

Challenges and Possibilities of Skill Development in India (A Focus Study on Rajasthan)

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ABSTRACT

Education aims at making children capable of becoming responsible, proactive and useful members of the society. The aims of education simultaneously reflect the current needs and aspiration of a society, lasting values and broad human ideals. With the developments in the field of Communication Science and Technology, the world has become a global village and for becoming an efficient citizen of this global village, the citizens of tomorrow (students) need to have skills to survive in such a global society. Thus the new wave of globalization makes new demands on education. The impact of Globalization and advancements in the field of Communication, science and technology are driving changes and reaches far deeper into every facet of human life, be it the social, economic, environmental, political, trade, business and educational landscape at a rate and magnitude that is too great and too multiple to ignore. Global media increasingly influence local cultural practices, and globalized education is an issue which is the basic requirement of every nation. Thus, the creation and diffusion of new technologies, including those of the Internet, are transforming the nature of science, ways and means of communication, educational patterns and pedagogies and last but not the least type and process of work. Globalization is and will continue to have an increasingly vital role in finding out training needs and also in explaining how and what the learner comprehends about the world in which they live and work.

Keywords: Skill Development, Education, Communication, Globalization, Socio-Economic Environment

Introduction

As globalization may present many new challenges which will indirectly change the society, the skills that students need to possess to be successful in life and society also should change. The increased globalization of the world means that the students of today need to be prepared for transitory and mobile mode of life. The students of today also need to be flexible and constantly learning in order to stay competitive as competitiveness is the prerequisite for survival in this globalised world. They need to have many more skills for surviving in this globalized society. The purpose of the research is to identify such skills.

Meaning and Definition of Skill

The ability to do something well, tactfully, properly and systematically is skill. It is also competence and proficiency in some activity or action. www.BusinessDictionary.com defines 'skill' as "An ability and capacity acquired through deliberate, systematic and sustained effort to smoothly and adaptively carry out complex activities or job functions involving ideas (cognitive skills things (technical skills) and /or people (interpersonal skills)." www.yourdictionary.com defines "Skill is a talent or ability that comes from training or practice." DK Illustrated Oxford Dictionary (2008) explains 'skill' as "expertness, practiced ability, facility in an action, dexterity or tact."

The term 'skill' has been given such an importance by the ancient Indian philosophers that it continues to be

the ultimate for any individual today. Skill or 'kousalam' refers to doing things perfectly, each time and every time. In the modern context of work, be it 'white collared' or 'blue collared', the term refers to the correctness, speed and accuracy with which a 'work' or portion of the work is accomplished. Further, in the context of modernisation, technological innovation, automation and such other dynamic environment, the capacity or capability to do the 'job' becomes crucial. The convergence of knowledge (of doing things) and wisdom (of decision making in a given situation) is required in all types of jobs and at all levels. It is in this context the term 'skill' assumes importance.

The present dynamic environment (political, economic, social and technological), the electronic and communication explosion, global operations have forced the economies as a whole and industries in particular, to adopt techniques to survive the competition. Undisputedly, the 'human resource', a vital link, in the chain is required to undergo metamorphic changes in terms of acquisition and upgrading their skill set. The employers have a challenging task to perform in identifying the required skill, identify the 'skill gap' and remedy the situation.

Levels or Stages of Education in India Today

Education in India follows a uniform structure of school education which is known as the 10+2 system. This system is being followed by all Indian States and Union Territories. But not all of them follow a distinct pattern as per the system.

