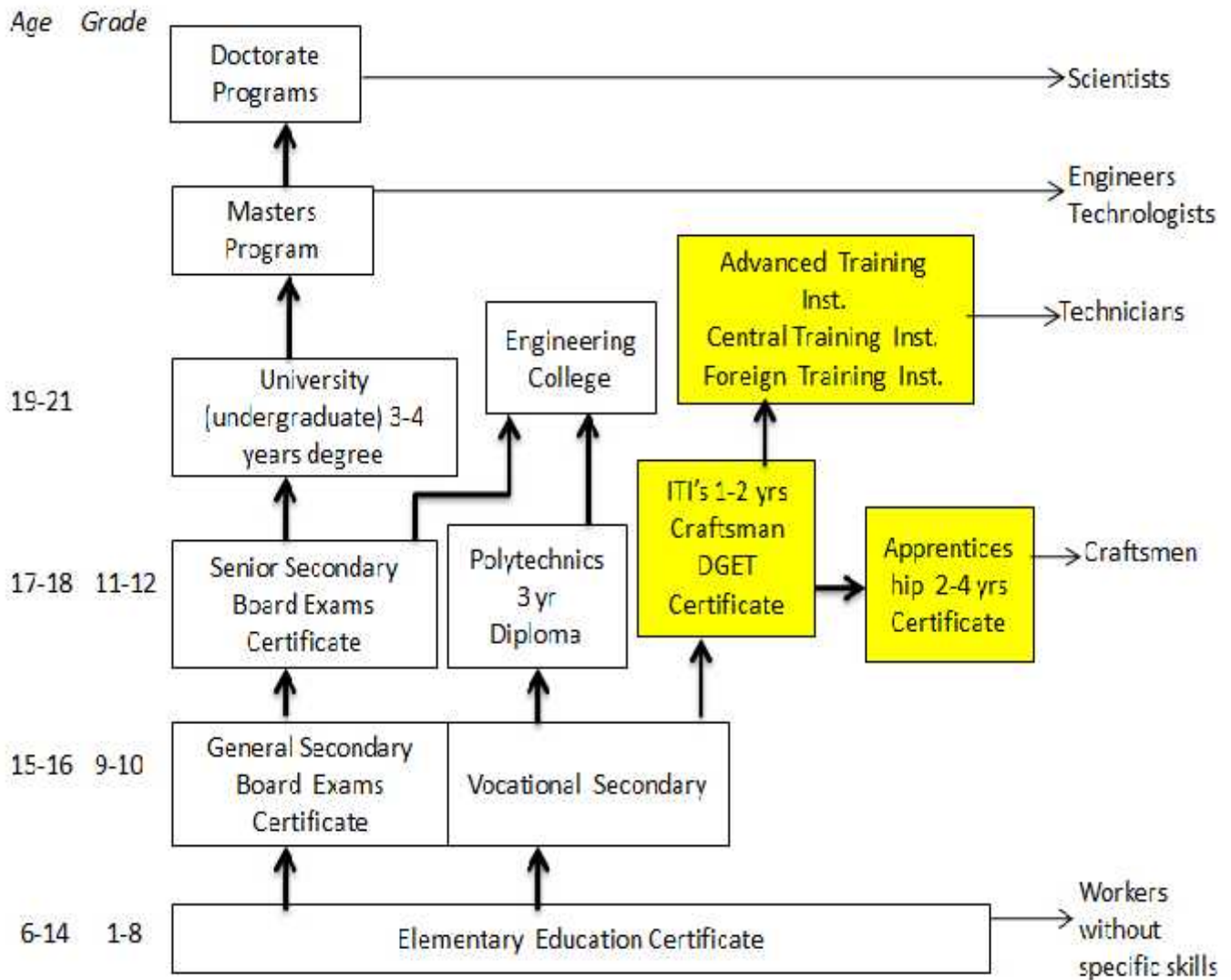
#### Non-Formal

Non-formal vocational training helps in acquiring some marketable expertise, which enables a person to carry out her/his ancestral trade or occupation. In a way through such non-formal vocational training, a person receives vocational training through 'hereditary' sources. Often 'Non-formal' vocational trainings are also received through 'other sources'.

### CURRENT SCENARIO OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN INDIA

Fig 1.0 shows Academic, Technical and Vocational parallel training structure/system in India.

