

Skill Development and Employability in Kashmir Division of Jammu and Kashmir State

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Abstract

Skills and knowledge are key drivers of macro economic growth and socioeconomic stability. Skills are central to improve employability and livelihood opportunities, reduce poverty, enhance productivity, and promote environmentally sustainable development. Appropriate policies for the skill development occupy a dominant place in the development of economy. With the demographic dividend, India needs to impart adequate skills to its workforce. Skill development has emerged as national priority for which a number of measures have been taken. In this context, present paper studies and investigates the present status of skill development in Jammu and Kashmir. Coordinated efforts are needed to develop an integrated approach that improves access to relevant, good quality education and training to all rural women and men.

Introduction

Skill development is an ability and capacity acquired through deliberate, systematic and sustained effort to smoothly and adaptively carry out complex activities or job functions involving ideas (cognitive skills), things (technical skills) and/or people (interpersonal skills). It helps an individual to develop his own skills required for his career development adding value to the organization where he works. Learning and developing one's skills requires their identification by assessing the skills that are important for career development and then successfully seeking out training opportunities. Development of skills takes place with the help of education and training with developmental experiences. It has both intrinsic and instrumental value. This is a lifelong process and hence skill up gradation is a fundamental component of the skilling cycle. In today's world of globalization, there is a demand for skilled human resource as it has become an integral component of increasing efficiency and productivity for sound economic development of a nation as a whole. It becomes imperative to equip Indian working population with employability skills. It helps in equipping educated youth with those skills which are essential requirement in the world of work. This helps to focus on those skills that lead to a

comprehensive specialization increasing efficiency of an individual. Further it equips an individual with greater self-confidence, self-esteem and dignity resulting from the knowledge they acquire and helping an individual to realize their aspirations by pursuing better jobs, leading to stable and sustainable livelihoods. India being world's youngest country in terms of demographic dividend has only 2 per cent of the workforce skilled as compared with 96 per cent in South Korea, 45 per cent in China, 50-55 per cent in USA and 74 per cent in Germany. The major focus of Indian education has remained mainly on higher education and hence least importance was given to Employability Quotient (EQ). The changing demographic profile of the country, with 54 per cent of its population under 25 years of age, the rising aspirations of our youth who seek better jobs and higher incomes, and the growing requirements of industry for an efficient, well trained workforce have contributed to a focus on skill development. High population if employed, trained and productive can easily capitalize the advantage of demographic dividend and lead to sustainable development but same high unemployed, untrained and unproductive population can even turn demographic dividend into demographic liability.

Skill development and vocational training programs are conceptualized, executed and monitored by various organizations, working closely with the government of India. There are various plans and schemes that are dedicated to achieve scalable skilling with quality and higher productivity. **Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojna (SGSY)** was launched in April, 1999 now replaced with **National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM)**¹. This is a holistic programme covering all aspects of self employment such as organization of the poor into self help groups, training, credit, technology, infrastructure and marketing. The objective of SGSY/NRLM is to provide sustainable income to the rural poor. The programme aims at establishing a large number of micro-enterprises in the rural areas, based upon the potential of the rural poor. It is envisaged that every family assisted under SGSY will be brought above the poverty line with in a period of three years. SGSY/NRLM lays emphasis on activity clusters. Four-five activities will be identified for each block with the approval of Panchayat Samities. The Gram Sabha will authenticate the list of families below the poverty line identified in BPL census. Identification of individual families suitable for each key activity will be made through a participatory process. Closer attention will be paid on skill development of the beneficiaries, known as swarozgaris, and their technology and marketing needs.

¹ National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) is a poverty alleviation project implemented by Ministry of Rural Development Government of India. This scheme is focused on promoting self-employment and organization of rural poor. The basic idea behind this programme is to organize the poor into SHG (Self Help Groups) groups and make them capable for self-employment. In 1999 after restructuring Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) launched Swarnajayanti Grameen Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) to focus on promoting self-employment among rural poor. SGSY is now remodeled to form NRLM thereby plugging the shortfalls of SGSY programme. This scheme was launched in 2011 with a budget of \$5.1 billion and is one of the flagship programmes of Ministry of Rural Development. This is one of the world's largest initiatives to improve the livelihood of poor. This programme is supported by World Bank with a credit of \$1 Billion. The scheme was succeeded by Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana on 25 September 2015.

Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojna is a restructured, streamlined and comprehensive version of the erstwhile Jawahar Rozagar Yojana designed to improve the quality of life of the poor, launched on 1st April, 1999. The primary objective of the JGSY is the creation of demand driven community village infrastructure including durable assets at the village level and assets to enable the rural poor to increase the opportunities for sustained employment. The secondary objective is the generation of supplementary employment for the unemployed poor in the rural areas. The wage employment under the programme shall be given to Below Poverty Line (BPL) families. The programme is to be implemented by the Village Panchayats with the approval of Gram sabha.

