



Implementation of Vocational Education in Education System of India: Challenges and Prospects of NEP 2020

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ABSTRACT

Professional Education depends on occupation and business and it is the need of great importance for each nation to have solid professional training framework. It can be characterized as talented based instruction. Professional Education helps in financial development. The Indian instruction framework perceives the part of instruction and especially Vocational Education. (Kumar, 2018) National Council for Professional Training set up by the Government of India assumes its vital part in execution of Vocational Education in India. Despite the fact that there are parcels numerous territories in which India is confronting issues in Professional Education Implementation. With the roll-out of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, vocational education has garnered the required spotlight. The NEP 2020 is a comprehensive policy document that extensively discusses the revamping of vocational education. The policy focuses on bringing vocational education into mainstream education, as recommended by successive commissions on education over the years. Yet, the vocational education space, over the years, has witnessed a painfully slow and stagnant growth. This paper focuses on the different challenges and future prospects of NEP 2020 regarding the implementation of vocational education.

Keywords: Challenges, NEP 2020, Prospects of NEP 2020, Vocational Education

Introduction

The process of facilitating learning, knowledge, skills, values, morals, beliefs is called as education. And by acquiring it one can live a better life in the society with a dignity. Every individual feels that their acquired knowledge and skills will help them to earn for their livelihood. That's why the main concern of the present education system is whether it is able to provide such type of education or not. Often the students are in dilemma that whatever they have been studying or learning in schools and colleges through their courses are useful for them in their future prospects of life or not (Saraf, 2016). Every time they are come up with the same questions that whether it will going to help them to earn for their livelihood or not. They

are thinking that which courses they should opt by which they will get benefitted (**Kumar, 2020**). The answer for their concern is the vocational education.

According to the 12th Five-Year Plan (2012-2017) in India, only a limited percentage of workers in the age group of 19-20 received formal vocational education. Historically, vocational education has primarily focused on students in grades 11-12 and those who dropped out of school at grade 8 or later. However, the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 suggests that vocational education is viewed as inferior to mainstream education, leading to a lack of enthusiasm among students to pursue vocational education options. In essence, this means that the traditional emphasis on formal education has led to a limited exposure to vocational education, particularly among students in the age group of 19-20. This is despite the fact that vocational education can provide valuable skills and training for students who may not have the aptitude or interest in pursuing higher education. The stigma surrounding vocational education as an inferior alternative to mainstream education has contributed to this phenomenon.

As a result, many students are hesitant to consider vocational education as a viable career option, perpetuating the limited availability of skilled workers in India. At the end they are not able to find a suitable job for them and remained as unemployed. It is a serious concern for the country as with the growing population and growing unemployment. And this could be dealt with by providing proper vocational education to students. NEP 2020 seeks to address these challenges by gradually incorporating vocational education into the mainstream curriculum across all educational institutions. This integration is planned to occur in phases, ensuring a smooth and systematic implementation (**Karra, 2020**). The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 recognizes the importance of vocational education in preparing students for the workforce by providing practical skills and hands-on experience. By integrating vocational training with mainstream education, NEP 2020 aims to:

Enhance Employability: Students will gain industry-relevant skills that increase their job prospects and readiness for various career paths.

Holistic Development: Combining academic and vocational education promotes a well-rounded development, balancing theoretical knowledge with practical application.

Reduce Skill Gaps: Aligning educational outcomes with industry requirements helps in minimizing the gap between the skills students acquire and the skills employers seek.

Inclusive Education: Making vocational education a part of the regular curriculum ensures that all students, regardless of their background, have access to skill-based learning opportunities.

Flexibility and Choice: Students will have the flexibility to choose vocational courses that align with their interests and career aspirations, fostering a more personalized and engaging learning experience.

Early Exposure: Introducing vocational education at an early stage in the education system helps students explore different fields, discover their interests, and make informed career choices.

Economic Growth: A skilled workforce is crucial for the economic development of a country. By equipping students with vocational skills, NEP 2020 aims to contribute to the nation's economic growth and competitiveness in the global market.

This phased approach ensures that educational institutions can adapt to the new system progressively, addressing any challenges and refining the implementation process to achieve the desired outcomes effectively.

