

Post Pandemic Crisis and TVET a Skill Development Program: A Joint venture by ILO-UNESCO & World Bank

¹Dr. Deepali M. Gala, ²Dr. Bhaskar V. Patil

^{#1, #2}Assistant Professor, Bharati Vidyapeeth Institute of Management, Kolhapur, [India],

¹deepaligala19@gmail.com, ²bhaskarpatil2881@gmail.com

Abstract - India's technical and vocational educational and training is facing many challenges due to outburst of pandemic. Adapting to new normal has become a big challenge in reaching their customers or for ensuring quality training or to connect with youth. This paper deals with the disruption occurred in Skill development Program to withstand the pandemic and the comeback policy made for new normal. In this tough situation ILO, UNESCO and the World Bank launched an interagency survey on TVET. The survey would help in new policy formation, training measures, new challenges faced and resource development in tackling the post COVID crisis period. This has emerged as a new ray of hope in this unprecedented situation. It is evident that crisis provides an opportunity for the development of being more flexible to learning and finding solutions.

Key Words: Pandemic, COVID, TVET, ILO, UNESCO.

I. INTRODUCTION

Economic growth of any nation largely depends on the levels of skill set and knowledge possessed by the country. These driving forces act as motivating agents to adjust to any adverse situation or challenges. COVID pandemic is the most significant health crisis faced in the past 100 years. It has collapsed the way of living and has put many in a question of their survival. Education and training institutions struggled to achieve a timely compliance due to lock down and social distancing measures. In this tough situation ILO, UNESCO and the World Bank launched an interagency survey on TVET. The survey would help in new policy formation, training measures, new challenges faced and resource development in tackling the post COVID crisis period. This has emerged as a new ray of hope in this unprecedented situation. Skill development programs comprises all those in the labour force, including those entering the labour market for the first time (12.8 million annually), those employed in the organized sector (26.0 million) and those working in the unorganized sector (433 million). The current capacity of the skill development programs is 3.1 million. India has set a target of skilling 500 million people by 2022.

II. METHODOLOGY

The scope of this paper is to understand the sudden effects of pandemic on the whole training process and how various countries cope up mechanism to deal with the problem. This paper also deals with the disruption to technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programs due to COVID-19 and its transformation to ILO a Skill

development program in the global pandemic. Thus the Objective of this paper is to understand the effects of COVID on various skill development program. This paper also summarizes the diagnosis done by ILO, UNESCO and World Bank to better understand the crises and come out with appropriate solution for the same. It has provided a platform to understand the sudden change and how every country had their own way of dealing with this kind of situation. At the end this paper tries to throw light on Indian condition to fit in to this new normal.

According to the report stated by the skill development in the time of COVID -19 by international labour office, Geneva, it is evident that the pandemic has become the reason for closure of major TVET centers. Due to the sudden lock down and lack of technical grip created hurdles in continuity of the program and failed in grabbing the impact of face to face communication. Distant learning option was explored during this period but due to lack of strong technical knowhow, experimenting and adapting to constraints posed by the pandemic.

To deal with the crisis agencies like ILO, UNESCO and World Bank came up with a survey to understand the situation of TVET in the light of COVID pandemic situation. The aim of this collaboration is to understand the challenges faced by TVET to continue with the existing program and to bring in a needed change for proper execution. This survey was collected on various aspects in focus like policy, training measures, challenges faced, resources developed etc. The aim of this research is to identify the gap and bridge it effective means so that quality training can be imparted in any crisis situation. The survey

was conducted online from 5th April to 15th May 2020 with samples selected were all the social partners, trainers and people undergoing TVET training. To reach the samples effectively the survey was drafted in 8 different languages like Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish and Vietnamese. There were 1353 respondents representing 126 countries all over the world.

III. EFFECTS OF COVID ON SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM : Indian Perspective

3.1 Change from Classroom teaching to Digital learning

In India most of the TVET programmes follow classroom teaching which faced problems due to sudden lock down. The lack of infrastructure was the major issue faced while moving their teaching model online overnight. On one side the facilitators were not equipped enough or knew technical aspects related to delivering content through virtual mode. On the other hand the participants from low-income families dint have access to digital infrastructure or technical knowledge to cope up with the new normal. Normally these skill development training sessions are arranged for unemployed youth, low income group or the one with educational qualification of 10th or 12th grade because of which reaching them through online mode was very difficult.

3.2 Fear of COVID

Most of the Indians prefer public transport to commute and due to fear of getting infected with COVID-19 has forced students to defer training and placements. Parents too have preferred a gap instead of coping up with the pandemic and move further. Majority of the youth have undermined their skills and have started doing local available jobs due to fear of COVID and travelling to cities.

3.3 Closure of TVET centres

There was a complete closure of TVET centers due to lack of disaster management knowhow and readiness of alternative infrastructural facility. It's not the case with India, in about out of 126 countries 114 countries had this issue. As TVET managers, trainers and learners were not adequately prepared for the unexpected change in transition to remote learning.