Fig. 1.0



In India, skill acquisition takes place through two basic structural streams – a small formal one and a large informal one. Details of major formal sources are listed in table 1.0 below :

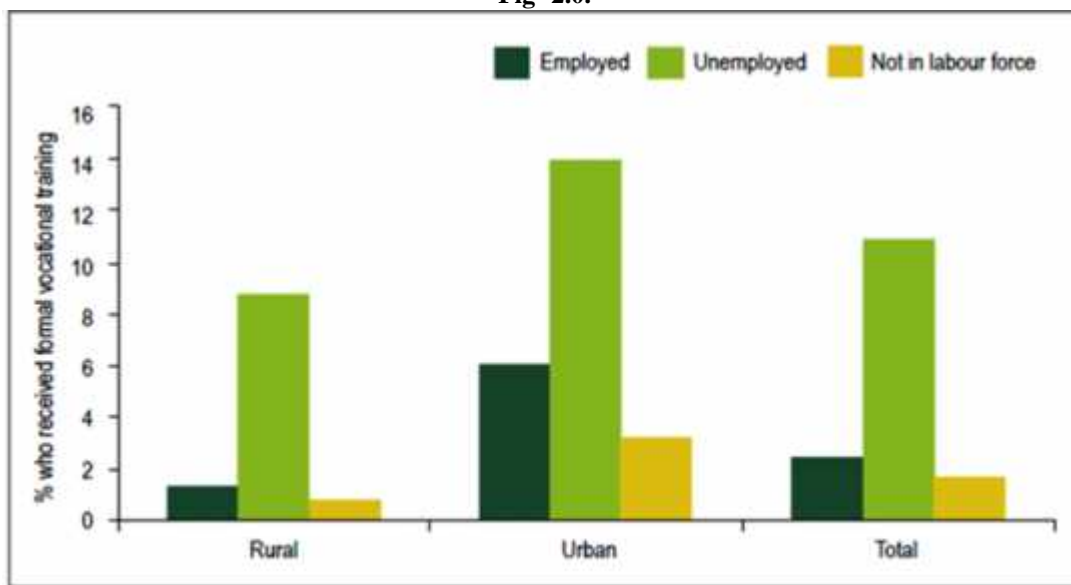
**Table 1.0**

Type of Source	Institute	Capacity	Quantity
Mainstream education system	Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Vocationalisation of Secondary Education run by the Ministry of Human Resource Development	Enrolling less than three per cent of students at the upper secondary level	9,583 schools offering about 150 educational courses of two years duration
Training institutions outside the school and university systems	Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and Industrial Training Centres (ITCs)	Total seating capacity of 7.85 lakh	5488 public (ITI) and private (ITC) institutions imparting VET, of which 1922 are ITIs and 3566 are ITCs.
Diploma level	Polytechnics	1,244 polytechnics run by MHRD with a capacity of over 2.95 lakhs	1,747 AICTE approved diploma programs with 294,370 seats

**STATUS OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TRAINING SCHEMES**

The World Bank report shows that among persons of age 15-29 only about 2 per cent reported to have received formal vocational training and another 8 per cent reported to have received non-formal vocational training. The proportion of persons (15-29 years) who received formal vocational training was the highest among the unemployed. The proportion was around 3 per cent for the employed, 11 per cent for the unemployed and 2 per cent for persons not in the labour force. The activity of persons receiving vocational education is as shown below (Fig 2.0):

**Fig- 2.0.**



Source: Status of Education and Vocational Training in India, 2004-05, NSS 61<sup>st</sup> Round

**VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TRAINING IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES**

There is little capacity in vocational education in India and even that is under-utilized. World Bank Report suggests that the enrolment figure is less than three per cent of the students attending Grades 11-12. This implies that between 350,000 to 400,000 students are enrolled in vocational education, which works out to less than three per cent of the 14 million students or more in Grades 11 and 12, implying that less than one per cent of students who had entered Grade 1 over the last decade or so would have eventually participated in vocational education. In comparison the status in various other countries is as shown below :

