Vocational Skill Interventions
Dropout Reduction and Employability

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Abstract

Dropping out of school mid-way is a serious educational and social problem. By leaving school mid-way, most dropouts have serious educational deficiencies that severely limit their economic and social well-being throughout their adult lives. Many school dropouts find it difficult to secure steady employment and an adequate income. Overtime dropouts face bigger disadvantages because they have fewer opportunities to obtain additional education and training needed to remain relatively relevant and competent in the job market, especially in the context of increased use of new technologies, and changes in the composition of jobs in the economy that will require more educational skills. In the educational hierarchy of school education, India registers disproportionate rate of drop out at secondary level. Significantly, in the educational hierarchy, secondary education is also an important transitory and preparatory stage for school going adolescent youth for preparation of higher education and the world of work. The study is primarily based on reviews of literature on vocational education, dropout reduction or prevention and its effect on employability. Based on these studies, we find that, when dropout programmes are designed, vocational education strategy in school emerges as an effective tool in developing dropout prevention, preparation of skilled workforce; geared towards sustainable livelihood and productive in society. In conclusion, an effective vocational policy intervention is very much in need of the hour in Indian context.

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Introduction

Vocational education aims at increasing the employment potential of young people by imparting appropriate skills and training in specific trades, occupations and crafts. Through preparation for specific competencies in different trades, vocational education helps individuals to be more productive by developing skills, abilities, work habits, employment opportunity and geared towards sustainable livelihoods. Vocational education stream in India has more than 100 courses in various areas of trades and crafts (World Bank Report, 2006. When relevant vocational skill is imparted in schools, it can promote a meaningful pedagogy—improve educational access; completion of meaningful level of learning; skilling by doing, enhance skills for individuals to be self-reliant and positive contributions to society.

Vocational Education Policies in India: A Brief Historical Background

Vocational education was integral to Indian education system that can be traced to Epic and Vedic period when numerous skills such as carpentry, smithy, foundry, and weaving formed an integral part of traditional education system (Vedalankar, 2002). The works of various scholars including those of Altekar (1954), Chatterjee and Mitali (1999), and Rashtriya (2008) reveal that ancient Indian literature refers to various trades—agriculture, weaving, dyeing, spinning, art of tanning leather, manufacture of boats and chariots, jewels making, implements and equipment, dance, music, building houses, sculpture, medical and veterinary sciences, manufacture of perfumes and a host of other trades. Most students earned their livelihood by taking up various occupations. Even a student aiming to achieve the highest philosophical knowledge was duty bound to do some manual labour daily. Craft education was not ignored during the Buddhist system of education too. The monks in the monasteries learnt architecture to enable them build new monasteries or repair old ones, apart from training in different types of vocation to earn their livelihood such as spinning, weaving, printing of clothes, tailoring, sketching, accountancy, medicines, surgery and coinage that formed an integral component of Buddhist education system. Scholar such as Vedalankar (2002) is of the of the opinion that such an education system operated on similar modus operandi such as the present education experiment—basic education, *Vishwa Bharti*, *Aurobindo Ashram*, *Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyala* and *Banasthali Vidyapeeth*. During medieval India, vocational skill reached great heights as it is evident from the findings of the numerous archaeological remains of the period. With the introduction of western formal

education, the traditional system of vocational and technical education lost its importance. The colonial administration established a number of vocational centers, with the primary objective of facilitating colonial administration by creating technical persons for construction and maintenance of public buildings, roads, canals, ports, harbors, railways and other services such as artisans and craftsmen in the maintenance of instruments and equipment for Army and Navy. For example, the British administration established a survey school at Madras in 1794 to train Indians in modern land survey for assisting them. Later, the first industrial school in India was established at Guindy in Madras in 1842. It was attached to the local Gun Carriage Factory (Sen, 1989). In 1844, a school for the training of overseers was opened at Poona (Rashtriya, 2008). Since then, the major initiative of starting new centres for technical education began. Setting up of these centres was a response to facilitate British administration.