Imbalance in Demand and Supply

The pandemic has brought in an imbalance in demand and supply chain. Various sectors like apparels, electronics, electrical goods, retail, hospitality, tourism, entertainment are severely affected due to pandemic which constitutes the major portion of business.

3.4 Lack of Funding

The funding sources are unavailable since the start of the pandemic. It has created a lot of issues in skill development programmes. Instead of spending on skills development

training programmes, government is forced to spend on creating the needed infrastructure in the lock down period which has least impact due to non availability of infrastructural facility on the other end.

Lack of effective Platform to switch over, Lack of electricity, internet connection, poor financial resources most importantly lack of motivation, fear of COVID infection were some other issues that put a stop to TVET learning program.

IV. OUTCOME OF THE RESEARCH

To deal with any crisis situation it becomes evident to understand the ground level problems. The research conducted by ILO, UNESCO and World Bank stated the various condition prevalent in various parts of the countries. Based on the review of the respondents many inference were taken which will help in TVET to deal effectively and be ready for the future phase. The various cope up mechanism are as follows.

V. TRANSITION TO DISTANCE LEARNING

Even though some countries were equipped enough to accept the transition to some extent some countries TVET's were fully non-operative during the sudden shut down. 13 out of 18 high-income countries were able to conduct the training fully remotely. In low income category countries out of 17 countries only 2 were able to perform learning in crisis situation. Low and lower-middle income countries reported that no online or offline distance learning was provided in the COVID Pandemic situation. As per the report of ILO it was evident that majority of the countries who are equipped could switch to distance learning journey and the nation without needed infrastructure failed to uptake distance learning and were left behind.

Alternative approaches like use of existing online platforms such as massive online open courses (MOOCs) and the Modular-Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment (MOODLE), video tutorials, live video conferences and simulators were done. The use of offline platforms, including national television channels, to disseminate practical knowledge was reported by such countries as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Madagascar and Pakistan, and the development and distribution of written resources such as self-paced learning guides and learner notes were also reported by many countries. Numerous resources and tools used by respondents for the shift to distance learning like Zoom for Video Conferencing using, youtube for Videos, Blogs, Microsoft teams as discussion platforms, google classroom for virtual classroom. According to the report other softwares like STR, Opera and Amadeus for training, along with Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and email to facilitate interaction and coordination between trainers and students were used.

This crisis has also affected the assessment and certifying process for many nations in which some Asian countries like Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam were successful. Countries like India, Argentina, Armenia, Iceland, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, North Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Zambia where complete closures were reported.

The mode of distance learning was seen as a short-term solution to manage a crisis situation by many respondents from India, Iceland, Lesotho and Malaysia and many other countries as the focus was on theoretical concepts and there was a lack of practical understanding of concepts which is the core aspect of TVET learners.

The list of tools used to help teachers during the process of distance learning are UNESCO recommendations for distance learning, Australian guidelines for VET, Skill development in the time of COVID-19, Joint Education Trust (JET), The open education consortium (OEC), Open education resources (OER), Canadian information on COVID-19 for education and training were some that provided guidelines to deal with the crisis situation.

In the Indian context, our government has done all possible ways to come up with various courses to cope with the disruption occurred during COVID. Even though there was no set infrastructure during the onset of the pandemic but various productive steps have been taken to follow lockdown rules as well as spend time usefully. Government of India under Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship has introduced many skill development courses under "Bharat Skills" which is one such pioneering work brought by Directorate General of Training (DGT). 71 new courses have been digitally updated and are available for the individual to learn being at home.

Various schemes include Craftsman Training Scheme (CTS), Crafts Instructor Training scheme (CITS), Apprenticeship, ITI Blended Learning and Training of trainers (TOT). Crafts Instructor Training scheme is devoted to impart quality skill training through blended learning. Its partnership with Central Staff Training and Research Institute (CSTARI) and National Instructional Media Institute (NIMI) has effectively implemented training for trainers to equip the trainers with the latest technology. During the initial phase, blended learning was developed in 6 trades as Fitter, electrician, Computer Operator and Programming Assistant (COPA), basic cosmetology, welder, mechanic diesel.

VI. CONCLUSION

"Necessity is the mother of invention" The above phrase rightly fits to this situation as prior to this pandemic, classroom teaching and practicals were considered and no online mode was entertained. This got shattered in this

COVID pandemic situation where every individual was forced to go online and social distancing norms completely failed the face-to-face teaching methodology.

Even though there is a lack of preparedness of TVET in skill development during the CORONA crisis, it is evident from the above research that effective steps have been continuously taken for getting adjusted to the new challenges. This pandemic has given a scope of thinking in various angles which were least identified. The research conducted by ILO, UNESCO and World Bank has helped in bringing in insight about the crisis happened in TVET programs during COVID. This research has helped in countries to prepare them to adjust to the new normal and help in continuous learning opportunities. India too has coped with this crisis situation effectively and has come up with many online programs to deal with this kind of crisis situation. This has led a path way for future crisis management and in due course the things will get much more effective than it is for availing proper training.

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