

FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

When discussing VET in India one should distinguish between formal and non-formal VET sector. Both sectors will be discussed in the subsequent sections and are depicted in the illustration in the appendix. Formal sector comprises legally defined VET pathways that lead to certificates or diplomas acknowledged by the government. Formal sector frequently attracts more attention in literature, politics and research than the non-formal. Taking into consideration the number of 260 million young people aged 15-29, present capacities of Indian VET sector on a whole are disproportionately small. Indian government (India G. o., National Policy on Skill Development, 2009) estimates that the overall capacity for skill development provided by public and private institutions amounts to around 3.1 million people annually.

KEYWORDS: Formal and Non-formal Education in India, VET Pathways

INTRODUCTION

Formal VE and VT in India are two distinct paths (Froumin, 2007). To pursue VE, the student needs to opt for two-year VE-stream at higher secondary level, which is usually offered at the same institution as the general stream. Unlike in the VT-sector there are hardly any private schools that offer vocational stream, as it is not considered lucrative enough (Nilekani, 2008). Diversified VE-courses in disciplines such as agriculture, commerce, engineering, home science or health intend to prepare pupils for working life and self-employment (Goel, http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/up/India_Country_Paper.pdf)(Bank, Skill Development in India. The Vocational Education and Training System, 2006).

VE, however, is popular among students with only about 400,000 students, corresponding to 3 % of all students at higher secondary level enrolled in the vocational stream in 2006 (Agarwal P. , Indian Higher Education. Envisioning the Future, 2009). This means that less than 1 % of students who entered Grade 1 received Vocational Education (India G. o., Report to the Nation 2006-2009, 2009a). Low level of acceptance of the vocational stream results in poor capacity utilization of about 40 % (Bank, Skill Development in India. The Vocational Education and Training System, 2006). Students who perform poorly in Class 10 are only said to choose this path. The overwhelming majority, who is still attending school at that level, strives to enter higher education (Bank, Skill Development in India. The Vocational Education and Training System, 2006)(Agarwal P. , 2009).

After completing elementary education Indian teenagers can enter **vocational training** in order to become a skilled or semi-skilled worker or craftsman. Pursuing VT, however, does not enhance student's level of general education (Goel, www.unevoc.unesco.org/up/India_Country_Paper.pdf). The Indian VT-market is very diverse and fragmented. The formal VT-sector comprises trainings in *Industrial Training Institutes and Centres* and *apprenticeships*. The distinction

drawn in literature between VT and Technical Education is somewhat contradictory. Indian authors and Indian Government frequently consider three year diploma courses offered at *polytechnics* to be part of the VT-sector whereas in international literature the narrower categorization is frequently applied. Education at polytechnics aims to prepare students for middle level or supervisory positions that form a link between engineers and skilled or semi-skilled workers and therefore can be classified as a higher level than VT. The most distinctive institutions which provide VT are *Industrial Training Institutes (ITI)* and *Industrial Training Centres (ITC)*. ITIs are financed and managed by state labour ministries whereas ITCs are owned, financed and managed by Private Organizations or NGOs. Both types of institutions are accredited at national level by National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT) or at state level by the respective designated institutions. Approximately 5,400 public and private institutions have a capacity of roughly 780,000 seats and offer qualifications in 60 engineering and 50 non-engineering trades. Of these, engineering trades are very popular. It is said that the existing capacities are largely unutilized. There is also possibility to undergo an on-the-job training in the form of *apprenticeship* in one of 254 industries. However, due to very small numbers (about 158,000 apprentices) which are the result of industry reservations, this pillar of the formal VT-sector is negligible.

