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## PROBLEMS OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2019

**Dr. Sr. Cathelina**, Research Advisor & Asst. Professor, Department of Commerce, Bon Secours College for Women, Vilar Bypass, Thanjavur

**Dr. K. Mala**, Research Advisor & Asst. Professor, Department of Commerce, Bon Secours College for Women, Vilar Bypass, Thanjavur

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**Abstract:** Vocational education will be an integral part of school and higher education. Social status hierarchy and vocational education the matter of social status hierarchy of occupations has vexed higher education in multiple ways. It has significantly influenced the public perception of vocational education and thus the choices that students make in higher education. There is no gainsaying the fact that vocational education has been less desirable to students making these choices. Other factors have also influenced this perception of vocational education. Notably, the 'hard' separation of vocational education from academic and professional education, most clearly manifested in complete institutional and curricular separation from school onwards, has had a role to play as has the mostly indifferent quality of vocational education institutions. This situation is in urgent need of change. Vocational education must become an attractive option for students to choose from. This is crucial for the wellbeing of the millions of people joining and already in the workforce. It is equally important for the national economy. This Policy takes decisive actions - both in the immediate and long term - to address this matter.

Vocational education prepares students for jobs, specific trade, occupation or vocation, in which the seeker participates. Vocational education comprises of all trades and ranging from mechanics to handicraft to agriculture to health care industry. It aims in making a student self-reliant. Right from the Wardha scheme of Basic education (1937) to Kothari commission (1964) to UNESCO (2013) to NPE (1968, 1986 and 2019) all have laid specific importance to Vocational education. Sustainability and economic growth of any nation can be harmonized through innovative pedagogical approaches in a promising way to address the challenges in vocational education. This paper is an attempt to study the problems in the existing state of vocational education, to study the new approach of NEP draft 2019 for increasing employability amongst the youth of India and in turn, leading to sustainability.

**Keywords:** vocational education, social status hierarchy, NEP draft 2019

### I. INTRODUCTION

A vision for the education system in India The vision of India's new education system has accordingly been crafted to ensure that it touches the life of each and every citizen, consistent with their ability to contribute to many growing developmental imperatives of this country on the one hand, and towards creating a just and equitable society on the other. We have proposed the revision and revamping of all aspects of the education structure, its regulation and governance, to create a new system that is aligned with the aspirational goals of 21st century education, while remaining consistent with India's traditions and value systems.

Education provides individuals with the opportunity for self-empowerment through intellectual development, skill acquisition, vocational development and environmental awareness. Vocational education or vocational education and training, also called career and technical education, prepares learners for jobs that are based in manual or practical activities, occupation or vocation, in which the learner participates. It is sometimes referred to as technical education, as the learner directly develops expertise in a particular group of techniques or technology. (AICTE, 2017)

**Vocational education has been accorded high priority in the National Policy on education of 1986 through various skill development programs and also in draft NEP 2019.**

Integrating vocational education into all secondary schools and higher education institutions: All academic institutions will be required to integrate vocational education into their educational offerings in a phased manner over a period of a decade. Towards this, they will collaborate with ITIs, polytechnics, local businesses and industries, hospitals, farms, and NGOs. Each educational institution will make a careful choice of a few areas that they would like to offer, based on an analysis of the jobs available in their regions. The focus will be the development of practical skills as well as the associated theoretical knowledge along with a broad-based education. Facilitating sharing of knowhow and best practices

among educational institutions: Formal mechanisms for mentoring and sharing knowhow will be put in place. A formal body must be dedicated to this task. Such a body can serve schools, colleges and universities, so as to help bring synergies across school and higher education. Skills gap analysis and mapping of local opportunities: Carrying forward the work already done by the NSDC in various sectors towards determining gross estimates of requirements for trained personnel, State governments will create more fine-grained mappings of training requirements in different regions of their states. Educational institutions can then use the State-level mappings as the basis for conducting further research to select the vocations they would like to offer, based on the projected gap in human resources and the availability and potential requirements for hands-on training facilities. Funding support for the integration of vocational education into all educational institutions: Curricular integration of vocational education will require funding for teacher preparation and professional development of teachers, for the creation of local infrastructure (equipment and laboratories, etc.) at educational institutions, for sourcing of locally available resources where necessary, hiring of experts in different areas of vocational education at competitive salaries, etc. A separate fund for the integration of vocational education into educational institutions will be set up. The NCIVE will work out the modalities for the disbursement of these funds and the processes for monitoring progress. Coordination between MHRD and MSDE: Given the crucial role that mainstream academic institutions can play in delivering vocational education to millions of young Indians at the earliest, it is imperative that MHRD and MSDE, and indeed all ministries involved in the provision of skills training, work in close cooperation to facilitate the interaction of academic institutions with other components of the skilling ecosystem managed by the MSDE, such as the NCVET, which is currently the custodian of the NSQF, and the SSCs, which define professional standards and conduct assessments. The RSA through its SCC will play a major role in helping to achieve this, both at the Centre and in the States.

