



QUEST
Alliance

Vocational Skills Training for Underprivileged Youth

Current scenario and the way forward

LIVELIHOOD
CONNECT

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**VOCATIONAL SKILLS TRAINING
FOR UNDERPRIVILEGED YOUTH**



Authors & Contributors

QUEST Alliance commissioned Access Livelihoods Consulting to look at current employability and skills training programs for underprivileged youth in different parts of India. This report is meant for the benefit of the larger community of employability training centres and vocational training institutes, who are working to equip youth with valuable employability skills. The report is part of a series of research studies and reports under the Livelihood Connect platform.

About QUEST Alliance: QUEST Alliance is a social venture that focuses on research-led innovation in education and skills development. QUEST engages with civil society, Government institutions and corporates to demonstrate and enable scalable and replicable solutions in education and vocational training. QUEST looks to harness the potential of technology and contextualize it to address real world challenges.

www.questalliance.net

About Livelihood Connect: LIVELIHOOD CONNECT is a multi-disciplinary forum that will bring together professionals from Community based organizations, Development organizations, Social sciences, Design, Pedagogy, Business and Technology. It is designed to facilitate information exchange and knowledge creation in the area of livelihoods and employability, through various manifests like online repositories, seed grants, conferences, publications and innovation workshops.

About Access Livelihoods Consulting India: Access Livelihoods Consulting (ALC) India is a professional management consulting company for the economic development of the poor. It focuses on the 5 Es (Enterprises, Employment, Equity, Economy and Empowerment). Till date ALC India has worked on more than 180 projects with 70 clients across 23 states of the country.

www.alcindia.org

Foreword

India boasts of a very large young population. Currently, youth comprise nearly 47% of India's population, which will have a profound impact on the country's potential for economic growth. However, the potential of these young people can only be realized if they learn relevant skills to help India develop economically. The 2nd National Commission on Labour report states that an overwhelming majority of the work force, irrespective of the location, does not possess any identifiable marketable skill.

India's economic achievements in the past two decades have been commendable but they have also been concentrated in certain high skill and capital-intensive services, while largely ignoring the plethora of low skilled workers operating in the informal economic sector. A major challenge that India faces today is to ensure employability opportunities for underprivileged youth by training them for productive work; inspiring in them the flexibility to learn new things and innovate; and by inculcating in them a proper work ethic

Fortunately the central and the state Governments are cognizant of the ramifications of having a large young unskilled labor force across the geography. Therefore it is very timely that the 11th Five Year plan and both the National Policy on Skills Development 2008 and the National Employment policy 2008 are addressing the skills development issues for rural, urban and tribal jobs directly. The Government aims to create 70 millions new jobs by 2012, and has constituted a National Skills Development Mission to guide the skill development policy in the country. To address the potential growing mismatch between the skills of a young population and the nature of jobs they would be required to fill, the Union Government has proposed spending a hefty Rs. 31,000 Crores on skill development over the next five years, as part of a National Skills Development Mission, according to a draft of the 11th Plan.

This report captures the existing gaps, challenges and opportunities in the vocational training centers. It also analyses the retail sector opportunities in detail. It provides a comprehensive look at what Government, civil society institutions and the private sector are currently doing in the area of vocational training.

QUEST Alliance has been working in partnership with civil society and private sector to address some of the challenges faced in school education and vocational training by innovating and institutionalizing technology tools that address challenges of career counseling, facilitator training, life skills development and job placement.

We would like to convey our appreciation to Access Livelihoods Consulting, our partner agency who developed the report, case studies and presented them in the best possible manner hence producing a good reference for organizations interested in this work. We would also like to thank the reviewers who have given valuable insights in shaping the report. We hope that this publication will help in creating a vibrant dialogue around the issues of vocational training and be part of a transformative journey.

Aakash Sethi

Executive Director, QUEST Alliance

Acknowledgements

We would not have been able to draft this report without vital contributions from people across the country. In this report, we have tried to capture most insights we had received through meeting, interacting with and interviewing people, as powerfully as possible.

At the outset, we would like to express our thankfulness to the reviewers who, with their vast experience and knowledge on this subject, provided the inputs needed to give this report its final shape.

We are also thankful to Solutions Exchange for running our query on their work and employment site, and also for providing a collation of responses. The contribution of each individual expert in Solutions Exchange has been of great use to this study, and there are several instances where the experts' contributions have been quoted to enrich the study.

During the Primary Research Phase, there were many senior people from the Government, CII, NGOs and Corporate houses, who took a special interest in the study, and expended their time to share with us information, as well as their thoughts on issues of concern to underprivileged employability. This report would not have been possible without their insights.

We are also thankful to the youth who spoke to us and provided us information with enthusiasm, with a view to make future programmes more meaningful and useful.

Finally, we are indebted to Quest Alliance as well as to the International Youth Foundation for reposing faith in us and giving us an opportunity to conduct such an important, relevant, interesting and challenging study.

G V Krishnagopal

Director, Access Livelihoods Consulting India

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List of Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AICTE	All India Council of Technical Education
AP	Andhra Pradesh
B2Y	Business to Youth
BPL	Below Poverty Line
BLBC	Block Level Banking Committee
CII	Confederation of Indian Industry
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CTS	Craftsmen Training Scheme
DGET	Department of General Education and Training
DRDA	District Rural Development Agencies
DRF	Dr. Reddy's Foundation
DTE&T	Department of Technical Education and Training
EGMM	Employment Guarantee and Marketing Mission
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FGDs	Focus Group Discussion
FICCI	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoAP	Government of Andhra Pradesh
GOI	Government of India
HRD	Human Resource Development
ICT	Information Communications and Technology
ICT	Information & Communications Technology
IDP	Institute Development Plan
ILO	International Labor Organization
IT	Information Technology
ITC	Industrial Training Center
ITI	Industrial Training Institute
ITDA	Integrated Tribal Development Agencies
IMCs	Institute Management Committees
KEF	Kotak Education Fund
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
LABS	Livelihood Advancement Business School
MES	Modular Employment Skills
MFI	Micro Finance Institution
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
MoLE	Ministry of Labour and Employment
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NVQF	National Vocational Qualifications Framework
NCAER	National Council of Applied Economic Research
NCVT	National Council for Vocational Training
NGO	Non Government Organization
NIIT	National Institute of Information Technology
NIOS	National Institute for Open Schooling
NSDA	National Skills Development Agency
PPP	Public Private Partnership
R&D	Research and Development
RMoL	Rajasthan Mission on Livelihoods
Rs	Rupees
SC	Scheduled Caste
SEWA	Self Employed Women's Association
SSC	Sector Skills Councils
UN	United Nations
VTP	Vocational Training Provider
VE&T	Vocational Education and Training
WB	World Bank

Key Definitions

A list of definitions has been provided below for better understanding. These include working definitions specific to this project.

Vocational Education: The vocational courses being offered in school in Grades 11 and 12 since 1988, under a Centrally Sponsored Scheme called 'Vocationalisation of Secondary Education'.

Vocational Training: Broadly refers to certificate-level crafts training (in India), and is open to students who leave school after completing any class between Grades 8 and 12. Programmes administered under the Craftsmen Training Scheme (CTS) are operated by Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and Industrial Training Centres (ITCs). This scheme falls within the purview of the Directorate General of Employment and Training (DGET), under the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MOLE).

Non-Formal Training: Refers to courses being offered by various organisations without any formal Government recognition and certifications, and which do not fall under vocational education or vocational training.

Employability: The ability to realize full economic potential through sustainable employment¹.

Skilled: Those who are adept at doing certain kinds of jobs which require a specific kind of physical work. For e.g., skilled in weaving.

Un/Under Skilled: Those who cannot physically do a job, and require inputs in the form of training to increase their skill levels.

Unorganised/Informal Sector: All unincorporated private enterprises owned by individuals or households, engaged in the sale and production of goods and services, operated on a proprietary or partnership basis, and with less than 10 employees².

Organised Sector: The organised sector is defined by the Employment Market Information Programme of the Directorate General of Employment and Training (DGET), Government of India, as comprising all establishments in the public sector and those in the private sector, which employ 10 or more persons on any day of the reference period (usually 3 months).

Youth: All people in the age group of 15-29 years.

Disadvantaged/Underprivileged Youth: People in the age group of 15-29 years in urban areas, who are unskilled/under skilled, and who belong to socially / financially poor families.

Retail: Selling of goods to consumers; usually in small quantities and not for resale. Retailers create value by making products available in the desired quantity, at the desired time and at the desired place.

Organised Retail: Organised retail refers to a form of retailing, whereby consumers can buy goods in a similar purchase environment across more than one physical location and avail themselves of self-service facilities.

Unorganised Retail: Unorganised retail refers to traditional kiranas and family run local shops, who sell directly to customers.

² India Labour Report 2007, Teamlease

² As per National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector (NCEUS)

Executive Summary

Over the years, skill development initiatives have been taken across the country in order to enhance the employability of underprivileged youth. Customarily, the ITCs/ITIs were the centres for vocational education. However, due to a gap felt in the quality and quantity at these centres, many civil society organisations have ventured into short-term employability programmes, the usefulness of which is also beginning to be recognised by the Government as well as industry. This study attempts to understand the existing short-term employability programmes in terms of approach and processes, and thereby identify gaps and challenges in the current scenario. The study, conducted across 11 large Indian cities, focuses on challenges and opportunities for youth in India as a central theme, keeping within context Government policies and regulations, training institutes, the Government, industry and civil society as well as employers who recruit these underprivileged youth.

Key Objectives

This study:

- has its focus on current approaches and gaps in existing skill development programmes, the extent of use of technology in training, and the views of all stakeholders including the Government, youth, training institutions and industry.
- provides suggestions in order to make these programmes more effective.

The study looks at skill development programmes from both, macro as well as micro perspectives. The retail industry, an emerging sector, was taken as reference point to study human resource practices pertaining to entry level personnel in the organised retail industry.

Methodology

Primary Research: 11 large cities across all four zones of the country.

Secondary Research: Internet, CII reports on employability, Teamlease report on employability.

Training Institutions: 39 training institutions: 22 NGOs, 9 Government and 8 industry.

Industry: 28 retail stores in various settings.

Youth: 40 focus group discussions and 15 personal interviews.

Solutions Exchange: 15 responses for query posted on the UN Solutions Exchange Work and Employment site.

Industrial Bodies: 4 CII offices of Bangalore, Calcutta, Chennai, Delhi and Hyderabad.

General Scenario of Employability in India

- Between 1983 and 1999, the increase in labour force was around 23%, and the concurrent increase in unemployment was around 35%, thereby indicating an increasing difficulty in finding jobs for youth.
- Employment exchanges contribute very little toward providing jobs. Only 2-3% of the 46 million registered job seekers are able to secure jobs.
- There are only 5465 ITIs/ITCs with a total capacity of 7.49 Lakh for almost 12.8 million youth entering the labour market every year. Almost 46% of this number is in the southern region of the country. The states of Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, which accounted for 44% of India's population in 1996, have access to only 19% of the total number of ITI seats available.
- 88% of youth in the age group of 15-29 years have not received any form of vocational training. Only 19.6% of male and 11.2% of female workers in Urban areas, and 10% of male and 6.3% of female workers in Rural areas possess marketable skills.
- Insufficient training facilities, obsolete infrastructure, low enthusiasm among VTI teachers, lack of market responsiveness among vocational training courses, negligible industry participation in curricular development and long course duration, upto 2-3 years, are some of the major reasons for the low effectiveness of the current VET courses.

Status of Key Government Initiatives:

- The Government of India, led by the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE), in partnership with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), drafted the National Skills Development Policy in 2008-09. The policy envisions creating the National Skills Development Agency (NSDA), implementing a National Vocational Qualifications Framework

(NVQF), promoting Sector Skills Councils (SSC), and involving all key stakeholders in the processes of skill development training. It aims at expanding its coverage so as to include 4000 vocations over the next two plans. The major defects of the policy for new entrants into the job market and for those who have been part of the market mechanism are: lack of emphasis on indigenous knowledge, low focus on market reforms for accommodating local traditional skills, strategies to make ITIs more market driven, lack of focus on employment exchanges, lack of focus on specific approaches for urban and rural areas, under-served population and under-served areas.

- The Government of India has also started focusing on implementation of skill development programmes by launching over 310 short-term modular employability courses. Also in focus is phased upgradation of the 1396 Government ITIs in the next 5 years through public-private partnership.
- Of the State Government programmes, notable are the Andhra Pradesh Government's Employment Generation and Marketing Mission (EGMM), which has trained and placed more than 1,20,000 rural youth, as well as the Rajasthan Mission on Livelihoods (RMoL) which has recognised the importance of apprenticeships, certification processes, and financing mechanisms for the effectiveness of short-term courses. A few other state-level employability programmes are the Vazndhu Kattuvom Project of Tamil Nadu, with special focus on employability training for women, the Gujarat Tribal Development Corporation, with special focus on tribals, the Karnataka Skills Commission and the Orissa Employment mission. The programmes in West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh are in their nascent stages.

Vocationalisation of Education

Vocationalisation of education, one of the key strategies for providing skills to underprivileged youth, is being currently implemented in more than 9500 schools. Various studies indicate that these courses failed to create the desired results due to lack of sufficient practical training, the absence of specialised vocational teachers, and also their commencement from Grade 12 and presence in CBSE schools. For better implementation, the programme should emphasise on the partnership of VEs with employers, should commence from Grade 7, and should emphasise on the last-mile of employability related soft skills—viz., English language and quantitative skills, computer literacy, spreadsheets, word processing, computer graphics, presentation skills, behavioral and interpersonal skills, etc. The key challenge will be to train specialised teachers for vocational education in the remote and rural areas.

Key Findings-Training Institutions

Absorption Capacity: 40% of institutions have an absorption capacity of less than 200 per annum. A variety of factors like the time consumed for student mobilisation, limited physical space, limited staff and faculty are hindrances in scaling up the programmes.

Initial process adherence: Upto 80% of dropouts from the programme are reported during the first 15 days. Lack of interest, parental pressure to contribute to the family income, as well as reluctance to put in the required effort during the programme, are the key reasons for early drop outs.

Curriculum development: About 60% of the institutions have reported a review of curriculum once a year. Alumni are not involved during review and development of the curriculum.

Courses Administered during Training: Nearly 40% of sampled institutions, especially Government institutions, do not focus on English communication, personality development, basic management skills, and computer literacy. Rather, they mainly focus on trade-based courses.

Faculty: Finding quality faculty for all subjects, and soft skills in particular, has been reported to be challenging. Key issues are low remuneration, lack of facilities and lack of adequate investment in the capacity-building of the faculty.

Methodology adopted during training: Internships and on-the-job training with the industry has not been observed in smaller training institutions.

Participation of the industry: The industry rarely gets involved in the evaluation process of students. The training institutes opined that industry involvement in curriculum development and internships is more of a push factor than an initiative of the industry.

Evaluation Procedure: End-term examinations and oral examinations are not seen as pre-requisites for placement as the industry does not emphasise on these for entry level personnel. An external certification process is absent for most short-term courses. Prohibitive costs have been cited by some organisations as a reason for not following a certification process.

Placement Procedure: Pre-placement interaction with the industry has been reported in only about 25% of the organisations. Very few institutions have formal placement cells or coordinators, as the centre coordinator is expected to undertake this task. This affects the quality of placements.

Post-placement follow-up: Short durations, high dropouts, placements in scattered locations, and lack of any formal system (placement or alumni cell), makes it difficult to follow up with students after placement. More than 50% of the institutions have a formal follow-up with the industry and the students after 6 months of placement. Reluctance to stay away from home, expenses involved in traveling and staying in cities, inability to cope with urban culture, shock as well as opportunities with better remuneration, are key reasons for attrition of rural youth from the programme.

Financial Participation of all stakeholders: The cost of the programme, per student, varies between Rs. 4,000-Rs. 8,500 depending upon the duration and the course subjects. Most civil society training institutions follow the grant-based model. Both, industry as well as youth, are reluctant to partially finance programme costs.

Conscious focus on the vulnerable: It was observed that 36% of the surveyed institutions have never trained any physically challenged youth, while only 25% of the institutions are consciously focused on the physically challenged, and are training and placing students. Faculty and placements have been observed to be key challenges.

Use of Technology: The ICT's use of training institutes and NGOs are limited to a few options. A majority of the organisations (48% of the total 39 organisations surveyed), use audio-visual aids during the Classroom Phase. The usage of the internet and internet-based applications are limited to 31% of the organisations. Limited use of long-distance interactive technology has been noticed.

Key Findings: Retail Industry

The retail industry which was pegged at USD 400 billion in 2008, is projected to grow to USD 700 billion by 2010, and the organised sector's share is likely to increase from a mere 7.5% to 20% of the total market by 2010. It is estimated that an additional 4 to 5 million people will be required in the retail industry within the next 7 to 8 years - a substantial workforce being in the entry-end jobs.

Recruitment Process in the Retail Industry: The recruitment process is localised and is through a referral system for entry level staff. Placement agencies are given low preference due to delayed payment of salaries to the employees by these agencies, despite timely remittance by the retail companies. Many industry heads were not aware of NGO training programmes.

Eligibility criteria: 18 years to a maximum of 25-26 years, or higher secondary (10+2), are considered to be the eligibility criteria for recruitment. 75% of the respondents mentioned that the background of a person is a very important consideration for recruitment. Honest and needy people are preferred. Communication skills, grooming, and taking initiatives, are prerequisites for shop-floor personnel in the retail industry. As more cities as becoming cosmopolitan, a basic understanding of English, along with good communicative Hindi (or another local language), is deemed very important. Stores in South India are averse to recruiting people from the North.

Induction: All big companies have developed customised induction-training programmes. The small retail companies are not equipped to have in-house training systems. 45% of respondents have said that training is only of a week's duration. The investment on initial training, as revealed by a few organisations, is equivalent to approximately one month's salary.

Sex ratio in staff profile: There is less preference for females in food and grocery stores/sections. The respondents say that long hours of work, multiple tasks requiring physical labour (like lifting crates) are the key reasons for this.

Fewer opportunities for Physically challenged: Though there are opportunities for the physically challenged in certain sections, active recruitment of physically challenged is hardly observed.

Attrition rate and reason: A turnover of 20-30% per annum is typical in industry. Better career opportunities, low salaries, tediousness and drudgery are the key reasons for attrition.

Collaboration with NGOs: Industry is keen to hire from NGO training programmes. The key reasons are: easier verification of background, better attitude and availability of a large number of groomed personnel.

Willingness to Contribute to Training: Employers are willing to provide support to evaluate training, guest lectures, curriculum development and final evaluations. They are reluctant to contribute towards infrastructure development, internships and finances.

Key Findings-Youth

Most youth trained in these programmes are from a lower socio-economic background. The educational qualification of the youth varied between Grade 8 and graduation. The gender Ratio in training is 50:50, and at times, females outnumbered males. Location base – whether urban or rural – significantly affects confidence levels and job-hopping. Rural youth tend to stay for a longer duration in the same job. 75% of the youth came from single member earning families. Travel costs and the inability to cope with the curriculum have been cited as the most important reasons for dropping out during training. The trained youth also have their share of challenges. These include adjustment issues for rural/urban lifestyle, culture shocks, inability to cope with long hours of work as well as home sickness. Awareness and parental counseling were cited as important necessities for youth to reach their goals.

Key Recommendations:

Macro-level

1. Better coordination among institutions, especially between the States and National Governments, for hassle-free operation of the National Skill Development Policy.
2. Revamp training institutes based on market needs. Faculty skills, curriculum and appropriate equipment should be major components.
3. Conduct large scale faculty development programmes exclusively for such courses.
4. Make provisions for higher and additional training of youth periodically.
5. Create half-way homes for rural youth to deal with adjustment blues in urban settings.
6. Use of technologies like V-Sat and mobile phones, coupled with improvement in infrastructure like electricity and telecommunications, to increase the reach of programmes as well as decrease the per unit cost of the programmes.
7. Make it mandatory for both, the institutions to implement, and the industry to participate, in apprenticeship programmes for the underprivileged youth.
8. Ensure quality by making external certifications compulsory.
9. Sensitising the industry to work with the physically challenged: The issue of dealing with the physically challenged is sensitive, and so social control and laws will not work. Regular workshops and interaction between the industry and the physically challenged youth are required in order to understand the potential of these youth.
10. Create opportunities to recognise the youth from formal institutions.
11. Conduct large promotional campaigns on the lines of the National Rural Health Mission.

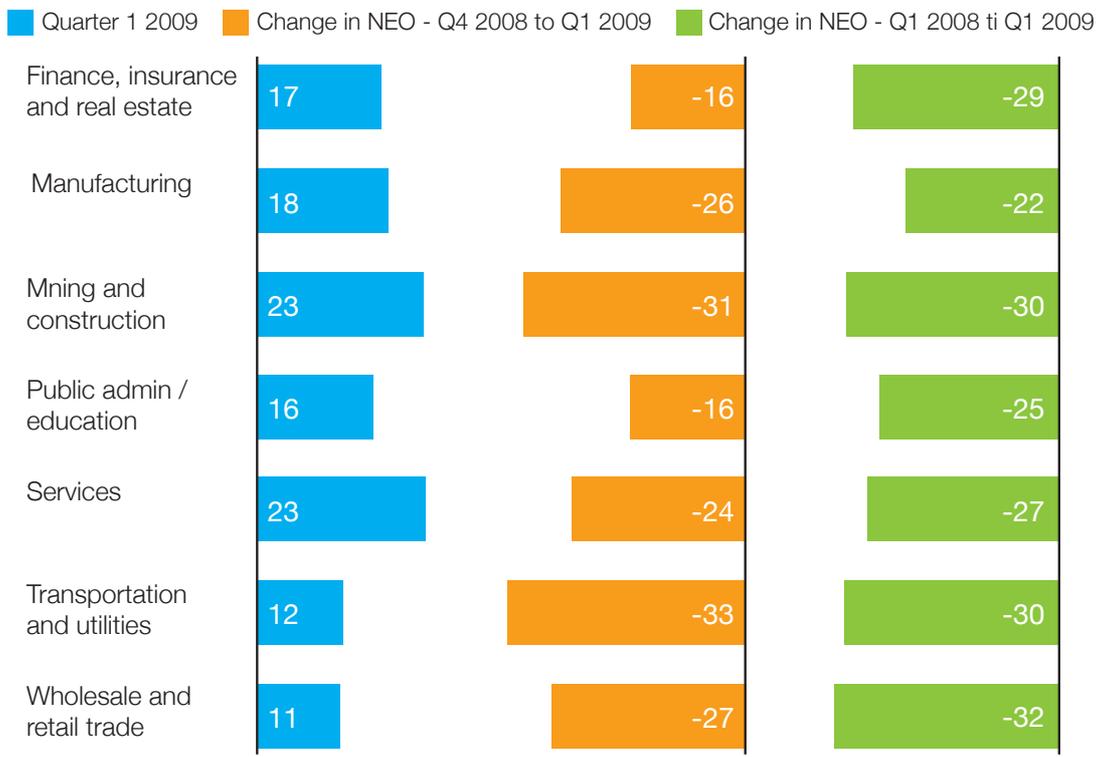
Micro-level

1. Improve the scale and reach of the programmes by training newer institutions which have a localised presence.
2. Strengthen the initial process by pre-course counseling of youth, with a checklist on the requirements of the programme. Arrange for exposure visit of parents, especially of girls, to industries, to allay their fears of security. Have separate groups for different levels of education.
3. Collaborate among institutions to develop a common curriculum, and introduce sharing of faculty which will enable optimisation of resources.
4. Key subjects like soft skills must be made mandatory. Additional subjects like legal literacy and workplace rights must be included in the curriculum.
5. Regularly work on building the potential of the faculty and team members on management aspects, enrichment of content and envisioning.
6. Take up adult-based learning which emphasises more on exploration. Ensure participation of the industry in key processes, including internships. Ensure equity of youth in the programme.
7. Conduct regular tests and introduce feedback mechanisms during the course for students as well as the faculty.
8. Actively conduct training as well as campaigns for the employability of vulnerable and physically challenged youth.

Context

India is not untouched by the current global economic recession. The manpower employment outlook survey suggests that there is a negative growth and drop in hiring in seven key industries. However, the good news for job seekers is that some companies in all seven sectors surveyed, plan to hire in the next three months. The number of such companies, however, is significantly lower than it was in the quarter ended December 2008, and, in most cases, even far lower than in the quarter ended December 2007.

Employers in seven industry sectors have reported a drop in hiring.



Source : Manpower Employment Outlook Survey for the first Quarter 2009

India is one of the few nations which is expected to bounce back to the Growth Phase at the earliest from this recession. According to International Monetary Fund, the Indian economy is expected to clock 6%³ growth in GDP in 2008-09. While the recession is likely to last for a while, the economy is likely to be back on track in the next 12 months or so.

“The Indian financial system seems to have absorbed much less toxic assets as compared to a number of other countries.”
-IMF chief Camdessus, March 21, 2009

When the study was started in 2008, the economy was on the upbeat, and there were opportunities galore for underprivileged youth in sunrise sectors such as retail, insurance and IT/ITES. It is expected that in the post-recession phase as well, these industries will be key contributors to the country's economy. Most of these sectors are labour-intensive and provide opportunities for youth. The rich, educated and skilled youth are able to make the most of these opportunities, while the poor and underprivileged are left behind. For inclusive growth, many skill development initiatives have been undertaken in order to prepare underprivileged youth for the emerging sectors. This study is an attempt to understand the overall employment scenario, to examine all aspects of skill development initiatives, and to find out ways in which to make these initiatives more effective for the underprivileged. The study involved close interaction with various stake-holders, viz., youth, Government departments, employers, training institutes and experts who have a role to play in the employability and skill development training for underprivileged youth. While understanding the employers' perspectives, the study was confined to the retail sector, which is one of the emerging sectors in India.



Key Objectives of the Study

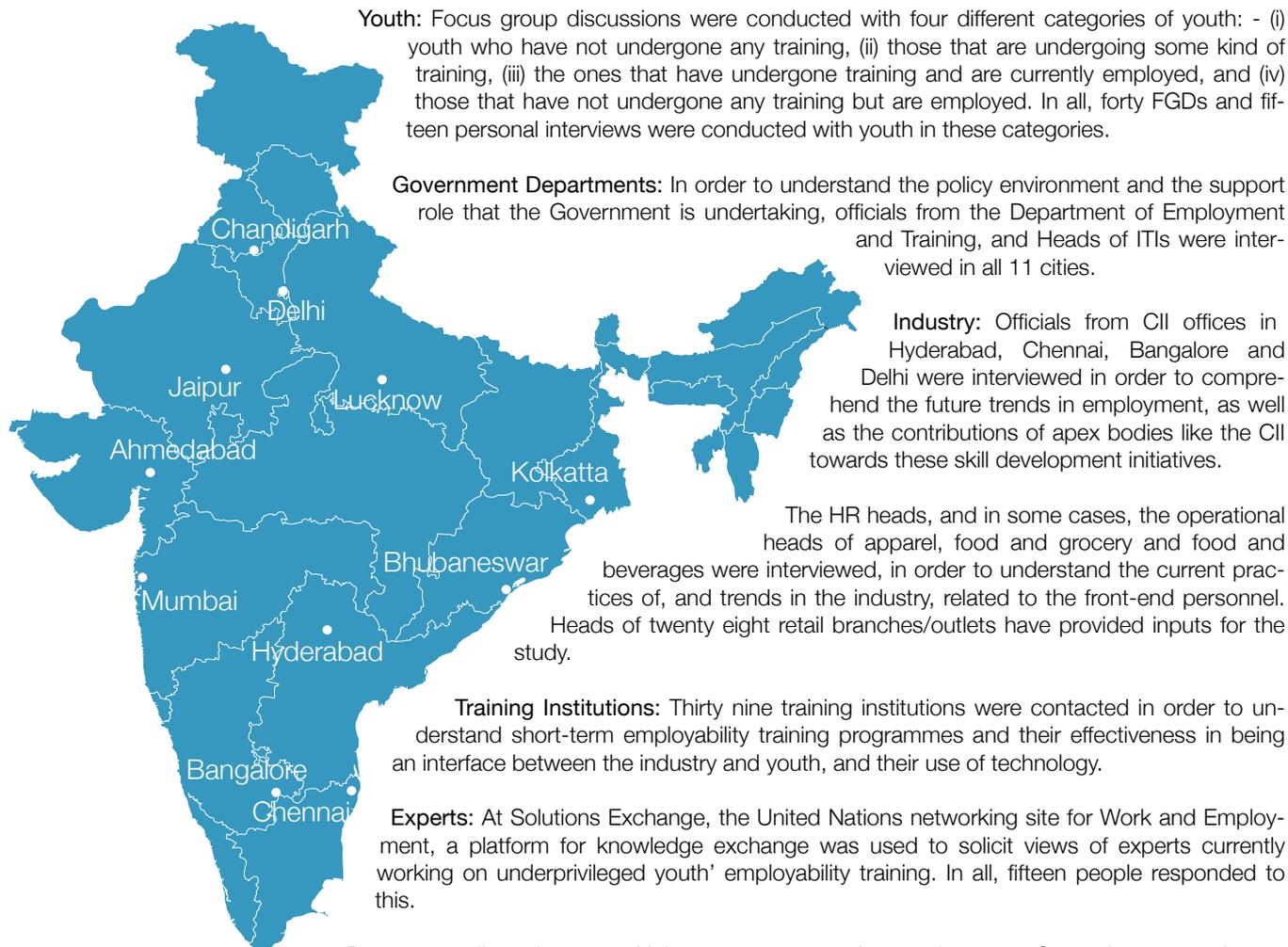
- To comprehend the current employment scenario from all stakeholders' perspectives.
- To comprehend the approaches and processes of existing skill development initiatives, and thereby identify gaps and challenges in the current scenario.
- To study the extent of use of technology in these initiatives.
- To suggest a way forward to make these initiatives effective and beneficial to underprivileged youth.