- **Pre Primary Stage:** Pre primary education in India is provided to children between 3–6 years by Kindergarten. The schools use varying terminology for different levels of classes, beginning from – Pre-Nursery, Nursery, KG, LKG (Lower Kindergarten) and UKG (Upper Kindergarten).
- **The Primary Stage:** Primary education in India usually consist of students aged between 5 to 12 years. The duration of study in this stage is 4-5 years. Common subjects include English, Hindi, Mathematics, Environmental Science and General Knowledge. Sometimes also termed as Elementary Education, Most of the primary education provided by primary schools in India is imparted from class 1st to 5th.
- **The Middle Stage:** Middle stage of education covering 3-4 years of academic study is formed by 6th-8th class consisting of students aged between 12 to 14 years.
- **The Secondary Stage:** Secondary Stage of education covering 2-3 years of academic study starts with classes 9th-10th. consisting of students aged between 14-16 years. The schools which impart education up till 10th class are known as Secondary Schools, High Schools,
- **Senior Secondary Stage:** Senior Secondary Education in India is of only 2 years. There is uniformity on this level of education in terms of duration and classes i.e. all the States/UTs follow this 10+2 pattern. Senior Secondary Schools in India include classes 11th to 12th consisting students aged between 16-18 years. At this level of education students have the freedom to choose their preferred stream and subjects. They can pursue Arts, Commerce, Science (medical & non medical). The schools which provide education up till 12th class are commonly known as Senior Secondary Schools or Higher Secondary Schools.
- **Under graduate Stage:** Under graduate education in India is of 3-4 years. Undergraduate stage of education is also known as higher education in India. Students studying in this level, generally begin their education from 18 onwards. Majority of the undergraduate courses of 3 years duration belong to field of commerce, humanities, science etc. and majority of 4 years of duration belong to the field of agriculture, engineering, pharmaceutical sciences, technology, architecture, law and medicine. After completing this course the student gets the Bachelors degree and is termed as graduate.
- **Postgraduate Stage:** Post graduate education in India is of 2-3 years. Postgraduate stages of courses are known as Masters Courses. Masters course are usually of 2 years duration. It is also referred as higher education, PG education in India is largely provided by universities in India. PG education caters largely to a specific field or sub field of any preferred discipline. Thus, one can specialize in any of preferred subjects at this level.

In Working Paper Series: Martin Prosperity Research of University of Toronto titled India's Higher

Education System by: Stolarick, Kevin(2014), stated that-India has been home to institutions of higher education. When India achieved independence in 1947,it had 20 universities and 500 colleges. It now possesses one of the largest higher education systems in the world 5with over 42,000 institutions of higher learning. Figure 1 shows the division of total enrolment, some 23.6 million students, by level of study. Roughly three-quarters i.e. 74% (17.5m) are getting a graduate degree; 15% (3.5m) are pursuing a diploma; 10% (2.5m) a post-graduate degree; and 0.7% (161,000) are working on a PhD.

Computed statistics compiled by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India (2015-16) depicts graphically the total number of pass-outs during 2015-16 at Undergraduate Level in major discipline/subject. It stated that the highest number of students (35%) has been graduated in Arts courses. The total number of students passed-out in this are 22.42 lakh out of which 44.9% are males and 55.1% are females. Science is second major stream with 8.56 lakh students (14%) passed-out followed by Commerce with 8.59 lakh students (14%). 8.49 lakh students have been graduated in Engineering and Technology (13%). In Medical Science stream, there are 1.77 lakh students (3%) who have been awarded

Under Graduate degree

The bias of the higher education system towards arts, science and commerce has affected employment prospects because the students studying in these courses are not equipped with the skills appropriate for industry and professional occupations

Table : 01- Skill Gap Analysis (Work Force Demand and Supply)

| Sectors | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Unskilled | 189193 | 249328 | 281599 | 313308 | 340377 | 381004 | 407018 |
| Semi-Skilled | 47873 | 51749 | 53330 | 55198 | 56079 | 58286 | 59310 |
| Skilled | 21425 | 25954 | 26217 | 27543 | 27183 | 28864 | 28691 |

Definition of Terms used in the Study

- **Skills:** A proficiency, facility or dexterity that is acquired or developed through training or experience is skill.
- **Globalization:** The globalization explores what connects us to the rest of the world. It enables us to engage with complex global issues and explore the link between our own lives and people, places and issues throughout the world.
- **Global Skills:** Global skills are the skills required for all job seekers. The domain general skills can be termed as global skills. These skills are the skills which are the basic requirement of any job whether abroad or in one's own country. Global skills are abilities to communicate with people from a range of social and cultural backgrounds, to work within teams of people from a range of backgrounds and other countries. It is willingness to play an active role in society at local, national and international level. Global skills are capabilities they need if they are to survive and thrive in the world of the future. Thus, global skills in broad terms are employable soft skills attained by the youths of the society having desire to bring about a social change. Moreover global skills empower the unemployed and out of work youth with vocational skills and make them able (educated + employable) and make them capable of earning a livelihood and support their families in home country or abroad. Some experts also refer all 21stCentury skills as global skills
- **Global Education** is the term used internationally to describe a form of education which enables people to understand the links between their lives and those of people throughout the world. (Hicks, D. 2009) Global education is an education perspective which arises from the fact that contemporary people live and interact in an increasingly globalised world.
- **Global Competence** is the capacity to analyze global and intercultural issues critically and from multiple perspectives, to understand how differences affect perceptions, judgments, and ideas of self and others, and to engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions with others from different

backgrounds on the basis of a shared respect for human dignity. Global Competence requires knowledge and understanding of global issues, as well as intercultural knowledge and understanding.