Vocational Education and Training (VET) ensures skills development in a wide range of occupational fields, through school-based and work-based learning. It plays a key role in ensuring lower school dropout rates and facilitates the school-to-work transition. In a changing world of work, well-designed VET systems can play a crucial role in developing the right skills for the labour market, not only for youth but also for adults in need of up-skilling or re-skilling. The OECD VET and Adult Learning Team helps countries understand the main strengths and weakness of their VET systems, and identifies opportunities and challenges for future-ready VET systems that are resilient, flexible and inclusive.

The way VET is organised and delivered, and its importance in the overall education system, varies substantially between countries. Country-specific VET reviews provide in-depth assessments of the strengths and weakness of countries' VET systems and tailored advice on a wide range of aspects of VET policies. Such reviews have been conducted in over 30 countries, see [here](#) for an overview.

#### Work-based learning and apprenticeships

VET systems differ strongly in how work-based learning is organised. In some programmes, including apprenticeships, VET students spend a large share of their time in the workplace (see [Work-based learning and apprenticeships](#)). But even in programmes that are organised pre-dominantly at schools, different types of work-based learning opportunities can be available for students (see [Work-based learning in school-based VET](#)).

#### Inclusive VET and adult learning

VET provides opportunities for skills development to a diverse group of learners. Inclusive VET systems have potential to facilitate the integration of migrants (see [Unlocking the potential of migrants through VET](#)). Adults can also participate in VET programmes to up-skill and re-skill through their working lives (see [Adult learning and basic skills](#)).

The power for economic development and national sustainability can be achieved through the quality of knowledge and skill of its citizens. The vocational skills can be enhanced through proper policies, planning and timely systematic implementations.

### **Importance of Vocational Education**

Vocational Education and training to all forms and levels of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding, and knowledge relating to occupation in various sectors of economic life. (UNESCO 2013)

This is the higher level of skills and knowledge required to be taught as advanced learning before workplace entry to cope with the emergence of technologies in the workplace.

Mahatma Gandiji believed that mass education and primary education can bring national integration through vocational training from the primary school itself. He wrote in the Harijan July 1973, "By education, I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in child and man-body, mind and spirit. Literacy itself is not education. I would, therefore, begin the child's education by teaching it a useful handicraft and enabling it to produce from the moment it begins its training. Thus every school can be made self-supporting, the condition begins that the state takes over the manufacture of these schools. "He propounded craft education, self-supporting to promote vocational education, in his Wardha scheme.

The national policy planners have considered higher secondary stage of school education as crucial since it is at this target that necessary skills and competencies are acquired which enable the students to enter the world of work or to go for higher education.

The NEP, 1986 inter alia states "the introduction of a systematic, well-planned and rigorously implemented program of vocational education is crucial in the proposed educational reorganization... vocational education will be a distinct stream intended to prepare students for identified vocations spanning several areas of activity". The NEP, 1986 set the target, to cover 10% higher secondary students under vocational courses by 1990 and 25% by 1995. The POA, 1992 reset the targets of diversification of students in vocational streams at +2 levels to 10% by 1995 and 25% by 2000.

Consequently, a Centrally sponsored Scheme (CSS) of Vocationalisation of Secondary education was launched in 1988, which was implemented by the States/UT's for the formal sector and by the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO's) Voluntary Organisations (VOs) in the non-formal sector. The objectives of the scheme were: (i) to provide diversification of educational opportunities to enhance individual employability; (ii) to reduce the mismatch between demand and supply of the skilled human resource, and (iii) to provide an alternative for those pursuing higher education. Under the scheme, vocational courses are provided in general schools with 2 years' duration after the secondary stage. Financial assistance and recruitment of teachers had been given by the central Government.