**Table 2.0**

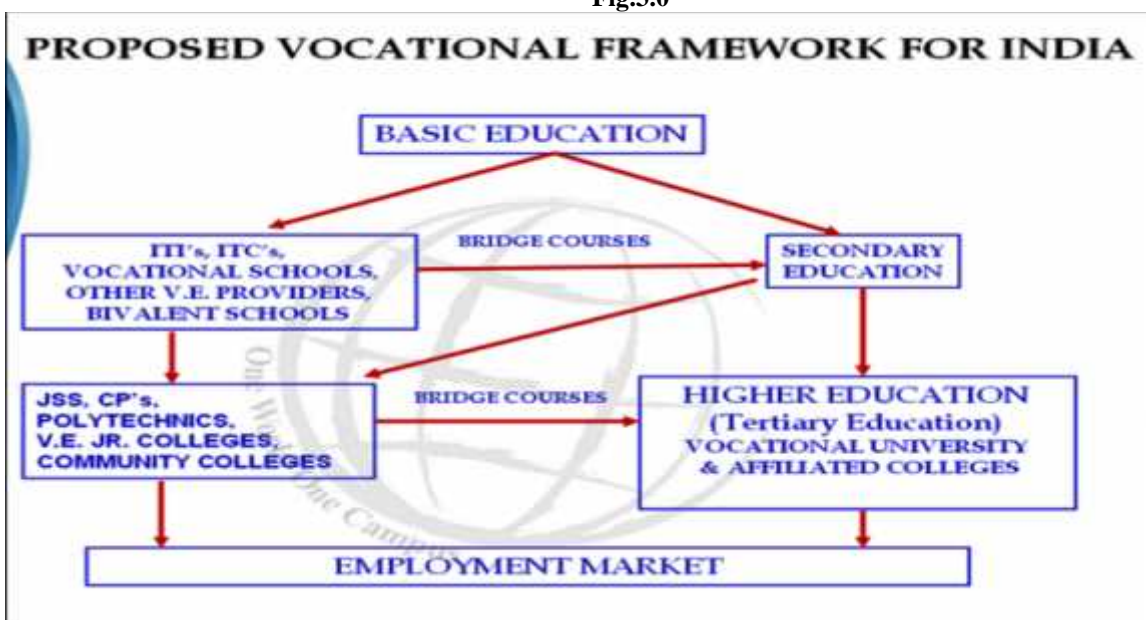
Country	Secondary enrolment ratio	Number of students (thousands)	Vocational-technical share (per cent of total secondary enrolments)
Russia	88	6277	60
China	52	15300	55
Chile	70	652	40
Indonesia	43	4109	33
Korea	93	2060	31
Mexico	58	-	12
Malaysia	59	533	11
South Africa	77	-	1

Source: World Bank, 2006

**PROPOSED VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FRAMEWORK FOR INDIA**

Based on the comparison of various education models across the world, the following education model is recommended for India (Fig 3.0) :

**Fig.3.0**



**PROBLEMS IN PRESENT VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM**

Through, the study of the prevalent Vocational Education System in India the following problem areas have been identified :

- There is a high dropout rate at Secondary level. There are 220 million children who go to school in India. Of these only around 12% students reach university. A large part of the 18-24 years age group in India has never been able to reach college. Comparing India to countries with similar income levels – India does not under perform in primary education but has a comparative deficit in secondary education.
- Vocational Education is presently offered at Grade 11, 12th – however students reaching this Grade aspire for higher education. Since the present system does not allow vertical mobility, skills obtained are lost. Enrollment in 11th & 12th Grade of vocational education is only 3% of students at upper secondary level. About 6800 schools enroll 400,000 students in vocational education schemes utilizing only 40 per cent of the available student capacity in these schools.
- The present system does not emphasize general academic skills. The relative wages of workers with secondary education are increasing.

- Private and Industry Participation is lacking. There are no incentives for private players to enter the field of vocational education.
- Present regulations are very rigid. In-Service Training is required but not prevalent today. There is no opportunity for continuous skill up-gradation.
- There is a lack of experienced and qualified teachers to train students on vocational skills. In foreign countries Bachelors of Vocational Education (BVE) is often a mandatory qualification for teachers. However, in India no specific qualifications are being imparted for Vocational Education teachers.
- Vocationalization at all levels has not been successful. Poor quality of training is not in line with industry needs.
- There is no definite path for vocational students to move from one level / sector to another level / sector. Mobility is not defined and hence students do not have a clear path in vocational education.
- No clear policy or system of vocational education leading to certification / degrees presently available for the unorganized / informal sector. No Credit System has been formulated for the same. Over 90% of employment in India is in the Informal sector. JSS offers 255 types of vocational courses to 1.5 million people, Community Polytechnics train about 450,000 people within communities annually and NIOS offers 85 courses through 700 providers. None of these programs have been rigorously evaluated, till date.
- Expansion of vocational sector is happening without consideration for present problems.

### **GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TRAINING IN INDIA**

To stimulate and support reforms in skills development and to facilitate nationally standardized and acceptable, international comparability of qualifications, a “National Vocational Qualifications Framework” is being established by the Central Government. Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) has resolved to set up an inter-ministerial group which would also include representatives of State Governments to develop guidelines for such a National Framework. The unified system of national qualification will cover schools, vocational education and training institutions and higher education sector. NVQF will be based on nationally recognized occupational standards which details listing of all major activities that a worker must perform in the occupation or competency standards – a detailed listing of the knowledge, skills and attitude that a worker should possess to perform a task written by the particular employment-led sector skills council. The Government is well aware of the important role of Vocational education and has already taken a number of important initiatives in this area.

