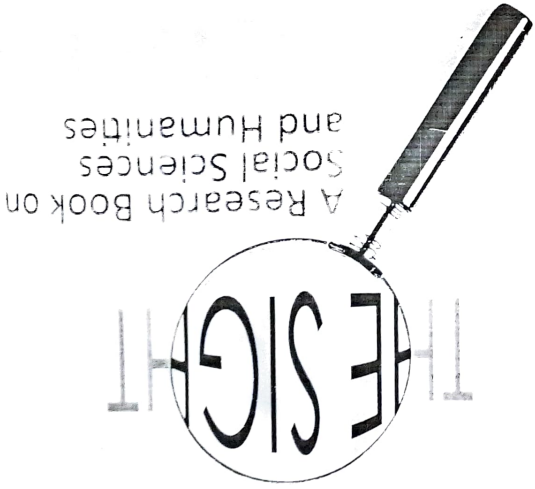


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VOCATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM IN NORTH EAST INDIA

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Vocational Education has been major concerns in the context of an overall transformation of the educational system in India. Vocational education is that from of instruction designed to prepare peoples for industrial or commercial employment. It can be acquired either formally in trade schools, technical secondary schools or in on the job training programs or, more informally, by picking up the necessary skills on the job. Vocational education has been considered crucial by policy makers in the country in order to address the shortage of skills among student as well as to link education with employability. The national policy on education 1986 has accorded a very higher priority to vocational education in the educational re-organisation. Moreover with the introduction of the National Vocational Education Qualification Framework (NVEQE) and the National Skill Qualification on Framework (NSQF) there is even greater emphasis on vocational skills acquired through, formal, informal education and training while also focusing on learning outcomes to organize various qualification. The government of Assam have taken various initiatives as well as introduced policies to provide an impetus to vocational education. The present paper tries to provide vocational education system in North-east India.

Education and social development are complimentary to each

other. Education improves functional and analytical ability and thus opens up opportunities for individuals to achieve greater access to skills and livelihoods. Skilled workforce is an essential factor to become a developed economy. The needs for qualified human resources are getting increased by the rapid development in science and technology and by global transformation of production and consumption relationships. In this context the well educated human resources who can reach, use and improve the knowledge effect the countries' economic and technical improvement and their socio-cultural structures as well. Today's information society needs individuals with creativity and communicational skills as well as contemporary knowledge, perfection in practice, effectiveness in economy by transforming knowledge to product or service. This can be formulated in education as individual and social competence, vocational and technical competence, leadership and management competence. To reach this aim in education, scientific data based educational programmes, practical application fields, and also social, sporty, artistic activities and mediums for free time sharing are all demanded. In fact, Skills and knowledge are the two pillars of economic growth and industrial development of any country. Vocational education is the branch of education which leads to work, which in turn provides skilled manpower that contributes to the national progress. Vocational Education play an essential role in promoting sustainable economic growth and the socio economic development of countries, with benefits for individuals, their families, local communities, and in turn, the whole society. Present scenario of Vocational educational system north east India, its challenges and the solutions to overcome discussed in this paper.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM OF NORTH- EAST INDIA

Vocational education has critical importance for progress, employment and for the high competitiveness of a country. Vocational training is becoming primary target in this context, which is based on cooperation with industrial and business sectors and supported

by the every part of society. The basic emphasise is the importance and role of the institutions of vocational education. Increasing the quality and transparency, achieving the international competence conditions in the schools are aimed. Not only theoretical knowledge, but practical applications are urgent for the vocational skills and experiences so, the hardware facilities, spatial and academic structure should be improved and the relations and cooperation with the industry should be strengthened. Moreover than vocational knowledge and skills, the interests of art and culture are required. Educating programmes targets on the members who are solving problems, proposing creative alternative solutions, constructing social relationships, communicating effectively, besides conscious about responsibilities and capacities and coping with the competition in global labour milieu. So the education programmes supported by the social activities, projects, contests, seminars, and presentations effect the social developments of the students, feed their creativity, productivity and make difference within their working lives.