As a consequence of deficits in Formal VET sector the very diverse **Non-Formal VT** market has been flourishing. *Private Sector delivery of VT*, especially by Non-Profit organizations, has increased significantly in past decades, thereby responding to both student and industry demand (Short, 2008). Yet, there is hardly any credible data available regarding quantity and quality of training opportunities offered in this market as privately owned and managed institutions are frequently not accredited. According to (Agarwal P., 2009) most of private VT providers offer short, non-formal and non-standard courses in IT-related and non-engineering trades like travel, tourism, hospitality, media, fashion or clinical research. Overall, it is said that the private training institutions offers more demand-driven market oriented disciplines. In turn tuition fees are charged (OECD, Economic Surveys: India 2011, 2011). Private VET providers commonly charge higher fees than public institutions, especially when operating without financial support from the Government (i.e. Unaided Institutions). Accredited private VET providers in India, however, are only allowed to operate as non-profit entities and are to run as charitable societies, trusts or non-profit companies. Fees charged by private institutions are set by state committees at a cost-covering level. Other regulations concerning admission of a certain number of disadvantaged students whose seats are cross-subsidized by the other trainees are also looked after by state committee.(OECD, Economic Surveys: India 2011, 2011). As a consequence of the deficits in provision of VET by the government, large companies like Infosys, Tata Group or Reliance set up extensive and high-quality *in-house training* centres to ensure their talent-supply. These in-house training options, however, are mainly targeted at higher level and academic professions and are limited because of the structure of the Indian economy. According to a World Bank report on VET in India (2006) less than 17 % of all manufacturing establishments in India provide apprenticeships or in-house trainings – with companies in sectors that require more sophisticated technologies more inclined to train employees than enterprises in Textiles, Garments, Leather Products, and Food Processing or Automobile parts industry. The fact that over 90 % of all Indians are employed in the “*informal sector*” has significant effects on the VET market (Panagariya, 2008). Still, there are some *VET initiatives of state and central ministries and NGOs that explicitly target workers in the informal sector* such as Community Polytechnics, Community Colleges or the Jan ShikshanSansthan Programme – to name the three biggest initiatives. To provide readers with a rough idea of these programmes two examples, Community Polytechnics and the Jan ShikshanSansthan Initiative, are briefly explained. In 675 *Community Polytechnics* with a capacity of about 450,000 places people are trained *within* their communities. Courses of 3-9 months duration are similar

to those provided in upper secondary schools in the vocational stream but with a focus on employment opportunities in the informal sector. No formal entry qualifications are demanded but students do not achieve a special qualification or certificate. The 122 *Jan Shikshan Sansthan*s (JSS means Institute of People's Education) with a capacity of about 1.5 million seats target newly literate workers and unskilled or unemployed young people in rural and urban areas by offering 255 types of vocational courses. As per 2001 data, over 60 % of all participants were women. JSSs are managed by NGOs but operate under state supervision. Some other agencies also provide a number of smaller development programmes for the informal sector that include VET elements (Froumin, 2007). Taken together the offers targeted at informal sector are capacity-wise very small. On top of that they often lack coordination and do not provide skills that are actually relevant for work or self-employment in the informal sector. (Wucher, 2012)

Many schools of thoughts have argued variously on methods and pros & cons involving effective instruction in the school setting. Some schools of thought hold the view that if a teacher prepares a subject matter adequately, s/he would be able to develop appropriate teaching method. Others believe that content can be acquired if a teacher has mastered the skills of instruction. Between these points of view, are differing contentions. Whatever is the case, teaching method refers to the structuring of educational materials to achieve an effective teaching-learning process (Olaitan, 1981)

Learning is defined as relatively permanent change in behaviour as a result of experience. When an individual's behaviour is influenced or modified such that the individual thinks or behaves differently consequent upon the newly acquired information, principles, data, skill or knowledge, learning is considered to have taken place (Greyson, 1979).

Momoh (Momoh, 2008) noted that absence of adequate practical skills by Technical & Vocational Education teachers would make nonsense of whole training program. Lack of practical skill will only boil down to mere possession of theoretical information by students without adequate practical skills to effectively engage in the occupational area for which students received their training (Okoro, 2005) (Wipawin, 2004).

Without a workforce that is continuously acquiring new skills, it would be hard to reap most of the returns from technological progress (Booth, 1996) as cited in ADB (Bank-ADB, 2004). More so, World Bank (Bank, Globalization, growth and poverty, 2002) as cited in ADB (2004) noted that the technological change has shifted demand towards higher skills in the labour force and that these new technologies are knowledge and skill intensive, thus there is a need to train people to work with these technologies (UNESDOC, 2011).

As UNESCO (UNESCO, ICT competency standards for teachers, 2008) put it, as ability to establish what they already know, assess their strengths and weaknesses, design a learning plan, stay on task, track their own progress, and build on successes and adjust to failures. Larson (Larson, 1972) also upholds that learning is an individual process and students must learn by themselves and assume responsibility for their own achievements in the learning process. (Okoye, April, 2010)

Entrepreneurship refers to an individual's ability to turn ideas into action. It covers creativity, innovation & risk taking, and the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives. This supports everyone in day-to-day life at home and in society, makes employees more aware of the context of their work and better able to seize opportunities, and provides a foundation for entrepreneurs setting up social or commercial activities¹. (COMMISSION, 2009) Existing

¹Commission Communication "Fostering entrepreneurial mindsets through education and learning". COM(2006) 33 final

activities and programmes qualify education for entrepreneurship if they include at least two of the following elements: a) Developing those personal attributes and generally applicable (horizontal) skills that form basis of an entrepreneurial mind-set and behaviour; b) Raising students' awareness of self-employment and entrepreneurship as possible career options;

c) Work on practical enterprise projects and activities, for instance students running mini companies;

d) Providing specific business skills and knowledge of how to start & successfully run a company.(COMMISSION, 2009)