³ <http://www.ptinews.com/pti%5Cptisite.nsf/0/10E4A9E50FEFEE766525757F004F3E9B?OpenDocument>

Study Design, Methodology and Data Sources

The study was conducted in eleven Class I cities viz., Chandigarh, Delhi, Jaipur and Lucknow in North India, Ahmedabad and Mumbai in West India, Hyderabad, Bangalore and Chennai in South India and Kolkata and Bhubaneswar in East India, between June 2008 to September 2008. These cities are observing a substantial in-migration of youth, and also have a large number of skill development institutions.

The key information gathered from various central data sources is as follows:



Data was collected from multiple sources to corroborate the facts. Secondary research was predominantly based on information available on the internet. The publication of the CII on retail industry and the CII at Andhra Pradesh on the skill gaps in that state, have been useful sources of information.

Limitations of the Study

In the research sample, there were partial responses or qualitative responses. For the sake of quantification, only complete responses have been considered. However, for substantiation, partial responses have been considered.

In terms of data sources, the data on non-formal training institutions was not available and was found to be unorganised. This made it difficult to comprehend the amount of such training across the country. It was difficult to elicit responses from the industry. On the pretext of protocol and stiff competition, many companies did not permit to conduction of interviews and FGDs on the shop floor, and refused to divulge information. Though training institutions were relatively forthcoming, there were a few institutions that have given information off the records, and some which did not entertain any discussions.

With reference to the requests of some individuals who have been interviewed, their names have not been quoted.

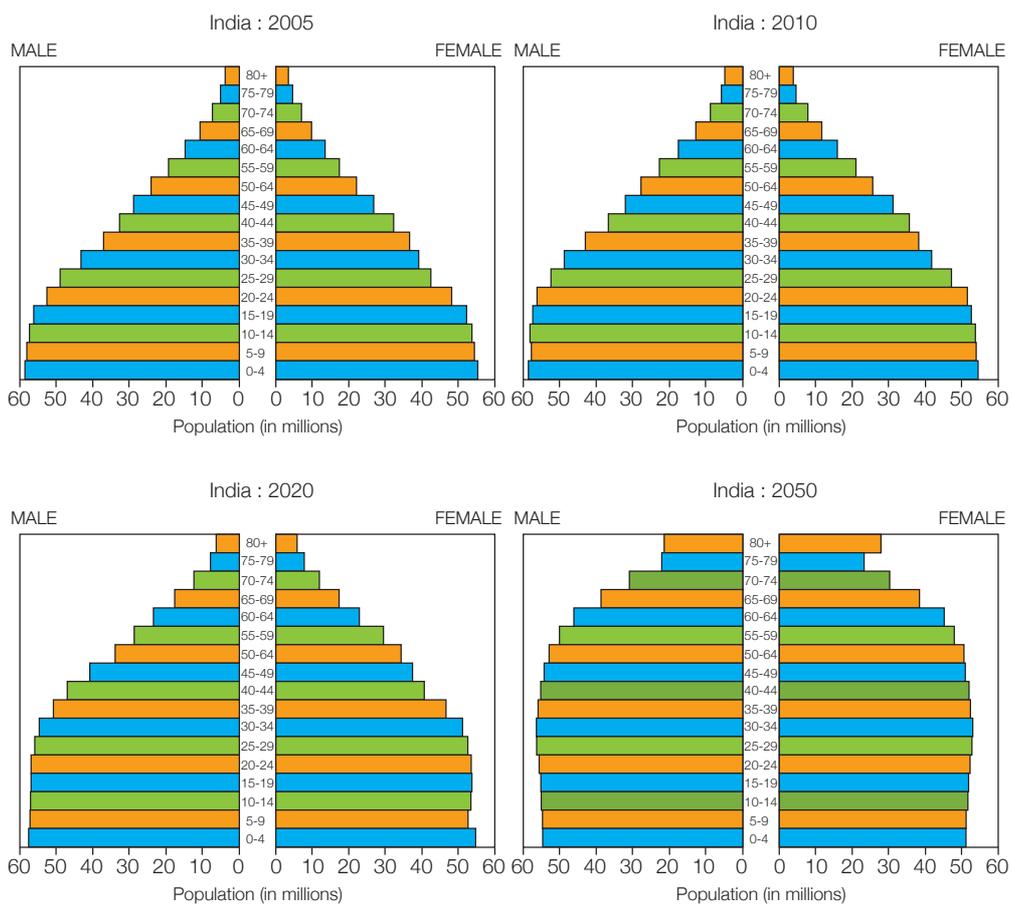
Chapter 1

India : Demographic Trends & Employability Scenario

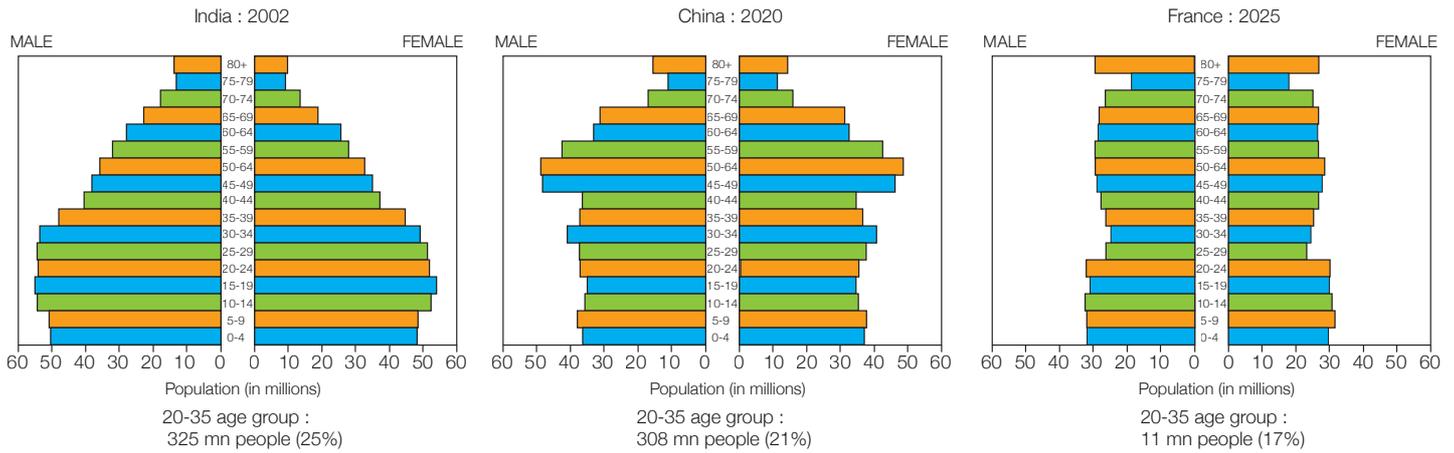
Chapter 1

1.1 Demographic Profile : An Overview

There is a major transition in the Indian demographic profile. By 2020, it is expected that 25% of the population and 65% of the labour force will be in the age group of 15-29 years.



Graph 1-1: Demographic Profile of India from 2005 till 2050



Graph 1-2 : Comparison of Demographic Profile of India, China and France

That India will be much younger in 2020 is clear from a comparison with other countries. An indication that India is growing younger is the fact that the current average age of India is 24, which is much less than many other nations.

Name of the Country	Medium Age
India	24
Europe	38
Japan	41
Chian	30

Table 1-1: Table showing the Median age of the population in different countries
Source: www.idfresearch.org/pdf/wdrGenMehta.pdf

There is an inverse relationship between the number of youth and the dependency ratio. The higher the younger population, the lower the dependency ratio. By 2025, India is expected to have a dependency ratio⁴ of 12.1, i.e., for every 100 working adults, there will be around 12 people above the age of 65. Statistics for China, Japan and Europe show that it will be 19, 49 and 33.2 respectively. It is an established fact that demographics and the dependency ratio play an important role in the economics of a country. It is estimated that the ageing economy phenomenon will create a global shortage of skilled manpower, of approximately 56.5 million by 2020. With a decreased dependency ratio and with increased productivity, India has a competitive edge over the ageing countries, and can possibly cater to the shortage in the labour supply of these countries.

⁴ For every 100 working age adults the number of persons above the age of 65

1.2 Demography and Employability

Indicator	1983	1999-2000	Increase in Percentage
Estimated Population (in million)	718.21	1004.1	28.47
Labour Force (in million)	308.64	406.05	23.99
Employed (in million)	302.75	397	23.74
Unemployed (in million)	5.89	9.05	34.92
Unemployed rate (as percentage of labour force)	1.91	2.23	14.35
Unemployed in organised sector (as percentage of labour force)	24.01	28.11	
Employment in unorganised sector (in million)	278.74	368.89	
Rate of Employment in organised sector (as percentage of labour force)	7.78	6.92	
Rate of Employment in unorganised sector (as percentage of labour force)	90.31	90.85	

*Table 1-2: Table showing the estimates of Population, Labour Force, Employment and Unemployment in India
Source: Employment and unemployment in India, Director General of Employment and Training (DGE&T)*

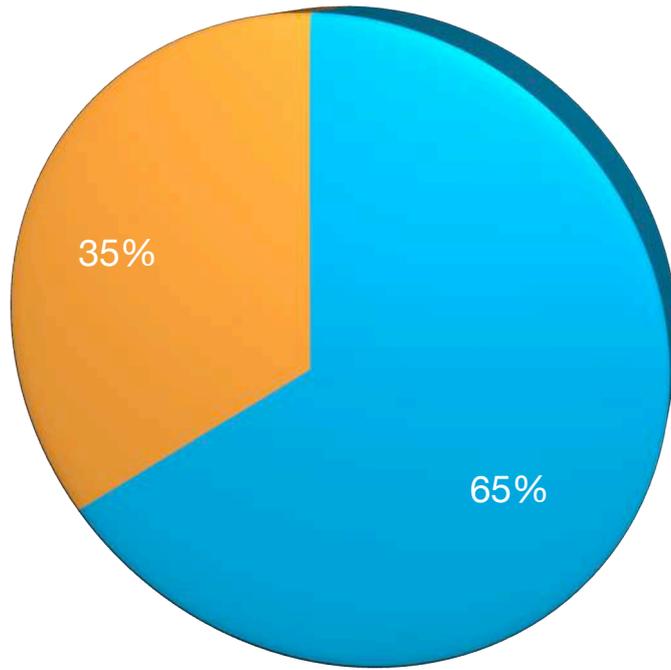
An analysis of the above table depicts that, though the increase in labour force is around 23%, the unemployed have increased by almost 35%. In other words, it is becoming increasingly difficult for youth to find jobs in the market. Further, a break-up of the labour force shows that the population employed in the organised sector has actually decreased (7.78% in 1983 compared to 6.9% in 1999).

The Government has set up Employment Exchanges to register and place job seekers, to collect employment market information, and provide counseling and vocational guidance. However, there is low awareness about the services offered by these Exchanges. The Employment Exchanges contribute very little towards providing jobs. Ministry data shows that there are 46 million job seekers registered in its Employment Exchanges as of October 2008, looking for positions ranging from a vehicle driver to a teacher⁵. But in the first 10 months of 2008, the number of candidates who found jobs stood at just 270,000. While the number of vacancies apprised by Government departments has risen by 90,000 jobs - from 170,000 to 260,000 during 2006 to 2007 - the number of registered job seekers is down from 72 million in 2006 to 54 million in 2007. Thus, employment exchanges, which were initially conceptualised to be the source of jobs, unfortunately, do not seem to be fulfilling the employability requirements of a large section of underprivileged youth. Most of the registered job seekers (about 80%) do not have any professional skills.

1.3 Vocational Training Scenario in India

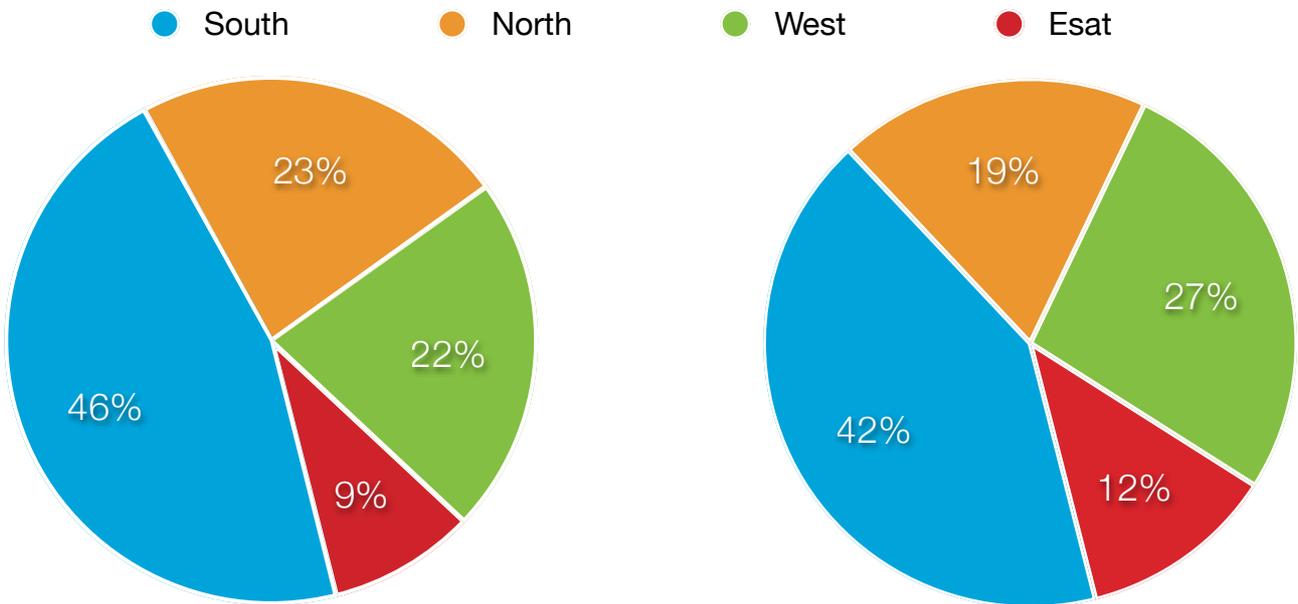
In India, the Director General of Employment and Training (DGE&T) is the Government body responsible for setting up Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) / Industrial Training Centres (ITCs). The main aim of ITIs and ITCs is to impart skills in various vocational trades, and thereby help meet the skilled manpower requirements for technological and industrial growth. There are 5465 ITIs with a total capacity of 7.49 Lakhs. Of these 5465 ITIs, about 65% are private institutions and 35% have been established by the Government, and are distributed unevenly across the country - almost 46% of this number is in the southern region of the country.

⁵ <http://www.livemint.com/2009/02/01220825/Employment-exchanges-to-get-a.html>



● Private ITI's, 3552 ● Govt. ITI's, 1913

Graph 1-3 : Graph showing the percentage share of Government and Private ITI's
 Source: Data from Annual Report 2007-08, Ministry of Labour and Employment



ITI's / ITC's Region wise

Total Seating Capacity - Region wise

Graph 1-4: Graph showing spread of ITIs across the country
 Source: Annual Report 2007-08, Ministry of Labour And Employment

1.4 Key Gaps in Vocational Education System

As per the DGE&T website, every year 12.8 million youth enter the labour market, but not even a million seats are available to these youth. A recently conducted CII study points out that, across sectors, only 20% to 67% of students passing from schools and colleges are employable. The high school dropouts have even fewer options in the unorganised sector.

Vocational Training Status	Percent
Receiving Formal Vocational Training	1.3
Received Vocational Training : Formal	2.3
Received Vocational Training : Non-Formal	3.9
Others	3.7
Did Not Receive Any Vocational Training	87.8
Total	100

Table 1-3: Status of Vocational Training among youth in the age group of 15-29 years
Source: Based on NSSO 61st Employment and Unemployment Round (2004-05)

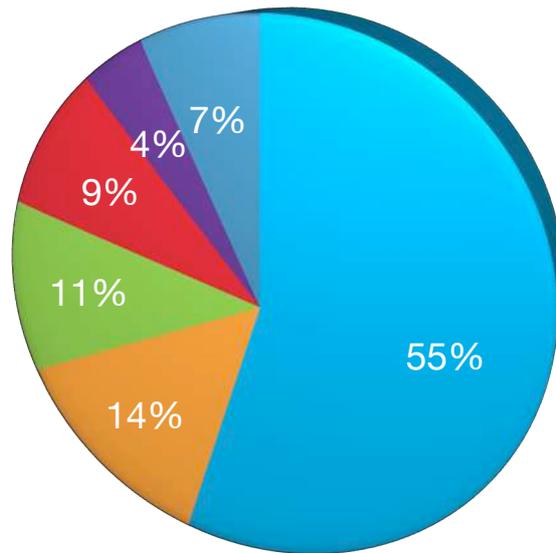
According to data from the 61st Round (2004-05) of NSSO, 88% of youth in the age group of 15-29 years have not received any form of vocational training.

In comparison to rural areas, the scenario is not very encouraging in urban areas. According to the DGE&T website, an overwhelming majority of the work force, irrespective of the location, does not possess any identifiable marketable skill. In urban areas, only about 19.6% of male and 11.2% of female workers possess marketable skills. The rural areas fare even worse with only 10% of male and 6.3% of female workers possessing marketable skills.

	Among all youth	Among Employed	Among Unemployed
Rural males	2.7	2.8	9.6
Rural females	2.3	4.8	17.4
Urban males	6.5	7.2	16.6
Urban females	4.7	15.8	24

Table 1-4: Percentages of youth aged 15–29 years receiving vocational training, 2004–2005

Source: *The Impact of Macroeconomic Change on Employment in the Retail Sector in India: Policy Implications for Growth, Sectoral Change and Employment* by Jayanti Ghosh, Amitayu Sengupta and Anamira Roychoudhury



- Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orissa
- Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala
- Maharashtra, Gujarat
- West Bengal, Assam
- Punjab, Haryana
- Other States

Graph 1-5: Graph showing the state-wise population growth in India between 1996-2016

Bihar	93	19 224
Uttar Pradeh	449	44 256
Madhya Pradesh	183	23 396
Rajasthan	233	18 883
Orissa	233	38 310
Total	1191	144 069
Total All India	5465	749 510
% in the 5 States	21.79	19.22

Table 1-5: Table showing the distribution of ITIs and their seating capacity in 5 states with 55% population growth.

Source: Data from Annual Report 2007-08, Ministry of Labour and Employment

Even geographically, there are wide disparities in training facilities. The states of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, which accounted for 44% of India's population in 1996, are expected to contribute 55% of population growth in the period 1996 to 2016. This implies that these states will contribute substantially towards the younger population in future. A large number of ITIs/ITCs (79% of the total ITIs) have been established in the South and in the West, as the

growth in industry and technology are taking place primarily in these two regions. The 5 states mentioned above, therefore, have access to only 19% of the total number of ITI seats available, indicating a gross mismatch in demand and supply.

1.5 Levels of Effectiveness, Gaps and Reasons therein

If we look at the international scenario and compare only numbers, India has only 5,400 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), which is a small number, compared to a whopping 5,00,000 Vocational Education & Training (VET) institutes in China. In the category of 20-24 years of age, only 5% of youth have vocational skills obtained through formal training, whereas, the percentage in most of the industrialized countries is much higher, varying between 60% and 80%. The percentage for Korea, which has recently been categorized as an industrialised country, is exceptionally high at 96%. Though most of the developing countries have percentages which are significantly lower than the developed countries, they are still much higher than India. For e.g., Mexico at 28% and Botswana at 22%.

In terms of skills imparted, an article in the Business Standard in 2007 states, that though India's Vocational Training Institutes produce 6 million students every year, the industry opines that less than half of them are employable. The reasons for the mismatch between the industry requirements and the quality of labour supply are low marketability of skills imparted in VTIs, and insufficient training facilities.

VET institutes in India are characterised by obsolete infrastructure and teachers with low enthusiasm. They hardly cater to the demands of the sunrise industries. Another reason for the lack of market response among vocational training courses is negligible industry participation in contributing to curricular development, though it is the industry that has to finally employ the trained youth. Long course duration, upto 2-3 years, is a significant factor which discourages enrollments. In contrast with the Indian scenario, there are about 4000 short duration modular courses in China, which provide skills more closely tailored to employment requirements.

"I have several times asked the industry to come to my institute and suggest, however they are interested only if they have to hire."

-An official of ATI, Mumbai

Chapter 2

Government Initiatives for Skills Development of Underprivileged Youth

Chapter 2

Worried about a growing mismatch between the skills of a young population and the nature of jobs they would be required to fill, the Union Government has proposed spending a hefty Rs. 31,000 Crores on skill development over the next five years, as part of a National Skills Development Mission, according to a draft of the 11th Plan-Livemint.com, 2007.

The Government of India has been actively pursuing the agenda of employability and skill upgradation since 2007. In this respect, the Government has taken a few key steps:

1. Released the National Policy on Skill Development.
2. Envisioned the National Employment Policy.
3. Launched 308 short-term modular employable schemes, with some of them available for youth educated only up to Grade 5.
4. Started a scheme for upgradation of the 1396 Government ITIs in the next 5 years through public- private partnership.

2.1 National Policy on Skill Development

The Government of India, led by the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE), in partnership with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), drafted the National Skills Development Policy. This is a comprehensive and well thought-out document on skills development. The document envisions a national skills development system in India, to carry forward the agenda of skills development in the country.

Key focus areas of the national skills development system are:

- Create a National Skills Development Agency (NSDA). This parent body, comprising of representatives of all stakeholders, will be the autonomous apex authority, which would eventually replace the National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT).
- Ensure consistency and coherence, and maintain local flavour and specificity of training programmes through the National Vocational Qualifications Framework (NVQF), so that the certifications offered by different bodies are comparable.
- Promote a skills development system based on strong public-private partnerships, to facilitate a greater association between training and employment.
- Promote skills development systems which respond to technological changes, employment requirements and improvements in industry productivity and competitiveness, through the Sector Skills Councils (SSCs - national bodies primarily led by industry but working closely with State and District offices). The SSCs will work towards thorough market research, accurate information, high competence standards and vocational qualifications that reflect local needs.
- Improve relevance of qualifications through greater involvement of industry in reviewing and developing qualifications, through the National Vocational Qualifications Framework (NVQF).
- Promote inclusive growth by providing equal training opportunities for women, youth, the poor and other disadvantaged communities, as well as those working in the unorganised sector. Literacy and soft skills training will form key elements of training programmes.
- Assure quality through nationally recognised qualifications and certifications, through the establishment of a National Vocational Qualifications Framework, a National Accreditation Agency, Sector Skills Councils and Assessment and Certification Bodies.

- Emphasise life-long learning and continuous upgradation of skills and knowledge, through the transition of individuals between education and training as well as between learning pathways, and help them achieve higher skills and knowledge levels.
- Ensure adequate funding through a progressive increase in the allocation of funds for skill development from 2% to 5% of the GDP. Establish a National Skills Development Fund, financed by a combination of public and private funds with tax incentives for private contributions. Introduce or hike training fees, and ensuring performance-based funding to training institutions.
- Promote regular research and dissemination of good practices to enable the policy to meet emerging needs. Institute a policy review once in 5 years in order to ensure relevance.
- Expand so as to include 4000 vocations over the next two plans.

2.2 A Critique on the Skills Development Policy

There is a justified requirement of skill development in the nation, and the draft policy is a step in this direction. The draft policy provides a great many details and is precise on several counts. The best part of the policy is that it has a separate chapter devoted to Equity and Access [pp.18]. In addition there appears to be a marked willingness to invest in achieving the pre-stated goals.

However, on the other hand, despite an early mention of how important skills are for the “economic growth and social development of any country” [pp.1], the remainder of the document focuses only on developing skills for making “them employable” [pp.1]. It is necessary that the scope of skill development be enhanced, so as to aim towards equitable development, inclusive growth and a stronger national spirit. Otherwise it would do just fine to reconcile the two themes of Employment and Skills under the ambit of a single policy.

Three fundamental questions that arise on pursuing the draft policy are as follows:

1. **Should not an appreciative recognition of skills precede Skills Development?**
2. **Are Knowledge Economies so global and rigidly defined that they cannot accommodate indigenous systems of knowledge? and**
3. **Is the gap always a linear skills-for-market gap?**

It is felt that the present draft policy is in serious danger of replicating the infamous banking concept of education [Freire, 1993]. This relationship involves, as some may know, a narrating Subject (the teacher) and patient listening Objects, or passive recipients (the students). It is not hard to discern a marked similarity to this concept in the present draft policy, as it begins with the premise that our “base of skilled and knowledge workers is particularly narrow” [pp.1].

The problem need not necessarily pertain to the absence of skills; it could just as well mean that we have either failed to recognise or appreciate traditional skills post independence. Or, it could mean that, since systems of indigenous knowledge did not conform to Western prerequisites, we have dismissed them altogether. Speaking of quality and relevance [pp. 14], as the draft policy does, it would be a sufficient hint that all of such skills (as mentioned above) are of high quality, being refined and fine tuned over generations. It also speaks of a strong social, economic and cultural relevance to those who profess to have them.

The mission statement reads, “... empowering all individuals through improved skills, knowledge and internationally recognised qualifications ...” [pp.5]. Empowerment is a participative process, and there could be no other way of ensuring the required participation, except by first beginning to appreciate and recognise skills already being put into practice by the people whom the draft policy is seeking to reach out to. In the absence of such an approach, we may not succeed in developing skills, but will confine skill diversity to pre-defined categories that are formally recognised (in other words recognised internationally!). This would really be a pity.

The draft policy attempts to cover up for this malaise when it briefly recommends the “active participation of the social partners” [pp.3], or insists on the “Involvement of Social Partners” [pp.10]. However, it is also noticed here that participation is vaguely described as:

“ ... Employers in the public and private sectors, and Workers’ Organisations, however, it can include in a broad sense Training Providers, Professional Societies, and NGOs/Civil Society Institutions.” [pp. 10 - 11]

Evidently, the emphasis is on the “Employers of public and private sectors”, and formally recognised “Workers Organisations”, with a passing second-degree priority to NGOs/Civil Society Institutions. No one knows what “professional societies” are meant to be.

However, for the skills that are being referred in this write-up, there is a dire need to strengthen and develop state level institutions that can directly track, appreciate and enhance skills at both, community as well as individual levels. Without true appreciation for the skills and systems of indigenous knowledge that exist within our national cultural context, no “social dialogue” [pp.11] is possible, even though the draft policy envisages this. It is also not possible to develop a resilient “Knowledge Economy” [pp.25], as suited to our context, without this.

It also appears that the intention is to identify competencies [pp. 11] within the formally recognised set of skills, rather than skills themselves, and competencies therein. In this sense, much remains to be learnt from the pioneering work being done by the Honey Bee Network and the National Innovation Foundation (NIF).

One is also made to wonder if the gap is always a skills-for-markets gap [pp.17], and whether skills have to be peremptorily tempered to cater to labor market needs. The possibility of restructuring or reorganising markets in order to make them more accommodative of local skills has been overlooked completely. This should not be thought of as an impossibility, since, after all the relationship between a people and their markets is dialectical. Positive ideas on market reforms find some mention under Part III (B)(4) titled, “Coordination and linkages with macro policy framework” [pp.10]. However, here too the premise is that it is possible to be able to produce (and reproduce) workforce in batches through supply side policies, for an errant and insatiable labour market. The role that social marketing can play has also not been acknowledged here.

To summarise, it is felt that:

1. A serious and honest effort to track, compile and popularise local traditional skills, and to appreciate skill diversity within our cultural context, is required before we end up imposing a part-parochial, part-colonial idea of “skills” on an unsuspecting mass.
2. Ideas on Knowledge Economy should be redefined in a manner so as to include systems of indigenous knowledge. In this way, we will have a better chance of being inclusive.
3. The gap need not always be a skills-for-markets gap. Market reforms and social marketing are equally essential for re-organising markets and making them accommodative of local traditional skills.

2.3 A Few Key Un-addressed Points in the Policy:

1. Strategies to make ITIs more market driven.
2. More clarity on the financing mechanism in terms of the role and approach of each institution.
3. The importance of reviving Employment Exchanges as major centres for labour market analysis. If Employment Exchanges are made more futuristic and technologically advanced, they will be better able to predict and convey information about marketable skills.
4. Sharper focus is required on specific approaches for urban and rural areas, the under-served population, under-served areas, for new entrants into the job market as well as those who have been part of the market mechanism.
5. As per the suggestion on the Solutions Exchange, the Public Private Community Partnership (PPCP) mode may be more effective, especially in sub-sector based co-operatives such as handloom/handicraft co-operatives, labour co-operatives, industrial co-operatives, agro-processing co-operatives and service co-operatives.
6. The policy is not clear on apprenticeships. Internationally, countries which are able to integrate good apprenticeship programmes with vocational training are very successful models.
7. While the draft speaks about skill enhancement and ensuring quality standards, it also needs to suggest strategies to increase wages and remuneration.
8. The policy does not say much on the sharing of resources among agencies in order to optimise costs.
9. There is hardly any mention of financial control and management and financial audit systems. This cannot be discounted, given that large investments are being envisaged for skill development.
10. Though there has been a mention about the faculty development programme, focus needs to be increased on the recruitment and training of faculty for disadvantaged groups like the physically challenged, child labourers, rescued victims of trafficking etc., as this would require specialised skills.

