Women, Education, Skills and Work

Compendium:
Case Studies from India

2015

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Compendium on 'Women, Education, Skills and Work' 2015

AIWEFA & UNESCO

CONTENTS

FOREWORD

This Compendium of Papers on Women, Education, Skills and Work is a follow up to the summary report containing the major findings and deliberations of the conference *Transition of Women from Education to Full Employment,* jointly organised by AIWEFA and UNESCO, on May 23, 2015, at India International Centre, New Delhi, India.

This compendium covers a range of structural concerns and our endeavour is to provide a platform to stakeholders to raise issues, address the recent developments and make the discourse more relevant.

AIWEFA and UNESCO express their deep appreciation to the authors of the papers that are being published in this compendium. Authors who have also been the resource persons of the conference are Ms. Sunita Sanghi, Adviser, NITI Aayog; Dr. Bindeshwar Pathak, Founder Chairman, Sulabh International; Dr. Kuldeep Agarwal, Director, Academic & Vocational Education (Additional Charge), National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS); Ms. Jyotika Kalra, Advocate, All India Women's Conference (AIWC) and Ms. Richa Srivastava, Head of Fashion Design, International Polytechnic for Women. We are especially grateful to Dr. Geeta Katarya, Associate Professor and Vice Principal, Lady Irwin College and Dr. Sarita Anand, Associate Professor, Department of Development Communication and Extension at Lady Irwin College, who have contributed papers on our invitation. The final paper by Dr. Adarsh Sharma raises challenges and suggests the way forward for gender equality in the transition of women from education to full employment.

AIWEFA and UNESCO are particularly grateful to the policy makers, academicians, members of civil society and international organisations, as well as colleagues, who participated in the conference and resolved to work towards transition of women from education to inculcation of employability skills. The session themes of the Conference are given in Annex 1, and we are thankful to all the eminent and committed resource persons. The proceedings of the conference provided the framework and theme for the papers that are presented in this compendium.

We are grateful to Dr. Anupa Siddhu, Director Lady Irwin College, for her constant support to AIWEFA through facilitation of faculty and student assistance.

The compendium of papers was prepared under the guidance of Ms. Asha Chandra, President, AIWEFA, Ms. Huma Masood, Programme Officer (Gender and Education), UNESCO Delhi Office and the support of Ms. Sarla Manchanda, Secretary, AIWEFA, Dr. Adarsh Sharma, Vice President, AIWEFA, Dr. Veenu Seth, Executive Member, AIWEFA and Ms. Asheema Singh, UNFPA Consultant and Project Coordinator, (Adolescence Education Programme), NIOS.

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Raj, Joint Secretary, AIWEFA, Ms. Jyotsna Kapur, Dr. Manorama Bawa, Dr. S.K. Sharma, Ms. Usha Nair, Dr. Usha Sharma, who worked very hard to make the conference a big success and made this compendium possible. We also thank the AIWEFA staff members, namely Vijay Kumar, Prakash Panchouli, Virender and Jugal Kishore, and also the student volunteers from Lady Irwin College, headed by Ms. Divyata Kher.

The conference and this resultant compendium of papers greatly benefited from the close collaboration of several partners, notably:

- UNESCO New Delhi Office
- Sulabh International Social Services Organisation
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- India International Centre
- All India Radio

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ABOUT AIWEFA & UNESCO

AIWEFA

The All India Women's Education Fund Association (AIWEFA) was founded in 1929 under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and vibrant women stalwarts of the freedom movement like Sarojini Naidu, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Aruna Asaf Ali, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, Annie Besant among others for empowering women. Education was recognised as the catalytic agent for social change, and in 1932, AIWEFA established the Home Science College, Lady Irwin College, New Delhi to bring a scientific temper in women's education.

For the last eight decades, AIWEFA's programmes in rural and urban areas have been implemented to promote holistic and sustainable development for welfare of communities. Activities promote education and training of women for family and child care, environmental sustainability, nutrition and health, development of rural families through introduction of drudgery reducing equipment for agricultural management, women's skill development, women's political representation and programmes to fight violence against women.

Combining academic strength with sound implementation and training strategies, AIWEFA campaigns and mobilises through its field projects, seminars, workshops, publications and networking, to bring about a sustainable approach to human development and advancement of the weaker sections. Partners include NGOs (India Alliance for Child Rights, Sulabh International), government (Department of Science & Technology, MNRE, Delhi State), public sector (GAIL), Corporate (NIIT), and bilateral agencies (UNESCO, FAO, Ford Foundation, UN Women, UNICEF).

In 1999, AIWEFA was granted the "NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC)". In 2003, AIWEFA accepted the role of Regional Coordinator of the UN's Informal Regional Network of NGOs (NGO IRENE).

UNESCO New Delhi

Gender Equality is one of UNESCO's two global priorities, with a commitment to promote equality between women and men across the Organization's mandate. Gender Equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for the creation of sustainable and peaceful societies.

UNESCO is a leading global advocate of equal access to knowledge, education and employment. The Organization's work in this area is central to its mandate of building knowledge societies that are open, inclusive and participatory.

INTRODUCTION

Education is essential to achieving all of the new Sustainable Development Goals which were adopted by the UN General Assembly in New York, 25-27 September 2015. It was considered necessary to eradicate poverty, boost shared prosperity and broad-based economic growth, and build peaceful, tolerant societies. One of the Sustainable Development Goals (Goal 4) is related to the education with the formulation "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all". This goal had been in the focus of the World Education Forum (WEF 2015) held in Incheon, Korea, from 19-22 May 2015, which set a transformative vision for education over the next 15 years. At the WEF 2015 session on "Skills for work and entrepreneurship" the participants had deliberated how governments can promote systemic reforms, including through strengthening links with the private sector and other stakeholders outside the TVET sector; improve the relevance of qualifications; and increase and diversify funding for skills development.

Since 2000, steady progress has been made. At the regional level, the South and West Asia have made the greatest progress in improving adult and youth literacy over the past 25 years. Between 1990 and 2013, the adult literacy rate in the South and West Asia increased from 47% to 68% and the youth literacy rate from 60% to 84%. Yet, our world is still home to 757 million illiterate adults- two - thirds of whom are women.

The principles informing the **"Framework for Action Education 2030: Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all"**, are drawn from international agreements, including Article 26 of the Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention against Discrimination in Education, the Convention of the Rights of the Child, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. **Gender equality** is inextricably linked to the right to education for all. Achieving gender equality requires a rights-based approach that ensures that female and male learners both not only gain access to and complete education cycles, but are empowered equally in and through education. The framework emphasizes on equity, inclusion and gender equality.

UNESCO's policy to promote the equal access of girls and women to technical and vocational education is based on the Organization's normative instruments: the Revised Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) (1974) and the Convention on Technical and Vocational Education (1989). As these instruments indicate, the continued persistence of inequality in this field calls for specific action in respect of girls and women taking into account their particular needs and the obstacles to be overcome.

Some of the major challenges that we face in the 21st century with regard to ensuring equal access of girls and women to TVE are:

• Increasing the participation of girls' especially rural girls in TVE, removing the gender bias in TVE from educational planning, parents, society and employers. Besides, facilitating employment for girls is also a major challenge.

- In order to be able to meet these challenges, it is imperative that specific strategies are adopted keeping in view the cultural, geographical and ecological variations as also problems relating to poverty and ignorance.

Some of the proposed strategies are:
- Decentralised and non-respective educational planning;
- Expanded programme of non-formal, low tech vocational training for rural girls, gender sensitive planning, gender inclusive curriculum and gender exclusive educational and vocational guidance and counselling services for girls and their parents; and
- Periodic upgradation of syllabi and instructional materials and creation of gender sensitive support structure for working women.

Indian Scenario

With an ambitious target of a 'skilled India' where over 500 million people will be trained by 2020, the new Ministry for "Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)" has initiated a slew of measures:
- Launch of National Skills Mission - currently work-in-progress and this will certainly transform the skills and employment landscape of the country;
- Alignment of National Skills Mission with other key missions;
  - "Digital India", "Make in India" and "Swachh Bharat", etc.
- Establishment of National Skills University in Raipur, Chattisgarh is underway;
- Revised National Skill Development Policy;
- Labour Market Information System (LMIS) to be developed; and
- National Skills Development Council (NSDC) has already taken the initial steps by coming out with Television Commercials and a holistic communication campaign with the tagline *'Hunar Hai Toh Kadar Hai'* – translation **if there is talent - there is respect.**

Education and Employment: The context of Women

1. There are 1213 Women ITIs and women wings in general ITIs. The training capacity in these institutions has increased from 47,391 in 2005-06 to 51,804 in 2009-10. As per recommendations of the National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT), reservation of seats for women in ITIs for craftsperson training has been increased from 25% in 2005 to 30% (India,12 plan document);

2. India is currently ranked 101 in the World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Report, and 124 in the index on Economic Participation and Opportunity[1], out of 136 countries. The female labour force participation rate has declined consistently, both in rural and urban areas, since the 1970s; in recent years, this has seen a sharp decline[2]. Data shows that 21.2 million have dropped out of the workforce during this period, in rural areas alone. Women are increasingly concentrated in sectors like domestic work, home-based work,

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[1] http://www.weforum.org/issues/global-gender-gap
[2] From 29 percent in 2004-05 to 23 per cent in 2009-10, and further to 22 per cent in 2011-12 (NSSO statistics).

agricultural work, garment factories – all forms of vulnerable work that have least protection of labour laws and other social protection measures.

3. The discrepancy between skills and the needs of the labour market is a major factor preventing young women and men from finding or maintaining stable employment[3]. Higher unemployment rates and increasing worldwide competition **highlight the need to raise the education and skill level of the workforce. Poor education quality leads to a significant mismatch between labour market needs and the skills of graduates.** For example, newly created jobs increasingly require critical thinking skills, but in many countries schools fail to develop these skills. Girls and young women are especially affected by these realities.

4. Currently, where labour laws apply to female workers in the informal economy workers (such as homebased workers, domestic workers, agricultural workers), they primarily concern the provision of welfare, thereby lacking rights based approach. Hence access to decent work must be treated as a right of women and men. This requires that labour laws are not only applied, but that they are extended to vulnerable workers, targeting issues such as setting fair minimum wages, including for piece rate work, defining normal hours of work, ensuring access to social security, maternity benefit, care facilities, old age pension, and grievance redressal.

5. Of particular concern is the systematic devaluation of women's work, which includes the devaluation of female labour across all sectors and occupations. This is unequivocally visible through indicators such as the gender wage gap, which indicates that women earn only 50-75 per cent of the wages earned by men, even in legislated employment such as under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)[4]. Limited access of educated women to decent work is reflected in the U shaped labour force participation rates where the participation rates are high among the least and highly educated, but low among the educated (secondary and above) group of women[5]. Analyses show that the key reason for this is women's family and care responsibilities. 54 per cent of working age women (15-59) all across India are not available for work because of household

6. Despite decades of efforts to promote gender equality in the labour market by governments and international organizations, imbalances persist[6]. Women face more obstacles than men in entering the work force, retaining jobs, developing in their working life and combining work and family life. Privatization and economic reform have shrunk the public sector and diminished government's role as an employer. This too has hurt women more than men, since women tend to seek public sector employment, mainly because it tends to provide more social security and more equal opportunities than the private sector.

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[3] European Union 2009.

[4] NSSO 66th round; 2009-10

[5] All references to the labour market indicators are drawn from ILO, 2013, Low female employment in a period of high growth: insights from a primary survey in Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat / International Labour Organization, ILO DWT for South Asia and ILO Country Office for India. - New Delhi

[6] International Labour Organization 2007.

7. Women working in the public sector tend to be employed as teachers and nurses, underscoring traditional gender stereotypes of women as caregivers. This occupational segregation has resulted in underuse of women's labour and feminization of certain occupations, which in turn has reduced overall wage rates. The lack of gender equality can also be seen in pay differentials, unequal career opportunities, gender differences in sick leave and under-representation of women in high-level positions. The shrinkage of opportunities in the formal sector also means a loss of jobs available to women with higher levels of education.

8. Girls are at high risk of dropping out in the transition from primary to secondary school because of both supply and demand factors. Secondary school is more costly per pupil than primary school, and few low-income countries provide secondary school for free. In addition, distance to school often increases at the secondary level. This leads parents to discourage girls from continuing, due to risks to their reputation and marriage prospects. Thus, particular focus should be given to education quality and the social barriers affecting girls aged 10–14.

9. Girls and women with disabilities suffer from double discrimination – based on gender and disability. They often face physical and mental abuse, including rape and other forms of violence. Exclusion of people with disabilities is common; according to UNESCO, only 2 per cent of children with disabilities in developing countries go to school.

10. Academic subject matter is another area of gender inequality. Women are the majority in such fields as health and welfare, education, and humanities and arts. But they are under-represented – in some cases significantly – in such fields as engineering, manufacturing, construction and science. This trend in turn influences women's professional choices and income levels. Consequently, efforts are needed not only to achieve parity in education but also to help overcome the political, economic and social barriers that hinder females from pursuing employment in traditionally 'male' fields and making use of their education and skills.

11. Young women also lack equitable access to public vocational training, apprenticeship programmes and other job-training programmes. These are crucial for developing skills useful in emerging markets and value-added activities. Efforts are needed to open up job-training opportunities in fields beyond those considered 'suitable' for women, which are often lower paying than jobs considered suitable for men. Efforts are also needed to get women into job-training initiatives that will prepare them for the new jobs available in the global economy[7].

12. Finding employment/career is more difficult for young women than for young men, partly because curricula and teaching materials often reinforce traditional roles that may deny women opportunities for full and equal participation in society. This is despite recent

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[7] UNGEI 2008, p. 21.

investments in girls' education and educational systems that are sensitive to the specific needs of girls and women[8].

13. As an UNGEI (UN Girls Education Initiative) report states, "on the supply side, females should not be limited to certain subject areas in their training and education by any constraint other than their own choice, while on the demand side, more emphasis should be placed on creating jobs, particularly those of the calibre that allow women to make the most of their education and skills."

The series of research papers included in this document:

• Deepen understanding on gender sensitive responses to skills provisioning for decent work of youth and adults.

• Review experiences of civil society organisations and of publicly provided and organised skills for work programmes for women;.

• Bring attention to policies on TVET and skills and appraise how these attend to the learning needs and contexts, specifically of marginalised women.

• Share experiences and stories of young marginalised women from the region working in the field of women's education for empowerment, decent work, girl child issues for women.

The publication initiative is an exercise to understand the existing practices and innovations amongst organizations/institutions (civil society and government) which are trying to break gender stereotypes and open avenues for women to access decent work leading to social and economic empowerment.

AIWEFA and UNESCO reiterate that there is a need to understand and document these practices, which will further help in advocating for a gender sensitive approach in TVET policies and lifelong learning policies. This is especially timely as national governments are preparing to influence their national policies and programmes to align with the new global education agenda, where gender, skills matter.

AIWEFA and UNESCO sincerely hope that all the desired objectives of the stakeholders through this compendium will be met like:

• Equipping organisations with the understanding and analysis needed on gender, education, skills, and TVET to influence emergent government plans and programmes contextualising the new education agenda 2030, and particularly for South Asia, the SAARC post 2015 plans;

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[8] Yet the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which entered into force in 1981 and has been ratified by 187 countries, requires States Parties to "take all appropriate measures" to eliminate discrimination against women in education and employment, to provide equal access to the same curricula as men, to reduce female drop-out rates, to organize programmes for women and girls who have left school prematurely and to take other actions aimed at helping the educational and professional advancement of girls and women.

- Deepen understanding on the development and policy environment and context for education, TVET, and skills for life and work in the South Asia region from a gendered and human rights perspective;

- Build a shared understanding of the barriers that affect women's participation in TVET and other skill building programmes and in the workforce; and

- Broaden appreciation of innovative practices on gender, education, skills and work, including non-traditional and decent work options for women and how existing practices and policies can include them and scale up.

The Compendium, we hope will also provide a platform for learning and exchange among practitioners and advocates of gender equality in education and decent work and develop a shared agenda for the future and identify how stakeholders can play a capacity building and shared advocacy role in influencing policies and practice to have a gendered approach in education, TVET programmes, and other skill building programmes across the region.

Papers and Presentations

Background research and specially commissioned Research Papers on the theme attempt to capture an overview of initiatives nationally prevailing to improve women's education and skilling in India. The thematic areas that were requested by the organizers included: school-to-work transition for women; educational opportunities through ITIs, polytechnics, private universities and distance education; public policies for women's participation in Make in India; the role of corporate India in women's skill development; initiatives in women's financial development; entrepreneurship opportunities for women; legislation for creating safe working spaces for women; an integrated approach to empower women to attain their full potential; women's portrayal in society and media; and creating support systems for women. Conclusively the researches indicate that women's empowerment is impacted by social and economic inequalities, therefore there is an urgent need to integrate such perspectives in policy frameworks addressing women's empowerment in the context of societal change.

ABOUT THE COMPENDIUM AUTHORS

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Ms. Jyotika Kalra, honoured as an outstanding woman by the National Commission for Women in 2014, is a women's rights activist. An eminent lawyer, advocate on record and Amicus Curie with the Supreme Court of India, she has conducted many gender sensitisation workshops and is a member of many committees to probe sexual harassment in the workplace. She has been honoured by the Supreme Court of India for two books she has authored.

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Professor Adarsh Sharma, a Fulbright Scholar, is a consultant in Early Childhood Education and Human Development. Having retired as Director of National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD), her professional career spans over four decades. She has worked with national and international organisations and several GOI committees related to policy formulation, ECE planning and programming. She is the Country Coordinator of Asia Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood and has articles/chapters in scientific journals and books.

Enhancing Women's Employability in The Labour Market

Sunita Sanghi

Context

The demographic advantage that India enjoys with more than 60 percent of India's population in the working age group (15-59 years) provides India an opportunity to be human resource capital of the world. A large proportion of this constitutes women who are 48.5% of the total population as per 2011 Census. This makes their participation in the labour market of paramount importance for their economic empowerment and sustainable development of the country. The world over women participation in the labour market is declining at all levels of education, India being no exception. However, the falling female labour force participation, currently 22.5 percent (2011-12)[1] especially in periods of high growth is a matter of concern. There are variations depending upon spatial/ regional characteristics, level of income and education necessitating analysis of supply and demand side factors which have an impact of women participation in the labour market. The empowered women are catalysts for multiplying development efforts.

The Constitution of India provides for gender equality and empowers states to take measures for positive discrimination of the women. Women centric interventions, legislative, legal and programmatic interventions have been taken to address economic, social, political and cultural empowerment[2]. To understand the need and necessity for enhancing women employability it's necessary to look into issues like skills and education level; labour market challenges; the scale of unemployment; obstacles that women face in their journey from education to employment and then suggest policy prescription for improving women participation in the labour market.

Education and Skill levels

It is well said that educating a women means educating the family and the nation. To achieve the goal of Education for All various government programmes have been initiated. On the supply side, the priority to women's education, irrespective of any barriers, through the programmes like *Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), National Literacy Mission, Mid-Day Meal and Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBY)* have led to 100% enrolment of the girl child at the primary level. The women literacy rate has also increased to 65.46% in 2011 from 53.67% in 2001. The gender parity index has improved across different levels of education. However there are variations across states with Kerala having 86% literacy rate and Bihar & Uttar Pradesh just between 55-60%. The rural areas with 59 percent have lower literacy rate than urban areas at 80 percent. The women's participation in higher education is declining. There is focus on universalising secondary education.

Together with improving education level, it is necessary to improve the skills level. As per the NSSO 2011-12 Employment and Unemployment Survey just about three percent of the labour

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[1] NSSO EUS 2011-12

[2] National Policy for empowerment of Women, 2001 Ministry of Women and Child.

force has some formal vocational training and another seven percent informal vocational training. Efforts are made to enhance the employability through skill development and vocational education. A National Mission on Skill Development has been launched which envisages skilling without any bias. The National Policy on Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, 2015 recognises that mainstreaming gender roles by skilling women in non traditional roles and increasing gender sensitivity in the workplace will have a catalytic effect on productivity and be a smart economic decision[3]. The table below highlights major targeted initiatives of various ministries for enhancing employability of women through skill development.

S.No.	Name of Scheme	Particulars/Objectives of the Scheme
1.	Support to Training & Employment Program (STEP)	The scheme has a two-fold objective viz. i. To provide skills that give employability to women. ii. To provide competencies and skills that enable women to become self-employed/entrepreneurs.
2.	*Priyadarshini* - scheme to organize women into effective Self Help Groups	The Women Empowerment and Livelihood Programme in Mid Gangetic Plains also called Priyadarshini Programme envisages holistic empowerment of 1,08,000 poor women and adolescent girls through formation of 7200 Self Help Groups (SHGs). The programme originally is being implemented in six districts including four districts in Uttar Pradesh
3.	*Swadhar Greh*/Short Stay Home (Skill improvement for rehabilitation)	Under the scheme, new swadhar greh will be set up in every district with capacity of 30 women with the following objectives: i. To cater to the primary need of shelter, food, clothing, medical treatment and care of the women in distress and who are without any social and economic support. ii. To enable them to regain their emotional strength that gets hampered due to their encounter with unfortunate circumstances. iii. To provide them with legal aid and guidance to enable them to take steps for their readjustment in family/society. iv. To rehabilitate them economically and emotionally.

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[3] National Policy on Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, MSDE July 2015

S.No.	Name of Scheme	Particulars/Objectives of the Scheme
4.	*SABLA* – Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls	The objective is to improve the nutritional and health status of adolescent girls in the age group of 11-18 years and empower them by providing education in life-skills, health and nutrition, the Government of India introduced the SABLA in November, 2010. The Scheme also aims at equipping girls with information on family welfare, health and hygiene, existing public services, etc., and to draw out-of-school girls into the formal or non-formal education systems
5.	Skill Up-gradation Training Programme for Women in 200 Border/Tribal/ Backward Districts	The programme is aimed at enhancing the vocational skills of women in the border or tribal or backward districts and also at helping them to acquire self-employment. The programme enables women participants to supplement their income in existing occupation, improve productivity and learn new skills for which there is a good demand in the market.
6	National Rural Livelihood Mission	NRLM organizes all poor households (women) into aggregate institutions of the poor that provide them with voice, space and resources. These platforms 'of the poor' and 'for the poor' would partner with local self-governments, public service providers, banks, private sector and other mainstream institutions to facilitate delivery of social and economic services to the poor.

