

Analysing Skill Development Policies In India And The Way Forward

Table of Content

Abstract	2
Literature Review	2
Introduction	3
Background	4
Current Policy and NEP	6
Impact of current policy	9
Analysis of ITIs	10
Comparison with Switzerland	12
Way Forward	13
Conclusion	15

Abstract

India is currently the 5th largest economy in the world according to the IMF data based on growth and nominal GDP and is on track to become third-largest by 2030 and second-largest by 2075. Skill development is the most essential aspect of our country. The median age in India is 29 years against the average age of 37 years in China and the US and 45 years in Western Europe implying that India has a huge demographic dividend. A well-designed and implemented skill development policy is essential for India to reap the benefits of its demographic dividend. India's young population must be equipped with the skills necessary to compete in the dynamic global economy. Otherwise, the demographic dividend could become a demographic disaster, as a large unskilled workforce would be unable to find employment. To cater to such demands, the government is actively engaged in formulating and implementing new skill policies in the country, the most important being the 'SKILL INDIA MISSION' which started in 2015. It is an umbrella scheme under which the government is running various schemes. This paper revolves around analyzing the skill development policies in India and a comparison with Switzerland which is one of the most highly skilled nations in the world. This paper also tries to understand the problems faced by India working upon which can help India produce workers with higher skills.

Literature Review

In order to understand the Skill Development system, the research paper of Vandana Saini titled 'Skill Development in India: Need, Challenges and Ways Forward' has been referred. In that paper, the author has written about the problems and possible solutions of skill development before 2015 since it was published in 2015. A research paper by Matthias Pliz and Julia Regel titled 'Vocational Education and Training in India: Prospects and Challenges from an Outside Perspective' has been studied. The authors have referred to various other research papers to understand the issues of skill development policies. The common aspect in both these papers is the problems that India faces in skill development. The website of the Ministry of Skill Development and Employment has been referred to study the current schemes of the government. A case study of Switzerland has been studied as Switzerland is among the highest-skill developed countries in the world. A report by Niti Aayog titled 'Transforming Industrial Training Institutes' published in January 2023 has been referred to study the current situation of ITIs in India. This paper will critically analyse the skill development policies in India and compare them with Switzerland's policy and will suggest some possible solutions to effectively implement the current policies.

Introduction

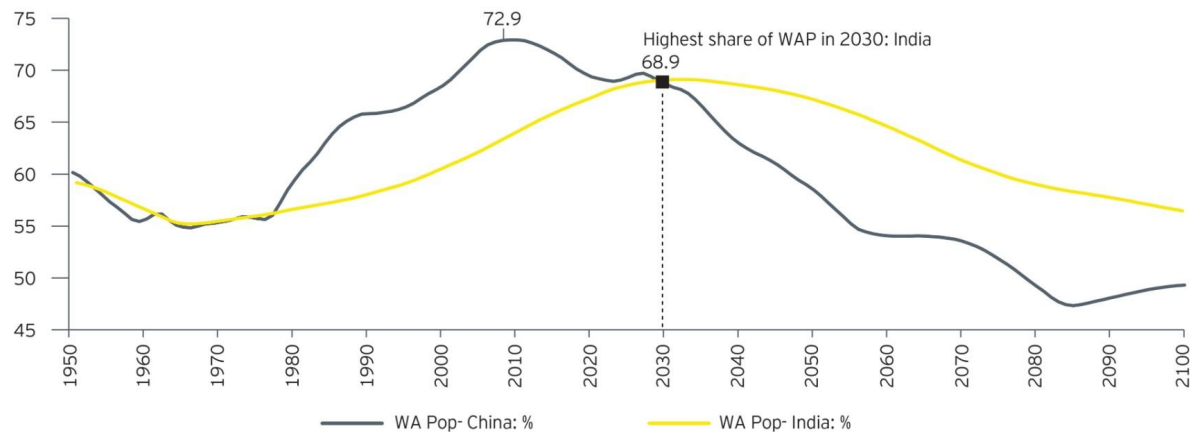
India is a country of almost 141 crore people according to United Nations Population Fund and accounts for nearly 18 percent of the world's population. Out of these 141 crore people, nearly 67.8% of the population come under the working age group in 2022 according to the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) while in European Union countries and the USA, the working age population is 63.8% and the 64.8% of the total population. Considering the fact that India has a growing population as compared to the developed countries which are experiencing stagnant growth in their population, India will have a tremendous advantage of a large working-age population. According to the reports of EY, India's dependency ratio will be the lowest in its history by 2030 at 31.2%. India's young dependency ratio —the number of children below 15 years of age relative to the total population — is expected to overtake the old dependency ratio (ratio of population aged above 65 years relative to total population) by 2056. About 24.3% of the incremental global workforce over the next decade is expected to come from India.

