CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the basic tools for making people as good citizens. It constitutes the core of human resource development. The growth and development of education facilities of all kinds in the third world countries, with plans to induct all sectors of the community, is interesting and instructive.

India has made remarkable progress and achieved near universal enrollment in primary, secondary, college, education. However, the quality of learning and progress beyond primary education are of concern; nearly 50 percent of fifth graders are unable to read the second-grade material, and retention rates at the secondary level are quite low. The higher education sector has also shown impressive growth but faces several challenges around inequitable access and low quality. Low outcomes at the secondary and higher education levels have resulted in a significant deficit in employable and vocationally trained individuals in the workforce. Evidence shows that just 14% of new entrants to the workforce are likely to have a college or graduate degree. Research also shows that over the long-term low outcomes at the secondary and postsecondary levels are likely to translate into low lifetime earnings and well-being (Namrata Tognatta, 2014).
Gandhiji’s views on education

Some of Gandhiji’s most firmly and unambiguously expressed views are in education, and this is to be viewed in the immediate context of English medium education that the British induced in India, and the larger context of foreign language education at the cost of vernaculars. Gandhiji has emphatically said that he has nothing against English language and its noble literature, but he is against education in English in India.

Gandhiji termed English medium as a foreign medium and held a firm view that this foreign medium has made us foreigners in our land. Language apart, Gandhiji also found the piecemeal approach towards education in India and the world wanting. It was incomprehensible for Gandhiji that any education system could impart learning that only benefited the mind or the intellect, in total ignore of physical and moral development. Gandhiji viewed education as an integrated approach to all round personality development that emphasized on physical training and high moral ground along with intellectual and cognitive development. Gandhiji clearly divided between learning and education, knowledge and wisdom, literacy and lessons of life. Gandhiji has said, “Literacy in itself is no education.”

Gandhiji’s education was to be essentially generative, which can be passed on from an educated person to the uneducated one in a selfless spirit. Gandhiji prefers vernacular education because it was only through local mediums that education could become more penetrative in a multilayered,
indigent and very poor society. An educated youth could teach his illiterate parents or siblings in the family only if his education was in local medium. Likewise, community level formal or informal education could also be facilitated in villages through vernacular medium only. It is in this broad context that Gandhiji was opposed to foreign medium education in India. Gandhiji thought that such a selective education did not meet the requirements of the country, there was no connect between education and home life, or village life.

Nai Talim

The above free structure of thoughts on education, Gandhiji conceptualized in his revolutionary Nai Talim or Basic Education for all, in 1937. Marjorie Sykes, an educationist, devoted for life to Gandhiji and Nai Talim pedagogy, writes in her book ‘The Story of Nai Talim,’ that in Gandhiji’s perception, this curriculum aimed at preparing a good society, not just a literate and educated one. Seen from the context of an education system specially developed for a newly born democratic nation. It can be said that Nai Talim aimed to make fruitful education that gave freedom; freedom from ignorance, illiteracy, false notion. In Gandhiji’s words and vision, Nai Talim was aimed at becoming the lead of a silent social revolution. Handicrafts, art drawing, are the most fundamental teaching tools in Nai Talim pedagogy. Gandhiji was so confident about the effectiveness of this method that he perceived teaching through art and craft even before teaching alphabets. Gandhiji assumes that it was easier for a child to distinguish between wheat
and chaff, than between A and Z. Moreover, it facilitated faster learning, “One imparts ten times as much in this manner as by reading or writing.” Lastly, it was much more economical to give learning through handicraft than through classroom lessons.

Gandhiji said “only imparting education through crafts can India stand before the world”’. It was not the first time Gandhiji stressed the need for education through crafts. During his entire life, he kept on reminding all the stakeholders about the importance of skill training in education. Now in the twenty-first century, when we talk about the gap between what industry demands and our education systems provide and the need for vocational skills training. (info@gandhifoundation.net)

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

In light of low educational and employment outcomes, policy in India has focused on skill development through the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector. The Vocational Education Program (VEP) was started in 1976-77 under the programme of Vocationalisation of Higher Secondary Education in general education institutions. The National Working Group on Vocationalisation of Education (Kulandaiswamy Committee, 1985 ) reviewed the Vocational Education Programme in the country and developed guidelines for the expansion of the programme. Its recommendations led to the development of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) on Vocationalisation of Secondary Education, which started being
implemented from 1988. Its purpose is to “enhance individual employability, reduce the mismatch between demand and supply of skilled manpower and provide an alternative for those pursuing higher education without particular interest or purpose. Vocational education falls under the purview of the Ministry of Human Resources Development (MHRD). The All-India Council for Vocational Education (AICVE), under MHRD, is responsible for planning, guiding and coordinating the program at the national level. State Councils for Vocational Education (SCVE) perform similar functions at the state level.

