English for Employability: India

Conference or Workshop Item

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Employability Skills and English

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Overview

India
- in the news: graduates employability
- MDG: education and gender
- Employable workforce - policies
- Demographic dividend

The World
- Globalisation – economy
- English language

India & The World
Employability skills test – core skills
Impact on Education
Pedagogy
"47 per cent graduates in India are not employable for any industry role. Their lack of English language knowledge and cognitive skills were identified as the major obstacles to their suitability in the job market."
India: Achieving Universal Education (2014:37)

ENROLMENT

Grades I-V  100%
2000: 83%  2010-2011: 99.89%

Grades VI-X
2000: 83%  2010-2011: 95.92%

REMAINING

Grades I-V
2009-10: 78.08%  2011-2012: 86.05%
## Youth Literacy

**UNDP (NSSO 2007-8)**

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<thead>
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<th>ALL youth</th>
<th>Female</th>
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<th>Rural</th>
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Fig. 5.2: States with Female youth literacy rate less than National level (NSS 2007-08)

Fig 5.3: States with 90% & above female youth literacy (NSS 2007-08)
## Youth Literacy

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Female participation in employment (non-agricultural sectors)

Rural: 19.9%  Urban: 18.7%  R+U: 19.3

“It is projected that at this rate of progress, the share of women in wage employment can at best reach a level of about 22.28% by 2015. Labour markets in industry and services sectors in India are heavily male dominated and a 50:50 situation for men and women is too ideal to be true given the market dynamics and existing socio-cultural framework.”
In 2005…

“…to meet the demand for specific skills of a high order, a Public Private Partnership between Government and Industry proposed to promote skills development programme under the name *Skill Development Initiative*…”

[ftp://ncw.nic.in/frmSkillDevelopment.aspx](ftp://ncw.nic.in/frmSkillDevelopment.aspx)
In 2007…

“Government of India, Ministry of Labour & Employment launched a Modular Employable Skills (MES) under Skill Development Initiative (SDI) Scheme through Directorate General of Employment & Training” (DGE&T, MoL: 2014)…”

http://dget.nic.in/content/innerpage/introduction-sdis.php
In 2008...

The National Skill Development Coordination Board (NSDCB), coordinated by the Planning Commission was established by the Prime Minister with a target of skilling 700 million people by 2022 (Weelbox et al, 2014).
In India, employment growth is almost exclusively concentrated in the informal economy, where more than 90 per cent of India's workers are employed at low levels of productivity and income. Half of the country's population over the age of 25 has had no education and an additional third have at best primary schooling. Four out of five new entrants to the workforce have never had any opportunity for skills training. While enrolment in technical education institutions has increased (from 2.1 million in 2000 to some 3.8 million in 2005), there is a very high drop-out rate in these institutions. There is a huge shortage of teaching faculty in engineering colleges. At the same time, significant skills shortages are reported throughout the formal economy. In the information technology sector alone, the current deficit in engineers is estimated to be around half a million.

In order to address these challenges, India adopted an ambitious National Skills Development Policy in 2009. Its main aim, in the words of the Union Minister for Labour and Employment, is to empower all individuals through improved skills, knowledge and internationally recognized qualifications to give them access to decent employment and to promote inclusive national growth. It is envisaged, among other things, to increase vocational training capacity to 15 million students over the 11th Five Year Plan period (2007-12).

* Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ China) 2009.
Home Minister Rajnath Singh, on Friday said that it is important to focus on skill development.

Not even one Indian university featured in the list of top 275 universities in the world, according to the Times Higher Education Survey.