The colonial agenda of vocational education gained a momentum through the Woods Despatch Act (1854), that first highlighted the need for the introduction of occupational education for many students by introducing vocational education at the secondary education level. With this, vocational education as integral to modern education system was formalised in India. Since then, several Committees and Commissions were appointed from time to time by the colonial state to examine educational problems in India. In this direction, the Hunter Commission (1882); Indian Education Policy (1902); the Government Resolution on Educational Policy (1913); the Hartog Committee (1929); and the Sergeant Commission (1944) are of special significance.

During the freedom struggle movement, Mahatma Gandhi redefined the meaning of vocational education, seeking to integrate theoretical cognition and productive labour. In his book 'Gandhiji's Experiments in Education' (1960), Avinash ilingam discusses about how Gandhi's experience at the Tolstoy farm in South Africa made him realise the great educational value of manual labour as Gandhi stated on his experimental journey, "The weak became stronger in the Tolstoy farm and the labour proved to be a tonic for all" (19:1960). In his book, 'The Problem of Education in India' (1962), Gandhi observed, in India, where more than 80 per cent of the population was involved in agriculture and another 10 per cent in industry; it was a crime to make education merely literary and to make boys and girls incapable of engaging in manual labour. Gandhi insisted that manual work must find a place in in the school curriculum and it should be sufficiently productive. The idea was further developed in his discourse

on the ideals of national system of education during the education ministers' conference in 1937. Under the leadership of Gandhi, the resolution of free and compulsory and craft-centric education for every child from the age of 7 to 14 was passed. The first model school was set up at Sevagram to run the programme on experimental basis. The success of the programme could be noticed from the overwhelming response from every part of the country. Gandhi promoted mass education that inspired cooperative life through pedagogic practice of 'learning by doing' in an atmosphere of freedom which enabled young people to earn freedom, a sense of self-respect, life skills and sustainable livelihood. Gandhi's education project could not be sustained after its short glorious journey, as it was poorly and falsely perceived as a system meant for the rural folk by the political masters and elites, whose sole aspiration was to promote English education as an escape route for their children.

Developments in the Post 1947

During the post-independence period, extensive policy attempts to reform vocational education were framed. Several policy documents such as the Radhakrishnan Commission (1948), the Mudaliar Commission (1952), the Kothari Commission (1964), and the Ishawarbhai Committee (1977) emphasised the importance of vocational skill education. There were renewed policy commitments in the National Policy of Education Resolution (1968), the National Education Policy (1986), the National Knowledge commission (2006), and the policy of Vocationalisation of Secondary and Higher Education (2012). Taking a cue from the Kothari Commission report, the National Education Policy (1986) provided a well-planned strategic programme of vocational education to make it a distinct stream to prepare students for identified occupations. The policy also envisaged that vocational courses to be imparted to students after Class VIII instead of Class XII as recommended in the previous policies. The NPE set a target to cover 10 per cent of higher secondary students under vocational courses by 1990 and 25 per cent by the end of 1995. As a consequence of NEP recommendation, a centrally sponsored scheme, such as vocationalisation of secondary education scheme, 1988 was introduced.

Developments in the Post 2000s

Currently, India stands at the threshold of demographic dividend and is set to become one of the youngest countries in the world by 2020 (Mehrotra, 2014). To address India's challenges of population dividend and skills gaps through comprehensive efforts, at various levels, catering to different needs of the society and industry, National Skill Development Policy was formed

in 2009, with the aim to create 500 million skilled workforces by 2022, and 15 million workforce every year to meet the requirement of both organised and unorganised sector. The Eleventh Five Year Plan provided a roadmap for skill development in India, with the aim of forming skill development missions, both at the state and national level. To create such an institutional base for Skill Development in India at the national level, a 'Coordinated Action on Skill Development' with three-tier institutional structure consisting of the Prime Minister's National Council on Skill Development, the National Skill Development Coordination Board (NSDCB) and the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) was created in 2008. To make vocational education attractive and facilitate skill mobility and interaction between vocational and general education, Government of India, through National Policy on Skill Development launched an integrated qualification framework, National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF). NSQF promotes multiple pathways of horizontal and vertical mobility both within vocational and general education, by linking one level of learning to another higher level; and allow multiple pathways between vocational education, skills, general education and job markets. Further more, to formally integrate vocational education with its current general educational streams across school and higher education (Institute of Applied Manpower Research, 2012), the Government of India formed the National Vocational Education Qualification Framework (NVEQF). According to MHRD, GOI (2012), NVEQF is a framework that organises qualifications according to a series of levels of knowledge along with skills. These levels are defined in terms of learning outcomes, i.e., the competencies which the learners must possess regardless of formal, non-formal or informal education and training the learners have acquired. Qualifications are made up of occupational standards for specific areas of learning units. It is, therefore, a nationally integrated education and competency based skill framework that will provide for multiple pathways both within vocational education and between general and vocational education to link one level of learning to another higher level, and enable learners to progress to higher levels from any starting point in the education or skill system. It further stated that the key elements of the NVEQF are to provide national principles for providing VE leading to international equivalency, multiple entry and exit between VE, general education and job markets, progression within VE, transfer between VE and general education, and partnership with industry or employers.