Source: Annual Reports of various Ministries. Table complied by Ms Kanika Agarwal, Consultant, NITI AAYOG

The equality in the education space does not necessary mean equality in the labour market. Therefore it is necessary to look into the labour market challenges for the women.

Labour Market Challenges

The proportion of the working age population (15-59) is around 60 percent[4]. On the other hand the labour force participation rate of women among this age group was only 33.1 percent in 2011-12[5]. The work force participation rates for 0+ females in rural areas is lower at 24.8% as compared to 54% for males and is much lower for urban female at 14.7%.

There is a decline in the female labour force participation rate since 1993 which is a matter of concern. Even among this low proportion who are employed as per the Census of India 2011

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[4] ibid
[5] NSSO: Key Indicators of Employment-Unemployment 2011-12

almost 40 percent are marginal workers working for less than six months. Almost 56.7 percent of female workforce is self-employed as compared to 50.7 percent of the workforce[6]. Among rural females 75 percent were engaged in agriculture as helper or unpaid workers perhaps because of low level of education. On the other hand, 55 percent of the urban females were involved in low–skill activities such as domestic work in the tertiary sector[7]. The proportion of women employed in manufacturing and service sector is very low. Any movement out of agriculture sector is in the non-manufacturing construction low paid activity. This exposes the vulnerable conditions of our female labour force.

The decline in participation of women in the labour force has been attributed to the education and income effect. But among the 15 and & above age group females only 9.8 percent were in the education stream, 32.7 percent were engaged in purely domestic duties while 28.2 percent were engaged in domestic duties plus home based activities like tailoring, collecting fire wood etc on an unpaid basis[8]. Among those aged 15 & above the reasons given for spending most of their time in domestic duties were: no other member to carry out the domestic duties (60 percent rural & 64 percent urban), cannot afford hired help (8.7 percent rural & 8.8 percent urban), for social and/or religious constraints (15.8 percent rural & 14.2 percent urban)[9].

Over the years with the structural transformation of the economy the traditional jobs performed by women in the rural areas like agriculture, traditional handicraft and handloom industries etc have been wound up restricting women's avenues for employment. Also with the migration of the male folk to urban areas in search of employment has curtailed the women's mobility in search of employment outside of their homes or farmlands. Among the women who were reported doing domestic duties expressed willingness to carry out work within the premises of their household provided a hand holding was also provided in terms of seed money and training.[10]

The increase in the self-employment reflects lack of availability of wage employment. The unemployment rate among the educated females is high both in rural and urban areas ranging between 10- 20 percent in rural urban areas. This highlights the fact that with education attainment the job aspiration increases and non-availability of jobs matching this aspiration leads to high educated unemployment.

Not only is the wage employment low paid, there is stagnation of female entrepreneurs especially with higher education and skills reflecting barriers in terms of social norms and access to credit.

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[6] ibid

[7] ibid

[8] Ibid, Table P4, Page 119

[9] NSS Report No. 559: Participation of Women in Specified Activities along with Domestic Duties, page 20

[10] ibid

Barriers faced by women in the labour market

In spite of provisions and initiatives for empowerment of women and gender equality, women face barriers in accessing the same job opportunities that are available to men and often end up in jobs where they do not use their full potential and skills. The barriers could be in terms of differences of time use at home, keeping the women out of labour market; workplace discrimination; lack of adequate infrastructure in terms of roads and connectivity; women's hostels; crèches/day-care centres; credit and market linkages; institutional failures in terms of implementation of labour laws and decision making capacities. These barriers serve to perpetuate women's lower employment participation.

The question is as what more needs to be done for better movement of women from education to employment.

Way ahead

The challenges of labour market in terms of unpaid or low paid jobs in agriculture or construction sector, low level of education, high unemployment rates, barriers to entry requires concerted efforts at different levels. The three dimensions of journey from education to employment 1) enrolling in post-secondary education, 2) building the right skills and 3) Finding work needs to be focussed on.

1.   Enrolling in post-secondary education

•   Improving girls access to education particularly secondary and higher secondary along with improvement in the quality of education and skill content.

•   Creating awareness among students, community, peer groups , parents on the benefit of pursuing education in terms of enhancement of employability and to access the jobs.

•   Institutions of education especially secondary and higher education must make the changes necessary to facilitate the full pursuit of education and professional training by women. This may include providing transport facilities for pick up and drop, exclusive toilet facilities, hostel facilities, scholarship facility for female students willing to pursue core sciences etc, Flexible study/work hours should be allowed for women requiring to take care of their children.

•   We need to remove the social bias for vocational education by providing clear mobility channels and information on career choices.

2.   Building right skills

•   Need to innovate with design, course and curriculum delivery, and financing to make education more affordable and accessible. It could be Module based and flexible to suit availability of time to women. Financial assistance in terms of skill voucher or loan could be made available.

- Dedicated efforts in skilling, re-skilling and improving their educational outcomes through infrastructure development, female teacher availability, incentives along with creating adequate number of favourable job opportunities is necessary to harness their potential.

3. **Focus young people, employers, and education providers on improving employment readiness:** Information availability for students to choose career paths; Employers and providers work together to design curricula that fit business needs; employers may even provide their own staff as instructors. Employers might also consider increasing the availability of work-placements and opportunities for practical learning. Larger enterprises may be able to go further and set up training academies for their own workforce and also their network of suppliers.

4. **Build the supporting structures that allow the best interventions to scale up: The Institutional and governance structure in terms of Ministry of Skill development and Entrepreneurship, Sector Skill Council** for aligning demand and supply and **National Skill Development Corporation** for catalysing private sector efforts in place. The National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) to ensure mobility and path of progression for trainees thus entering market place notified and is expected that all training would be NSQF compliant by 2018.

5. **Finding Jobs:** Education and training is a key factor in enhancing the employability of individuals, increasing productivity and competiveness of enterprises, reducing unemployment, poverty and exclusion. Education and training is an essential but not sufficient condition for a student to have good employment outcome after completion of education. There must be sufficient decent jobs for absorbing entrants to the labour market.The good quality jobs which offer sufficient income, social protection , guarantees rights at work and dialogue.

6. **Making Available the infrastructure and support system**

- Making available adequate infrastructure in terms of roads and connectivity to satellite towns and small cities.

- Access to better infrastructure such as water, electricity, crèches, hostels etc.

- The training needs to be provided in trades which are available near places of residence.

- The entrepreneurship also plays an important role in transition from education to work. In India there is a move to facilitate creation of women entrepreneurs though Self-Help Groups (SHGs). These groups not only boost women confidence but also enable women to give employment to more women and facilitate women is part in innovation and growth story. Many such self help groups like *Lijjat Papad* are attempting to create women entrepreneurs wherein women without disturbing their home participate in the economic activity. The Micro Units Development & Refinance Agency(MUDRA) would ensure access to finance . (BOX 1)

- **Strengthening implementation of anti-discrimination:** legislations in employment across all occupations for expanding employment opportunities for women. In addition, reducing the large gaps in wages and working conditions, often observed between women and men, could help provide a boost to the number of women seeking employment.

MUDRA: *Mahila Uddyami Scheme*

Government of India (GoI) is setting up a Micro Units Development & Refinance Agency (MUDRA) Bank through a statutory enactment. This Agency would be responsible for developing and refinancing all Micro-finance Institutions (MFIs) which are in the business of lending to micro / small business entities engaged in manufacturing, trading and service activities. The Bank would partner with state level / regional level co-ordinators to provide finance to Last Mile Financiers of small / micro business enterprises.

Within the framework the products being offered by MUDRA at the rollout stage have been designed to meet requirements of different sectors / business activities as well as business / entrepreneur segments.

One of the innovative products, being worked upon, which will be offered by **MUDRA is Mahila Uddyami Scheme**

Timely and adequate financial support to the MFIs, for on lending to women / group of women / JLGs/ SHGs for creation of qualifying assets as per RBI guidelines towards setting up / running micro enterprises as per MSMED Act and non-farm income generating activities.

How women's self-help groups are transforming rural India

Self-Help Groups are facilitated by NGOs, and advise and train members in a variety of on- and off-farm income-generating activities. In 1998, PRADAN helped the village of Teliya begin its transformation from a remote village with a bleak future—severe food insecurity, malnutrition, and almost no cash—to a thriving place with year-round cash crops and other products that are sold to markets nationally. This all started with the Self-Help group suggested by PRADAN, which brought the village's women together to support one another, access financial and public services, and spearhead changes that affect the whole community. Teliya's Self-Help group encouraged the women to save what little they could. The five rupees each woman scraped together over the course of months was the start of community resource-sharing to make investments that have completely changed the prospects of the village's 77 families.

{*Source: GOI for MUDRA and Ford Foundation for SHG*}.

In the end, the economic empowerment of women is a pre requisite for sustainable development, pro-poor growth and the achievement of the millennium development goals. Gender equality and empowered women are catalysis for multiplying development efforts.

Women's Education and Skill Development, the Sulabh Way

Bindeshwar Pathak

Introduction

This paper is about Sulabh International's successful campaign for providing education and employment to the dalit women of the towns of Alwar and Tonk in the state of Rajasthan, India. Till the intervention, these women cleaned and disposed human excreta with their bare hands from houses lacking flush toilets—a practice euphemistically referred to as 'scavenging', which is illegal and punishable under the Indian law, yet continues in many rural and semi-urban areas—to eke out their living. They were among the most oppressed and desolate segments of Indian society, as they suffered from severe disadvantages of gender, caste and class. Besides lacking material means of a decent living—hygienic shelter, basic healthcare, education, and other necessary resources of improving one's life—these women, despite the Constitutional assurance of equality, also suffered from extreme social exclusion known as untouchability. Obviously, it was a daunting task to devise and develop appropriate modules for their education, apprenticeships and skill-building that was essential for ensuring their alternative employment without which they could not be freed from the dehumanizing work of manual scavenging. This was the challenge Sulabh took and succeeded through its multi-pronged endeavours in educating, training and providing alternative employment to them, thus setting an example and a hope for universal education and employability of women, especially those who are at the bottom of a terribly discriminatory system.

Overview

Sulabh International Social Service Organisation established a centre called Nai Disha (New Direction) in Alwar in April 2003 with the aim of eradicating manual scavenging and providing alternative employment to the scavenging women. Against severe odds and reservation of the local people, this centre was started with the active support of socially conscious women belonging to the scavenging dalit community in the vicinity. Nai Disha first provided the suffering women basic education before training them in market-friendly trades. We also helped them in developing their self-esteem and their integration in the social mainstream.

Before our intervention, these women were engaged in manual scavenging because they were born in a community that was traditionally burdened with this inhuman work. Nai Disha encouraged these women to learn vocational skills that would help them leave their hereditary occupation of cleaning excreta. Alongside giving them functional literacy and numeracy, we closely interacted with them, took their feedback into account and created a training module to develop their skill in food processing, cutting and tailoring, carpet making, embroidery, beauty care, bag making, etc. Nai Disha also paid attention to the trainees' health and hygiene, as they lived in filthy surroundings and manually cleaned and carried excreta. Health being the key to a person's well-being, the centre held regular medical check-ups of the trainees.

Sulabh's initiative for education and liberation of the suffering women of Alwar cannot be grasped without understanding the larger context and objective of our movement. Way back in 1970, inspired by Gandhi's dream of the untouchables' emancipation and sanitation for all Indians, I laid the foundation of Sulabh. The aim was to build an effective movement for liberation of the manual scavengers, as well as eradicating open defecation and ensuring clean environment. In subsequent years, we succeeded in finding a solution to the menace of open defecation through inventing a safe and affordable toilet technology. We put this technology in practical use, as we constructed a large number of household and public toilets all over India. But our bigger achievement lies in rousing the social conscience and changing the caste-ridden mindset of Indians for restoring the human rights and dignity of a community that has for generations been cruelly ostracized as untouchables.

As the hierarchies of caste and patriarchy have dominated the Indian society through the centuries, it is not unusual that their consequences still dominate our social life. For example, unhygienic dry latrines that still exist in rural and suburban areas have to be manually cleaned and they are invariably cleaned by a particular dalit community and most of them happen to be women. This made our movement take into account the gender and caste dimension of social and sanitation problems. We also realized that the best way to ensure sanitation, human rights, and women's education and employment is to adopt a holistic approach because human problems do not exist in isolation but in close proximity. One problem is difficult to be resolved unless other problems are also resolved.

Education, Livelihood and Liberation of Scavenger Women

Sulabh employed an integrated approach for educating and training the women scavengers for alternative employment. We ensured that these people first get motivated and develop a sense of their human potential, which are crucial for laying the foundation of their education and liberation. Alongside giving them basic literacy and training them in market-friendly trades, we also tried to develop their attitudinal and behavioural skills. We provided them and their family members a special counselling on the importance of education, health and hygiene. Considering the extremely poor economic condition of these women, Nai Disha gave the trainees a monthly stipend (in the beginning Rs. 1800 that now has been revised and enhanced to Rs. 3700) during the training period so that they do not go back to the earlier job of scavenging for their living. Like in our earlier experiments at other places, at Nai Disha at Alwar too, we adopted as far as possible a multi-faceted approach which has five interconnected stages — liberation, rehabilitation, vocational training, education of next generation, and social elevation.

Course Content

Besides imparting functional literacy, the following courses are designed to help trainees acquire skills that help them towards self-employment.

Food processing: General knowledge about food hygiene and training in making various types of *papads,* pickles, sauces, chips and handmade vermicelli, etc.

Cutting and tailoring.

Hand and machine embroidery on sarees, suits, etc.

Beauty care such as pedicure, manicure, various types of facials, waxing, etc.

Making jute school bags, bags for women and children, conference bags.

Carpet making *(Namda)*.

Exposure visit to various places for participation in conferences.

Participation in seminars, conferences and exhibitions.

Strategies/Approaches

Normally, such courses are designed for six months or one year but in the case of the scavenger women, we decided to extend it further (to two years, and in some individual cases even longer) considering the fact that they had been doing nothing except manual scavenging for generations. Thus, in our centre, the duration of the training varies depending upon the intelligence quotient of trainees. Based on our experience, we prolonged the duration of their training so that they get a detailed knowledge, both of the technical and practical side of training, that will enable them to compete in the open market.

The two-year training is followed by a one-year period of rehabilitation so that they get sufficient time for earning through putting to productive use their newly acquired skills. We generally put the trained women in two categories. In the first category are those who show initiatives and leadership qualities, who can set up their own enterprise with the help of subsidies and loans available from the government. Such women are able to produce quality material and they have the ability to make necessary arrangements for their marketing. In the second category are those trainees who do not have these abilities and leadership qualities. They are put under a cooperative society that provides them requisite help and assistance.

How we overcame the obstacles

Transforming the lives of these women was a challenging task. Initially, the women scavengers were not greatly bothered about personal hygiene. Also, their lurking suspicion against the 'other people' reflected in their use of language, which hampered interpersonal communication. But our resource people were mentally prepared for these challenges. Sympathy, patience and perseverance yielded results. These women gradually opened up and showed their potential. We were able to instil in them a sense of self-worth and dignity. Nai Disha taught them how to begin a new life and rewrite their destiny.

When the first batch of scavenger women joined the training centre, 97 per cent of them were illiterate. During the training all were taught to read and write. Laxmi Nanda, who was unable to read or write, now expresses her feelings through poems. Now all of them have bank accounts, as they receive their monthly stipend through account payee cheques, and they know how to operate their bank accounts.

After their training, 115 women from Alwar have learnt to successfully market the goods they produce. These women have organised themselves into self-help groups and are availing credit facilities from banks so that they can market their products effectively, enabling them to earn a steady income.

After the initial hesitation, the people now buy their food products. Their *dal, papad* and handmade vermicelli are in great demand in the local markets. The women trained in beauty-care now provide service to the homes the doors of which were earlier closed to them, as they were 'untouchables'.

Alongside these developments, all dry buckets or pit-latrines(which needed to be cleaned manually) have been converted into the Sulabh twin-pit toilets to make Alwar a scavenging-free town.

Expansion after the success of the Alwar project

After having seen the success of the Alwar project, the Government of Rajasthan invited Sulabh to extend this program in other areas. Under the Scheme of Self-Employment for Rehabilitation for Manual Scavengers, the Rajasthan SC/ST Finance Development Cooperative Corporation Ltd. along with the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and the National Safai Karamchari Finance Development Corporation entrusted a project to Sulabh for training 225 manual scavengers in the neighbouring town of Tonk. The project work started from March 17, 2008. Like Alwar, the aim of the Tonk project was to rehabilitate the scavengers and their children and to ensure the elimination of scavenging from the district once and for all. The idea was that after completion of the training, the ex-scavengers would get subsidy from governmental and financial institutions. This would enable them to get self-employment.

Under this project, scavenger women and their wards were admitted for training in various trades like handicraft, cutting and tailoring, embroidery, electrical repair and plumbing. Apart from enabling the beneficiaries to earn a decent livelihood, the programme aimed to ensure improvement in education, health and economic status of the ex-scavengers.

After reviewing the training, we felt that the official training period was not enough for these women, but the Rajasthan SC/ST Finance Corporation Limited showed its inability to extend the training. We decided to continue the programme. Like Alwar, we also decided to make Tonk a scavenging-free town. By the end of 2011, 118 pit-latrines or dry buckets had been converted into the Sulabh toilets, and 280 scavengers were trained in various vocations or trades.

The beneficiaries have been linked with job work. They stitch clothes like blouse, petticoat, skirt, saree fall, *Namda, Aratari* work, embroidery in *lehanga, chunni,* etc. The main aim of providing vocational training to the manual scavengers is to equip them with the requisite skill in a particular trade or occupation so that they can compete with others in the open market. Besides training, the Sulabh team helps them in seizing the opportunity for self-employment and getting orders for their products.

Social acceptance and integration of rehabilitated women

Above all, ourinitiatives have produced encouraging social impact. Untouchability has become a thing of the past in Alwar and Tonk. The social transformation brought about can be gauged by the fact that the same people who were earlier loathe to touch them now purchase products, including eatables, prepared by the ex-scavengers. The dalit women now provide beauty care services to the upper-caste women. The upper-caste families now invite them in various functions and ceremonies. To give but one example, in the first of its kind, the priest of the local Jagannath temple invited Usha Chaumar of Alwar on his daughter and son's marriage. At our initiative, the dalits offered prayers in temples for the first time in the local temple, and the Brahmin priests performed the puja at their homes. We encouraged people to come together for common puja. And we succeeded in our effort. The point of organising such activities is to overcome religious dogmatism and social discrimination.

It may be noted that among the rehabilitated and liberated scavengers from the Nai Disha are Usha Chaumar (who rose to become President of Sulabh International) and Guddi Athwal who attended the World Water Forum from 12th to 14th March 2012 at Marseille, France and the World Toilet Summit in Durban in December 2012.

Lessons learnt

There is an inner urge among the hitherto uneducated and underemployed women, as we saw in the case of scavenger women of Alwar and Tonk, to get educated and gain a rewarding employment. If the civil society and government provide the suffering women effective means and tools, they are more than willing to break their shackles. Another lesson learnt is that the government programmme of rehabilitation of scavengers entails some monetary compensation or some piecemeal vocational training which prove inadequate to motivate them to start a new life. An integrated approach is required, keeping in mind their various economic and human needs. We need the patience and perseverance to deeply engage with them, allay their fears and build their self-confidence. Sulabh's comprehensive training programme that includes hygiene and health education, psycho-social counselling, besides basic skill-building, can lead the severely disadvantaged women to the path of liberating education and employment.

Recommendation

The question of gender inequality, as we can see in the challenge of women's education and employment, should not be seen in isolation but as a part of the larger structural discriminations of caste, class etc. Though all women suffer some common problems due to the deeply entrenched culture of patriarchy, not all women suffer from the curse of illiteracy or economic slavery. In other words, women are not a monolith and the great question of gender inequality must be seen and tackled with other institutionalized discriminations like caste etc.

The question of education and employability of women in India or elsewhere is essentially the question of their liberation from various forms of overt or covert subjugation which are cultural, social, economical, educational, psychological, and thus all pervasive. So much so that many

patriarchal values have also been internalized by women. Therefore, a larger social movement for gender equality in all aspects of life must accompany any campaign or drive for women's education and empowerment.

Above all, there is a need to adopt a holistic and imaginative approach to ensure women's education and employment because these problems exist with other troubles that women face in their everyday life. As we saw earlier, we would not have been able to educate and liberate the scavenger women unless we would have built safe toilets to replace the existing pit-latrines or dry buckets, and this necessitated dealing with the families using the filthy latrines and convincing them of the need of safe ones as well their duty as a fellow citizens to help out the scavenger women who are struggling for their liberation. Thus, a holistic approach requires, among other things, an engaged social sensitivity to understand and overcome the problems.

Conclusion

Sulabh International's distinctive vocational centre, Nai Disha is driven by the vision to educate, train and rehabilitate the scavenger women from the obnoxious and inhuman drudgery of cleaning human excreta. Overcoming a range of difficulties, the centre has by and large been successful in its mission of educating and liberating the women. Sulabh accomplished this difficult task through a pragmatic, culturally sensitive and holistic approach that combined an application of technological innovation with imaginative initiatives of social reforms. But this movement is just the beginning. There is a great need to replicate in the rest of India—and other countries where similar oppressive situation obtains—what Sulabh has achieved at Alwar and Tonk in the state of Rajasthan. A concerted and sustained effort involving the government, civil society, private sector and NGOs is required for creating a synergy for education and employment of severely disadvantaged women in India and rest of the world.

Glossary

Dalits /Untouchables: *Dalit* is the Hindi word currently in use for a class of people who were earlier deemed as outcastes or the lowest in the Hindu caste hierarchy. Not long ago, these people were identified and despised as Untouchables by the rest of society. The official term for 'Untouchable caste' or 'Untouchables' is Scheduled Caste.

Scavenging/scavengers: Scavenging is the practice of manual cleaning of human excreta from service or dry latrines. The scavengers crawl into the dry latrines and collect the human excreta with their bare hands, carry it as head-load in a container to dispose it off. Most of the scavengers are *dalits* and 80 per cent of those who do scavenging work are women from this community. Employing manual scavengers to clean excreta is punishable under the law, yet this work continues in many rural and semi-urban areas, though the practice is on the decline. In 1993, Indian Parliament passed the Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act, which tendered even voluntary employment of manual scavengers for removing excreta an offence.