2.4 Modular Employment Skills and Renovation of ITIs - Steps in the Right Direction

DGE&T has started the Modular Employable Skills (MES) programme. MES is a demand-driven ‘minimum skills set’ course that fulfills optimal requirements for gainful employment. There are 308 courses currently available. Some of these courses are available to youth with education up to Grade 5.

The different target groups of MES are:

- Workers seeking certification of skills which have been acquired informally.

- Workers and ITI graduates seeking skill upgradation.
- Early school drop-outs and the unemployed.
- Previous child labourers and their families.
- The disabled.

2.4.i Key Features of MES

The courses have to be conducted by the Vocational Training Provider (VTP) approved by the Apex committee of the Government. All VTPs must have a broadband Internet connection. The VTPs have to fulfill many functions, viz., ensure training quality, maintain trainee databases, support placements, and to track trainees post-placement for 3 years. The VTPs can collect the prescribed amount of money per person as training fees. As for the student, the fee is more of a deposit since the money is refunded to him/her on successful completion of the course. The course duration is a minimum of 100 hrs and a maximum of 270 hrs.

Approach in curriculum development: Multi-stakeholder inputs are taken through workshops to prepare a sound curriculum. The draft curriculum is then placed on the DGE&T website for reviews and comments by practitioners, industry and academia. Post this, the curriculum can be used by the VTPs Courses in a similar way that soft skills have also been developed under MES. Many new courses have been introduced as a part of the curriculum. The scheme has trained more than 8,000 persons in 2007.

Assessment: Separation of training delivery and assessment functions has been done in order to ensure better quality. An independent assessment institution is selected and performance of the VTPs is closely monitored, based on the output and outcomes of training they provide. Ratings are awarded to these VTPs.

2.5 The Public- Private Partnership (PPP)

As employment in the private sector is increasing, the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) is becoming crucial. PPP is useful in forecasting emerging areas of employment, required employability skills, development of the course curriculum and materials, imparting training, institution building, on- job training, and placement of graduates, among other functionalities.

A proactive step towards the PPP is the conceptualisation of Institute Management Committees (IMCs) for the upgradation of ITIs. In 2007-08 the Union Finance Minister had announced a scheme for the upgradation of 1396 Government ITIs into centres of excellence in specific trades and skills, through Public-Private Partnership, with an investment of 3665 crores over the next 5 years. Out of these, 500 have been undertaken in the first phase - 100 through domestic funding and 400 through World Bank assistance. An interest-free loan of 2.5 crores per ITI for 30 years is being provided for each ITI. Under this scheme the Chairperson of the IMC will be the industry partner or representative. To make the body broad in scope, the industry partner is allowed to nominate four other members of the industry. The State Government shall nominate five other members comprising of:

- i) The District Employment Officer,
- ii) One representative of the State Directorate dealing with ITIs,
- iii) One expert from local academic circles,
- iv) One senior faculty member, and
- v) One student representative.

Once the IMC is constituted/ reconstituted, it has to get registered as a society under the Societies Registration Act applicable in the State. The IMC is allowed to decide on up to 20% of the admissions in the ITIs. The newly constituted/ reconstituted IMCs, under the leadership of the Industry Partner, should prepare an Institute Development Plan (IDP), and must decide their target Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the next five years. The IDPs should contain details about how much money would be kept as seed money in a corpus fund and how much would be utilised for different components, such as civil works, purchase of machinery/ equipment and other miscellaneous activities.

This PPP has started functioning from August 2008. The advantages are that industry has been involved in the process to a large extent, and a multi-stakeholder committee has also been created. The actual functioning remains to be seen once operations start.

2.6 Essence of State Programmes

All state Governments are implementing employability programmes, though with different approaches. Notable among these are the Andhra Pradesh Government's Employment Generation and Marketing Mission (EGMM), which was started by the Rural Department of Andhra Pradesh in 2005-06 as one of the first public- private partnerships for skill development. Other programmes of the Andhra Pradesh Government include the Rajiv Udyoga Sri Programme, which aims at training 10 lakhs

of youth. An outlay of Rs.25 crores was released for this purpose during the year 2007-08. During the year 2008-09, an amount of Rs.130 crores was earmarked for this purpose. The Government has also proposed the Rajiv Yuvashakti programme in order to extend financial assistance to youth for training in entrepreneurial skills.

The Tamil Nadu Government had also initiated skills development. In order to encourage private placement, an on-line interactive web-site-cum-portal has been set up to develop a data bank of highly qualified, marketable candidates from the Live Register of the Employment Exchanges in Tamil Nadu, to allow private sector employers and others easy access ⁶. There is special emphasis on employability of female youth in the state under the Vazndhu Kattuvom Project

The Rajasthan Mission on Livelihoods (RMoL), started in 2004, is a flagship programme of the Rajasthan Government to create increased sustainability by 2015. Short-term skill training programmes were envisaged as one of the major strategies to generate large scale rural and urban livelihoods. By 2007-08, more than 11,500⁷ youth were trained under this programme. The skill development initiative of RMoL has combined unique strategies with technology to increase the scope and effectiveness of the programme.

The DGET of Karnataka has forayed into skill development with a special focus since 2007-08. They have started a special cell called the Karnataka Skills Commission which has been conceptualised on the model of RMoL, to implement programmes for skills development for employability.

The Government of Gujarat has been progressively working on skills development. They had collaborated with Saath, an NGO which pioneered skill development in Gujarat, to initiate 'Umeed' for implementing the programme on skill development across the state. This apart, they have also initiated a special programme under the tribal development corporation to enhance skills of tribal youth. The Government is ready to spend up to Rs.30,000 per tribal youth on their skill training in order to ensure sustainable changes in their skill sets and steady income. The Gujarat Government has also been actively revamping Employment Exchanges to make them more relevant to the current scenario.

The Government of Orissa had established the Employment Mission in 2005 to work towards creating employment opportunities in Orissa. Under this programme, the Orissa Government has been conducting informal sector skill-upgradation training through DTE&T in ITIs/ ITCs/ Polytechnics etc. It has also been conducting Atma Nijukti Paramarsha Mela (Self-Employment Counselling Camps) in all the Blocks of the State and organising Block Level Bankers' Committee (BLBC) Meetings. More than 20,000⁸ youth have benefited in the last 3 years through the informal sector skill-upgradation programme.

The programmes in West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh are in the nascent stages. In West Bengal, skill development is one of the focal areas in the Kolkatta Urban Services for the Poor programme. In Uttar Pradesh, 63 Employment Exchanges have been set up to provide Employment Assistance to the unemployed and to cater to the manpower requirement of the public and private sectors.

While various states are experimenting with different programme approaches, the programmes of Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat are noteworthy. The Andhra Pradesh programme is the largest and has been scaled up by setting up the required physical and social infrastructure for conducting these programmes. The Government of Rajasthan has concentrated on adequate mechanisms for youth to connect to these programmes and avail all facilities. The Government of Gujarat's focused programme for tribal youth is an innovative step to truly influence their livelihoods. It is important for other states to learn from these states while implementing large scale programmes with public-private partnership.

2.7 Vocationalisation of Education

The programme for vocationalisation of Higher Secondary education was initiated in 1976, broadly based on the recommendations of The D.C. Kothari Commission. However, very few States and Union Territories evinced interest in taking the agenda forward. To strengthen the vocationalisation of education, a review was undertaken by The National Working Group on Vocationalisation of Education (also known as the V.C. Kulandaiswamy Committee, 1985). Its recommendations led to the initiation of the centrally sponsored scheme on Vocationalisation of Secondary Education in February 1988. State Governments implement the scheme at the Grade 12 stage, through approximately 9583 secondary schools. More than 150 courses are offered in six major disciplines: agriculture, business and commerce, engineering and technology, health and paramedical services, home sciences and humanities.

⁶ <http://www.employment.tn.gov.in/default.htm>

⁷ <http://rajasthanlivelihoods.org/skill-training/>

⁸ http://orissagov.nic.in/labour&employment/State_Employee/State_Employment_Mission.pdf

In 1998, the NCERT Evaluation had undertaken a study to review the vocational education in schools and listed below are a few key findings⁹:

1. Though vocational courses were more useful when compared to general courses, they failed to prepare a student for any job or self-employment venture.
3. The practical training imparted by visits to different institutions and by arranging guest lectures was not sufficient.
4. Teachers needed to be trained on all practical aspects in their respective subjects.
5. The service conditions of teachers who taught vocational subjects were such that they kept good teachers away from these subjects.

Based on these findings, the study had recommended:

- (a) Providing vocational training in general schools, in active partnership with industry and in close collaboration with the Block Level Vocational Institutions (BLVI) that may be established in rural areas.
- (b) Treating vocational courses like other main stream courses, viz., the arts, science and commerce streams, and students passing out from this stream at the Grade 12 stage should have direct access to the tertiary stage in a related discipline.
- (c) The National Curriculum Framework of the NCERT should be restructured to give due emphasis to work experience, pre-vocational and generic vocational competencies, at various levels of school education.
- (d) Full time teachers should be appointed on a regular and permanent basis as in the case of academic streams.
- (e) All vocational courses at the Grade 12 level must be covered under the Apprenticeship Act, 1961.

The 10th Plan proposed various changes in the vocational education in schools based on the recommendations of the study. These included:

- Making vocational education competency-based and in modular form, with a credit transfer system and provisions for multi-point entry/exit.
- Establishing a relationship between vocational courses at the Grade 12 level and courses at the University level.
- Charging fees and designing courses on a self-financing basis for the schools to recover their costs.
- Compulsorily utilising the apprenticeship training facility.
- Deciding the placements of those who have completed vocational studies for apprenticeship and training, immediately after the results of the Grade 12 examinations are declared.
- Making it mandatory for the *Kendriya Vidyalaya* and *Navodaya Vidyalaya* school systems to run vocational courses.

The knowledge commission, in its recommendations¹⁰ on implementation of vocational education, states that:

- i) Aspects of general education (such as numeracy skills, etc.) should be retained in VET as far as possible, to enable students to return to mainstream education at a later stage.
- ii) Entry requirements for certain trades should reflect the requirement of the trade (as appropriate, for instance, the entry requirement of Grade 10 could be relaxed to Grade 8 in some cases). Students should be permitted multiple entry and exit options in the vocational education stream.
- iii) Links should be established between the vocational education stream and school education as well as higher education.
- iv) Courses devoted to particular training of skills at the primary and secondary level should be introduced in all schools.
- v) Vocational training should be made available in various literacy and adult education schemes.
- vi) Schemes for lifelong skill upgradation, through short training programmes, should be introduced.
- vii) Provisions should be made for generating a cadre of multi-skilled persons.

Based on the current implementation strategies, the PHD Chamber of Commerce, in October 2008, had suggested an action plan for vocationalisation of education, which includes,

1. Expansion of Vocational Education from 9500 Senior Secondary schools, to 20000 schools. Absorption capacity to go up from 1.0 million to 2.5 million.
2. Partnership of VEs with employers, for providing faculty/trainers, internship, advice on curriculum setting, skill testing and certification, etc.
3. Progressive movement of vocational education from an unviable 2-year stream, commencing after Class 10, to a stream that captures Grade 9 dropouts and subsequently, commencing from Grade 7, capturing Grade 7 dropouts. Emphasis on last-mile employability related soft skills such as English language skills, quantitative skills, computer literacy, spreadsheets, word processing, computer graphics, presentation skills, behavioral and interpersonal skills.

Though vocationalisation of education has been spoken about in various forums, the implementation of the programmes across the country has to be taken up more seriously. With a majority of youth in the country dropping out by Grade 8, vocationalisation of education by Grade 7 would be more effective. The idea of continuing with the aspects of general education

⁹ www.education.nic.in/cd50years/g/z/9j/0Z9J0807.htm

¹⁰ www.knowledgecommission.gov.in/recommendations/vocational.asp

is always an added advantage, as it will allow mainstreaming of youth if required. Training mainstream teachers to undertake vocational education is important as availability of specialised teachers for vocational education might be challenging in remote and rural areas.

2.8.i Promising State Government Programmes 1 - Rajasthan Mission on Livelihoods¹¹ (RMoL)

The Rajasthan Government's Mission on Livelihoods (also known as RMoL) has done a lot of innovative and effective work in improving employability. Some of its key ideas are as follows:

- **Apprenticeships:** Realising that apprenticeship provides a direct exposure to the workplace, RMoL has introduced 'Eklavya' for backward youth. The programme provides an incentive to employers to take apprentices for three months by subsidising part of the stipend cost and paying the candidate a living allowance. The programme also equips Employment Exchanges with the tools and resources needed to connect candidates to local employers.
- **Access to Information:** The State Government has created various avenues for youth to access information about training. They have partnered with private agencies to establish www.rajasthanrozgar.com (a portal for job seekers, employers and employment exchanges), 01410- 6001234 (a job hotline in Hindi, Marwari and English that gives candidates a seven minute preliminary assessment, and funnels candidates for detailed assessments, jobs or training) and an Employability Primer (a 100 page document for first time job seekers to prepare them for the job search process).
- **Separate finance and delivery mechanism:** It has separated financing from delivery. Traditionally, Government financing was only available for Government delivery, but RMoL reimburses approved private trainers for various courses. There is an additional incentive for job placements, and continued approval depends upon outcomes with the panel being continuously reviewed.
- **State Skill Centre:** A separate policy has been evolved to encourage employers or trainers to set up training institutes in the State. The State is providing land, a small capital subsidy and partial reimbursement of training costs.
- **Certification:** RMoL has partnered with Kota University to certify youth for short term courses they take up under RMoL. This substantially increases the marketability of courses and reduces dropout rates.

2.8.ii Promising State Government Programmes 2 - Employment Generation and Marketing Mission - Andhra Pradesh (EGMM)¹²

The Employment Generation and Marketing Mission (EGMM) was set up three years ago by the Department of Rural Development, Government of Andhra Pradesh (GoAP). Its main aim is to create employability/employment for underprivileged rural and tribal youth, with focus on the vulnerable and on girls. The three main stakeholders are the Government, companies and rural communities. Until October 2008, 289 training centres had been set up and 120,000 youth were trained, of which 80% have been placed. EGMM works with the Collectors, District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs) and Integrated Tribal Development Agencies (ITDAs) in all 22 districts of Andhra Pradesh (AP).

It uses a transaction-based software, which reduces transmission losses of information coming up to the State level from the districts, villages and tribal areas. Apart from transparency, the software helps generate various MIS reports required by different stakeholders, be it the Government or other funding bodies, and anyone can view it from anywhere. The reports and analyses help the programme team to reflect on field knowledge acquisitions and improve their performance. For example, it could help improve the quality of training and ensure better job placements by analysing the income of youth placed.

Initially, companies were skeptical about integrating rural youth coming from poor and marginalised backgrounds into the organised market, due to the required investment of time and money. For this, the EGMM has created pro-poor market-linked products like the country's first Rural Retail Academy, Grassroots English Work Readiness and Computer Academy. There is also a Security Academy that not only provides job skill training, but also provides life skill training and grooming inputs. All training is residential, with concentrated English language inputs, like films, videos, songs and a student-centric pedagogy, making learning fun.

¹¹ Based on inputs from Mr. Manish Sabharwal, Teamlease and ALC Team field visit to RMoL training centre

¹² Based on inputs from Ms. Meera Shenoy, EGMM on Solutions Exchange as well as a personal interview.

To reduce overheads, EGMM takes over unutilised infrastructure in rural areas to impart training in locations which are easily accessible to rural communities. EGMM works with a network of 500 private companies, for which they have created an ABC analysis based on not just the salary, but their sensitivity in dealing with the employees.

EGMM conducts meetings with the training-cum-placement partners every month in order to track their quality and given targets. There are challenges in the programme in terms of strengthening systems and maintaining quality, even as rapid scaling up is taking place.

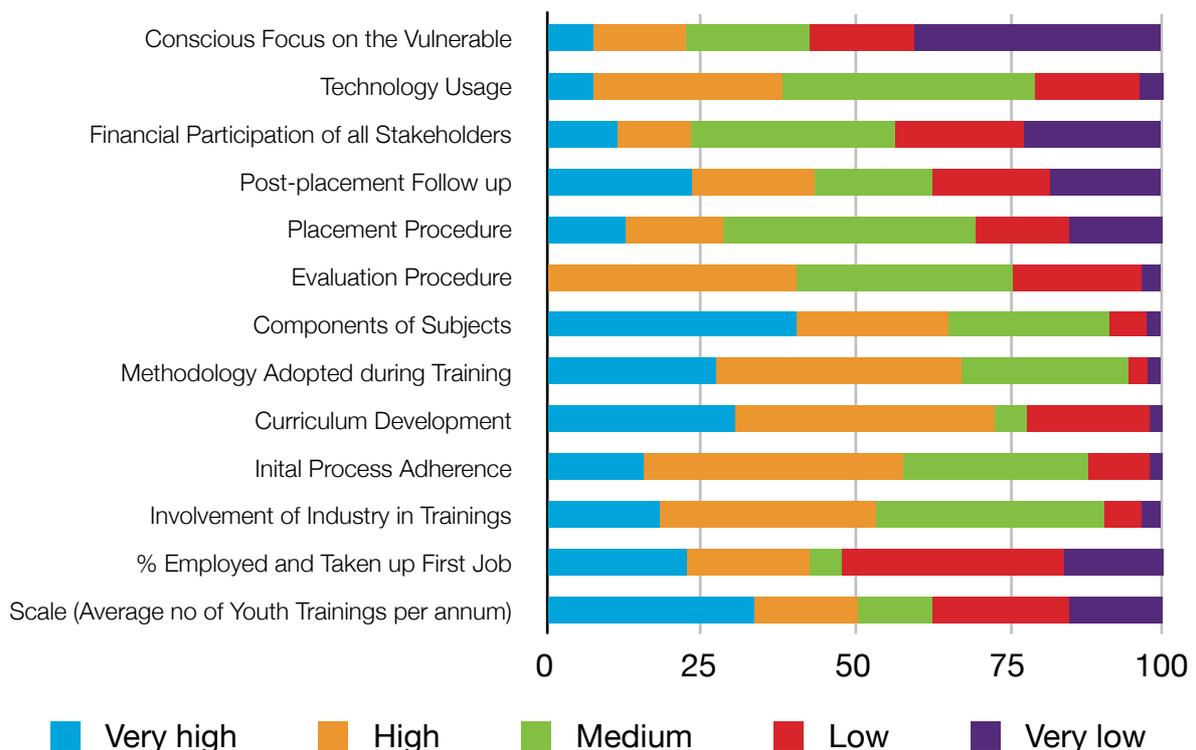
Chapter 3

Assessment of Employability Training Programmes

Chapter 3

3.1 Introduction

As discussed in the previous sections, employability programmes for the underprivileged youth can be both formal and informal. Even when Government focus was on formal vocational education through ITI/ITCs, civil society organisations and other private institutions had realised the need for informal and short-term courses to fulfill the skill shortage in various entry-end jobs in different industries. Over the past two years, the Government has appreciated the importance of these courses and thus MES was initiated. Most of these short-term courses provide youth with basic entry-end skills in order to enhance their status from “unemployable” to “employable”. Most of these courses cater to the requirements of sunrise industries like IT/ITES, retail and real estate, which are human resource intensive, and thus require large pools of people at the entry end. To understand the key parameters of employability programmes, Government-run, industry-run and civil- society run programmes were studied. While at least 2 civil society organisations were studied, there was interaction with at least one Government and one private sector institution. In all, 22 civil society, 9 State Government and 8 industry programmes were studied. Institutions which have been administering courses of duration ranging from 3 months to 2 years were studied on 13 important parameters, which have been considered as ingredients of good employability programmes. There was an overall assessment of each institute on a scale of 1-5 for each parameter. The detailed findings on each parameter are presented below.



Graph 3-1: Graph showing the performance of the Training Institutes over different selected parameters

3.2 Key Findings on various parameters

3.2.i.a Absorption Capacity

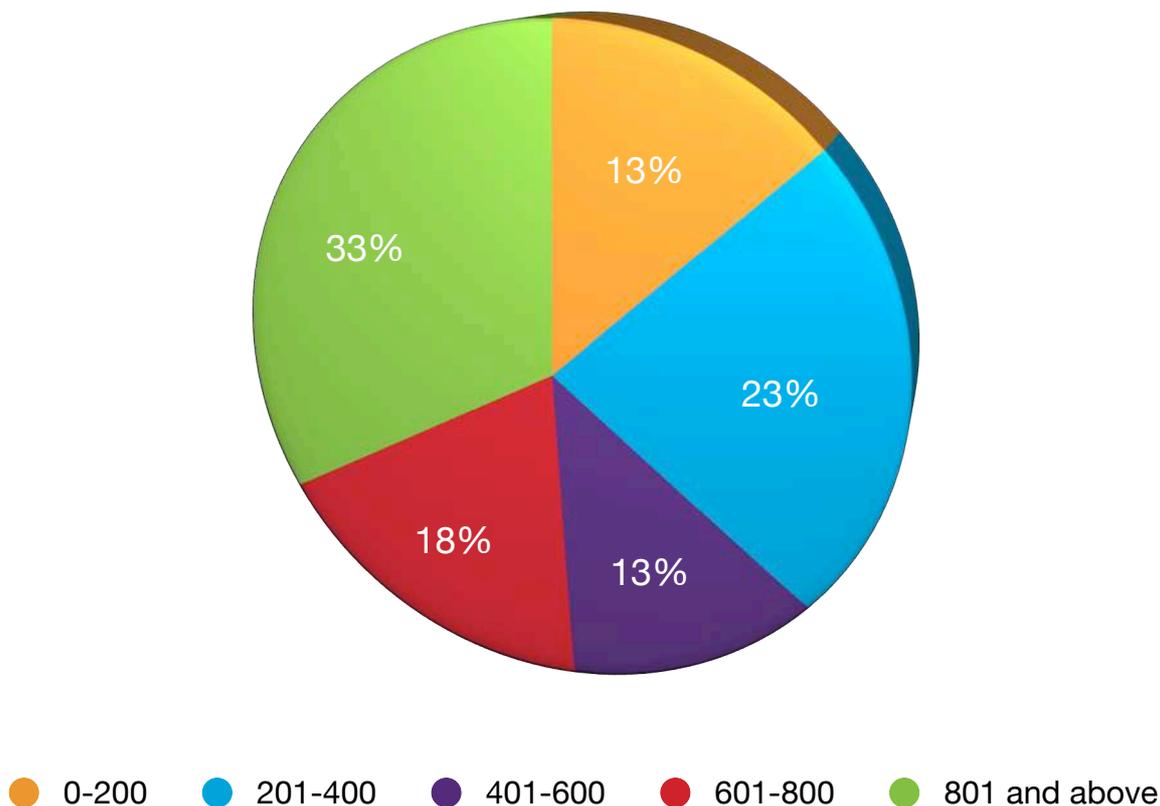
Absorption capacity refers to the total number of students absorbed for employability programmes in an institution in a year. This parameter was deemed important to comprehend the macro-scenario of absorption of the institutions in the employability programme.

3.2.i.b Findings

Only 33% of the studied institutions could absorb more than 800 students per annum. 40% institutions have absorption capacity of less than 200 students per annum. There is a huge gap between the demand and supply for trained youth in the industry. As discussed earlier, with 8 million youth entering the work force every year, the absorption capacity of all institutions put together is miniscule. There is a growing gap between the marketable skills of the work force and the increasing demand for trained youth in IT/ITES, retail, telecom, insurance and other sectors.

Key Challenges

- Infrastructure
- Monitoring Systems
- Availability of quality faculty
- Availability of resources



Graph 3-2: Graph showing the absorption capacity of surveyed institutions

A few civil society organisations (CSOs) which had collaborated with the Government to conduct these programmes have been able to scale up. However, with monitoring and delivery systems not geared up for rapid expansion, the quality of programmes has deteriorated over time.

Though it is concurred that it is required to scale up in the current scenario, a variety of factors like the time consumed for student mobilisation, limited physical space, limited staff and faculty are impediments to it. Many civil society organisations also have inhibitions to work with the Government in the current set up, due to bureaucratic hurdles, long drawn processes and limited freedom in deciding on courses.

Scaling up through the transfer of a model from one city to another is possible; however it takes much longer to create the systems, capacity and relationships for a successful transfer.

-'Evaluation report of Entra21 of IYF phase I'

"Monitoring the quality of programs is greatest challenge when we scale up."

-Meera Shenoy, Employment Generation and Marketing Mission

"The priority sometimes gets diluted in chasing numbers."

-Avinav Kumar, SkillPro Foundation

3.2.ii.a Initial Process Adherence

Several pre-classroom processes are vital for successful employability or skill development programmes. The key processes identified are:

1. Market Scans.
2. Road shows.
3. Discussion with and counseling of students and parents about trades.
4. Written Tests
5. Interviews.
6. Students, parent and industry interaction before the start of sessions.

3.2.ii.b Findings

Almost all organisations have reported that they conduct market scans and discussions with students, and also that they inform parents about the availability of trades. Institutions organise events and melas at village/ slums to mobilise underprivileged youth. Only 20% of the organisations that were studied conduct written tests, as many believe that the prerequisite for an employability programme is aptitude and not skills.

The student mobilisation phase is the key for laying a strong foundation and to prevent drop-outs during employability programmes. Up to 80% of dropout from the programme is reported during the first 15 days. Due to this dropout, some organisations count the total tally of the youth in the programme from the 15th day onwards. The lack of interest, parental pressures to contribute to the family income, reluctance to put in the efforts required during the programme are the key reasons for the early drop out.

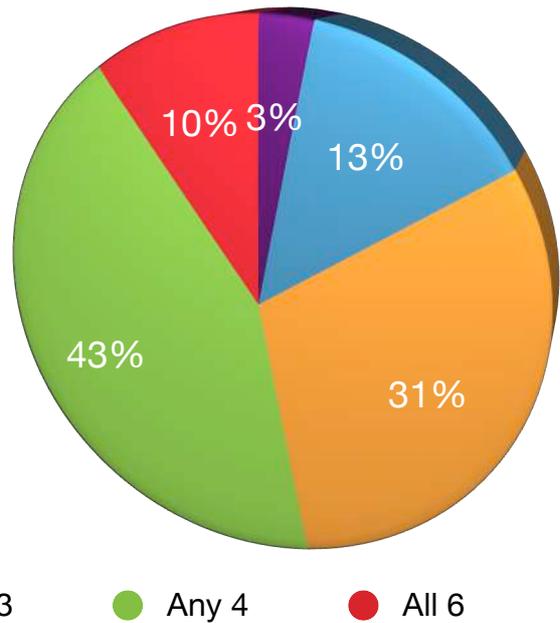
The majority of youth attending these training sessions are educated up to Grade 10 or above. Thus, a substantial percentage of the youth who have dropped out before Grade 10, are excluded. In a few training institutions it was also found that irrespective of their different comprehension abilities, students with varying educational backgrounds were undergoing employability training together.

Key Processes missing during mobilization

- *Written Tests*
- *Parent industry exposure visit especially for parents of female youth.*

Parameters

1. Market Scan
2. Road Shows
3. Student / Parent Counselling about Trades
4. Written Test
5. Interviews
6. Student / Parent Pre-session Industry Interactions



Graph 3-3: Graph showing the percentage of students adhering to one or more initial process parameters.

3.2.iii.a Curriculum Development

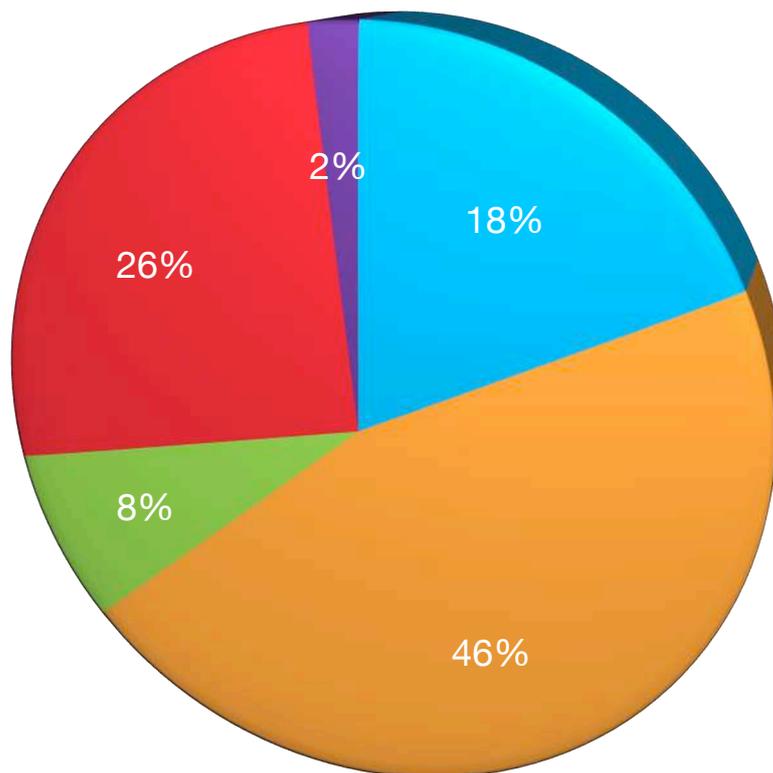
The curriculum development process was chosen as one of the parameters to understand whether the organisations are tailoring courses according to the needs of local youth, whether it is a dynamic process, and whether all stakeholders are involved in curriculum development process.

