



Youth

1 Introduction

Youth is the time of life when one is young, but often means the time between childhood and adulthood (maturity). Youth is an experience that may shape an individual's level of dependency, which can be marked in various ways according to different cultural perspectives. Global number of youths is highest ever, as the world is home to 1.8 billion young people between the ages of 10 and 24 year. Never before have there been so many young people. Never again is there likely to be such potential for economic and social progress. How we meet the needs and aspirations of young people will define our common future.

The youth population is growing fastest in the poorest nations, with 9 in 10 of the world's young population live in less developed countries. With 356 million 10-24 year-olds, India has the world's largest youth population despite having a smaller population than China. Every third person in an Indian city today is a youth. In about seven years, the median individual in India will be 29 years, very likely a city-dweller, making it the youngest country in the world.

Young people are the innovators, creators, builders and leaders of the future. But they can transform the future only if they have skills, health, decision-making, and real choices in life. Today's record 1.8 billion young people present an enormous opportunity to transform the future. The potential economic gains would be realized through a "demographic dividend", which can occur when a county's working age population is larger than the population that is dependent. But what is "demographic dividend"?

2 Demographic Dividend

Demographic dividend refers to a period – usually 20 to 30 years - when fertility rates fall due to significant reductions in child and infant mortality rates. As women and families realize that fewer children will die during infancy or childhood, they will begin to have fewer children to reach their desired number of offspring, further reducing the proportion of non-productive dependents. This fall is often accompanied by an extension in average life expectancy that increases the portion of the population that is in the working age-group. This cuts spending on dependents and spurs economic growth.

The demographic shift initiates the demographic dividend. With fewer younger dependents, due to declining fertility and child mortality rates, and fewer older dependents, due to the older generations having shorter life expectancies, and the largest segment of the population of productive working age, the dependency ratio declines dramatically leading to the demographic dividend. Combined with effective public policies this time period of the demographic dividend can help facilitate more rapid economic growth and puts less strain on families. In many countries this time period has led to increasingly smaller families, rising income, and rising life expectancy rates. Countries with large youth populations could see their economies soar, provided they invest heavily in young people's education and health and protect their rights.

For example, China's current dependence ratio of 38 is unprecedentedly low. **Dependence ratio** represents the number of dependents, children, and people over 65, per 100 working adults. This implies that there are nearly twice as many working age people as the rest of the entire population combined. This historically low dependency ratio has been extremely beneficial for China's unprecedented period of economic growth. This dramatic shift was brought about largely in part due to China's one-child policy. As a result China is currently aging at an unprecedented rate.

2.1 Indian Scenario

Current predictions suggest a steady increase in the youth population to 464 million by 2021 and finally a decline to 458 million by 2026. By 2020, India is set to become the world's youngest country with 64 per cent of its population in the working age group. Thus, in the near future India will be the largest individual contributor to the global demographic transition. A 2011 International Monetary Fund Working Paper found that substantial portion of the growth experienced by India since the 1980s is attributable to the country's age structure and changing demographics.

The U.S. Census Bureau predicts that India will surpass China as the world's largest country by 2025, with a large proportion of those in the working age category. With the West, Japan and even China aging, this demographic potential offers India and its growing economy an unprecedented edge that economists believe could add a significant 2 per cent to the GDP growth rate.

Extreme actions are, therefore, needed to take care of future basic minimum living standards including food, water and energy. The urgency to put in place appropriate policies is magnified by the reality that what follows the "demographic dividend" is a time when the dependency ratio begins to increase again. Inevitably the population bubble that made its way through the most productive working years creating the "demographic dividend" grows old and retires. With a disproportionate number of old people relying upon a smaller generation following behind them the "demographic dividend" becomes a liability. With each generation having fewer children population growth slows, stops, or even goes into reverse. This is currently seen most dramatically in Japan with younger generations essentially abandoning many parts of the country.

In order to maximize the dividend, India must ensure that its young working-age population is equipped to seize opportunities for jobs and other income-earning possibilities. A closer analysis of the urban youth suggests that greater political participation, engagement at a policy level and urgent attention to improving their quality of life can ensure that India enjoys the benefits of this dividend. However, to what extent India has been able to exploit its demographic dividend?

The benefits of this dividend are tempered with social and spatial inequalities. Urban spaces have not necessarily aided the quality of life enjoyed by Indian youth. A telling sign: one-fifth of the Indian urban population lives on less than a dollar a day. Additionally, while income levels in cities may appear to be higher, the cost of living is also constantly increasing, resulting in shrinking savings, inadequate access to health care and lack of quality education. Maternal mortality remains the 'top cause of death among young women.'

More than half of young urban women are anemic, pointing to inadequate food and nutrition. Though, the problem is not urbanization per se, but the inequalities that it seems to accentuate. While India is undergoing a demographic transition, regional disparities in education mean the benefits will not be evenly spread across the country. The largest share of youth with formal skills is found in Kerala, followed by Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat. Among those undergoing training, Maharashtra had the highest share, Bihar the lowest.

India is also home to the highest number of child laborers in the world. And it has the world's largest number of sexually abused children - 53 percent - according to a recent study released by the government. The ground reality for a vast majority of children in India continues to be grim, despite a number of government and civil society initiatives to improve the state of children and youth.

Even after seven decades since independence and more than two decades of economic reforms the majority of our work force is in agricultural sector. This is gross under-utilization of the endowed precious resource. Further, majority of our non-farm work force performs unskilled job. What may be the reason for such state of affairs?

Policy makers are usually focused on short-run economic management issues. But there has not been much success in bridging the short-run to the long-run management of human resources. The central long-run question facing India is where will good jobs come from? Productive jobs are vital not only for economic growth, but also for proper utilization of human resource along with overall prosperity of people. A larger work force translates into more workers only if there are productive jobs. What may be for encashing demographic dividend?

