

# National Skill Qualification Framework and its implementation: Problems of Students

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## ABSTRACT

With the roll-out of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, vocational education has garnered the required spotlight. The NEP 2020 is a comprehensive policy document that extensively discusses the revamping of vocational education. The policy focuses on bringing vocational education into mainstream education, as recommended by successive commissions on education over the years. Vocational study is concerned with meeting student needs; it can be structured only as a service to help the student in the identification of his abilities, aptitude, interests and attitudes. It involves assisting him to understand, accept, utilize his traits and provides him with an opportunity for learning about areas of occupational and educational endeavors and to help in obtaining experiences which will enable him to make free and wise choices. It helps him in developing his potentials to the optimum so that he may become the individual he is capable of becoming and lastly to help him in becoming self-directive. The choosing of a wrong vocation leads to unhappiness, discontent and ultimate failure. The occupation that a person follows is not a means of earning a livelihood, but also a way of life. Through an occupation the individual tries to realize his needs for self enhancement and self-realization.

**Keywords:** Qualification, Senior, Secondary, Skill, Vocational Education

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is the key for nation-building by providing right knowledge and skills to children. Education is the only means for the overall economic growth and national progress. The Indian education system plays a significant role in instilling the values of secularism, democratic traditions, civil liberties and justice.

With the rapid explosion of science and technology in every sphere, students and teachers' role have changed a lot to cope with the very changing world. Yesterday's educational system will not meet today's and even less so, the need of tomorrow. They must have to seek for the vocational education in order to satisfy their preparation for better livelihood having some occupation which will increase socioeconomic condition.

### Vocational Education

Vocational education refers to skilled learning and work experience. It has several differing concepts which mostly arise from the tradition. One concept is that it is a craft-oriented education or training where the learners learn with manual activities rather than intellectual activities. Those who are unable to profit from the traditional academic learning generally opt for this sort of industrial training. There is the concept that vocational education is education for productive purposes or socially useful productive work.

### The National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF)

NSQF is a nationally integrated education and competency based skill framework that will provide for multiple pathways both within vocational education and between general and vocational education to link one level of learning to another higher level and enable learners to progress to higher levels from any starting point in education and skill system. It is a framework to enhance employability skills of our students by introducing applied learning skills in integration with academic stream.

The trainings conducted in the scheme are based on the Nation Occupational Standards set by NSDC through its Sector Skill Councils. The scheme also mandates the SSCs to conduct assessments and certification jointly with the State Board.

### India:

The National Council for Vocational Training, an advisory body, was set up by the Government of India in 1956. Vocational training in India historically has been a subject handled by the Ministry of Labor, other central ministries and various state-level organizations. To harmonize the variations and multiplicity in terms of standards and costs, the National Skills Qualification Framework in India was notified on 27 December 2013.

National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 Vocational education will be integrated in the educational offerings of all secondary schools in a phased manner over the next decade. Towards this, secondary schools will collaborate with ITIs, polytechnics, local industry etc. Higher education institutions will offer vocational education either on their own or in partnership with industry. The policy has targeted that by 2025 at least 50% of learners through the school and higher education system shall have exposure to vocational education. This is in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goal 4.4, and will help to realize the full potential of India's demographic dividend.

General Education Council (GEC) shall be set up to frame expected learning outcomes for higher education programs, also referred to as 'graduate attributes.' A National Higher Education Qualification Framework (NHEQF) will be formulated by the GEC and it shall be in sync with the National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF). Higher education qualifications leading to a degree/diploma/certificate shall be described by the NHEQF in terms of such learning outcomes. In addition, the GEC shall set up facilitative norms for issues, such as credit transfer, equivalence, etc., through the NHEQF.

### **NSQF Haryana**

Haryana is the only state in the country having successfully launched and implemented NVEQF pilot project allotted by MHRD during 2012-13. The state has taken another lead in establishing a State Level Centre of Excellence in the applied learning skills at Faridabad with a Govt. Model Sr. Sec. School in applied learning skills in its campus where all the seven skills have been introduced and each student enrolled in class 9th would take up IT/ITeS in addition to one other trade.

The State has also started implementation Star Scheme for skilling unemployed youth, enhancing the employability skills of out of school children, semi-skilled persons, empowering girls and women and also rope in the children studying in regular schools who opt for training posts school hours. The scheme is being implemented by NSDC.

### **Brief review of related literature**

To be acquainting with the current knowledge in the field of the research work and to understand the research methodology, related issues in respect of the topic undertaken for the study. To analyze it out in critically and creative manner, the following source used for analytical review of the existing literature.