Table 1
Architecture of NVEQF

Case 1 Case 11

Level	Certificate	Equivalence	Equivalence	Certifying Body
10	NCC 8	Degree	Doctorate	University and SSC
9 8	NCC7 NCC6	PG Diploma	Master's Degree	University and SSC
7 6	NCC5 NCC4	Advanced Diploma	Bachelor's Degree	Board of Technical Education and SSC, University and SSC
5 4 3	NCC3 NCC2 NCC*1	Diploma	Grade XII Grade XI	Board of Technical Education and SSC, School Board and SSC
2	NCWP2	Grade X	Grade X	School Board and SSC
1	NCWP*1	Grade IX	Grade IX	School Board and SSC
RPL*	RPL2 RPL1	GradeVIII Grade V	Grade VIII Grade V	NIOS/State Open schools and SSC NIOS/State Open Schools and SSC*

RPL*: Recognition of Prior Learning
NCWP*: National Certification for Work Participation
NCC*: National Competency Certificate
SSC*: Sector Skill Council
Source: Ministry of Human Resource Development. Govt. of India 2012

Table 1 reveals different Levels such as 1–10 corresponding to different Levels of national competency certification, vocational degrees with its equivalent academic qualifications. For example, when a person has been provided skill training as Level 10, its vocational qualification is termed as Degree, which is equivalent to doctorate degree and the level of national competency certification is 8. Level 10 requires a person to acquire highly specialised skilled knowledge in a particular area including problem solving skills to provide original contribution to knowledge through research. The job skills in such profile needed are ability to take strategic decisions especially in unpredictable complex situations of work or study. Level 8 and 9 are equivalent with Post-Graduate in Diploma, and its general academic qualification is equivalent with Masters Degree. The national competency certificates of Level 8 and 9 are 6 and 7 respectively. At this level, a person is trained to acquire critical understanding of a particular subject, demonstrating mastery and innovation, completion of substantial research, etc. Similarly,the vocational degree of Level 6 and 7 is Advanced Diploma that is equivalent with Honours degree with its national

competency certificate Level 4 and 5. The vocational skill needed in these Levels include wide range of specialised technical skill, clarity of knowledge and practice in broad range of activity involving standard and non-standard practices, knowledge command over wide ranging specialised theoretical and practical skills, etc. Levels 3, 4 and 5 correspond to national competency certificate 1, 2 and 3 respectively. Its vocational degree equivalence is Diploma, while the academic degree for Level 5 is Class XII, it's Class XI for Levels 3 and 4. Job profiles of Level 5 is that of a supervisory role that includes having knowledge of facts, procedures, and concepts in a field that requires cognitive and practical skills in order to accomplish problem solving tasks, etc. Job profile of Level 4 is that of a skilled worker whose job role requires practical skill, routine and repetitive in narrow range of application, using appropriate rule and tool. The position of Level 3 is assigned to semi-skilled worker whose job role requires limited range of activities that are routine and predictable. Levels 1 and 2 correspond to national certificate of work preparation whose job roles demand limited service skill used in limited context such as selection and application of tools, assist in professional works, safety and security measures, etc. The vocational and educational qualification of Level RPL2 and RPL are grade viii and grade V. The knowledge required in RPL1 and RPL2 are not much of a difference. The knowledge profession of both the profiles requires making oneself acquainted with common tools, equipment, process, basic numeracy skills and literacy skills, etc. In addition, the framework allows industries to interface with training and education centres, while there is also the provision of accumulation and transfer of credits and accreditation of skill knowledge, assessment, certification and quality assurance can be provided. The new policy development is an initiative to re-organise the existing vocational education system by taking stock of the given realities of India's rapidly changing economic landscape; youth aspirations for employment and global skill competency challenges.

National Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Policy envision the integration of 25 per cent of schools with the skill development programmes by 2022. To achieve the goal, the National Policy on Education (2016) has taken up policy measures as part of its initiative for vocationalisation of secondary education in the country. The policy of vocationalisation of secondary and higher secondary education scheme aims at integrating vocational education as an integral component of general education system. The main thrust of the policy is to enhance employability of youth through demand driven competency based vocational skills by employing nationally and state designed frameworks to

implement vocational education, linking vocational education and employment in various skill sectors by involving key stakeholders on public-private mission mode. The scheme of vocationalisation of secondary and higher secondary education was subsumed under *Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan* introduced in 2009. The new policy seeks to integrate vocational education with general education, mainly to enhance employability of youth through demand driven competency based modular vocational courses. Its component includes introduction of vocational education from Class IX onwards in government schools, aided recognised and un-aided private schools. Vocational modules are offered as additional or compulsory subject at secondary stage and compulsory (elective) at higher secondary stage. The policy is implemented on sharing mode between center and states on 75:25 bases. For effective policy implementation, NSDC considers the involvement of local community at the time of skilling individual students trades and schools located in special focus districts, educationally backward blocks, and violence affected districts and districts with high dropout rates at the secondary level.

Vocationalism and Dropout Reduction

Over the past two decades, India launched multiple education schemes, programmes and strategies leading to school expansion and increase in enrolment for all children across all social groups. Through the Right to Education Act (2009), all children under the age of 14 are able to access elementary (Grade 8) school. For smooth transition from elementary to secondary education, India introduced *Rashtriya Madhyamic Shiksa Abhiyan in* 2009, to achieve universal access to quality secondary education for all children in the age group of 14–18. With these educational schemes and programmes, India has made significant improvement in school expansion and enrolment of children. However, on the downside, these policies have not translated to successful educational inclusion for all the children. According to the Unified District Information System for Education (2015–16), NUEPA, MHRD, Govt. of India, the gross enrolment rate at primary level during the period 2014–15 and 2015–16 were 100.08 and 99.21. During the same period, the corresponding figures were 96.89 and 96.91 for elementary level, 78.51 and 80.01 for secondary level and 54.21 and 56.16 for higher secondary level. The data reveals that in spite of impressive enrolment rate at primary and elementary level, the same could not be retained and high proportion of dropout among students could be noticed from secondary stage in which the rate becomes severe at higher secondary level. This further indicates that an overwhelming proportion of secondary students

leave school before the completion of higher secondary stage. Table 2 indicates annual school dropout rate among children at different stages of learning. The drop rate at secondary stage is disproportionately high when compared with the dropout rate at other levels of learning.

Table 2
Annual Average Dropout by Educational level (2014–15)

Grades	Year- 2014-2015		
	Males	Females	Total
Primary	4.36	3.88	3.49
Upper primary	3.49	4.60	4.03
Elementary	4.07	4.13	4.10
Secondary	17.21	16.88	17.06
Class XI–XII	0.25	–	–

Source: U-DISE, NUEPA, MHRD, Govt. of India, 2015-16

The drop rate at secondary stage is disproportionately high when compared with the dropout rate at other levels of learning. In the following year, i.e., 2015–2016, as shown at Table 3, the number of students who continued to at secondary and senior secondary level is also alarming.

