

THE NSQF CONCEPT: ENHANCING EMPLOYMENT BY FORMING A BRIDGE BETWEEN GENERAL EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL SKILL TRAINING

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ABSTRACT

General education and vocational skill training in India, have been operating as separate verticals, since ages; with very little interaction between the two. This has led to hesitation amongst the youth in opting for vocational education and training as it is presumed that this avenue would preclude the concerned individual from being able to acquire higher degrees and qualifications. In order to facilitate mobility from vocational to general education, and vice-versa, a policy or a framework had to be structured in India. Hence, the National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF) was notified. This would help make qualifications more understandable and transparent.

KEYWORDS: Qualification Framework, NSQF, Vocational Education, General Education.

Introduction

In India, general education and vocational education & training have been operating as separate verticals, with very little interaction between the two. This has led to hesitation amongst the youth in opting for vocational education and training as it is presumed that this avenue would preclude the concerned individual from being able to acquire higher degrees and qualifications.

India is destined to be a contributor to the global workforce pool on account of demographic bonus, with the growth rate of higher working age population as compared to its total population and home to the second largest population (with a headcount of around 1.4 billion by 2025) in the world with distinct advantage of having the youngest population with an average age of 29 years as against the average age of 37 years in China and the US and 45 years in Western Europe (FICCI, 2014).

1. Literature review

Prof Krunal K. Punjani (2014) in his study on skill development for Make in India Project a success stated that the present policy on skill development needs critical Management. It requires simplification on institutional structure with larger investment on training infrastructure. Greater emphasis should be provided to private sector participation with incentives. He inferred that India should equip with millions of youth with right skill to compete in the global competition to make in India project successful.

Sonali Kanchan et al (2015) in their study stated that 80% of the Indian workforce do not have required marketable skills to compete in the global market. To fulfill the skill gap, various skill developmental initiatives are to be taken up for providing skilled human resources in India to become global hub. They further said that course curriculum should be re-designed in such a way at various levels for skill development based on the raising opportunities for employment this project. Engineering and MBA students are provided with on job training to made them ready for industry with required Soft skills and technical skills.

Vandan Saini (2015) in her study on skill development in India stated that India need skilled and efficient human resources to make it globally competitive and to augment its economic growth and to transforming India a demographic dividend. Therefore in order to achieve skilling target it is required to have a holistic solutions for skilling India rather than partly solutions.

LVSN Murthy and Dr. Nagaraju Battu (2016) in their study development- role of public sectors- in make in India stated that Public Sector Undertakings in India are also contributing to the skilling the existing youth to catch and meet the challenges and employment opportunities through "Make in India campaign" and to supply skilled workforce.

2. Research Gap

The literature shows that there exists a gap regarding linkage between skill developmental studies and general educational qualification. Hence, this study would contribute a little towards filling the identified gap.

3. Objectives of study

- a. To study the objectives of NSQF.
- b. To study the implementation schedule of NSQF.
- c. To study the prospects of NSQF in Indian context.

4. Research methodology

Research components	Description
Research type	Exploratory research
Data source	Secondary data (NSDA website)

National Skill Qualifications Frameworks

In order to facilitate mobility from vocational to general education, and vice-versa, a qualification framework for India, i.e. the National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) will help make qualifications more understandable and transparent (NSDA).

Objective 1: Objectives of NSQF:

The objectives of the NSQF are to provide a framework that:

- Accommodates the diversity of the Indian education and training systems
- Allows the development of a set of qualifications for each level, based on outcomes which are accepted across the nation
- Provides structure for development and maintenance of progression pathways which provide access to qualifications and assist people to move easily and readily between different education and training sectors and between those sectors and the labour market
- Gives individuals an option to progress through education and training and gain recognition for their prior learning and experiences
- Gives individuals an option to progress through education and training and gain recognition for their prior learning and experiences
- Supports and enhances the national and international mobility of persons with NSQF-compliant qualifications through increased recognition of the value and comparability of Indian qualifications.

Objective 2: NSQF-Implementation Schedule:

For any policy, structure, or project to execute there would be a plan of action. Similarly, NSQF also has been provided with a firm implementation schedule. This schedule is divided into two phases. The first phase is scheduled for three years and the second phase is scheduled for two years. Following are the details of the schedule:

The NSQF provides for a five year implementation schedule which provides that:

- a) **After the third anniversary (27.12.2016) date of the notification of the NSQF,**
 - Government funding would not be available for any training/ educational programme/ course which is not NSQF-compliant.
 - All government-funded training and educational institutions shall define eligibility criteria for admission to various courses in terms of NSQF levels.
 - The recruitment rules of the Government of India and PSUs of the central government shall be amended to define eligibility criteria for all positions in terms of NSQF levels.
 - The State Governments and their PSUs shall also be encouraged to amend their recruitment rules on above lines.
- b) **After the fifth anniversary (27.12.2018) date of the notification of the NSQF,**

- It shall be mandatory for all training/educational programmes/courses to be NSQF-compliant.
- All training and educational institutions shall define eligibility criteria for admission to various courses in terms of NSQF levels.

Objective 3: Prospects of NSQF in Indian context:

- Mobility between vocational and general education by alignment of degrees with NSQF.
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), allowing transition from non-formal to organised job market.
- Standardised, consistent, nationally acceptable outcomes of training across the country through a national quality assurance framework.
- Global mobility of skilled workforce from India, through international equivalence of NSQF.
- Mapping of progression pathways within sectors and cross-sectorally.
- Approval of NOS/QPs as national standards for skill training.

5. Conclusion

As India has witnessed the age, that comprises of the largest youth population, skill and education have become a necessity for growth. The workforce skill capacity of an Indian has been assessed in the form of general education and vocational training level. Hence, they need to be measured on a single scale. Also, to make India Internationally competitive, it is important to have a similar educational and skill framework like that of developed countries. Therefore, following the European Union qualification framework, a qualification framework called National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) was notified to form a bridge between general and vocation education. NSQF facilitates mobility of individual from vocational to general education, and vice-versa. This framework also would help make qualifications more understandable and transparent.

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