Population dividend is an open secret to India. The average age in India is 29 years against the average age of 37 years in China and the US and 45 years in Western Europe. To become the world's third-largest economy by 2030 and second-largest by 2075 by surpassing the U.S.A., Germany, and Japan. The population dividend will aid in making this happen. The population dividend is an advantage particularly if the young population can cater to the demands of the dynamic nature of the globalized economy. This can be done if the skill development policies in India are effectively planned and efficiently implemented. It is important for India to look at the skill development policies of countries such as Singapore and Switzerland which have a skilled population of 50.5% and 71.8% respectively compared to India's statistics which reflects a meager figure of 21.2% according to the Human Development report of UNDP in 2020. Skilling the workforce is not only crucial for the economy but also for the socio and cultural aspects as it brings the positives in the human development index which is the primary calculator of the quality of life of a nation. In this aspect, skill development emerges as one of the most critical aspects of a country.

Figure 1:

A worker boom

India's working age population to total population ratio will be the highest of any large economy



Source (basic data): UN Population statistics 2022; WAP stands for working age population

Background

Since independence, India has come a long way in upskilling its population. The government of India designed a policy framework namely, Craftsmen Training Scheme. This scheme was launched in 1950 and aimed at developing the skills among the population in the country. The scheme is implemented by DGT(Directorate General of Training). The DGT has established a network of 15,000 ITIs (Industrial Training Institute) across the country to deliver the CTS training. It offers wide range of trades including engineering trade, construction trade, electronics trade, hospitality trade, etc. The skill development ecosystem includes the Apprentice Act of 1961, a formal way of skills acquisition. The Apprentice Act, 1961 ensures that there is participation from the industry in the skill development of the students undergoing a formal technical education. The Act aims to make it mandatory for establishments in the private and public sector to train the students. The industry has to provide on the job training to the students hence giving them a real world exposure to skills and processes and making them employable in the labour market.

To increase the skills of migrant laborers the government in 2002 initiated a programme, called Migrant Labor Support Programme under the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government while implementing the Rainfed project funded by DFID on a smaller scale.

Understanding the evolving demand of the economies in the world, the then Prime Minister Mr. Manmohan Singh in 2008 set up a not-for-profit organization named *National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)* which aims to promote skill development by catalyzing the creation of large, quality, and for-profit vocational institutions. It provides funding to build scalable and profitable vocational organizations and also enables a support system that focuses on quality assurance. The Government of India holds 49% shares of the NSDC while the private sector accounts for 51%.

The government in 2009 brought the *National Policy on Skill Development*. The purpose of NSDP was to empower individuals through improved skills, and knowledge and to train them to get employment as per the demand at the national and international levels. The Government in its 12th Five Year Plan (2012-2017) focussed on Skill Development Mission with the demand of the market. It looked upon major industrialised countries such as European nations and China whose workforce has been declining constantly with India being the exception due to the benefit of its demographic dividend. It mentions the crucial role played by employers and enterprises to develop the Vocational Training Programmes and ITIs. The government formulated *National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF)* in 2013. The purpose of NSQF was to analyse the knowledge, skill and aptitude required at each level of qualification. The levels are graded from one to ten and are defined in terms of learning outcomes for each level. It is regardless of whether the skill is possessed through formal or informal methods. This model is based on the competency model which is considered to be the highly effective model for mapping the skill.