Mujumdar, Swati Shantaram. (2012): An opinion oriented survey of students and faculty, through descriptive methods along with qualitative methods. This study is descriptive research as it attempts to describe systematically the situation changing objectives of VET system. This regulatory system is extremely important from the standpoint of creating a unified integrated system of Vocational Education, Training and skill Development.

Agarwal, Tushar. (2013): Since all the South Asian countries are expanding the VET system, it needs to be ensured that expansion in quantity does not result in decline in quality of the system.

Sharma, Janardan. (2016): In the present day context of quick industrialization and development of economy, it is felt that the general education system is not adequate to meet the growing demands of the diversifying economy. It is generally felt that the varied needs of the growing economy can be effectively met through diversified Vocational Courses at the Senior Secondary Stage.

Kumar, R., Mandava, S. & Gopanapalli, V.S. (2019): Found that having formal training increases the wage by 4.7% in the overall economy as compared to a person without any training. The effect is highest in the primary sector, where the individuals with vocational training had a wage increase of 36.9%. Workers with formal vocational training in the secondary sector had an increase in wages by 17.6%.

Ramasamy, M., & Pilz, M. (2020): The demands of the rural population varied, and their participation in the training course was highly influenced by access to a training centre, the duration of the training, economic returns and socio-cultural factors. The demand-driven approach works best in vocational training when it involves the relevant stakeholders and the target groups in the planning and designing process.

Ferm, L. (2021). Three different ways in which vocational students handled the academic/vocational divide: Placing senior value on practical knowledge than on theoretical knowledge, reinforcing the separation between school and work, and selecting theoretical subjects as useful tools for the future.

### **Rationale of the Study**

As one of the fastest-growing economies in the world, a critical challenge to achieving this goal is the large informal sector and the low level of skills development in the country. The 12th Five-Year Plan (2012–2017) estimated that only a very small percentage of the Indian workforce in the age group of 19–24 (less than 5%) received formal vocational education Whereas in countries such as the USA the number is 52%, in Germany 75%, and South Korea it is as high as 96%. This research also proposes certain policy interventions in the parallel educational system. In this

regard, there are many questions that arise in the mind of the investigator, the answers of which could be obtained only through research. These questions are:

The answers to these questions will reveal the status of vocational education in the schools, which will enable the authority to do something for the improvement.

The vocational courses at senior secondary stage are to be regarded as a preparation of an increasingly large number of school leavers for different vocations in life.

1) What problems are being faced by NSQF students?

### **Statement of the Problem**

To address the questions raised in the preceding section and also to fill the research gaps, the proposed research problem was formulated as below:

*NSQF Vocational scheme at Senior Secondary Stage of schools: Students Problems.*

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To find out the problems faced by students of Senior Secondary Schools in Kurukshetra.
2. To suggest measures for improvement of NSQF vocational education at Senior Secondary stage of education in Kurukshetra.

## **METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

The methodology adopted by the investigator in the present study is discussed and presented under the following heads:

1. Method of the Study
2. Population and Sample
3. Construction of Tools
4. Collection of Data
5. Statistical Treatment of Data

### **Method of Study**

A descriptive survey approach was used to collect data for the present study.

### **Population and Sample**

Population of the present study has been discussed under the following heads:

1. Population and sample of vocational students

#### **Population and sample of senior secondary schools**

There were 6 Senior Secondary Schools in Kurukshetra where 5 vocational courses were offered. All these schools constituted population of the present study. As the number of senior secondary schools offering vocational courses was large, sampling was random. Thus 6 Senior Secondary Schools offering vocational subjects were covered in this study.

#### **Population and sample of vocational students**

Sample selection was done random as the number of students enrolled in vocational courses at senior secondary level was large. All the 6 senior secondary schools offering vocational courses in the State were visited and 4 random students of each IX to XII were selected of each vocational subjects present on the day of data collection formed the sample. As such, the sample of the present study came to be 192 students.

### **Constructions of Tools:**

To develop tools, the researcher first consulted different kinds of documents related to the study, interviewed experts having knowledge of vocational education, teachers and students of vocational education. The following are the tools developed by the investigator for collection of data relevant for the study:

1. Questionnaire for studying problems of the students.

### **Collection of Data**

The required data for the present study were collected from both secondary and primary sources. Secondary sources comprised of books, journals, annual reports of SCERT, office documents, internet, e-book, e-journals and files etc., whereas primary sources comprised of students.

### Statistical Treatment of Data

The data obtained after tabulation were analyzed quantitatively. For quantitative analysis descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage were used.

## MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

### Problems faced by Students:

#### 1. Problems regarding the vocational course they pursued

- 1) Concerned about job placement is the key problem among the vocational students which is cited by 40.62 percent students.
- 2) The next major problem is concern about college admission and further studies as cited by 31.25 percent students.
- 3) Anxious about thinking of changing subject into general stream as cited by 21.87 percent students.
- 4) Other problems cited by 5.20 percent that this course is not first choice of students and 1.4 percent not interested in the course.

#### 2. Problems faced related to facilities

- 1) Insufficient equipments is a problem for 55.72 percent of students, insufficient furniture for 19.79 percent of the students, irregular power supply for 14.06 percent and congested classroom for 10.41 percent of the students.
- 2) However, these problems appear to be not that serious except insufficient equipments as majority of the students do not mention other.

#### 3. Problems with regards to practical work

- 1) Lack of time for doing practical work conducted is stated as a problem by 47.39 percent irregular supply of electricity by 25.52 percent.
- 2) Lack of lab equipment for doing practical work by 16.66 percent and too congested practical room/laboratories by 10.41 percent.
- 3) Lack of time for doing practical work is faced by large number of student. This data imply that these problems are not faced by majority of the students.

#### 4. Problems regarding textbook

- 1) Textbooks not available into the local market are the highest problem faced by 83.33 percent of students.
- 2) Textbook not available in time is the second highest problem faced by 16.66 percent of students.

#### 5. Problems with regard to contents of the textbooks

- 1) Unavailability of textbooks written in Hindi is the highest problem faced by 61.45 percent of students.
- 2) Contents of the textbooks are difficult to understand for 26.56 percent and 6.25 percent find that textbooks do not cover the whole syllabus.
- 3) For 5.72 percent of students, the contents do not help in developing their skills.

#### 6. Problems related to teachers

- 1) The problem students face related to teacher is unfriendly attitude of teachers towards students mentioned by 3.12 percent.
- 2) Irregularity of teacher in taking class is the problem stated by 0.52 percent of teachers.
- 3) Looking at the percentages of students stating the problems related to teachers, it can be inferred that there exists no problem related to teachers of vocational courses.

#### 7. Problems of students relating to on-the-job training

- 1) A major problem of students relating to on-the-job training is that the training centre was too far from school for 29.68 percent of the students.
- 2) For 7.29 percent of students, their problem was that the training centre was not well equipped.
- 3) Problem related to on-the-job training centre is not a big problem as majority of the students 63.02 percent are free from this.

#### 8. Problems of students relating to method of teaching

- 1) 54.16 percent of the students face problem as time allocated for practical class is not enough and 28.64 percent of students find it difficult to understand the way their teachers teach them.
- 2) For 8.85 percent of students, theory class is not helpful to understand the concept and practical class is not helpful enough to develop their skills for 13.54 percent.
- 3) Time allocated for theory class is not enough for 8.90 percent of students and for 0.52 percent of students, the methods of teaching adopted by the teachers are not helpful/ effective enough.

- 4) A few per cent of students have problem due to unavailability of textbook and as they have to spent the whole class taking notes.

#### **RECOMMENDATION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ON THE BASES OF PROBLEMS FACED BY STUDENTS**

1. As many students of vocational courses are worried about job placement, concerned authority at the state level should take care of this by having a tie-up with potential employers.
2. The State Government should appoint a Committee or entrust some government officials to take care of the needs of students of vocational courses such as college admission and further studies for those who want to continue their studies, and job placement and self-employment for those who want to earn a living.
3. Producing employable students should be the focus of the program. For this, internship and on the job training should be taken seriously and carried out in an effective manner.
4. Concerned authorities should take the necessary actions for solving the problems related to facilities such as insufficient equipment, insufficient furniture, congested classrooms and irregular power supply.
5. Attention should be given to the problems regarding conduct of practical works such as congested practical rooms, insufficient number of practical classes and lack of required space, and remedial measures should be taken for these.
6. More time needs to be allotted for practical classes to address the complaint of the students in this regard. At the same time, practical classes should be conducted in an efficient manner so as to develop the required skills.
7. The required number of teachers should be appointed to run the courses effectively.
8. To make the teachers more efficient, the equipment and facilities required by them should be made available to them.
9. There should be proper linkage of institutions offering vocational courses and on-the-job training centre.
10. While selecting the centers for on-the-job training, it should be ensured that the selected centers are equipped with the required facilities.
11. Teachers should be approachable for the students to solve their problems.

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