At least nine countries (Austria, Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Luxembourg, Poland, Romania, Spain and UK) also report that between 90% and 100% of vocational education **students** participate in entrepreneurship programs at some point during their vocational education path. However these figures are only indicative, while programmes and activities included in above data may differ greatly in intensity and effectiveness.(COMMISSION, 2009)

Non-Profit Organizations (NGOs) play an important role in organizing entrepreneurship education in VET schools, especially by offering programs based on practical experience & working on projects. They normally have close links with the business world, and often receive some form of support from public authorities. In particular, European networks such as *Junior Achievement-Young Enterprise (JA-YE)* (www.ja-ye.org) and *Europen-Pen* (www.europen.info) widely promote minicompany or practice firm programs where students have to work on their real or virtual firm. These programmes are wide-spread and they are present in all European countries (for instance, JA-YE reports that 80% of VET schools in Denmark and 66% of VET schools in Norway offer students possibility to create their mini-company).(COMMISSION, 2009)

Good Practice indicators for entrepreneurship education in vocational schools:

- The programme or activity has well-defined objectives and appropriate measures of success. It is regularly evaluated, and receives positive feedback from students. Evaluation results are unceasingly fed into the development process.
- There is a good balance between theory and practice: the programme or activity is action oriented, based on experience and project work. It aims to improve the students' abilities to work in a team, develop and use networks, solve problems, and spot opportunities. Students are actively involved in the learning process, and responsible for their own education.
- The programme or activity is adapted as per the students' learning environment and to their specific fields of study.
- The institution has external links with enterprises, experienced business people & young entrepreneurs, and with local community. Entrepreneurs are involved in the learning process.
- Students are exposed to real-life work situations and encouraged to take part in extra-curricular activities. External events, activities and contests are organised.
- Teachers have an appropriate qualification in entrepreneurship (through experience in business and/or participation in training). They use up-to-date study materials and up-to-date knowledge.
- The programme or activity stimulates students and teachers to look beyond the borders of their school environment

(e.g. by exchanging experience or ideas with other schools, with students from other countries or with other technical backgrounds).

- The programme or activity is part of a wider scheme: students are followed after participation in the programme, and are referred to right support mechanisms if they want to start up a business. (COMMISSION, 2009)

What exactly is a Polytechnic? The term 'poly' comes from Greek word meaning 'many' and 'tekhnikós' meaning 'arts'. In short, **Polytechnic** means an institute that offers a variety of professional courses, which is mainly technical and vocational in nature. Aim of polytechnic education is to create a pool of skill based manpower to support shop floor and field operations as a middle level link between technicians and engineers. The Diploma level Institutions pass-out levels in Engineering & Technology play an important role in managing shop-floor operations. It is further an established fact that small & medium Industry prefer to employ Diploma Holders because of their special skills in reading and interpreting drawings, estimating, costing & billing, supervision, measurement, testing, repair, maintenance etc.

Polytechnic education in India contributes significantly to its economic services. The Central and state governments in the subsequent years, therefore, provided funds to increase technical education facilities in 1950s and early 1960s which resulted in the establishment of a large number of government and government aided private institutions in the country. Government also adopted a policy of heavily subsidizing the technical institutions to attract meritorious students. The aided institutions received 50 to 70% of the capital cost and 80 to 90% of the recurring cost. (Singh, 2008)

Expansion of Polytechnic Education

During last decade, India has seen a tremendous increase in the number of Engineering Colleges at Degree level throughout the country. However, the growth of technical institutions has not been uniform as far as number of polytechnics and degree engineering colleges is concerned. The present student intake in degree and diploma level technical institutions is 6.53 lakhs and 3.54 lakhs respectively. The ratio of degree to diploma holders is around 2:1, whereas ideally it should be 1:3. This is because of more private participation in the engineering sector compared to the diploma sector. There is also a societal perception that degrees command a premium in the job market rather than the diplomas.

Ministry of Human Resource Development has launched a Nationwide Scheme on "Sub-Mission on Polytechnics" under Co-ordinated Action for Skill Development in order to augment Skilled Manpower requirement in the country by providing assistance to state governments. Under this scheme 1000 new polytechnics will be set up in each district not having one already with the emphasis to cater to the needs of unserved, underserved areas and disadvantaged sections of the Society. Of 1000 Polytechnics, 300 polytechnics are to be set up with a one time central grant of Rs.12.3 crore per polytechnic to meet the capital cost. Similarly, about 300 polytechnics would be set up under Private Public Partnership (PPP) mode with partial funding of Rs.3.00 crore per polytechnic from the Central Government. The rest 400 polytechnics would be set up through private funding.

