

# IMPORTANCE OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT AMONG RURAL YOUTH

P. Srivatsa

India, which has earned the distinction of being called as the nation of youth will see a further rise in its young population. By 2020, India, is expected to be called as the world's youngest population as 500 million Indian citizens will be under 25 years of age and more than two thirds of the population will be eligible to work. This means that a growing number of India's youth need the right educational infrastructure to develop skills and adequate opportunities to get employed or become entrepreneurs. However, the wide gap between those who have access to education and skill development opportunities and those who do not, is a challenge that has to overcome. Developmental economists have proposed several models for rapid progress of nations. One among them is to generate employment opportunities in countries where there are unlimited manpower available---ready to take jobs. Employment is a factor of the demand and supply of labour and increasingly the ability to make supply available where demand exists with or without any physical relocation.

## Current Situation of Rural Youth:

As per the annual report of 2015-16, (NSS) following is the current state of rural India.

- 72.2% of Indian population i.e. 857 million people lives in rural areas.
  - 12% of the world population lives in Indian villages, which makes it bigger than the size of Europe.
  - 80% of the rural household depends upon small and marginal farms.
  - Though the share of agriculture in India's GDP is continuously declining, it still engages around half the country's total work force.
  - However, 40% of rural households now rely on non-farm activities as their major source of income.
  - About 60% of the rural males and 61% of rural females belong to the economically active age group viz. 15-59 years.
- Persons aged 15-29 years, who were considered as the youth, accounted for 26% of rural population.
  - About 72% of rural males and 56% of rural females are illiterate. However, only about 21% of rural males and 12% of rural females are educated at secondary level and above, (including diploma/certificate course). The literacy rate has continuously increased significantly over the years for both rural males and females.

India faces a paradoxical situation where youth is looking for job on one hand and on the other industry is suffering from availability of skilled workers. The skill mismatch makes youth unemployable. Further, it can be noted that manufacturing employment in India has not increased to the extent desired. The level of human capital in terms of literacy, educational levels and specific skills raise the productivity and incomes of workers in the labour market. It is so astonishing that literacy and educational levels though have increased, 89% of the youth have not taken any kind of vocational training. Youth labour market also faces the problem of organized labour market, lower income, and unhygienic conditions of work and lack of social security. Even when the education and training are available, obstacles still exist such as social customs, caste barriers, and lack of access to capital, corruption, lack of support mechanisms, poverty, poor health, poor working conditions and population growth. Due to population growth, youth numbers are growing faster than the rate of job creation. Exploitation also threatens youth. Rural youth starts working from their childhood. They are often forced to work as bonded labour. All such harsh situations make rural youth unemployable and it was rampant for the last ten years. Most of the youth in rural areas, even though decently educated, they are not getting their desired and required jobs as per their educational qualifications. Their qualifications and the job they are doing mismatch which creates the lack of skilled and qualified employees in the

desired market field. Rural youth who preferred to work in fields also lack innovative ideas that is making agriculture bitter for them. There are many other problems which make rural youth unemployable. These include:

### **Excessive increase in population**

In India, the population is crossing all bounds. It is believed that within 20 years or so the population of this country may get doubled. At this rate of increase in population, no country can guarantee full employment to its hands. Programmes of family planning attempts to restrict the increase in population have so far not yielded the desired results. Hence, newer ways of handling this issue has to be meticulously planned to accommodate the increasing population in respective works. Meeting the demands of population and maintaining balance between supply and demand by creating innovative jobs for the youth (particularly rural youth) may prove to be prosperous for youth empowerment.

### **Limited land and great pressure on land:**

India has a limited area of agricultural land. Attempt is being made to break the barren land and bring greater area under the orbit of the agriculture. Apart from this there is greater pressure on the land. In rural areas most of the people depend on land for their livelihood. This creates the situation of unemployment for a large number of persons in the rural areas. Providing proper agricultural land to all those persons who do not have land to some extent can induct rural youth in agrarian employment.

### **Seasonal nature of agriculture:**

Agriculture in India is a seasonal affair. It keeps people engaged only for few months. After sometime the farmer has nothing to do. There is a season for sowing and harvesting. After that the farmers have no job. During this period they remain unemployed. This has adverse effect on the earning of the people and the standard of living. What is needed is that for this period, the agriculturalists should be provided with some job. This would help them to earn more and employ their free time materialistically. This free time for the rural youth can be utilised for productive

works such as giving training in self-designed and self-employable industry works, training in small scale and cottage industries and if the youths unemployed graduates, then training and push up for starting a small scale start-up company can be provided with due incentives from the governments.

### **Lack of education and ignorance about scientific and modern means of agriculture:**

Due to lack of education, they are not able to utilise their energy in proper manner. Apart from this they are not able to know about the scientific and modern methods of agriculture. This makes their task cumbersome and time consuming. This also has adverse effect on employment position which requires rethinking and reconsideration. Vocational training on farming methods and providing special lectures on scientific cultivation, mechanization of agriculture for less educated unemployed youth will give fruitful results.

### **Lack of knowledge for rural youth on job oriented courses:**

Many of the rural youth just go and join any course without proper guidance but only for the sake of degree. Such courses which don't bear compatibility to the innate talents of youth may remain as degree for name sake and they don't help them in getting a job. In such cases these rural youth resign back to their villages only to go for agriculture works or remains unemployed.

### **Job creation for a calendar year is not sufficient to cater the spurring youth:**

Although many students come out of the colleges with flying colours every year, they don't find that much of jobs to accommodate even 50-60% of the youth who completed their degrees. On the other side of the coin, for the last 5-6 academic years we are observing many students are not opting to join professional courses and number of vacant seats are increasing year by year which shows inability of such courses in providing a job for that particular student.