India must reap its demographic dividend by improving the quality of education and focusing on skill development. However, education and skill development are a necessary but not a sufficient basis for social mobility. Large numbers of young people acquire high school diplomas or degrees in India but not all of these youth can obtain the secure, salaried jobs that they have been led to expect. Education provides a sense of entitlement but not always the problem-solving skills that allow young people to start businesses. This is particularly a problem in north India, where education is widely available but opportunities for social mobility rather rare.

Moreover, Indian higher education suffers from a lack of continuous assessment and active learning. Teachers and students tend to focus on examinations and curricular review tends to be slow. These aspects of India's mainstream educational scene reflect colonialism. The British introduced subjects and curricula that were alien to the Indian milieu, and teachers and students responded in part through adopting strategies of rote memorization and by concentrating on exam success.

Therefore, apart from improving the overall quality of education we must focus on creating more opportunities. As Amartya Sen has observed, "Capacity building is of no use in the absence of opportunities to choose".

We should encourage the start ups by young entrepreneurs, especially by providing findings and facilitative environment. It has been observed that large chunk of our talented youth migrate to other countries in search of opportunities, leading to brain drain from India.

Promoting human development is another area where we need to focus. It is a well established fact that a healthy and well educated population can be a priceless asset for any country. Higher IMR and MMR rates and unimpressive health indicators in India hinder the realization of its full potential. The developed countries are generally higher up in the HDI ranking than the developing and under-developed ones. Economic benefits apart human development is an end in itself.

Finally, there are two main challenges, which must be addressed for full utilization of this most important asset- unemployment, and lack of skill development. These are discussed separately as under.

3 Youth Unemployment

Youth unemployment is one of the most critical challenges the world is facing today: young people make up almost half of the world's unemployed, despite accounting for only one quarter of the working population. Youth unemployment is the unemployment of young people, defined by the United Nations as 14–28 years old. An unemployed person is defined as someone who does not have a job but is actively seeking work. In order to qualify as unemployed for official and statistical measurement, the individual must be without employment, willing and able to work, of the officially designated 'working age' and actively searching for a position. Youth unemployment rates are historically four to five times more than the adult rates in every country in the world.

3.1 Causes

There are multiple and **complex causes behind youth unemployment.** The most important among them are-

1. The quality and relevance of education is unsatisfactory.
2. Inflexible labor market and regulations.
3. Lack of appropriate skills.
4. All of the above in turn create a situation of assistance and dependency.

The quality and relevance of education is often considered as the first root cause of youth unemployment. In 2010, in 25 out of 27 developed countries, the highest unemployment rate was among people with primary education or less. Yet, high education does not guarantee a decent job. For example, in Tunisia, 40% of university graduates are unemployed against 24% of non-graduates. This affects highly educated young females in particular.

Beyond the necessity to ensure its access to all, education is not adequately tailored to the needs of the labour market, which in turns leads to two consequences:

1. The inability for young people to find jobs, and
2. The inability for employers to hire the skills they need.

Labor market policies and Institutions play a critical role in promoting labor demand and supporting transition from education to work. Labor market regulation affects the employment in following ways-

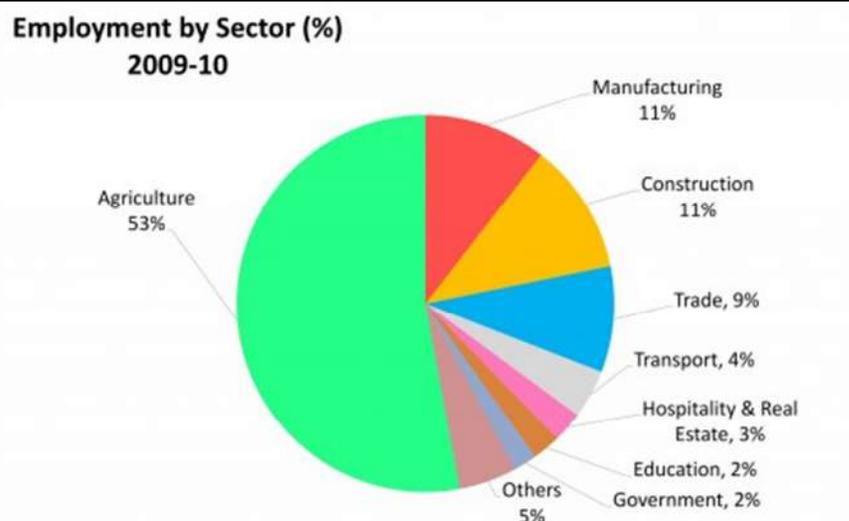
First, a high level of employment protection regulations has had a negative effect on youth workers, because these regulations make it harder for employers to fire them during a downturn. Second, the emergence of temporary forms of work such as internships, seasonal jobs and short-term contracts have left young workers in precarious situations. Because their jobs are temporary contracts, youth are often the first to be laid off when a company downsizes.

If they are laid off, youth are typically not eligible for redundancy because they only worked with the company for a short period of time. Once this work ends, many find themselves unemployed and disadvantaged in the job search. However, some youth are entering work on a part-time basis during tertiary education.

Facing unemployment, young people also turn to unpaid work. The legitimacy of internships has begun to be questioned. The intent of an internship is to provide valuable work experience, typically to youth in or recently out of college. However, many interns have complained that they are simply performing basic grunt-work, rather than learning important knowledge and skills. The internship however, seems to be the only viable alternative to job placement for the young individual.

3.2 Indian Scenario

Distribution of labor employment in India across economic sectors



India is shining and progressing with an amazing growth rate. Growth rate of India is the second highest in the world after that of China. The youth force of India is contributing lot to the same. It is believed that principal reason behind Indian progress is its youth force, highest in number in the world. However, there is a problem. Large numbers of Indian youth are not only unemployed but unemployable.