DRDA Administration

District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) has traditionally been the principal organ at the District level to oversee the implementation of the anti-poverty programmes of the Ministry of Rural Development. Created originally for implementation of Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), the DRDAs were subsequently entrusted with a number of programmes, both of the Central and State Governments. Since inception, the administrative costs of the DRDA (District Rural Development Agency) were met by setting aside a part of the allocations for each programme. Of late, the number of programmes had increased and several programmes have been restructured with a view to making them more effective. While an indicative staffing structure was provided to the DRDAs, experience showed that there was no uniformity in the staffing structure. It is in this context that a new centrally sponsored scheme - **DRDA Administration** - has been introduced from 1st April, 1999 based on the recommendations of an inter-ministerial committee known as Shankar Committee. The new scheme replaces the earlier practice of allocating percentage of programme funds to the administrative costs. The objective of the scheme of DRDA (District Rural Development Agency) Administration is to strengthen the DRDAs and to make them more professional and effective. Under the scheme, DRDA is visualized as specialized agency capable of managing anti-poverty programmes of the Ministry on the one hand and effectively relate these to the overall efforts of poverty eradication in the district on the other.

The DRDA will continue to watch over and ensure effective utilization of the funds intended for anti-poverty programmes. It will need to develop distinctive capabilities for poverty eradication. It will perform tasks which are different from Panchayati Raj Institutions and line departments. The DRDAs would deal only with the anti-poverty programmes of the Ministry of Rural Development. If DRDAs are to be entrusted with programmes of other Ministries or those of the State Governments, it must be ensured that these have a definite anti-poverty focus.

Scope of the Study

The state of Jammu and Kashmir is having huge problems of unemployment and unrest due to which the government at central and state levels have launched many programmes and schemes so as to involve the youth in these schemes and programs to generate employment. The present study gives emphasis to the schemes introduced in the state of Jammu and Kashmir so that our youth can aspire to being job seekers and job creators.

Objectives

The study has been conducted mainly:

1. To analyze the present status of Skill Development Programs in the state of Jammu and Kashmir.
2. To identify BPL families and coverage under income generating schemes of rural development.
3. To make suggestions based on the results.

Methodology

The study is focused on secondary sources of data. The secondary data was also collected from various published and unpublished sources from various journals, magazines, articles and media reports and from various departments including the department of census, department of economics and statistics, district commissioner's office. Keeping in view of the set objectives, this research design was adopted to have greater accuracy and in depth analysis of the research study. Available secondary data was extensively used for the study.

Data Analysis

India has gradually evolved as a knowledge-based economy due to the abundance of capable, flexible and qualified human capital. However, there is a need to further develop and empower the human capital to ensure the country's global competitiveness. Despite the emphatic stress laid on education and training in this country, there is still a shortage of skilled manpower to address the mounting needs and demands of the economy. Large sections of the educated workforce have little or no job skills, making them largely unemployable. Therefore, India must focus on scaling up skill training efforts to meet the demands of employers and drive economic growth. Even today, Skilling is perceived as the last resort meant for those who have not been able to progress in the formal academic system. This mental block has only increased the gap between what the industry requires and what is currently available. Rural development in India is one of the most important factors for the growth of the Indian economy. India is primarily an agriculture-based country that contributes major portion in domestic product. Rural development

department aims at developing the rural economy in terms of infrastructure, creation of durable assets and generation of employment opportunities including creation of wage and self employment. The basic objectives of rural development programmes have been alleviation of poverty and unemployment through creation of basic social and economic infrastructure, and providing employment to rural un-employed masses to discourage seasonal and permanent migration to urban areas. District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) is the principal organ at the district level to manage and oversee the implementation of different anti-poverty programmes of the Ministry of Rural Development. It was a supporting and facilitating organization which plays a very effective role as a catalyst in development process. It helps in implementation of DRDA Administration Scheme through which the central share of fund is directly released to DRDA. The objective of the scheme is to strengthen and professionalize the DRDAs so that they can effectively enhance the quality of implementation. DRDA Administration Scheme was introduced from 1st April, 1999 under which the salary and administrative expenses of DRDAs were funded on 75:25 basis between central and state governments. However, from 2008-09 the funding pattern for N.E. States has been changed from 75:25 to 90:10. In the case of UTs, the centre provides entire 100 per cent funds under the scheme.

Table No 1
Panchayat and Villages as per new jurisdiction

Block	No. of Panchayat as on ¼ 2011	No. of Villages Census 2011	Population of Villages as per 2011 Census
Srinagar	10	11	17313 (Rural only)
Total	10	11	17313 (Rural only)

Source: BDO Srinagar

The directorate of rural development Kashmir comprises of 10 districts in Kashmir Valley and 2 districts in Ladakh region. There are 170 CD Blocks (77 erstwhile and 93 newly created blocks). As per census 2011, number of panchayats in block Srinagar are 10 with 11 numbers of villages comprising of 17313 of the rural population.