A survey conducted by Wheebox Employability Test, the minister said "only 34 percent of our graduates are employable".
We have a remarkable 60% of total population available for working and contributing towards GDP, but out of the total pool only 25% is capable of being used by the market. If the research findings are to be believed there would be a demand-supply gap of 82-86% in the core professions; IT industry would face the shortage of up to 3.5 million skilled workers…
The demographic dividend

Population of 1.3 billion, of which about 0.8 billion in the working age, India in 2020 is surely something the world can look forward to. According to economic predictions that time would be the golden growth era in the demographic dividend. We would not only have enough manpower to meet our need but we can help the rest of the world as well (Wheebox 2013:13)

HOWEVER…

If we continue in the current pace we would have a skill gap of 75-80% across industry sectors…people with skills corporates do not require, jobs for which right fit is not available
World demographic changes

The world population is ageing: marked by declining fertility and rising life expectancy
- over 60 years will increase
- Working age (25-59 y.o.) will decline (developed regions) will grow slowly (less developed regions)

CONSEQUENCES: education, skills and training

1. Economic growth will depend more on productivity of workforce: Life long learning for active persons (ageing, women)

2. Growing size of youth cohort will challenge education and training, job creation rates

3. Flow of migrant workers will grow: fair access to training, fill skill gaps (G20: 2010-8)
Globalisation

The division between rich and poor countries is blurring as technology becomes a global commodity that developing and emerging economies import and adapt to catch up with advanced economies.
The Cold War 1945-1990
USA vs Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
English
The discourse of ‘English as a language for international development’: Policy assumptions and practical challenges
Philip Seargeant & Elizabeth J. Erling (2011:5)

Within the broader discourse of English as a global language, several … associations have been made,…that characterise English as the language of international commerce, of science, of technological advancement, and of human rights... Our contention is that a similar formulation, that of ‘English as a language for international development’, is emerging in the thinking and practices of academic, educational and political institutions.
Aspiring Minds (2013)
Annual report (60 000 students)

• 47% graduates not employable in any sector of the knowledge economy

• Less females are pursuing 3-year graduate degrees and show similar or higher employability to males

• English and computer skills dampening smaller town employability prospects significantly

• Education system promoting rote learning in place of actual application of concepts

• Over 40% employable graduates beyond the top 30% have no way to signal their employability to potential recruiters
Skills for life: core skills

Literacy
Communication skills
Team work
Problem solving skills
Learning abilities
Cognitive Ability Skills (CAS) (CAS Tests measure verbal, numerical and abstract reasoning and the …score reflects the person's ability to acquire, retain, organize and apply information. People, who score well…are more likely to develop a greater knowledge of the job quickly, Make effective decisions, Successfully reason and solve problems and respond appropriately to new or complex situations.
Basic IT Literacy

Most people need some IT skills to find work today. Acquiring basic IT skills and being familiar with using a computer may open up a wide range of employment opportunities and increase a test taker’s marketability in the workplace. It is likely that a modern job will require one to be familiar with at least some computer applications.
English Language Skills are probably the most important ingredient to a successful career. Language is now considered a skill that most companies in India and abroad look for. The importance of the English language in the workplace continues to be a top concern among employers.
The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD 2010:13)

The gulf between the world of learning and the world of work can be wide. The former is often classroom-based and academic, while the latter is dominated by the practical demands of production processes, deadlines and workplace organization…

…there is a persistent gap between the kind of knowledge and skills that are most in demand in the workplace and those that education and training systems continue to provide.
Aspiring Minds (2014)

…the report strongly points towards the need for renewed focus on vocational training, specific targeted intervention in areas of computer and English skills…less than 25% students are able to apply concepts to problems… our higher education system needs to lay greater stress on application of concepts and discourage rote learning. Employers should also start questioning their traditional ways of selecting and sourcing graduates and find new ways to reach employable youth.
“A public education system that often under-delivers” (UNESCO 2012:5)

Many contend that …schools' approach to educating young people is:
- excessively theoretical and…
- does not equip them either with sufficiently transferable skills that are valued by employers - notably computer skills and English- or with sufficiently extensive and focused work experience.
Aspiring Minds (2014)

47% graduates not employable in any sector of the knowledge economy

…nearly 47%, were found not employable in any sector given their English language and cognitive skills.

English and Computer Skills dampening smaller town employability prospects significantly

For students in smaller towns and cities the maximum gap is observed in English and Computer skills….these skills are rated as enablers and useful skills in knowledge sector jobs, they demand early intervention.