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Education and Women's Career Development Education for Women through Polytechnics and ITIs

Richa Srivastava

Introduction

Education is the most important means for bringing socio- economic transformation among the people of a country. The role of education in facilitating social and economic progress is crucial. Education improves functional and analytical ability and expands an individual's intellectual horizons, interests and potential for empowerment and a better quality of life and thereby opens up opportunities to earn their livelihoods.

With the challenges and opportunities of globalisation we need higher and better levels of knowledge and skills to work effectively. India is in transition to a knowledge based economy and this requires development of skilled workers in the country who can be flexible, analytical, adaptable and multi skilled. In the new knowledge economy the skill sets will include professional, managerial, operational, behavioural, inter personal and inter functional skills. India thus needs flexible education and training systems that will provide the foundation for learning, secondary and tertiary education and to develop required competencies as means of achieving lifelong learning. Let us dwell here on what we mean by vocational education imparted through various institutions.

Vocational Education

Vocational education or skill based education enables students to acquire skills which are traditionally non-academic and totally related to a specific trade, occupation or vocation. These are also known as Technical Education. Career and Technical Education (CTE) or Vocational Education and Training (VET) as they directly develop expertise in a particular group of techniques or technology through manual or practical activities.

Vocational courses are primarily designed in such a way that they impart a thorough application-based study wherein theoretical concepts of a field are not studied independently but are subordinated to the understanding of techno-operational aspects of specific job.

The following are the said aspects which make vocational training a necessity for the growth of the people of a country:

- Opportunities to run their livelihood
- Bring socio economic change
- Need for skilled labour
- Globalisation and modernisation
- Direct link between education and vocation
- Practical training

Some of the positive measures by both State and Central Governments are described below:

**Table 1. Status of Vocational Training
and Technical Training Institutes:**

	Type of Institution		Number Trained
School Education	Primary		790640
	Upper Primary		401079
	Secondary		131287
	Senior Secondary		102558
	Total		1425564
Higher Education	Universities	Central University	42
		State Public University	310
		Deemed University	127
		State Private University	143
		Central Open University	1
		State Open University	13
		Institution of National Importance	68
		Institutions under State Legislature Act	5
		Others	3
		Total	712
	Colleges		36671
	Stand Alone Institution	Diploma Level Technical	3541
		PGDM	392
		Diploma Level Nursing	2674
		Diploma Level Teacher Training	4706
		Institute under Ministries	132
		Total	11445

Source: For School Education : U-DISE-2013-2014 (Provisional)
For Higher Education: AISHE Portal (www.aishe.gov.in)

According to a survey by All India Survey on Higher Education, against the number of fourteen lakh twenty five thousand five hundred and sixty (1425560) there are only three thousand five hundred forty one (3541) diploma level technical institutes.

The need of the hour is not only to increase the number of institutes offering technical education but also an effort is required from both state and central government to strengthen the structure of the education system for technical and vocational training.

Positive Measures – by both State and Central Government

National Vocational Education Qualifications Framework (NVEQF)

A descriptive framework that organizes qualifications according to a series of levels of knowledge along with skills regardless of whether they were acquired through formal, non-formal or informal education and training. Qualifications are made up of occupational standards for specific areas of learning units. The key elements of the NVEQF are to provide (a) national principles for providing Vocational Education leading to international equivalency, (b) multiple entry and exit between VE, general education and job markets, (c) progression within VE, (d) transfer between VE and general education, and (e) partnership with industry/employers

Vocationalisation of Secondary Education

CBSE is offering 34 Vocational courses consisting of 107 subjects in its about 500 government and government aided schools across the country. CBSE is making efforts to introduce more such courses in collaboration with relevant industry/organization, and has facilities for joint certification.

National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS)

NIOS offers 82 vocational education courses through its accredited vocational Institutes which include Government Institutes, NGOs and Registered Societies.

Establishment of New Polytechnics

Under the scheme, it is proposed to establish 1000 Polytechnics in the country, the breakup of which is as under:

*   300 Polytechnics to be set up by the State governments/Union Territories with assistance from government of India in unserved areas (district).
*   300 Polytechnics to be set up through Public Private Partnership by the State Governments/Union Territories. These 300 polytechnics will be selected in consultation with State Governments/Union Territories, various industrial organizations such as Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), Associated`Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ASSOCHAM) and PHD Chamber of Commerce, etc.
*   It is proposed to facilitate the creation of 400 additional Polytechnics by the private sector.

Strengthening of Existing Polytechnics

It is proposed to upgrade infrastructure of existing diploma level, public funded Polytechnics by:

*   Providing financial assistance for modern equipment and replacement of obsolete equipments
*   Providing modern facilities for application of IT in teaching, learning and testing processes and creating infrastructure facilities as well as introduction of new diploma courses.

Construction of Women's Hostel In Polytechnics

In order to attract women in Polytechnic education, it is proposed to provide one time financial assistance for the construction of women's hostels in 500 Polytechnics.

Community Polytechnics

Selected AICTE approved polytechnics run vocational programmes in the local area for community development under the Community Development through Polytechnics (CDTP) scheme. Each Polytechnic runs short-term non-formal skill development programmes through 5 -10 extension centres in nearby villages. There is no age and qualification bar for trainees under the scheme and no fees is charged.

Craftsmen Training In ITIs – Industrial Training Institute

Duration of training courses varies from 6 months to 3 years and students with Classes 8 to 12 pass qualification can seek admission in these courses.

National Policy on Skill Development

 A National Policy on Skill Development has been formulated by the Ministry of Labour & Employment. The objective is to create a workforce empowered with improved skills, knowledge and internationally recognized qualifications to gain access to decent employment. It aims at increase in productivity of workforce both in the organized and the unorganized sectors, seeking increased participation of youth, women, disabled and other disadvantaged sections and to synergize efforts of various sectors and reform the present system. At present the capacity of skill development in India is around 3.1 million persons per year. The XI Five Year Plan envisions an increase in that capacity to 15 million annually. India has target of creating 500 million skilled workers by 2022. Thus, there is a need for increasing capacity and capability of skill development programs. Skill development initiatives support employment generation, economic growth and social development process. Skill development policy will be an integral part of comprehensive economic, labour and social policies and programmes. A framework for better coordination between various stakeholders – Ministries, States, Industry etc. will be established. It will promote excellence and will meet the requirements of knowledge economy.

Education and Career Opportunities in Polytechnics and ITIs

KEY NOTES:–
- Imparts technical education
- Not affiliated to any university
- Approved by AICTE
- Run by State Technical Boards
- Diploma & Post Diploma courses
- Basic qualification- 10 th
- Admission through Common Entrance Test Conducted by BTE in respective states.

Courses Offered

Most of the polytechnics (about 80%) in the country offer three-year generalized diploma courses in conventional disciplines such as Civil, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering. During the last two decades, many polytechnics started offering courses in other disciplines also. Polytechnics also offer post-diploma and advanced diploma programmes of 1-2 years duration in different specializations. The following courses are run by most of the polytechnics:

1. Architectural Assistantship
2. Automobile Engineering
3. Chemical Engineering
4. Civil Engineering
5. Computer Engineering
6. Computer Science and Engineering
7. Electrical Engineering
8. Electronics and Communication Engineering
9. Electronics and Communication Engineering - Industry Integrated
10. Electrical and Electronics Engineering
11. Electronics (Microprocessor)
12. Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering
13. Fashion Design
14. Food Technology
15. Garment Technology
16. Information Technology
17. Instrumentation Technology
18. Interior Design and Decoration
19. Leather Technology
20. Leather Technology (Footwear)
21. Library and Information Sciences
22. Mechanical Engineering
23. Mechanical Engineering (Refrigeration and Air Conditioning)
24. Mechanical Engineering (Tool and Die)
25. Marine Engineering
26. Medical Laboratory Technology
27. Plastic Technology
28. Production and Industrial Engineering
29. Textile Design
30. Textile Processing

Mode of Teaching

The instructional strategy employed in the polytechnics is predominately classroom-based teaching. Laboratory practices are conducted as per requirements in specific subjects. Many of the polytechnics have acquired adequate audio visual hardware like projectors and smart boards However, an adequate amount of courseware/software is not available due to which these audio visual aids are not being used to the fullest.

Equipment and Facilities

Most of the polytechnics in the country were established about 30 years ago and the infrastructure facilities in terms of buildings and equipment provided at that time continue to be

used in the polytechnics. Changes in technology and field practices call for corresponding changes in equipment and laboratory facilities. Due to resource constraints, most of the facilities have not been updated adequately. The Government of India has been providing grants under Direct Central Assistance to keep the polytechnics updated. The present World Bank assisted project has the objective of modernizing the facilities, resources and courses of polytechnics.

Community Polytechnics

In the later half of the 1970s, about 35 polytechnics were identified as Community Polytechnics and provided with funds under a Direct Central Assistance Scheme (DCA) to take up activities relating to development of rural areas. The Community Polytechnics were expected to perform activities like: rural technical manpower development, transfer of technology and other technical services needed by the Community. Later, the Government of India also provided funds to selected institutions to develop Centres for the Development of Rural Technologies (CDRT). CDRTs are expected to take up research activities in areas of appropriate technology and develop technologies and devices for improvement in productivity and growth of rural economy. At present, there are about 180 institutions designated as Community Polytechnics. A number of these institutions have performed well in the area of manpower development and transfer of technology.

Technical Teachers Training Institutes

The four Technical Teachers Training Institutes (TTTIs) at Bhopal, Kolkata, Chandigarh and Chenai were established in 1967 by the Government of India with the major aim of improving polytechnic education and continuously enhancing its efficiency and effectiveness. For this purpose, these institutions conducted programmes and undertook activities in the areas of teacher training, curriculum development, admission tests and examination reforms, promotion of educational research, extension services to States, Polytechnics, Industries and Community and Management Development.

TTTIs have continuously assessed the needs of the States through surveys and consultations and also have benefited from the directions of the two Review Committees constituted to assess their performance. TTTIs have been offering a variety of long-term and short-term training programmes in the areas of engineering/technology, instructional methodologies and techniques, and educational management. The bulk of training programmes for polytechnic faculties is organized by them .

The curriculum development activity has contributed to the adoption of systematic approaches to the development of job-related technical programmes with the involvement of teachers from polytechnics and other technical institutions, as well as professionals from industry.

In the area of instructional material development, TTTIs have developed a variety of instructional materials both print and non-print; print materials such as textbooks, laboratory manuals, workbooks, data books, etc. and non-print materials like video films, computer-assisted learning

packages, charts, OHP transparencies, models, slides, film strips, tape-slide programmes, experimental boards, teaching kits and multimedia packages. TTTIs have constantly involved industries in their activities and promoted the interaction of industries with the polytechnics. Promotion of entrepreneurship in polytechnic students is another area where TTTIs have contributed significantly to promote self-employment among polytechnic graduates.

Other Supporting Agencies

There are many other professional bodies and agencies which directly or indirectly support polytechnic education. Associate Membership of the Institution of Engineers (AMIE) has been one of the avenues for diploma holders to upgrade their qualifications. Recently, some states have made arrangements with engineering colleges to admit Diploma holders to engineering degree programmes in an extended period of three years. The Institution of Electronics and Tele-Communication Engineers, in addition, provides some post-graduate diploma programmes in Computer Science and Electronics. Indian Society for Technical Education (ISTE), Department of Science & Technology (DST), Department of Electronics (DOE), and the Computer Society of India (CSI), also have programmes to support polytechnic education. The Apprenticeship Boards have programmes to provide industrial training to polytechnic teachers and also provide apprenticeship training to polytechnic pass outs. Many industries and industry organizations have contributed in a significant measure to the development of polytechnic education.

Status of Women's Education:

Women form an integral part of the Indian workforce. According to the information provided by the office of Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India the total number of female workers in India is 149.8 million and female workers in rural and urban areas are 121.8 and 28.0 million respectively. Out of total 149.8 million female workers, 35.9 million females are working as cultivators and another 61.5 million are agricultural labourers. Of the remaining females workers, 8.5 million are in household Industry and 43.7 million are classified as other workers.

In so far as the organised sector is concerned women workers constitute 20.5 percent of total employment in organised sector in the country.

The root cause for this steep curve is the lack of vocational training provided to women in our country.

According to the data by All India Survey on Higher Education by Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD)

Table 2. Level-wise Enrolment in School & Higher Education

(in '000')

Level	All Categories			SC			ST		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Primary (I-V)	67223	62769	129992	13469	12614	26083	7458	6994	14452
Upper Primary (VI-VIII)	33746	32035	65780	6568	6257	12825	3280	3121	6401
Elementary (I-VIII)	100969	94804	195773	20037	18871	38908	10738	10115	20853
Secondary (IX-X)	19484	17477	36961	3589	3231	6820	1641	1523	3164
I-X	120453	112281	232734	23626	22102	45728	12380	11638	24018
Senior Secondary (XI-XII)	11747	10406	22153	2036	1815	3851	741	642	1383
I-XII	132199	122688	25662	25662	23917	49579	13121	12280	25401
Ph.D	50	34	84	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
MPhil	16	19	35	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Post Graduate	1744	1631	3374	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Under Graduate	12723	10815	23538	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
PG Diploma	164	51	215	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Diploma	1500	624	2124	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Certificate	81	95	176	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Integrated	51	32	83	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Higher Education - Total	16329	13301	29629	2005	1632	3637	729	586	1315

Note: NA - Not Available

For School Education : U-DISE-2013-2014 (Provisional)

For Higher Education: AISHE 2012-13 (Provisional)

The above data shows that we do not see much difference in the ratio of boys and girls in school education, graduation, post graduation and even Doctorate degrees .

The difference at diploma and post diploma is quite large that is 164: 51 and 1500 :624

Meaning thereby the skilled force in India majorly constitutes of men .

Vocational Training for Women

Directorate General of Employment & Training (DGE&T) is the nodal agency for providing vocational training in traditional and contemporary courses and certification to women to meet demand for the trained skill workforce to the industry and service sector etc. in the country. These courses help women to achieve their career goals and become independent. The Women

Vocational Training Programme is dedicated to planning and implementing long term policies related to women's vocational training in the country.

The Institutional framework comprising 11 Institutes in the Central sector, offer training courses to women to develop professional skills required to find suitable jobs/self employment and trained faculty position in ITIs etc. The institutes set up to impart training exclusively for women under the Women Vocational Training Programme are as under:

- National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) for Women, NOIDA
- Regional Vocational Training Institutes (RVTIs) for Women at Mumbai, Bangalore, Thiruvananthapuram, Panipat, Kolkata, Tura, Allahabad, Indore, Vadodara and Jaipur.
- Entrepreneurship Training Centre (EFC) has approved for setting up of New RVTIs in the States of Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Tripura, Goa, Uttarakhand, Bihar, J&K and Tamil Nadu. These RVTIs would be operational by August, 2015

The National/Regional Vocational Training Institutes for women provide (i) Crafts Training Scheme (CTS) & (ii) Crafts Instructors Training Scheme (CITS) under modular pattern training programmes and Short term training courses, who have passed 10th or 12th standard and meet the specified eligibility criteria for various courses. The CITS courses are specially designed for ITI instructors. Apart from the regular courses, these institutes also organize short term courses as per the requirements for the industry. Short term courses include training in employable skills, preparation/use of Audio-visual aids etc. for general women, housewives, students and school drop-outs. More than 1,10,000 women have been trained since inception of Women Vocational Training Programme in 1977.

In the State sector, vocational training facilities exclusively for women at Craftmen level are provided through a network of Women Industrial Training Institutes/ITCs and Women wings in general ITIs/ITCs under the administrative control of the State Governments. The Women's Training in Directorate General of Employment & Training (DGE&T) is responsible for policy matters, standards, revision of course curricula & implementation of new schemes. As per information furnished by the respective State Governments, there are about 1431 Women ITIs and women wings in general ITI/ITCs having a total of 82,390 training seats .

Apart from the above endeavours of the central government the Board of Technical Education run by all states respectively plays an important role in women education.

They give affiliation and recognition to various institutes for running courses exclusively for women such as

- Fashion Design
- Library Management
- Information Technology
- Secretarial Practices
- Textile Processing Technology
- Electronics and Communication Engineering
- Fine Arts

- Food Technology
- Garment Technology
- Interior Design and Decoration
- Textile Design
- Architectural Assistantship
- Journalism and Mass Media

The problem of women's education in India attracts our attention immediately. In our country, due to conservative traditionalism, women's status has, through ages, been considered to be lower than that of men. Thus depriving them of one of the most fundamental human rights.

Even today, in spite of the recognition of women's status is equal to that of men, the majority of them suffer in primitive ignorance as never before. Illiteracy and ignorance is prevalent more in women than in men and this evil is rampant specially in rural areas and backward communities.

Under the fast changing conditions in the country in the recent times increased attention is being paid to their education. Though the government is working at various levels ,there are certain problems that still persist in the field.

The main problems facing their education are:

(i)   Immorality from their male counterparts.

(ii)   Lack of suitable curriculum for the education of girls.

(iii)   Lack of social consciousness among women.

(iv)   Scarcity of lady teachers;

(v)   Lack of proper physical facilities and infrastructures.

(vi)   Unwillingness of lady teachers to serve in rural areas.

(vii)   Financial difficulties.

(viii) Problem of transport.

(ix)   Problem of empathetic behaviour in co-education.

(x)   Lack of enthusiasm and interest of the officials in charge of education

The lack of coordination that existed between the home, the school and the life outside has to be remedied and a close integration must be secured between the process of education and the social and economic life of the country. Everyone should be trained to make an adequate living and to earn their livelihood effectively in their appropriate place in life.

The facilities for education should be adjusted as accurately as possible to the actual needs and opportunities which arise. The methods of education have to be so designed that the inherent appeal and the value of education would speak for itself and the women students feel encouraged to study further.

Conclusion

Taking into account the present scenario and the perspectives of development of technical education, we should concentrate on the following aspects to ensure equality in opportunities for women/girls:

• Improvement of quality and standards at all levels

• Up gradation of infrastructural facilities

• Establishment of effective linkages with development sectors, national laboratories, industries and other institutions/bodies.

- Technology watch and assessment of manpower in crucial area
- Measures to prevent brain drain specially among women.
- Promotion of research and development programme.
- Steps to ensure cost effectiveness
- Special programmes for SC/ST students, women and the handicapped candidates
- Entrepreneurship development
- Continuing education and in-service retraining programmes.
- Starting advanced and post-diploma courses.
- Starting courses in special technological areas exclusively for women like Beauty Culture, Fashion, Textiles, Printing, etc.
- Providing increasing opportunities for women in technical education by opening polytechnics exclusively for women.

Transition of Women from Education to Full Employment through Open Vocational Education

Kuldeep Agarwal

With a population of nearly 1.28 billion, India is the second most populous country in the world. India accounts for almost 17.31% of the world's population, which means that every sixth person in this world lives in India. While over 50% of **India's current population** is below the age of 25 more than 65% is below the age of 35.

The literacy rate of India as per 2011 Population Census is 74.04%, with male literacy rate at 82.14% and female at 65.46%. Apart from poverty, high fertility rate, rapid decline in death rates or mortality rates, illiteracy, especially among women, is one of the major reasons for India's rapidly growing population.

Keeping in view that about 72% of the population lives in villages, making education accessible to the millions of girls and women becomes a huge challenge.

National Institute of Open Schooling plays an integral role in making education accessible to them. An analysis of enrolment at NIOS in the context of gender is given below.

Table 1. Gender distribution of Enrolment in NIOS (2008-09 to 2012-13)

Year	Gender	Secondary	Sr. Secondary	Total
2008-09	Boys	131495	129568	261063
	Girls	**57986**	**52576**	**110562**
	Total	189481	182144	371625
	% of Girls	**30.6**	**28.86**	**29.75**
2009-10	Boys	148329	145829	294158
	Girls	**65008**	**60536**	**125544**
	Total	213337	206365	419702
	% of Girls	**30.47**	**29.33443**	**29.91**
2010-11	Boys	154736	164820	319556
	Girls	**67600**	**70899**	**138499**
	Total	222336	235719	458055
	% of Girls	**30.4**	**30.07**	**30.23**
2011-12	Boys	162502	181476	343978
	Girls	**71815**	**77741**	**149556**
	Total	234317	259217	493534
	% of Girls	**30.65**	**30**	**30.30**
2012-13	Boys	168216	190486	358702
	Girls	70947	81139	152086
	Total	239163	271625	510788
	% of Girls	**29.66**	**29.87**	**29.78**

From Table 1, it is evident that the enrolment of girl learners in Academic Courses has increased from 110, 562 in 2008-09 to 152,086 in 2012-13. While at the secondary level, it was 57986 in 2008-09, which increased to 70947 in 2012-13, in Senior Secondary it increased from 52576 to 81139. Proportionately, the enrolment for girl learners at Senior Secondary level has increased more in comparison to Secondary level. Even though the percentage rise is substantial, the girl learners comprise of nearly 30% only of the total learners. Therefore, there is stringent need to focus on more enrolment of girls.

With reference to transition of women from education to full employment, we need to comprehend three different terms: *Education, Vocational Education* and *Open Education (Learning).*

Education (in a holistic, broad sense) is a multi-leveled experiential journey of discovery, expression and mastery where all students (and teachers) learn and grow together. It is a quest for understanding and meaning. Its aim is to nurture healthy, whole, curious persons who can learn whatever they need to know in any new context. It is concerned with the growth of every person's intellectual, emotional, social, physical, artistic, creative and spiritual potentials and aims at integrating/creating balance between knowledge, skills and values.

The Delor's Commission Report, UNESCO, "Education in the 21st Century - Learning: The Treasure Within" has mentioned four Pillars of education:
? Learning to Know
? Learning to Do
? Learning to Live Together
? Learning to Be

Education should not only prepare all for life but for livelihood as well. Developmental Tasks of adolescent stage (which become characteristics of adult stage) should be the goals of life, and also of education. The principal ones are:
? Cognitive Autonomy (Thinking Skills)
? Emotional Autonomy (Development of Affective Domain)
? Moral Autonomy (Value Inculcation)
? Economic Autonomy (Livelihood)

The last one leads us to **Vocational Education,** which aims at Skill Development needed for earning one's livelihood or attaining economic autonomy.

Holistic Education includes both academic as well as vocational education. Why should we conceptualize vocational education separately? In fact, ideally, all education should have the component of vocational education/ skill development. Mere academic education renders individuals incapable of earning their livelihood; pure vocational education will not prepare individuals for life, for leading a good life.