Vocational Education and Training (VET) is an important element of the nation’s education initiative. For Vocational Education to play its part 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. The Government is well aware of the important role of Vocational education and has already taken some important initiatives in this area. The primary objective of these policies is to significantly improve the rate at which youth and young adults participate in these programs.

According to the modified National Educational Policy, 1992 stated that “the introduction of systematic, well planned and meticulously implemented programmes of vocational education is important in the proposed educational reorganization.” These elements are intended to develop a healthy attitude amongst students towards work and life, to enhance individual employability, to reduce the mismatch between demand and supply and to provide an
alternative for those intending to pursue higher education without particular purpose or interest.” The policy also states that graduates of vocational courses will be given opportunities, under predetermined conditions, for professional growth, career improvement and lateral entry into courses of general, technical and professional education through bridge courses. The Kothari Commission Report had also emphasized on full-fledged vocational education in vocational institutions and schools after VIII+ and X+ as well as at higher secondary levels.

The National Skill Development Policy has an ambitious plan to Skilling about 12-15 million youth each year. As part of this policy and to ensure execution, the Government of India has arranged the National Skill Development Mission (under the aegis of the Hon.ble Prime Minister of India), the Coordination Committee and the National Skill Development Corporation. The Policy amongst other things proposes to establish a National Vocational Education Qualification Framework.

The current vocational education system does not focus on training young people in employable skills that can provide them with employment opportunities. Today, a large section of India’s labor force has outdated skills. The Government is therefore strongly emphasizing on upgrading people’s skills by providing vocational education and training to them. 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.
Skills development more important than ever for India

Powerful nations and economies have historically been built by the strength and a total number of its people. Industrialization in the United States begun in the late 1800’s and had its foundation in the factories that were fueled by millions of hardworking workers. At the end of the 1900’s, following economic liberalization, China emerged as the next manufacturing superpower. It’s strength being its manufacturing cities built by armies of skilled labor. India faces a similar historical opportunity. The 700 million-strong workforce that the nation will have by 2020 will provide a demographic dividend. However, to capitalize on that dividend, India will need to empower workers with the right skills. There is a need for increasing capacity and capability of skill development programs. The Indian government recognizes the importance of skills development as part of driving economic growth.

Skilling efforts:

Before 2009, the government provided skills training to young people predominantly through industrial training institutes (ITIs) located around the country. These institutes remain a critical component in the nation’s skilling system and offer vocational and technical training to thousands of youth every year. The ITI system faces several challenges, such as poor physical and learning infrastructure, limited scalability and uncertain stakeholder satisfaction. To complement the ITI system, the government established the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) in 2009. This unique public-private partnership (PPP) aims to promote skills development by fostering the
creation of large, high-quality vocational institutions. NSDC funds are used to build scalable, for-profit vocational training initiatives. Its mandate also includes enabling support systems such as quality assurance, information systems and train-the-trainer academies directly or through partnerships with training providers. The NSDC has a target to train 150 million youth by 2022 through the PPP model. Vocational Skill education has been provided to the school students and supporting teachers to upgrade their vocational/technical skills through Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) programme.

**Private sector participation**

The private sector can help improve the infrastructure of the existing vocational training institutes, bring contemporary course curricula to these centres, train the trainers. In fact, engaging in vocational education as part of CSR in exchange for which they can be given tax concessions, infrastructural benefits, financial aid, and funding is one way of bringing private players into the field. They can also take a particular centre under their wings to provide trade-based training. After such training, the responsibility must partly be on the private sector to absorb these skilled workers into their organizations. At the same time, they must ensure that their existing employees are not made surplus because of the entry of new skilled workers. It can be done by conducting training programmes within their organizations to skill workers, assess and re-skill existing workers, and sustain that skill to maintain a high level of productivity. So, in both ways, direct and indirect, the private sector can play a role in expanding the reach and quality of vocational education.