3.2.iii.b Findings

Most of the studied institutions have reported preparation of their internal curriculum catering to the requirements of the local youth. About 60% of the institutions have reported an annual review of their curriculum.

Though informal feedback from the alumni is taken, in many employability programmes involving alumni during curriculum review and development is not observed as a practice. The institutions that follow the NCVT curriculum, however, cannot alter the curriculum by themselves. Curriculums of Government institutions have been found to be very rigid, and modification generally happens once in 5-6 years. This renders them obsolete and the trades are not in line with the market demand. Too much centralisation, as in the case of many Government institutions, leads to a mismatch of requirements. For e.g., what is applicable in Andhra Pradesh may not work in West Bengal. Most Institutions across Government, civil society and corporate houses are facing difficulties in developing curriculums for soft skills. Further, training institutions are making little efforts to explore synergies in creating common curriculum.

Avoid short-term thinking when designing the curriculum. If the goal is to enable youth to secure a job and become more employable (longer term purpose), Training institutions should focus on growth sectors of the economy and try to project what type of ICT skills will be needed in the next several years based on their best data sources .-'Entra 21 programme phase I of IYF'



- Internal Curriculum and Reviewed Before Every Training
- Internal Curriculum and Reviewed Before Every 6 Months
- External Curriculum and Inputs from Industry and Others
- External but Revised
- External Curriculum Only

Graph 3-4: Graph showing the various forms of curriculum followed by different organisations.

3.2.iv.a Courses Administered During Training

The purpose of examining this indicator is to know the extent to which life skills and basic management skills are being administered, apart from the technical skills required for jobs. Life skills comprise courses related to personality, basic general knowledge, confidence, basic leadership, discipline and office etiquette. Basic management comprises courses related to resource management like time, finance and HR and marketing management.

3.2.iv.b Findings

Nearly 40% of sampled institutions, especially Government institutions, do not focus on English communication, personality development, basic management skills, and computer literacy, and focus mainly on trade-based courses.

As discussed earlier, the short-term modular courses are usually of 90-100 days' duration. In one particular civil society training institution, which has a country-wide presence and conducts short-term courses, it was found that in addition to technical skills, life skills, personality development and values are taught. However, these modules constitute only 10% of the total sessions. The short duration of the course does not allow for sufficient emphasis on language skills like English. This is an obstacle for rural youth who are seeking jobs in urban areas.

Life skills are developed not only through the course content, but also in the way youth are engaged throughout the training process (encouraging participation, leadership, initiative, etc.).

.-'Entra21 programme phase I of IYF'

3.2.v.a Faculty

Despite all the groundwork and good curriculum, the quality of the faculty determines the maximum benefit that these courses would provide the students.

3.2.v.b Findings

It has been observed during the study that three types of strategies were adopted for recruiting faculty for the programmes:

- Full time anchor faculty or coordinators who can undertake 2-3 courses, one technical subject and 2 other general subjects like soft skills, English communication and computers.
- Part-time college lecturers who can undertake specific courses.
- Part-time or voluntary experts from the industry, who are domain experts and take specific subjects, or come for guest lectures.

It was found that the centre coordinators at most of these organisations are either graduates or post graduates. Finding quality faculty for all subjects, and soft skills in particular, has been reported to be challenging. Low remuneration and lack of facilities to stay in rural areas, and movement from one place to another as per the demand of courses, are key reasons for the high displacement of faculty. Though faculty training programmes have been reported, there is inadequate investment of time and money on training of full-time faculty. According to an internal survey by a large organisation conducting employability programmes, the faculty felt that there had been better mentoring when the organisation was small, and that, as the organisation grew, the requisite attention was not given to this aspect. It was also observed that the performance of the faculty is evaluated across organisations primarily on the number of the sessions taken and the number of students placed. There is very little importance given to the process indicators. Given the fact that very few organisations were conducting programmes on this scale, it is felt that the faculty in smaller organisations have limited opportunities for growth, which is also one of the reasons for the high displacement of full-time faculty.

During interactions with the faculty at some institutions, it was also observed that the courses have to be tailored to the needs and capabilities of the students, and the duration of the courses need to be altered accordingly.

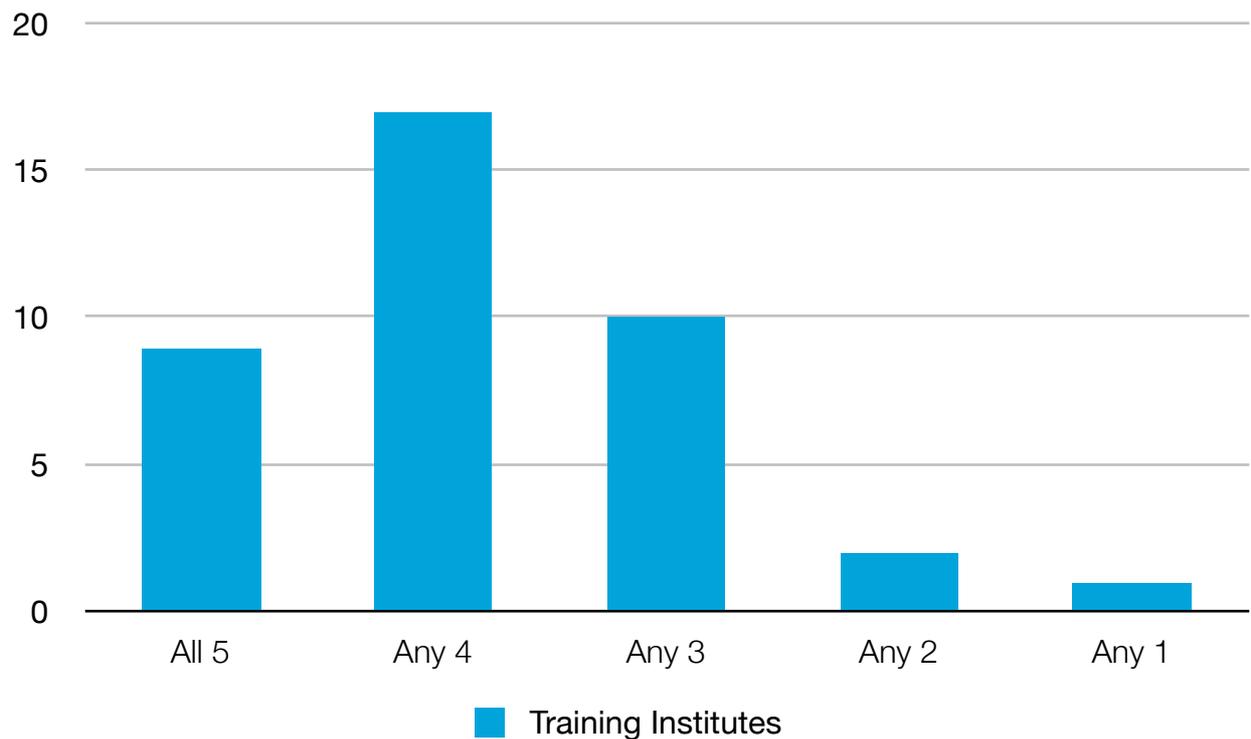
3.2.vi.a Methodology Adopted During Training

The training methodology was studied to understand whether the processes were didactic or based on the principles of adult learning, where learning is based on a lot of self exploration.

3.2.vi.b Findings

Classroom teaching seems to be the predominant methodology, apart from guest lectures by industry experts, exposure visits to the industry and field work. Though a few large organisations have reported internships at the end of the course, many others directly placed students in jobs. This deprives the youth of opportunities to understand the work environment during the course itself as a part of his/her work readiness.

Kotak Education Fund (KEF) experiments with weekend on-the-job training programs - this is an effective model for students being trained in retail services. It is difficult for the retail chains in Mumbai to find additional staff during weekends when the footfalls increase. KEF has tied up with some of these chains for their trainees to work at during weekends. This takes care of the requirement of the industry as well as the trainees, who are able to experience theory in practice, and also earn upto Rs.150-200 a week. It is a win-win situation for the trainees, the industry and the KEF.



Parameters

1. Classroom Teaching
2. Exposure Visits
3. Interaction with the Industry Experts
4. Field Work
5. Internship in companies

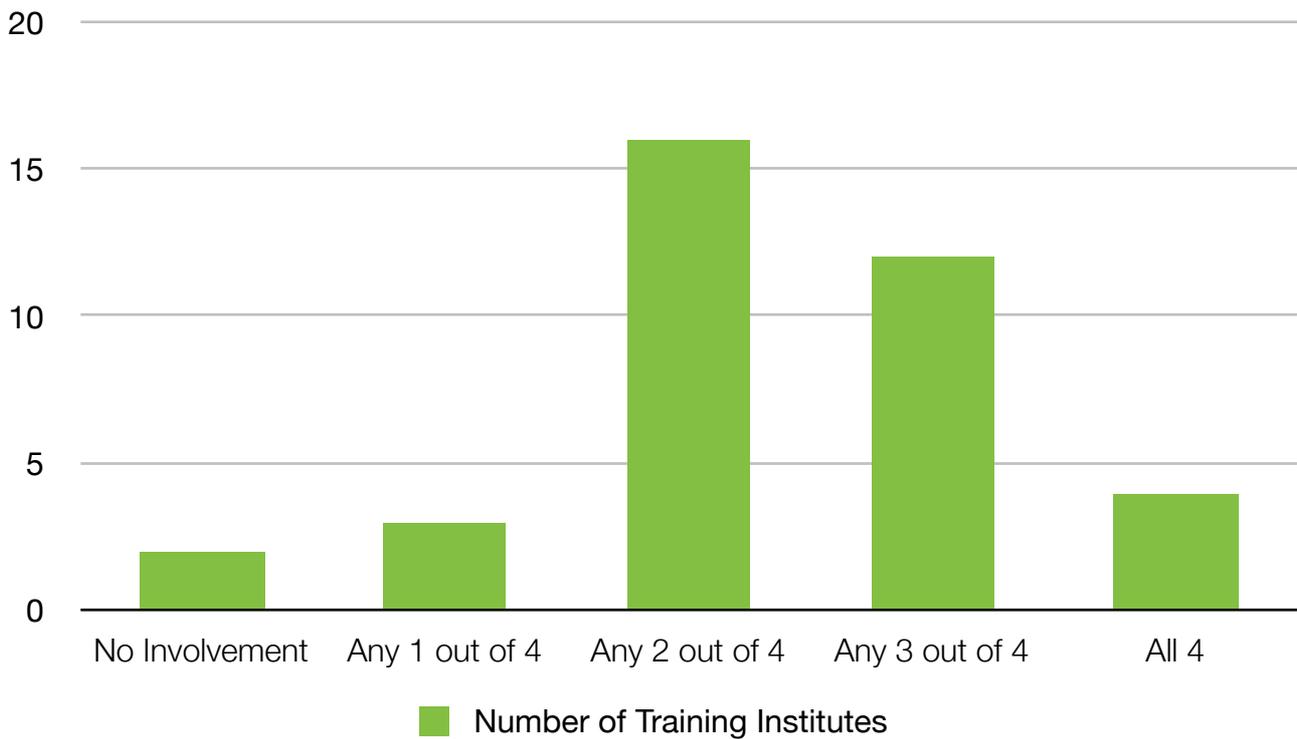
Graph 3-5 : Graph showing the different types of methodologies used for teaching by the training institutes.

Internships are a critical component of the training cycle in which youth could test and hone their technical and non-technical skills and knowledge (or competencies) in a real work setting. In reality, internships also proved to be important pathways to employment. .

'Entra 21 programme phase I of IYF'

3.2.vii.a Participation of the Industry

Industry is a key stakeholder, and their role at various stages was understood from employability training institutes.



Parameters

1. Curriculum Development
2. Internships
3. Guest Lectures
4. Evaluation

Graph 3-5 : Graph showing the involvement of industries in various parameters in the training institutes.

3.2.vii.b Findings

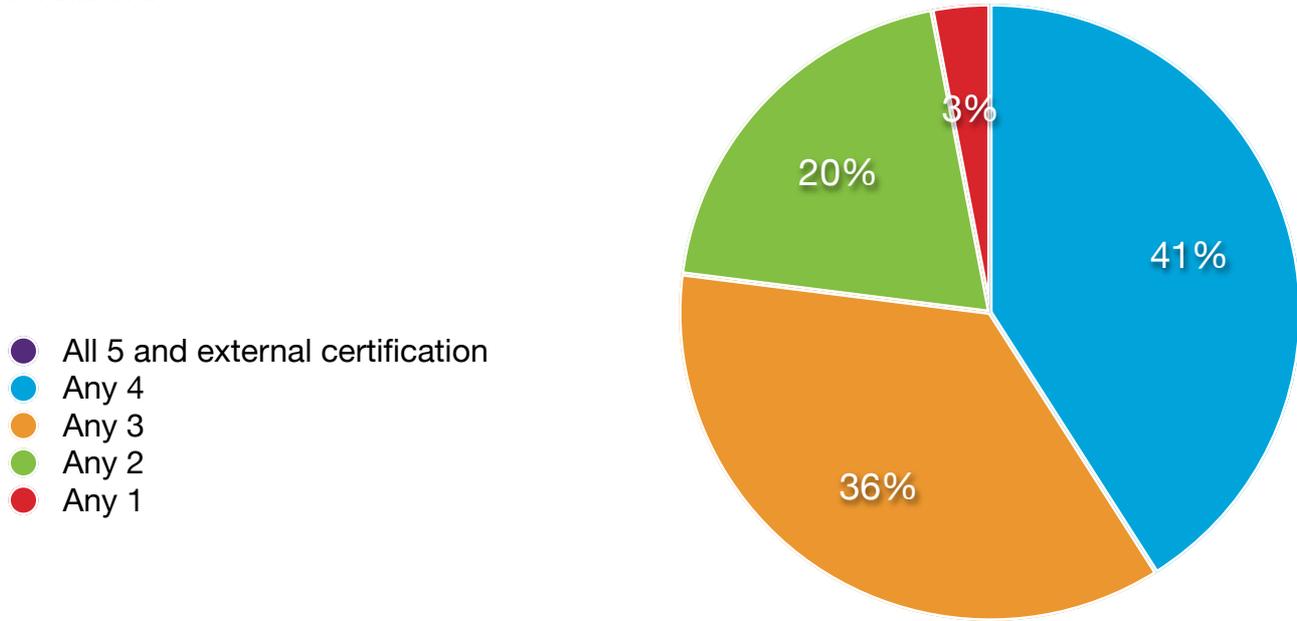
The involvement of the industry at various stages provides an opportunity to the industry and the students to understand each others requirements. Most of the training institutions reported industry involvement in guest lectures, curriculum development and, to an extent, in extending internships. The industry rarely gets involved in the evaluation process of the students. However, as observed by the training institutes, involvement in curriculum development and internships is more of a push factor than the industry taking an interest by itself. In case of the metros as well, the industry involvement in guest lectures is limited as they are reluctant to travel to distant centers.

3.2.viii.a Evaluation Procedure

The process of evaluation was studied in order to understand the rigour of assessing students in the programme.

Parameters

1. Mid-Term Evaluation
2. Assignment Evaluation
3. Internship Evaluation
4. Final Written
5. Final Oral



Graph 3-7: Graph showing the various parameters followed during the evaluation procedure of the training institutes

3.2.viii.b Findings

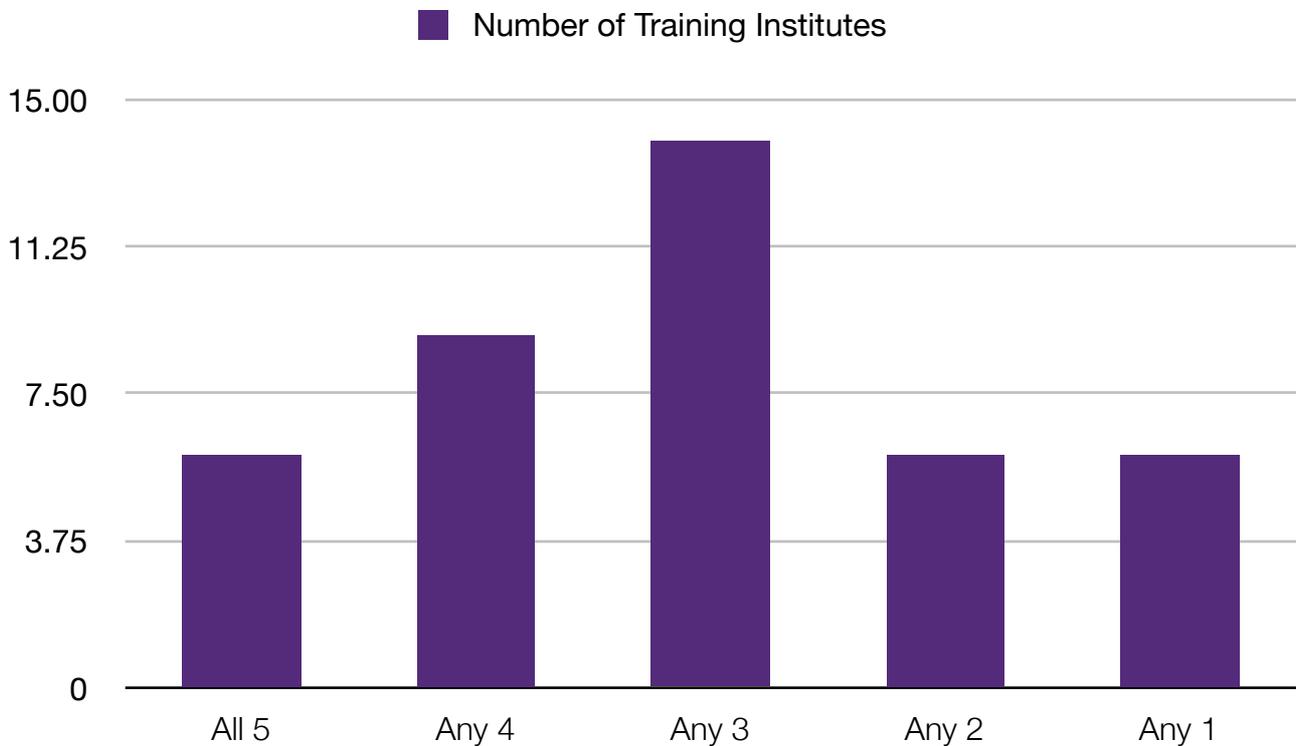
The process of evaluation varies largely among institutions. While Government institutions and ITIs are more structured in their evaluations, civil society training institutions vary in their approaches. Most institutions undertake evaluation of the internal assignments on a regular basis. There are no mid-term examinations during the courses and assignments are evaluated on a regular basis. The end-term examinations and oral examinations are not seen as pre-requisites for placements, as the industry does not emphasise on it for entry-level personnel. While all Government institutions have a certification examination, only 3 civil society institutions have external certification process. Some of the institutions stated that external certification was an expensive process. Absence of standard external certification creates a vacuum in benchmarks for gauging. It was evident in interactions with students across the county that there was a clear difference in the increase in knowledge and confidence levels.

Dr. Reddy's LABS has a social audit conducted periodically by an external organisation. A panel of external experts, trainers and trainees, vet the social audit report and suggestions are accepted. In the next social audit, the action taken on recommendations is provided. Despite the lack of certification, this process provides at least a minimum level of external evaluation.

"Occupational experts conduct the oral and written exam for the students and certification is given to the students." - Mr. Ankur Gupta, National Sales Manager, City & Guilds, New Delhi

3.2.ix.a Placement Procedure

The practices during placements were studied across organisations in order to understand the tools and methodologies used to communicate to the industry.



Parameters

1. Placement Brochure
2. Profiles of Students
3. Resume of Students
4. Pre-placement Talks
5. MIS Database of Students

Graph 3-8: Graph showing the placement procedures followed in the Training Institutes

3.2.ix.b Findings

The most common observation in most organisations is that the center coordinators perform multiple tasks. They mobilise students, conduct market scans, undertake courses and follow up after placements. This reflects on the procedures followed. Students are taught to prepare their own résumé. Pre-placement interaction with the industry has been reported in only about 25% of the organisations. Preparation of concise profiles is not being done. Very few institutions have formal placement cells or coordinators, as the centre coordinator is expected to undertake this task. This affects the quality of placements. It has been observed, that though on paper the youth are placed in jobs, their remuneration is too little to enable them to make any significant improvements in their lives. This is one of the key reasons for attrition from the first job.

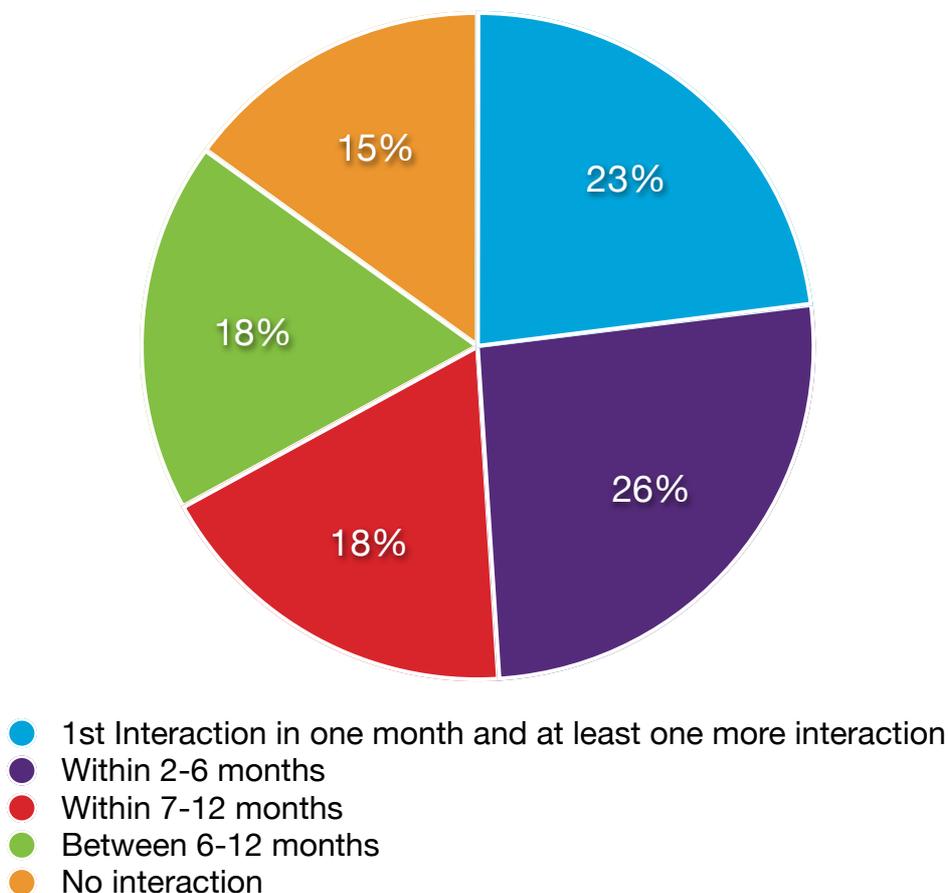
Large organisations like Don Bosco ensure 100% placement. If trainees are not absorbed by companies, they can approach the Don Bosco Institution, a country-wide entity which also offers direct employment to these youth.

3.2.x.a Post-Placement Follow-Up

For continuous improvements to be part of programmes, feedback is an important element. The post-placement follow-up is a key feedback mechanism.

3.2.x.b Findings

Short duration of courses, high dropouts, placements in scattered locations and lack of any formal system (placement or alumni cell), makes it difficult to follow up with students post-placement. It was found that more than 50% of the institutions have a formal follow-up with the industry and the students after 6 months of placement. However, considering that attrition from the first job has been reported to be higher in the first 3-months, the period of post-placement follow-up is longer. For rural youth working in urban areas, the pressure of adjustment is the key factor for dropping out. Reluctance to stay away from home, expenses involved in traveling and staying in cities, inability to cope with urban culture, shock, and opportunities with better remuneration, are key reasons for attrition.

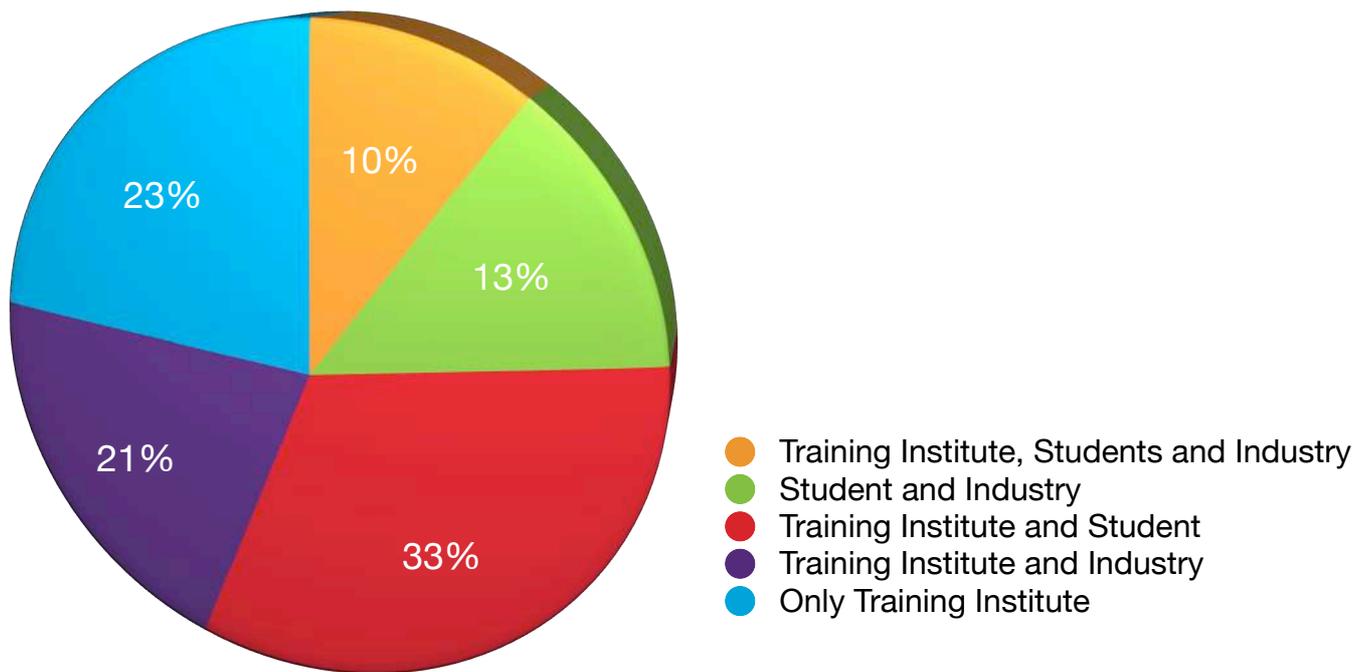


Graph 3-9: Graph showing percentage of Training Institutes falling in different time gap for post placement follow-up

65% of institutions reported an informal follow-up through interaction between the alumni and ongoing batches, or faculty visits to their place of work. The key observations of most institutions during post-placement follow-ups, is that youth are concerned about lifetime assistance, work environment and remuneration, while the industry is concerned about the quality of the candidate and their long-term commitment.

3.2.xi.a Financial Participation of All Stakeholders

The cost of the programme per student varies between Rs. 4,000 and Rs. 8,500 depending upon the duration and course subjects. When these programmes have to be conducted on a large scale, it is important to understand the financing mechanisms, as it will be difficult to sustain these programmes purely on grants.



Graph 3-10: Graph showing percentage break-up of training institutes, students and industry in various combinations for the financial assistance of the institute.

3.2.xi.b Findings

The ideal financial participation involves contributions towards training from each stakeholder, viz., the student, the industry and training institutions. This leads to sustained interest of all three stakeholders. However, it was found that only 5% of the studied organisations believe in this approach. Most NGO training organisations depend upon the grant-based model. It is also observed that the industry is reluctant to contribute, on the premise that NGOs can raise grants.

3.2.xii.a Conscious Focus on the Vulnerable

As these programmes are working towards creating equity and access, it is important to address vulnerable groups such as the physically challenged.

3.2.xii.b Findings

Though all institutions realise the importance of inclusion of the physically challenged, very few actually implement it. It was observed that 36% of the surveyed institutions have never trained any physically challenged youth while only 25% of the institutions have a conscious focus on the physically challenged, and are training and placing these students. Though seats are reserved in Government institutions, these are usually not filled. The training institutions opined that dealing with the physically challenged requires different skills, which are scarce. Placement of them is also seen as a challenge. However, faculty of a large institution opined that there should be focused courses for the physically challenged.

3.3 Conclusion

To summarise the above findings, it can be concluded that although many programmes are being conducted across Government, civil society organisations and corporate houses, most of them display a lack of standardisation of processes during administration of courses. Positive learning outcomes are achieved only when there is adequate process focus and rigour. A few cases have been provided to illustrate the good practices of a few civil society organisations, on different parameters.