Indian youth force, behind the progress of India, is mainly engaged in IT sector. IT industries has seen a tremendous boom in India. This industry has employed large number of educated youth with handsome salary. Normally, IT is the highest paid sector. Management, banking, finance, retail, telecommunication, entertainment etc. are some other new sectors that helped India in her tremendous growth. India is a leader in software and the industry is continually offering white collar jobs besides some blue collars.

India is also world leader in **BPO** (Business process out sourcing) and **KPO** (Knowledge process out sourcing). Large numbers of call centers are contributing to the industries and trades of America the US, UK, Australia, Japan, European Union, Canada and many other developed countries. BPO sector needs large number of blue collars where as KPO industries require and offer white collar jobs.

However, of late, the problem of youth unemployment started cropping up. These sectors have started facing a typical problem. Despite large numbers of educated young, there is shortage of skilled manpower. This is the dilemma. There are unemployed youths and the companies are facing shortage of manpower.

As the population of India's youth (aged 15-24 years) more-than-doubled during 2001-2011, the unemployment rate among this section rose from 17.6 per cent to 20 per cent, show the latest Census data. In absolute terms, 46.9 million of India's youth were unemployed in 2011, compared with 33.5 million in 2001. However, we do not have reliable statistics on youth unemployment on regular basis. The most important source is NSSO Survey on Employment and Unemployment. However, this survey has little utility because it is conduct once in very five years.

3.3 Causes of Youth Unemployment in India

Some of the **general causes** of youth unemployment in India are-

1. There are employment opportunities in India, but the rising population problem creates a situation where rate of unemployment exceeds rate of employment.
2. Persistently high rate of Inflation coupled with recession for quite long time.
3. Indians don't take jobs which are below their grades or qualification level.
4. Many Employers give preference to the experienced candidates only and not the fresher.
5. **Not enough or new jobs:** The number of new government jobs is decreasing every year.
6. **Advanced Technology:** Earlier for a task hundreds or thousand people were required to do a work but now due to the advanced technology only one person can do many people's work. \Corruption: In Government sector and in some private sector people get the job by giving the bribe. The qualified candidate remains unemployed without giving the bribe.

Some other **specific causes** of youth unemployment in India are:

It has been observed that, in recent times there has been an increase in young adults remaining in school and getting additional degrees simply because there aren't opportunities for employment. These youth are typically of a lower class, but it can represent a wide variety of individuals across races and classes. They call the phenomenon time pass because the youth are simply passing time in college while waiting for a paid employment opportunity. In India, the employment system is reliant on connections or government opportunities.

The lure of some prestigious jobs, like civil services, is another significant factor behind youth unemployment. It is because it is believed that the exams for these jobs require dedicated full time study for at least one or two years. Unfortunately, when a candidate is not able to get through in his first attempt he goes on till he exhausts all his attempts. However, still this doesn't guarantee that he would be selected. If not he is left with no other option but to do some job which doesn't suit his aptitude and potential.

To avoid this, it is suggested that number of attempts for civil services are reduced along with age eligibility, so the youth are re-integrated with the labor market before it is too late. Additionally, there is another proposal that specific designated schools are set up for training for civil services right from the early stage of career.

A recent survey throws light on the problems faced by educated youth in India. They are mainly lacking three types of skills required in the industries-

1. Communication skill
2. Analytical skill and problem solving
3. Domain knowledge

While in interview approximately sixty percent candidates are screened due to lack of communication skills. Rest twenty five percent is screened for analytical skills and five percent for their lack of knowledge in their respective domain. Hence ninety percent of educated youth force are lacking in one of these three main skills required for job and employment. Only ten percent of educated force of India is employable.

Indian education system has a mismatch with the requirements of the industries. Institutes teach whatever they want. They do not teach what industries require. Industries do not require what institutes teach. The syllabus committees have not been interfacing with the industries. Several big industries have to set-up their own in-house training program to fight with the problem. Most of the newly employed youths are compulsorily undergone employers own training program. This enhances cost of employers enormously. It also wastes time.

The MSME sector, which is a large employer, is unable to provide productive employment due to various reasons, like-

1. Lack of credit to the SMES at lower interest rates.
2. Various clearance processes and procedures before they start.
3. Deliberate attempt of the owners of SMEs to keep them small for obtaining various sops and tax relaxations.

Finally, there is under development of manufacturing sector in India. It is a well established trend that this sector is the main employer throughout the world. Whereas, in India this sector only has about one-fourth share in employment.

3.4 Consequences of Youth Unemployment

Unemployed youth has been called “a lost generation”: not only because of productivity loss but also because of the long-term direct and indirect impact unemployment has on young people and their families. Unemployment has been said to affect earnings for about 20 years. Because they aren't able to build up skills or experience during their first years in the workforce, unemployed youth see a decrease in lifetime earnings when compared to those who had steady work or those who were unemployed as an adult.

The rise of political unrest and anti-social behavior in the world has been recently attributed to youth unemployment. During the course of 2011 it became a key factor in fuelling protests around the globe. Within twelve months, four regimes (Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen) in the Arab World fell in the wake of the protests led by young people. Riots and protests similarly engulfed a number of European and North American cities (Spain, France, United Kingdom between 2008 and 2011 for example).

The lack of productive engagement of young people in wider society, underlined by high levels of unemployment and under-employment, only serves to add to this feeling of disenfranchisement. It may also promote anti-social activities like theft, robbery, drug trafficking, drug abuse etc. All of this affects the overall physical and mental capacity of the youth, the foundations of any society.

Apart from that prolonged period of unemployment slows down economic growth and breeds poverty. Since poverty itself is a cause of many other problems, like malnutrition, etc. therefore, unemployment if prolonged can have drastic effects on the society.

Excluding young people from the labor market means lacking the divergent thinking, creativity and innovation that they naturally offer. This fresh thinking is necessary for employers to foster new designs and innovative ideas. Fighting youth unemployment is, therefore, key to maintaining the economic performance of a country. What could be the solutions to solve the problem of youth unemployment?