Besides the financial support for the setting up new polytechnics, it has also been decided to strengthen the existing polytechnic system by granting funds upto Rs.2.00 cores per polytechnic for 500 polytechnics. As one of the components to incentivise skill development among Women, grants are also proposed for construction of Women's Hostel in more than 500 polytechnics at the cost of Rs.1.00 crore each. (Ministry of Human Resource and Development, mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload.../AgendaBackgroundCSES-13042012_1.pdf, 2012) All these new polytechnic institutes will

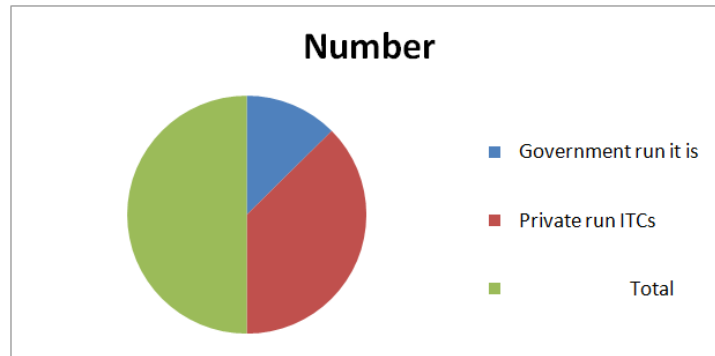
have a community polytechnic wing. Women’s Hostels will also be set up in all the government polytechnics. The existing Government Polytechnics will be incentivised to modernize in PPP mode. Efforts will also be made to increase intake capacity by using space, faculty and other facilities in the existing polytechnics in shifts. There is also a shortage of qualified diploma holder in several newly emerged areas. Therefore, engineering institutions will be incentivized and encouraged to introduce diploma courses to augment intake capacity. Diploma programmes could be run in evening shifts when the laboratory, workshop, equipment and library are free. Sum total intake capacity of polytechnics in the year 2009-10 was around 5.09 lakhs.

Growth of Polytechnics in India

Over the years, the number of Polytechnics increased as per the following:

Institutions	Number	Seating capacity
Government run it is	2189	4,53,346
Private run ITCs	6498	7,60,702
Total	8687	12,14,048

Source & footnotes: Ministry of H.R.D. Department of Secondary & Higher Education &U.G.C.



Main Problems of Polytechnic Education in India

Over the years, the diploma programmes have deteriorated losing key skill components, which has resulted in their being just a diluted version of degree education. The organizations employing them have to train them all over again in basic skills. Major problems being faced by the polytechnic education system are non - availability of courses in new and emerging areas, Inadequate infrastructure facilities and obsolete equipment, system unable to attract quality teachers, inadequate financial resources, Inadequate or non-existence of state policies for training and retraining of faculty and staff, lack of flexibility and autonomy to the institutions, inadequate industry institute participation, lack of Research and Development in technician education and antiquated Curricula.(B.Sanjay, 2011)

Community Polytechnics

The working group on Technical Education of All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) in February 1978 recommended for selected Polytechnics to act as focal points to promote Community/Rural Development on scientific lines through technology transfer. The scheme of Community Polytechnics (CPs) was started under Direct Central Assistance Scheme in 1978-79 in 35 Polytechnics. The scheme envisaged the Community Polytechnics to act as important centres for the application of science and Technology in rural areas and generate self and wage based employment opportunities, through non-formal training, towards and competency and need based courses in various trades

and multiple skills. The major objectives of Community Polytechnics are to assess the needs of rural areas so that development programmes are designed and carried out, train village youths for self and wage employment, enhance production and productivity in rural areas to raise their standard of living, make available repair facilities at the door-step, start people's participation in development and increase awareness of various development schemes floated by different agencies.(Goa)

Following are the main aims of Community Polytechnics:

Socio Economic Survey: To interact with the rural community, make a survey and obtain information to ascertain their needs and identify direction in which rural development efforts are likely to bring quicker results.

Transfer of Technology: To organize programmes to enable the villagers to indicate normal methods adopted by them in their daily activities, develop better techniques, implement and teach them to adopt the modern developed techniques and implements.

Manpower Development: To impart training and teach local people the basic skills, knowledge and attitudes to practice any occupational activity that will lead to gainful employment in their own village, and also training for upgrading the skills in their own fields. This sort of training is crucial in the context of Technology transfer, and it helps people in equipping themselves with the adoption & use of modern techniques, implementation and maintenance of equipments.

Technical Service: To organize technical service camps at regular intervals, and undertake minor repairs on the jobs at site, through trained man-power. To also promote service centres and repair shops to be set-up by the villagers themselves and also consultancy services at village levels through trained man-power.

Support Service: This is in addition to the technical service mentioned above, villagers may need support of other kinds to improve professionally, to widen the scope of activities and enhance productivity. Such need may be more encouragement/boost, guidance in getting loans, supply of raw materials, development of marketing facilities etc.