3.4 Case Studies

3.4.i Case 1: *Unnati*

Number of completed batches: 13 (Thirteen)

Number of beneficiaries: Around 350

Job placements: 100% (The more recent batches have students getting more than one Job offer)

Cost per student: Approx Rs.12,000

Batch size: Approximately 30 per batch

Batch size from July 2008: Approximately 100 Per Batch

Number of Vocational Courses: 3, being expanded to 7 (from July 2008)

(Source: www.unnatibl.org)

Unnati was started in 2003, with the aim of empowering and transforming underprivileged families, and to provide a comprehensive certificate course to the students in the chosen vocations. The mission was to bring harmony through focused programmes in different sections of society - primary education for the under privileged (Shiksha programme), vocational training for unemployed youth (Unnati programme), and preserving traditions and promoting art & culture (Utsav programme). At Unnati, the unemployed are provided vocational and life skills training free of cost, enabling them to find a steady job, thus augmenting their family income. The programme started out with vocations such as garment tailoring, retail sales and guest care services. Today, the Unnati programme provides a well-defined advocacy towards enabling the underprivileged sections of society to enjoy the benefits of the Indian economic transformation.

The programme targets school drop outs (both girls and boys), who are 18 years of age and who belong to poor communities. Dropouts from school/Pre-University Colleges between ages 18 and 21 are selected after careful scrutiny. Prospective candidates are tested for their attitude and aptitude. Their family background is also verified to ensure that they belong to Below Poverty Line (BPL) Families. Post selection, all selected students undergo a medical test, and their parents/guardians are called for a brief counseling session. Their selection process is mainly through NGOs and campaigning in the slums of urban areas, and sometimes through the print media. Alumni Reference System is also a preferred mode of student selection.

The 3-month course is very rigorous, and demands the students' full attention. Classes are held every day for seven hours. While technical subjects are dealt with during the first half of the day, the second half is exclusively focused on personality development. Despite careful selection, there are always 2-3 people who drop out during the first 10-15 days of the course.

Faculty is drawn from a talented pool of academicians, managers and professionals in various fields such as sales, marketing, human resources and communication skills. Guest lectures are also organised by inviting eminent personalities to provide their insights into the working atmosphere, in real life situations and also soft skills.

The curriculum is standardised, and the curriculum design process includes consultations with the industry, prominent educationists, and professors. Besides providing reading material and stationery, conveyance and food of the students is also taken care of to woo poor families who have to travel long distances in order to reach the training centre.

The small batch size enables individual attention to be given to each student, and thereby enables the participants to explore their potential to the full. Interaction with students shows that each of them exudes confidence and was able to articulate his/her aim in life in English.

On completion of the course, students are assured placement with reputed organisations. From July 2008, the Unnati programme has been expanded to a batch size of 100, with 7 vocational streams. At present, training is offered in 1) Retail Sales, 2) Tailoring (for the Garment Industry), 3) Guest Care, 4) Voice/Data BPO, and 5) Security Services. Electrical, Plumbing and Carpentry will be added in the future.

The Unnati model is an example of creating sustainable learning among students. However, there would be challenges on the scalability front, as they have been able to handle only 350 students over the last 5 years. Further, since the model is dependent on volunteers to act as faculty, quality would be affected in rural areas. Though management believes that training underprivileged youth has to be subsidised and grant based, the long-term sustainability of a model that is entirely dependent on grants is questionable.

3.4.ii Case 2: *SOLS 24/7-A Guide to a Life-Skills and Leadership Programmes*

In the year 2000, SOLS 24/7 and another concern, Leadership Character Development Institute (LCDI), were created in order to pilot learning modules for disadvantaged Cambodian youth. Currently, SOLS24/7 is the largest non-formal education provider in Cambodia. It builds its programmes from the grassroot-level in partnership with local NGOs to ensure sustainability and smooth management transition. It has a youth-run programme, and offers comprehensive two-year training. It has a

programme on life-skills education for the disadvantaged and youth who are at risk and who hail from poor communities. The programme consists of employability training and training for the underprivileged, for schools located in both urban and rural communities. This programme has made it a policy to accept the same number of male and female students. It advocates the Science of Life Systems - learning modules have been developed and successfully proven to improve the lives of the youth who participate in them. These centres also contribute to the community by becoming involved in the delivery of basic social services such as providing medicines, carton food (food in cans) and clothes, as well as conducting public awareness programmes. SOLS 24/7 helps youth and the local communities by establishing a network of social services. More than 23,000 youth who would not have otherwise been able to attend school have graduated from the programme.

The vision and mission of the organisation is to provide the best informal education and life skills to youth - to develop youth to become skilled, responsible, dynamic, disciplined, compassionate and socially conscious - and also to establish rural economic and urban networks that provide youth with the necessary support to gain employment or start their own businesses.

SOLS 24/7 has provided the network, resources and base for many Government ministries and organisations that have the expertise to be able to reach the grassroots. These organisations use the SOLS network & resources because they are efficient, cost-effective and interdependent.

The institution offers a 2-year intensive training programme organised in four 6-month stages. The first and third stages are conducted in the province centres. The second and fourth stages are conducted in the Teachers' Training center. Each stage focuses on specific disciplines which are complemented by practical application of the theories learned.

Stage 1 - teaches English, Mathematics, Agriculture, ICT Computer Skills and Personality Development (For e.g., developing confidence, a positive attitude toward learning and concentration).

Stage 2 - increases the emphasis on self-reliance, responsibility, trustworthiness and leadership, as well as developing teaching abilities.

Stage 3 - sends the advanced students to province centers and gives them volunteering responsibility to teach the Stage 1 curriculum to new students.

Stage 4 - offers training on higher-level job requirement skills, teaching students management, computing and other vocational skills. They are also taught how to start a business, find work, prepare résumés and write application letters.

Soft Skills - Capacity Building (Science of Life + Transformation - Confidence (Alphametics) - Public Speaking (Seminars) - Leadership Skills (Taking Responsibility) - Concentration & Composure (Counting Beans Exercise) - Discipline (Promotes high discipline among students).

Hard Skills - English Language (Formula & Practice English Learning Programme) - Basic Mathematics (Add, subtract, multiply & divide) - Agriculture Techniques - (Traditional Technology from Timor Leste & New Technology from Grassroots Innovation, Thailand) - Accounting (SOLS 24/7 Accounting Programme) - Job Preparation (SOLS 24/7 Job Preparation Programme) - Marketing (SOLS 24/7 Marketing Programme) - Management (SOLS 24/7 Management Programme) - Start your business (SOLS 24/7 & ILO SYB Programme) - Computer (SOLS 24/7 Basic Computer & ICT Programme), Social Consciousness - Social Hazards (HIV/Aids, Domestic Violence, Drug Abuse, Health, Environment) - Community Service (Blood Donation, Cleaning streets, market area, churches, etc.) - Religious & Racial tolerance & respect (Devotionals) - Promoting Talent (Art & theater, Friday night performances) - Living in Love, Unity & Fellowship - Eye exercise - Beautifying surroundings (using natural resources within the community, High level of Cleanliness & Orderliness).

ICTs such as Digital Imaging and computers are used by volunteers and students to map the economic, social and environmental situation around the centre so that they can learn about potential solutions from global best practices on the Internet as well as track the implementation of problem solving efforts and learn IT skills for the job market.

These programmes hope to create "compassionate souls and realistic visionaries" out of young men and women, as Future Social Entrepreneurs of the developed and developing nations. Training in the 'Science of Life' and 'Science of Economy' hones dynamic and bold youth leaders, who use innovation, creativity and revenue production mechanisms in their relentless pursuit to meet the development needs of communities.

The programme till 2007 provided 9,200 boarding and 13,000 non-boarding students with leadership and life-skills training. Almost 100% of the students/participants have secured employment in the public, private and the social sectors.

The centers are cost-effective through the use of available resources within the community for training, infrastructure, and through students taking up responsibility for daily food and board requirements.

The market strategy of SOLS 24/7 is to raise the visibility of the programme to ensure that local youth will enroll in the two-year training programme, that funding sources will support the programme, that Government bodies will embrace the programme and that the general population will employ the graduates and, finally, that individuals will purchase from the new social business ventures that the youth create.

SOLS 24/7 has expanded to various countries in the South-East. In 2005, SOLS 24/7 and LCDI had set up the Grassroots Development Institute, a local Cambodian NGO, to continue the success of the programme. It has expanded its development programme to Timor Leste, and subsequently to Laos and Vietnam. SOLS 24/7 trainers have also conducted Leadership Courses for Youth in Australia, Malaysia, Cambodia & Singapore.

3.4.iii Case 3: Boys Town - Demonstrated Model of Self-Sufficiency

Boys Town, started as a small orphanage in 1955, is currently a premium institution for education and vocational training at Hyderabad. This institution has made a mark due to the quality of its products, and also as it is a center for excellence for sports, games and education, thus shaping the lives of thousands of underprivileged youth. Selections are done from all over India. This happens through missionary organisations, NGOs and primarily through the contacts of the alumni. Every year, they get three times more applications than the available seats. The key criterion for the selection process comprises of minimum educational background, willingness to study, and they should belong to a lower economic background.

The training is carried out primarily in the 6 manufacturing trades – metal-working, carpentry, fabrication, painting, printing and electrical work. Training in tailoring is available for girls. There is also an integrated training center for the physically challenged and adult deaf & dumb students. However, there are very few deaf and dumb students who study at the center. The duration of the training is two years. All the trades are NCVT-subscribed and the final certification is also done by NCVT. The present strength is about 750 trainees per batch. There is a free boys' home which houses over 500 deprived children and orphans.

The students have to undertake various extra-curricular activities during the two years of their course. After 5 hours of study in the schools, it is compulsory for children to have some exercise. In order to cater to the tastes and abilities of as many students as possible, the extra-curricular activities that are encouraged in the school are games, physical training, field sports, recreation, library, and mass drill.

Boys Town has a unique financing model. This has been achieved with the factory-school model of training, which makes production and training an integral part of learning. The first few weeks after joining are spent on exercises until the basic skills are picked up, and then each fresher is assigned to a senior trainee. Both of them work on jobs that are given on contract to Boys Town by the industry. Thus, the earnings of Boys Town from external clients are used for subsidising the education of students.

Since they have the factory-school model, and their work is also considered to be of high quality, there is no dearth of work and all students therefore learn while actually executing an external job. There are no problems with placement, and salaries range between the minimum wage and Rs. 5000 per month.

Boys Town is an example of how an institution has, for years, been able to produce quality skilled youth from the underprivileged community. It is indeed important to note that many ITIs are following the same NCVT curriculum and are offering similar trades; but yet are not able to demonstrate the same resolve in taking the programme forward effectively.

3.4.iv Case 4: Saath - Unique Quality Assurance System

Saath was founded in 1989. Saath conceptualised the Integrated Development Programme for the slums of Ahmedabad, Gujarat, in the year of its founding, to facilitate participatory processes that would improve the quality of life for slum residents. In 2005, Saath started the employability programme, Umeed, for urban youth in partnership with the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation. The focus of these jobs is in the mushrooming service sector, wherein about 600 youth were trained and placed in the first year. Umeed has been subsequently renamed Udaan, and in collaboration with the State Government, has been scaled up to a State level programme. It aims to reach 20 towns with 1 lakh youth by 2010.

Over the last 3 years, Saath has established 24 training units – 12 in Ahmedabad and 12 in Baroda - and has trained more than 6000 youth. Out of the trained youth, more than 5000 have been placed, while many others have either taken up entrepreneurship or are pursuing further education.

Saath has urban resource centres which are involved in initial market scanning through community events like melas, plays and interaction with community leaders.

Saath has standard course curriculum, with mandatory trades and optional technical trades. Mandatory courses include communication skills, basic computer and life skills and a work readiness module. The technical trades are hospitality, automobile mechanics, electronics service & mechanics, ITES \ BPO, retail management and bedside patient attendant.

Quality Control: The quality monitoring and control system is the hallmark of Saath. To ensure that quality monitoring is undertaken on a regular basis, Saath has a separate quality control unit which assesses the quality of each unit and evaluates each unit on four important parameters - faculty, infrastructure, students and placement. The aggregated score is taken up and the units are ranked on the basis of their composite scores.

Scoring Scale	Ranking
70-75 %	Presentable
75-80 %	Average
> 80 %	Ideal

If any training unit gets a score of average or presentable, they are assessed to find out the reasons for these scores, and are assisted in preparing an improvement plan to reach the ideal score.

These kinds of quality control systems will enable smoother expansion and scaling up.

3.4.v Case 5: Jointly Owned Job Oriented Education (JOJOE) - An Attempt to Attain a Higher Scale and Financial Sufficiency

TMI, a staffing solutions company based out of Hyderabad, is focusing on rural and semi-urban youth across more than 400 small towns. TMI is training semi-urban and rural youth for jobs in various sectors including retail, financial services, manufacturing, IT and BPO. At TMI First, the focus is on those who have dropped out late in their school years - between Grades 10 and 12. Across the country, approximately 6.7 million students drop out at this stage. TMI First is working to create 100,000 Jointly Owned Job Oriented Education (JOJOE) students every year by 2010.

TMI First assists, if required, employers in assessing and selecting rural and semi-urban youth, as the assessment techniques used for hiring the semi-urban and rural youth is different from the city youth. Once it zeroes in on the skills required for specific jobs, TMI First arranges to send the candidates to the selected institutions for appropriate courses. The training institutions are identified based on a number of criteria: the training content and the experience of the institute in imparting similar content; the reputation and the brand image of the training institute; the infrastructure required and available with the institute; and the availability of suitable trainers.

To address difficulties like adjusting to new places, homesickness, etc., TMI First has developed the idea of 'work+stay+eat' instead of just 'work'. Groups of people are hired to work together, so that their opportunity for some social life in the city is greater. When their jobs are relocated to smaller towns or rural areas, some of these employees from rural areas would have opportunities to move closer to home.

The cost of these courses is met either by the employers, or the student, or a third party - often the Government. TMI subscribes to the model wherein the student contributes a portion of the costs, along with some subsidy from the Government / employers. Micro-financing institutions are also willing to provide loans, provided the employer and the funding institutions are willing to sign a long term agreement. The role of micro-financing institutions may be especially important, because formal credit from banks is hard to come by due to the lack of explicit guidelines for funding short-term job oriented courses, either from the Government or the Indian Banks Association. This model demonstrates the requirement of partnerships and collaborations for rapid scaling up.

3.4.vi Case 6: Ability Foundation - Effective Employability of the Physically Challenged

Started in 1995, the Ability Foundation, Chennai, works on advocacy as well as training and employability of physically challenged youth. The foundation has been organising an Employability Fair every year for the past 5 years, and sensitise the industry about the needs of physically challenged youth. The industry is asked to participate with a positive attitude towards hiring physically challenged youth. According to the placement coordinator, this has created a change in attitudes towards these students. Physically challenged graduate youth from all over the country participate in this fair. There are instances of youth who are hired by retail companies for their finance and back-end operations. The foundation also provides counseling

to the youth and runs one month courses for the needy on specific soft-skills. This annual fair is proving to be an important platform to connect the physically challenged youth to the industry. However, its main limitation is its focus on youth who are at least graduates. It needs to widen its platform for undergraduates and less educated youth as well.

Chapter 4

Technology

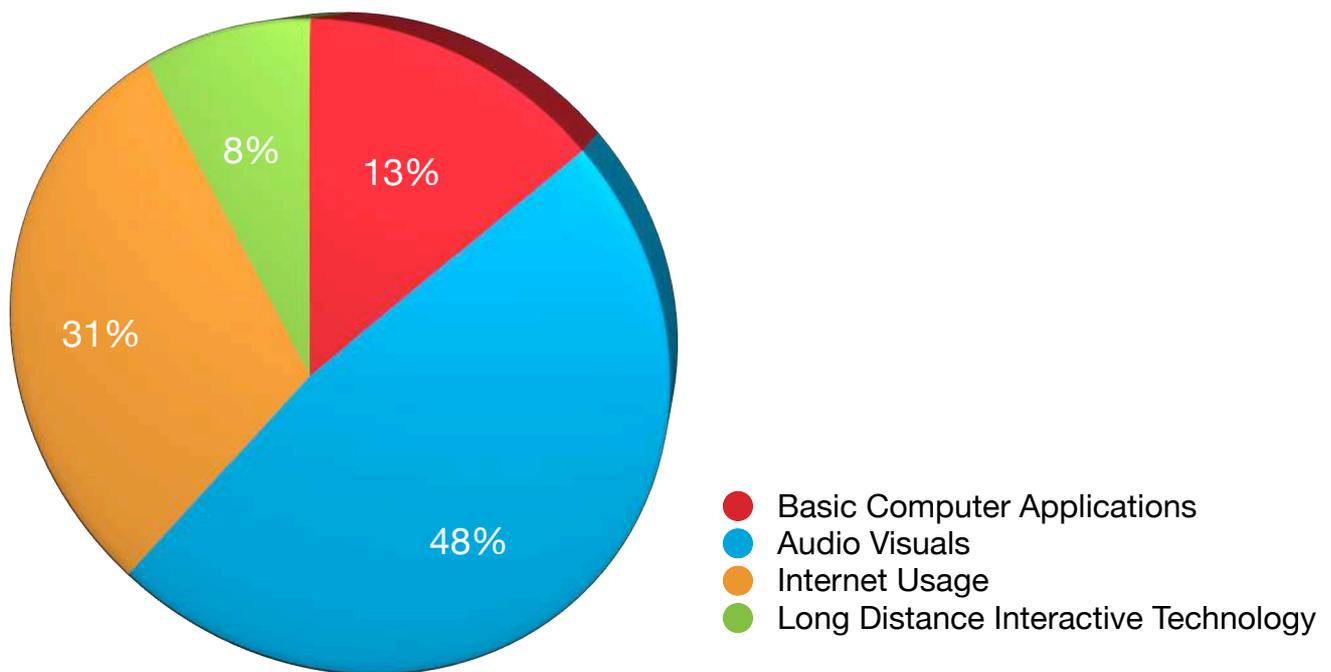
Chapter 4

4.1 Back ground – Study Findings

Information related to the usage and effectiveness of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the employability programmes undertaken by a variety of training institutes and NGOs, was obtained as part of the study. The usage of ICT has been categorised into 5 phases, viz., pre-classroom phase, classroom phase, evaluation phase, placement phase and post-placement phase. The study observes that currently the use of ICT at training institutes and NGOs are limited to a few options. The important ICT applications in the ongoing skill training programmes across 11 study cities in India are given in Table 1.

Phase	Type of ICT
Pre-classroom phase	E-mails and mailing software, information on Websites, telephone communication, PowerPoint presentations, pamphlets, brochures.
Classroom phase	OHP, LCD projectors, video films, Internet, computers, printers, PowerPoint presentations, SMS, VSAT technology.
Evaluation phase	Online tests, PowerPoint presentations.
Placement Phase	E-mails and mailing software, information on Websites, telephone communication, PowerPoint presentations, pamphlets, brochures.
Post Placement Phase	Telephone communication, e-mails

Table 4-1: Phase-wise usage of ICT in Employability Trainings



Graph 4-1: Graph showing the percentage usage of ICT applications among Training Institutions

However, the usage and adaptation of ICT is not common across all training institutes and NGOs. In order to understand the level of ICT applications used by training institutes, these applications have been classified into 5 levels-

- Level 1 – Basic training aids like OHP, Slide Projectors, etc.
- Level 2 – Primary computer-based applications like PowerPoint Presentations.
- Level 3 – Audio-visual aids like audio tapes, video films, LCD, etc.
- Level 4 – Internet medium for reading, correspondence, etc.
- Level 5 – Long distance interactive technology.

The findings of the study revealed that the majority of the organisations (48% of the 39 organisations surveyed), use audio-visual aids during the classroom phase. However, the usage of the internet and internet-based applications are limited to 31% of the organisations. In the case of usage of long distance interactive technology, most of the organisations are at the nascent stage only.

4.1.i Relevance of ICT in employability programmes

There is vast scope for ICT to aid in enhancing the livelihoods of the underprivileged people, especially in skill enhancement employability programmes for the underprivileged youth, as these technologies can be useful for scaling out in both urban and rural areas. Although there are currently only 60 million internet users¹³ in India, internet connectivity in rural areas is increasing at a very fast pace.

ICT has vital role to play in employability programme in coming days - Leading corporate certification agency

4.1.ii What kind of ICT useful for employability programmes ?

The use of ICT can enable better communication with, comprehension of, assessment of and outreach to underprivileged youth, especially in rural areas. The possible ICT applications, in addition to those already being practiced are :

¹³ Based on information from internet world stats

Phase	Type of ICT
Pre-classroom phase	Web based campaigning; Web based career guidance and counseling; Hot phones (Interactive Voice Response Systems); CRM mailing software – to reach out to NGOs and other communities and organisations; online new letters and brochures.
Classroom phase	VSAT technology; Voice Over Internet Protocols(VOIP); Video conferencing; documents sharing software; simulation software; English speaking, writing and reading audio visual tool kits; use of gadgets like a handcam, etc. (recording the learning process and showing the video clips).
Evaluation phase	Customised software for assessment; online tests; report generating software
Placement Phase	Web based advertisements; CRM mailing software – to reach out to clients; online new letters and brochures
Post-placement Phase	Data base software; hotlines; alumni portals; hot phones; VOIP communication, e-mails.

Table 4-2: Useful ICT technologies for employability programmes

4.2 Cases on the use of ICT Applications for Employability Programmes in India

Different pilot interventions are taking place in different parts of India with regard to employability skills. Prominent among there are:

4.2.i eJeevika

A startup intervention, incubated by Rural Technology and Business Incubator (RTBI), this is a society established under the Indian Institute Technology, Chennai, or IIT-M. eJeevika trains villagers for employment in retail, business process outsourcing and security services, in an attempt to bridge the urban-rural divide.

Students who wish to be trained, register with eJeevika's website, after which the company conducts an online interview in the presence of its client. Once the client gives the go-ahead, the candidate pays a fee and undergoes online training. The candidate then has to clear online tests, interviews and a final face-to-face interview with the client. The entire process takes around a month to complete. Students are required to pay a nominal fee of Rs. 500 to enroll in the programme. This has been successfully piloted in Cuddalore and Tiruvallur districts of Tamil Nadu. eJeevika has trained and placed around 100 candidates with the help of a network of 20 franchisees. At present, some offline classes are also given to students at their respective locations. eJeevika plans to train and find jobs for 200,000 people in the next couple of years through a network of around 1,000 franchisees in the rural districts of India.

Business Model of eJeevika

- Identify entrepreneurs through village council heads, non-profit organisations and self-help groups (SHGs).
- Offer them a franchise - a franchise requires one to invest on a couple of personal computers, a broadband connection and power backup - which entails an investment of around Rs 50, 000.
- Franchisees identify potential candidates who are trained by eJeevika as per clients' requirements.

4.2.i.a Village Resource Centres

The Village Resource Centre (VRC) concept has been evolved

by ISRO and implemented through a partnership with MSSRF, by integrating ISRO's capabilities in satellite communications and satellite-based earth observations, to disseminate a variety of services in order to address the changing and critical needs of rural communities. The VRC is a totally interactive VSAT (Very Small Aperture Terminal) based network.

VRCs can provide a variety of services like tele-education, tele-medicine, online decision-support, interactive farmers' advisory services, tele-fishery, e-Governance services, weather services and water management. By providing tele-education services, the VRCs act as virtual community centric learning centres.

The Dhan Foundation (Tamil Nadu) and the Byrraju Foundation (Andhra Pradesh) are among several NGOs which are actively utilising VRCs for providing services to their community members. Dhan has more than 20 VRCs in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu and the Byrraju Foundation has 16 VRCs in 3 districts of Andhra Pradesh.

The total cost of the equipment worth Rs. 1 Crore is provided by ISRO free of cost to the interested NGOs. The operation and management costs are to be borne by the NGOs. At present, the major constraint for effective utilisation of the VRC is the erratic power supply in rural areas.

4.2.i.b Online Employment Information

As discussed in the previous section, the Rajasthan Mission on Livelihoods (RMoL), has in association with private partners, set up a website (www.rajasthanrozgar.com), which serves as a job portal for job seekers and employers. The website also provides a hotline number (01410-6001234) where job seekers can call and upload their resumes, as well as get career guidance. The hotline is available in English, Hindi and Marwari, and caters to the needs of a diverse audience. This hotline provides candidates with a seven-minute preliminary assessment, and then funnels them for detailed assessments, jobs or training. The website also offers an Employability Primer (a 100 page document for first-time job seekers to prepare them for the job search process).

4.2.i.c Software For Monitoring Employability Programmes

The Employment Generation and Marketing Mission (EGMM), an employability programme for underprivileged youth in Andhra Pradesh, is using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as a tool for transparency. They have developed a transaction-based software, which reduces transmission losses of information coming up to the State level from different levels, from villages, districts as well as tribal areas. Additionally, the software helps in generating reports.

The reports and analyses help the programme team to reflect on the field learning's and improves their performance. For example, this helps us to continuously improve the quality of training and ensure better job placement by analysing the income of youth placed in companies.

4.2.i.d Digital tool-kit for training programmes

In an effort to reach a greater number of youth who are at risk, and to take advantage of the power of educational technology, CAP Foundation has designed, developed and piloted a digital toolkit, with technical assistance from QUEST and Microsoft. This tool-kit will assist facilitators and programme participants to support both, the facilitators' capacity to deliver employability training, as well as provide students support in skill training, that includes life skills and workplace readiness modules. These modules will be used in conjunction with Microsoft's UP curriculum in community-based Employability Training Centers (ETC) located in rural and remote areas of India.

The target is to provide digital tool kits for 80 ETCs across 3 countries - India, Sri Lanka and the Philippines - to train 125 facilitators and to train 12,500 young people.

The digital tool-kit allows facilitators to conduct life skills and workplace readiness components of the programme in remote places. Digital tool-kits for master facilitators and students consist of multimedia-based tools for both, the facilitator's own training, and for the facilitator to use in helping students with skills training, self-guided skills and remedial academic training.

The examples mentioned here are only some of the many ICT applications that are being pilot-tested across the country.

4.2.ii Potential for ICT in Employability and Skill Development Programmes

The future seems very promising for ICT applications in the employability skills sector, given the projections for employability programmes by the Government as well as non-Government organisations.

- a. **Cost effectiveness** – Although the costs related to design and pilot testing would be high, scaling up of successful applications will bring down the costs.

"We are looking for the funding sources to develop and use ICT technologies as it involves high investment for bringing out new ICT technologies."

-Senior person from a major skill training organisation

Mobile technology is a huge example of such scaling up and cost effectiveness.

Many computer firms replace their computers every 2-3 years. The changes in technology might render them useless for high-end firms. However, these computers might be very useful for training institutions, since the institutions can purchase these at very nominal rates.

- b. **Scope** – The scope in different parts of the country can be maximised through ICT applications. NGOs like the Dr. Reddy Foundation, and corporate institutes like the Indian Retail School are in the process of developing ICT applications to extend their scope through online programmes.
- c. **Quality** – Use of online programmes will lead to the standardisation of content delivered across the country. This will lead to fewer variations in the quality of programmes. Even the use of simple ICT tools like the internet, which is a powerful learning tool, enhances the quality of the programmes being delivered.
- d. **Time efficiency** - Online programmes can be directly relayed across many classrooms simultaneously and will hence increase time-effectiveness.

4.2.iii Risks and Limitations

The infrastructure support required for utilising ICT applications may not be on par with the pace of the development of ICT applications. This will hamper the scope and usage of ICT applications. In addition, the pace of adaptability to ICT applications by rural communities is an important issue for scaling up, and thereby impacts the overall cost-effectiveness.

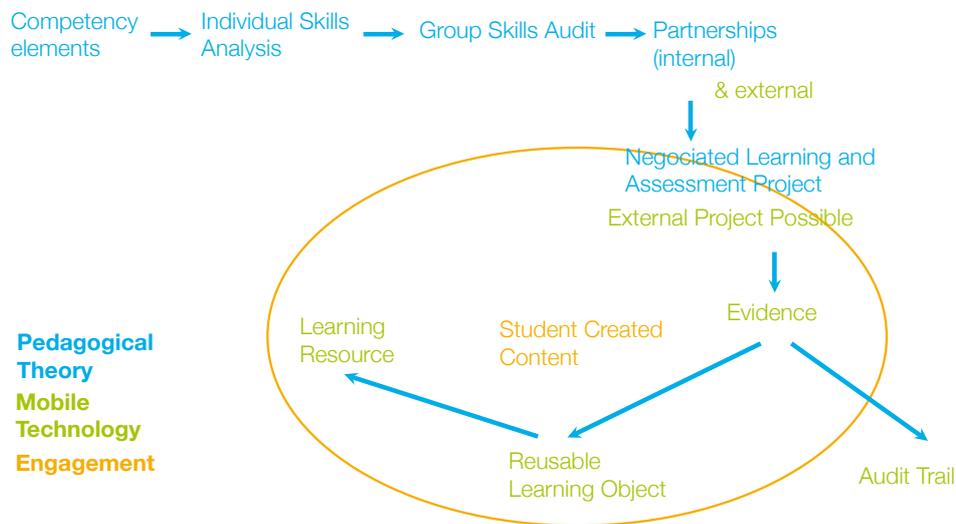
The process of using ICT is also limited, and the faculty at institutes have to be adequately trained to understand that ICT is only supplementary, and the personal touch required to deal with these youth for courses like life skills is irreplaceable.