3.5 Possible way out

The one point solution of the problem is a change in education system, a radical change. There must be an interface among Government bodies looking after education, Universities, all India committee of technical education and representatives of the industries. The institutes must educate as per industries' needs. Having this done, India will not face problem of unemployability and the youth force of India will not remain unemployed. In specific terms the solutions may be as under-

The role of labor market policy and institutions to facilitate access to employment- A more balanced employment protection for permanent and temporary workers is needed. It will ensure that young people who lack work experience can prove their abilities and skills to then progressively transition to regular employment. It will also encourage a more equal treatment between permanent and temporary workers and help combat informal employment.

The role of initial education in ensuring a smooth transition to work: The vocational education- The case has been made the past few years on the need to provide technical training to youth to prepare them specifically for a job. Vocational education would help address the skills crisis.

Entrepreneurship: an answer to youth unemployment- When taking into consideration the need to foster competitiveness through innovation and creativity, recent studies have advocated for entrepreneurship as a viable a solution to youth unemployment. With the right structure and facilitated administrative processes, young people could create enterprises as means to find and create new jobs. Small and Medium Enterprises in India are today's main employers, especially for the marginalized sections. This alternative is often regarded as a way to empower young people to take their future into their hands.

This solution ties back with labour market and regulations as many reforms are yet to be implemented to ensure that the market is flexible enough to incentivize young people to create enterprises. Target tax and business incentives are key to support young entrepreneurs in creating and scaling their businesses.

Assistance to youth in the transition to the world of work- A number of studies have shown that young people are not sufficiently advised on work related opportunities, necessary skills and career pathways. Before they leave education, it appears critical that they have access to this information to be better prepared for what to expect and what is expected of them. Good quality career guidance along with labour market prospects should help young people make better career choices. Too many young people choose to study a field that leads to little if no jobs. Governments, employers and trainers should work together to provide clearer pathways to youth. Similarly, programmes should be developed to better transition young people to the world of work. Here, vocational education and apprenticeship systems have shown that practice and on-the-job training had a positive effect.

Social media and youth unemployment- Internet has been seen as a new world of opportunities for youth unemployment. With the use of social networks such as Facebook, young people are actively building their informal networks. New web applications are being designed today to use these networks to better match job seekers with employers, training volunteers and other forms of placement or mentoring. The Internet has contributed to redefining traditional forms of communication and young social entrepreneurs are now thinking about designing a job application that fits more with today's online presence and use of new technology.

Thus, combined with the economic crisis and the lack of sufficient job creation in many countries, the result is high unemployment rates and development of a skills crisis. Surveys suggest that up to half of all businesses have open positions for which they are struggling to find suitably qualified people. One global survey found that more than 55% of employers worldwide believe there is a "skill crisis" as businesses witnesses a growing mismatch between the skills students learn in the education system and those required in the workplace. For

many governments, a key question is how they can bridge this gap and ensure that young people are equipped with the skills employers are looking for. This brings us to the problem of skill development.

4 Skill Development

When the second most populous country in the world says that it is facing manpower crunch in most areas of its activity, there is obviously something terribly wrong with the way it has been managing its human resources. Despite a population of over 1.2 billion, not to mention the fact that our country has the world's youngest population and the largest number of people in the working age group, we are facing an enormous shortage of employable talent and skill. For example, our hospitals do not have adequate number of medical and paramedical personnel, there are not enough engineers to build our bridges and roads, nor teachers in our schools and colleges, our rapidly growing IT enabled service sector, manufacturing sector and financial services sectors are not able to hire as many people as they would need. There is a shortage of technicians, mechanics, plumbers, electricians- the list could go on. And while this is so, we also have a huge army of people in the working age group – both educated and uneducated – who do not have any regular means of livelihood as they do not possess the kind of talent and skill that the economy needs.

The biggest challenge before the country today is to bridge this gap by imparting employable education and skill to people so that they can meet the growing needs of a rapidly expanding economy. This requires an ever vigilant planning and execution process which is sensitive to the emerging needs of the economy and has the vision and the wherewithal to orient and mould the education system accordingly. The government, the industry, the academia, the NGO sector – would all need to collaborate for such an effort.

In simple terms, India is going through a rare case of demographic dividend (about 60% of our population is in working age group), which countries usually get only once in their history and sometimes only for a short period. Developed countries once gained from it but now have a larger older population and small young and child populations.

To make the best use of its opportunity, India should expedite economic growth and provide more employment to the people who are in the working age group. For this India must provide educational facilities and implement skill development plans for those who need it. Otherwise, this once in a life time opportunity is threatened to be lost. A good part of those in the working age category, even those who are considered to be qualified, need such programmes.

A skill may be defined as proficiency in doing something gained over a period of time, as a result of training and experience. Therefore, skill development may be defined as the process of inculcating or equipping those skill sets which are valued in the current market system. Skills may be communicational, analytical, and appropriate vocational know how. This can be understood from the fact that there is growing mismatch between the skill set of individuals and the required capabilities. In this complex world productive jobs demand specific skill set.

Industry and services have to provide the greatest share of productive jobs because the employment potential in agriculture is limited. But a good part of the growth in population is in rural areas, and so urbanisation and investment in education and skill development is needed.

Focusing on skilling our people will create several industries and professions where India will become the global talent pool. Our nurses, teachers, healthcare workers for elderly, construction workers, chefs, hospitality experts have great potential global opportunities if we skill people with quality standards and in sufficient numbers.