Dissemination of Information: This involves publication, distribution of Technical literatures containing information on improved, adopted & new technologies suitable for rural needs, and also includes guidance as to where to obtain the required raw materials, how to get loans etc.

Co-operatives/Self-help group: Helping the villagers to organize self-help group and co-operatives overall departments, improvement in lifestyle, beautification of the environment and enrichment of social and cultural life.

As on date there are 617 AICTE approved Polytechnics covered under the scheme of Community Polytechnics.

The rationale for choosing Polytechnics for implementation of scheme of Community Polytechnics is based on the fact that Polytechnics are equipped with adequate infrastructure in the form of Buildings, Lecture Halls, Laboratories, Workshop, and Hostel etc. which could be used for linking such centres of knowledge to the rural community. Besides, Polytechnics have qualified and trained faculty whose services could be utilized for vocational training and transfer of technologies.

Community Polytechnic Scheme is run by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, and New Delhi. They have been established as entities within polytechnics rather than as autonomous institutions. To that extent Community Polytechnics is part of the formal system. However, they provide training within communities and their approach can be considered as informal. There are now 675 Community Polytechnics (approved and unapproved both),

training about 50,000 people a year. Courses are of 3-9 months duration and there are no entry pre-requisites. MHRD intends to incorporate CPs into all AICTE-accredited institutions in the years to come.

Community Polytechnics deliver the same types of courses in a community environment: that are delivered through vocational education in schools, but the focus would seem to be on informal sector of economy. The content of Community Polytechnique courses is different to those in schools. For example office management and fashion designing courses are covered within six months duration by a Community Polytechnic whereas courses with such titles are offered for two years under vocational education programmes. Participants in Community Polytechnique courses gain no special qualification and no particular credit towards any further training in ITIs or polytechnics. Community Polytechniques does not therefore fit into any qualifications framework. According to 10th Five Year Plan document, the courses and services of Community Polytechniques were to emphasize the transfer of technology to communities, manpower development and rendering of technical and support services.

The Community Polytechnics impart short- term courses of 6 months duration in various trades, free of any charges and intake of trainees is Limited to 15 per batch per trade. Before starting any course the advertisement is given in leading local Newspapers to enable the aspirants to apply for the same which followed by selection of the trainees through personal Interview. Besides, Community Polytechnics also undertake training in collaboration with government departments and agencies. The duration of such courses is decided jointly by the departments and sponsored agencies.

The Community Polytechnics also used to provide direct community services like Mahila Mandal, fural roads, nutrition camps, social service camps, tree plantation camps, financial help for self-employment, educational film shows, medical camps, safe drinking water, student counselling, village environment and Youth club.

Taking initiative to strengthen the network of Community Polytechnics in the country MHRD has directed to open a new community polytechnic wing with all the one thousand new polytechnic institutes to be established by Ministry under the Scheme on "Sub-Mission on Polytechnics". To provide skilled personnel at grass-root level as well as to facilitate appropriate technology transfer to the local community, under the revised scheme of community polytechnics, it is proposed to cover all the above polytechnics at a cost of Rs.737.82 crores. Total outlay for the entire scheme is Rs.6828 crores to be spent during 11th and 12th Plan period.

Impact of Community Polytechnics on Society: The main activity that Community Polytechnic had rendered since the beginning is the manpower development, which initially, is carried out only at the main centre, but subsequently carried out at the Extension Centre also. The Community Polytechnics design their own course curriculum.

Shortfall of Community Colleges

Many shortfall of the scheme have been assessed so far. There appears to be a compartmentalization between normal Polytechnic and Community Polytechnic activities. Very little attempt has been made to integrate these in curricular activities. At present only a handful of staff members seem to be involved in rural development work. Also, in most of the projects undertaken by community polytechnics, very little attention has been paid to the costing and the economic aspects of it. The technical documentation of work done is also weak.

Notwithstanding the above shortfalls, overall the Community Polytechnics are improving their performance and particularly in the states of Kerala and West Bengal where they proved to be good models.

Community Colleges

The Community College is an alternative system of education, which is aimed at the empowerment of the disadvantaged and the underprivileged through appropriate skill development leading to gainful employment in collaboration with the local industry and the community and achieves skills for employment and self-employability of the above sections of people in the society. The Community College is an innovative educational alternative that is rooted in the community providing holistic education and eligibility for employment to the disadvantaged¹⁹.

The Vision of the Community College is of the community, for the community and by the community and to produce responsible citizens. The Community Colleges promote job oriented, work related, skill - based and life coping education. The Community College initiative is in conformity with the Indian political will that prioritizes in education, primary education, information technology education and vocational education.