4.3 Use of ICT in Youth-Employment Programmes – International Cases

4.3.i Caselet 1: Using Mobile Phone Technology to Enhance Learning for Youth in VETiS, Pre-apprenticeships and Apprenticeships

The mobile phone has become a convergence of devices, resulting in a powerful multimedia tool. The trend towards self-publishing and self content creation is evident in the rise of YouTube, MySpace and Facebook. This project at Chisholm uses Moblog, which enhances learning through the social network created, for its Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETiS), and now, more broadly for its pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programmes,. The project focuses on learner content being created by the learner. The impact of these technologies on the learner is the ability to create and share objects of interest, or learning objects, that can be done wherever the learner is, be it the classroom, the workplace, or in life. This not only ensures that the resource content is relevant for the intended audience, but is considerate of generational differences. The resources and tasks are developed by the same generation who will use them. The faculty is also able to utilise these resources with other theoretical and instructional classes, again giving greater relevance. This content can be used to complement Chisholm Institute's existing learning resources.

A New Model Constructivist, Collaborative and Collective Learning



The Moblog platform also allows the inclusion of third party evidence.

Third party evidence is gained as the employer/supervisor videotapes the student carrying out a task, and adding audio commentary, thus doing away with the need for written reports. Validation is also addressed since the authenticity of the student working on a particular task can be checked through student record photographs.

The ability for the teacher, assessor, employers, students and even parents and friends to be able to visit this learning environment allows for social dialogue, recognition of employer input into training, acknowledgement of student achievements, and gives friends and family an insight into the students' work environment, giving a greater understanding of the stresses and rewards of a career in a particular field. This site can be accessed by means of a computer with an internet connection or an internet-enabled mobile phone, providing anytime access to photographs and videos. Users can also view and add comments, all in a mobile context. The cost of accessing the site is quite inexpensive, at approximately 12 to 16 cents to open the page. Adding a comment costs a further 12 to 16 cents. The ability to add comments provides feedback to the student on their work processes, and is shared collaboratively since fellow students can also access pictures and comments, thus giving added context to the written comment. All participants can then learn from one experience.

This project provides for employer/supervisor participation. This inclusion into the learning process creates opportunities for the employer to be more involved, more aware of what is happening, and also provides the employer/supervisor with recognition of their role in the training. Another feature of the onsite or workplace learning and assessment programme is content delivery to mobile devices. This has been successfully used with apprentices. The ability to create information, carry out self-assessments and have scored formal assessments accessible via a mobile device creates a holistic learning environment whilst the learner is in the workplace. Mobile technology has the capacity to not only support the assessment, but also to support learning and the learner in the workplace. The staff has created a set of online learning resources accessible by means of mobile devices. This is enhanced by the ability to web-cast events live through these devices. Live web-casts are being tried out with critical points of instruction being filmed utilising software installed on the mobile phone. The system notifies a selected group, in this case the onsite or workplace students, who are then able to see the instructions real-time via a mobile device or computer, with an option to view the archive later at a more convenient time. Students currently utilise this to relay contextual information back to Institutes. This allows for specific contextual content to be viewed, discussed and reflected upon, either collaboratively or individually, enabling learning and knowledge construction.

VETiS teachers have been supplied with mobile phones that support the required software technology for students to utilise in the classroom and workshop/simulated workplace environment. This guides the students on how to implement this technology and gives them guided practice at no expense to them. This cost is borne by the Institute with the current billing averaging at around USD 20.00 per mobile phone per month. Students use these phones to take photographs and videos of their individual and/or group projects, and can use Bluetooth technology to transfer this to their own phone. The teacher transfers these digital resources to a computer for digital archiving. Students are given the contact details of each of these

phones, and they relay SMS text information to the teacher. This information can be pertaining to class attendance, requests or clarifications. The teachers get, on an average, 10-12 messages each evening from students. The parents are also given this contact number, but are reminded that discussions are permitted only up to half an hour prior to class commencement, unless the matter is urgent. There is an average of two parents who call up per call in order to discuss issues/progress with the individual teacher. The teacher uses mobile technology to instigate responses. This may be a simple reminder of the class project for the week, or a reminder on what equipment the student will need to bring.

4.3.ii Case 2 - Berwick TEC at Chisholm

The Berwick Technical Education Centre (TEC), South East Victoria, is an exciting State Government initiative to provide vocationally focused courses in state-of-the-art facilities, for 16-20 year old students who have not completed Grade 12. The TEC facility provides both, a 'home base' for students, and an adult learning environment, with vocational training facilities in high skills shortage areas such as building & construction, plumbing, electrical, children's services, health and nursing.

4.3.ii.a Features

Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) programmes are offered as one seamless programme with integrated learning and assessment and Information Communication Technologies (ICT). The following are its features:

- Strong links through the Lead Partner Model with local schools, and for industry involvement in delivery, work placement and mentoring.
- Development of an e-portfolio linked to the credit matrix of each student.
- An applied learning focus which embraces technology and takes place in simulated learning spaces (For e.g., a high tech simulation of a clinical acute area, general fluid learning spaces in the workplace and through community projects).
- A unique aspect of the TEC is the simulated building site where all trades work together in a collaborative, flexible and timely manner, within a single space, so that students gain a realistic experience of a multi-trade environment.
- Strong use of ICT for learning, communication and social interaction.

4.3.ii.b Philosophy

A significant outcome is the students' ability to plan, map and fulfill learning and employment journeys, improve life and basic education skills, and, in particular, skills to manage setbacks and advantages. The educational model is built on initially identifying the desired student outcomes, and then determining how the outcomes can be achieved. This includes measures to overcome challenges that may inhibit successful outcomes.

4.3.ii.c Approach

All courses offered at the TEC provide defined pathways to either employment or further study. Each student receives individual support with career and pathways planning, and also gain access to specialist services during their time at the Berwick TEC. Individualised learning is a priority at the TEC, where students are given support to become independent learners and to develop skills that allow them to successfully manage their own learning. All levels of the TEC experience are focused on providing students with a competitive edge in transitioning into the workplace and becoming valued members of the community. Classes generally focus on project-based learning in a "world-of-work" environment to simulate the workplace.

The Berwick TEC is developing strong links with the industry for both staff and students. The staff has current industry skills and knowledge to ensure that the curriculum is responsive to the needs of industry, and to improve job prospects for students. Students will benefit from the industry partnerships by gaining relevant work placements in order to further develop their technical and employability skills.

4.3.ii.d Staff A Key Success Factor

A critical component of TEC success relates directly to the selection of staff. TEC staff must support an integrated delivery model, understand and enjoy working with young people, be prepared to question and change traditional delivery practices, and use ICT extensively in order to aid in the participation of young people in learning.

Chapter 5

Retail Industry and Skill Development Training

Chapter 5

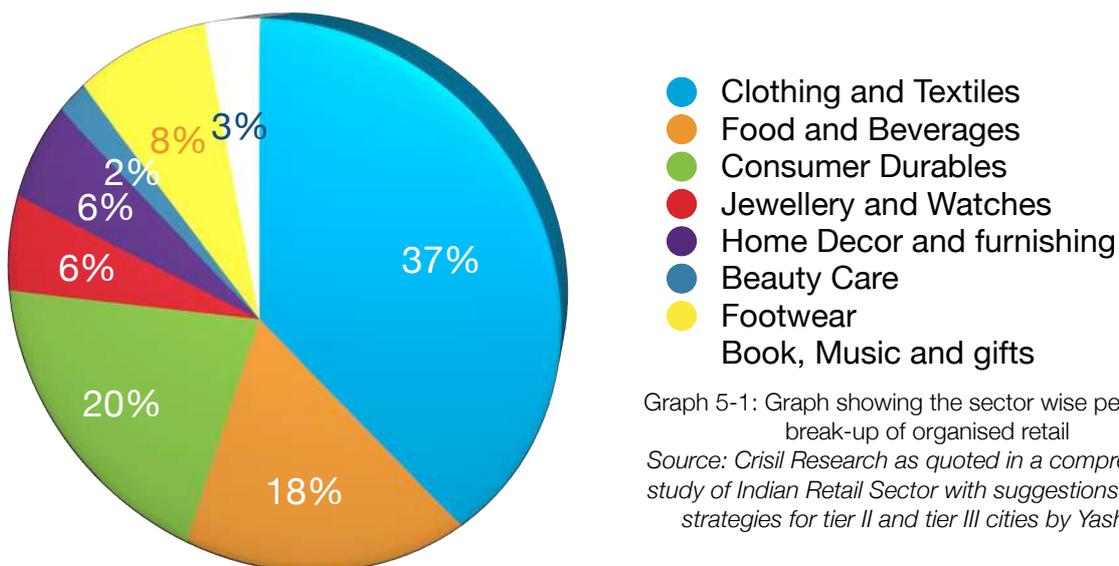
5.1 Retail Industry: An Overview

India is poised for a big leap in the organised retailing sector. In 2008, various studies by Northbridge Capital, McKinsey and a joint study by KPMG and ASSOCHAM, have made almost similar observations about the current scenario and the future of the retail industry. According to the Northbridge Capital Report¹⁴ in 2008, the retail industry, which was pegged at USD 400 billion in 2008, is projected to grow to USD 700 billion by 2010. The organised sector, which has a mere 7.5% share currently, is expected to be 20% of the total market by 2010. The report also suggests that, in the next 3 years, organised retail will grow at 40% (Compound annual growth rate).

According to the McKinsey Report¹⁵ in September 2008, titled 'The Great Indian Bazaar: Organised Retail Comes of Age in India', the organised segment of the retail industry is expected to grow from the current 5% of the total market to about 14-18% of the expected Rs 18 lakh crore market by 2015. At the moment, only about 13 million out of the total 204 million households in India have the purchasing capacity to be regular buyers at organised retail outlets. However, this is expected to increase to 65 million in the next eight years.

The ASSOCHAM and KPMG study¹⁶ estimate the total retail market size in India in 2008 at USD 353 billion. The annual growth of the retail market in India is expected to be around 8% and the total retail market size is likely to touch USD 416 billion by 2010. The present share of the organised retail sector is estimated at 7%. By the year 2010, the size of the organised retail sector is estimated to reach USD 51 billion up from the current 7% to 12% of the total market. The investment in modern retailing formats over the coming 4-5 years is expected to be around USD 25-30 billion.

5.2 Sector wise Overview of Organised Retail



Graph 5-1: Graph showing the sector wise percentage break-up of organised retail

Source: Crisil Research as quoted in a comprehensive study of Indian Retail Sector with suggestions for ideal strategies for tier II and tier III cities by Yashaswi

¹⁴ <http://www.livemint.com/2008/09/28135507/Indian-retail-market-to-touch.html>

¹⁵ http://www.ibef.org/artdisplay.aspx?tdy=1&cat_id=60&art_id=20386

¹⁶ <http://www.assochem.org/prels/shownews.php?id=1690>

The Northbridge Capital report says that, among the various categories, apparel is the largest organised retail category, accounting for 39% of the organised market, and its annual growth is pegged at 12-15%. It also predicts that organised apparel retail is projected to touch USD 200 million by 2010 from the current worth of USD 120 million.

5.3 Geographical Spread of Organised Retail

A report by Adecco TISS Labour Market Research Initiatives (ATLMRI), a June 2007 Jones Lang LaSalle Meghraj report entitled "The Geography of Opportunity - The India 50", has identified 50 Indian cities as potential beneficiaries of the organised retail boom. These have been divided into five categories:

5.3.i Maturing

The places where organised retail started with a bang, like Delhi, National Capital Region (NCR) and Mumbai, are being saturated. At these places growth in malls and hypermarkets is likely.

5.3.ii Transitional

These include cities like Bangalore, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Pune, Chennai and Ahmedabad. A majority of the total market will be accounted for by these cities. Large corporate houses, high levels of economic activity, above-average income, and large number middle-class residents are the drivers of growth of organised retail in these cities.

5.3.iii High-Growth

The cities which have proximity to larger cities like Chandigarh, Jaipur, Ludhiana, Lucknow, Kochi, Surat and Vadodara will see a rapid growth in the immediate future.

5.3.iv Emerging

These include cities which are tourist-oriented, and have setup infrastructure for IT companies. Some of these are Nagpur, Indore, Nasik, Bhubaneshwar, Vizag, Coimbatore, Mangalore, Mysore, Thiruvananthapuram, Amritsar, Agra and Goa.

5.3.v Nascent

These offer the first-mover advantage as income levels and corporate activities are limited. The cities are Patna, Bhopal, Meerut, Asansol, Varanasi, Kolhapur and Sonapat.

The top 15 cities in the list will contribute to more than 80% of the total national retail business.

According to the ASSOCHAM and KPMG study¹⁷, 315 hypermarkets are likely to come up in Tier I and II cities by the year 2011. The study also points out, that in 2008, although 212 towns had sufficient market potential for hypermarkets for break-even existence, this potential was not realised. It also pointed out that 5 or more Hypermarkets could have been possible in 25 towns in 2008, and in 2011. Post-2011, organised retail would grow by 15%, as enough competition would have emerged by then, and in about 400 towns, the number of hypermarkets would have risen to 475. However, it may be challenging to obtain spaces of 25,000-30,000 sq. ft. for a single store in high street locations and to recruit sales staff and store managers in Tier III, IV and V towns.

¹⁷<http://india-real-estate-news.com/2008/09/24/315-hypermarkets-likely-in-tier-i-ii-cities-by-2011-assochem/>

5.4 Rural Retail

According to a study by CII and Yes Bank¹⁸, the rural retail market is estimated to cross the USD 45.32 billion mark by 2010 and USD 60.43 billion by 2015. Rising purchasing power, changing consumption patterns, increased access to information and communication technology, and improving infrastructure, are the major reasons for the increase. According to a report — India Retail Report 2009 — by Images FR Research, rural India accounts for 55% of private consumption. Many retail giants like Reliance and Spencer's are planning to expand into semi-urban and rural areas.

5.4.i Impact of Economic Slowdown on Organised Retailing

According to an Economic Times¹⁹ article, recession has forced many of the organised retail players to take another look at their strategies. Reliance Retail, which had plans to set up 1000 stores by 2007, could succeed in setting up only 816 stores across 60 cities by the end of 2008. The economic slowdown has forced it to down-size its hypermarket in Ahmedabad. Further, according to a report in the Mint, Reliance Retail is restructuring its operations by shutting down, relocating or resizing at least 200 of its smaller stores, and wants to focus on making existing stores profitable. The situation is worse for Subiksha, which is cash strapped, and has shut down operations in many cities. The Future Group has also closed down two of its Big Bazaar outlets in Ahmedabad. Austerity measures like reduction in advertising budgets, reduction in electricity bills and cuts in packaging costs have become the order of the day.

A blessing in disguise from the meltdown has been the decrease in rentals²⁰. The Future Group, Reliance Retail and Aditya Birla Retail are renegotiating rentals to bring down costs. Most of the retail chains either purchased or rented properties at the peak of the real estate market. This has seriously dented their ability to make profits from the retail business, and this is further taking its toll during recession. There is an expectation that a correction in real estate prices will bring down the costs of the companies by 20-30%.

However, as per the Manpower survey done in the 3rd quarter of 2008-09 financial year, there has been a noticeable decline in the hiring sentiment in the wholesale and retail business. Only 11% companies in these businesses said that they are likely to hire in the next quarter.

5.4.ii Key Formats of Organised Retail²¹

5.4.ii.a Malls

Shopping malls are the largest form of organised retailing today. These are located mainly in large metropolitan cities, where consumers are looking for an experience which includes shopping and entertainment under one-roof. Shopping malls range in area from 60,000 sq. ft. to 7,00,000 sq. ft. and above. For e.g. Forum mall and City Centre mall.

5.4.ii.b Specialty Stores

These stores focus on specific market segments, specialising in particular products such as entertainment and recreation products, gift items and so on. For e.g., Crossword for books, Mediplus for medicines.

5.4.ii.c Discount Stores

Discount stores, or factory outlets, offer discounts on the Maximum Retail Price either through bulk selling, thus reaching economies of scale, or when disposing of excess stock left over at the end of the season. For e.g., Brand Factory, an apparel showrooms offering "seconds".

¹⁸ http://ibef.in/artdisplay.aspx?cat_id=194&art_id=20773

¹⁹ http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/Features_27_September_2008

²⁰ <http://www.indianrealtynews.com/retail-market/organised-retail-losing-its-path.html>

²¹ http://atlmri.googlepages.com/ATLMRI_discussionpaper7.pdf

5.4.ii.d Hypermarkets/Department Stores

Large stores ranging from 20000-50000 sq. ft, catering to all consumer needs under one roof. For e.g., Big Bazaar, Vishal Megamart.

5.4.ii.e Supermarkets

Large self service outlets, having a strong focus on food & grocery and personal sales are termed as Supermarkets. Supermarkets can further be classified into mini-supermarkets, typically 1,000 sq. ft. to 2,000 sq. ft. in area, and large supermarkets, ranging from of 3,500 sq ft to 5,000 sq. ft in area. These stores today contribute to 30% of all the food & grocery of organised retail sales. Examples are *Foodland Fresh, Haiko, Shoprite*, etc.

5.4.ii.f Convenience Stores

These are relatively small stores (400-2,000 sq. feet) usually located near residential areas. They stock a limited range of high-turnover convenience products and are usually open for extended periods during the day, seven days a week. Prices are slightly higher due to the convenience premium.

5.4.iii Human Resources for Organised Retailing

The non availability of trained manpower is the major problem-area for the fast growing Indian retail industry. A report released by CII & ICRA Management Consultancy Services (IMaCS)²² in September 2008, estimates the current human resource absorption capacity in organised retail to be 1.5 to 2 million. This number is likely to increase to about 5.5 to 6.5 million by 2015, which means an incremental human resource requirement of 4 to 5 million people in the next 7 to 8 years.

The report categorised the manpower requirement in organised retail in India into four categories – Minimal Education (cleaning, housekeeping etc.), Skill Category Level I (managing outlets, customer service etc.), Skill Category Level II (marketing, selling, merchandising etc.) and Specialised Skills (supply chain design and management, etc.).

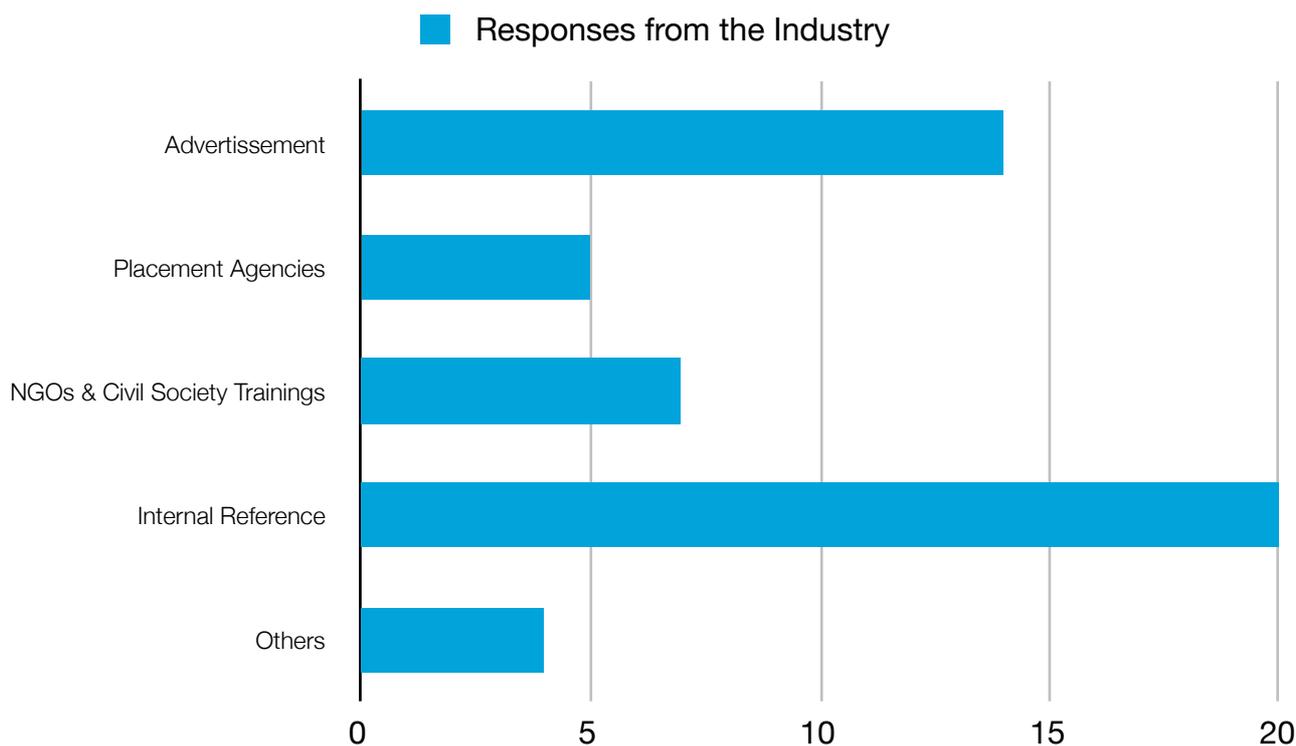
With the current economic slowdown, where jobs are being slashed and expansion plans are being put on hold, only those who are efficient and skilled in their jobs can survive. Those youth who are acquiring the requisite skills through short-term skill development courses will have an edge over the others for entry-level jobs.

In-depth interviews were conducted with HR heads and store heads of the various retail chains in order to understand the requirements, processes, the current quality of personnel on the floor spaces, and expectation of the industry from the skill training providers and the trained youth. The findings are as presented below:

5.4.iv The Recruitment Process in Retail Industry

Recruitment in the organised retail industry for entry-level floor jobs is through diverse methods. The key feature observed in the recruitment of sales and other personnel is that it is highly localised. This is true even of larger chain stores. The most common method for hiring staff is internal references. Many in the industry believe this to be the best way to fill a requirement of large personnel of similar economic and social background. It is faster, often leads to lower attrition rates since jobs are acquired through local references, and is less expensive. Hiring seldom happens through advertisements as these are believed to add to the costs while attracting hordes of job-seekers whose credentials are unknown.

²²<http://www.employabilityuniverse.com/Retail/49/CII-IMaCS-study-on-skills-gap-Non-availability-of-trained-manpower-is-the-key-problem-for-Indian-Retail-sector>



Graph 5-2: Graph showing the major recruitment procedures followed in the retail industry

Placement agencies, which were earlier the most convenient mode of hiring, are no longer preferred due to delayed payment of salaries to employees despite timely remittance by the retail companies. This was seen to affect the morale and performance of employees on the shop floor. A few respondents also quoted examples of non-payment of PF (Provident Fund) to employees by placement agencies.

NGO training programmes are currently not an important source of recruitment due to the lack of awareness on the part of companies, and the inability of NGOs to meet with a large number of companies. Almost all companies showed willingness to hire from NGOs. A few of them believed that this was a better way to ascertain the trustworthiness of the individual.

"Since I took over, I have started having tie-ups with NGOs training institutions as I find them to be the best source of connecting to larger numbers of better-trained youth for the front-end jobs."

-HR Manager of food and grocery retail at Hyderabad

5.4.v Eligibility Criteria

In most cases, the eligibility criteria for selection of candidates was 18 years of age. Many retailers, especially the national chains, preferred a maximum age limit of 25-26 years.

In many of the bigger formats for apparels and food and grocery, higher secondary (Grade 12) is the minimum qualification. However, there are cases where even those who have completed Matriculation education are preferred. A trained person is not a pre-condition for recruitment as of now in the industry for the floor and front-end sales people.

5.5.vi Pre-requisites for Employees

75% of the respondents mentioned that the background of a person is a very important consideration for recruitment. Since the front-end involves handling several items of household consumption, chances of pilferage would be higher if the family background was not good. Honesty and integrity are, therefore, much valued traits. However, the companies do find it difficult to entirely ascertain these attributes. *A few respondents believe that hiring from the NGO training programmes does help in mitigating this risk.*

"We look at the background of the person. We prefer people who are needy because these people are more sincere and hardworking."

-HR Manager of a Departmental Store in Kolkatta

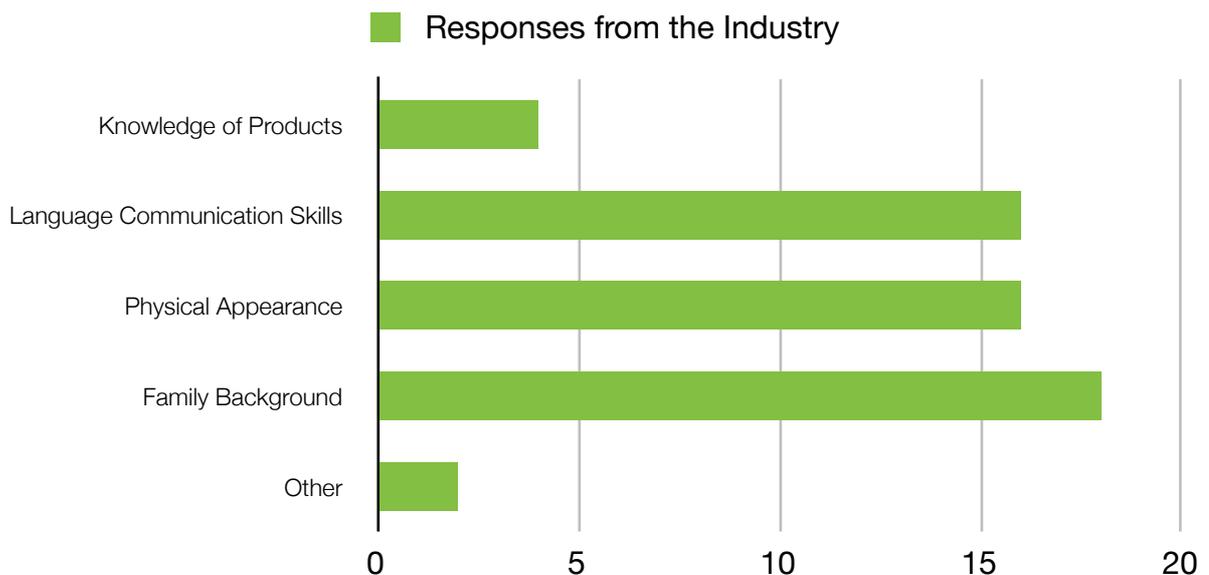
A good background is also preferred in order to understand the importance of the job for the person and the utility of the income from the job. Companies prefer needy people who have to either supplement their family income or finance their own studies. Communication skills, grooming and taking initiatives are pre-requisites for shop-floor personnel in the retail industry.

Hire for attitudes and train for skills

-HR Manager of a Hypermall in Mumbai

Many companies prefer candidates with good English communication, though a general observation of the shop-floor at various cities appears to show that this is actually required on the job in very few places. The retail chains that have hired from NGOs felt that the students are lacking in English communication. It is primarily required in up-market areas, hypermalls and departmental stores like Shoppers Stop and Lifestyle. On the other hand, a new retail chain that is also entering into training the underprivileged for the shop-floor, does not deem English to be necessary except in a few places and posts, and therefore have decided to emphasise on the local language. Further, with the growth of the retail industry in the near future expected to be in tier-2 and tier-3 cities, the preference for the local language is going to be higher. With the increasing cosmopolitan nature of cities, a basic understanding of English along with good communicative Hindi (or another local language) is deemed very important.

Knowledge about products and computers is not found to be a major requirement at this level. Candidates are expected to know how to use the keyboard since all the retail chains have customised software which their people are trained to use.

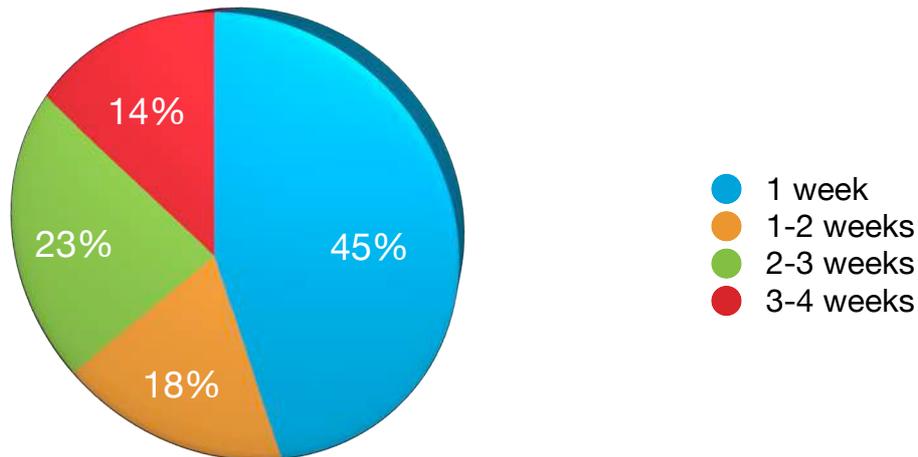


Graph 5-3: Graph showing the key attributes focused during recruitment

Stores in South India show an aversion to recruiting floor-people from the north. This is partially due to negative perceptions about the Northern states and partially to the absence of local language skills.

5.5.vi.a Induction

Induction in the retail industry is very crucial. Presently, the retail industry is hiring freshers without training and experience at the entry level. All big companies have developed customised induction-training programmes. The small retail companies are not equipped with in-house training systems; therefore they generally give greater preference to trained or experienced people when recruiting.



Graph 5-4 : Graph showing the percentage break-up of various durations followed for induction training.

The established companies have their own excellent training system. For example, Pantaloon has their own training manual as well as a core team comprising of people from all levels. During training sessions, IT, reading materials, role-play, hand-outs, training manuals, etc., are used. The staff of Shoppers Stop has the advantage of using the shop's library.

