

Status of Vocational Education in Govt. High Schools of Guwahati, Assam—A study

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Abstract: NEP 2020 wants to extend the ideas of vocational education among the students by introducing skill enhancement programmes. For holistic development, it is necessary to introduce the knowledge of different skill-based practical training, which will create the students as job creators in the future. Their industry-based training during the courses would allow them to choose the right profession. The main focus of this paper is to study the present status as well as future prospects of vocational education in the light of NEP 2020 at the high schools in Kamrup (Metro), Assam, along with the enrolment status and challenges faced in implementing the course of the students. The population and samples of the study would be the students enrolled in 2023 (from various high schools in Kamrup, Metro). The findings of the study will help the higher authority to redesign the vocational education at the high school level so that our students can prepare themselves in various fields with the requisite knowledge and skills.

Key words: Vocational education, NSQF, Skill based training, RSMA

Introduction

Vocational education is a type of educational programme that is tailored to prepare individuals for employment in a particular trade, craft, or profession. Vocational education emphasises practical skills and hands-on training that are directly relevant to a specific occupation or industry. On the other hand, traditional education is inclined towards only theoretical knowledge and general skills. The main objective of vocational education is to provide individuals with the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies to enter the workforce and excel in their chosen career path. This type of education usually involves a combination of classroom instruction, practical training, and work-based learning experiences, such as internships or apprenticeships. This type of education generates new ideas and creates activities that will lead to the development of industry. It improves skills in different vocations, trades, and crafts, which enhances occupational chances. Vocational education develops good habits of work, cooperation, and honest workmanship, which creates a desire for perfection among the students. The greatest challenge for vocational education is to meet the needs of society.

The reports of Abbot Wood's Commission in 1937 and the reports of the Sergent Commission in 1994 also emphasised vocational education in schools. The Kothari Commission also stressed the need for vocational training in schools to orient pupils in manual labour and training in relation to their general education and introduced the term work experience and later socially useful productive work, which implies more significant educational as well as productive value for national reconstruction. Today's vocational education is the root of Mahatma Gandhiji's Basic Education, in which Gandhiji stressed craft-based education. Spinning, weaving, agriculture, woodworker fishing, carpentry, pottery, gardening, fruit preservation, music, drawing, painting, sports, and yoga were introduced in basic education because Gandhiji believed that education should be productive, aiming to make the children economically self-sufficient and self-independent. All these manual activities carry the slogan "work and live in the future. M.K. Gandhi also said that 'true education ought to be for boys and girls a kind of insurance against unemployment'. NEP2020 also stressed the vocationalization of school education so that students can prepare themselves for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. To meet the demands of the job market, NEP 2020 empowers students to meet the 21st century's skills through vocational education. Then, education must teach the students how to think critically, solve problems, be creative and multidisciplinary, and innovate, adapt, and absorb new material in a changing world. Only 0.13 lakh schools out of 14.89 lakh schools in India are providing VE under the National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF). Vocational education programmes at present in high schools and higher secondary schools in Assam encompass a wide range of subjects such as retail trade, IT/ITes, private security, health care, agriculture (dairy farmer), horticulture, floriculture, tourism and hospitality, beauty and wellness, electronics and hardware, electrical, automotive, animal health worker, music, dance, fine arts, woodcraft, and garment design, which carries the marks 0 (theory-paper 1 and 2 = 60+6+60 and practical- 40+40).

Needs of the Study

Vocational education seeks to equip students with the knowledge and skills they need to enter the profession immediately upon graduation; however, some programmes may also offer avenues for continued education and career growth in the subject of study. The history of vocational education in schools is a tale of how societal needs, economic shifts, and educational philosophies have evolved over time. In ancient times, this type of education was prevalent informally among craftsmen and artisans. Slowly, there was a growing demand formally in schools during the early 20th century. In the era of post-World War II, skilled workers were produced from different vocational schools and career and technical education in the fields of manufacturing, construction, and technology. It is seen that there is an integration between academic and technical education from the late 20th century to the present, which provides students with theoretical and practical skills to achieve a career in the future through this course. NEP 2020 also emphasises the apprenticeships and internships of students in industry to get

hands-on experience through vocational educational subjects in school level. Hence, it is necessary to study the present position of vocational education in schools.

Statement of the Problem

For the above reasons, the investigator has taken the topic as “Status of Vocational Education in Govt. High Schools of Guwahati, Assam—A study”

Objectives of the study

1. To identify the various vocational courses in the High schools of Kamrup District, Assam.
2. To investigate the enrollment status in various vocational courses of Secondary level.
3. To find out the enrollment status in various vocational courses in Secondary level in relation to gender.
4. To find out the prospects of emerging vocational courses in different schools.
5. To identify the challenges in introducing vocational education at mass level in High schools.