Vocational education is an effective tool to improve the potential and productivity of the individuals who face with the global problems like competition, specialisation and employment. For sustainable development institutions of vocational training should be developed, supported by the industrial world and it is essential to increase their quality in the light of international criteria's. The vocational education with two dimensional processes within school and industry, prepares and integrates the young people to the working life, and helps them to produce value by working. Vocational education supplies the needed human power with skills and knowledge to labour market; motivates the economic recovery and influences the social transformation as well. The vocational education has been differently defined according to the changes and developments in time. Firstly it is defined as a kind of training for working, for hand skills and for producing. Recent wide definition is "the form of vocational education aims to improve the capacity of knowledge, skills and behaviour for efficient activities chooses working field." Vocational education has

three main elements-related with the economic, social and cultural changes as individual, business and training process. This means that one gains professional knowledge, skills and praxis within the vocational education is also the physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially and economically development process. The vocational education should be updated according to the employment needs while adapting to the changing socio-economic conditions and demands of the market. Vocational education is a way of learning based on praxis at work.

Vocational education has to be viewed from different multi-layered practices. One is of course the hands on training component. The other is employment generation and sustainability, whether the training programmes or courses can lead to employment/self employment. If so there has to be follow up measures to see what the participants in a vocational training programme have achieved and whether there has been a progress in terms of employability and income generation. Also, whether any industry has employed any participant, especially when there has been in plant or in house training. Another perspective of vocational education is studying a course on vocational education in a college or a university with the hope that the certificate will lead to an acquisition of jobs. The industry education alliance which is gradually becoming a force in the country, one reckons that this will play a significant role in the future, what with a Skills Development Council being set-up under the aegis.

Skill development is one of the components and outcome of vocational education but training programmes should also concentrate on unskilled workers thereby giving them an opportunity to learn and earn. The unorganized sector is also a catchment resource in areas such as retailing, marketing and micro businesses. In North East India there are hardly any industrial houses worth the name and the local industry in terms of agro based products and raw materials remain untapped, the potential being exploited by middlemen. Jute, rubber, bamboo and cane, ginger, turmeric are grown in the different states but how are these to be encapsulated as micro units to generate

employment? The other business houses which have come to the region are basically setting up franchisee units in mobile phones, internet connection; computer courses etc. all for marketing strategies and the youth who are employed look unsettled and are trying constantly to search for better opportunities. Livelihoods have also to do with living in good if not salutary conditions. Floods in Assam every year are cataclysmic but precious little is done to take long standing measures to combat this problem. Flood control management & how to live intelligently with floods, could well serve vocational and training needs of the common populace who finally bear the brunt of such disasters.

Vocational education in the North East Region can be integrated into a whole, a complex process since we have to trace it to components of agriculture and the current despair of the educated unemployed or even the plumber or the technicians eking out a living. This is of course true of the entire country but in a Region where industrial development is in backwaters then education is strength with the presence of some very good academic institutions in the Region. These institutions should come forward in partnership whether they are general colleges or professional colleges to re-appraise vocational education in the context of the small industries and local habits mentioned above. More than having vocational education courses, short term training programmes will benefit the people keeping in mind the changing order of the 'world' market such as repair of mobiles and computer hardware. Vocational education contributes to the achievement of society's goal of self sufficiency in agriculture and industry by developing suitable skills. Basic education, Craft education, Learning to do, Socially Useful Productive Work, Vocationalisation of Education, World experience, World of Work- all these concepts, by the large, cannot the same idea, education should be related to productivity. The National Policy on Education of India (NPE) 1986 (as

modified in 1992) has stated that the education system should be able to fulfil the needs of the skilled manpower requirement for the development of the country, as result Government has given high importance to vocational education and training. It has been realized that Education develops manpower for different strata and needs of the economy. So NPE has emphasised on introduction of systematic, well-planned implementation of vocational education programmes, to enhance skills and employability, to reduce the mismatch between demand and supply of skilled manpower. Efforts were made to introduce vocational courses of several occupational fields at school. Vocational Education covers education and skill development from post primary to tertiary education levels through formal and non-formal modes. It develops knowledge and skills for any occupation and prepares students for the world of work, and self-employment. Today about 150 jobs oriented courses are being provided in the areas of agriculture, business & commerce, engineering and technology, home science, health and paramedical, social sciences, humanities etc. at secondary educational level. Today vocational education has been identified as a proven requirement of any country for its development. It is of much importance in countries like India where the share of youth in total population is going to increase and to make this much population with skills will bring India in the list of countries of highly skilled manpower, which is quite necessary factor for country' development.