The key words of the Community College system are access, flexibility in curriculum and teaching methodology, cost effectiveness and equal opportunity in collaboration with industrial, commercial and service sectors of the local area and responding to the social needs and issues of the local community, internship and job placement within the local area, promotion of self-employment and small business development, declaration of competence and eligibility for employment.

The Community College is a place that makes people fit for a job. It is an alternative system of education to empower the socially, economically, and educationally disadvantaged. Here, we concentrate more on skill development based on each individual. Anyone can join—school dropouts, degree holders who want to learn a particular skill—we even have students from the rural areas. Anyone from the age group of 16 to 47 years can enrol.

The Community College Movement started in South India in October 1995 with the beginning of the Pondicherry University Community College. It was taken forward by the Inauguration of the Madras Community College by the Archdiocese of Mylapore - Mylapore in August 1996. It was strengthened by the Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, by giving approval to five Community Colleges in September 1998. It spread to Andhra Pradesh with the starting of JMJ Community College in Tenali in July 1999. It also spread to the states of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Kerala, Karnataka and Uttarakhand. Today there are 153 community colleges across 17 states. The movement has so far helped 35,000 students from the socially, economically and educationally backward groups. Thus it has become a national phenomenon.

The Salient Features of Community Colleges

The Community Colleges are generally established by non-profit making, non-commercial and community based organisation with proven years of service to the local community. The establishment of the Community Colleges should be preceded by an extensive Need Analysis of the employment opportunities available in the local area and also the social needs of the Community. The Target group of the Community College is XII passed students, school drop-outs, rural youths, rural women; existing workforce that wants to update its skills and all who want skill based and need based education at an affordable price.

There is no age limit for admission into a Community College. The close and active linkage between Industries and Community College is a must for the success of the Community College System. The industrial partners help the College in designing the curriculum, providing part time instructors, serving as members of the advisory board and the governing board, taking students for internship and helping them to find job placement. The Community College is a

Multi-campus reality. The Community College is permitted to the optimum utilization of the existing Infrastructural facilities available to the community-based organisation that establishes the Community College.

The Community College tries to respond to the deficiencies of the Vocational system through industry-institutional linkage, competence assessment, proper certification, training on site, life skills training and job oriented programmes decided on the basis of the local needs. It is in the above areas that the Community College is an improvement and departure from earlier initiatives such as it is Community Polytechnics and apprenticeship training.

The curriculum of the Community College has four distinct parts: life skills, work skills, internship and preparation for employment. The certificate programmes for the school dropouts consists of 28 weeks and the diploma programmes consists of 52 weeks for the X and XII passed students and all others who want skill-based education.

Criteria for Selection of Industrial Partners by the Community Colleges

Since the selection of right Industrial Partners is an important factor in the overall success of the Community College Movement. The following criterion is used by the Community Colleges for selecting the Industrial Partners:

- Willingness of the Industrial Partners
- Willingness to allow girls to work in order to gain experience
- Safety, distance and accessibility to the work spot
- Experience in Work skills
- Sharing of vision for the poor
- Interested to train our students
- Commitment for Job placements in their Companies
- Having good infrastructure
- Good Trainers
- Concerned with upliftment of students
- Frequency of the visits of the industrial partners to our college
- Serving as the members of the Advisory board
- Ready to provide apprenticeship training
- Skill based training
- Helping in the Designing the Curriculum
- Part time instructors
- Allowing the students to work with advanced equipment
- Authorised Service Centres

Functioning of Community College

The Directors of Community Colleges accept the responsibility of running the Community College by the Board of the Management of each college. The Governing Body use to have few Industrial partners as its members. The entire system is kept going by the qualified life skills, work skill staff and guest faculty. The Advisory Board for each of the course should be in place every college. The colleges send their students for internship for 2 months. Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, Training and Placement all are done by the Community College. The Community College improves the living standard of those who are excluded and uplift the downtrodden. They also update the courses every year with the experts from different fields. Most of the colleges have nominal and flexible fee structure. Many colleges have past peoples association. All the colleges follow the pattern of life skills, work skills, internship and preparation for employment.

Courses Offered by Community Colleges

The Community Colleges offer diploma courses in health assistance/nursing assistance; pre-primary teacher training; DTP operation/computer application; fashion designing and garment manufacture; house electrical/electrical work; air-conditioning and refrigeration; four-wheeler/automobile mechanism; catering; plumbing technology; tailoring and embroidery; Tally accounting; medical lab technology; computer hardware; sales and marketing management; travel management; bakery and confectionery; cargo management; printing technology; hotel management, rural marketing; community enterprises; Information Technology; business accountancy and chartered accountancy, housekeeping, and so on.

