

Skill Development: Empowerment of Youth

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ABSTRACT

India has a distinct advantage over advanced economies in having a larger percentage of a young workforce and this contrast may become starker in the years to come. However, the developed and the developing economies show a similar trend in the declining percentage of youth joining the workforce. This trend is attributed to a larger proportion of young people joining schools in comparison to the previous years, with the emerging economies showing a higher percentage. This is a welcome trend for countries like India where sustained efforts by the successive Governmental and other agencies in the field of basic education and curtailing the child labour have brought positive results. However, for a large chunk of the youth, the lack of basic skills needed for employment after completing school or graduation does not present a rosy scenario. Some of the reasons could be a very dismal connection between formal and vocational education, meagre training facilities, under-qualified trainers and lack of infrastructural facilities (UNDP). These emerging trends, when viewed in conjunction with some recent studies, show that employers have found about 25% of Indian graduates are 'employable' in the organised sector. The informal sector that takes care of about 93% of the workforce does not have any skilling mechanism, and largely depends on the skill development taking place on the job. 'Skill' is the ability to do something well, and the current situation calls for a quick reorganisation of the skill development ecosystem. It will act as a defining element in India's growth story by becoming an essential ingredient for future economic growth if India is to transform into a diversified and internationally-competitive economy.

KEYWORDS: *skill development, empowerment, youth, resource, human, institutions, education*

INTRODUCTION

If India has to rise as the Human Resource Capital of the world, it needs to appropriately skill its youth bulge and convert this advantage to a dividend. Skill development thus becomes a buzzword for the 21st century. It may require re-defining the relationship of education, employment and skills development. For a large population like India, ups-killing of all its youth across the country cannot be accomplished through the conventional education framework. It would ensure the enhancement of the quality of life of a key sector of the population and can be brought about in synergy with the industry. Skill development may act as a catalyst for ushering social equality, a step towards providing opportunities for all and a move towards eradication of poverty.[1,2] The government alone cannot accomplish such a gigantic task.

Currently, most of the corporate institutions are either investing in existing vocational training infrastructure or setting up their own skill training institutes. While this has resulted in an increase in the number of youth trained in different vocational skills and has complemented the "Skill India" mission. However, there is still a significant number of skilled and unskilled youth who are unemployed. Addressing this issue in a comprehensive manner would call for a concerted effort by the government, private players and the NGOs. The concept of skill development involves giving directions through proper training/counselling sessions, to raise the confidence level of students and linking the earned skills to livelihood opportunities for various sections of the society. One of the most critical points is that there is

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a dire need to create awareness among the youth on why the government is investing in them and who will be the ultimate beneficiary of the whole process. This requires extensive counselling sessions to make them understand the significance of choosing the right vocational training course, work environment and role of other relevant factors that will impact their lives.

It is essential to carefully screen the candidates for enrollment in the training institutes by looking into their desire to learn, become financially stable and independent. These candidates should show motivation, positive attitude and to rise despite hardships. It has been observed that the right target audience is not mobilised effectively due to ineffective pitching style of the field staff, wrong selection of community group/locations or lack of adequate branding material in the form of a canopy, pamphlets and mobilization kits.[3,4]

Improper counselling of the beneficiary and their parents in the field during mobilisation has been noted as a major cause of candidates dropping out in between the training sessions. These dropouts often turn up for placements after the training sessions are over without understanding the requirement of completing the module. It is also seen that the zero-fee based model does not attract the right candidature. Courses without any monetary commitment are taken for granted with no regular attendance and seriousness during the sessions.

Under qualified and inefficient training, persons who are incapable of conducting the sessions are a big negative point. Such trainers fail in motivating the candidates and in bringing about any change in the mindset of the students who are mostly from the underprivileged section of the society. Presence of such trainers is a big deterrent and one of the major causes of absenteeism/dropout cases of target beneficiaries.

DISCUSSION

A sudden change of work environments (from informal to formal set up), workload, change of lifestyle, and migration from the home district are some of the critical reasons that often lead towards poor retention and a perpetual cause for concern for the employers. Thus post placement tracking and counselling creates a good synergy between the centre-employer-candidate and inculcates a mutual bond of trust. Centres running the skill development courses should address these challenges to ensure quality output and proper functioning. The skill development initiative is appreciable, but there is a need for a more meticulous implementation approach. The current model requires a thorough re-examination

and plugging of the gaps for providing a sustainable source of livelihood to a large set of the population.

Education is the most honorable & noble profession of our society. Every human keeps on learning each day & every moment. But to prosper and to be successful, every person must possess some skill or set of skills apart from their formal education. You will find many people who don't have formal education but still successful with the support of skills they possess.[5,6]

Skill Development Course Training, Vocational Course Training & Professional Course Training sectors are thriving sectors in our country as on today. In fact our Honorable Prime Minister Shree Narendra Modi ji has a vision of India as being one of the top leaders on world's map in manufacturing sector. And for this vision he has introduced "MAKE IN INDIA" program. That has steered "SKILL INDIA" initiative in a gigantic way. Government of India has separate ministry for Skill Development courses which empowers today's youth to acquire & enhance skills that shall be useful for them to be employable or to start their own business. This initiative will lead to massive employment in formal as well as informal sectors. And this will lead our nation to be a force to reckon with and a way to be a superpower.