Vocational Education: Vocational Education equips students with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in specific occupations, trades, or professions. Also referred to as career education, technical education, or technical and vocational education and training (TVET), this type of education prepares individuals for immediate employment in their chosen fields. The main goal of vocational education is to provide students with the essential skills, knowledge, and expertise to excel as technicians, craftspeople, or professionals in their respective careers.

Vocational Education encompasses a wide range of subjects and fields, including areas such as technology, engineering, healthcare, hospitality, and the arts (**Fuller, 2015**). It can take many forms, including apprenticeships, on-the-job training, vocational schools, community colleges, and online courses. The benefits of vocational education are numerous, including providing individuals with marketable skills that are in high demand, reducing unemployment rates, and fostering economic growth.

It is a vital component of the education system (**Nawani, 2017**) that enables individuals to acquire the practical skills and knowledge required to succeed in their chosen careers (**Saraf, 2016**). By providing students with hands-on training and industry-specific expertise, vocational education helps to bridge the gap between education and employment, ensuring that graduates are equipped with the skills needed to thrive in their chosen professions. It helps to promote social equity, inclusion and sustainable development. The main purpose of this education is preparation of youth for formal employment and self-employment. It also helps in personal development and emancipation.

Vocational Education promotes socio economic development by improving the capacity of individuals to adopt practices that are socially worthwhile (**Fuller, 2015**). It helps to develop communication skills and interpersonal relations of an individual.

Status of Vocational Education in India: Vocational Education is what prepares people to work as technicians or to enter the workforce as craftspeople or artisans in a skilled craft or trade. It's also known as career and technical education. The apprenticeship system may be impacted by vocational education that occurs at the post-secondary, higher education, or further education levels. The approach of providing vocational education in India functions on two levels: training and theoretical vocational education (practical). National Institute for Open Education: Only 8% of the whole population aged 15 to 29 has received non-formal vocational training, while only 2% have received formal vocational training. Projections from the 12th Five-Year Plan (2012-2017) indicate that less than 5% of the Indian workforce aged 19 to 24 received formal vocational education. Data from the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) 75th round (2017-18) reveal that 24% of rural students are enrolled in Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) or other vocational training institutions, compared to just 8.3% of urban students. Overall, the enrollment rate in formal vocational training programs is quite low, with only 15.3% of the population participating in these programs. This indicates that there is a significant need for increased investment in vocational education and

training initiatives to equip India's workforce with the skills required to meet the demands of the modern job market.

Importance of Vocational Education

The importance of vocational education is to summed up the difference between theoretical knowledge vs. practical skills.

1. It helps with bridging the skills gap between work and education.
2. It allows students to gain practical knowledge and experience in their chosen path.
3. It promotes skill development
4. It enhances the employability skills: students learn the techniques and strategies that they specifically need for the area of work.
5. It helps people to choose the specific field they want to work or it becomes easier for one to choose in which field they want to work.
6. It helps one to recognize the skills and improve whatever the skills are present in them.
7. Gives a new learning experience and even help to improve their performances
8. It has its practical applications
9. It helps students to get clear idea what they want to study and work in the future.
10. It makes an individual an independent and responsible.
11. Thus education provides stable jobs.

Problems for Vocational Education

1. Lack of respect: the people engaged in physical labour are not getting respect. For that, youth force doesn't want to choose such type of jobs.
2. Lack of institution: the number of institutions which providing vocational education are very less.
3. Narrow curriculum: vocational education institutions are only providing technical education. They are lack in general and liberal education.
4. Lack of qualified teachers: vocational education institutions are having lack of qualified teachers. Because of less payments and lack of respect again the people don't want to opt towards this line.
5. Lack of practical: practical knowledge of establishing and managing industries and business firm is not provided.
6. Lack of development: by having vocational education people are engaged in certain jobs but there is very less opportunity for their growth and development in those jobs.

Objectives

1. To study the challenges in integration of Vocational Education in Education System
2. To study the prospect of National Education Policy 2020 towards Vocational Education in India

Methodology

The study is descriptive in nature and the researcher tries to understand the challenges of vocational education in India and also tries to find out prospects of NEP 2020 regarding Vocational Education in India. A systematic review was done on the collected literature on Vocational Education and its related concerns.