Gandhiji's philosophy of **Basic Education** was based on this principle of integration of vocational and academic education. UNESCO's four pillars point towards the same idea. The

National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF) also accepts this principle, particularly at school level (Levels 1 to 4).

Open Education is usually coupled with **Distance Education.** Both these need to be understood as distinct concepts. In Distance Education the teacher and the taught are at a distance; the key for open education is **flexibility.** There can be distance education that is inflexible and rigid like the formal face to face education system. In most formal Universities, there are Directorates of Distance Education, which offer courses that are not flexible or 'open' like those in the non-distance programmes.

Open Education implies flexibility in terms of eligibility conditions, choice of subjects, delivery systems, examination systems, etc. For instance, at NIOS (National Institute of Open Schooling), there is no other requirement for eligibility except 14 years of age at the secondary level. Anyone who has not even been to school at all is eligible for admission. One gets 9 examination chances over 5 years for completing the secondary or senior secondary course, with the system of credit accumulation. There is also the system of credit transfer, wherein up to 2 subjects passed from another Board are accepted and marks obtained transferred to the learner's score; he/she can earn the certificate by passing in the remaining three subjects in the examination conducted by NIOS. The On Demand Examination system is probably the ultimate in flexibility. Under this system offered by NIOS, a learner can avail of unlimited chances throughout the year. Whenever one is ready to appear in any subject, one can register online and take the exam. Open Education is closely linked to **self learning** and related ideas of **Freedom to learn** and **Learning to Learn.**

Open Vocational Education (OVE) refers to flexible skill development, where inter alia eligibility conditions and assessment procedures, etc. can be flexible. OVE has a crucial role to play in the context of the country's requirement of millions of skilled personnel in the coming years, particularly in lower and middle level Job Roles. **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** is also an important aspect of flexibility. OVE does and should make optimum use of ICT for reaching out to large number of learners. OVE has been recognized by NSQF as an accepted mode of skill development by making NIOS an important partner in the mission of skill development.

Open schooling/open vocational education is particularly relevant for girls/women due to several reasons, inter alia

- In many communities/areas, girls/women are not allowed to attend formal educational institutions after puberty
- Facilities for their formal education are limited in rural areas
- Open Schooling/Open Vocational Education provides educational opportunities for them to get education/continue their education sitting at home, without having to attend regular face to face classes
- Courses offered under open & distance learning (ODL) can be tailor made for them
- ODL provides flexibility in terms of choice of subjects/courses, pace and place of learning, number of attempts for qualifying/passing, etc.

Table 2. Gender Distribution of Enrolment in Vocational Courses (2009-10 to 2012-13)

Year	Gender	Enrolment	Percent
2009-10	Boys	8562	44.89
	Girls	**10511**	**55.1**
	Total	19073	
2010-11	Boys	8902	39.07
	Girls	**13877**	**60.92**
	Total	22779	100
2011-12	Boys	9972	37.83
	Girls	**16382**	**62.17**
	Total	26354	100
2012-13	Boys	11158	39.80
	Girls	**16877**	**60.2**
	Total	28035	100

The enrolment of girls has increased from 10,511 in 2009-10 to 16,877 in 2012-13. This accounts to an increase of nearly 6000 enrolments in three years. In comparison, the increase in the enrolment number of boys of was nearly 2500 during the same period. The percentage of girls' enrolment to total enrolment was 55.1%, in 2009-10 increased to 60.2% in 2012-13. It is interesting to note that the percentage of enrolment of girls to total enrolment has been proportionally more in vocational courses than in academic subjects. Nearly 60% of the total learners are girls in vocational courses while in all the academic courses they are 29.78 % (table 2).

This clearly indicates a positive gender shift in the vocation course through distance and open education where nearly 60% of the learners in vocational courses are girls/women while the majority of students in academic courses are boys/men. This clearly articulates the need of offering diverse vocational courses for girls and women, courses that not only expand their Cognitive Autonomy, but also lead them towards Economic Autonomy leading to full empowerment.

To sum up, the following recommendations can be made for this conference aimed at developing a future vision for 'Transition of Women from Education to Full Employment'

• Education is ideally holistic where both academic as well as skill development find prominence.

• Education should prepare all, including women, for Life as well as Livelihood.

• Flexible Open Vocational Education (OVE) is crucial for skilling the large number of personnel required for realizing the 'Make in India' dream.

• Recognition of Prior Learning is an important aspect of flexibility that should be brought in a big way under the umbrella of OVE.

- All programmes need to be rigorously evaluated and updated to suit the needs of industry.
- Optimum use of ICT is imperative in OVE for skilling large numbers.
- OVE needs to be explored and utilized extensively in the mission of skilling millions of personnel.

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Legislation for Creating Safe Working Spaces for Women

Jyotika Kalra

Overview of the theme - both national and global

Nation's economy grows with the growth in the value of the goods and services produced by its nationals and economic growth is the benchmark of the contribution rendered by the people . Like any other country, growth of India also depends upon contribution by its people, the population of India consists of both males and females who are almost equal in number. Can anyone perceive of growth particularly economic growth without active and adequate participation and contribution by the females. After achieving the targets of growth, comes the target of sustainable growth. Growth of women is the growth of the society and finally growth of the nation and growth of women at sustainable level ensures sustainable growth of the Nation. The preamble of CEDAW[1] (Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women) states "women's participation on "equal terms with men in all fields" is necessary for the "full and complete development of a country, the welfare of the world and the cause of peace". Kofi Annan[2] had said,"Gender equality is more than a goal in itself. It is a precondition for meeting the challenges of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development and building good governance. There is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women."

Challenges

With adoption of the Constitution, with education and social awareness, the condition of women in India has improved; it continues to improve still further with further opportunities, like better education, opening of new areas of work which were exclusively for men earlier, breaking of gender stereo type and enactment of gender sensitive legislations. These opportunities are accompanied by challenges, the challenges that are faced by urban working women in India have been identified after a study of the urban working women in white collared jobs in the city of Delhi, India. The study involves face-to-face interviews and group discussions for effective elicitation of data from the respondents to find out the possible solutions for working women, which could help them to overcome the problems that they face in the workplace. The result of the study showed that different age groups of working women have different kinds of problems and challenges and different categories like married, single, divorcee, single parent, separated, have different issues at stake in the workplace. Some problems are definitely common: not appreciating gender specific challenges like menstrual periods, pregnancies, looking after young babies, separate and clean toilets, mental and physical stress, lack of proper balance between employment and family care, unfair treatment in the workplace, and work place discrimination etc. But some challenges are age or category specific, like gender stereotypes, the reasons for work distribution and assignment are neither rational nor neutral but based on sex

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[1] Adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, is often described as an international bill of rights for women.
[2] Seventh secretary-general of the United Nations, 2001 Nobel Peace Prize

and gender systems, safety and security issues especially the problem of Sexual Harassment at Workplace etc.

Strategies/Approaches

In 1985, one woman named Bhanwari Devi became a *saathin* ("friend"), a grassroots worker employed as part of the Women's Development Project (WDP) run by the Government of Rajasthan. As part of her job, apart from other projects, she also took up the issue of child marriage. In 1992, the state government of Rajasthan decided to launch a campaign against child marriage during the fortnight preceding the festival of *Akha Teej,* which is considered an auspicious date for marriages. Many child marriages take place during this festival. WDP members were tasked with convincing local villagers not to conduct child marriages, a task that Bhanwari took up, along with *prachetas* and members of the District Women's Development Agency. According to Bhanwari Devi, after the incident in September 1992, while she and her husband were working in their field, five men of her village attacked her husband and raped Bhanwari Devi. Women's rights groups propagated the view that Bhanwari Devi attracted the ire of her rapists on the basis of her work. A PIL was filed in the Supreme Court of India by Vishakha and four other women's organizations in Rajasthan. In 1997, in the case of *Vishakha Vs State of Rajsthan*[3], Supreme Court framed guidelines to ensure safe working environment free of sexual harassment at their workplace. After 16 years i.e. in 2013 the law to control sexual harassment at workplace was enacted known as Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (Act).Not only this Act has been enacted by the legislature but Indian Penal Code (IPC) has also been amended by redefining rape and outraging the modesty of women, Sexual Harassment has been termed as a cognizable offence punishable with imprisonment varying from one to three years.

The preamble of this Act is meaningful and conveys the object of the Act, by stating that it is an Act to provide protection against sexual harassment of women at workplace and for the prevention and redressal of complaints of sexual harassment and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto; In paragraph 3 of the statement of objects and reasons of the Act, recounted is Article 11 of the CEDAW, to which India is a party, and which requires State Parties to take all appropriate measure to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment; for equality in employment can be seriously impaired when women are subjected to gender specific violence, such as sexual harassment at workplace. It has been emphatically stated that sexual harassment is termed as a violation of the fundamental rights of a woman to equality, life and liberty, as guaranteed under Articles 14 and 15 of the Constitution of India and right to life and to live with dignity under Article 21 of the Constitution of India. Sexual harassment is also considered a violation of a right to practice any profession or to carry on any occupation, trade or business which includes a right to a safe environment free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a law which has outpaced the social and organizational changes, till date society is not prepared to accept sexual harassment as a misconduct at workplace or as an offence under IPC. The enactment of these gender sensitive laws would have little impact until society catches up with them, and there are different challenges in the effective implementation of these laws.

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[3] AIR 1997 SUPREME COURT 3011

The Law can serve its purpose or can have its impact only when its challenges are undone. Broadly speaking there are three types of challenges-how to prevent occurrence of sexual harassment at workplace, how to prohibit sexual harassment at workplace and how to redress victims of sexual harassment. To begin with prevention, there ought to be a wide awareness as to what constitute sexual harassment, as per section 2 (n) of the Act, physical contact and advances, a demand or request for sexual favours, making sexually coloured remarks, showing pornography or any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature comes with the definition sexual harassment, people must learn that which according to them is a normal behaviour or an expression of love towards the woman can turn out to be an act of harassment of that woman.

The penal consequences of sexual harassment must also be brought to the notice of every one that sexual harassment is an offence under section 354 A IPC and attracts imprisonment for a term which may vary from 1 year to 3 years depending upon nature or fine or both. Insulting the modesty of woman with words and gestures is an offence under section 509 IPC and attracts imprisonment which may extend to thee years, and also with fine. Under section 19 of the Act, the employer is required to organise workshops and awareness programs and orientation programs for the members of the Committee, provide necessary facilities and assistance to the Committee etc. so that people understand these laws. Under section 24 of the Act, the Appropriate Government is also required to develop relevant information and training material concerning the Act and organise awareness programmes, to advance the understanding of the public of the provisions of this Act and to formulate orientation and training programmes for members of Local Complaint Committee.

To prevent the occurrence of sexual harassment there must also be awareness about the concept of gender and the concept of gender sensitisation. Gender sensitisation training would help in creating an atmosphere wherein women would not be treated as an inferior gender meant to serve the men or to take care of their sexual needs, because these kinds of perverted mind sets result in sexual harassment at workplace. Performance of the women would be appreciated & not their womanhood. People need to understand gender is the relations between men and women, both perceptual and material, it is not determined biologically, as a result of sexual characteristics of either women or men but is constructed socially, there should be awareness that subject to just exceptions, women can do all those jobs which the men can.

For prohibiting the acts of sexual harassment, under section 19 of the Act, the employer is duty bound to provide assistance to the woman if she so chooses to file a complaint under IPC or any other Law in force if the perpetrator is not an employee, treat sexual harassment as a misconduct under the service rules and monitor the timely submission of reports by the Internal Committee. For successfully implementing the sexual harassment laws, it is necessary to train the women workers how to file a complaint and how to follow it up. As a matter of policy, the guilty should be dealt with strictly and a message should go that acts of sexual harassment would be taken seriously.

For redressal of victim of sexual harassment, mechanism has been provided under section 15 of the Act. The Committee may order compensation in favour of the victim having regard to the

mental suffering, the loss in the career opportunity, medical expenses incurred by the victim depending upon the income and financial status of the respondent and feasibility of such payment in lump sum or in installments; this amount may be deducted from the salary of the harasser and paid to woman. On the completion of the inquiry, If allegations are proved, the Committee, shall recommend action for sexual harassment as misconduct in accordance with the service rules.

The success of the Act would be measured in terms of a dignified working environment, an environment free of Sexual Harassment at the workplace and last but not the least safe public spaces. Full employment can be facilitated only when the women feel safe, secure and comfortable at work place and at public spaces.

Recommendation

In-depth training about sexual harassment about gender etc. should be imparted at every level be it schools, colleges, workplaces or social groups like Resident's Welfare Associations etc, if possible gender should be part of course curriculum. There should be regular training how to write a complaint and the importance of contents of complaint. There must also be gender training at a more serious and formal level, there should be regular training of Law, its effective implementation, about judgements and about the weak points which fail in judicial scrutiny.

Conclusion

It is not only the duty of the employer to make sure that the female employee are provided with proper working conditions. It is also the duty of the female employees not to allow any act of sexual harassment and when ever sexual harassment occurs make sure that the management is informed about the same without fear of promotion, transfer, salary etc. I have no hesitation in claiming that the belief of the Constitution framers in fairness and justice for women is yet to be fully achieved at the workplaces in the country. There is need to make people aware of as to what constitutes Sexual Harassment, there is a need to evolve uniform procedure for adjudication of complaints, the quality of adjudication is to be Standardised. There is a need to have a nodal agency for the coordination and improvisation of training of Complaint Committee members. There is a need to have a Forum which continuously assesses the impact of the Act and comes up with a Report how far the Act has been effective and what are its weak points so as to achieve fairness and justice for women. These are some of the intrinsic issues which have been discussed in this paper, I hope that further deliberations would take place on the subject, followed by a follow up action plan and if so required appropriate amendments in the Rules[4] or in the Act or in IPC would be incorporated.

Swami Vivekanand had said: "Just as a bird could not fly with one wing only, a nation would not march forward if the women are left behind." I conclude by saying although Sexual harassment is complex, subtle, and highly subjective subject, still it has to be prevented with an effective mechanism which ensures a safe working environment, an environment that facilitates the full employment of women.

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[4] Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Rules, 2013

Experiences of Capacity and Skill Building of Youth: Employment Issues and Concerns

Geeta Katarya & Nidhi Arora

Introduction

Youth are regarded as the future of the nation and the means to realise national and development goals. Youth are the most vibrant and dynamic segment as well as potentially most valuable human resource of every country. Not only does this cohort represent India's future in the socio-economic and political realms, but its experiences will largely determine India's achievement of its goal of population stabilization and the extent to which the nation will be able to harness its demographic dividend. While today's youth are healthier, more urbanized and better educated than earlier generations, social and economic vulnerabilities persist. In the course of the transition to adulthood, moreover, young people face significant risks related to education and career and many lack the knowledge and power to make informed choices.

While the youth population is fast shrinking with higher dependency ratios in the developed world, India is blessed with 70% of her population below the age of 35 years. In the next few decades India will probably have the world's largest number of young people. The population between the age of 10–19 years is approximately 242 million, the largest ever cohort of young people to make a transition to adulthood. Efforts, therefore, need to be made to harness the energy of the youth towards nation-building through their active and responsive participation.

With the above perspectives in mind the 11th Five Year Plan (2007-2012) was prepared with an emphasis on youth affairs. The thrust of this were:

*   Holistic adolescent development through convergence of schemes;
*   Overall personality development of youth and provision of life skills;
*   Youth empowerment through restructuring and expansion of youth programmes;
*   Greater female participation in youth development programmes;
*   Special focus on engaging rural youths in nation building activities transcending beyond social, economic, religious, and linguistic boundaries

The 12th Plan Draft Approach paper has a section on Youth Development that focussed predominantly on economic growth. Young people are viewed primarily as a workforce that will spur economic growth and enable India to capitalise on the demographic dividend. Consequently, all sections that mention young people in this paper relate to education and skill development and vocational training. The section on education and skill development, for example, starts with the following:

"A well educated population, adequately equipped with knowledge and skills, is not only essential to support economic growth but also a precondition for growth to be inclusive since it is only educated and skilled people who can benefit from employment opportunities that growth will provide. Further, higher education is seen as essential to build a workforce, capable of underpinning a modern, competitive economy."

It is instructive to analyse the different lenses people use to view young people. They can be seen as the workforce or consumers that drive economic growth, as vote banks for politicians, as volunteers and peer educators for development agencies. Yet, not enough is invested in young people as leaders who can develop the skills required to understand the varied dimensions of a social conflict, make their own choices, work in collaboration with others and become agents of change.

There is a need to adorn a youth-centric lens and focus on youth participation and leadership (not just skill development for employability and economic growth). If young people become good leaders and responsible human beings, then their skills, attitudes and behaviours will impact all other spheres of their lives – health, education, livelihoods, lifestyle, friends and family.

Understanding Capacity Building

Capacity building is an ongoing process through which individuals, groups, organisations and societies enhance their ability to identify and meet development challenges. To understand capacity building first, one needs to go beyond a narrow definition of capacity building as 'training' as it is interpreted and implemented by majority of development institutions. It is not only the creation of an enabling environment but also institutional development, including community participation of women in particular. Further, the need of engendering arises because there is a growing recognition of the fact that development interventions have to be sensitive towards women. Organization be, it government or non- government, has to recognize that policies have to be built to recognize the structures of inequality so as to make a positive impact on women. Therefore, any mechanism such as capacity building, that seeks to strengthen women's skills needs to be engendered.

Current Scenario and Scope of Women Empowerment through Skill Development

In Indian scenario, women have contributed equally but have not been considered for their skill enhancement or for improving their entrepreneurial capacities. This is applicable in both rural and urban situations. In rural situations the distinction is clear as women's role in construction of habitat and infrastructure is sometimes more significant than the male counterparts. But the value addition and the respectability to their skills are absent. The capacity building of women by enhancing their skills would bring about a socio-economic change thus empowering them with opportunities for enhancing their incomes.

Over the past decade, the Government has provided support in the field of livelihood trainings to women. At the same time, livelihood-oriented initiatives and activities carried out by NGOs have been recognized for their role in promoting development and alleviating poverty.

Some research questions which are perspectives for the future policy makers, training organisations and that address the following concerns of the young are:

- What are the ways in which young people develop their own identities so that they can withstand different pressures?

- Where are the spaces where they can reflect on their own values, listen to other perspectives and make informed choices?

- How do they understand the dimensions of social conflict and proactively intervene to make a difference?

The Empirical Study

Studies in the area of youth's aspirations received importance in recent years. The current paper, **Experiences of Capacity and Skill Building of youth: Employment issues and concerns** have emerged from a larger study titled **Capacity Building and Career Aspirations of youth: A study of Government and Non-Government organisation's initiatives** with the objective to understand the career aspirations of youth and how the process of going from school to work is facilitated for youth.

Increasingly, the capacity building through various government and non-government organisation's initiatives are being advocated as a viable approach to positive youth development. Therefore, the purpose of the study is to gain insights into the lives of young persons, their education, employment profile, their aspirations and employability and other related aspects, like the support they get within and outside the family, as well as the barriers which they face in achieving their career aspirations. The study also helped us understand the development changes in the youth after associating with the training program.

Methodology Used

Sample: Selection of the organisation

To understand the initiatives for youth development, several organisations were contacted. Organisations fulfilling the criteria of selection as well as those willing to participate in the study were selected. To have a wider coverage, four organisations (both Government and Non-Government organisations) in India working with youth were selected. The agencies involving youth in their ongoing programs were:

Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan – Ministry of Sports & Youth Affairs

Town School Education Initiatives – Ministry of Rural Development

ETASHA – Non Profit Organisation

CURE India – Non Profit Organisation

Naurang Foundation – Non Profit Organisation

1. ***Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) – Haryana (India)***

   Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan has been working in various fronts of youth development with a variety of youth programmes of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and certain special

programmes in coordination and cooperation of other ministries. Main focus has been on **developing values of good citizenship, thinking and behaving in secular ways, skill development and helping youth to adopt a productive and organized behaviour.**

Vision of the organization focuses on developing long term strategies for good citizenship and youth leadership at the grass root level. Youth Clubs are formed and encouraged to participate in sports, cultural and local development activities. Youth leadership is developed in the course of formation and sustenance of youth clubs. This leadership becomes highly useful in creating:-

Instruments of empowerment of youth like, skill-generation, awareness creation about health, life skills, and self employment.

- The largest non-political youth organization of its kind in the world

- It caters to the needs of more than 80 lakh non-student rural youth in the age group of 13-35 years

- 2.20 lakh voluntary village level youth organizations affiliated to NYKS

- It has 2551 Youth Development Centres (YDCs)

- It has 139 Rural Information Technology Youth Development Centres (RITYDCs)

- By it, 17000 Trained volunteers are enrolled every year

- It has 501 offices all over the country at district headquarters

- It reaches out to each and every part of India through its wide network in villages

2. **Town School Education Initiatives (TSEI) – Uttar Pradesh (India)**

Project Prosper is a 'Special Project' under *Swarnajayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY)* of the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India, aimed at skill development of disadvantaged rural BPL youth in the country, with a view to providing them with jobs / placements. The project is implemented by Town School Education Initiatives (TSEI), under its skill development program. The program is designed to equip the members of **Below Poverty Line families** with skills necessary for day-to-day and practical living with generic skills like Soft Skills and computers along with skills for livelihood like Retail, Tally. The program is fully interactive such as, role plays, group work, presentations, video clippings etc.

TSEI joins hands with **Director General Employment & Training (DGET), Govt. of India**, as one of the first approved & authorized Vocational Training Provider for Modular Employment Skill (MES) development courses in UP & Uttarakhand. These short term & cost effective courses are certified by **National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT)**. On establishing its credibility in quality execution, TSEI is approved for alliances with **Ministry of Rural Development & by Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU).**

3. *ETASHA* – **Delhi (India)**

ETASHA works with two models of delivery. One is to deliver programmes for partners at their sites and the other is to run them from their two **Career Development Centres** (CDCs), dynamic hubs of learning in the deprived areas of Madanpur Khadar and Zakir Nagar, South Delhi, from which their community mobilisation team operates and their facilitators train. The locations are chosen to be convenient and accessible for the local communities. The centres are each equipped with a computer room and power back up, essential considering the frequent power outages in the areas.

ETASHA designs and runs **vocational training and employability skills programs**, operated from the CDCs or at external venues on behalf of partner organisations.