Role of IGNOU in Popularizing Community Colleges

In India, only 5% of the youth in the age group 20-24 years have obtained vocational skills through formal means, whereas the percentage in industrialized countries varies between 60% to 96%. Though about 12.8 million enter the labour force every year, only about 2.5 million vocational training seats are available in India. To address this 'Skill Gap' nationally, during the 11th Plan, the Government aspires to create 70 million skilled jobs in different sectors.

For undertaking this massive expansion in capacity, besides current established approaches, many committees have suggested the need to institutionalize an alternative education framework such as Community Colleges. Community Colleges, institutions rooted in the community for providing holistic education which is flexible and job-oriented, will offer post-secondary programmes leading to Associate Degrees in Arts, Science and Commerce.

The Associate Degree programmes through Community Colleges will focus on employability, with following features:

- Skill & job orientation
- 2-Year duration
- Vertical mobility into 3 year degree programme
- Flexible entry qualifications
- Fulltime face-to-face programme

The Indira Gandhi National Open University has begun an earnest move in providing this innovative alternative model of higher education. Since 2009 IGNOU is successfully running the scheme of Associate Degree Programmes

through Community Colleges in various parts of India. The pilot programme for the scheme was launched with about 200 institutions across the country, particularly in rural areas, in the first phase. Today IGNOU is running around 443 community colleges across the country.

Suggestion to Bring About the Improvement of the System

The colleges need to access the need of the various potential employers. Government recognition is needed. If the colleges get Government Recognition the system would gain societal and national acceptance and the student's strength will go up. The Need Analysis of the Employment and Self Employment opportunities should be done every 3 years. Review Meeting among Community Colleges to share their experience and problems should be arranged once a year by the Madras Centre for Research and Development of Community Education, MCRDCE. MCRDCE should conduct refresher training programmes for the teachers of Community Colleges. Professional Enrichment Workshop and sharpening the teaching skills and ways to improve industrial collaboration should be explored. There should be monitoring, close and regular follow-up by MCRDCE of the Community Colleges.

The Industrial Partners feel that the question of recognition from the Government is so essential for the survival of the system. They also feel the training period / internship should be extended for few more weeks. They advocate women entrepreneur training. Publicity for the system is urgently required to get better placement for the student. Some of them feel the duration of the course to be increased to two years and they want the uniform standard to maintain in all the Community Colleges through regular update of the syllabus and continuous interaction with the Industrial Collaborators.

Recognition and Accreditation

The Community College System has been working successfully with 70% Job Placement without getting Recognition from any Approved Educational Bodies of the Country. However most of the Community Colleges felt there is the need for Recognition from the state and central governments to facilitate the horizontal mobility and the vertical mobility of the students of the Community College. The MCRDCE has conducted Seven Consultations so far to further this cause. It is for the first time in the educational history of the country, the agencies that run Community Colleges have devised Self-Regulatory and Autonomous Guidelines to ensure credibility and accountability of the system. Thus the MCRDCE has succeeded in influencing the state and central governments for Recognition and Accreditation of the system and for the Student Centered Funding. The issue of Accreditation was examined closely by the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), New Delhi at the direction of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India, and New Delhi. The NIOS has given accreditation so far to 18 Community Colleges in India. The MCRDCE is also trying its best to workout Credit Transfer with the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi for Vertical Mobility.

Suggestions and Future Directions to Community Colleges

A Research Study on "The Impact and Prospects of the Community College System in India" was conducted by the Madras Centre for Research and Development of Community Education (MCRDCE), August 2003 and submitted to Socio-Economic Research Division Planning Commission Government of India, YojanaBhavan, Parliament Street, New Delhi, underlined following suggestions and future directions to the Community College Movement in India which needs to be corporate in the years to come:

- The study shows that the problem of school dropouts can be handled by the Community Colleges by providing

them multi skills since they already have the experience of at least eight to ten years of schooling. These students can be given certificate courses.