If we get our skill development act right, we will be harnessing demographic dividend; if we do not get there, we could be facing a demographic nightmare. Skill shortages can really hurt India's growth prospects. The so called demographic dividends can wither away very fast if 'young India' is not represented by people with right skills. The problem of skill shortages, however, is not unique to India as many developed and developing countries are also suffering from this malaise. But what makes India's case perhaps worse than others is that while the country is deficient in skilled manpower, it has to deal with a huge surplus manpower which is ready to work but lacks

employability due to not having the skills that the market demands. According to NASSCOM-McKinsey Report (2005) about 25% of technical graduates and 10-15% of general college graduates from India are suitable for employment in the offshore IT and BPO industries respectively.

Thus the task before India is quite challenging. The country has to maintain the growth momentum by ensuring adequate availability of skilled workforce, which is currently in short supply. On the other hand, it has to create ample employment opportunities for a vast population having low or no skills. The problem gets intensified when one considers shifting surplus manpower from agriculture to other economic activities. According to the Eleventh Five Year Plan Document, only 2% of existing workforce in India has skill training, while the corresponding figures are 96%, 80% and 75% respectively for Korea, Japan and Germany. Further, against 12.8 million per annum new entrants to the workforce the existing training capacity is only 3.1 million per annum. For bridging this sizeable gap, the system of skill development in the country requires a new direction. Skill development efforts in India needs to be accelerated and aligned with the overall development of the economy so that the country's scarce resources are efficiently utilized in creating skills that the market demands.

4.1 Measures for Skill Development in India

Restructuring of the education sector in the country is a pointer to the government's intent to address the issue urgently. By making education a fundamental right and bringing in major reforms in the sector, the government is trying to ensure that everyone receives an education that is useful, meaningful and has the potential to be an instrument of progress. Apart from formal education, the wage employment schemes of the government are also being linked to skill enhancement programmes that can secure better means of livelihood for the people.

Given that a significantly high proportion of India's population is devoid of any marketable skill, the mass-scale skill development has been attached higher priority. The Eleventh Five Year Plan contained a mission mode approach for skill development by launching a "Skill Development Mission".

Vocational training plays a crucial role in transforming the unskilled people into skilled human resources and Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) are key components of the vocational training system in the country. Vocational training being a concurrent subject, the responsibility is shared by both Central and State Governments. In order to overcome the existing weaknesses in the vocational training system, the Government of India has formulated a number of schemes to transform the existing ITIs into Centres of Excellence (CoE).

The main objective of this scheme is to provide appropriate infrastructure and equipment, update syllabi and introduce new courses in the ITIs. The implementation of the scheme is guided and supervised by two bodies viz., National Steering Committee (NSC) at the apex level and State Steering Committee (SSC) in the states. Subsequently, 1396 Government ITIs are being taken up for upgradation through public private partnership (PPP). The Scheme is the first initiative of its kind in which Industry and Government Institutions have to work in tandem for the upgradation of the ITIs.

Director General, Employment and Training (DGE&T), Ministry of Labour, GoI formulates policies, lays down standards and conducts trade testing & certification for both public and private ITIs. The State Governments are responsible for managing the ITIs. Over the years the number of ITIs has increased manifold; from a meager 59 in 1956 to 5114 in 2008. Of these, 1896 are State Government-run ITIs while the remaining (3218 ITIs) are private. These institutes are imparting training in 57 engineering and 50 non-engineering trades and they collectively offer 7.42 lakh seats to those who have passed either 8th or 10th class examination.

The Central Government set up National Skill Development Corporation India (NSDC): It is a one of its kind, Public Private Partnership in India. It aims to promote skill development by catalyzing creation of large, quality, for-profit vocational institutions. NSDC provides funding to build scalable, for-profit vocational training initiatives. Its mandate is also to enable support systems such as quality assurance, information systems and train the trainer academies either directly or through partnerships. NSDC acts as a catalyst in skill development by providing funding to enterprises, companies and organisations that provide skill training. It will also develop appropriate models to enhance, support and coordinate private sector initiatives. The differentiated focus for the 21 sectors under NSDC's purview and its understanding of their viability will make every sector attractive to private investment.

The Government of India has recently set up National Skill Development Agency(NSDA)- NSDA is an autonomous body which will coordinate and harmonize the skill development efforts of the Government and the private sector to achieve the skilling targets of the 12th Plan and beyond and endeavour to bridge the social, regional, gender and economic divide. It will do so by -- ensuring that the skilling needs of the disadvantaged and marginalized groups like SCs, STs, OBCs, minorities, women and differently-abled persons are taken care of through the various skill development programmes; and taking affirmative actions as part of advocacy by the NSDA. The Central Ministries and NSDC will continue to implement schemes in their remit. The NSDA will anchor the National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF) and facilitate the setting up of professional certifying bodies in addition to the existing ones.

As a platform for youth in science, the first Indian Youth Science Congress (IYSCA) was held from June 5 to 7, 2009 at Rajiv Gandhi National Institute for Youth Development. This Congress was jointly organized by M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF), SRM University and Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development, in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. The objective is to encourage Young Scientists; The Indian Science Congress Association has instituted a number of awards in different disciplines. India also has entered into an agreement with the U.S. and Germany to impart training to Indian youth.

On a policy level, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has launched a National Vocational Education Qualification Framework (NVEQF). This establishes equivalence between the formal education system and the skills training certifications. For example, it provides mobility for youth to acquire credits through skills training and work experience on the job to get a bachelor's degree. This is a great step forward. Vocational skills courses will now be rolled out to students in schools from 9th class onwards and through undergraduate education. Students will get credits for it too. This policy, if implemented, will yield results in a few years' time.

4.2 Pitfalls of Skill Development Programmes

Various state governments have started their own skill development programmes. On the whole there are about two hundred programmes for skill development at various levels- Central, state, NGOs, and Industry. It has been seen that often various agencies are running their programmes covering the same domain area, without any co-ordination. This results in confusion and wastage of resources.

There is widespread corruption in skill development programmes. Though, on paper millions of youth have been imparted skills, but the ground reality is hardly encouraging. It is a lucrative enterprise for politicians and bureaucrats alike to make huge money.