Table 3
Level-wise Enrolment in School and Senior Secondary Education (In thousand) (2015–2016)

Learners by Grades	Males	Females	Total
Upper Primary (VI-VIII)	34720	32874	67594
Secondary (IX–X)	20547	18598	39145
Senior Secondary (X1–XII)	13002	11733	24735

Source: Educational Statistics at a Glance, MHRD, Deptt. of Education and Literacy, Govt. of India (2018)

Table 3 indicates that the proportion of enrolment among older children is much lesser when compared with children of lower age groups as shown in case of upper primary level. The enrollment figure at the secondary level IX–X is quite alarming as almost half of the children who are in the upper primary level could not complete the upper primary cycle and continue at secondary level. (Govinda and Bandyopadhyay's study (2008) reveal that boys at higher class are likely to drop out in order to support household income while girls are more likely to drop out in order to carry out domestic chores, in addition to other socio-cultural factors. The study further reveals that there are also children who continue to be enrolled at school, but who are at risk of dropping out. These children are often silently excluded from schools; despite of their physical presence and gaining little cognitive benefit from the experience. These children are generally first generation learners and many of them live in an environment that does not have academic support for children.

Dropping out of school mid-way is a serious educational and social problem. By leaving school mid-way, most dropouts have serious educational deficiencies that severely

limit their economic and social well-being throughout their adult lives. Research studies (R.W. Russell, 1987) reveal that the most immediate consequence of dropping out of school is a low level of academic skills. Because of low levels of academic skills, many school dropouts find it difficult to secure steady employment and an adequate income. Overtime dropouts face bigger disadvantages because they have fewer opportunities to obtain additional education and training needed to remain relatively relevant and competent in the job market, especially in the context of increased use of new technologies, and changes in the composition of jobs in the economy that will require more educational skills. The consequences of students' dropping out of school are costly to both the individual and society. For example, dropouts have fewer options for employment and are usually employed in low skilled, low paying positions. School dropouts are likely to engage in anti-social activities, incapable of realisation of their potential self and become productive in society.

Dropout is a process of disengagement from school owing to school or familial related factors or a combination of both factors that culminate in the final act of leaving school. There are several school factors that include a lack of provisioning of quality education including inefficient school management and administration, unsuitable curriculum, poor pedagogical organisation, etc., (Banerjee, 1997 and Varghese, 1995), while home factors include poor socio-economic status such as low educational and occupational attainment levels of parents, absence of learning opportunities at home, compulsion to work to financially help families or looking for employment, etc., (Chugh, 2011, Sekher and Sateesh, 2014, Horner *et al*, 2015). Absenteeism, individual behavioural and frequent discipline referrals and disinterest in academic could be other problems leading to dropout. Furthermore, rather than an impulsive action, dropping out of school is a cumulative process that requires targeted interventions.

Literature surveys suggest that when dropout programmes are designed, vocational education strategy emerges as an effective tool in developing dropout prevention (Pittman, 1981). The broadest conception of vocationalism is the view that schools are primarily devoted to preparing students for different occupations (Grubb, 1985). Quoting studies done by Toles, Rumberger Schulz and Rice, found that many high schools in the Chicago region had much lower dropout owing to vocational programs interventions. Alan Weisberg (1983) argues that in the USA system, vocational education programs keep youths in school longer by citing the case of lower dropout rate for students in business programs than for those in general curriculum. The author further claims

that vocational education is a logical, effective way of integrating those at the bottom of the economic into the mainstream; vocational education helps solve national economic problems by somehow matching workers to jobs, thus overcoming employment bottlenecks by increasing worker productivity. Such intense policy interest in vocational education in the USA began as early as the 60s and 70s (Grubb 1985), by examining the vocational education policy trajectories in advanced, and developing countries argues that there has been substantial convergence of vocationalism in the educational systems of many countries across the globe. Vocational education systems have been promoted as a solution to many problems, especially as rising youth unemployment has challenged the school to be more relevant.

Countries recording high-skilled labourers indicate that in these countries there is high proportion of vocational education component in the mainstream general education. For example, Word Bank Report (2006) reveals that secondary enrolment ratio in vocational-technical courses at secondary stage is as high as 93 in Korea, followed by Russia (88), Chile (70), South Africa (77), Malayasia (59) and China (52). Bishop and Ferran' study (2003) reveals that there is also strong evidence that vocationalism in schools by providing diversified courses enable youth to stay in school longer than they might have if they had the choice of an academic curriculum. Their study further reveals that Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries provides clinching evidence of the positive trend on the relationship between vocationalism in schools and low dropout rates. The study reports that a 100 per cent increase in the share of upper secondary students in vocational and pre-vocational programs is associated with 2.6 per cent increase in the secondary school graduation rate and a 1.9 per cent increase in the proportion of 15–19 years old in school. This observation depicts that access to secondary and tertiary education becomes important as does access to technical and vocational education (Adams, 2012).