- Technical Vocational Training and Educational (TVT &E) Programme can easily be implemented by the Community Colleges. It could be started as a pilot project taking 800 students – 40 students each for two trades in 20 Community Colleges from July 2004.
- Lack of recognition has been the major problem faced by those who passed out from the Community Colleges. Recognition by the Ministry of Human Resources Development, New Delhi and the Directorate of Employment and training by the respective state governments will enhance the acceptance of the diploma given by the Community Colleges at national or regional levels. It will also ensure the horizontal mobility of the students in terms of getting employment all over the country.
- The Vertical mobility of going for further education in the respective trades could be ensured by the National Qualification framework through credit transfer especially in the Open Universities of the Country like Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU).
- The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) has accredited 18 Community Colleges. Many more colleges would be accredited in the near future for the Vocational courses already offered by NIOS. Efforts should be made to get the new courses designed according to the local needs.
- The model of the Community College system could be replicated all over the country. At least one CC should be there in all the 600 districts of the country.
- The Community College should try to address the deficiencies in the Vocational educational system in the following manner based on the findings of the above research study:
 - It should aim at the employability of the individual trained.
 - It should evolve a system to declare the competency level and duly certify the same.
 - It should promote strong Industry – Institutional linkage and ties. It involves the Industry to articulate the skills it wants and works in close collaboration with the industries, to make the individuals skill oriented that is needed by the employer.
 - It should emphasize the teaching of life skills, communication skills and English language to the takers of the system.
 - The Community College System certainly lessens the burden on higher education.
 - It is evolving a system of evaluation and assessment of skills, which are personal, social, language, communication, work and creativity.
- The important problem, the Community Colleges are facing today is the financial viability. The fees collected from the students are very low (an average fee of Rs. 2500-3000) to make the system cost effective and reachable to the poor and the most disadvantaged. Hence it is recommended that the central and state governments could offer to the students from the socially, economically, educationally backward groups scholarships and stipends – Rs 3000 by way of meeting the training cost of per student per year which will help the Community Colleges to

strengthen the System. The Planning Commission could recommend the same to MHRD since the Planning Commission has already advocated the strengthening of the Community College scheme in the Tenth Five Year Plan “There should be focus on convergence of schemes like the SarvaShikshaAbhiyan, Adult Education and Vocational Education Programme at Schools, Polytechnics, Community Colleges etc. (Tenth Five Year Plan, 2002-2007).

- As the Community Colleges are predominant in South India, the concept of Community College has to be propagated through regional workshops especially in the northern states of India in particular in Bihar, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, West Bengal and other north eastern states. These workshops can be conducted to popularize the Concept among service minded organizations and NGOs with the help of the respected state government.
- The various components of the Life Skills Programme such as Life Coping Skills, Communication Skills, English, Basic Computing Skills preparation for employment could be included in the whole stream of Vocational Education with the expertise of the Community Colleges and by training teachers of Vocational Schools. There is a need to promote active industrial partnership with agencies like the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Confederation of Indian Industries etc. in order to stabilize the internship and job placement.
- The same Life Skills could be introduced as an integral component to the Arts and Science college students to enhance their employability.
- The whole movement has been a non-governmental initiative. Hence the governments could provide external support through recognition and awarding of scholarship and stipends to the deserving students. This help could come from the following departments of the government.
 - Rural Development Department
 - Social Welfare Department
 - Health Department
 - Women Welfare/Empowerment Department
 - Youth Welfare and Sports Department
 - The Quasi-Government Organisations, Public Sector Agencies to ensure placements
 - Funds of the Special Component Plan Programmes For the welfare of the SC/ST population.
- MCRDCE could function as nodal agency to help agencies to establish Community Colleges, to train teachers, to develop curriculum and evaluation methods in the overall direction of the Community College Movement in India. This Centre could be recognized and supported by the Ministry of Human Resources Development, New Delhi.
- The Study shows that adequate infrastructure facility is not available in most of the Community Colleges. Since the nature of the Courses is Vocational and Trade activities it is essential that adequate infrastructure particularly for hands on training is to be considerably strengthened. While some support could come through Community Contribution and fees collected from the Students there is need for the Government’s grants also to strengthen

community colleges.

The study provides the following insights into how to influence perceptions of VET:

- When it comes to IVET attractiveness, a key stakeholder is the (prospective) student. To understand how they make decisions on future education paths, more information is needed from students directly. There is current evidence that the labour market relevance of IVET is likely to be one of the most important influences on student decision-making, alongside personal interest in the subject. Perceptions about the likelihood of finding employment after completing IVET are found to be correlated with relative esteem;
- Existing campaign and communication efforts often use students and/or people working in the relevant areas as a messenger. This is a combination of ‘authority’ – people who are already working in the area and ‘similarity’ young people who are like the intended audience. The local level of campaigning, seen frequently, may help to reinforce this similarity element, and make the message even more relevant to recipients;
- The family is the most influential group in student decision-making. As messenger, families are also an important target for information, requiring consideration of what messengers are likely to be relevant for them;
- Participation in VET is stable in most countries, even where other indicators on attractiveness vary significantly. This suggests that norms might be significant driver in IVET participation. Norms can and have been used in campaigns by exposing young people (or other groups targeted) to examples of those involved in IVET and in relevant careers (e.g. in skills competitions);
- The desire to be consistent with previous commitments and actions has implications for the involvement of employers in IVET, suggesting that engaging them in small ways initially might lead to larger commitments down the line. This is seen in some of the incentive strategies. It also has implications for students, suggesting that it may be valuable to expose students to IVET at lower secondary level, or give ‘taster’ opportunities. Short-term courses, which can then be extended, could also be useful as a low barrier way to engage students in IVET.(CEDEFOP, 2014).

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