Methodology of the study

The investigator has taken the Descriptive survey method for the study to investigate the phenomenon. The study is a survey based to gather the information of the particular topic.

Population and sample of the study

The investigator has taken all the Govt., Provincialized and Private High schools under Kamrup District for the convenience of the study. The total number of schools is 254 numbers in different educational blocks of the district. The investigator has taken 144 number of high schools out of 254 numbers of high schools from the Kamrup district as a sample on the basis of purposive sampling technique for the study.

Analysis and Discussion of the objectives

Objective1: To identify the various vocational courses in the High schools of Kamrup District, Assam

The investigator identified various vocational courses running in various schools. It is found that 72 nos. of schools introduced Music, 8 nos. introduced Dance, 56 nos. schools have introduced Fine Arts, 15 nos. of schools introduced Retail and Marketing, 22 nos. of schools introduced Information Technology (IT), 11nos. schools introduced Tourism and Hospitality, 2nos. schools introduced Electronics and Hardware, 4nos. schools introduced Beauty and Wellness, 3 nos. schools introduced Garment Making, only one(1)school introduced Wood Craft, Weaving

and Textiles and Home science is also found in one (1) school respectively ,6 nos. schools introduced Health Care, and 3 nos. schools have Private Security as VE which is shown in the following table 1 and Fig. 1.

Table No.1 :Vocational courses in the High schools of Kamrup District

SL	Vocational subjects	Nos. of schools	% of schools
1	Music	72	50
2	Dance	8	5.55
3	Fine Arts	56	38.88
4	Tourism and Hospitability	11	7.63
5	Private Security	3	2.08
6	Health Care	6	4.16
7	Garment Maki	3	2.08
8	Beauty Wellness	4	2.77
9	Electronics	2	1.388
10	Retail Marketing	15	1.03
11	Information Technology	22	15.27
12	. Wood Craft	1	0.69
13	. Weaving and Textiles	1	0.69
14	. Home science	1	0.69

The investigator identifies various vocational courses running in various schools. It is found that 50% schools introduce music,. 5.55% has dance, 38.88%schools have fine arts, 7.63% ,2.08 % 4.16%schools have selected their vocational courses as Tourism and Hospitability, Private Security, and Health Care Only 2.08% and 2.77 % schools have Garment making and Beauty and Wellness vocational courses.1.388 % schools have Electronics 15.27% schools select informational Technology (IT), Retail and marketing,1.03 % and 0.69 % schools in Kamrup District has opted woodcraft ,Weaving Textiles and Home Science as the vocational subjects in their schools.

From this collected data,it is found that out of 254 schools ,only 72 and 56 schools selects music and fine arts as VE for their students .On the other hand, Blind and Deaf School, Kahilipara has selected more vocational subjects such as Fine Arts, Garment Making, Wood Craft and Weaving and Textiles for their students .Durung Adarsha Higher Secondary School ,Khetri has selected one vocational subject i.e .Garment Making for their students. Jatiya Vidyalaya ,Kahilipara also selects Home science as vocational subject for their students . Dispur Govt H.S .School and Bidya Mandir H.S. School have taken Electronics and Hardware as Vocational subject.

Objective No.2. To investigate the enrollment status in various vocational courses of Secondary level.

The investigator tries to investigate the present enrollment of the students who has opted vocational subjects in class ix and class x .in 2023-24 which is shown in the following table no.2 and figure no.2

Table 2 Enrolment status for Vocational courses in the High schools

	Vocational subjects	Enrolment of Students		
		Class IX	Class X	Total
1	Music	539	414	953
2	2 Dance	55	43	98
3	Fine Arts	382	232	614
4	Retail Marketing	326	180	506
5	Information Technology(IT)	566	367	933
6	Tourism and Hospitability	324	172	496
7	Electronics and Hardware	40	24	64
8	Beauty Wellness	132	39	171
9	Garment Making	107	34	141
10	Wood Craft	21	18	39
11	. Weaving and Textiles	29	0	29
12	Health Care	154	36	190
13	. Private Security	79	74	153
14	Home Science	4	0	4

From the above table and figure, it is found that highest number of students in vocational courses is enrolled in Music (953 nos.) and Information technology (933nos) respectively followed by fine arts (614 nos.) and retail Marketing (506 nos.). Tourism and hospitability (496 nos.), Health care (190nos.), Beauty and Wellness (171 nos.),Garment Making (!41 nos.) vocational subjects are also chosen by the students comparatively than other courses.