4. **CURE India – Delhi (India)**

CURE organizes and empowers low income communities, especially woman and young people in urban areas, to access water supply, sanitation, power, **livelihoods**, education, health care and housing.

CURE capability lies in its capacity building work in the areas of poverty reduction. CURE has a core team of field facilitators with competency in use of PLA tools for qualitative and quantitative information collection and community mobilization.

Located near the Delhi-Haryana border in northwest Delhi, *Savda Ghevra (SG)* is currently MCD's primary resettlement site and will soon become the capital's largest resettlement colony. Occupying 250 acres to the north of National Highway-10, the colony is expected to house more than 20,000 families from various slums across Delhi once completed. Over 8,500 families have already relocated to SG and planning for another 12,000 households.

While resettlement provides opportunities for improved living conditions for many residents, the physical and social planning in SG has fallen short of addressing sustainable livelihood requirements and the provision of basic services, like water and sanitation.

5. *Naurang Foundation* – **Delhi (India)**

Naurang Foundation took the responsibility of capacity building of youth, especially girls through one of its initiative where in the role of Foundation was to empower young girls of Delhi through skill development. Naurang Foundation did not do the mobilization themselves like other Government & Non Government Organisations but they were making alliances with such NGOs and helping them achieve better by their specially designed training Programs.

Naurang Foundation was able to reach out to more than a thousand youth with a nearly equal ratio of girls and boys. The role of Naurang Foundation was to develop appropriate content and give skill based capacity building trainings to these youth. Youth were considered as under-privileged under various parameters such as economic background, educational profile (like drop-outs), demographic profile (issues such as mobility) etc.

Naurang Foundation also conducted some special workshops like career counseling, personality development, art and craft workshop, group discussions with these youth, with the help of experts in the field. These types of workshops were a real success as the group could share their real concerns and issues and could also find a real – practical solution from the group itself.

Selection of the youth

- From each organisation a total number of sixty youth were selected.
- A total of 250 youths were selected for the study.
- In-depth interviews on the various themes and issues under discussion were conducted with 75 youth who were attending the various programs in all the four organisations.
- Focussed group discussions were carried out with 75 youth in the groups of fifteen in the organisations namely NYKS and Town School.
- SWOT Analysis was performed with 70 youth in Town School.
- Classroom sessions focussing on youth concerns and attitudes towards work, gender etc were conducted with a sample of 70 youth.
- In one of the organisations their queries towards career were elicited and they also responded very seriously.
- Case studies were also done with a sample of 10 youth

Locale of the study

Training sites of four identified agencies:

- Bilaspur in Haryana (*Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan*)
- Dadri and Muradnagar in Uttar Pradesh (Town Schools Education Initiatives)
- JJ colonies of Madanpur Khader in Delhi *(ETASHA)*
- Savda Gehvra in outer Delhi (CURE India)

Study technique-Tools for data collection:

The sections describe multiple tools used for data collection. The tools were prepared carefully along with guide lines for their administration. The tools were finalized after pretest on 55 youth not included in the final study.

A **semi structured interview schedule** was supplemented by general discussions as the language was adapted to suit the individual situation of the respondents.

Focussed Group Discussions were conducted to elicit qualitative information on the:

- Perception of the respondents on gender and work, and their corresponding constraints,
- Role of training in transitioning from school to work.

The information for case studies was collected through the informal discussion, observation and also through interview.

Discussion sessions were held as part of the awareness workshop. Youth were asked about their ideas, questions, issues, concerns related to their career, which brought a good picture of youth's inner instinct and hence cautiously reflected their issues and concerns.

Informal discussions with the Organisations were held with the NGO leaders, trainers, staff and the target group. One of the key aspects mapped during the visit to the NGO was to reflect on the relevance of vocational training programme, its success and failure rate and to what extent it addresses the needs of the emerging market.

Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat (SWOT) analysis revealed the strong points and how can they further brush them up to exploit them to get a good job. It also aimed at reflecting the negative character traits that can hinder the chances of getting a good job and as certain the skills, courses and training they need in order to remain competitive.

Data collection:

Efforts were made to ensure quality of data by establishing rapport. A schedule convenient to both the researcher and the youth for data collection was fixed.

Other efforts included:
- Before starting with the data collection, the community and the training centres were visited many times.
- The youth were approached and the purpose of the study was explained to them.
- The interviews were conducted in the work centres of the respondents.
- Each interview session consisted of an informal talk and discussions.
- The data collection processes was completed in the period of 1 and a half month from December to mid January.

Findings and Discussions

Profile of youth: Understanding their socio-economic background provided insights about their baseline realities. Together they provided the realities of the youth's lives, their ability to deal with day to day situations and their background information.
- The sample comprised more of Graduates, and the pressure to have stable livelihood source remains higher on the boys than the girls.
- Of youth of the total sample 75% of our respondents were only students. They were pursuing their studies and along with that, they had joined training programs of Government and Non-Government organisations. However one-fourth i.e. 25% were studying and also employed part time either in the private sector or some kind of self–employment revealing that they were working along with studying and participating in the training programs.
- Majority of the respondent's family occupation were Government and Non-government services.
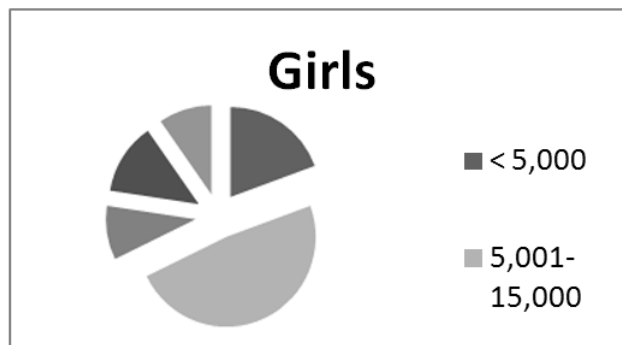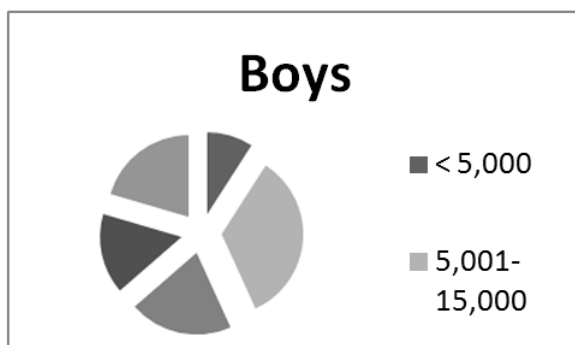
- Majority of girls belonged to low income strata family, with large families.
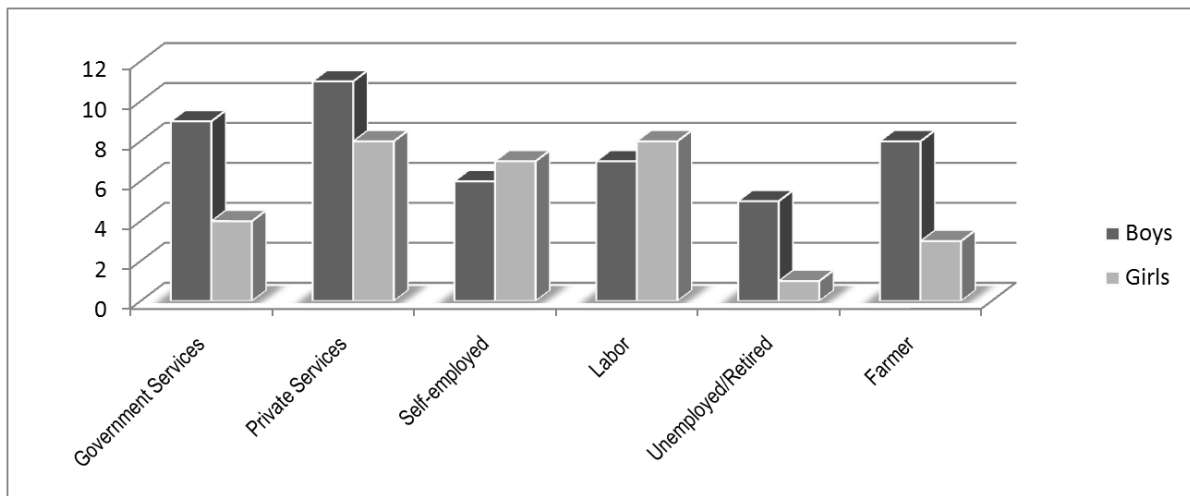
Average monthly income of the family (INR)

Career aspirations of youth

The aspirations of youth were quite high. Several of them aspired to be top level professionals such as doctors, management professionals and IAS Officers (Indian Administrative Services). These aspirations in several cases look unrealistic, considering their education profile which in some cases is only up to graduation.

Gender stereotypical career aspirations were visible. Large number of girls preferred to be teachers, tailors, beauticians and fashion designers. However, there is small number of youth who had not thought what to do in their near future.

Role of Organisation, Experts, Friends, Siblings in Capacity and Skill building

The decision of youth to participate was influenced by two kinds of factors namely facilitatingfactors and inhibiting factors.These emanate from three sources of support:

- The family
- The community
- The organisation

Both these factors had a push and pull effect and it was only when positive factors were stronger than negative ones that the youth began participating in organisation's initiatives.

From the study, it was found that parents were supporting their children's education. The sample revealed that the parental support was in terms of financial and emotional. Further parents guide them, motivate them, and provide them with all the facilities, which include providing for day to day expenditure.

For some of the youth, unwillingness on the part of their own parents and other family members inhibited their studies and participation in the program. Parents were ignorant and did not see any logic in allowing their son/daughter to participate in these initiatives.

A lower economic compensation was one of the main reasons that restricted parents from allowing their son/daughter to join the training program and the placements.

Interviews and focussed group discussion clearly brought out that other influences were friends, relatives and neighbours. Organisational personnel played as great supporters and facilitators.

Further youth also revealed that after the trainings their capacities had been built, and now they could talk to their parents frankly and convince them about the efficacy of the programs. They could deal with difficult situations as well.

Facilitating factors

- Friends (29%)
- Siblings (12%)
- Teachers (13%)
- Neighbour (6%)
- Organization (40%)
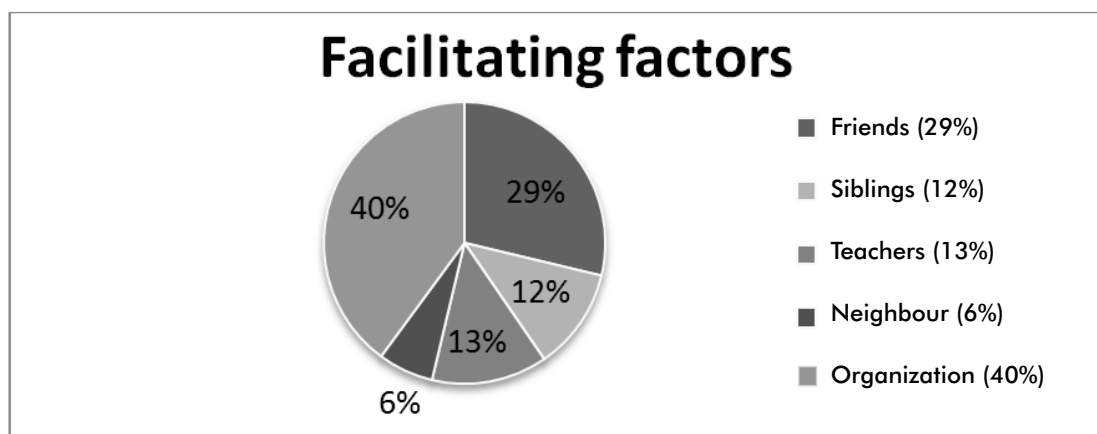
While the sessions were being conducted, it came out that there were some **inhibiting factors &negative influences** also in the surrounding environment that were acting as obstacles for youth in achieving their aspirations. These were: unsocial elements**, country wine shops, gambling groups, local political leaders,** and **drug peddlers, boys who do not go to work or study.** Few of the respondents in a group discussion revealed that,

"There are certain elements in the society, which are trying to disturb us from our goals. We have to struggle hard to keep ourselves away from them. Sometimes it's our friends, or somebody who is very close to us. This is the time when we have to choose between right and wrong and believe

us it's really difficult. The life skills development through NGO programs has greatly helped us from this curse of society."

Negative influences have always prevailed in the society as well as in the minds of the people. It was only when the positive support or the facilitating factors were stronger than the negative ones the youth could fulfil their career aspirations and develop their personality.

Reasons for participation in such vocational trainings for capacity building led to the enhanced confidence and ability to interact effectively with diverse people. This helped them to be more socially acceptable and attain leadership qualities and become socio-politically more active.
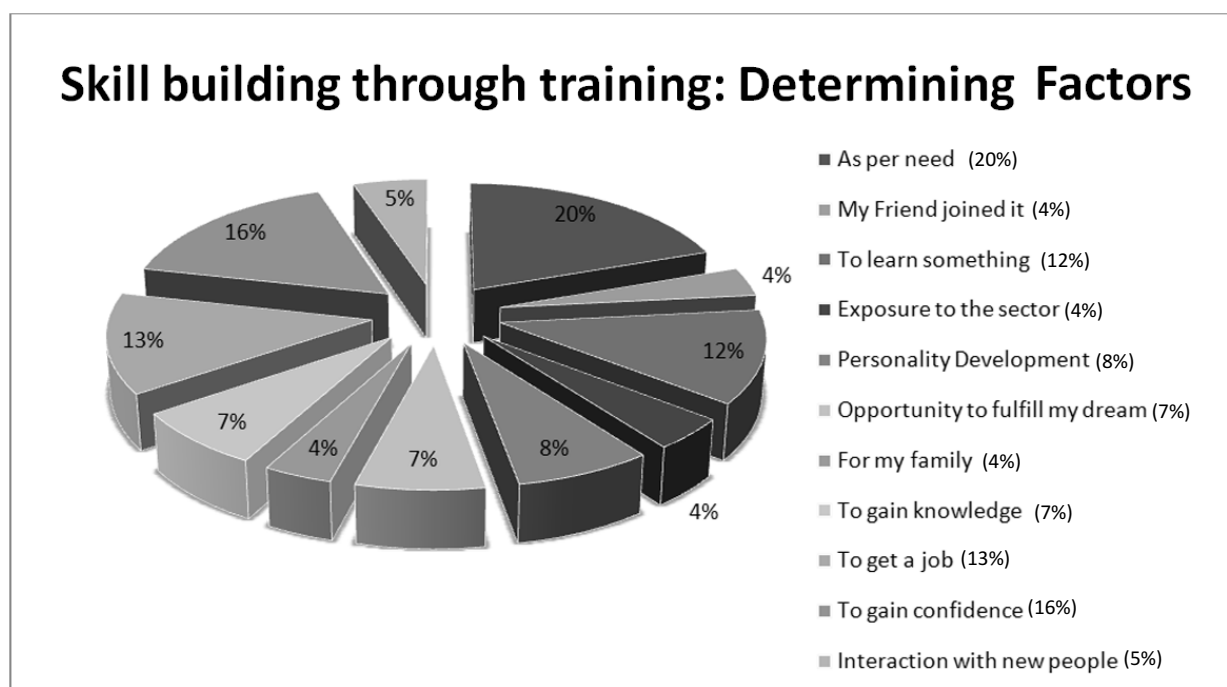
Moreover some of the youth perceived that their changed social image and association with an organisation had improved their social status and gave them added power. They felt more secure.

Involvement and satisfaction with Organisation

The youth perceived multi-faceted effects of participation in development initiatives. Participation in the programs had both immediate and cumulative effect on them. These effects focussed on aspects of their personal growth, capacity building and development and behavioural changes.

On the other hand, it also focussed on aspects of their social image, family and community at large and last but not the least they have gained certain skill sets which will help them in taking a place in job market.

Development through training

- Self development (34%)
- Improved social status (26%)
- Leadership qualities (23%)
- Better contacts (17%)
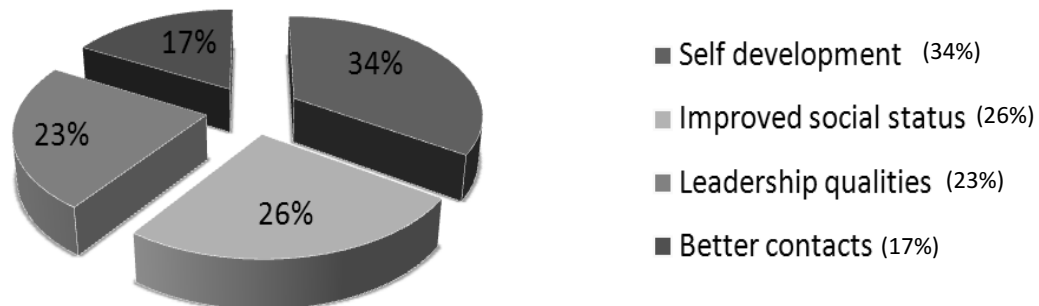
Most of the youth were satisfied with their involvement in the organisational initiatives. Core skills that were developed included:

- Decision-making: "We have started evaluating information and advice to make informed decisions"

- Problem solving: "I can now assess the advantages and disadvantages of different options"

- Creative thinking: "I can change my decisions to adapt to new situations; setting goals; planning for the future"

- Effective communication: "Through the training program our communication skills have improved a lot. It has helped us make friends, develop business contacts and relate to other people. The skill also enhances leadership skill development and the ability to convey thoughts and ideas."

- Interpersonal relationship skills: "being kind, cooperative, and compliant to reduce defiance, aggression, conflict, and antisocial behaviour; showing interest in people and socializing successfully to reduce behaviour problems associated with withdrawal, depression, and fearfulness"

- Self-awareness: "We can identify personal strengths, weaknesses, and vulnerabilities; clarifying personal values and beliefs; recognizing personal worth and personal happiness"

Criteria for work

In the study youth looked forward for a job opportunity, just after completing the training program in the school. They identified aspects such as achievements/ accomplishments; work itself; recognition; authority and advancement and growth that contributed to their satisfaction/dissatisfaction. The presence of these factors resulted in satisfaction whereas their absence resulted as dissatisfaction.

Criteria for work
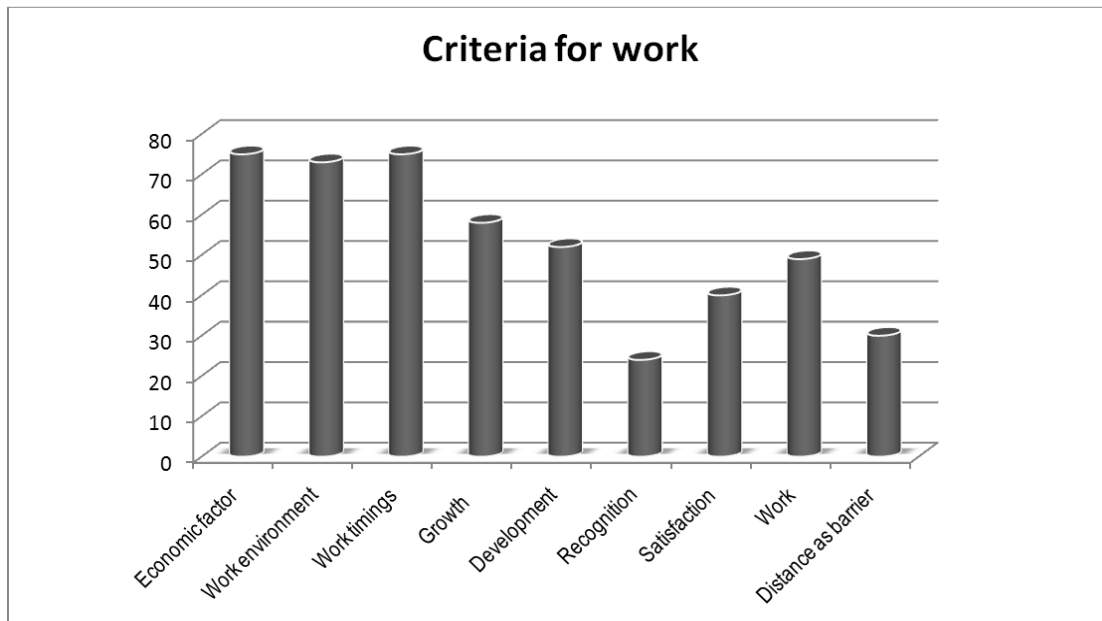
Criteria for work

Youth have identified **work timings, work environment, good salary and work itself** as important criteria for selecting any job. And work related satisfaction and dissatisfaction adds another crucial point in their retention. Many companies have observed higher attrition rates, for which the work related dissatisfaction could be one reason.

Youth would like the job to be a satisfactory one and not just the **job of their need**. Above and beyond, youth would wish to get time to time trainings from the company itself, to further enhance their skills and abilities. If they perform their task well, youth seek recognition by the company too. **Recognition** was an important incentive identified and it acts as motivator, as said by few of the respondents. Therefore it can be concluded that youth, crave to hunt for the satisfaction in the work that they will do. Frequent promotions, increments in their salaries, gifts, bonuses, and other incentives are some more expectations of our youth that they look for.

The nature of work strongly influences whether people show interest or they experience monotony. Varied work brings about more satisfaction than does routine work. **Bhatt (1995)**

Criteria of Work

From **gender perspective** also, decision for taking up any job is very different for girls and boys in our society. Family support plays a very important role before deciding for any small task. Societal pressure, safety issues, work timings, long distances, lack of commuting facilities are some of the constraints mainly for girls. And if the girls are married then other things that limits her from going out and work is family and her children. A few female respondents who were married said that "It's very difficult for us to leave our children at home alone, especially when there is nobody to take care of them at home."

In a focussed group discussion it came out that these are some factors that are hindering growth of girls in becoming economically independent. "Even the boys were agreeing to this point that

these kind of pressure exists in the society. And when asked for the solution to it, they were speechless. Male respondents beautifully concluded that there is a dire need of behaviour change. "If we cannot change others we can absolutely change us."

To end with, our respondents have believed that whatever be the constraints in getting or sustain in a job, dedication and hard work are key things that are required.