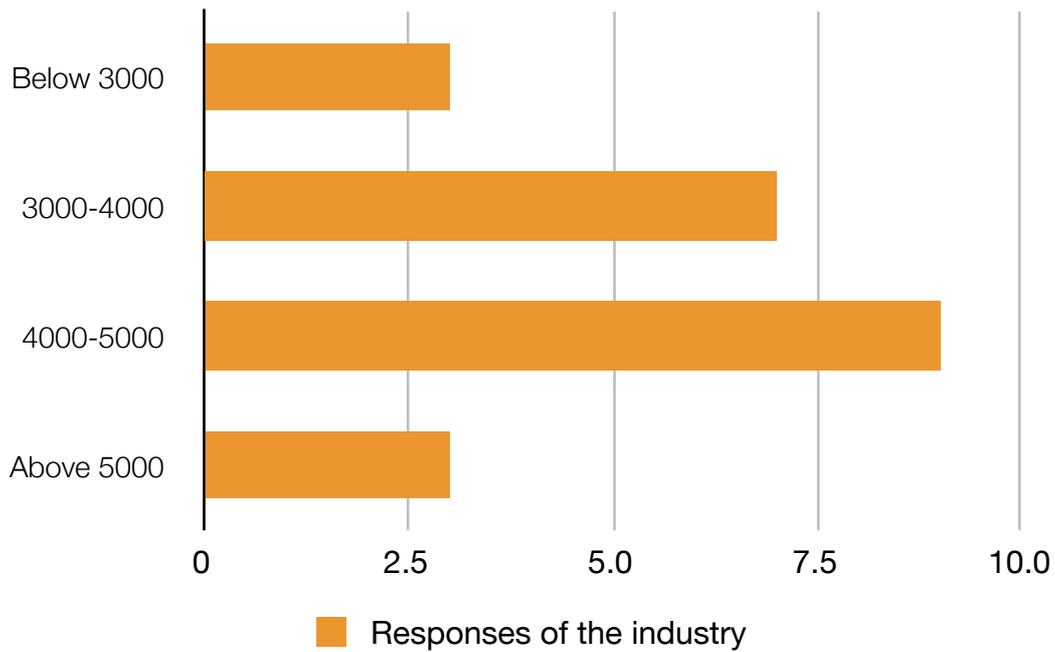
Since there is an immediate requirement on the shop-floor, about 45% of the respondents have said that training is usually of a week's duration. The companies believe in learning on the job. According to the shop-floor personnel, the training initially provided is not sufficient. It has been reported that a second round of training is conducted after six months.

Bharti Retail Private Limited has a system to provide day-to-day feedback to their staff and every store has a trainer. The Store Manager is also prepared to coach the staff and improve their performance.

The investment on initial training, as revealed by a few organisations, is equivalent to approximately one month's salary.

5.5.vi.b Entry Level Salary

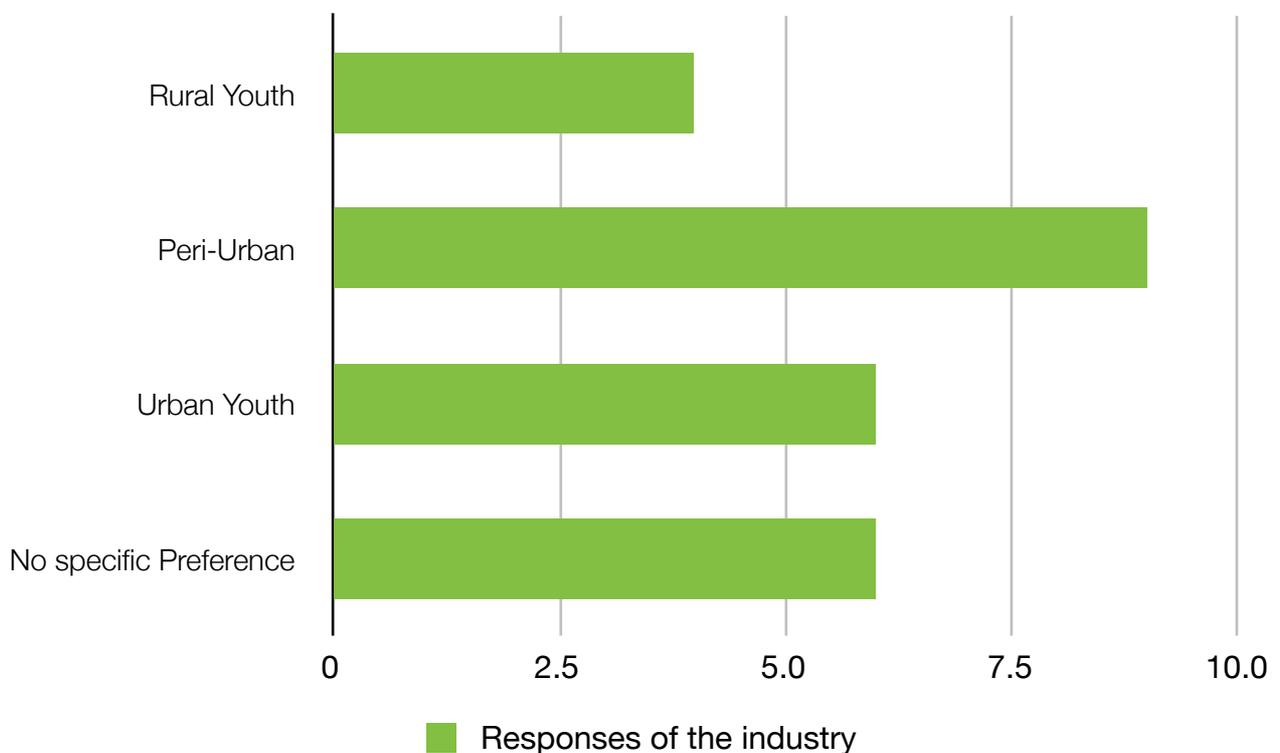
Gross salaries offered to the entry-level shop floor executives range between the basic minimum wages to Rs.6,000. This includes PF and other allowances. While in most of the cities it is around the Rs.4,000 mark, it is higher in Mumbai due to the high cost of living. The net pay varies between Rs.2,500 to Rs.5,000. It must be noted that these salaries are abysmally low when compared to inflation and the high cost of living prevailing in these cities.



Graph 5-5: Graph showing the range of entry level salaries (Rs) offered at the training institute.

5.5.vi.c Career Prospects

Entry-level floor jobs in retail industries are low-paid and almost mundane and stagnant. Promotions are based on performance on the shop floor and on certain tests. Bright and sincere employees, who are spotted as long-term stakeholders, are encouraged through promotions, financial support for education and relaxation in shift timings.



Graph 5-6: Graph showing the Industry preference for youth from a geographical area

An upcoming retail chain has its own unique performance assessment system. It maintains a performance coaching log, responsibilities are defined, half-yearly reviews are done, and daily feedback is given. Staff continue to receive phase-wise training, and career plans and rating systems are in place.

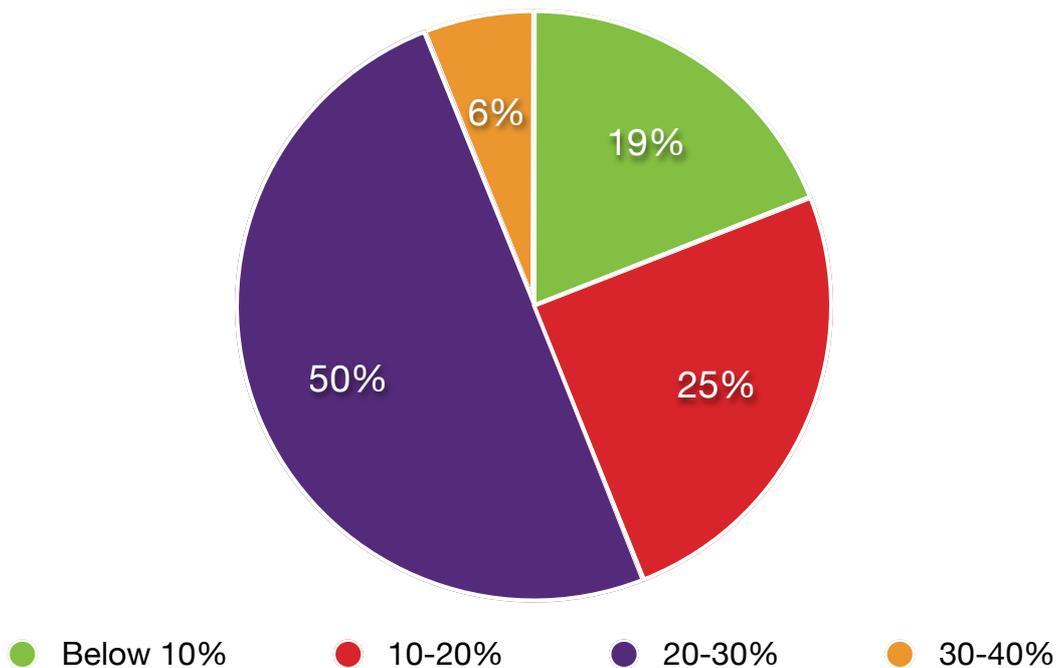
5.5.vi.d Industry Preference for Youth from a Geographical area

Though a substantial number of respondents did not have any specific preferences, there were companies who preferred youth from the nearest peri-urban location who could stay with their families, as this leads to a lower cost of living that enables them to adjust to the salaries given. A few recruiters have found rural youth to be more sincere, hardworking and honest, while lacking in smartness and confidence in selling. The urban youth are considered smart but with a high tendency to move on to the next job.

“City youth are not ready to do low paid jobs and its an opportunity for rural youth.”
-Mrinalini Kher, Secretary, KESWA, Mumbai

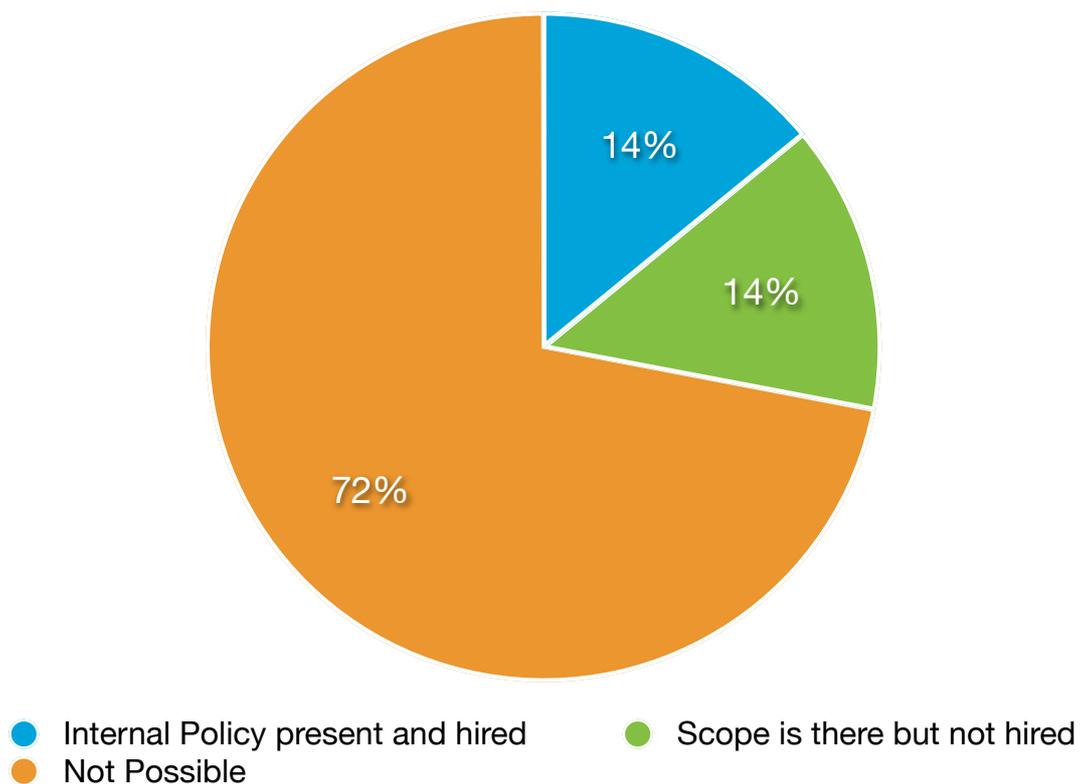
5.5.vi.e Sex Ratio: In Staff Profile

There is less preference for females in food and grocery stores/section. The respondents say that long hours of work, multiple tasks requiring physical labour (like lifting crates) ,are the key reasons. Apparel and departmental stores employ more females. However a departmental store in Jaipur has only 7 females out of 54 employees.



Graph 5-7: Graph showing the percentage range of female employees working in retail stores

5.5.vi.f Retail: Fewer Opportunities for Physically challenged



Graph 5-8: Graph showing percentage of various employment opportunities offered to the physically challenged by retail industry

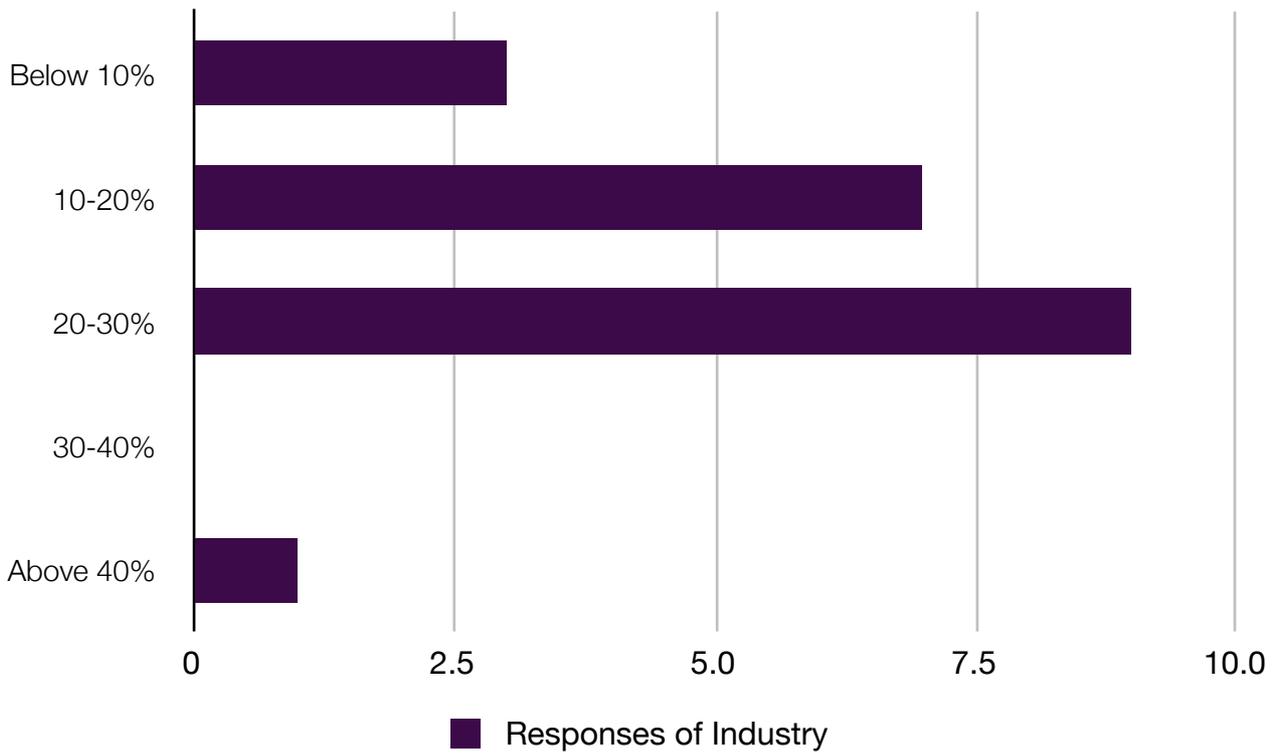
A majority of the industry does acknowledge that there are opportunities for the physically challenged. However, there are very few who have actually made the effort to employ them.

Retailers like Levi's acknowledged that most jobs in retail are not suitable for the physically challenged – however, they are opportunities at the counter and in back-end departments.

Bharti Retail Private Limited claims to have about 10% of their work force from the physically challenged community, 15% are housewives, 7-8% are retired people and 10% are rural youth. This mix in staff creates a healthy environment in the shop, and customers feel comfortable as well. *Bharti Retail Private Limited* has a great plan to come up with big retail shops that will be friendly to the physically-challenged.

5.5.vi.g Attrition Rates and Reasons

A turnover of 20-30% per annum is typical in the industry. Most people move on to better career opportunities with other retailers. A significant number of staff, especially females, quit the sector because of low salary, tediousness and drudgery on the job. Retail chains which have low attrition levels claim to be more responsive to the needs of the youth and other facilities like flexibility in timings, scope for job rotation, etc.

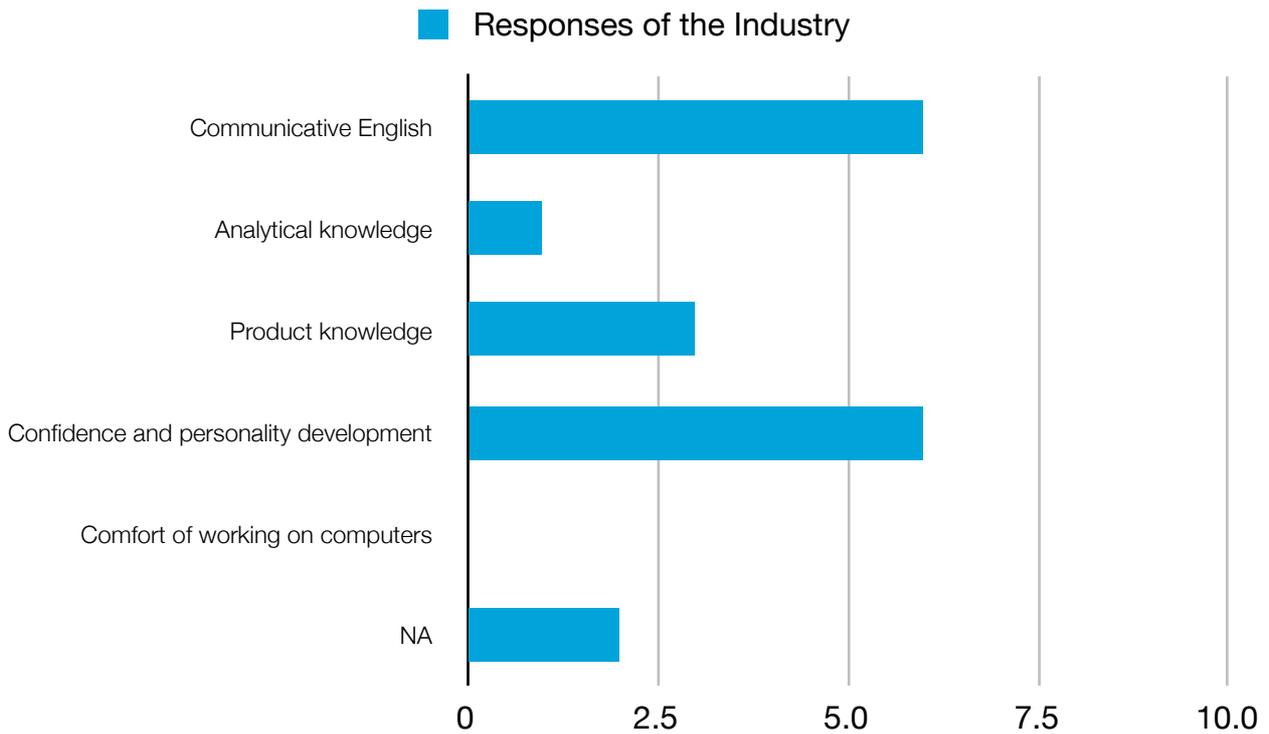


Graph 5-9: Graph showing the responses of industry on attrition rates

5.5.vi.h Collaboration with NGOs

There is a unanimous response towards hiring from NGO training programmes. The key reasons, as mentioned earlier, are verification of background and availability of large numbers with low cost implications.

The industry expects NGOs to concentrate on two major areas - attitude and communication. These are skills that cannot be acquired over-night and need to be provided over a period of time. They believe that communication skills, personality development, grooming, leadership skills and negotiation skills are some of the key components that can be handled by NGOs.

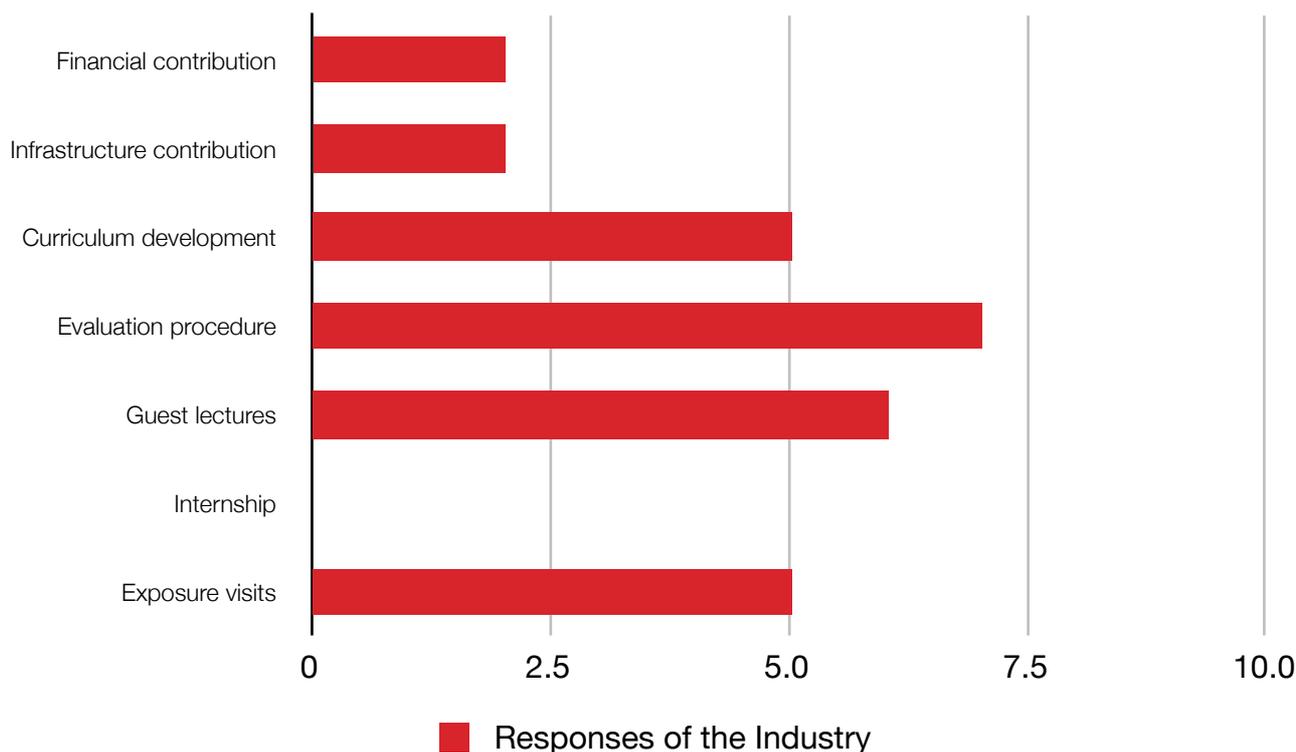


Graph 5-10: Graph showing the preferred components in NGO's Training

5.5.vi.i Willingness to Contribute to Training

Employers are willing to provide support in evaluation of the training, guest lectures and curriculum development. They believe that the industry contribution in these three areas will go a long way in improving the content of the programmes. Since they are the ones who are going to absorb the students, they feel that they must also be a part of the final evaluation. Very few employers are willing to provide long-term internships to untrained youth.

The willingness to contribute to infrastructural development and finances is very low. A few employers are willing to pay for a part of the training costs as long as NGOs assure them of low attrition rates. They have proposed a fine-tuned system of payment over a period of 8-12 months. They also believe that infrastructure is the responsibility of the Government.



Graph 5-11: Graph showing the percentage willingness of the employers to contribute in the training

*“Government must make the half-way home facility available to the youth who are migrating from the rural areas.”
-Training Manager an apparel retail in Mumbai*

5.6 Case of Retail Training - Indian Retail School

The Indian Retail School, headquartered at New Delhi, is a first-of-its-kind retail education and research center in India, formed to respond to the unique needs of the modern retail industry. It aims to create a primary resource centre for all retail manpower specialisation. The programmes are commercially relevant, ensuring that the students of the Indian Retail School maximise their employment and growth prospects. The school provides unique educational and career development opportunities through different courses for:

- Students who want to start a career in retail.
- Experienced retail people, who aspire for better prospects.
- Entrepreneurs who wish to make their business ventures successful.

The Indian Retail School is a unit of *Pearl Retail Solutions Pvt. Ltd.*, promoted by House of Pearl and Images Multimedia Group. House of Pearl is a USD 350 million group engaged in manufacturing, distribution, branding and retailing education. Images Multimedia is playing a vital role in organising the fashion and retail business in India.

There are both full time and executive development programmes. Some of the programmes are as follows:

Executive Development Programme in Retail Store Operations Management and Executive Development Programme in Retail Buying & Merchandising Management.

The duration of these programmes is 3 months and the eligibility criterion is Grade 12, with work experience. These are part time, 5 days a week and 2 hours every day. The course focuses on Introduction to Retail, Retail Commercials, Merchandise Knowledge, Store Location, Design & Visual Merchandising, Information Technology in Retail, Managing Operations, Retail Selling Skills & Customer Service, Projects & Case Study and Assessment & Evaluation.

In addition to this, there are other elective programmes such as:

- *Professional Programme in Retail Commercials.*
- *Professional Programme in Retail Store Location & Visual Merchandising.*
- *Professional Programme in Retail Selling Skills.*
- *Professional Programme in Retail Supply Chain Management.*

The duration of each of these programmes is 30 hours and the eligibility criterion is Grade 12 with work experience. These are part time, 5 days a week and 2 hours every day.

Another programme offered is "Basics of Retailing". The duration of the programme is 6 weeks. The eligibility criterion is Grade 12 in any stream. It is part time, 4 days a week and 3 hours every day. The course covers Introduction to Retail, Careers in Retail, Merchandising, Visual Merchandising & Space Planning, Basics of Store Operations, In Store Promotions & Marketing, The Retail Consumer, Retail Selling Skills, Soft Skills, Communication Skills / Personality Development & Grooming, Interview Skills, Cashier's Activities.

The institute has been functional for the past two and a half years. The first batch started in January 2005. Major topics include retail salesmanship, soft skills (mannerisms), attitude and behavioural communication. Up till 2008, 1500 members have been trained, out of which 40% are from rural areas and 30% are women.

With regard to pre-course methodologies, the institute conducts market scans (talks to the industries), identifies the major trades, discusses with and counsels the students about the trades, and conducts written tests and interviews. The full cost has to be paid by the students.

The pre-course methods are taken up on a regular basis. Inputs are collected and the existing curriculum and other aspects are modified according to suggestions. Industry participants included *Kwality Walls*, *Shoppers Stop*, *Wills Lifestyle*, etc. On-line training is being planned in collaboration with Hughes Software Company through VSAT. This will be broadcast to 31 centres.

The methods employed for selection of candidates are mainly advertisement and word of mouth. The institute is well equipped with required infrastructure, viz., training halls, computers, internet and LCD projectors.

Training programmes are reviewed before the start of the programme and customised according to the needs of the batches. The faculty members are selected from industries. To ensure the quality of the facilitator, feedback is taken from students at the end of 3 months. In addition, course committee meetings take place in order to assess faculty performance.

The key subjects taught in the course include – soft skills and attitude/behaviour, communication. These subjects take up about one-third of the course time. The remaining two-thirds is allocated for technical aspects such as selling skills, store management, visual merchandising, merchant knowledge, use of IT in retail, etc.

A variety of approaches like classroom teaching, exposure visits, interactions with industry experts, assignments/projects and apprenticeship are used for delivering the content to the students. A complete review of the programme is taken up at the end of it.

The organisation uses ICT applications at all stages. During the pre-classroom stage, web advertising is used to reach students. In addition, information is shared through mailing lists. During the classroom phase, ICT equipment such as computers and LCD projectors are used. Students make PowerPoint presentations and video films; mobile phones are used for evaluation and online assessment is done with students sending a soft-copy to the faculty. E-mail and PowerPoint presentations are used when approaching placement agencies.

Present technologies used in the organisation are adequate for the present. However, a major hurdle to conducting online training is that a live interaction (such as role-play) with the students is not possible. Consultations are on to overcome this limitation. The major benefits of ICT technologies are moderate cost efficiency, high usability to explain concepts, moderate potential for self-learning and high potential to reach out to a larger audience.

Industry people are involved in development of the course content, during the classroom training, during internship and during placements. Evaluations are done through a variety of mechanisms like mid-term evaluations, final evaluations, peer-reviews and external examinations.

All the trained students were placed with companies. Placements were offered by companies like *Wills Lifestyle*, *Globus*, *Lifestyle*, *Shoppers Stop*, *Vishal*, *Big Bazaar*, *Pyramid* (apparels), *Mobile Store*, *Subhiksha*, *RPG Spencer's*.

Post-placement interaction is done approximately 2-3 times a year. Major issues perceived by companies were attitudinal aspects and low output of the students. The major issue shared by the students was lack of guidance for better improvement. The issues of students are addressed through counseling and remedial classes.

The cost of programmes for professional training is Rs. 28,000, and for front end courses is Rs. 15,000. HDFC Bank provides loans for one year and two year programmes. However, loans are not available for short term professional programmes and the fees are prohibitive for underprivileged youth.