- **Gaps:** It means the differences in the achievement of the objectives and actual status.
- **Skill Gaps:** An emerging gap between the global knowledge and skills and what the students currently learn in college so that they are unable to compete for high value jobs in a globalised economy, and are ill-equipped to participate in today's interdependent society.
- **Graduation Level:** In the scheme 10+2+3/4 of education system in India, 3/4 years bachelors' degree classes in colleges covering fields like commerce, humanities, science, agriculture, engineering, pharmaceutical sciences, technology, computer application, management, architecture, law, medicine etc is termed as graduation level. After completing this course the student gets the Bachelors degree and is termed as graduate
- **Eduployable:** Educated adults who have all the skills of being employable.
- **Preferences in skills:** Skills that are chosen, considered, promoted or favoured by a group. These are more desirable skills over others. Strategy: It covers various aspects of sequencing and organizing the content, specifying learning activities and deciding how to deliver the content and activities

Operational Definitions of the Terms

Definition of Terms and Concepts

- **Skills:** Skill is a special ability which is conceptualized as a set of competencies an employee brings to his workplace.
- **Current Skills:** Current skills are conceptualized as the competencies the employee's possess and also expend them on their present jobs as a part of their job contract.
- **Required Skills:** Skills that are defined by the prototype job descriptions which an employee is expected to observe and keep updating for the future job requirements.
- **Skill Gaps:** It is conceptualized as the variation in the required skills specified by the job and the current skill possessed by the employee who they expended on the job.
- **Drivers for Future Skills:** There are conceptualized as the kind of operations the business is involved in, ranging from producing goods, offering various services like research and development activities or administrative services, outsourcing activities etc.
- **Industry:** It is conceptualized as a conglomerate of companies in a given geographic area. In this study it is further conceptualized as a group of companies representing various sectors of business, by and large, classified as Financial Services, Manufacturing Sector, Process Industry, Service Sector, IT/ITES Sector and Development Sector.
- **Management Challenges:** Extent to which management in companies has made attempts to address the skill gaps and their consequent effects on the business process.
- **Skill reserve:** Extent to which the requisite skills set the companies are in possession as consequence of skill acquisition.
- **Consequences of Skill Gap:** The extent to which there are adverse impacts of skill gaps in the business process

Need of Global Skills in Education in India

In today's economic scenario, industrialization and globalization play a crucial role in a country's social and economic development. With this the demand of trained, certified and skilled workforce is increasing at an exponential rate. Presently our country produces semi-literate workforce without marketable skills or global skills which are essential to survive anywhere in the world. India's demographic bulge –the hundreds of millions of young educated people, who flood its job markets every year, are in the danger of sliding into a lopsided paunch. In other words a sea of unskilled educated young people is heading towards unemployment. So there is a persistent need to sensitize the country on the importance and need of skills along with education.

Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Mr. Narendra Modi spoke in his Independence Day 2019 speech

“Today, the world and India need a skilled workforce. If we have to promote the development of our country then our mission has to be ‘skill development’ and ‘Skilled India’.” He further added “I also want to create a pool of young people who are able to create jobs and the ones who are not capable of creating jobs and do not have the opportunities, they must be in a position to face their counterparts in any corner of the world while keeping their heads high by virtue of their hard work and their dexterity of hand and win the hearts of people around the world through their skills”

In such condition we need a policy push towards imparting skills along with education to our youth population to ensure their employment. Mr. Modigave this indication in his speech further “My brothers and sisters, having taken a resolve to enhance the skill development at a highly rapid pace, I want to accomplish this.” And a separate Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of India was created which gave its draft as “**National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship 2015**” in May 2015.

Now skill and knowledge being the driving forces of economic growth and social development of any person and country at large, so persons with higher level and better standards of skills along with basic required education will adjust more effectively with the challenges and opportunities of domestic and international market.