All the above factors are simply raising the same voice i.e. accessing decent jobs not only

requires improvement in quality of education, training and skill development but also it is to be done as per the need of the industry and labour market. Skill Development Programmes are essential and can work as a vehicle for change. However, a skill development programme to be successful in enhancing the employability of rural youth needs to take care of some additional factors. We should bear in mind that skill development is from the supply side. We need to be sensitive to the expectations of employers from demand side. Besides hard skill, they also award weightage to soft skills such as communication skills, upkeep of the employees, language proficiency, punctuality, hygiene and so on.

### **Probable solutions to the unemployment in Rural India:**

1. The very first solution for growing unemployment is to control the rising population of our country. Measures have been taken by the government to control population explosion, but still the desired results have not been achieved.
2. The quality of Indian education should be improved. Job oriented courses should be incorporated into the curriculum. Government should keep a strict watch on the education system and try to implement new ways to generate skilled labour force. The education should be as per the current requirements of the industries. Before completing the education a practical knowledge should be given.
3. Also today's youth should join the institute or select the course where proper training is imparted and the course is as per the current industries requirements.
4. Government should encourage and develop agriculture based industries in rural areas so that the rural candidates don't migrate to the urban areas. More employment should be generated in rural areas for the seasonal unemployment people.
5. Rapid Industrialization should be created.
6. Development of the rural areas will stop the migration of the rural people to the urban cities and this will not put more pressure on the urban city jobs.

### **National Skill Development Mission:**

The National Skill Development Mission has been developed to create convergence across sectors and states in terms of skill training activities. Further to achieve the vision of 'Skilled India', The National Skill Development Mission would not only consolidate and coordinate skilling efforts but expedite decision making across sectors to achieve skilling at scale with speed and standards. The mission directorate will be supported by three other institutions namely, National Skill Development Agency (NSDA), National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and Directorate General of Training (DGT). Seven sub-missions have been proposed to act as building blocks for achieving overall objectives of the mission:

- i. Institutional Training
- ii. Infrastructure
- iii. Convergence
- iv. Trainers
- v. Overseas Employment
- vi. Sustainable Livelihood and
- vii. Leveraging Public Infrastructure.

### **Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Rurban Mission:**

This scheme includes development of economic activities and skill development. The preferred mode of delivery would be through PPPs while using various scheme funds. Rurban Mission addresses one of the biggest challenges the country is facing that is the rural migration leading to the hyper urbanization and subsequent loss of rural habitat.

### **USTTAD:**

Upgrading Skills and Training in Traditional Arts/Crafts for Development (USTTAD), scheme aims at upgrading skills and training of minority communities by preservation of traditional ancestral arts and crafts. It also envisages boosting the skills of craftsmen, weavers and artisans who are already engaged in the work.

### **Conclusion:**

Youth is considered to be the future of any nation. More particularly in a developing

country like India, Youth plays a considerable and substantial role in the development of the nation. Significant emphasis has to be given to the youth and they should be viewed as an investment opportunity and be treated as partners in growth and development. However, most of the rural youth remain unemployed due to various reasons which mainly include lack of knowledge in job oriented courses, dearth of technical expertise and for some who are employed in agriculture may encounter difficulties due to seasonal issues and severe agrarian crisis. Among educated rural youth, the problem of unemployment can have serious repercussions in terms of social instability which, in turn, many affect governance and growth adversely. In order to tackle the challenges of participation and job quality of the rural youth, policy interventions should promote a better quality education, on-the-job training, skill formation on the one hand and productive job creation on the other. For those

who are in self-employment, credit assistance and marketing assistance can be of enormous help. Comprehensive policy framework for the rural youth should contain aspects like innovative delivery models, using skill development centres in rural areas to provide training information, guidance and delivery mechanism, improving access to apprenticeships, providing training information, guidance and delivery mechanism, improving access to apprenticeships, providing training in scientific and technical fields etc., will benefit the rural youth immensely. Hence, broad-based skill development is crucial and these initiatives should be supplemented by specific programmes and policies that provide all-inclusive packages for the empowerment of rural youth and ensure that the present day demographic dividend should prove to be India's real added advantage.

*(Author is a social anthropologist and writes on social issues)*

### Union Cabinet approves the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi recently approved a National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme. The scheme has an outlay of Rs. 10,000 crore with a target of 50 lakh apprentices to be trained by 2019-20. The Scheme would be implemented by Director General of Training (DGT) under Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE). It provides for incentivizing employers to engage apprentices. 25% of the total stipend payable to an apprentice would be shared with employers directly by Government of India. It is for the first time a scheme has been designed to offer financial incentives to employers to engage apprentices. In addition, it also supports basic training, which is an essential component of apprenticeship training. 50% of the total expenditure incurred on providing basic training would be supported by Government of India. The Scheme will catalyze the entire apprenticeship ecosystem in the country and it will offer a win-win situation for all stakeholders. It is expected to become one of the most powerful skill-delivery vehicle in the country.



Apprenticeship training is considered to be one of the most efficient ways to develop skilled manpower for the country. It provides for an industry led, practice oriented, effective and efficient mode of formal training. The National Policy of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, 2015 launched by the Prime Minister focuses on apprenticeship as one of the key components for creating skilled manpower in India. The present scheme also aims to achieve the objective as stated in the National Policy, 2015. The policy proposes to work pro-actively with the industry including MSME to facilitate tenfold increase opportunities in the country by 2020-20.