After the formation of the Modi government in 2014, the government formed the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship in November 2014 to look upon the matters related exclusively to skill development in the population. As per the report on the National Policy on Skill and Development, it is estimated that only 4.7% workforce had undergone proper training till 2015 as compared to 52% in the US, 80% in Japan, and 96% in South Korea in 2015. As per the India Skills Report 2015, only 37.22% of surveyed people were found employable - 34.26% among males and 37.88% among females. These numbers are very serious looking upon the future goals of India to achieve the target of 5 trillion dollar economy.

To combat these issues, the government has taken various steps and launched various initiatives under the ambit of the Skill India campaign such as National Skill Development Mission, National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana, Skill Loan Scheme and Rural India Skill Scheme. The idea of skill universities was first

proposed in National Skill Universities Bill 2015 by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of India. Haryana Vishvakarma Skill University was the first skill university established in India. In 2021, the Government of Assam laid the foundation of the East India Skill University aimed at imparting training to over 10000 students in 12 disciplines. It will have an understanding with Israel, England, Germany, Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan. It's the first skill university in north-east India part of the India. Besides, there are other private skill universities as well in India. This shows that the current government is working radically and progressively to skill the youth population in India.

Current Policy and NEP

The government after the formation of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship in November 2014 undertook various steps to enhance the skills among the youth to provide the skilled workforce to the nation and the world. All the schemes below come under the ambit of the SKILL INDIA MISSION. Skill India Mission is a government scheme launched in 2015. It is an umbrella scheme that has many schemes and sub-schemes under it.

A. Schemes & Initiatives through NSDC

- a. *Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)*- The basic objective of the scheme is to bestow Indian youth with industry-relevant skills and render them employment-ready. This is done by imparting short-term training to the students, recognition of their prior learning, running special projects, social and community mobilization, placement, and monitoring. The NSDC is the main implementing body of the scheme. The training is provided to the students free of charge and is centered on the ones who are dropouts or unemployed.
- b. *Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendra (PMKK)*-These are the model training centers run by the NSDC. These are governed by the MSDE and operate in every district of the country. They hold the required infrastructure and equipment to provide training to the students. These institutes act as a benchmark to demonstrate competency-based skill training. These are expected to focus on the quality of training, sustainability, and connection with the stakeholders in the process of skill development.
- c. *India International Skill Centre (IISC)*- The IISC Network is envisioned to be the nodal platform to facilitate international workforce mobility opportunities for Indians. This network will be central to the GOI's plan to make India the skill capital of the world.

- d. *Pre-Department Orientation Training (PDOT)*- Given the need to orient potential migrant workers regarding language, culture, do's and don'ts in the destination country, the emigration process, and welfare measures, the PDOT program has been launched.
- e. *Schools and higher education*- In the school education space, NSDC is engaged in 28 with a total of 9182 schools. NSDC has worked with the Ministry of Education (erstwhile MHRD) to restructure the implementation model of skill development training in schools from a 4-year (1 entry at 9th class and 1 exit at 12th class) to a 2-year model (entry at 9th and exit at 10th; again entry 11th and exit at 12th class). 73 Job roles (pegged at NSQF Level 2 to 4) were identified across 21 Sectors and will be offered in schools. In the higher education space, NSDC is working with the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) for the facilitation of its flagship initiative of PMKVY-TI (Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana – Technical Institute).

B. Schemes & Initiatives through DGT

Schemes such as Craftsmen Training Scheme, Apprentice training under the Apprentice Act of 1961, Vocational Training Program for Women, Advanced Vocational Training Scheme, Polytechnics, etc. come under this.