The government has yet to align all its skill missions and initiatives. This is begging for attention. Turf wars seem to be the only reason holding it back. In most countries, skilling the bottom of the pyramid is a government-funded initiative. In several countries, industries take on apprentices and are subsidised or compensated by the government. This is happening in India to a limited extent. This needs to now include certifications which are calibrated and defined by the industry.

Even if there is some actual work in the direction of skill development, there is hardly any effort to improve the quality of skill training programmes.

All these go a long way in demotivating people from sending their children to skill training centers. Further, there is something to blame the people themselves, because it has been observed that, there is a general tendency in people to send their child for graduation in Arts instead of sending them for skill development. Graduation degree in Arts generally offers little avenues in India.

4.3 Possible Way Forward

Merging various skill development programmes dealing with the same domain. This would eliminate the overlapping and mismanagement of efforts by different agencies.

Focus on promoting Industry-Academia Collaboration for HR Development. However, it requires innovative and productive methods of collaboration between industry and academia to have a complete, comprehensive and all

round development of human resources in India. This will ensure that skills imparted by the education system are in line with the needs of the market. In this context, Apprentice programs need to be scaled up.

Salaries, especially in entry-level jobs in services as well as manufacturing, have remained stagnant. While nominal wages have increased, real wages have not. This makes it difficult to attract and retain staff. Industry has to focus on improving productivity and increasing minimum wages, otherwise this situation will remain as it is. Sectors like infrastructure and construction have not made adequate investments in technology. Perhaps that is the only way to improve productivity.

India has been witnessing jobless growth for the past few years. This poses a real challenge. It means that the positions we are filling are largely replacements for those who have left. In the BPO segment, this is popularly described as a revolving-door syndrome where you have associates exiting and entering all the time. We have to identify sectors and industries where net job additions are happening and support skill-building initiatives for them. We need to encourage growth in employment generating sectors.

In high skill areas, rather than bemoaning the absence of experienced skilled people, industry would be better off by rolling out an apprentice or internship scheme. And finally industry has to recognise that many entry-level jobs will not be aspirational. Funding and supporting the youth to undertake a continuing education plan would be the way forward.

Youth cannot be bystanders and critics. They have to define and create their career paths. We have seen many youngsters who take up jobs not directly related to their formal education doing very well, whilst some others choose to remain unemployed. Today, with the abundance of continuing education programs, it is possible for youth to earn and learn at the same time. This is a sound time-tested approach. Youth need to be pragmatic and rooted in realities.

Rooting out corruption from skill development programs. This can be done by setting up specific agencies which may be entrusted to periodic review and verification of the claims made by various skill development agencies.

On 15th August 2013, the Prime Minister launched a Rs.1000 crores STAR (Standard Training Assessment & Reward) initiative to get the skills agenda rolling. This scheme marked a significant departure from earlier schemes and could be a game changer in the skills landscape.

Very simply, the scheme envisages skills training in line with job roles defined by the industry. Trained youth will also undergo a certification process, again by industry. Those who pass will be eligible for Rs 10000. This amount will cover training and certification costs, and in some cases a cash award too.

By linking payouts to certifications, there is an emphasis on outcomes. No stakeholder gets a paisa if the student fails to meet the grade. All the stakeholders are aligned to the learning outcome. The student will get a certificate from the industry body if he is job ready. The training provider gets paid for only those students who meet the exit gate.

This ambitious program is a huge subsidy for the industry. The industry has to embrace the process to skill and up-skill the existing workforce and work out a mechanism to give skill premiums. This will make the scheme sustainable in the years to come.

Another area, which needs focus is promoting sports and developing adequate infrastructure for the same. This may be discussed separately as under.

5 Sports

Sport (or sports) is all forms of usually competitive physical activity which, through casual or organized participation, aim to use, maintain or improve physical ability and skills while providing entertainment to participants, and in some cases, spectators.

Sports is a very important career path for youth. It not only offers a chosen career opportunities but also goes a long way in developing soft power of a nation of the participants. Other benefits are physical fitness, development of spirit of team work, spirit of goal orientedness. All these skills/things go a long way in overall development of any society.

To give focused attention the Central government setup Ministry of Skill Development, Entrepreneurship, Youth Affairs and Sports - The Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports was initially set up as the Department of Sports in 1982 at the time of organization of the IX Asian Games in New Delhi. Its name was changed to the Department of Youth affairs & sports during celebration of the International Youth Year, 1985. It became a Ministry on 27th May, 2000.

The Youth, i.e. those falling within the age group of 15-35 years constitutes nearly 40% of the total population of India. This group, which is the most vibrant and dynamic segment of the country's population constitutes potentially its most valuable human resource. To optimally tap their constructive and creative energies, the Ministry pursues the twin objectives of personality building and nation building, i.e. developing the personality of youth and involving them in various nation-building activities. As most of the issues concerning young people are the functions of other Ministries/Departments, like Education, Employment & Training, Health and Family Welfare, etc. the role of the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports is to act as a facilitator and catalytic agent.

Sports promotion is primarily the responsibility of the various National Sports Federations, which are autonomous. The role of the Government is to create the infrastructure and promote capacity building for broad-basing sports as well as for achieving excellence in various competitive events at the national and international levels.

5.1 Problems of Indian Sports and Way Forward

However, unlike in many other countries, in India sports (except cricket) is suffers from neglect. To overcome this state of affairs the Central government set up Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sports as an academic wing of Sports Authority of India. However, it is an irony that, Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sports is Asia's largest Sports Institute located in city of Patiala, but India's performance in the field of sports is not encouraging.