Data for the study is completely collected through secondary sources i.e. through journals, reports, news articles, different websites, research papers and other form of academic publications.

Discussion

Challenges of Vocational Education

School-level courses have a fragmented and inconsistent curriculum. The courses are not clearly defined or appropriately divided; rather, they are taught alongside other subjects. It is difficult to get school kids interested in vocational education since there is no good comprehensive curriculum and simply a basic introduction to all of the courses. The current approach is ineffective in deterring pupils from pursuing vocational education in the future. Vocational education also fosters a sense of "second class" citizenship in society, aside from the poorly managed framework. People who choose to enrol in vocational programmes are thought to be less intelligent than those who choose traditional higher education options. Despite the growth in the number of vocational training institutes, vocational education remains a less popular choice among Indian students and parents. In fact, despite the increasing importance of skills training in the job market, many students and parents still view vocational education as a second-rate option compared to traditional academic streams.

However, the government has taken steps to boost the popularity of vocational education by increasing its budget allocation for skill development. The Union Budget of 2020-21 has allocated a whopping ₹3,000 crores for skill development, a significant increase from the ₹1,007 crore allocated in 2015-16. This increased funding is expected to support the establishment of more vocational training centers, upgrade existing infrastructure, and provide training to a larger number of students. The government's efforts to promote vocational education are aimed at addressing the growing skills gap in India's workforce (**Karra, 2020**). With the rapid pace of industrialization and technological advancements, there is an increasing demand for skilled workers who can meet the needs of industries such as manufacturing, healthcare, and IT. Vocational education can equip students with the practical skills and knowledge required to fill these gaps and secure better job prospects.

To further boost enrollment in vocational education programs, the government is also implementing initiatives such as apprenticeships, on-the-job training, and online courses. These programs aim to provide students with hands-on experience and industry-specific training, making them more attractive to potential employers. Despite these efforts, there is still much work to be done to change the perceptions of students and parents about vocational education. It is essential to raise awareness about the value of vocational education and its benefits in terms of job prospects and career advancement (**Karra, 2020**). By doing so, India can create a more skilled and employable workforce that meets the demands of the modern job market.

Despite India's demographic dividend, the budget allocated to vocational colleges remains inadequate. The Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) and the Skill India Mission have not delivered the anticipated outcomes. Under PMKVY, only 15% of registered students secured employment. The Skill India Mission aimed to train 300 million youth by 2022, but by the end of 2018, only 25 million had been trained through the program. Challenges need to be focused are:

1. Vocational educational institutions are not able to fulfill the demand of technical labour in market: It is impossible to say that all technical and vocational institutions founded after Independence are sufficient. The country's young who want to pursue technical education might dream of a bright future, but there aren't enough such institutions given the size of the population. More such schools that offer technical and vocational education at all levels might help to tackle this issue. In order to meet the rising demand, the government at the federal level and in the states should establish new institutions. Lack of proper concept of vocational education: people think that those who are not having good academic performances are opting for vocational education. Division and choosing of stream is not on the interest of the students, it is based on the average academic performances.
2. Resources are limited: for the development of vocational education institutions and vocational education less contribution from the private sector is there.
3. Lack of participation of other stakeholders: industries are in need of people with technical knowledge. But they are not involved directly in it.
4. Lack of experienced teachers: Because a very small percentage of students participate in technical education, fewer qualified teachers are produced to encourage continued study among huge numbers of pupils. Institutions lack talented and capable people. By enticing brilliant individuals to work as instructors at technical and vocational institutions, the government may address this issue. Teachers should receive appropriate remuneration, and society should value these men's builders.
5. Lack of motivation: People of technical knowledge are not getting high paying jobs. Due to which most of the students are not interested in vocational education. The caste system in India was established based on work or labour. The roots of work division, which originate from thousands of years of caste system, are deeply embedded in our culture. People who make their living via handicrafts and other manual labour are not respected. Lack of vertical mobility: there is no provision for students having vocational qualification to join in higher education.

Due to all these problems, still the vocational education is perceived as inferior to mainstream education. And to overcome this situation and to remove social status hierarchy NEP 2020 aims to integrate vocational education programs into mainstream education in all educational institution in a phased manner.