C. Other schemes and initiatives

- a. *Skill Loan Scheme*- This scheme was launched in 2015 to provide loans to those individuals who secure admission to ITIs or Polytechnics. The courses are aligned to NSQF.
- b. *Indian Institute of Skills*- IISs are established in the country to provide training to the people beyond the programs available in the current skill eco-system. It provides world-class training for skill development.
- c. *SANKALP and STRIVE scheme*- These schemes are assisted by the World Bank. SANKALP(Skill Application and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion) scheme is a centrally sponsored scheme whereas STRIVE(Skill Strengthening for Industrial Value Enhancement) is a central sector scheme. SANKALP aims to create convergence among all skill training activities, both State-led and Government of India funded, at the state level and improve the quality of skill development programs through building a pool of quality trainers, developing model curriculum and content, and standardizing assessment and certification. STRIVE aims to improve the ITIs by involving Industrial clusters, business associations, and Small Scale Industries.
- d. *Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS)*- It was established in 1967. The objective of this scheme is to improve the occupational skills and technical knowledge of the

non/neo literates and persons having a rudimentary level of education upto 8th standard and other school dropouts beyond 8th standard i.e. upto class 12th to raise their efficiency, increase productive ability and enhance their livelihood opportunities, to identify and promote traditional skills in the districts through skilling/upskilling, to create a pool of master trainers working across the department/agencies of skill development through training/orientation programme and to collaborate and coordinate with other departments/agencies working in the field of skill development.

- e. *Dual System of Training* - This scheme was launched in February 2019. The objective of this scheme is to provide employable skills to the trainees who pass out from ITIs.

National Education Policy - The National Education Policy 2020 is a major push by the government to change the education pattern in India. The “10+ 2” school education structure is replaced with a new design of “5+3+4+4” corresponding to age groups of 3–8 years for the foundational stage, 8–11 years for the preparatory stage, 11–14 years for the middle and 14–18 for secondary stage respectively. This policy focussed specifically on practical and vocational skills.

- a. The Department of School Education and Literacy (DoSEL) is implementing the scheme of Vocationalisation of School Education under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme - Samagra Shiksha by aligning it with the aims of the Skill India Mission. It aims at integrating Vocational Education with general academic education in all Secondary/Senior Secondary schools.
- b. Dedicated skill development centres will be established nationwide.
- c. Emphasis on continuous skill upgradation as the evolving demand of the world.
- d. It aims to develop specialised skills among students in field of finance, coding, art, healthcare, etc.
- e. NSQF compliant vocational courses are offered to the students from class 9th to 12th in the schools covered under the scheme.
- f. Under the Scheme, the Employability Skill module has been made a mandatory part of the vocational Courses. It consists of Communication Skills, Self-Management Skills, Information and Communication Technology Skills, Entrepreneurship Skills and Green Skills.

Impact of current policy

The current policy is a paradigm shift in the outlook of skill-enhancing policies that were adopted before. Only 21.2% of workers in India are skilled according to the Human Development Report report of UNDP in 2020. In 2014, this data was less than 2%. There is a mammoth transition in the number of skilled labour forces in India.

Under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana scheme, more than one crore people have been trained and more than two million got placed from this scheme. The dropout rate of this scheme stands at about 20% according to the report by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Labour in September 2022 implying that the ministry needs to take steps to reduce the dropouts. The PMKVY has faced some significant challenges such as budgetary cuts and low placement. The MSDE had proposed a Budgetary Estimate of Rs.3,229.94 crore for skill development but was allocated Rs.1,643 crore in 2022, according to the report on the Demands for Grants (2022-23) of the MSDE that the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Labour, Textiles and Skill Development. The scheme failed to a large extent the sensitization of the program to the grassroots level as there is a lack of awareness of this scheme to the actual beneficiary in the rural areas, tribal areas, slums, etc. The scheme has been impacted by the underutilization of funds as per the 36th report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Labour.