### **Bases for vocational Selection**

There are several courses and subjects available for students in vocational education, which play an instrumental role in deciding the profession of the student. Subjects should be selected after analyzing individual qualities and desired qualities for the profession.

### **The following must be kept in a mind while choosing a profession (sharma, 2008):**

- Nature of work which includes the kind of work, charge, responsibility, duty and interest
- Working conditions
- Necessary personality traits – nature, adapts in behavior, power of leadership
- Level of intelligence
- Mental abilities
- Interest and aptitudes
- Necessary education and training
- Income, chances of promotion and permanency
- Social prestige
- Demand for the job
- Higher education must play a key role in preparing individuals for the world of work. The 12<sup>th</sup> five-Year Plan (2012-2017) estimated that less than 5% of the Indian workforce in the age group of 19-24 received formal vocational education: in comparison, the USA has 52%, Germany has 75%, and South Korea has 96%.

Vocational education distinguishes itself from academic education in the close linking of knowledge and skills to specific practical challenges and work situations in the economy. Therefore, integrate vocational education into all educational institutions. – Schools, colleges and universities. Provide access to vocational education to at least 50% of all learners by 2025 is taken as the main objective in the draft of National educational policy 2019.

Vocational education integrates a complex of knowledge, attitudes and skills for particular occupations. Thus, skills are a part of vocational education.

### **Problems of Vocational Education in the Present Education System**

- **Lack of Institutions:** the Institutions related to Vocational Education introduced after 15 August 1947 cannot be said adequately. The youngsters of India, with aims of getting technical education, can hope for a bright future but such institutions are very short in numbers in considerations to such a large population. There are 10,426 institutes for vocational training (AICTE 2018-19)
- **The attitude of the people:** In the present scenario, more importance and respect has been given to the activities related to the intellect than physical activities. Based on physical labor, the caste system has been introduced in the country. The bases of diversification of labor, based on thousands of years of the caste system, The people engaged in physical works and handicrafts for earning their livelihood are not looked with respect.
- **Short Curriculum:** In the Vocational Streams, only technical subjects are provided. There is no provision of liberal education. So with the technical knowledge, the youngsters are not able to acquire knowledge of social objectives and human relations of production.
- **The medium of instruction:** Medium of instruction in the Vocational courses is also a big challenge. In almost all technical institutions of modern India, English is the medium of instruction. The student who have passed through the medium of hindi or some other regional language find it very difficult to receive technical and vocational Education in English. Such students are disappointed and leave vocational and technical institutions after a term of stagnation. So this sort of frustration also brings about a loss of money, time and energy.
- **Lack of good Teachers:** Meritorious and able persons having received Technical and Vocational Education is always after good salaries and other material gains. They hesitate to go in these professions. Consequently, such institutions are deprived of able and talented persons.
- **Shortage of practical:** practical knowledge is not sufficient for the students. They should be provided the practical knowledge, industrial training, internship, and hands-on experience.
- **Shortage of continuous Education:** Young people complete the Technical and Vocational Education and get employed. In the beginning, they are full of knowledge, but in course of time, they forget many things. This brings a lack of efficiency in their work.

### **What needs to be done?**

- Set up more institution for impacting Vocational Education and Technical Education at all stages.
- Emphasis should be given on education to the youth force, to change the attitude towards physical work and labour. High earning potentiality of different vocations can also assist in changing the attitude of the youths.
- The curriculum of Technical and Vocational Education should be broadened with liberal and general education.
- Talented resource person should be attracted to be teachers in Technical and vocational education. Teachers should be given decent pay packages and the society should respect those builders of the youth.
- Regular practical training sessions and workshops should be effectively organized. Young enterprises need to be given practical knowledge of starting industries and setting up business firms.
- Part-time instructions should be provided to persons employed in jobs to improve the quality of work. Refresher courses may be organized to acquaint the people in service with the recent development of knowledge in the field of science and technology.
- Collaborate with NGOs, industries to provide practical skills to the students.
- Work with NCERT and/or SCERTs to create supplementary educational materials for vocational education.
- An appropriate training module for the teachers should be developed.
- Conduct assessment of all vocational education courses, jointly with the partners that are providing the practical skills training to the students.
- Recognition of prior learning of the students to reduce dropouts.