Table No 2
Block-wise identification of BPL families and coverage under Income Generating Schemes of Rural Development

Year	Block	Surveyed	No. of families identified below poverty line	No. covered for upliftment during the year under programme		
				Individuals	SHG	Total
2008-09	Srinagar	3142	1583 (P)	86	27	113
	Total	3142	1583 (P)	86	27	113
2009-10	Srinagar	3142	1569	52	11	63
	Total	3142	1569	52	11	63

2010-11	Srinagar	3142	1569	68	7	75
	Total	3142	1569	68	7	75
2011-12	Srinagar	3142	1569	44	50	94
	Total	3142	1569	44	50	94
2012-13	Srinagar	3142	1569	1569	1569	1569
	Total	3142	1569	1569	1569	1569
2013-14	Srinagar	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	-	-	-	-	-
2014-15	Srinagar	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	-	-	-	-	-

Note: The SGSY Scheme has been closed W.e.f. 01.04.2013 vide Administrative Department No:-RD/PC. 76/76/2010-11 Dated 02.09.2013.

Source: DRDA

The poverty rate in the state of Jammu and Kashmir rose from 9.4 per cent in 2009-10 to 10.35 per cent in 2011-12 mainly due to an increase in the number living below the poverty line (BPL) in rural areas from 8.1 per cent to 11.5 per cent. As per the Economic Survey of 2010 about one fifth of the population in Jammu and Kashmir was falling Below Poverty Line (BPL) category, with about 98 per cent among them living in the rural areas. The sample that was worked upon in this study was scheduled on block Srinagar in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. It was estimated that there were in total 3142 number of families surveyed in Srinagar block from the year 2008-09 to 2012-13 out of which 1583 families were living below poverty line during the year 2008-09. 1569 families were living below poverty line from the year 2009-10 to 2012-13. The number of families covered for upliftment under programme was 113 in the year 2008-09, 63 in the year 2009-10, 75 in the year 2010-11, 94 in the year 2011-12 and 1569 in the year 2012-13.

According to Economic Survey for the year 2012-13, the total BPL estimated population ratio of Jammu and Kashmir has arrived at 21.63 per cent of which 26.14 per cent are from rural areas and 7.96 per cent are living in urban areas. Highest estimated BPL population in the state has been recorded in district Baramulla, with the indicator standing at 2.37 lakh persons. District Kupwara stands at rank second with estimated BPL population 2.34 lakh persons while as District Budgam is at rank third with estimated BPL population 1.78 lakh persons. Lowest estimated BPL population has been recorded in district Leh with the indicator standing at 0.29 lakh persons followed by district Shopian with 0.38 lakh BPL population. At rural level, highest BPL population percentage has been observed in District Reasi (40.15 per cent) followed by District Kishtwar with (40.10 per cent) while as Srinagar District (8.16 per cent) recorded lowest BPL population percentage followed by District Kathua (12.66 per cent).

Conclusion

Skill and entrepreneurship development have been highly fragmented efforts across the country. Among different age groups, the young population of India keeps alive the hope of boosting growth and development. There is unemployment among the educated youth particularly among technically qualified persons as there is shortage of persons possessing critical skills essential for economic growth in Jammu Kashmir. Jammu and Kashmir has the highest rate of unemployment in India, as per the survey reports conducted by various government and non-government agencies. According to the survey, there are various reasons of unemployment in Jammu and Kashmir such as lack of skill development training programme, low corporate sector jobs and low industrial input and output, lack of awareness of different jobs etc. The unemployment has given birth to many social problems like poverty. Poverty is a wide issue before the whole world including India. Various measures and schemes have been adopted from time to time to alleviate the poverty. In the recent years in India, skill development programmes have been initiated to check the unemployment and to reduce the poverty by various skill development schemes and programmes. This has intended to integrate various skill development efforts in the state and train underprivileged, unemployed, unskilled and semi- skilled youth of the state and connect them with the job market. This is to create an all-encompassing integrated structure for streamlining various skill development programmes and play a pivotal role in monitoring, coordination, facilitating and providing overall policy direction for skill development activities in Jammu and Kashmir. In this paper it is observed that a number of families have been covered under skill development programmes and during 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12 individuals and SHGs have been provided skill development programmes and the impact is positive. It is concluded that the scheme is successful in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. There is a need for quick reorganization of the skill development ecosystem and the promotion of which is necessary to suit to the needs of the industry to ensure enhancement of life of the population. Jammu and Kashmir would surely rise to be the human resource capital by appropriately skilling its youth. It is to suggest here that government has to create opportunities, space and scope for the development of the talents of the youth and to develop more of those sectors which have already been put under skill development for the last so many years and also to identify new sectors for skill development.

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