Expectations of the youth from Organisations: Capacity and Skill Building

The youth were very focused in terms of their expectations from the NGOs. It also clearly highlights that the youth know what they are lacking and the NGOs are trying to bridge that gap. Significantly large number of groups also expressed the need for information, training, spoken English and communication, personality development, placements. And many others expressed the need for financial support. Other expectations from the organisations are as follows:

- Increase in the match of the skills of young persons and the requirements of the labour market
- Increase in the creative responses to a changing economy
- Increase in numeracy and literacy levels
- Increase in certification rates
- Decrease in dropout rates

Role of organisations in capacity and skill building

To ensure the quality of capacity and skill building the organisations kept the following criteria:

- Ensuring quality of trainers and trainings.
- Approaching youth and employability program with a business outlook.
- Identifying the trades suitable for a given location.
- Sourcing the trainees in an aggressive manner.
- Yet screening the candidates thoroughly.
- Inducting the candidates systematically.
- Conducting career counselling.
- Setting clear and professional standards of training.
- Monitoring quality of training.
- Imparting life skills, language and computer skills.
- Engaging with potential employers during and after the training – dealing with them in a businesslike manner not expecting charity from them.
- Post placements follow up.
- Training the employees for next higher levels of jobs.

Company responses: Need of building capacities and skills

Informal interviews were conducted with several companies during the Job fair organised by Town Schools.

Based on the experience of best practices listed above, the institutions and the corporate sector will provide equal opportunity to all and remove the thought that connections matter and hence there is no bias.

In fact the need is mutual and once the companies get good candidates from training institutes, they are keen on recruiting them regardless of backgrounds.

Most of the candidates from the development initiatives are being considered for entry level, "customers connect" jobs. At an entry, that could mean serving tables, at a departmental store helping shoppers and at a cinema hall, ticketing, but they need not remain at that level. Deepa Menon of PVR Nest (PVR cinemas) says that once they are part of that system, they study more, learn more and get promoted if they do well.
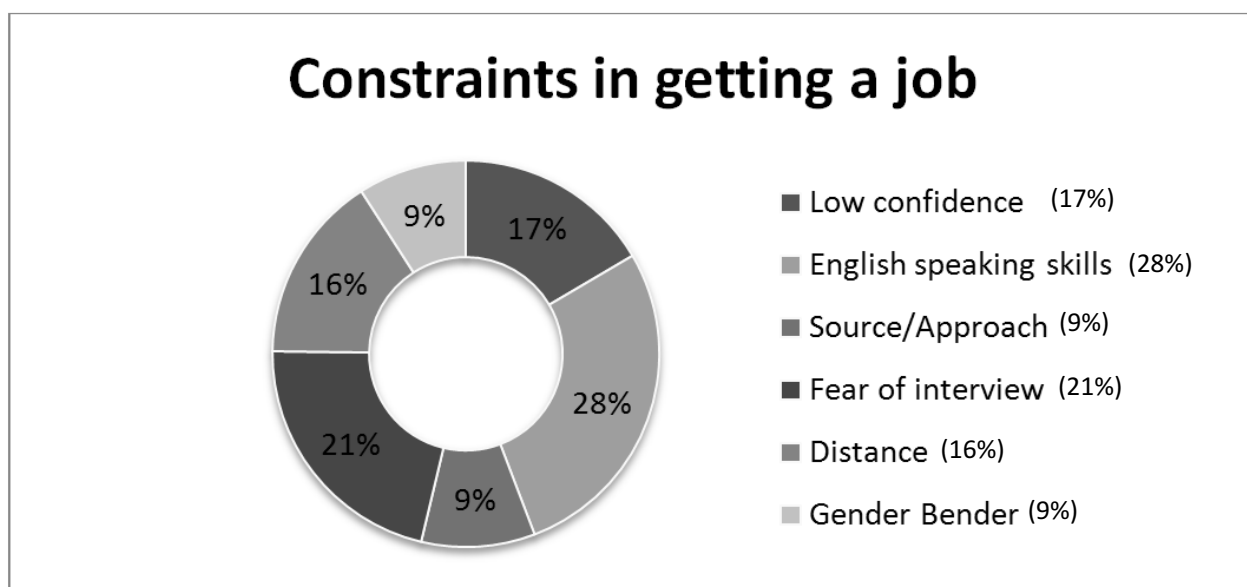
"That happens very naturally when you are a part of financial process," says Menon. "The minimum qualification required is to have passed class XII. For those among the candidates who have studied till class VIII, there's housekeeping, but, again, they are free to study and get ahead."

Therefore there is a pressing need that the capacities of our youth to be developed in the right direction so that they are capable of taking major decisions on their own.

Moreover the priority of the training organisations was reducing unemployment, poverty and delinquency among youth to foster active youth participation in nation building and integration processes.

Constraints in transitioning from school to work

Harnessing youth energy in a productive manner is an important cause for holistic development of youth as well the nation as a whole. Moreover, even after binding each and everything for youth's good, there are still some constraints that are obstacles in the path of their achievement. Therefore it is very important to identify the constraints and hence working on them.

Constraints in getting a job

- Low confidence (17%)
- English speaking skills (28%)
- Source/Approach (9%)
- Fear of interview (21%)
- Distance (16%)
- Gender Bender (9%)

Changes at the level of provision of training and skill development

Gender sensitive training: women face complex ground realities, including low levels of literacy, discriminatory social customs and traditions, limited hours available for training and work, and limited exposure with new technology. Hence, there is a need to make the skill development program flexible to encourage women to enroll. "The training must also incorporate teaching of communication skills, team work and other skills such as behavioral skills for employment purpose.

One method of encouraging participation in skill development is the identification of skills that are already known and up gradation of the same. In case of women, such an approach would increase the acceptability of the training being offered. It is also equally important to provide training after identification of changing norms and aspirations of women. As noted earlier, to make training programmes actually accessible to women, it would be crucial to provide additional basic services and facilities such as, safe and secure transport, etc.

However, it is to be noted that the initiatives required to skill the workforce cannot be assumed to be the same for both men and women, as women and men face very different social and economic circumstances in India. Gender differences are there right from the access to and the availability of education and training, to the conduct of training programmes.

Low social value is attached to girl´s education, and as they are considered secondary income earners, lower importance is given to training of girls for employment. The gender roles defined for women, expect them to primarily devote their time to household chores and child rearing, while time devoted to skill training and economic activities is limited.

Key Issues and Challenges

As noted earlier, the aim of skill development, particularly in case of women, is not merely to prepare them for jobs, but also to improve the performance of women workers by enhancing the quality of work in which they are engaged. The National Skill Development Council has identified a few of the major challenges, which need to be addressed for skill development for the women workforce. These are as follows, "(i) the large number of women who need to be trained since currently only 2% of the female workforce is formally trained, (ii) inadequacies in the quality and relevance of Technical and Vocational Employment Training in India (TVET), (iii) inadequate Infrastructure, acute shortage of trained women workers, poor quality of training, (iv) lack of mechanisms to judge and certify quality, (v) inequity in access to TVET for women (vi) low level of education of potential women trainees that limits training of women in the formal sector, (vii) lack of recognition of prior learning of potential women trainees (viii) relatively high opportunity cost of learning involved for training women." The major challenges noted here are few in number but represent a complexity of issues involved.

Besides the above mentioned, another factor that adds to the need of improved skill development is the increasing number of newly educated youth, especially women, who would like to seek employment in the service sector. The education and skill development sector has not adequately responded to this emerging need, making it imperative to provide skill development and training in marketable skills and services.

It is therefore clear, that there is a dire and urgent need for a paradigm shift in the skill development sector, in favour of innovations, improvements and high quality training. It is also observed, that the concept of training and skill development needs to move beyond the conventional goal of imparting technical and managerial competencies, to playing a broader role of even including basic literacy, numeracy, critical social and political awareness, awareness about gender, and enhancing life skills. Such interventions by their nature will encourage higher self esteem among women and overall personality development. It is also urged that for skill development to be more effective, training needs to bend towards developing the kind of skills women and men already know. or, in other words, the need is to enhance or adapt traditional skills to aspirational skills.

Conclusions

Many young people aspire for government jobs, rather than accepting well paying jobs in the service sector, which is perceived to be less prestigious. Many times they do not know how to go about seeking jobs, and believe that the system is biased towards those with connections. They often do not have the basic skills needed to qualify for the jobs available.

Office and service related jobs require both hard and soft skills such as English language ability, teamwork, initiative, and problem solving. Some manufacturing and construction industry employers are also looking for soft skills as well as specific technical skills in their particular area.

Out-dated teaching methods and curricula in the formal school system as well as many of the vocational technical institutes coupled with high dropout rates in many areas mean that many young people are not equipped for the job market.

Framework for understanding youth participation and impact on communities

From the findings of the study, it can be concluded, that participation of youth in development initiatives, had multi-faceted effect on their lives.

However it can also be inferred that participation in organisational initiatives is two-pronged. i.e. it is mutually beneficial to the youth and the community as a whole.

Involving youth in the training programs is an effective method, which can provide them with a set of skills and enhancing their career opportunities.

Thus conceptualizing all the facets of youth involvement (including influences, reasons and effects) in terms of systems perspective led to the emergence of a conceptual framework.

The flow diagram illustrates that there exists a set of inter-related elements that function as a whole, each of them affect all the others and a symbiotic relationship exists between them.

Capacity and skill building of youth and communities
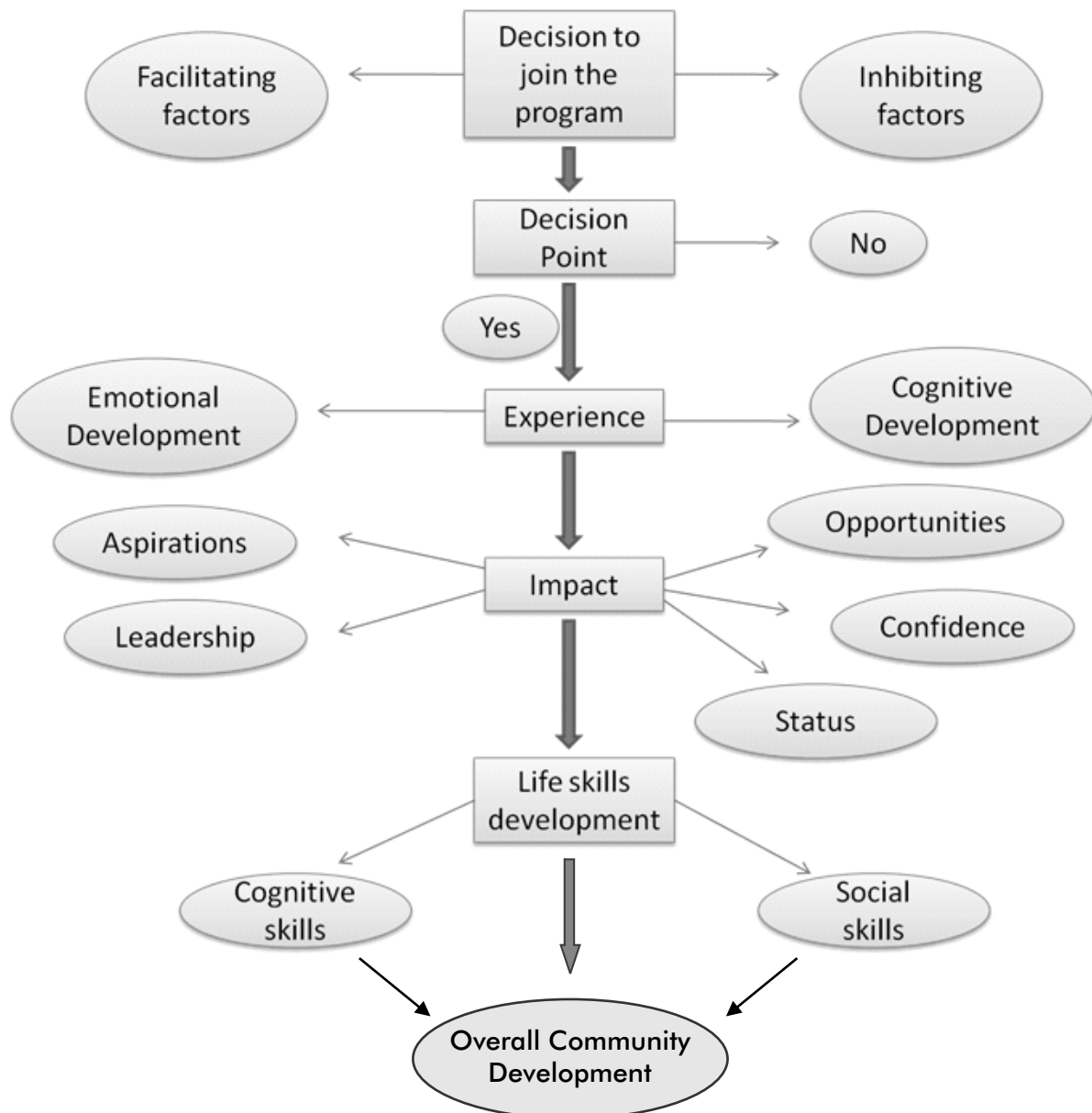
Feasibility of the Sectors from Youth Employment Perspective

- To sum up the findings the feasibility of the sectors for employment is dependent upon the following parameters:
- Possibility of growth in the sector.
- Jobs available that match the qualifications and aspirations of youth.
- Trainings that can be provided by the NGOs or youth may be supported for their training in private institutes.

- Duration of the training should be short.
- Acceptable / non abusive working conditions.

The retail and hospitality sectors are most feasible for employment especially on the jobs of sales / customer care executives. It is a high growth sector and there are jobs available which meet the aspirations of youth as well. Customer care and sales executives are required in the retail or customer care functions in other sectors such as telecommunication, garment-sales outlets and health sector.

Strategies adopted by the Organisations

Finally there has to be a strategic effort for the placement of youth and the post placement follow up by the organisations, as an extra effort. Some of the best practices that need to be replicated are:

- approaching youth and employability program with a business outlook instead of charity approach;
- making the trainer responsible for employment of the students and incentivizing the trainer;
- identifying the trades suitable for a given location;
- screening the candidates thoroughly;
- inducting the candidates systematically;
- setting clear and professional standards of training;
- monitoring quality of training;
- engaging with potential employers during and after the training – dealing with them in a business like instead of charity seeking manner;
- post placement follow up and forming students alumni association;
- Website for employer employee interface and training the employees for next higher levels of jobs for ensuring constant career growth.

Challenges for the companies and the youth

The study has amply revealed that the challenge at the level of the youth is with regard to their preparedness in terms of their employment related skills, soft skills and being level headed.

The above points were discussed with an expert group together with the findings of the study.

- It was emphasized that the process with the corporate sector will have to be that of ongoing engagement and not one of events.
- Strategies will have to be devised to ensure that young women have facilitative rather than inhibitive conditions and also benefit from employability programs.

Outcomes of Skill-Based Education

Programmes aimed at developing skills and build capacities have produced the following effects:

- increased ability to plan ahead and choose effective solutions to problems;
- improved self-image,
- self-awareness, social and emotional adjustment;
- increased acquisition of knowledge;
- improved classroom behaviour;
- gains in self control and handling of interpersonal problems and coping with anxiety;
- improved constructive conflict resolution with peers, impulse control and popularity.

While skill development and employment are very important for young people and national development, they are not the magic bullet they are touted to be. While they may spur economic growth, growth does not necessarily lead to inclusive development.

The way forward

Creating jobs for the millions of young women and men entering the labour market every year is a critical component in the path towards wealthier economies, fairer societies and stronger democracies.

It is not only the quantity but also the quality of jobs that matters. "Decent Work" is the best way young people can realize their aspirations, improve their living conditions and actively participate in society.

There is **no one-size-fits-all** solution to the youth employment challenge. This calls for combining policies for employment expansion with targeted programmes that overcome the specific labour market disadvantages faced by many young people.

The best labour market entry path for young people remains
- a good basic education,
- vocational training or higher education and
- initial work experience.

The development of national action plans on youth employment that are focused on these elements can guide countries to translate national commitment into action.

Finally, skill building programs encourage a **bottom up** approach that enables countries and communities to identify the way forward relevant to their particular needs and resources.

This led to the development of materials that are tailored for specific target audiences and to the training of personnel who can apply these materials according to the needs of the community in which they work.

One possibility is through Non Profit organisation involvement which is becoming increasingly important in the region in the areas of training at local levels, leadership development, organizational support and various kinds of networking.

Recommendations

Involving youth as active participants in development enables them:

- to learn and change;

- to articulate their needs;

- to design and implement solutions to problems in order to achieve what they need.

The ultimate goal of any development programme is to improve quality of life, and this can be achieved only when people are self-reliant and self-motivated. Youth who are well-organised, provided with appropriate training, opportunities and incentives, have the capacity to engage in enterprises that bring both economic and social benefits.

Youth should be part of designing and implementing programmes that bring benefit to the entire rural community.

- Vocational training needs to become more flexible and responsive to changing employment needs.

- Mobility is a social concern with girls. Therefore the parents of girls must be taken into confidence while planning interventions with them. It is also important that rather than strengthening the stereotypes, they should be challenged and girls should be encouraged and supported to choose newer career options.

- Strategies to ensure that young women have facilitative rather than inhibitive conditions and also benefit from employability programs.

- Ensuring placement and follow up after placement.

- Possibilities of supporting and encouraging entrepreneurial initiatives of the youth.

  - The *Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust (BYST)* in India is an example of an organisation that provides support, including micro-finance, for underprivileged youth in order that enthusiastic and innovative youth have the opportunity to set up or develop their own businesses.

  - The "Start and Improve Your Business" (SIYB)[1] programme set up by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) is an example of a programme which aims to enhance the skills needed for successful entrepreneurship. SIYB has provided training to entrepreneurs and enabled them to start businesses or increase business profits and productivity.

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[1] Dr. Geeta Katarya has worked as a Convenor and Coordinator on a project by International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2002-2004), titled "Decent Employment for poor women" involving capacity and skill building of women, youth for Entrepreneurship, setting up a business in selected domains based on need assessment studies with selected NGOs. Phase II involved material preparation for the above by experts followed by trainings. This was the joint program of the institution Lady Irwin College, Director General Employment and Training, Govt. of India and ILO

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Mapping effects of local initiatives to raise status of girl children in a village in Haryana

Sarita Anand & Anshul Singhal

Introduction

The gender-based discrimination remains the most pervasive and persistent form of inequality, which acts as a hurdle in the path of development as it restricts females to participate in social, cultural, economic and political activities. Eliminating such differences are the key elements on path to attaining gender equality and reducing the disempowerment of women. The International Conference on Population and Gender Development held in 1994, recommended that sex composition is vital for any meaningful demographic analysis.As human population exhibits definitive characteristics in terms of its sex composition, lesser females are born in most parts of the world as compared to their male counterparts.However, in India this demographic characteristic is not the same where males resolutely out-number females. According to Census 2011 data, India has the second lowest sex ratio (940) among the ten most populous countries of the world with China (926) followed by Pakistan (943) and Bangladesh (978). The discrimination against girls manifests itself in sex selective abortions in Asian and some other countries. The preference for boys cuts across caste and class lines and the discrimination against girls may start at pre- natal stage but for those born, may continue through the life cycle.

Sex ratio is taken to be a powerful indicator of women's health and position in any society and is used to measure the extent of the prevailing equity between males and females in a society at a given point of time. A change in child sex ratio index reflects underlying socio-economic and cultural patterns of the society, especially its attitude towards the girl child and the state of gender relations. Though on one hand the overall sex ratio of the population has been encouraging, increasing from 933 in 2001 to 940 in 2011, on the other hand child sex ratio (CSR) has been declining faster than overall sex ratio. Child sex ratio in 2011 has registered a 13 point decline from 927 in 2001 to 914 girl children per 1000 boy children which starkly contrasts with the improvement in the sex ratio of the overall population, which is a matter of serious concern. In addition regional disparities exist and the lowest child sex ratios have been observed in the north- western states including Haryana (830) and Punjab (846). The most worrisome trend is that rural areas which traditionally showed lesser disparity in the number of girls and boys have registered a decline of more than three times as compared to drop in urban India in 2011.

Policy and action response

India is indeed one of the few countries to have legalized abortions under the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act in 1972. Under this act abortion is legal in instances where pregnancy carries a risk to the foetus or to the mother, or in case of pregnancy caused by contraceptive failure or otherwise. Another act was passed in 1994 and further amended and renamed in the year 2003 is Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques(PCPNDT) Prohibition of Sex Selection Act, 1994 (PNDT Act). The Act brought within its ambit the techniques of pre-conception sex selection in a bid to pre-empt the misuse of such technologies. But it is estimated that more and more abortions are being performed every year outside the ambit of the act with son preference as a major cause.

Promoting Behavior change: Positive Deviance Approach

The government of India has formulated schemes from time to time to ensure the survival and development of girls through various central and state level schemes. Likewise, media strategies, campaigns and schemes have also been planned by government of India, Doordarshan, Non-governmental and bilateral agencies. Though numerous programmes have been planned based on various approaches to generate awareness and bring about change in the attitude of people towards sex selection, Positive deviance is another approach that yet needs to be explored in this context.

As stated by Dura & Singhal (2009) **Positive deviance** hinges on the premise that in every community there are individuals whose uncommon practices enable then to find better solutions to problems than their neighbours with access to the same resources. Positive deviance is an Asset based approach, so it looks solutions based on the assets that exist within the community. Those individuals who exhibit some specific positive behaviours or practices living in the same space and using the same resources as others are known as **Positive deviants** as they display different behaviours and practices from others but in a positive manner. It follows Practice Attitude Knowledge (PAK) instead of Knowledge Attitude Practice (KAP) framework. So as opposed to the socio psychological framework of communication to social change that says knowledge leads to change in attitude and then finally action, positive deviance enables which then becomes knowledge, and then it is shared with others to act and obtain immediate results.

Also as opposed to the typical role of social change experts of prioritizing the problems of a community and then applying an outside solution, positive deviance augments already existing local wisdom, solutions and benefits that can be immediate and sustained where the role of the expert is to facilitate the Positive Deviance (PD) findings by identifying uncommon practices of positive deviants and make them evident as a possible solution. So, Positive Deviance Approach works when the community in which it is being applied identifies and owns the problem and then generates locally relevant solutions to solve it.

Haryana has the most skewed child sex ratio of 830 girl children per thousand boy children, with 831 in rural areas and 829 in urban areas. Also National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-3 data clearly shows that in Haryana, son preference exist as there are 97.4% people with two sons and this percentage is even more skewed in rural areas i.e. 97.7%. Furthermore, the percentages of people with two daughters are very less i.e. 25.8% and 17.9% in rural areas respectively as 22% women and 18% men want more sons than daughters (NFHS-3). Among the several factors that influence CSR in India, the three major factors are son preference, small family norm, decline in fertility; and easy availability of technology for sex selection.