## **A Fresh Approach to Vocational Education as per Draft of National Education Policy 2019**

- As the most basic and important step, the implementation of vocational education must be improved. This must be on all dimensions – teacher development and recruitment, curriculum, and infrastructure.
- Vocational education must not be developed separately from ‘mainstream’ education.
- There must also be easy mobility across vocational and general academic streams, through clear equivalence of qualifications/ certifications and credit structures.
- All school students must receive vocational education in at least one vocation during Grades 9-12.
- Students will choose from among a selection of courses that their schools will offer, based on the availability of hands-on training facilities and job opportunities in the region.
- HEIs will also offer vocational courses that are integrated into the undergraduate education programs.
- A separate National committee for the integration of vocational Education (NCIVI) will need to be set up, consisting of member from across ministries, to review the longTerm goals outlined here and to work out the steps that need to be taken towards achieving them.
- The NCIVE will work out the modalities for the disbursement of these funds and the processes for monitoring progress.
- Skills gap analysis and mapping of local opportunities
- Data gathering, MIS and technology support for the rollout of vocational education

### **Areas of special focus**

- Production, development, and management of various goods and services;
- Textiles and embroidery to the grand architecture of historic buildings;
- Enhancing the work of local crafts persons and artisans
- Development of local knowledge systems in medicine to myriad varieties of art and handicrafts; and
- Water conservation,

### **To operationalise the fresh Approach to Vocational Education, the Draft of National Education Policy 2019 envisages the following:**

- Relevant and meaningful integration of vocational education into school and higher education through skills analysis and mapping of local opportunities, along with efforts to formalize the capabilities of youth already in the workforce through mechanisms like RPL, adult education, online learning, etc.
- Network of ministries, bodies/agencies, and institutions as well as local industries and individuals to optimize the learning and exposure of students at all stages.
- Adequate investment in developing Infrastructure, as well as recruiting, preparing and supporting individuals to transact vocational education effectively.
- Maintenance of databases and study of possible models of vocational education which can be applied in our context.
- Ensuring mobility of learners across institutions and streams, through alignment with international standards, and curricula and assessment aligned to NSQF.
- Enhanced capacity of vocational education particularly at the higher education stage, and in rural and tribal areas.
- Integration of work of local crafts persons and artisans into the curriculum, along with measures to disseminate their work more widely.

## **II. SUGGESTIONS**

NPE 2019 draft carefully examines the requirement of a sustainable and just society. It highlights the needs for liberal education with an emotional quotient for successful impact. It emphasizes that professional education must seek to develop individuals with a capacity to combine a strong foundation of theoretical knowledge and specific competencies; curriculum for vocational education must be able to connect theory to practice; students must develop an understanding of how their profession impacts the society, students must develop generic competencies such as decision making, critical thinking, problem-

solving, and communication skills; and vocational and disposition to be constructive and contributing citizens.

### III. CONCLUSION

The challenge of providing vocational education to millions of youth is the most pronounced in India particularly in discipline related to agriculture, technical, and healthcare education. For instance, the agriculture sector needs to be supplemented with skilled workers in many related areas such as horticulture, fertilizers, and pesticides, food processing, fisheries, and livestock. Similarly technical education includes degree and diploma programs in engineering, technology, management, architecture, town planning, pharmacy, hotel management and catering technology while health care education includes a whole host of allied health staff such as radiologists, laboratory technicians, physiologists, home caregivers for the elderly, and many others that total up to a projected 80 million jobs worldwide by 2030 according to WHO. Many of these sectors are critical to India's wellbeing and overall development, so the very large target of vocational education must be addressed in multiple ways. Government employers, the respective sector skill councils (SSCs) and all other stakeholders must work together to address a large part of this target. The role of educational institutes providing skill based education will be critical thus NPE 2019 should provide amicable solutions to the existing problems and also makes possible efforts towards an employable sustainable society.

#### Abbreviation

CSS- Centrally Sponsored Scheme

NCERT- The National Council of Educational Research and Training

NCIVE- National Committee for the Integration of Vocational Education

NGOs- Non-Government Organisations

NPE- National Policy on Education

NSQF- National Skills Qualification Framework

POA- Program of Action

RPL- Recognition of Prior learning

SCERT- State Council of Educational Research and Training

UNESCO- United Nations Educational Scientist and Cultural Organization

VOs- Voluntary Organisations

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