Education system promoting rote learning in place of actual application of concepts

Not more than 25% of the graduating students could apply concepts to solve a real-world problem in the domain of Finance and Accounting. On the other hand, on average, 50% graduates are able to answer definition-based/theoretical questions based on the same concept. This shows that even though students have got exposure to the concepts, they really do not understand them or know how to apply them.
The world of learning and the world of work are separate. One imparts learning; the other produces goods and services. But neither can thrive without the other. The art of successful skills policies is to construct sound bridges that connect the two worlds to serve both.

A strong partnership between government, employers and workers is an essential feature of an effective and enduring bond between the world of learning and the world of work.
Universities should provide support for their students’ preparation for the work-force, with special attention to the relevance of their education programmes to the labour market’s needs and the quality of the graduates.

- “a deeper understanding and respect for global issues”,
- “more favourable attitudes toward other cultures”,
- “stronger intercultural communication skills”,
- “improved personal and professional self-image”,
- “better foreign language skills”,
- “self-confidence”,
- “ability to handle ambiguity”,
- “insight into their own value systems” and “overall maturity”.
OECD (2010:11)

Training and skills development...[cover] the full sequence of life stages.

- **Basic education** gives each individual a basis for the development of their potential, laying the foundation for employability.

- **Initial training** provides the core work skills, general knowledge, and industry-based and professional competencies that facilitate the transition from education into the world of work.

- **Lifelong learning** maintains individuals’ skills and competencies as work, technology and skill requirements change.
Seamless pathways of learning (from primary)

Core Skills development

High-level skills development

Portability of skills

Employability skills

Adapted from: International Labour Organisation: 2011 (A G20 Training strategy)
International Labour conference (2008): Holistic approach

Continuous seamless pathways to learning (from pre-school-employment: career guidance, labour market info., counselling for women and men, opportunities for learning, upgrading skills, lifelong learning

- Core skills development: literacy, numeracy, communication skills, teamwork, problem solving skills, learning abilities, knowledge of workers rights (market changes, adaptability)

- High level skills development: professional, technical, human resource skills

- Portability of skills: apply skills to new occupations and industries
Developing core skills from an early age…

Encourage diversity and use it
Nurture creativity
Set problems – applying skills
Questioning skills - Students’ voices
Multiple intelligences explored
The learning process (VS results)
Responsibilities for own learning, assessments and achievements
Reflective learning
Learning strategies discussed
Assessment for/of learning
Experiential Learning (Kolb)

1. EXPERIENCE
   - The activity; perform, do it

2. SHARE
   - The results, reactions, and observations publicly

3. PROCESS
   - By discussing, looking at the experience; analyze, reflect

4. GENERALIZE
   - To connect the experience to real-world examples

5. APPLY
   - What was learned to a similar or different situation; practice
Pedagogical implications

• Learning by doing alone and with others – (perceptions of errors – motivation)
• Peer and self evaluation
• Assessment for learning: St & T
• Performance-based criteria
• Goal setting
• Developing competencies – measuring
• Use content to learn skills – use skills to learn content
• Collaborative learning – (social construction)
• Integrating skills (across the curriculum, sectors)
Activity types

- Active listening
- Fluency-based activities
- Problem solving (different types of reasoning)
- Working in different groups and pairs
- Talking about and reflecting on learning (and learning strategies)
- Creative thinking
- Critical thinking (open questions)
- Role playing
- Register (writing, speaking, reading – vocabulary/syntax)
- Project-based / real world activities
- Presentation skills
- Using various types of technology
MAKING EDUCATION A PRIORITY IN THE POST 2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA (unesco.org)

“We cannot continue to tell young people that they are the future, if we don’t provide them with the tools and resources they need to be successful in that future.”

Jamira Burley, Executive Director, City of Philadelphia Youth Commission Youth Advocacy Group member, Global Education First Initiative
DEAR EGNSLIH TECAEHR,
AS LNOG AS THE FSRIT & LSAT LTETER R IN THE SMAE PALCE, U CAN SILTL RAED TIHS.
SINCEREMLY,
SLPELNIG IS NOT TAHT IPMRONTAT


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