Realizing the problem of declining child sex ratio, as a result of socio-cultural environment and patriarchal structure of the society that discriminates against girls, Bibipur village in Jind district **exhibited** a positively deviant behaviour of initiating change at the ground level. They organized an all women *Gram Sabha*, which was attended by around 250-300 women. This was followed by holding a *Mahila Maha panchayat* in 2012 in which *Khap Panchayats* from various parts of Haryana participated to raise the issue of female foeticide for the first time. The panchayat of Bibipur village showed their commitment towards the issue by looking at the registration system of the pregnant women at an *Anganwadi,* keeping a strict vigil and tracking those who already had a girl child and were suspected of going for a sex selective test at the time of second pregnancy, making a secret team for keeping a watch over women of the village and doing surprise visits to ultrasound centre and hospitals as well. They also promoted celebrating the birth of girl child and rewarded those women who acted as role models of family planning.

Thus, a study was carried out in *Bibipur* village and its contiguous village, *Ghimana* to understand the trends and patterns of people's aspirations towards girl child as a reflection of various initiatives taken at the local level by the Panchayat members.

Methods and Results

The sample for the study constituted of those women who had participated in *Maha Mahila Panchayat* held in 2012. After preparing the list of names of the married women with the help of *Anganwadi* workers (AWW) and field functionaries, 70 married women having at least one girl child and 10 married women having only boy child or children were purposively selected. Home visits were made to conduct in-depth interviews with them. The elicited information was recorded and supplemented with observations and comments from Anganwadi workers and field functionaries. Responses of the selected women were considered for understanding awareness and practices related to pregnancy and family planning, the socio-cultural factors influencing the family decisions related to sex and family size, parent's desire for ideal composition of family, reasons behind son and parents' aspirations towards education of girl child.

Socio-economic outline of the respondents

Majority of the women respondents were in the age group of 18-30 years with a predominance of Jats and Brahmins followed by backward castes. 78% of them were married off at an early age, much below the legal age of 18 years of marriage, as it helped the family save money by marrying the girl along with either of their siblings. Marriage seemed to be the aspiration of parents for their daughters. The family did not value education much as more than half of the women were found to be either illiterate or had studied up to 10th standard. Sushil Manav (2013) also showed the existence of a high female illiteracy (39%) in the village, being lower than the average literacy rate of Haryana state and Jind district. Most of the women belonged to a conservative set up where household chores and farm labour were considered to be the key responsibilities of women. Their low social status was indicative by the fact that they had no idea of distance in kilometres from the natal family, though some of them were able to give a rough estimate of cost of bus ticket to go to their natal village indicating that they may have seldom travelled alone.

Pregnancy and family planning

Large proportion of women lacked information on contraceptives and delivered a baby within first year of their marriage. More than half of the interviewed women delivered at home and had female child as their first child while only 37% delivered all of their children in a medical institution. The medical institution chosen for delivery was either private hospital or village sub centre, depending upon individual's economic status. Having no say in decisions related to health checkups during pregnancy, all women largely depended either on their husband or in laws to avail medical services. Though the source of information on methods of contraception was either a doctor or *Anganwadi* worker, only 17% women used contraception for birth spacing. Largely, the families were unplanned as tubectomy was the most common contraceptive method adopted for family planning by women.

On being asked about the reasons for going for an ultrasound, 45% responded, it is for detection of abnormalities in the foetus while 41.25% said that they wanted to know about the health of the baby and get defects detected, if any. Others (13%) strongly responded in negative and said that ultrasound leads to sex selection and hence, one should go only after seeking doctor's advice. A few women also said that 'no reference is needed for getting ultrasound done in a private ultrasound centre. This suggests that though illegal but due to easy accessibility of ultrasound centres, such practices do take place in their surroundings in an unethical manner. Most of the women expressed, aborting female foetuses was wrong, even if there are more girls in the family already.

Size and sex wise composition of families

Most of the women (82.5%) preferred having two children as the ideal family size but in practice the families were not small. On being asked about the ideal combination of children, all the respondents strongly remarked about the importance of having at least one son in order to complete a family. 77.5% of the respondents suggested a girl and a boy as the ideal combination

of children while others preferred at least one or two boys. This indicates that the socio-cultural environment does not support having small family size if there are only girl(s). Unless a boy child is born in the family, a family is not considered complete.

The analysis of the parity progression of the birth order indicated that there was more number of female children in the first three birth orders and the trend seemed to change only in the 4th order, where the number of females dropped to half of the number of males. Generally, the number of females begins to decline as the parity progresses but since one of the criteria of the study was selection of families with preponderance of female children, this trend needs to be examined further. So, it suggests that the selected sample exhibits a **differential stopping behaviour** (DSB) which says that couples continue child bearing until they reach their desired number of sons or when they hit the ceiling for the maximum number of children that they think to be feasible. Therefore, families continued to have children till they had adequate number of surviving sons. Consequently small families had more sons while large families had more daughters.

Table 1. Parity progression according to birth order

Sex	1st order	2nd order	3rd order	4th order	5th order
Female	53 (66.25%)	46 (57.5%)	32 (40.00%)	8 (10.00%)	3 (5.00 %)
Male	27 (33.75%)	20 (25.00 %)	12 (15.00%)	16 (20 %)	4 (5.00%)

Reasons for son preference

Among the various reasons given by respondents behind son preference, 76.5% opined that a son is preferred because he carries forward the family lineage and is required to perform numerous Hindu rituals and festive ceremonies. Some (15) women preferred son as they would take care of their sisters and fulfil their societal responsibilities, support parents in old age and ensure their security in future when they would be unable to earn. This is indicative of the conservative mindset of considering a son for the great economic value while daughters as financial liability.

When mothers were asked to reflect upon their feelings after they delivered a child, 20 of them said that they were equally happy at the birth of daughter as well as son. As daughter gets married and goes away to in laws house while a son stays, around 17 mothers were more pleased to give birth to a son. Other 15 mothers related their feelings with everyone's happiness, especially elderly people after the birth of a son in the family. This clearly indicates that due to social conditioning and strong patriarchal practices, women's preferences were not individualistic., rather, their happiness was co-related with the family (specifically in-laws) wishes.

Table 2. Socio-cultural factors influencing family decisions related to sex wise composition.

Reasons for son preference	n	%	Mother's feeling after child birth	n	%
Lineage/ rituals	61	76.25	Equally happy at the birth of daughter as well as son	20	25.00
Takes care of sisters	15	18.75	Son carries forward the lineage	19	23.75
Supports in old age	10	12.5	Future security for daughters	4	5.00
Future security	5	6.25	Everybody/elderly becomes happy	15	18.75
More physical Labour	4	5.00	Mother feels honoured and free of responsibilities	9	11.25
Daughters as financial liability	3	3.75	Son stays and daughter gets married and goes away	17	21.25

Parents' aspirations towards education of girl child

In the context of aspirations related to the future of children, most of the women said that they want their daughters and sons to study equally as per their children's wish and family's economic condition. But few women (10) were of the view that they would allow their daughters to study till 10th standard due to safety reasons. Thus indicating that although there is a growing concern for girls' education but differentials in terms of years of education for sons and daughters are still practiced owing to reasons such as mobility, security and threat that they would become smart and start questioning.

Suggestions for empowerment of girl children

Further on being asked about their suggestions for empowering girl children, 43% of the respondents said that both boys and girls should be given equal facilities, opportunities and education. Some suggested that daughters need to be cared, empowered, made more aware about their rights and should be prepared to raise their voice against wrong. Few women were also concerned about social evil practices like dowry and responded that parents should not give dowry as it increases the greed and also government should make more stringent laws. They expressed their strong concern to stop sex selective abortions and suggested to generate awareness among people about the consequences of declining child sex ratio.

Conclusion

Women in *Bibipur* like most other women in other parts of the country are less educated, economically dependent on others and hence less empowered, therefore, their decisions related to their reproduction is largely influenced by the in laws family. The practice of differential stopping behaviour, tubectomy being the most common option of contraception and aspirations of women towards girls' education reflected bias towards male heir. The findings revealed that a strong son preference exists among the women of *Bibipur* and *Ghimana* villages in specific and

Haryana in general. But the silver lining is that in most cases it did not lead to sex selective abortions. Though changing mindsets and attitudes around the practices that discriminate against girls is difficult, but initiatives like *Mahila Maha Panchayat* and the volunteerism building up around the issue of skewed child sex ratio can positively impact and bear fruits in the future.

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Educational Aspirations of Young girls and their parents in rural Haryana

Sarita Anand, Anshul Singhal, Divya Mehta

Development can be viewed as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy. Analyzing development in terms of expanding substantial freedoms directs attention towards the ends that make development imperative, rather than merely to some of the means that, inter alia, play a major part in the process. Development requires the elimination of major sources of confinement [14] (Sen 1999). There is widespread acceptance today that development needs to be evaluated not just in terms of economic growth but also in terms of the advancement of human capabilities, and that enhancing human well-being is not just a means but also an end in itself [12] (Panda 2005) If development means the expansion of human capabilities, then participation of women in the workforce and equality among both the sexes in all aspects of life should form an integral part of any exercise for evaluating developmental progress.

Women constitute almost half of the entire population of India but they form the largest restrained group in relatively all aspects. As the social fibre of India is predominantly patriarchal and contributes extensively to the secondary status of women, they have been denied their basic rights and freedoms leading to poor socio-economic and political status of women. This has further resulted in substandard representation of India in terms of Human Development Index. Gender-related Development Index clearly reflects inequality in survival, education and economic contribution of women and men. All the three factors are interlinked but are culturally rooted in patriarchy. India has been traditionally and culturally plagued with the problem of gender discrimination of the worst form: the avoidance of female births [13].

Sex ratio is now taken to be a powerful indicator of **women's position in any society** and is used to measure the extent of the prevailing equity between males and females in a society at a given point of time. **A change in child sex ratio index reflects underlying attitude towards the girl child and the state of gender relations.** The recently released data from the Indian census [2] has refocused the world's attention on the dark side of India's demographic change — a low and falling ratio of girls to boys. For the last 40 years, each successive census has found the number of young girls shrinking relative to boys. Interestingly, the decline in the child sex ratio has occurred in the phase of rising living standards and improvements in every other indicator of demographic change and human development, i.e. average life expectancy, infant mortality, male and female literacy, fertility rate, and enrolment of children in school [11].

Education acts as one of the critical factors in influencing the aspirations of girls' and their capacity to work. It holds the key to economic growth, social transformation, modernization and national integration. Literacy rate in Haryana has seen an upward trend and is 75.55% (Census 2011). Of that, male literacy stands at 84.06% while female literacy is at 56.91%.

To propose the problem, it may be recalled that though several Indians have achieved national and international honour in the fields of science, politics and leadership, business, sports etc; yet

these progressive developments cannot hide one of the worst looming "gender" crisis faced by India with rapid diminution of women's population. During 1961 and 2011, India's population at the collective level has witnessed a decline in child sex ratio (CSR) by 69 points (from 976 to 914 females per 1000 males). Particularly in Haryana, the CSR has been on an unabated decline with certain ups and downs since its formation as a separate state in 1966. Between 1981 and 2001, CSR in the state has decreased from 902 to 819, a decline of 83 points. But during the decade of 1991-2001 alone, the decline in this ratio has been more precipitous, i.e. of 60 points. However, an increase of 11 points has been noticed in CSR during the decade 2001 to 2011. Despite this escalation, Haryana is at the lowest rung of ladder amongst all states of India with 830 girls for 1000 boys in 0-6 years age group. This indicates a marked preference for male children which may be due to the differentials in parents' aspirations for their sons and daughters [2].

Thus to improve the status of our country, it is important to bring women at par with men in almost all aspects of life; if the status of women in the country is rectified then consequentially it will ameliorate the status of our country as well. Therefore in order to understand and modify one's choices, it is vital to recognize what determines his or her aspirations (defined as a desire to achieve) [1]. Markus and Nurius (1986) have reported aspirations as one's ideas and hopes of "possible selves", i.e. what a person would like to and what would not like to become or achieve. In psychology, aspiration level has been defined as the level of quality of a task which one desires to attain. Aspirations are usually determined in early childhood and are liable to change throughout the life [8].

In Indian context, family life is the foundation and cornerstone of society and respect for parents is continually emphasized in the family patterns. Therefore from this kind of acculturation children incorporate the values of parents since childhood and behave in accordance with the family code and ethics. Sex of the child might be an important factor in shaping the perceptions of parents' for their children. Hence it may play a major role in moulding the perspectives of girl children in terms of their future aspirations. Beyond the macro factors like rural or urban vicinity, micro factors like parents' education, occupation, self drive and role models of an individual might be important factors in influencing the aspirations of any individual.

As a significant number of women are reaching great heights, the mindset of people towards their daughters is also expected to undergo transition. Thus, a study was carried out to gain insight into the aspirations of girls and their parents regarding education and future employment. Since the aspirations are shaped by familial and social factors, the study also attempted to identify the vital factors fabricating such aspirations in order to understand the social status of girl child in the family.

Methods

The state of Haryana has the lowest sex ratio, 830 [2], in the country. The NFHS-3 data indicates existence of strong son preference in Haryana with 97.4% people having two sons in urban and 97.7% in rural areas [5]. However, amidst the odds, lies Bibipur village in Jind district of Haryana wherein the *Gram Panchayat* seems to be proactive in addressing the issue of survival and education of girl children. It hosted the first all-woman meeting of *Gram-Sabha* on the issue of

sex-selective abortion wherein the *Khap Panchayats* came together for the first time to raise the issue. Besides, the village's sex ratio has also seen an upward trend wherein 51 girls and 45 boys were born as per 2013 estimates[15]. As a reflection of various initiatives taken at the local level by the *Panchayat* members and momentum generated around enhancing the status of girl children, Bibipur village was selected as the locale of the qualitative study.

Also, a pilot study was conducted to test the feasibility of the study and the developed tools. Further, ethical considerations of having participant's informed consent, maintaining confidentiality, and the right to refuse or withdraw were assured while conducting the study.

For the sample for the study, 30 girls studying in Class XII of a co-educational government higher secondary school lying close to Bibipur village and their parents were purposively selected to understand their aspirations towards education and future employment. After taking due permission from the school authorities, girls were interviewed in-depth in the school premises while home visits were made for interviewing mothers and fathers separately.

Findings of the study

Profile of the respondents

Girls: The girls selected for the study belonged to the age group of 16-18 years and were studying in 12th grade of co-ed government higher secondary school.

Mothers: The mothers of the selected girls were also interviewed. Majority of them were in the middle age category of 30-35 yeras. As more than half of them were either illiterate or had studied up to 5th grade, it points towards the poor educational status of women in the village. 45% of the repsondents were home makers and 46% worked as daily wage agricultual labourers.

Educational and career aspirations of the girls

Importance of Education: More than half of the girls were appreciative of getting education as it made them more aware about various issues and events that are important to understand day to day life. Also, they strongly felt that education makes one self-sufficient and self-reliant. Others exclaimed that education boosts up cnfidence and gives financial independence.

Ambitions after completing schooling: Though girls had restrited mobility and were not allowed to go outside their village for studies, they had high educational aspirations of pursuing further studies i.e. graduation or any vocational course. 50% of the girls wanted to take up a job soon after schooling in order to help their families overcome the financial crisis. Only 10% of them mentioned of getting married soon after school which might be due to the familial influences.

Local Panchayat also seemed to have played an active role in promoting education among girls as they proposed to start bus services from the village to the nearest city from the upcoming session i.e. 2015-16.

Career aspirations of young girls: The young girls interviewed for the study aspired to make careers for themselves in various fields. Little less than 50% of the girls, aspired for "safer jobs" like teaching in school while two respondents thought of becoming professors. Nursing/ Practising as Doctor was second most opted career choice for the girls (n=10). Only 10% aspired for practicing law and becoming an advocate. For the careers as army officer, IPS officer or that of a journalist, girls said "jobs like IPS officer, Army officer etc, are good for boys only, for girls teaching job is the best". It indicates that the gender roles imbibed from childhood affect the career choices of the girls.

Employment and their reasons: Majority of the girls wanted to have a government job and said "a government job is best suited for girls as no one refuses to opt for it and because of its work timings, family members also do not complain". None of the girls were interested in jobs related to communication technology like computer science, IT etc which might be due to lack of exposure and awareness about the work related aspects in such fields. Reputation and self identity was a significant factor of being employed for almost 75% of the girls. Around 17% of the girls wanted to pursue a particular job for money while others wanted to make use of the skills they wished to acquire.

Girl's views regarding economic independence: More than 83% of the girls desired to become economically independent and work after marriage. They wished to pursue career so that they don't have to ask for money. They wanted to be self-sufficient and self-reliant. Others felt that economic independence may give them a sense of respect and recognition in the society.

It clearly illustrates that even though these girls belonged to a conservative environment but still aspired to make their lives better, which signifies a positive and gradual change in their lives.

Educational and career aspirations of the mothers towards girls

Importance of Education: For 37% of the respondents, education was important to increase the knowledge and awareness so that informed decisions could be made in life. 30% of the mothers said that education helps to unfold the job opportunities in future while 16% said that it plays a critical role in making an individual self-dependent. It is also associated with financial independence, as exclaimed by 10% of the total mothers interviewed. Others said that education also boosts self-confidence and enhances the overall personality of an individual. Therefore, it can be said that mothers as parents understand the importance of education.

Aspirations after schooling: Maximum mothers (43.33%) wanted their daughters to pursue graduation after school while around 33% mothers desired their daughters to complete schooling only. Nearly one-fourth of the participants (23%) specified that they would try to fulfil their daughters' aspirations to the best of their capabilities. The findings point towards the changing perceptions of parents towards education in a positive way, ultimately leading to the better status of women in our society.

Career aspirations of mothers for their daughters: Nearly half of the mothers (47%) motivated their daughters to pursue higher studies; graduation and post graduation. About one-fourth of the participants (23%) wanted their daughters to choose such a career wherein they can

secure a good government job for themselves. Others had left it to the choice and destiny of the child. The findings are reflective of the fact that parents are opening up towards educating girls and making them self dependent.

Employment and their reasons: Most of the parents wanted their daughters to opt for nursing (30%) and teaching (23%) as a profession in future. Nearly 23% of parents wanted their daughters to be settled with a government job whereas only 10% of them wanted their daughters to be well settled and become successful by following their aspirations. While the majority of mothers wanted their daughters to work in future and encouraged their daughters to follow the aspirations, some (13%) specified that they would not allow their daughters to work and earn. Thus, it can be presumed that work preferences of parents for their daughters remained largely restrictive to those jobs that were viewed as more appropriate for women; reflecting a kind of gender segregation in employment aspects.

Permit mobility for educational and career aspects: Whenparents were asked about the movement of girls out of the village for pursuing higher studies or for employment, all of them refused and expressed their concerns about the safety of young girls.

Awareness about the daughters' future aspirations: All the mothers were very well aware of their daughters' future aspirations and mentioned that if their daughters put in their best efforts, then they would completely support them in their endeavour, except for one. She was a mother of five children, all daughters and wanted them to get married soon after completing schooling, reflecting a strong societal pressure she felt in rearing five daughters.

Conclusion:

Almost all the girls had high educational and future aspirations and they mentioned that they wanted to make their lives better but socialization and defined gender roles restrict their awareness and exposure to the outside world. Also, they remain subjugated due to functioning within limited space of physical mobility and the stereotypical expectations of society from them inhibit them to realize their true potential. This is further underpinned by an attitude that a girl in the natal home is considered as a temporary member and in husband's home an outsider. As far as parental aspirations are concerned, they wanted their children to accomplish their goals and provide them full support but somewhere gender roles and responsibilities impinge on the girls' aspirations. Most of them wanted to marry off their daughters irrespective of whether they would be employed or unemployed in future.

To improve the situation, school authorities should play a more proactive role by providing the students with facilities and resources for networking so that they get to know about the outside world and make decisions regarding their future wisely. Good education and wider exposure only can help to change these stereotypical roles and images.

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Women, Education, Skill and Work: Towards Gender Equality

Adarsh Sharma

Women and girls constitute half the population of India. However, due to the patriarchal fabric of our society, traditionally they have not been given equal opportunities to grow and develop optimally. They are subjected to discrimination across all stages of life cycle which is manifested in gender disparity that exists in human development indicators of survival, health, education, contribution to the economic development and participation in the labour market.

Let us take stock of one of the important indicators of human development related to survival. The sex ratio and child sex ratio (0-6 Years) are defined as the number of females per thousand males in the specific age population. India has seen for decades a consistent decline in both sex ratios. The Child sex ratio has been declining unabatedly since 1961. The figures of the recent decades have shown an alarming decline in child sex ratio from 1945 in 1991 to 927 in 2007 and 918 in 2011(Census 2011).Whereas female sex ratio on the whole has shown a slight upward trend in the last census from 933 in 2001 to 943 and this in any way is not a matter to rejoice as it continues to be   below the desired ideal ratio of 1/1.

The issue of declining sex ratios is a major indicator of women disempowerment and a testimony to the lack of care protection given to women and girls in our society. "The pervasive discrimination begins before birth, manifested in the form of gender-biased sex selection and elimination and continues in various forms even after birth (if born), where in the health, nutrition and educational needs of the girl child/women are neglected (Rathore, 2014).

It is well acknowledged that without inclusion and participation of women, sustainable development is not possible for any nation. It is, therefore, imperative that all citizens of the country, without any social or class prejudices are made to access provisions and services to realize their potential and build their future and be able to contribute productively in building the future of the country. Thus in Indian context, the issue of gender equality becomes a major concern.

Gender Equality: Constitution of India

At this juncture it is worth while to have a common understanding of the concept of gender equality. It will surely be useful in contextualizing our discussion on education, skills, and work in the subsequent section of the paper. The UNESCO document has a very comprehensive definition which says" *Gender equality means that women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and for contributing to, and benefiting from economic, social and cultural political development. Gender equality is therefore the equal valuing by society of the similarities and the differences of men and women, and the*

roles they play. It is based on women and men being full partners in their home, their community and society" (UNSCO, 2006).