The Craftsman Training Scheme is the most important in the field of Vocational Training, and has been shaping craftsmen to meet the existing as well as future manpower needs, through the vast network of ITIs spread over various States / Union Territories in the country., training courses under the Craftsmen Training Scheme are being offered through a network of 14955 ITIs (Govt. 3248 + Private 11707) located all over the country with total trainees enrolled 26.58 lakhs (in the trades of 1-year and 2-year durations) on NCVTMIS portal intending to provide skilled workforce to the industry in 150 NSQF compliant trades.

There were government schemes that were made up for certain backward areas such as the Udaan scheme for the youth of Jammu and Kashmir. Under this scheme, 44,369 candidates have joined the training. Of these, 38,798 candidates have completed training, and 24,184 have been offered jobs across different sectors. 115 corporates have been part of the program. For the tribals in the Naxal-affected area, the government initiated the ROSHNI scheme in 2013. It has trained almost 50,000 youth in three years and provide employment in the organised sector to almost all of the the trainees. Women training under the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship takes care of providing skill training to women in the country which aims at stimulating employment opportunities among women of various socio-economic levels and different age groups. These include industrial skill training, industrial skill training, demand-driven short-term courses, and

tailor-made courses as per the demand of the industry. This has created a massive improvement in the lives of the women because most women are engaged in unpaid work but by imparting the skills under these schemes they are not only making a positive impact on the economy but also bridging the gap by becoming active members of the economy. By legislating the Companies Act 2013, the government makes it compulsory for the companies under section 135 to do CSR work under which some companies can dedicate that money to impart education and vocational training to kids and women.

The service sector in India has seen a tremendous hiring growth rate with 5% to 7% year-on-year growth rate. It is further noticeable that the year 2022 showed 22% hiring growth in this sector much owing to the demand rise in covid. In the manufacturing sector, according to the latest periodic force survey, manufacturing employment increased about 5% in 2020- 2021 and 8% in 2021-2022. This hike is remarkable because employment in the manufacturing sector has been falling since 2011.

Analysis of ITIs

There are 14,789 ITIs in India including private and government according to the latest data of National Council of Vocational Training. Around 78.40% of all ITIs are owned by the private sector while 21.59% are government institutions. Around 66% of the ITIs are situated in 5 states i.e. Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, Karnataka, and Maharashtra. The top two trades in the number of ITIs are electrician and fitter and they have very poor occupancy. As per the report of Niti Aayog titled 'Transforming Industrial Training Institutes' published in January 2023, there is an annual public expenditure of about INR 10,000 Crores in running the ecosystem of 3500 Govt ITIs, besides the INR 2200 crores allocation through STRIVE scheme. Despite this huge expenditure, the twin-deficit continues. Placement of ITI students remains low and the industry keeps complaining of shortage of skilled technicians. The analysis of the working of ITIs can be done in three aspects:

1. Curriculum and Industry Connect

- a. There is a disconnect between ITIs and the market stating that the teaching tools are different in ITI and market. The market uses modern tools of the trade (for eg. Python) whereas the ITI uses decades-old tools (for eg. HTML).
- b. The curriculum is not aligned with the market demand.
- c. As per the Management Information System (MIS) portal of ITIs, the overall placement scenario looks very bleak with only 405 candidates placed out of 4,14,247 candidates trained which is merely 0.09%. Tamil

Nadu has the highest number of placements (3.2%) with 248 candidates placed out of 7676 candidates trained. Gujarat is the second highest in placement with 0.25% of candidates placed. The rest of the States have a very poor placement percentage¹.

2. Management

- a. ITI principals mentioned that they had limited financial power to purchase major machines & tools. They faced issues related to procurement and took many months to resolve these challenges.
- b. ITI premises are often used by other organisations for non-training purposes.