Prospects of Vocational Education at Higher Education:

The provisions and mandates of NEP 2020 regarding vocational education are:

1. **Started at Early Ages:** The policy suggests implementing vocational education beginning in Grade 6 in order to provide all students with access to high-quality vocational education, which is essential for them to develop the skills needed for further education and training as well as a clear and recognised pathway to employment. Through the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, the vocationalization of education would be increased in all public and government-aided schools. In grades 6 through 8, all students will take part in a 10-day bag-free time when they will intern with local tradespeople including carpenters, gardeners, potters, artists, etc. Students in Grades 6 through 12 may be offered comparable internship opportunities to pursue vocational courses, even during breaks. The introduction of the Skill Based Aptitude Test (SBT) would help students make informed career decisions.

2. **Quality shall be improved through different models:** Youth learning will be facilitated by vocational education in a range of contexts, including the classroom, the workplace, and the larger society. Not only will it encourage and improve some occupational skills, but it will also help students grow their entrepreneurial talents. Students will get skill-transfer assistance from local artisans and the community, which will develop schools as learning communities where instructors, students, and their families collaborate with local business, industry, and the community. The National Curriculum Framework will be created by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) (NCF). The topic of "Pre-vocational Education and Vocational Education" will be covered in one of the working papers that will be created. The NCERT will also prepare guidelines, textbooks and teacher handbooks for vocational subjects. Assistive devices and appropriate technology-based tools, as well as adequate and language-appropriate teaching-learning materials (e.g., textbooks in accessible formats such as large print and Braille) will be made available to help children with disabilities and integrate more easily into classrooms, and engage with teachers and their peers.
3. **Integrated into Higher Education:** Over the next ten years, vocational education will gradually become a part of every school and higher education institution. At least 50% of students in the school and higher education systems must have access to vocational education by 2025, and a detailed action plan with goals and deadlines will be created to achieve this goal. This will assist India's demographic dividend reach its full potential and is consistent with Sustainable Development Goal 4.4. The Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) objectives will be determined after taking into account the number of students enrolled in vocational education. Vocational education will be provided by higher education institutions either independently or in collaboration with business and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Different models of vocational education, and apprenticeships, will also be experimented by higher education institutions. Incubation centres will be set up in higher education institutions in partnership with industries.
4. **Every child should learn at least one vocation of their interest:** This strategy mandates the gradual integration of vocational education programmes into mainstream education in all educational institutions in order to address the social status hierarchy associated with vocational education. High-quality vocational education will be seamlessly incorporated into higher education, starting with early exposure to the field in middle and secondary school. Every youngster will be exposed to at least one profession and learn about many more as a result. This would lead to a focus on the value of many professions including Indian arts and artisanship as well as the dignity of work.
5. **Professional Development of Vocational Teachers:** Vocational teachers and trainers will constantly have the chance to develop personally and learn about the newest developments in their fields. These will be made available in a variety of formats, including online teacher development courses and workshops at the local, regional, state, national, and worldwide levels. By 2022, the nation will have standardised National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST). The NCERT, State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERTs), teachers from various levels and regions, organisations with extensive experience in teacher preparation and development, higher educational institutions, and other pertinent stakeholders will all be consulted as the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) coordinates this effort and develops the NPST. SCERTs will create the State Professional Standards for Teachers.
6. **Learning in a variety of settings, including the classroom, workplace and the wider community:** Not only will it encourage and improve some occupational skills, but it will also help students grow their entrepreneurial

talents. Students will get skill-transfer assistance from local artisans and the community, which will develop schools as learning communities where instructors, students, and their families collaborate with local business, industry, and the community. Young children will benefit from vocational education by developing lifelong learning skills that will help them keep up with the rapid rate of technological development and adapt to the regular changes through the "earn and learn" idea. It will provide students the chance to engage in real-life scenarios that address their personal, social, and economic challenges and adapt to changes in the workplace, which will enhance their learning and accomplishment. They will gain the skills necessary to recognise, create, launch, and successfully manage personal, professional, occupational, and community possibilities. It will enhance and highlight the value of different occupations.