Objective No.3:To find out the enrollment status in various vocational courses in Secondary level in relation to gender.

The investigator has analyzed the enrollment position of the students in various vocational courses with regards to gender to know their expectation level in different vocations which is shown in the following table no.3 and figure no.3

Table No.3 : Gender wise enrolment status for Vocational courses in the High schools

Sl nos.	Vocational Subjects	Enrollment of students		
		Boys	Girls	Total nos. of students
1	Music	23	930	953
2	Dance	0	98	98
3	Fine Arts	227	387	614
4	Retail Marketing	468	38	506
5	InformationTechnology(IT)	734	199	933
6	Tourism and Hospitability	453	43	496
7	Electronics and Hardware	64	0	64
8	Beauty Wellness	0	171	171
9	Garment Making	103	38	141
10	Wood Craft	39	0	39
11	Weaving and Textiles	4	25	29
12	Health Care	9	181	190
13	Private Security	140	13	153
14	Home Science	0	4	4

From the above table, it is found that the enrollment of boys is totally nil in the vocational courses such as dance, Beauty and wellness and home science whereas their interested areas are found in the subjects like Information Technology (IT),Retail and Marketing, Tourism, Private Security ,Fine Arts ,Garment Making also. The enrollment of girls is absent in courses such as Electronics and Wood craft. Their preferred vocational subjects are Music, Dance, Fine Arts, Health Care, Beauty and Wellness than other subjects.

Objective no.4: To find out the prospects of emerging vocational courses in different schools. The investigator tries to find out the different prospects of vocational education if the course is prevailed at school level .The school authority can align the vocational subjects as per the industry demands. Then 50% of all students by 2025 will be expert in vocation with industry training which is the main objective of NEP 2020 in the category of school education.

1. School education can introduce in the vocational curriculum of information technology specialised skills such as artificial intelligence, data science, cyber security, and block chain to have career opportunities in higher education.

2. To emerge as vocational courses in school education, the curriculum must be flexible and adaptable as per the needs of the industry.

3. It is found that there is no topic for training in languages, cross-cultural communication, and global business practices in vocational courses at the school level through which students can prepare themselves for their careers in multinational corporations and global markets.

4. Renewable energy, green building, environmental science, sustainable agriculture, etc. must be introduced as vocational courses because the world focuses more on sustainability and environmental conservation. Since India is an agricultural-based country, it is very important to know the base of agriculture and its related prospects among the students.

5. It is necessary to introduce such types of vocational courses at the school level through which the students can start their own businesses, become self-employed, and avail themselves of their full autonomy to pursue their passions.

Objective No.5: To identify the challenges in introducing vocational education at mass level in High schools.

The investigator identifies the following challenges in introducing vocational education as per NEP2020 such as--.

1. Parents have a deep-seated societal bias towards certain professions and a misconception about vocational education. They think that vocational education is inferior to other subjects.

2. The selection of students for vocational courses is necessary. To identify aptitude and make informed vocational decisions, psychometric tests are required for taking different vocations.

3. It is high time to break the barriers among the students in choosing the VE. All students should be welcomed by the school with a mindset of gender inclusion in any vocational field.

4. There is a challenge in aligning vocational courses with the existing curriculum prescribed in the syllabus. VE is now regarded as an elective subject in the course. It is necessary to transform VE from an elective to a core subject so that all students can be enrolled in this stream.

5. A high-quality standard of vocational training is a great challenge for rural schools. Infrastructure, a vocational lab with equipment, and resources for vocational education and training are major drawbacks for the implementation of VE in schools.

6. It will be a difficult task to recruit specialized, trained teachers who are experts in both subject knowledge and pedagogical skills because VE education requires both specialisations.

7. It is not a reconstructed standardised assessment and certification for VE through which students can get admission to higher-level institutions.

8.It is a great challenge to sustain the vocational programme in high schools. Funding allocation, monitoring mechanisms, and policy support are needed to continue vocational education in school

9.Though NEP 2020 encourages the schools to collaborate on training programmes or internship program with the nearby industries to uplift the vocational courses by the schools ,it is not possible to organize such type of event due to the communication problem like in state of Assam.

Conclusion

If the education sector of all states of India meets all these challenges within a short period of time, then vocational education will cover 50% of school students with their skills by the year 2025 in India, as NEP 2020 reconstructs vocational education in the educational sector, and India will progress with the students who are not only experts in technically skilled but also foundational and transversal skilled people.

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