Industrialised countries such as Germany, Japan, Korea, and China supported vocational education at the school level on a large scale since the decade of 1970s. Further, the World Bank (2006) report shares some of the key practices followed by international communities. For example, Korean vocational education system focuses on equipping students with basic knowledge and skills and providing them with a foundation which will enable them to learn further, inclusion of extensive elements of general education in vocational education, active partnership between private-public sectors in bearing financial resources, such as in the form of tuition entrance, etc., and linking up vocational schools with specific industries to ensure curriculum and

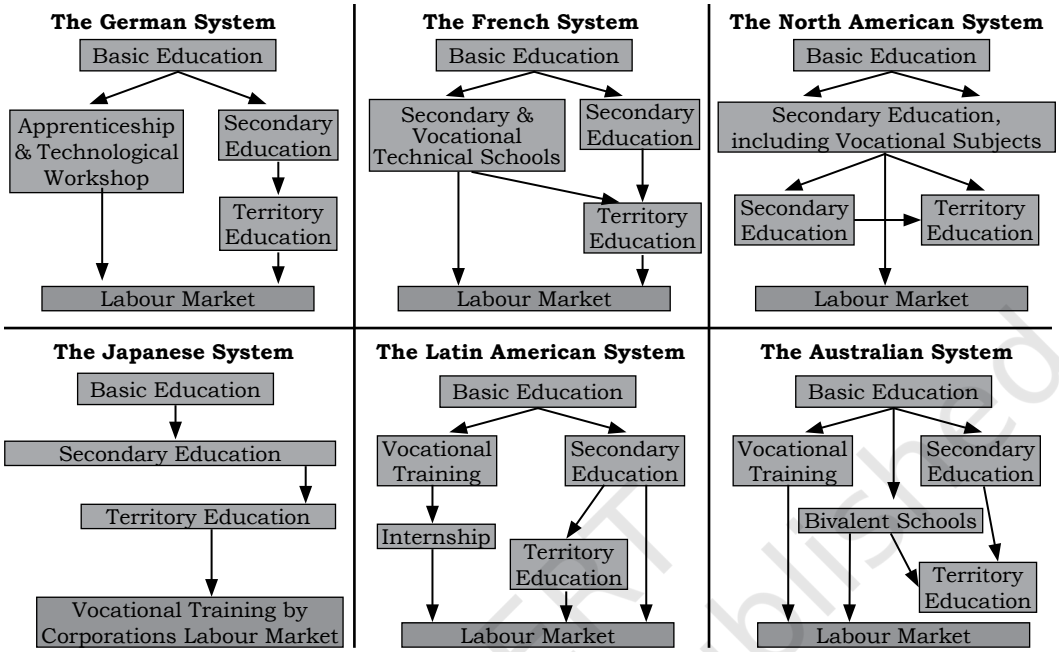

Figure 1: Education and Vocational Training System around the World

Source: The Vocational and Training System (World Bank), 2006

industry requirements match. In the Japanese system, with its simplest design, students after completing basic education enroll in general secondary education from where, they enter firms that provide entry level training or move to tertiary level education. The French system is based on streaming students into vocational course at the secondary level and these students are prepared for entry into labour market, while those in humanities are prepared for higher education. The German system is based on a long tradition of apprenticeships where dual system such as general instruction and firm-based occupation specific-training exist. The dual system regulated by the guilds has a set for qualifications that provides broad equivalence between graduates of the academic and the dual subsystems, while the Australian system allows transitions between the vocational and tertiary education systems. In the Australian system, employers play a key role in the management of the vocational system. Of late, Latin American countries have been able to respond successfully to the pressing challenges of skilling youth based on a variety of skills development policies (Servo, 2012). In the past two decades,many skill development initiatives were implemented by focusing on post-primary formal education; and technical and vocational training

(based on traditional Vocational Training Institutions; and youth entrepreneurship. The successful model of the Latin American experience is attributed mainly to the management structure of a broader and diversified set of stakeholders. There are thus different traditions and strategies adopted by international communities according to their suitability and requirements.