3. Finances

- a. One of the issues with financing is that the ITIs spend over 90% of the allocated funds on salaries, which leaves relatively little to support facility upkeep and other operational costs.
- b. There is no correlation that if the number of trades and instructors are high in ITIs. The budget of those ITIs will be high and vice versa. For eg. ITI Shahdara has 15 trades and 8 instructors and is given the allocated budget of Rs. 8.85 crores. ITI Khichripur has 19 trades and 43 instructors and is given the allocated budget of Rs. 6.68 crore.
- c. There is a stark difference between budget allocation in ITIs of different states. For example, the average budget of 17 Delhi ITIs for the year 2020-21 was around Rs. 7 crore per ITI and the average budget of 3 Faridabad ITIs for the year 2020-21 was around Rs. 1.15 crore approximately

¹ The low placement can be due to MIS portal not updated, but generally, as per the past records the placement rate of ITIs is not high.

Comparison with Switzerland

Switzerland has one of the highly skilled labour force in the world. It was a poor country one hundred fifty years ago with very little natural resources to rely upon. As a result, as it industrialised it chose a path to economic development that continues to define the country. It has developed itself to become one of the highest per capita income countries in the world. Ensuring international competitiveness and innovation became critical to its export-based economy, and vocational education became a central pillar of this. To reach this level, Switzerland relentlessly focussed on developing and polishing the skills of its population by focusing on VET(Vocational Education and Training). VET system has a system for modernisation and innovative changes to bring the best for the market demand.

Key points in Switzerland's system

- a. High quality of vocational education. About two-thirds of people choose to go for Vocational Educational Training
- b. Compulsory education ends at grade 9. After that, the choice is to either go for higher education or vocational training.
- c. Professional education and training provide high-quality options for workers to improve their skills. Learners can pursue further training and education and can switch between vocational and professional pathways, as well as between general and vocational education. there are multiple pathways between different parts of the system, giving learners a range of progression and reskilling routes that they can pursue flexibly through the course of their lives.
- d. Apprenticeship is at the core of the vocational system.
- e. There is a high degree of mobility and very few restrictions on people upgrading or updating their skills, or indeed switching between professional pathways.
- f. There is a high level of coordination and partnership working: Central Government provides strategic management and regulation whereas industry organization determines occupation standards and practices.
- g. Employers provide the majority of funding for VET.
- h. Vocational education is regarded as highly as general education. There are a number of reasons for this. Firstly, VET is considered as a central priority of the decision makers and public leaders and receives a significant public and private investment. Secondly, it is highly integrated with labour market needs and economic strategies, which ensures that the skills they learn and experience they gain are relevant to the market.

- i. Career advise and guidance is provided at the local training centres provided by the counselors trained in understanding skill system which helps people to make the right career choice.

What India can learn from Switzerland

- a. India needs to improve the quality of vocational education by making sure that the institutes and colleges are complying with the rules and standards. According to the “Industry opportunity based vocational course design” report by TeamLease Service research, more than 60% of candidates and employers found the current vocational courses as ineffective and only 18% undergoing vocational education courses get jobs with merely 7% formal jobs. The report revealed that the primary reasons for the disconnect between vocational education courses and the industry is the absence of rich academic content, inadequate funding, and negative perception of these courses.
- b. India's vocational training system is characterized by weak coordination and partnership between the central government and industry organizations. This contrasts with the strong coordination and partnership that exists in Switzerland and other highly skilled countries. The Indian government needs to strengthen this partnership by empowering the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC).
- c. There should be a positive environment for vocational training in India because many of the youth population do not apply for any vocational training. According to the unemployment report published by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, the rate of unemployment for those in the age bracket of 20-24 stood at 41.9% in September 2022 because in India particularly in rural India, the youth aim for government jobs due to which they initially do not have any vocational training. According to a report by the Department of Personnel and Training, over 22 crore applicants have applied for government jobs since 2014, and over 7.22 lakh have received permanent positions in the central government.