Today, we are lagging in almost every field of sports, like in Olympics, as measured by number of medals, in Hockey, our national game, etc. Sports is one area where India lags behind even some of the poorest nations in the world. Is it not a question mark the potential of India as an emerging nation given that despite having largest population in the world we are at the bottom of medals tally in every international sports event, be it Common Wealth games, or Asian Games? What are reasons for such dismal performance of Indian sports?

We have huge pool of talented sportsperson that exists in all parts of India. At the junior levels, our boys and girls can compete with the best in the world in almost every sport. However when it comes to the senior levels, where the actual capabilities of our sportsperson are tested, we fail miserably. This shows that it is not the lack of talent that bogs down our athletes but somewhere along the line; it is the lack of proper training that lead to their poor performances in the international arena.

Lack of sports infrastructure is the biggest hurdle in the realization of full potential of sports in India. The government sports facilities do not stand up to the international standards. Often there is financial crunch. It has been observed that, most of the few medal winners from India were trained in private academies. Since, private academies charge exorbitant fee sports remain outside the reach of middle and lower classes. Thus, the fact that professional sportsperson in our country face a lot of hardships cannot be denied.

There is widespread corruption and nepotism in sports bodies in India and lethargic approach on the part of government agencies. The recent cases of betting, fixing, and misappropriation of money point to collusion among players, members of governing boards, and even some politicians.

Unlike, in other countries, there is indifference of the corporate sector in providing sponsorships in India.

However, the fundamental problem lies in the absence of a sporting culture in India. Sports in India are considered a secondary and supplementary activity. This explains to a large extent, the apathy on the part of the government machinery towards sports. The corporate indifference too stems from the fact that they are not sure that the sponsorship money will be efficiently used in promoting the game and for the welfare of the players.

International sports is highly competitive where only the best and the brightest can hope to reach the top position. Past experience has shown that the government run organisations like the Sports Authority of India (SAI) have consistently failed to produce athletes who can compete at the international level. Hence government should withdraw itself from the administration and running of sports at the senior levels.

The corporate sector should be encouraged to take full control of the management of games and training of athletes. This only will ensure greater accountability on the part of the players and the coaches to show results. It should restrict its role to promoting sporting activities at the school and college levels and in providing jobs to meritorious sportsperson. It should make all efforts to encourage young boys and girls to take up sports as a full time profession and not as a secondary activity.

Government should focus on building state of the art sports infrastructure in collaboration with the private sector to address the infrastructure bottlenecks. The Draft Bill on setting up of National Sports University at Manipur envisages the setting up of the proposed National Sports University, on a proposed 200 acre land in Manipur- it shall function through the proposed Four Schools i.e. School of Sports Medicine, School of Sports Sciences and Technology, School of Sports Education and School of Interdisciplinary Studies. Each School shall have Department(s) in a specific knowledge domain pertaining to sports development.

Apart from this, there should be talent hunt right from the schools for adequately developing the talent of gifted children.

General apathy towards sports may be explained by the fact that, there is often little incentive for sportsperson after they retire from sports. Since, the career in sports lasts for only short period, after which the sportspersons face problems regarding employment and adequate source of income. So there should be some special incentives for those that want to pursue a career in sports.

There should be a comprehensive law covering all the sports federations and governing bodies for tackling any wrong doings in sports.

Year 2014 was celebrated as the Year of Friendly Exchanges between India and China. A 100-member Indian Youth Delegation visited China in December, 2014. The exchange of youth delegations between India and China started in 2006, under the youth delegation exchange program. During the recent visit of the Chinese President H.E. Xi Jinping, it has been decided that from 2015 to 2019, 200-member Youth Delegations will be exchanged between the two countries.

Sometimes, on account of drive to perform in sports or some other times on account of lack of avenues the youth resort to various types drugs. This points us to next big issue of drugs and youth.

6 Drugs

A drug is, in the broadest of terms, a chemical substance that has known biological effects on humans or other animals. In pharmacology, a drug is "a chemical substance used in the treatment, cure, prevention, or diagnosis of disease or used to otherwise enhance physical or mental well-being. Recreational drugs are chemical substances that affect the central nervous system, such as opioids or hallucinogens. Alcohol, nicotine, and caffeine are the most widely consumed psychotropic drugs (which alter the consciousness) worldwide.

6.1 Drug Abuse

Some drugs can cause addiction and habituation. Many drugs are illegal for recreational purposes and international treaties such as the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs exist for the purpose of legally prohibiting certain substances. The term drug abuse is generally to those instances wherein people take drugs purely to change their moods, and in which they experience impaired behavior or social functioning as a result of doing so. What are the factors responsible for drug abuse?

There are many factors like, easy availability of drugs; reduce paternal supervision- both parents are working; distressing social conditions like poverty, unemployment etc. On the other side of the coin use of consciousness-altering drugs has also been attributed to the fact that these substances reduce negative feelings such as stress, anxiety, or physical discomfort.

Among the youth the biggest reason of drug abuse are social factors, e.g. teenagers consider it cool to use drugs. This social motivation is a powerful factor in drug abuse, as it enhances the image of adolescent within their peer groups.

Mental distress and illness have been a bane across different population segments in India. The tragedy is compounded when bright young students resort to the extreme steps, like drug abuse or even suicide. Today, educational institutions are increasingly marked by competitive pressures and financial and other demands that put a burden which some students are just not able to bear.

June 26 is celebrated as International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking every year. It is an exercise undertaken by the world community to sensitize the people in general and the youth in particular, to the menace of drugs. The picture is grim if the world statistics on the drugs scenario is taken into account. With a turnover of around \$500 billion, it is the third largest business in the world, next to petroleum and arms trade.

About 190 million people all over the world consume one drug or the other. Drug addiction causes immense human distress and the illegal production and distribution of drugs have spawned crime and violence worldwide. Today, there is no part of the world that is free from the curse of drug trafficking and drug addiction. Millions of drug addicts, all over the world, are leading miserable lives, between life and death.