The National Skill Development Policy 2009 has proposed the following features for the framework :

- Competency based qualifications and certification on the basis of nationally agreed standards and criteria;
- Certification for learning achievement and qualification;
- A range of national qualification levels – based on criteria with respect to responsibility, complexity of activities, and transferability of competencies;
- The avoidance of duplication and overlapping of qualifications while assuring the inclusion of all training needs;
- Modular character where achievement can be made in small steps and accumulated for gaining recognizable qualification;
- Quality Assurance regime that would promote the portability of skills and labour market mobility;
- Lifelong learning through an improved skill recognition system; recognition of prior learning whether in formal, non-formal or informal arrangements;
- Open and flexible system which will permit competent individuals to accumulate their knowledge and skill through testing & certification into higher diploma and degree;
- Different learning pathways – academic and vocational – that integrate formal and non-formal learning, notably learning in the workplace, and that offer vertical mobility from vocational to academic learning;
- Guidance for individuals in their choice of training and career planning;
- Comparability of general educational and vocational qualifications at appropriate levels;
- Nationally agreed framework of affiliation and accreditation of institutions;
- Multiple certification agencies/institutions will be encouraged within NVQF.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TRAINING**

#### **National Board for Vocational Education**

A National level Board for Vocational Education should be established, called as National Board for Vocational Education. For Example, In Australia, there is a similar authority established by the state and federal government called Australian National Training Authority (structure may vary) which plays a major role in :

- Developing A National TVET System And National Strategies With Respect To Vocational Education,
- Ensuring Close Interaction Between Industries And TVET Providers
- Developing Effective Training Market For Public And Private Needs.

- Enhancing efficiency and productivity of TVET providers.

### **National Vocational Education Policy**

A National Vocational Policy should be formulated. The policy should establish equivalence for degrees, diplomas and certifications in the vocational education sector for lateral and vertical mobility across various learning sectors that is, secondary, vocational and higher education.

### **National Vocational Education Assessment and Accreditation Council**

National Vocational Assessment & Accreditation Council should be established to formulate a regulatory and quality/standards framework.

### **Introduction of SSC (Vocational)**

SSC (vocational) or its equivalent 10th grade certification in vocational stream should be created on similar lines as HSC (Vocational) at both national and state level. Vocational Stream should be introduced at 8th Grade through Bivalent Schools which may provide both conventional and vocational stream of education at secondary level. Presently, in India only sporadic courses as electives are being offered to students under bifocal scheme. However, a separate vocational stream offered by means of bivalent schools does not exist. Statistics reveal that employers prefer students with some general education skills in addition to vocational skills. Thus, in all schemes related to SSC (Vocational) general education courses should be emphasized. Ex. Problem Solving, English, Soft Skills, Business Management etc. For Ex, In China, there are three levels of vocational education: junior secondary, senior secondary and tertiary. Junior vocational education refers to the vocational and technical education after primary school education and is a part of the 9-year compulsory education i.e from age group of 13-15 years.

### **Lateral/Vertical Mobility**

To ensure vertical mobility, ITIs, MSBVs, Community Colleges and other State Vocational Education Institutions may be granted recognition and accreditation from the respective State Board for Vocational Education to award SSC (Vocational) certification. Vocational Education Providers, Community Colleges, JSS, CP's, Vocational Junior Colleges may also be allowed to award Diplomas and Associate Degrees in addition to HSC (Vocational) certification. Students from Vocational Institutions can be given opportunity for lateral mobility into conventional stream by providing bridge (preparatory) courses. The proposed mobility structure is as indicated below :

### **Industrial Participation**

Private Participation from Industry and other players must be encouraged and is critical for the success of the vocational education growth in India. Industry participation must be at all levels especially in Governance, Curriculum Design, Placements and Funding, Monitoring Outcome. Industry participation is also required for creating production oriented Research and Innovation Labs. A PPP Model can be also created where GOI and Industry can come together to invest in infrastructure and train students in latest skills. For Example, Penang Skills Development Center is a joint company training center. The Government invests in the center and uses it to carry out public training programs. The State provided the infrastructure and the industry partners donate equipment, labs, training modules and trainers. Industry thus has access to shared training facilities for in-service employees training. The Government uses the center as a training institute.

### **SUMMING UP**

The industrial and labour market trends clearly indicate the necessity of strengthening of vocational education in India. The introduction of vocational education at secondary level through bivalent schools and SSC (vocational) will enable us to broaden the vocational education base at secondary level of education. A clear pathway for vocational students to enter higher education streams is the way to move forward. Through this concept, it is made an endeavour to provide some of the possible solutions to address these issues. Framing of vocational qualification framework, introduction of vocational degrees and setting up of a Vocational University with polytechnics, community colleges, CPs and other VEPs as affiliated colleges are some of the recommendations which require further deliberation at National and State level.

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