It is interesting to note that the founders of our Constitution in their wisdom captured the above concept of gender equality, while framing **Fundamental Rights** and spelling out **Directive Principles** for the State much ahead of the movement of women empowerment. Out of the of seven Fundamental Rights granted to the citizens - **right to equality**, is the first one along with right to freedom, right against exploitation, right to freedom of religion, cultural and educational rights. Further Article 15th of the Constitution prohibits discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth, or any of them. It simultaneously places upon the state an obligation to protect the citizens' rights from encroachment by society. The Constitution not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women.

The Government has also set up the *National Commission for Women as* a statutory body in January 1992 under the <u>National Commission for Women Act, 1990 (Act No. 20 of 1990 of Govt.of India)</u>. It is expected to:

• review the Constitutional and Legal safeguards for women ;

• recommend remedial legislative measures ;

• facilitate redressal of grievances and

• advise the Government on all policy matters affecting women. Further, India has been very favourable in ratifying various international conventions and human rights instruments committing to secure equal rights of women. Key among these is the ratification of the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1993.

Ministry of Women and Child Development: Initiatives

There is a full fledged nodal Ministry of Women and Child Development that has the responsibility to coordinate with other allied Ministries and their departments to ensure that the rights of women are protected and provisions are made for fulfilling these effectively through interventions at various levels. As per its mission it is promoting social and economic empowerment of women through cross-cutting policies and programmes, mainstreaming gender concerns, creating awareness about their rights and facilitating institutional and legislative support for enabling them to realize their human rights and develop to their full potential.

Several initiatives have been taken by the ministry during the last few years to fulfill its mandate, a few important ones are:

1. The National Policy of Women Empowerment -2001: The goal of this Policy is to bring about the advancement, development and empowerment of women. Specifically, the objectives of this Policy include:

- Creating an environment through positive economic and social policies for full development of women
- The de-jure and de-facto enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedom by women on equal basis with men in all spheres - political, economic, social, cultural and civil; able them to realize their full potential;
- Equal access to participation and decision making of women in social, political and economic life of the nation;
- Equal access to women to health care, quality education at all levels, career and vocational guidance, employment, equal remuneration, occupational health and safety, social security and public office etc.;
- Strengthening legal systems aimed at elimination of all forms of discrimination against women
- Changing societal attitudes and community practices by active participation and involvement of both men and women;
- Mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development process;
- Elimination of discrimination and all forms of violence against women and the girl child; and
- Building and strengthening partnerships with civil society, particularly women's organizations. (Ministry of WCD, 2001)

Schemes and Programme Interventions

In order to reach grassroots through the state Women & Child Development (WCD) and NGOs some innovative interventions to cover areas of concerns have been introduced by the ministry from time o time. Each of these is targeted at a particular target group and addresses a specific issue. For example *SABLA* scheme is for empowering adolescent girls, *Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Yojana* for women farmers, a scheme for leadership training of Minority women, *Ujjawala* for combating trafficking and *Dhanalakshmi* to tackle the issue of declining sex ratio. The *Rashtriya Mahila Kosh* into a systemically important Non- Banking Finance Company with an enhanced corpus of Rs. 500 crores and has benefited over two lakh women with financial assistance to be self employed and become entrepreneurs.

One of the recent initiative, *Beti Bachao Beti Padhaho* (BBBP) is a laudable nation wide campaign that aims at prevention of gender biased sex selective elimination; ensuring survival and protection of the girl child and ensuring her education.

Convergence with other Schemes of Women Empowerment

Bringing women into mainstream has also received special attention under programmes in partnership with other ministries such as: The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA), the Right to Free & Compulsory Education, National Rural Health Mission, National Rural Livelihood Mission, and National Skill Development Mission. Gender Budgeting initiatives also led to development of new schemes in supposedly gender neutral sectors like Department of Telecommunications and Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

National Mission for Empowerment of Women

The National Mission for Empowerment of Women (NMEW) was launched on March 8, 2010. It has the mandate to strengthen the inter-sector convergence; facilitate the process of coordinating all the women's welfare and socio-economic development programmes across ministries and departments. Since it is expected to provide a single window service, it has been called *Mission Poorna Shakti,* implying a vision for holistic empowerment of women. It is likely to forge synergy amongst stakeholders and create enabling environment conducive for social change. The National Resource Center for Women has been set up which will be the focal point of convergence at the national level. It will also act as a central repository of knowledge, information, research and data on all gender related issues and is the main body servicing the National and State Mission Authority.

Education an Instrument for Empowerment

Education is recognized as a powerful catalyst agent for social change. It is a strategy to bridge inequalities within social groups in society. It is acknowledged as a means to achieve all the Sustainable Development Goals. There have been wide gaps in access to education by girls and women at all levels in India.

The global movement of Education for All as we know has one of its goals to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with ensuring girls full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality. Millennium Development Goal 3 also endorses it by setting the same target: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary levels preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015. In May 2002 with launch of East Asia and Pacific Regional UN Girl's Education Initiative (UNGEI) a further impetuous has been given to achieve the above goals of equality within the Dakar Framework of Action, Education for All and Beijing Plat form of Action and the World fit for Children in most countries of the region.

One of the noteworthy developments in India in 2011 has been the 86th amendment to the Constitution that made free and compulsory education for children aged 6-14 a fundamental right. The government's *Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) p*rogramme is providing the support to achieve the goal. The programme addresses needs of over 200 million children in areas with inadequate school facilities where *SSA* is setting up new schools and improving existing infrastructures. Teaching capacity is being improved through recruitment and extensive teacher training and many other inputs to enhance quality of educational processes. It has a focus on making special provisions for girls to access education at all levels (*SSA*, MHRD).

While positive progress has been made in increased educational enrolment and retention of girls in primary and secondary levels, disparities still exist for disadvantaged groups in particular. The girls are unable to bridge the parity index and have several problems in catching up .Girls aged 10-14 face particular difficulties, the distances to travel to school, no relief from child care role of younger siblings; lack of sanitary facilities that continues to result in higher drop out rates for girls in post primary classes.

Linking Education and Skill Development

For economic and social development of India we not only need well educated population, but people with relevant skills, values and attitude that are required for life and work. It is essential to ensure that when youth enter the world of work they have higher levels of education and skills needed to support rapid growth. We have a large young population; the demographic dividend of young population can contribute to India's growth considerably.

The issues related to education and training of young people and adolescents fall under the purview of different ministries of the Government of India, including the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Several programmatic interventions have been formulated to create enabling conditions to effectively address the issues relating to adolescent and youth development.

The main focus of these programmes in the context of the Education For All (EFA) initiatives has been on facilitating the upward mobility of students from elementary to secondary/senior secondary education, and incorporating imparting of vocational competence. The aim is to build a system that supports continuing education and life-long learning, and promoting skill development (National University of Education Planning & Administration (NUEPA) 2014).

National Skill Development Policy 2009 accordingly has set a target for skill training of 500 million people by 2022. Under the education and skilling initiative, 9555,000 people were covered during 2013-2014. Vocational education at the secondary stage has been redesigned to promote diversification of educational opportunities so as to enhance individual employability and reduce the mismatch between demand and supply of skilled human resource.

It is well known that girls /women are more disadvantaged in the process of transition from school to work. The deeply embedded beliefs / stereotypes about women have been primarily identified with household responsibilities, marriage and family, leads to low valuation in the labour market. The Labour Female Participation Rates in the age group 15-59 years for females -33.1% and males 82.7%.Out of these only one percent women have received any vocational training (NSSO, 2009-2010). Despite decades of efforts to promote gender equality in the labour market by governments and international organizations, imbalances persist (ILO, 2012).

Academic subject matter is another area of gender inequality. Women are the majority in such fields as health and welfare, education, and humanities and arts. But they are under-represented – in some cases significantly – in such fields as engineering, manufacturing, construction and science. This trend in turn influences women's professional choices and income levels. Consequently, efforts are needed not only to achieve parity in education but also to help overcome the political, economic and social barriers that hinder females from pursuing employment in traditionally 'male' fields and making use of their education and skills (AIWEFA, 2015).

Women choose normally to work in the public sector as it tends to provide more social security and greater equal opportunities than the private sector. Women working in the public sector tend to be employed as teachers and nurses, underscoring traditional gender stereotypes of women as caregivers. This occupational segregation has resulted in under use of women's labour and feminization of certain occupations, which in turn has reduced overall wage rates. The lack of gender equality can also be seen in pay differentials, unequal career opportunities, gender differences in sick leave and under-representation of women in high-level positions. The shrinkage of opportunities in the formal sector also means a loss of jobs available to women with higher levels of education (AIWEFA 2015).

One of the more difficult things than finding the right job which women face today is identifying the right career. If variety of skill based courses were easily available along with business, sale and marketing support it would have been possible for them to conduct independent business having life time of self-employment.

Mahila Samakhya programme of the government started in 1989 continues in developing capacities of poor women to address gender and social barriers to education and realization of women's rights at house hold and community level. It obviously has a small coverage and is very diverse in its quality across states.

New Initiatives: With the Central Government announcement of Make in India (MII) campaign that is geared towards making India a hub of manufacturing and innovation, it is likely to create more jobs in the formal sector. The skilled and semi - skilled job will require higher technical education. Youth in particular from disparate backgrounds seem to have welcomed this development. The 2014-2015 Economic Survey stated that the PM's Skill India objective should be given high priority to achieve the MII goal. Developing "economy-wide skills must complement efforts to improve the conditions for manufacturing". While MII is an important goal, it is for sure that the   future of India depends on 'Make in India' as well as on 'Skilling India'. The National Skill Development Cooperation (NSDC) in line with the Government's vision has undertaken a skill gap study to guide their initiatives to train people accordingly. Training in technology has become in this context more important as people must know how to use technology (Times of India, 25th May, 2015).

Another contribution is **Innovate for Digital India Challenge** in collaboration with Department of Science and Technology. Fostering innovation amongst students, house wives, and entrepreneurs is another vital activity. This is aimed at finding solutions to varied problems of India using technology in an innovative manner. It is expected that a sustainable eco system will be created by taking innovations to the market. Industry stalwarts will mentor the project (Times of India March 4th, 2015)

Involvement of International Agencies and Voluntary Sector

The arena of empowerment of women in India has several actors and partners besides the federal government. A vibrant voluntary sector works for various issues related to women at grassroots and at the level of communities. Their areas of operation are normally restricted to small geographical coverage. However, there is enough documented and empirical

evidence available of the best practices used by these organizations in their programmes. Combined with the commitment, dedication, and professional expertise mobilized, they have been able to show effective results in making a change and improvement in the projects. None the less it is noteworthy that this knowledge could be useful in replicating and main streaming the practices and integrate these into large programmes of the government.

Many international and bilateral agencies have at times partnered with NGOs and supported these programmes using existing schemes of the government A few major ones are: UNICEF, Plan International, UNESCO, USAID, UNIFEM, UNFPA, Save the Children, ILO, World Vision, FAO, WHO, Bill Gates Foundation and several others, who have a mission to work in the area of women empowerment.

Provisions for Empowering Women: Stock Taking

The description of provisions made available for achieving the goal of gender equality and women empowerment is indeed impressive. Despite all this we know that gender disparity is rampant and manifests itself across all sections of the society. There is a wide gap between the goals enunciated in the Constitution, legislation, policies, plans, programmes, and related mechanisms on the one hand and the situational reality of the status of women in India, on the other.

This has been analyzed extensively in the Report of the Committee on the Status of Women in India, "Towards Equality", 1974 and highlighted in the National Perspective Plan for Women, 1988-2000, the *Shramshakti* Report, 1988 and the Platform for Action, Five Years after- An assessment".

The Ministry of Women and Child Development has an exclusive wing of Women Development which reviews and monitors progress regularly and also coordinates with other Ministries and Departments of the Government at the center and states to ensure that programmes and interventions are implemented effectively. The National Resource Center of women has a portal that keeps up dating the information on several issues from time to time.

Initiatives of AIWEFA: Enhancing Working Skills of Women

Established in 1929 the All India Women's Education Fund Association (AIWEFA) has been working for last eight decades to promote holistic and sustainable development in rural and urban communities. Activities undertaken promote training of women in several aspects of family and child care, including nutrition and health and environment. Vocational training programmes have also been held in collaboration with partners. Recently in association with **Maruti Suzuki India Ltd., AIWEFA** organized series of car driving workshops to train 400 under privileged girls. It is presently conducting Cyber Security workshops in 100 colleges of University of Delhi. The aim is to make youth aware of cyber security procedures and be familiar with using e-services with safety, security and efficiency.

As a part of 85th Anniversary celebrations, AIWEFA in collaboration with UNESCO New Delhi Office organized a conference "Transition of Women from Education to Full

Employment" on 23 May, 2015 at India International Center, New Delhi. The theme of the conference was very timely as it endorsed Honourable Prime Minister Narender Modi's dream of "Skilled India", in which high priority has been given to achieve the Central Government's Make in India (MII) campaign. The platform brought together representatives from private sector organisations, bilateral agencies, the government, public sector units, educators, academicians and other institutions to explore how they could work jointly to strengthen the Skill India initiative. The possibility of drawing upon CSR policies and allocations for the welfare of women was also examined through the technical sessions.

The recommendations emerging from the conference are very relevant to the theme of the paper. It is appropriate to include these here to suggest as the way forward to take the concerns related to bringing equality for women in education, skill development and employment opportunities for work.

The conference recommended following actions (AIWEFA & UNESCO, 2015):

- **Improve and set precedence to develop education for all** including girls, ensuring equitable and inclusive access to education for all - children, youth and adults at all levels from early childhood care and education to tertiary education, significantly improving the quality of education imparted, and ensuring that educational opportunities are available to all segments of the society;

- **Promote an enabling environment for women's entrepreneurship** by raising awareness about existing entrepreneurial opportunities, programmes and schemes, fostering entrepreneurial spirit and facilitating women's access to finance and credit, information and resources. **Collect and consolidate data on gender outcomes of microcredit programmes.**

- **Develop a National Policy and Plan of Action for addressing women's unpaid and care work,** including the implementation guidelines, convergence plans and resource allocation for collection of data, establishment of suitable infrastructure and care facilities, education and training on redistribution of unpaid and care work, and ensuring universal and equitable right to public services/amenities such as health, water, sanitation, etc.

- **Review, adopt and implement the pending policies on employment,** domestic workers and land reforms**,** incorporating a gender equality, rights and empowerment framework.

- **Strengthen gender equality outcomes within existing flagship programmes on livelihoods, employment and social protection,** such as National Rural Livelihoods Mission, Skills Development Mission, National Food Security Act, etc. by undertaking gender analysis, training of government functionaries for gender-responsive implementation, and undertaking monitoring and evaluation, to track empowerment indicators such as security, resources and capabilities.

Source: AIWEFA and UNESCO, 2015. Conference: Transition of Women from Education to Full Employment – Summary Report. New Delhi

Conclusion and Way Forward

The review of the issues discussed in the paper and recommendations presented above give a fairly good road map to walk toward gender equality. It is felt that some of the action points need to be spelled out to ensure that we make necessary changes to improve the existing scenario. An attempt is made here to delineate the same for ensuring clarity and understanding.

- Improving the need to access post-school and higher education for girls so that they can be prepared for high paying jobs and better skills
- Improved quality of school education curriculum, both in content and pedagogy, for preparing youth for the job market through training of relevant, appropriate skills
- Technology needs to be integrated in the school curriculum. It can play a critical role in designing the digital future. Women in particular are to be provided with these skills to enable them to break boundaries and move up in their chosen careers
- Women-centric initiatives - delivery models to be changed with access to be improved
- Creation of job opportunities so that there is a synergy between improving access, skill development and finding supply and demand avenues to facilitate and ensure proper job opportunities
- Improve the lack of data and figures which are very much required for creating skill training and creating job pathways which have to be progressively added
- Ensure that the gaps between the wages and emoluments received by women and men are bridged across the board at various levels in varied occupations and measures of legal enforcement are put in place
- Ensure inclusion and reduce exclusion based on gender and social background and ethnic orientation
- Ensure adequate matching between talent, choice of freedom and freedom of choice for selecting professional/occupational options
- Dealing with and addressing socio-economic barriers which inhibit women from participating in several competitive jobs and aspiring for better jobs
- Strengthen information and advocacy efforts to facilitate access and utilisation of governmental schemes and projects, and other initiatives undertaken by the private sector
- Create an enabling environment by providing hostel facilities, transportation, scholarships, targeted particularly for the poor sections of society
- Women need organisational support at different phases of their lives, including flexible work hours and conditions during pregnancy and for child care
- With more and more men working along with women, family organisation policies ought to be gender neutral to enable men to share the burden of family management
- Full employment can only become a reality if provisions are made for women to feel safe, secure and protected at their place of work, and

- Networking and partnership among stakeholders to see that all above aspects are addressed adequately

All these suggestions have policy implications and a need of creating opportunities in the labour market to harness the skills of women. The stakeholders hopefully will take note of these and if translated into action we may be able to realize our dream of gender equality in education and work in the time to come.

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Annexure I: Conference Sessions

TRANSITION OF WOMEN FROM EDUCATION TO FULL EMPLOYMENT

PROGRAMME SCHEDULE
23 MAY 2015

0900 to 1000 Hrs.	**Registration**
1000 to 1130 Hrs	**Inaugural Session**
Welcome Address	**Ms. Asha Chandra** President, AIWEFA
Special Address	**Dr. Alisher Umarov** Chief of Education & Programme Specialist UNESCO New Delhi Office
Inaugural Address	**Ms. Sunita Sanghi** Adviser, NITI Aayog
Special Address	**Mr. Sunil K Chaturvedi** CEO, Automotive Skill Development Council (ASDC)
Special Address	**Ms. Panudda Boonpala** Deputy Director & Officer-in-Charge International Labour Organisation
Special Address	**Ms. Frederika Meijer** Representative United Nations Population Fund, India and Country Director, UNFPA, Bhutan
Address by the Guest of Honour A Video Presentation	**Dr. Bindeshwar Pathak** Founder Chairman, Sulabh International
Keynote Address Via Skype	**Mr. Dilip Chenoy** MD & CEO, National Skill Development Council (NSDC)
Vote of Thanks	**Ms. Sarla Manchanda** Secretary, AIWEFA
1130 to 1200 Hrs.	**TEA**

SESSION I

1200 to 1330 Hrs	EDUCATION AND WOMEN'S CAREER DEVELOPMENT	
1200 to 1210 Hrs	**Session Chair** ***Dr. Alisher Umarov*** Programme Specialist Chief of Education UNESCO New Delhi Office	**Session Co Chair** ***Prof. Parvin Sinclair*** Professor of Mathematics School of Sciences Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)
1210 to 1220 Hrs.	***Dr. Vineeta Sirohi*** Professor National University of Educational Planning & Administration (NUEPA)	*"School-to-work" transition for women*
1220 to 1230 Hrs.	***Ms. Richa Srivastava*** Head of Fashion Design International Polytechnic for Women	*Educational opportunities for women through ITI, Polytechnics*
1230 to 1240 Hrs.	***Dr. Kuldeep Agarwal*** Director, Academic & Vocational Education (Additional Charge) National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS)	*Educational opportunities for women through distance education*
1240 to 1250 Hrs.	***Prof. Tanu Jindal*** Director, Advisor, Mentor Amity Institute of Environmental Sciences	Private sector initiatives in women's education
1250 to 1310 Hrs.	**Discussion and Wrap Up**	
1310 to 1330 Hrs.	***Sumitra, Dayawati, Sheena***	*Testimonies by women achievers*
1330 to 1400 Hrs.	**LUNCH**	

SESSION II

1400 to 1515 Hrs	CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR "MAKE IN INDIA": A WOMAN'S PERSPECTIVE	
1400 to 1410 Hrs.	**Session Chair** *Ambassador H.E. Ashok Sajjanhar IFS* Secretary, National Foundation for Communal Harmony	**Session Co Chair** *Ms. Rashmi Singh IAS* UT Civil Services Former Executive Director National Mission for Empowerment of Women
1410 to 1420 Hrs.	*Ms. Jyotsna Sitling IFS* Joint Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship	*Equitable and just public policies for women's participation in "Make in India"*
1420 to 1430 Hrs.	*Ms. Rumjhum Chatterjee* Deputy Chairperson, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Chairperson, Feedback Foundation.	*Role of corporate India in women's skill development*
1430 to 1440 Hrs.	*Mr. S.K. Thakkar* Field General Manager Syndicate Bank	*Women's financial empowerment*
1440 to 1450 Hrs.	*Ms. Rashmi Paliwal* CEO, Saburi Garments & Trustee, Art of Living	*Entrepreneurship opportunities for women*
1450 to 1515 Hrs.	**Discussion and Wrap Up**	

SESSION III

1515 to 1620 Hrs	ACHIEVING WOMEN'S FULL EMPLOYMENT	
1515 to 1525 Hrs.	**Session Chair** ***Ms. Frederika Meijer*** Representative United Nations Population Fund, India and Country Director, UNFPA, Bhutan	**Session Co Chair** ***Dr. Huma Masood*** Programme Officer (Gender & Education) UNESCO New Delhi Office
1525 to 1535 Hrs.	***Dr. Jitender Nagpal*** Senior Consultant Moolchand Hospital	*Integrated approach for attaining a woman's full working potential*
1535 to 1545 Hrs.	***Ms. Jyotika Kalra*** Advocate AIWC	*Legislation for creating safe working spaces for women*
1545 to 1555 Hrs.	***Ms. Urvashi Butalia*** Founder Zubaan Books	*Women's portrayal in society and media*
1555 to 1605 Hrs.	***Dr. Mridula Seth*** Former Technical Advisor (Adolescents and Youth), UNFPA	*Creating support systems for women*
1605 to 1620 Hrs.	**Discussion and Wrap Up**	

SESSION IV

1620 1700 Hrs	CONCLUDING SESSION	
1620 to 1630 Hrs.	**Session Chair** ***Dr. Sarala Gopalan IAS*** Patron AIWEFA Former Secretary, WCD, GOI.	**Session Co Chair** ***Ms. Reva Nayyar IAS*** Chairperson Bal Sahyog Former Secretary, WCD, GOI
1630 to 1640 Hrs.	***Professor Adarsh Sharma*** Vice President, AIWEFA	*Reporting conference highlights and way forward*
1640 to 1655 Hrs	***Dr. Sarala Gopalan IAS*** ***Ms. Reva Nayyar***	*Closing remark*
1655 to 1700 Hrs.	***Dr. Huma Masood*** Programme Officer (Gender & Education) UNESCO New Delhi Office	*Vote of thanks*
1700 to 1730 Hrs.	TEA	