By international standards, India is still far behind in introducing new and innovative trades and skill trainings at the school level and attracts young students to vocational stream. According to Planning Commission (2017), currently, India doesn't have more than 8 per cent of all senior secondary schools that impart vocational education with considerable state level variation. Further more, reports such as Apeejay Stya Education Research Foundation, quoting data from CRY, NGO Global March Against Child Labour, and UNICEF, (UNICEF-India-Statistics (2004), (Report of the Committee on India Vision 2020, Planning Commission, 2002) reveals that in India every year 5.5 million students pass out of Class X, of which 3.3 million go to Class XI, leaving 2.2 million out of the education stream. Hence those who dropout after Class VIII are young population without being equipped of skills of any kind. Reports by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (2010), India Brand Equity Foundation (2013), National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (2015) indicate that about 63 per cent of school students dropout at different stages before reaching Class X. Quoting World Bank Report, 2006, country wise labour force data indicates that population in the age group of 20–24 years that had undergone formal vocational training varies from 5 per cent in India to 60 to 96 per cent of industrialised countries. The scenario calls for urgent appropriate policy interventions to prepare for India's millions of youth into skilled force.

Recently, the Government of India has launched several vocational skill schemes to empower youth population, while the challenges are complex and manifold. As these complexities and challenges remain unresolved, the status of vocational education in the new skilled based policy framework remains vague, while some of its significant policy prerogatives are misplaced. The new policy framework outlines the need to increase flexibility of vocational education within mainstream education, introduction of new innovative methods of training, building strong linkages between vocational stream education, school and higher education, strategic partnership between concerned departments of central, state and district level, accreditation and certification, etc. The new skill policy must be inclusive by bringing all new entrants to labour and vulnerable groups such as women,

scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, disadvantaged rural youth, informal workforce and dropouts. It is however in the schools that vocationalisation effort has to take off in a big way by utilising high enrolment of children in schools. Studies (Ramaswamy, 2015, Pilz, 2016) point out that vocationalism in schools can create newer opportunities for students from early on in life by facilitating school-to-work transition programmes. Substantial convergence of vocational skill interventions with school education will not only address the goal of inclusive growth; but also produce skilled workforce and geared for sustainable livelihoods especially for those who would have opted out of school for want of such opportunities while they are in school. Vocationalisation means learning a skill that is related to readily suitable for a given job, as vocational education has the very definite object-which general education has not—of preparing young men and women for work in specified occupations or groups of related occupations (Abbot, 1939). With the right vocational skill, a trained person is better equipped for employment in the long run. Hence, from early school onward if students from rural and urban, class and caste are given the opportunity for vocational skill in various crafts and trades, the learnability of various skills at the early stage is far higher with better career options. Alternatively, if these young students opt to discontinue higher education, by that time, they would have picked up certain skills by which they would be able to acquire decent employment. Secondly, vocational skills consist of numerous trades and crafts that cut across rural and urban, caste and class divide and involve both cognition and manual labour.

Youth population constitutes a major resource for a nation's development. Harnessing young potential, however, remains a national challenge. In the world, India has one of the most extensive network systems for education. It is only with the use of this system that can put vocational education programme wider reach, effective and make vocational education a national aspiration. Vocational programmes are likely to be much more successful and attractive when delivered with quality enriched and flexibility options by interfacing with local potential resources such as geographic presence of industries, bio-resources, local skills and human economic activities. Skill policy interventions in this way will help children to organically connect with their immediate environment, longer stay in schools; delay in dropping out of school, and much likely to be successful in imparting vocational skills of different trades, crafts; become self-reliant and productive in society.

Conclusion

With the establishment of the new Ministry of Skill Development and

Entrepreneurship, the vocationalisation of secondary education policy has received renewed commitment. The policies envision that along with academic education, imparting the right kind of vocational skill to adolescent youth is a larger effort of holistic and all-round development of individual potential.The effective implementation of these policies at school level will improve access, quality of education and retention of student upto a desired level of learning by preventing dropout mid-way. For this to happen, there is a need for speedy re-organisation of ecosystem of education by integrating vocational skills in school as an important site of innovative and new pedagogies of learning.

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