7. **Secondary schools will collaborate with it:** Over the following ten years, vocational education will gradually be included into the curricula of all secondary schools. Secondary schools will work together with organisations like Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), polytechnics, skill knowledge suppliers, vocational training providers, community members, artisans, local businesses, etc. to achieve this goal. Additionally, skill laboratories will be established in the schools using a hub-and-spoke architecture, allowing other schools to utilise the space.
8. **The B.Voc degrees will continue and vocational courses will also available in other degree programmes:** Vocational courses will be available to students enrolled in all other Bachelor's degree programmes, including the four-year multidisciplinary Bachelor's programmes, as well as the Bachelor of Vocation (B.Voc.) degrees that were introduced in 2013. The Ministry of Human Resource Development (currently the Ministry of Education) would form a National Committee for the Integration of Vocational Education (NCIVE) to manage this programme. The NCIVE will include officials from numerous Ministries, vocational education specialists, and business leaders. To help increase the reach of vocational education, early adopter institutions will innovate to identify successful models and practises, which will subsequently be shared with other institutions via channels established by NCIVE.
9. **'Lok Vidya' will be made accessible to students:** "The phrase "knowledge of India" refers to knowledge of ancient India, its contributions to modern India, its successes and issues, as well as a full awareness of India's future goals in education, health, the environment, and so on. A major amount of vocational knowledge known as LokVidya would have been developed in India and made available to students by incorporating it into vocational education courses. To guarantee that all students have equal access to high-quality practical and hands-on experiment-based learning experiences, virtual laboratories will be created using current e-learning platforms such as DIKSHA, SWAYAM, and SWAYAM PRABHA.
10. **Vocational Courses through ODL mode will also be explored:** It will become easier to conduct occupational courses through the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) mode. The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) will use the ODL system to address the demands of open vocational courses, particularly for individuals who have abandoned regular schooling. The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) curriculum must be mostly consistent with the NCERT curriculum. MHRD will constitute a NCIVE (national committee for the integration of vocational education) in collaboration with industry to supervise the performance of vocational education and its integration in schools and higher education over the next decade.

To expand the reach of vocational education, institutions are urged to innovate models and practices of vocational education and then share with other institutions.

Conclusion

To combat the issues and problems of unemployment in the economy, vocational education is one of the important armaments. The Indian government is taking steps to make vocational education more accessible and convenient through the adoption of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) mode. This innovative approach will enable individuals to pursue occupational courses from the comfort of their own homes, without being tied to traditional classroom settings. The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) will utilize the ODL system to cater to the needs of individuals who have dropped out of regular schooling, providing them with an opportunity to acquire vocational skills and knowledge.

To ensure consistency and quality, the NIOS curriculum will be largely aligned with the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) curriculum, which is the national authority responsible for setting educational standards in India. This alignment will guarantee that NIOS programs meet the same academic standards as traditional schools, while still offering the flexibility of distance learning. The use of ODL technology will also enable NIOS to reach a wider audience, particularly in rural areas where access to educational institutions is limited. This initiative aims to bridge the gap in vocational education and training, addressing the skills gap in India's workforce.

By leveraging the ODL system, NIOS plans to offer a range of vocational courses in various fields such as agriculture, IT, healthcare, and manufacturing. These programs will be designed to equip students with practical skills and knowledge that are in high demand in the job market. The adoption of ODL mode is expected to increase access to vocational education, especially among marginalized groups, women, and those living in rural areas. It will also help to reduce the drop-out rate in education and increase the employability of students. With its flexible and accessible nature, ODL is poised to revolutionize vocational education in India, empowering individuals with the skills they need to succeed in today's competitive job market. And to deal with the various issues and challenges of vocational education and its implementation, the provisions made by the NEP 2020 should be properly implemented and follow up should be properly done.

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Cite this Article:

Dr. Monika Sharma, Dakngam Riba & Dr. Anga Padu, “Implementation of Vocational Education in Education System of India: Challenges and Prospects of NEP 2020” *International Journal of Scientific Research in Modern Science and Technology (IJSRMST)*, ISSN: 2583-7605 (Online), Volume 3, Issue 7, pp. 01-10, July 2024.

Journal URL: <https://ijismst.com/>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.59828/ijismst.v3i7.220>.