Investment in prevention and treatment of drug abuse can lead to significant savings in health-care and crime-related costs, and alleviate the suffering of drug-dependent users and their families.

6.2 Indian Scenario: Causes

South Asia is facing a serious and growing drug abuse problem, including the abuse of pharmaceutical preparations containing narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Drugs enter South Asia's illicit drug markets through a number of different channels, including diversion from India's pharmaceutical industry, illicit cultivation and/or manufacture within the region, and smuggling from other countries, including Afghanistan (through Pakistan) and Myanmar.

Despite efforts by India to tackle the problem, diversion from illicit channels in the country remains a major source of pharmaceutical preparations trafficked in the region. Globally also prescription drug abuse – often legally obtained medication by a friend or a family member who no longer needs it or is not using it for medical purposes is outpacing the rates for illegal drugs in some countries.

According to a UN report, One million heroin addicts are registered in India, and unofficially there are as many as five million. What started off as casual use among a minuscule population of high-income group youth in the metro has permeated to all sections of society. This has increased the intensity of the effect, hastened the process of addiction and complicated the process of recovery. Cannabis, heroin, and Indian-produced pharmaceutical drugs are the most frequently abused drugs in India.

Cannabis products, often called charas, bhang, or ganja, are abused throughout the country because it has attained some amount of religious sanctity because of its association with some Hindu deities.

Drug abuse is a complex phenomenon, which has various social, cultural, biological, geographical, historical and economic aspects. The disintegration of the old joint family system, absence of parental love and care in modern families where both parents are working, decline of old religious and moral values etc lead to a rise in the number of drug addicts who take drugs to escape hard realities of life.

Drug use, misuse or abuse is also primarily due to the nature of the drug abused, the personality of the individual and the addict's immediate environment. The processes of industrialization, urbanization and migration have led to loosening of the traditional methods of social control rendering an individual vulnerable to the stresses and strains of modern life. The fast changing social milieu, among other factors, is mainly contributing to the proliferation of drug abuse, both of traditional and of new psychoactive substances.

The introduction of synthetic drugs and intravenous drug use leading to HIV/AIDS has added a new dimension to the problem, especially in the Northeast states of the country.

6.3 Indian Scenario: Effects

Drug abuse has led to a detrimental impact on the society. It has led to increase in the crime rate. Addicts resort to crime to pay for their drugs. Drugs remove inhibition and impair judgment egging one on to commit offences. Incidence of eve-teasing, group clashes, assault and impulsive murders increase with drug abuse.

Apart from affecting the financial stability, addiction increases conflicts and causes untold emotional pain for every member of the family. With most drug users being in the productive age group of 18-35 years, the loss in terms of human potential is incalculable. The damage to the physical, psychological, moral and intellectual growth of the youth is very high.

Adolescent drug abuse is one of the major areas of concern in adolescent and young people's behavior. It is estimated that, in India, by the time most boys reach the ninth grade, about 50 percent of them have tried at least one of the gateway drugs. However, there is a wide regional variation across states in term of the incidence of the substance abuse. For example, a larger proportion of teens in West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh use gateway drugs (about 60 percent in both the states) than Uttar Pradesh or Haryana (around 35 percent).

Increase in incidences of HIV, hepatitis B and C and tuberculosis due to addiction adds the reservoir of infection in the community burdening the health care system further. Women in India face greater problems from drug abuse. The consequences include domestic violence and infection with HIV, as well as the financial burden. Eighty seven per cent of addicts being treated in a de-addiction center run by the Delhi police acknowledged being violent with family members.

Most of the domestic violence is directed against women and occurs in the context of demands for money to buy drugs. At the national level, drug abuse is intrinsically linked with racketeering, conspiracy, corruption, illegal money transfers, terrorism and violence threatening the very stability of governments.

6.4 Indian Scenario: Possible Way Out

India has braced itself to face the menace of drug trafficking both at the national and international levels. Several measures involving innovative changes in enforcement, legal and judicial systems have been brought into effect.

The introduction of death penalty for drug-related offences has been a major deterrent. The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985, were enacted with stringent provisions to curb this menace. The Act envisages a minimum term of 10 years imprisonment extendable to 20 years and fine of Rs. 1 lakh extendable up to Rs. 2 lakhs for the offenders. The Act has been further amended by making provisions for the forfeiture of properties derived from illicit drugs trafficking.

Comprehensive strategy involving specific programmes to bring about an overall reduction in use of drugs has been evolved by the various government agencies and NGOs and is further supplemented by measures like education, counseling.

India has bilateral agreements on drug trafficking with 13 countries, including Pakistan and Burma.

India also is signatory to the following treaties and conventions:

1. 1961 U.N. Convention on Narcotic Drugs.
2. 1971 U.N. Convention on Psychotropic Substances
3. 1988 U.N. Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances
4. 2000 Transnational Crime Convention

Prevention drugs in sports: Government of India is one of the Foundation Members of World Anti Doping Agency (WADA) (1999-2002). WADA, sets out standards in the fight against doping in sports. National Anti-doping Agency sets standards in fighting against doping in India. NADA is actively involved in educating the athletes/sportspersons located at various training centers throughout India. In this regard, NADA organizes workshops/seminars and awareness program on Anti Doping issues. NADA has developed an extensive education program namely Program for Education and Awareness on Anti Doping in Sports (PEADS).

The spread and entrenchment of drug abuse needs to be prevented, as the cost to the people, environment and economy will be colossal. The unseemly spectacle of unkempt drug abusers dotting lanes and by lanes, cinema halls and other public places should be enough to goad the authorities to act fast to remove the scourge of this social evil. Moreover, the spread of such reprehensible habits among the relatively young segment of society ought to be arrested at all cost. There is a need for the government enforcement agencies, the non-governmental philanthropic agencies, and others to collaborate and supplement each other's efforts for a solution to the problem of drug addiction through education and legal actions.

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