Sector Wise Analysis of Demand and Supply Man Power

Table No. 02: Agricultural Sector

| Sectors | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | % Man Power |
|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Unskilled | 973631 | 971345 | 962824 | 959902 | 953842 | 948997 | 944024 | |
| Semi-Skilled | 79372 | 79186 | 78491 | 78253 | 77759 | 77364 | 76958 | |
| Skilled | 5291 | 5279 | 5233 | 5217 | 5184 | 5158 | 5131 | |
| Total Demand | 1058294 | 1055810 | 1046548 | 1043372 | 1036784 | 1031519 | 1026113 | 32% |

Table No. 03: Industry Sector

| | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----|
| Un Skilled | 419008 | 446023 | 447690 | 472167 | 480719 | 494713 | 505518 | |
| Semi-Skilled | 193388 | 205857 | 206626 | 217923 | 221870 | 228329 | 233316 | |
| Skilled | 32231 | 34309 | 34438 | 36321 | 36978 | 38055 | 38886 | |
| Total Demand | 644628 | 686189 | 688755 | 726410 | 739568 | 761098 | 777720 | 25% |

Table No. 04: Service Sector

| | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----|
| Un Skilled | 154524 | 165549 | 173043 | 182041 | 187970 | 196154 | 202577 | |
| Semi-Skilled | 360556 | 386281 | 403766 | 424762 | 438598 | 457692 | 472679 | |
| Skilled | 515080 | 551830 | 576809 | 606803 | 626568 | 653845 | 675256 | |
| Total Demand | 1030160 | 1103659 | 1153618 | 1213606 | 1253136 | 1307691 | 1350513 | 43% |

Table No. 05: All Sectors

| | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------|
| Un Skilled | 1547163 | 1582917 | 1583557 | 1614110 | 1622531 | 1639864 | 1652119 | |
| Semi-Skilled | 633316 | 671323 | 688884 | 720938 | 738227 | 763385 | 782954 | |
| Skilled | 552603 | 591418 | 616479 | 648340 | 668730 | 697058 | 719273 | |
| Total Demand | 2733082 | 2845658 | 2888921 | 2983388 | 3029488 | 3100307 | 3154345 | 100% |

Problems Faced in Global Skill Development in India

Though skill is regarded as an essential element with education to make the educated adults employable, but the fact is that the development of skill is not being focused at college level. Pandya, 2007 indicated in his pre-investigation field visits that ‘inculcation of communicative skills is not catered to in the instructional process.’ The professional colleges somewhat try to inculcate skills in the students by various activities mentioned in the syllabus/ curriculum. However, mainly the emphasis is on completion of the syllabus and the formal recording. At the completion of the course, neither a specific test to evaluate any global skill is conducted nor is a proper certification of the skill given. This is a major problem. Non availability of trained experts of various global skills is another important problem faced by most of our colleges. Sinha, 2005 stated that ‘in order to compete the world market, proficiency in English is mandatory. In our present system of education, although English has a major role, many students fail to compete due to lack of proficiency. Lack of resources is also a major problem of concern. Knowledge of facilities, policies and schemes of government are not known to the students and the institutions also.

The students are not aware about their own potential, aptitude or interest. They are just under the influence of market or their peer group. They are not aware about the global skills they require to get employment. Palit, Amitendu (2009) presented a working paper titled “Skills Development in India: Challenges and Strategies” under Institute of South Asian Studies and National University of Singapore. He stated that ‘the dominance of arts, science and commerce in higher education has prevented the bulk of the pass –outs from the system from acquiring skills required by manufacturing and service industries’. He further stated that ‘the technical training system also suffers from an excessive emphasis on longer duration courses, a lack of alignment with industry requirements, the under utilization of existing capacities and poor physical infrastructure.