Way Forward

After reviewing various schemes and policies and evaluating them, the following recommendations

- a. ITIs fall under the responsibility of the Ministry of Skill Development and Education. They are administered by the state governments. The quality of education and delivery varies significantly and a general attempt to modernize training and processes by the

central government is complicated by the bipartite structure of responsibilities. The funding of ITIs has been an issue as many posts of teachers are vacant. According to MSDE in 2018, annually 95,000 instructors are required while the training institutes have the capacity to train only 5,168 instructors per annum. Furthermore, even though the seating capacity is limited, not all the seats are filled. In 2017-18, only 85% of all places for instructor training under CITS were utilized. The lack of advancement in technology and syllabus is also one of the factors behind the low skills among the youth in India. The government should look into the working of NSDC since the quality of work and handling of finances by NSDC has been an issue as it bridges the government and private sector in the VET. It is proposed that the central government assume full administrative responsibility for ITIs, increase funding for infrastructure, and modernize the curriculum to align with current market demands to improve efficiency.

- b. The provision and qualification of trainers/instructors is one of the greatest challenges and could be considered the weakest point of Indian vocational training institutions. With reference to VET, the MSDE (2018) states that only 15% of all teachers of ITIs are qualified under the Craft Instructor Training Scheme. Most of the teachers are recruited as ITI graduates, with no pedagogic and working experience. Stemming from the system, outdated teaching and training methods are perpetuated and thus unable to meet the quality requirements. Furthermore, only 55%–60% of the positions are filled, adding to the precarious situation of the institutions. The MSDE estimates that the country needs 95000 teachers to meet the actual demand of the ITIs. The government needs to look into the improvement of the quality of the instructors by making it compulsory for the instructor to qualify CITS scheme and should increase the number of seats for the training of the instructors.
- c. The government should look for improvement in the infrastructure of the schools and VET institutions and should increase the public investment in education to 6% of the total GDP as per the recommendation of NEP,2020.
- d. VET in India is rooted strongly in theory, while practical components, in-service training, and application of theoretical knowledge are neglected. The government should make it compulsory for the institution to conduct regular practicals by bringing out the guidelines.
- e. The government should promote vocational education since Indian parents value general education that is academic education more than vocational education. Since the LPG reforms, the boom of the service sector has created a class demarcation between white-collar jobs and blue-collar jobs. This leads to low turnout in VET.

- f. The government should impose Skill India cess just like Swacchh Bharat cess so that the problem of allocation of the budget would be tackled.
- g. The government should look for the equitable distribution of funds across ITIs, given the significant disparity in funding allocation between states.
- h. The government should establish public-private partnerships to open IT-based and non-IT-based skill development centers in every district and village in India. IT-based centers should teach computer programming, data analysis, accounting, and graphic design, while non-IT-based centers should teach foreign languages, marketing skills, content writing, and other in-demand skills. The government would provide the buildings for the centers, while the private sector would provide the instructors and equipment. The government could also open these centers in local colleges of every district.

Conclusion

Since 2014, the government has taken significant steps to improve skill development in India, including establishing the Ministry of Skill and Entrepreneurship and launching the Skill India mission in 2015. The Skill India mission encompasses a variety of schemes and policies, such as the National Skill Development Mission, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana, Indian Skill Development Service, National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and Skill Loan Scheme. These initiatives have contributed to a rise in the skilled population from 2% in 2014 to 21.2% in 2020, according to the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Report. Government-established ITIs and polytechnic institutions aim to impart skills to the population, but shortages of qualified faculty and inadequate infrastructure have burdened the state. Uneven funding distribution across ITIs, poor management, and outdated syllabi have resulted in poor placements. NEP has been a remarkable step taken by the government to establish vocational education at the school level as it put a thrust on practical and flexible education but the successful implementation of it throughout the country will bear the fruits of the scheme. High-demand IT and non-IT skills, such as marketing, content writing, coding, data analysis, and graphic design, have received inadequate attention. Investing in these skills would help the government reduce unemployment and address skill development challenges.

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