With every third person being a youth aged between 10 and 24 in India, investment in young people and adolescents has become even more critical. A passionate attachment to moral values and national pride should be encouraged and supported by providing quality healthcare, standard education, skill-building, employment creation and opportunities, good governance, and empowerment to the youth in achieving the progress and development of the nation.

The supreme value of the youth is incalculable and indescribable. The empowerment of youth is the key to a self-reliant India. Young people are important as future voters, decision-makers, and productive citizens. Their health and well-being, therefore, are critical for their future.[7,8]

Youth empowerment can restrain the rate of poverty to an enormous extent if and when harnessed meticulously. One of the key factors is skill development. When youth is equipped with the necessary skills, they can utilize such skills to assist others as valuable members of society. This will, in turn, contribute to the increase in employability and add to the nation's development. Furthermore, youth empowerment through social innovation and entrepreneurship has incredible potential to solve

issues at a grassroots level if youth are provided with powerful platforms to connect and act.

RESULTS

However, our young population faces challenges that have been accentuated by the pandemic. For instance, anaemia, child marriages, and teenage pregnancies have increased. Mental health has also become a significant concern amongst the youth as they are worried about their tomorrow. Moreover, the transition to secondary education and employment demonstrates persistence in challenges. In addition, the country-wide closure of educational institutions has impacted millions of children enrolled in school, further restricting mobility and access to services for economically disadvantaged adolescents. Although these changes will have a long-term impact on shaping India's future if necessary, steps need to be taken today.

Notwithstanding the challenges at hand, we at Humanity Welfare Council, whose Mission is 2030 Developed Nation, strongly believe in youth empowerment and what they can do for our country. Because of that, we make sure that we do what we can to give the youth the push that they need to realize their full potential. Therefore, we implement programs and projects that enable the youth to develop and be leaders.

We have implemented various projects to ensure holistic development for the children and youth that we meet:

➤ Project Litindia

Community Libraries in rural India. Recognizing education as one of the approaches to empowering youth, we make sure that we educate the children under our care by establishing libraries in rural areas where there is no access to education and learning. We have established 8 community libraries so far where interested individuals can access this educational space to gain their world knowledge.

➤ Project Global Cure (PGC) Interventions

Youth empowerment also signifies the well-being of the youth. Through PGC, we provide medical support to the youth deprived of it in case of emergencies. In addition, we conduct events on health awareness among the youth of India.

➤ Health and Medical Services

PGC, our Care Centres facilities, provides primary preventive medical care, consultations, and treatments to ensure our youth's optimum health condition

CONCLUSIONS

Youth development is a process that prepares a young person to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood and achieve his or her full potential. Youth

development is promoted through activities and experiences that help youth develop social, ethical, emotional, physical, and cognitive competencies. *Youth leadership* is part of the youth development process and supports the young person in developing: (a) the ability to analyze his or her own strengths and weaknesses, set personal and vocational goals, and have the self-esteem, confidence, motivation, and abilities to carry them out (including the ability to establish support networks in order to fully participate in community life and effect positive social change); and (b) the ability to guide or direct others on a course of action, influence the opinions and behaviors of others, and serve as a role model (Wehmeyer, Agran, & Hughes, 1998).

Conditions that promote healthy youth development are supported through programs and activities in schools and communities. Youth development researchers and practitioners emphasize that effective programs and interventions recognize youths' strengths and seek to promote positive development rather than addressing risks in isolation. Youth who are constructively involved in learning and doing and who are connected to positive adults and peers are less likely to engage in risky or self-defeating behaviors.

Providing the conditions for positive youth development is a responsibility shared by families, schools, and communities. The conditions for healthy youth development reside in families, schools, and communities.

Families promote healthy youth development when they:

- provide support;
- have positive family communication;
- are involved in their adolescent's school;
- have clear rules and consequences and monitor their adolescent's whereabouts;
- provide positive, responsible role models for other adults, adolescents, and siblings;
- expect their adolescent to do well; and
- spend time together.

Schools promote healthy youth development when they:

- expect commitment from youth;
- have a caring school climate;
- have clear rules and consequences;
- provide positive, responsible adult role models; and
- expect youth to do well.

Communities promote healthy youth development when:

- adults advocate for youth;
- neighbors monitor youths' behavior;

- adults model positive, responsible, and healthy behavior;
- youth model positive, responsible, and healthy behavior; and
- youth programs are available (Konopka Institute, 2000, pp. 3-4).

It is unusual for all these positive influences to be present at the same time; unfortunately, too many youth grow up in circumstances that provide limited support for healthy development.

Well-designed and well-run youth development programs promote youth leadership by involving youth in needs assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation. A growing number of organizations include youth on their boards of directors. Effective programs engage all participating youth in constructive action through activities such as service learning, arts, and athletics; and emphasize common values such as friendship, citizenship, and learning.

Research on factors promoting resilience in youth at risk has shown that the consistent presence of a single caring adult can have a significant positive impact on a young person's growth and development (Garmezy, 1993). Well-designed programs promote positive relationships with both peers and adults (National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth, 2004).[9]

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