International Labour Office(ILO) presented a report in 2011 in which it stated that ‘skills are fundamental for individual employability and national competitiveness’. It also stated some skill challenges which are as follows-

- **Skills Mismatch:** Skills obtained through training and those required by the job often do not match, resulting in skills shortages in some areas and, simultaneously, a surplus of workers with skills that are not in demand, contributing to unemployment. This is more applicable to requirements of global employing agencies

- **Limited Involvement of Social Partners:** Many countries lack the active participation of employers' and workers' organizations that is essential to ensure the provision of relevant and appropriate training.
- **Poor Quality and Relevance of Training:** Weak quality assurance, too few or poorly qualified trainers, poor working conditions for trainers, and outdated qualifications, curricula, training materials and methods all inhibit the quality of training. Limited labour market information and inability to translate such information into improved training undermines relevance
- **Limited Access to Training Opportunities:** The outreach of formal training is often very limited, especially where distances are great and political unrest prevails, the informal economy looms large, and literacy and educational levels are low –all factors that leave a large number of people with few or no employable skills. Women and disadvantaged groups often face additional barriers in accessing training.
- **Weak Coordination in the System:** A large number of actors and providers (ministries, agencies, central and regional governments, NGOs, employers and workers) are involved in skills development. Their efforts often overlap and are not well coordinated, especially in developing countries. Weakness in linking skills supply and demand also limits positive impact on employment and productivity. The problems and challenges mentioned above clearly indicate that a real concern is now needed to solve these problems and work on grass root level to improve the level of skills, to identify the training needs required to survive in our country and also globally

Research Questions

After studying at length the current scenario and policies the researcher has following question in mind-

- What are the global skills that are essentially required for future in Indian scenario?
- Is there any significant difference in the preferences in global skill of different educational groups?
- Are there any specific strategies for development of these global skills?

Purpose of Study

By and large, the purpose of this study is to survey the repository of skills prevalent in the industrial sectors of the twin cities of Rajasthan and Rajasthan. In specific, the purpose of this study is threefold. First, this study explores the drivers of future skills in select sectors of business in the twin cities of Rajasthan and Rajasthan. This way, a better and a brighter picture of the requisite skills across the sectors of industry will be known, consequently helping the apex industrial bodies to evolve sectoral and national skills policies. Secondly, it examines the skill acquisition process adopted by various sectors of business in the twin cities. This way, the employee skill needs in the select sectors of the industry in the twin cities of Rajasthan and Rajasthan will be known better. In order to understand the needs, it is important to first address the drivers of future skill needs of the employees in the select industrial sectors under study. Besides, it is also important to know as to how these industry sectors are attempting at acquisition of such employee skills. Lastly, this study addresses the employee skills gaps across the select industrial sectors. In order to do so, this purpose is further trifurcated into:

- To survey the type of skills of the employees in the select sectors of industry,
- To compute skill gaps in such skills of the employees in the select sectors of the industry,
- Lastly, to investigate the consequences of such skill gaps by the responsible managers for the management of the skills in such sectors of the business.
- In order to fulfil the purposes of this study, there is a need to adopt the standard skills, methodology for identifying universal skill set normally found in business sectors globally.

Objectives of the Study

In view of the statement of the problem and the significance of the problem, the following are the objectives stated

1. To study the future skill drivers required as perceived by the managers in select companies.
2. To examine the employee skill acquisition process in select companies.
3. To understand and explore the skill reserve, skill gap and the managerial challenges faced by the selected companies.
4. To analyze the employees' existing skills, the required skills and skill gaps.
5. To understand the modalities to improve the current skills to match with the required skill as suggested by the managers.

Hypotheses of the Study

The following are the hypotheses formulated.

Ho1: There is no significant association between drivers of future skills and the type of sector in the select companies.

Ho2: There is no significant association between skill acquisition process and the type of sector.

Ho3: There is no significant association between type of skill reserve and the type of sector.

Ho4: There is no significant Gap in the skills as reported by the managers in the select companies across the sectors

Ho5: There is no significant association between the consequences of skill gaps and types of sectors.

Ho6: There is no significant association between managerial challenges and types of sector reported

Conclusion

India has been re-focusing and re-prioritizing to build the capacity of poor rural youth to address domestic and global skill requirements. The paper is a secondary-data-based document which provides a review of the scheme, DDU-GKY, focusing on the skill training for rural employment and resultant placement. Through this study, it is revealed, how far this scheme has been successful, by way of career and placements. Resultant insights will be beneficial both to the policy makers and the implementers of the scheme in Rajasthan. The study brings into light that; though Assam gives a good picture of implementation of the scheme, they are not up to expectations; and there is room for further improvement. The paper intends to be inspiring to improve the practice of the scheme, thus benefiting the skill development and resulting employment of the beneficiaries of the scheme.

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