The overall feedback from the industry on the youth graduating from this school has been encouraging. Industry feedback included requirement for improvement in communication skills and further grooming on soft skills.

Excerpt from the interview of the Vice-President Retail of a Large Retail Chain

“Organised retail requires large number of youth at both front and store level, in position like Store Associates, Clerk, and Store Managers. The monthly salary for a beginner is in the range of Rs. 4,000-4,500 for a base level job. The new employee at base level undergoes a 7-10 days’ class room training and thereafter 2 weeks of orientation in the store. Such jobs are taken over by urban youth from poor families. Since job opportunities are limited in the Government sector, even educated unemployed youth seek these jobs. Jobs in retail are preferred over other options in the casual job sector, viz., peon and courier boys, as the retail industry has a better working environment, social security and career growth for the underprivileged youth.

The other options for youth in retail are to work in distribution supply chains and as data entry operators. Underprivileged youth are also benefiting from the outsourcing model of collection centres and trucking. Skill-sets required for these jobs are not high and their monthly earning ranges from Rs 4, 500-7, 000.

Retail industry also has a high attrition rate of about 45%, and meeting the aspiration level of youth is a big challenge. Youth from rural areas are also talented and are sincere; however, they are not able to enter the retail job market because of limitations in geographical mobility and low salaries. As the retail industry penetrates smaller cities and towns, rural youth will find more opportunities with it.

My personal view is that rural youth’ employability in the retail industry can be enhanced by focusing on soft skills. The bridge course can be useful in building a career for the underprivileged youth in the retail industry.

In the beginning, retail companies mostly employ people through advertisements and placement consultants. After attending maturity, they may opt for other recruitment strategies like retail training, academics, etc. The entry of civil societies in enhancing rural and underprivileged youth employability will be welcome by the industry.

Industry has a great role in strengthening public-private partnerships. Government has a lot of infrastructure; robust private industries can enhance the training quality and job opportunities.”

Chapter 6

Youth : The Primary Beneficiaries

Chapter 6

6.1 Introduction

The focus group discussions (FGD) with youth across cities and across various segments, delved into issues which gave insights into their perception of employability training. FGDs were conducted with four different categories of youth :- (i) youth who have not undergone any training, (ii) those that are undergoing some kind of training, (iii) the ones who have undergone training and are currently employed, and (iv) those that have not undergone any training but are employed. FGDs were also conducted exclusively for women groups to understand their aspirations.

6.2 Findings From FGDs With Youth Undergoing Training

6.2.i Socio-Economic Background of Youth

The Rural poor and urban slum dwellers are the key beneficiaries of the employability programmes. A majority of the youth among the discussion groups were from the lower middle class or the poor strata of society. It was observed that the youth from OBCs, SCs and OCs were primarily part of the training, while there were very few trainees from tribal communities. According to a large agency which conducts programmes across several states, only 3% of the aspirants are tribal. This is an indication that tribal areas are less served by these programmes and would need more focused training programmes.

6.2.ii Educational Qualifications

The educational qualifications of the youth varied between Grade 8 and graduation. A majority had successfully gone through Grade 10, but either discontinued thereon or had failed their Grade 12 examinations. 15-20% of the youth was either pursuing graduation or had completed graduation and were undergoing this course, thus suggesting that the current mainstream graduation courses are failing to equip youth with basic marketable and employable skills. These graduates also felt that, apart from the lack of skills, it was also a lack of right contacts which was preventing them from securing jobs. The trainees also felt that a large section of the youth who dropped out below Grade 7 were doing odd jobs, and were left out of such training sessions currently. They suggested commencement of courses for such youth as well.

6.2.iii Pre-Training Profile

Though the majority was freshers, it was found that around 20% of the youth who were currently attending the courses had prior work experience. This figure is almost negligible in the case of women. The youth who previously worked as daily labourers, security personnel or other such jobs, left their jobs and joined the courses in anticipation of increased knowledge, exposure and a better work environment.

6.2.iv Gender Ratio

It was gathered from the students that there was an almost equal number of male and female youth participating in the trainings. In some cases it was also seen that females outnumbered the males. The women primarily preferred courses related to ITES. Generally, girls who were trained in beautician and tailoring courses are starting their own business, and a few of them prefer to teach in colleges. Females do not prefer the retail sector much, as it is perceived to be a long and strenuous job and involves physical labour. However, in large cities, it was also seen that women were keen on getting into companies like Big Bazaar and Shoppers Stop. They preferred profiles of cash counter executives and sales of apparels, jewellery and cosmetics. On further enquiry it was seen that it was the glamour in these counters which attracted women.

6.2.v Initial Source of Information about Employability Training

Many have come to know about the course from their friends. Resistance from parents in the initial phase on the pretext of futility of the course, wastage of time and loss of wage days was reported. In the case of women, distance between the centre and residence was an important reason for their parents' disapproval. Parent-faculty interactions seem to have helped change parents' attitudes. Students felt that the parent-teacher interactions should be held within the first 10 days. They also felt that parents must be taken to the classrooms or other centres where the courses were being held to create awareness and facilitate interaction with the ongoing batches.

6.2.vi Key Reasons for Joining

More than 75% of the participating youth have single-member earning families, thereby rendering it essential for these youth to earn to support their families. The primary motive of joining the courses was find reasonable jobs with minimum investment of time and money. Once there is a consistent flow of money, they either want to go for higher studies in the same field or in related fields. They found that the programmes were very convenient, as most of these were being offered free of charge and at their doorstep. Quite a few also stated that they had observed a marked improvement in grooming, confidence and public speaking among their peers who had attended these courses earlier.

6.2.vii Views on the Curriculum

The youth were by and large happy with the courses they underwent. The youth undergoing training observed that industry interactions through visits to companies as well as guest lectures were the most useful components of the training sessions and demanded an increase in the frequency. The students felt that an increase in video presentations on behaviour and etiquette would be useful. The duration of English and Computer courses being offered is not adequate in many urban areas like Bangalore, Mumbai, Delhi and Hyderabad. Although the course has been able to equip them with very basic skills most of the youth felt that it was inadequate to interact in supermarkets and malls.

6.2.viii Dropouts

The major reasons that youth stated for dropouts are distance of the training institute from their residence, lack of money to pay for travel, and inability to cope with the curriculum. The dropout rates have been observed to be low in instances where accommodation and travel are also being provided.

6.2.ix Key Gains from the Courses

There was an unequivocal response that the training sessions have helped the participants in grooming and made them smart, presentable, has improved communication skills and has got them jobs. There has been an overall increase in the quality of life of the individuals as well as of their families. However, the average salaries according to the youth are low and they feel it is difficult to sustain themselves with it. Their expectation was that the training institutions would help them to find jobs with higher salaries.

6.2.x Views on Financial Participation

The youth who are currently undergoing grant-based training, are ready to pick up part cost of training in installments after their placement.

It was observed during discussions, that there were a few students who were very casual and took it for granted that they would be offered jobs after the completion of the course.

6.2.xi Views of the Trained and Placed Youth

- The youth believed that they were able to appreciate and learn more from the short mandatory trainings on the shop-floor by the industry, only because of their prior training in the institutes.
- They also felt if they had not been trained at the institutions, the training provided at the companies would not have been sufficient to work independently.

- There were mixed opinions regarding a shift in jobs. While most of them were ready to jump to another job for a slight increase in remuneration, there were those who saw value in sticking to a good company, only if there were regular promotions and recognitions, and not necessarily monetary incentives.
- There is a marked difference in responses of the youth who joined immediately after the training and those who have spent 6-8 months in their jobs. While the those who joined afresh are very euphoric about the industry, the experienced youth feel that the scope is limited, as the chances of promotion to the next level are 1 in 20. They also cited examples of shutting down of a few stores which created more insecurity.
- Sometimes it has also been found during FGDs that there is a superiority complex among the youth who have undergone employability training, and they are not ready to handle some of the tasks that a normal customer sales representative is expected to do.

6.2.xii Difference Between Urban and Rural Youth

- Due to exposure, the urban youth are more confident in working and conversing with customers in malls and supermarkets. This is one of the key traits required by the retail industry.
- It was found that the urban youth are more prone to shifting from one job to the other on being offered a higher salary because of the mobility due to their understanding of the city. The rural youth who have migrated seem to be sticking to the same job for a longer period of time.
- There is a tendency of the rural youth to drop out of jobs in the first three months due to lack of a proper place to stay, pressure to cope with long working hours and to outperform their urban counterparts, to withstand the high costs of living and the distance of daily travel.

6.3 Interaction with Untrained Youth

This is by far the most fragmented and divergent section of the study. These youth were identified based on their place of residence, their educational level and their aspirations. Some of them are in odd jobs as domestic helpers. These jobs are not necessarily related to the trades they were trained in. Moreover, these jobs are transient, with no standard working hours or salary structures. In general, they do not have a sense of direction and are unclear about available opportunities. They are drop-outs from schools, in some cases primary school, and hence are ideal for moulding and grooming.

In their current situation, however, they are more concerned about their own livelihoods and are reluctant to sacrifice wages to attend training programmes. On delving more into this and discussing benefits, they found it important and beneficial to be trained in grooming.

The primary school drop-outs are not literate. They may, therefore, not be suitable for retail training or any other generic training. Those who have studied upto high school are well-versed in their mother-tongue. These untrained youth work as drivers, cooks or tailors as these jobs do not require them to read or write. However, this does not dampen their aspirations. All the respondents wanted to study English and wished to work in an office environment, which they preferred to the current domestic environment they are working in.

The clear lack of information, career guidance and peer influence make them choose the work they do at present. In addition, they live in neighbourhoods where nobody can read or write. Given the right inputs at the right time, they could be groomed for the retail industry.

6.4 Case of an Employed Youth from a Village

Satyamurthy, aged 26, hails from a remote village of Karnataka. At a very early age, Satyamurthy lost his father and he was raised by his elder brothers. He completed graduation at his native place and moved to Bangalore in search of some work with one of his village friends. After lot of searching, he got the job of Lift Attendant. He could hardly make both ends meet with his paltry salary. Later he started doing part-time work with the postal department at Rs.10 per hour. After completing his work as a lift attendant, he would do this part-time work at night for three to four hours. He continued like this for more than a year. However, he did not enjoy his jobs and wanted to do something else. Meanwhile on the advice of one of his friends, Satyamurthy joined the UNNATI Youth Training Institute where everything was free. The course was only for four months and was highly enriching, resulting a huge transformation in his personality. He narrates, "I got back my confidence in life at UNNATI". After completion he joined Food World at Rs.1, 200 per month on a temporary basis. However, after four months, he joined Café Coffee day at Rs.3, 000 per month. His hard work and prior training got him out-of-turn promotions. Now he is the Deputy Manager of a Café Coffee Day outlet with a salary of Rs.6, 500 per month. Satyamurthy has joined the second level of VETA English learning course at a fee of Rs.4, 500 after completion of the first level. According to him there is no end to learning, and he still feels he should invest on improving his skills. Though job-hopping is commonplace among many of his friends, Satyamurthy believes in sticking to the same company as he enjoys the work. Satyamurthy opines that all youth should join such courses which can be highly beneficial for them in the long run.

Chapter 7

The Way Forward

Chapter 7

7.1 Introduction

As highlighted in the previous sections, the importance of high-quality large-scale skill development programmes cannot be undermined. According to ILO 97th Session's Report on Skills for Improved Productivity, Employment Growth and Development, all countries that have succeeded in linking skills with productivity have targeted their skill development policy towards three objectives:

(i) Meeting Skills Demand in Terms of Relevance and Quality : To ensure the matching of skills supply and demand, skills policies need to develop skills that are relevant, promote lifelong learning and ensure the delivery of high levels of competence as well as a sufficient number of skilled workers. Furthermore, equal opportunity to access education and work is needed to meet the demand for training across all sectors of society.

(ii) Mitigating Adjustment Costs : The reorganization of work in line with new demands and technologies results in some skills becoming redundant. The ready availability and affordability of training in new skills and occupations helps to insure against prolonged unemployment or under-employment, and to maintain the employability of workers and the sustainability of enterprises.

(iii) Sustaining a Dynamic Development Process : Skills development policies need to build up capabilities and knowledge systems within the economy and society which induce and maintain a sustainable process of economic and social development. The first two objectives of improving skills-matching and mitigating adjustment costs are based on a labour market perspective; they focus on skills development as a response to technological and economic changes, and are essentially short and medium-term objectives. In contrast, the developmental objective is focused on the strategic role of education and training policies in triggering and continuously fuelling technological change, domestic and foreign investment, diversification and competitiveness.

A concerted effort is needed both, at the macro level led by the State and the large confederations of industries, as well as at the micro level where training institutions have an important role to play in order to set standards for training sessions and to ensure that benefits are reaped by youth.

7.2 Key Recommendations at the Macro-level

7.2.i Enhance Coordination among Institutions

Massive programmes like skill development programmes which involve intensive training have to be accompanied by intent and action at the State as well as the National level. The National Government should strategically drive the employability courses in the States with higher percentage of youth from the under-privileged families. As many of these states are under-developed, it is important to promote a special body to exclusively focus on the skill development agenda of backward states.

7.2.ii Conduct Faculty Skilling and Reskilling Programmes

Though the design and modules might be ready, the challenge, as stated by all training institutions, is getting quality faculty. There have to be large-scale faculty or instructor development programmes for these kinds of training sessions. The Government must encourage all states to invest in programmes like SOLS24/7 which will churn out faculty to conduct such programmes. A rough calculation says that if 8 million youth have to be trained in a year, assuming 3 faculties per batch of 40 youth for 4 months, there is a requirement of 1,50,000 trained faculty exclusively for such programmes. This requires 30,000

Trainers who can train the faculty. So tracing the skills programmes requirement to the level of the experts is important. Requirement of an exclusive course at the state and national level for trainers cannot be over-emphasized.

7.2.iii Promote Compulsory Apprenticeships

The Government has to ensure that all trainees will have an opportunity participate in apprenticeship. In this context, it must work with large bodies like the CII towards ensuring that this alliance works in favour of the students and the industry. In consultation with the industry, the Government must propose a bill on compulsory apprenticeship with companies.

Korean System of scaling up Vocational Programs

In the Republic of Korea, technical and vocational education programmes within the formal education system are provided at both, senior secondary schools and junior colleges. Out-of-school vocational training is provided as informal education. Vocational senior secondary schools provide three-year programmes, preceded by six years of primary education and three years of junior secondary education. In 1997 there were 771 technical and vocational senior secondary schools with a total enrollment of 960,037, which accounted for about 40% of the total senior secondary school enrollment. Informal vocational training comprises public and private training. The Korea Manpower Agency (KOMA) under the Ministry of Labour along with local Governments undertakes public vocational training. It aims to train semi-skilled and skilled workers through programmes lasting from three months to two years. KOMA manages institutes concerned with a broad range of occupations, while local Governments concentrate on training in trades necessary for increasing the income of farm households. Enterprises and corporations conduct private vocational training. Enterprises are required to pay employment insurance fees, depending on the number of employees. The fees paid by the enterprises are pooled into a central fund, known as employment insurance funds, and these funds are used to finance vocational competency development programmes. The vocational competency development scheme, which came into effect in January 1999, replaced the compulsory training levy system. The vocational training courses are divided into 'basic training', 'upgrade training', 'job transfer training', and 'retraining,' according to the objective of the training. The programmes are provided in 477 fields covering 23 technical areas. In 1997, 477 training institutes (96 public and 381 private) provided training for 302,646 trainees.

The apprenticeship structure must be on the lines of various international successful programmes which had an agreement with the industry. One such programme is the German vocational training model. In Germany, a law was passed in 1969 that regulated and unified the vocational training system and codified the shared responsibility of the State, the Unions, associations and chambers of trade and industry. In 2001, 51% of all young people under 22 had completed an apprenticeship. In 2004, the Government signed a pledge with Industrial Unions that all companies except very small ones must take on apprentices.

7.2.iv Enhance Quality Control

For an improvement in overall employability of the youth undergoing these programmes, an improvement in the quality of the training is required. Quality assurance and improvement has to take place at two levels: at the training provider as well as at the trainees' level.

International Experiences in Quality Control

In Brazil, since the 1990's, the focus of institutions on quality has pushed them for a Quality certification. From 1993, it has been widely used as an internal system of management and recognition of quality of its training centres. After an evaluation of these centres they are awarded as model centres of vocational education or national centres of technology. The system is inspired by the criteria of the National Programme of Quality, which include process management, leadership, and strategic planning focus on client, market, results and information management. In 1997, the National Industrial Training Services (SENAI) got itself an ISO 9000 certification. Besides this, the National Department of the SENAI was certified with the ISO-9001 with application in planning, development and co-ordination of strategic projects and operative improvement projects. The National Service of occupational Training in Industry (SENATI) has received the ISO 9001 certificate for quality. This institution obtained certification for its vocational training and preparation programme: dual learning, the qualification of workers in service, industrial technicians, industrial administrators, industrial teachers, technicians in engineering, continuing training, multimedia training, computers, and its work package. The technical services of manufacturing and non-destructive testing, and counseling and consultancy for small and middle sized enterprises, in its 41 area offices are also certified.

In Australia, vocational education and training is mostly post-secondary and provided through the Vocational Education and Training (VET) system by Registered Training Organisations. This system encompasses both public and private providers in a national training framework consisting of the Australian Quality Training Framework, Australian Qualifications Framework and Industry Training Packages which define the assessment standards for the different vocational qualifications. A crucial feature of the Training Package system is that the content of the vocational qualifications is theoretically defined by the industry and not by the Government or by training providers. A Training Package is owned by one of ten Industries Skills Councils which are responsible for developing and reviewing the qualifications. It is a non-profit company owned by the federal, state and territory ministers responsible for training. It is responsible for collecting, managing, analysing, evaluating and communicating research and statistics about vocational education and training (VET). A number of vocational training providers are now offering specialised Bachelor degrees in specific areas not being adequately provided by Universities. Such Applied Courses are in the areas of equine studies, winemaking and viticulture, aquaculture, information technology, music, illustration.

7.2.v Compulsory Registration and Accreditation of Agencies

The Government must ensure registration process of all the employability skill development agencies under one umbrella body. An organisation unregistered under this body should not be allowed to continue with the programme. Like in the case of Government ITCs/ITCs, this will create a database across the country and results and impact of such programmes can be easily tracked.

This common regulatory body must also ensure the accreditation process for all the institutions. Without this accreditation, no organisation must be allowed to continue. This regulatory and accreditation agency should comprise representatives of the Government, trainers and industry. This would discourage some of the fly-by-night kind of agencies to undertake the skill development trainings. This also renders authenticity to the internal evaluation process of the registered and accredited bodies.

7.2.vi Insist on External Certification

Regulatory mechanisms must be put in place to assess the change in skills imparted to youth. The Government must insist on standard testing mechanisms as well as external evaluation system to gauge the change in skills due to trainings.

7.2.vii Establish Physical Infrastructure Promotion

As suggested by many, the employability training sessions in service sectors in the rural areas which have a migratory effect would go in vain if the initial requirements of the youth arising out of migration from rural to urban areas are not taken care of. It is expected that 60% of the 8 million youth would be trained from the rural areas, and a majority of the youth would be migrating to the urban centres in sectors like retail, construction, security services, etc., as there are massive investments required for infrastructure to support these youth. The Government can create half-way homes where the youth can be allowed to stay for 3 months during their transition from rural to urban areas. It requires investment of a gigantic scale from the Government.

7.2.viii Improve Access to Credit

A large section of underprivileged youth who intend to undertake employability trainings do not have the capital to pay for the training. Over and above they also do not have access to formal credit. Apart from the current practice of subsidising the courses through grants, access to credit must be facilitated by the Government. The Government must announce special sops for those formal institutions that encourage borrowing among the under-privileged youth for the purpose of employability trainings.

7.2.ix Sensitise Industry to Empathise with the Physically Challenged

The issue of dealing with the physically challenged is sensitive and enforcement laws would not work. The Government has to ensure that there is an exclusive cell that works on the sensitisation of the industry. Regular workshops and interactions between industry and physically challenged youth are required to understand the potential of the youth. The whole relationship with the youth must be more on trust rather than on mistrust. The industry must also understand the special infrastructure required for the physically challenged to work. The youth too must be counselled to choose trades which don't limit their performance due to their disability.

7.2.x Enhance Technology Infrastructure Promotion

The infrastructure required for the scale of programmes would also mean extensive use of technology. In the prohibitive costs of establishing technology like VSAT for training institutes, the Government can play a vital role. The Government must invest in digitising the content and production of programmes that the training institutions can use as supplements to the main programme.

7.2.xi Focus on Marketing of Programmes

It is important that all these efforts are backed up by proper marketing of these programmes and highlighting the benefits of these programmes. Promotion campaigns on the lines of the National Rural Health Mission must be carried out in both, the print and television media, and the urban and rural under-privileged youth encouraged to visit their nearest civil/society or Government MES programme and understand the importance of undergoing such courses. This will also educate the parents on the importance of such courses.

7.3 Key Recommendations at the Micro-level

The various policy and strategic level plans must be backed by adequate process interventions in the employability training sessions. This section highlights key suggestions based on the findings on the various parameters of the functioning of training institutes.

7.3.i Absorption Capacity

In the current scenario scaling up and catering to a large number of underprivileged youth is possible on getting associated with the Government. Maintaining quality along with scale is possible only when strong quality and monitoring systems are envisaged initially. Training institutions which have gained expertise and experience over the years, should train and guide other organisations. This would help in increasing the scope of the programmes. The parent employability training institutions must insist upon the replication of the of delivery and performance rather than its name.

7.3.ii Initial Process Adherence

Pre-course counselling of youth with a checklist on the nature of jobs, industry, curriculum, work-load during the course, minimum disciplinary requirements much before the start of course would enable filtering casual youth from joining. Exposure visit of parents along with students, especially in the new geographical areas or in areas of low female participation will decrease drop-out rates from the programmes.

Programmes must be designed around the specific needs of each underprivileged group. The migrant students, female participants from backward communities, and youth with different education levels, will require separate strategies and batches to ensure that they get the maximum impact of programmes.

7.3.iii Curriculum Development

Collaboration among various training institutions in similar geographical areas and similar domains will help in standardisation of curriculums as well as sharing the costs of developing new curriculums.

7.3.iv Components of Subjects

The emphasis on soft-skills, basic management and language communications skills as primary components must be stressed more forcefully than is currently done in most of the organisations. These courses are creating individual personalities. Most organisations have to review and time more judiciously in order to ensure that adequate learning takes place. Introduction of courses on workplace rights are important as Mr. Avinav Kumar pointed out, 'Another emerging issue is going to be introduction of some level of legal literacy and workplace rights among the candidates....', right emphasis on all the basic components would push the duration of the courses to between 4-6 months.

7.3.v Faculty

The organisations working in contiguous geographical areas must explore the option of sharing of resources, especially faculty. Instead of hiring part-time faculty, full-time faculty can be shared across 2-3 organisations. This arrangement would add value as it would reduce costs and assure quality faculty for multiple institutions.

Regular capacity building, mentoring and reflections of faculty and team is important to maintain the morale. This is particularly important as the institutions grow big, as, during attaining the scale, many a time the team bonding is lost.

7.3.vi Methodology adopted during training

Adult-based learning where self-exploration is promoted is very important for internalising the learnings. The youth must also be made to undergo compulsory apprenticeships to have a real-time experience of the industry. The classroom content for the youth from underprivileged backgrounds should not exceed 40% of the total time.

7.3.vii Participation of the industry

The industry must realise that participation in the programmes is mutually beneficial. They must be involved in all the aspects of the training which will create mutual faith and understanding of requirements. This will improve productivity and retention of the youth during work.

"Sensitisation of employers to the context, background, strengths, and constraints of the community from which they plan to draw most of their labour set is an absolute must when we are crafting employability programmes for the under-privileged youth. Recently, for example, we had to work with a reputed hotel chain in Western Rajasthan to convince them to pay stipends and upkeep allowance to trainee rural youth during the apprenticeship... they were hesitant at first as they wanted the trainees to invest in themselves! Another agency working with migrants in Western Rajasthan ensured that an industrial major made matron services available at staff quarters for women labour with small children. Working with and on employers has to be coupled with capacity building of underprivileged youth under employability programmes."

-Bharati Joshi, Aravalli

There is equal onus on the training institution to follow up with the industry to make the training fruitful. The training institution can also negotiate the entry-end salaries on behalf of the students. Thus, apart from upgrading skills, the training institutions can also address equity issues for the youth.

7.3.viii Evaluation Procedure

The regular process of evaluation through surprise tests and vivas must be undertaken and feedback on this to students during the course prevents the dilution of seriousness among the students. This is also a way of checking their comprehension of the course.

For final evaluations, linking up with reputed universities will provide the required credibility to courses. A national recognition of the course will also boost the confidence of the youth undergoing these courses.

Dr. Reddy's LABS has social audit conducted periodically by an external organisation. A panel of external experts, trainers and trainees, vet the social audit report and suggestions are taken. In the next social audit, the action taken on recommendations is provided. Though there is no certification, the minimum of external evaluation is undertaken in this process.

*"Occupational experts conduct the oral and written exam for the students and certification is given to the students."
- Mr. Ankur Gupta, National Sales Manager, City & Guilds, New Delhi*

7.3.ix Post-Placement Follow-up

Post-placement follow-up with the students, industry and parents is an important way to ensure constant enrichment of the course as well as to track the post-training changes in youth. The follow-up must be constructive. Care must be taken that training institutions do not interfere in the employee and employer relations.

"Toll free phone has been established and made available to students and alumni for easy accessibility. Website construction is under progress for alumni students to share their views."

- Minu Abraham, DRF, New Delhi

7.3.xi Financial Participation of all stakeholders

The ideal financing mechanism:

- Government/training institutions: Pay a subsidy towards training.
- Industry: Pays towards the costs of recruiting trained youth. This can be partially upfront and partially over a contractual period which the youth may commit to work.
- Student: Pays a part of the cost of training. This can be either through facilitation of credit from banks or micro-finance institutions. The loan can be repaid on the student's being placed. It can also be directly remitted to the financier through a regular monthly deduction from their salary.

"Alumni Clubs have been formed and every week student and faculty interactions are done for the placed students. Students with any issues are encouraged to come to the alumni club to share issues for getting solutions."

- Mr. Ritesh Datta, Relationship Manager, ETASHA, New Delhi

7.3.xii Conscious Focus on the Vulnerable

As a responsibility towards society, it is imperative that all training institutions must in some way connect to the physically challenged and people living with HIV/AIDS and include them in training sessions. This is important as sensitisation of the industry toward this important group can happen only if these groups have the basic minimum skills for qualification. At the same time the training institutions will also provide an environment for these groups to understand the requirements of the industry.

7.5 Conclusion

We Need To Act Now For A Better Tomorrow !

The employability and skill development of underprivileged youth will in a large way influence the growth of the country. Responsible youth will facilitate not only the growth of our country but will also find opportunities in other ageing countries. It is important for the Government, industry and civil society to get together to share the daunting task for a stable country. The policies have been laid down, finance is being made available and infrastructure is also being spruced up. However, all these will go in vain if there is no implementing machinery.

Most of the underprivileged youth come from families which are small entrepreneurs like farmers, labourers etc, and they have an inherent risk-taking ability. Hence, institutions must consider having more courses on self-employment. This will require training institutions to equip themselves with skills to carefully guide the youth on starting an enterprise. The Government must also look at promoting individual as well as collective enterprises of these youth. Successful enterprises of the poor, would in turn, generate more employment for poor youth.

More swift action from the Government, more systematic working from civil society, and more inclusiveness from the industry will be critical for the better future of youth. It has to be acknowledged by everybody that technology has a very important role to play in this. It has been proved repeatedly in history, that civilisations that were better equipped with technology, survived nature's fury as well as enemies' onslaughts. We have to use various technologies on scale in order to administer employability programmes and thereby reap the demographic dividends of a young country.

Annexure I

List of Reviewers

1. Mr. Sourav Banerjee, USAID
2. Mrs Meera Shenoy, EGMM, Govt of AP
3. Capt (Retd) K Raghuraman, Dr Reddy Foundation
4. Mr. IS Gahlaut, CII- Skills Development
5. Prof. Mahaveer Jain, V.V. Giri National Labour Institute
6. Mr. P K Ray, Ex DDG, DGET
7. Mr. Rajendra Joshi, Saath

Annexure II

List of Solution Exchange Responses:

1. Monika Khanna, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), New Delhi
2. Manish Sabharwal, Teamlease Services, Bangalore
3. Subodh Kumar, Udyog Bharati, Ghaziabad
4. Shashi Singh, Consortium of Women Entrepreneurs of India (CWEI), New Delhi
5. Surekha Sule, Independent Journalist, Pune
6. Bharati Joshi, Association for Rural Advancement through Voluntary Action and Local Involvement (ARAVALI), Jaipur
7. Meera Shenoy, Employment Guarantee and Marketing Mission (EGMM), Hyderabad
8. Avinav Kumar, SkillPro Foundation, Bhopal
9. Sridhar Kolluru, Mahila Abhivruddhi Society (APMAS), Hyderabad
10. Shyamla Nath, Women's India Trust (WIT), Mumbai
11. Anindita Dey, Online Universal, Karnal
12. S. J. Amalan, Apex Hitech Institute, Bangalore
13. Rachna Arora, German Technical Cooperation, New Delhi
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