Now the major struggle in vocational skill education is a lack of employability skill among the outgoing students. That reflects in the job market. Our current curriculum is 70 per cent theory and 30 percent practical.
There is no scope for skill development. An automobile engineer, for example, can explain in 15 steps on paper how to change a tyre but may have never done it physically. There is a clear mismatch between supply and demand of labor due to lack of technical and soft skills; inappropriate education system. The reasons because institutions are conducting the skill programme towards certificate oriented not skill oriented. That reflects a lack of employability skills among the students. To overcome the issue Vocational and technical education as a discipline requires adequate instructional facilities such as the ICT-mediated teaching and learning to ensure the efficiency.

**Information Communication Technology (ICT)**

ICT is one of the greatest ways of imparting skill education which is a cost-effective one in the current scenario. Vocational education consists basically of practical courses through which one gains skills and experience directly linked to a career in future. At the same time, these vocational subjects also are taught through ICT materials which give high impact and confidence among the students in the respective trade skill. It helps students to be skilled and in turn, offers better employment opportunities.

Uses of ICTs in education are widespread and are continually growing worldwide. It is believed that ICTs can empower teachers and learners, making significant contributions to learning and achievement. While teachers interviewed on the effectiveness of ICT in education, the majority of them felt that the introduction and use of ICT adequately and to develop extremely efficient in students learning and achievement.
ICT is an umbrella term that includes any communication devices or application, encompassing radio, television, cellular phones, computer and network, hardware and software, satellites systems and so on, as well as the various services and application associated with them, such as videoconferencing and distance learning. It is, therefore, all-embracing, that is, one need to be electronically educated, and one major device for undertaking ICT is computer usage.

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. The skills would be provided with intensive practical and Information Communication materials related to their trade both soft skills and hard skills. The Materials are in the form of PPT, Tutorial Videos and Animation. The communication materials are visualized to the students in theoretical classes, with supporting equipment could give a significant impact on the students. All the demonstration can be done through the visual presentation. The pre-designed user-friendly video tutorials, PPT, s and Animated materials are available in the market and the websites in the vernacular language. The Teachers has to collect and review the materials for their trade of teaching. With the help of free downloaded software, the teachers could able to develop the ICT materials for each lesson according to their style for their standard of students both soft skills and hard skills. At least, the teachers develop the materials only where the students need more clarity in the skill subject. The
same may be easily transferred to the student’s Mobile phone Whats App., Facebook, website for their reference. It could be more help full for the students whenever they have doubt they just go through it, which could clarify them as like as a teacher. The available Information communication materials or the development of the materials are cost effective and more useful for the vocational education students. Learners would also face with the use of new technologies where interactive learning materials like CD-ROM, the Internet, computer aided models and PowerPoint presentations. The learners with their traditional methods of learning have to adapt and understand the process of learning in a more flexible and open environment using new technology and having greater responsibility and choice for their learner pathway.

Teachers’ perceptions are critical to the success or failure of integrating ICT into instruction, and they play a significant role in this process. Vocational teachers should model the appropriate uses of ICT resources in the workshop and classroom to help to equip their students with the necessary knowledge and skills to use these tools effectively in their working life. Vocational Education Teachers (VET) must be able to use new technologies that are continually changing the ways how people live, work, and learn. Therefore, VET teachers should keep speed with changing technology to assure their roles still relevant to produce tomorrow's labor. Because their competency in ICT is essential if they are to be successful instructional leaders as they transfer this competency to their students.
Overcome the unemployment

Apart from financial impact, unemployment has many social impacts like theft, violence, drug taking, crime, health as well as it leads to psychological issues. Next, comes the poverty that is directly linked to unemployment as well as inequality. Long-term unemployment can ruin the family and the society.

Vocation-based training is the missing link between education and employment. However, with the launch of the Make-in-India initiative, vocational education has been pushed to the front position. The best way to ensure that vocational training serves its intended purpose is through PPP. The government must strive hard to increase the number of skilled workers to compete with other nations successfully. Our demographic dividend is a huge asset; we should now take all possible steps to ensure better facilities for skill formation.

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