

Developing Multi-skilled Man Power: Need, Challenges and Opportunities

Padmavati S. Undale*

Department of Arts and Commerce, MIT Arts, Commerce and Science College, Alandi(D), Pune, Maharashtra. *Corresponding Author's Email: psundale@mitacsc.ac.in

Abstract

The present review article deals with need, challenges and opportunities in developing multi-skilled manpower. The literature review throws light on the need of multi-skilled manpower. Due to globalization, changes in information and technologies, advancements in industries, the need of multi-skilled manpower is on high demand. With this background, the present paper tries to highlight some of the areas associated with developing multi-skilled manpower. There are certain challenges in creating awareness about the need of developing multi-skills approach. The industry requires labor force having abilities to handle the diversified work areas to achieve organizational goals. The role of skilled human resources is major in achieving set targets of the organized or unorganized industry sectors. There are challenges in the development of multi-skilled man power. Accordingly, there are benefits of having multi-skilled man powers. The paper is of the view that considering the current industry demand, there is need to develop multi-skilled man power. The government, education institutes and industry should work hand in hand to match the needs of industry and man power. The cohesive environment in them will lead to economic growth of the country.

Keywords: Multi-skilled, industry readiness, man power, economic growth.

Introduction

Education is one of the sources of acquiring knowledge and skills. It contributes to develop academic knowledge as well its execution in a systematic way to achieve success. Learning and execution of learned things is a process which involves various aspects. This process requires the different skills such as handling the people, identifying and solving the problem, thinking critically, logically and innovatively, resolving conflicts etc. Along with these the knowledge of technology and the ability to use it efficiently both are required. The expertise in one core domain and simultaneously in the supportive subdomains is one of the prior needs to survive in the competitive and unstable earning sources. Depending upon one source of income or being skilled in any one area is not enough. There is need to uplift oneself with multi-skills. The industry requires labor force having abilities to handle the diversified work areas

to achieve organizational goals. The role of skilled human resources is major in achieving set targets of the organized or unorganized industry sectors.

Literature Review

Shaw in his essay 'How Wealth accumulates and Men Decay' describes the knowledge and skill of old pin makers and how these have changed (1). The old 'pinmakers' had the knowledge from raw material used in pin making, its process from production to selling in the market. Shaw is in favor of the knowledge of old 'pinmakers' as they are involved in and aware of the whole process of pin making. He argues that in capitalism the process from pin making to selling has been distributed among the people contributing to single part of it. Hence, they are giving their best in the part allotted them and unaware about the remaining one. Also, that work becomes routine work and they work like machine without using any intelligence which leads to degradation of knowledge and skill.

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution CC BY license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted reuse, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

(Received 31st March 2023; Accepted 06th April 2023; Published 30th April 2023)

Toner in his report on 'Workforce Skills and Innovation: An Overview of Major Themes In The Literature' has identified some areas to be focused while matching with man power demand by industry and its supply by society (2). It has been observed that there is need to be adapting the changes in technical as well as in the organization. Only academic excellence is not enough to be a part of industry. There is a need to develop creative and innovative skills among the man power. Formal vocational training is required along with academic knowledge.

G20 Training Strategy emphasizes on the major factors that are essential for growth. The strategy document entitled 'A Skilled Workforce for Strong, Sustainable and Balanced Growth: A G20 Training Strategy' describes the three major aspects to rightly satisfy labor demand and supply (3). It is one of the prerequisite to provide basic education having good quality which will boost the further part of education that is training. Training is very much required to be industry ready. Along with this, there is needed to be adaptable for the changes in various fields such as knowledge, technology, organizational structure etc. The readiness to acquire and accommodate with changes is very much essential.

Mahatma Gandhi in his book 'India of My Dream' states that 'our negligence and ignorance' is the major cause of unemployment (4). According to him the work is available to those who consider all types of work as a dignified work and ready to work with 'their hands and feet honestly'.

India Skill Report describes the positive signs of Indian youth regarding possession of employability skills (5). Students having knowledge of technical domain, business field, numerical and critical thinking, and digital literacy are highly demanded. The awareness about self-employment and getting employment is on higher side. With development in new sectors such as agriculture, pharmaceutical etc. skills relevant to that field are in high demand. The organizations prefer to recruit job ready candidate. Hence, need for skill development has become important factor. There is need to incorporate with the essential factors that can help to meet the demands by the industry. Some of these factors are blended learning, hands on experiences, emphasis

on creative and innovative thinking, digital literacy, technological changes etc.

The above discussions show that there is a need to focus on multiskilling development.

Challenges in implementing Multiskilling model

Multiskilling approach is the most urgent requirement of the time to sustain. Though it is one of the crucial factors, there are certain challenges in implementation. Some of them stated as below:

Obstacles in Reaching to people

Now a days various initiatives are taken to make the people aware about the importance of skill development due to which as compare to past, the current development in this sector is good. Still there is need to create awareness. There is need to create this awareness since the primary education to higher education. Reaching to all is one of the biggest challenges. It is difficult to reach at people situated at remote and undeveloped region where advanced facilities are yet not reached.

As well as the trained manpower to create awareness is also in high demand. Imbalance between the ratio of knowledge givers and knowledge seekers needs to be considered.

Lack of awareness of Policy and procedure

The modifications in education system at various levels are essential. The needs to incorporate various crucial areas that are allied to basic education are important for example creative and innovative thinking, the generic skills, technological skills, life skills, moral values etc. The question is how to design a proper lay out for this and implements it in a proper way. There is need to design policy and procedure at micro and macro level and create awareness about it.

Lack of active engagement

The active engagement of both the one who implements the skill development program and the other who takes advantage of it is important. The lack of active involvement in skill development process affects the success rate. There are various possible reasons that affect the active engagement such as lack of interest, negligence, lack of

knowledge of importance of being skilled, inability to cope up with changes required etc.

Lack of Resources

The resources either human or non-human required to develop skills are crucial. The unavailability any one of them affects the process of skilling. The number of skilled trainers and the infrastructural should match with the number of trainees and their requirement. The imbalance between them causes obstacles in effective implementation of skilling program. Hence, the implementation of skilling program becomes difficult.

Lack of awareness and guidance about the skills to be developed

Many times, the students are not aware of the skills that to be developed. Due the availability mass information with heavy content, the problem of categorizing the information that is required has become a difficult task. In many cases, it leads to confusion. As the proper guidance is not available, the chaos in selecting the skills arises. If the skills selected do not match to the skills required to get placed in, then the situation becomes worst. The planned and structured guidance, regarding this problem is very much required.

Opportunities for multi-skilled man power

Survival in job market

Due to the rapid changes in information and technology, industry is in high demand of multi-skilled man power. The labor force with multi-skilled, is having openings in many sectors. It helps to sustain and survive in the changes occurred due to recession or any such problems. A multi-skilled man power can easily accommodate with various fields and continue with source of income. Even industry can merge them to the sectors as per the requirement.

Enrichment of experiences

A multi-skilled man power can have an opportunity to get an experience of various fields. It widens the areas of knowledge. A person with expertise in various fields can become one of the major assets of the organization and opens door for prosperous growth. It is a ladder to grow.

Contribution in innovation and creativity

There are chances to contribute to organizations' growth with creative and innovative thinking. A person having multi-skilled, can have scope to develop knowledge and enhance experience of various fields. It helps to give creative and innovative contribution for the organization's growth.

Increase in economic growth

Multi-skills help to reduce the unemployment. It results into better job performances. Collaboratively it leads to economic growth of an individual and in turn of the nation. The growth of an individual and the growth of the society go hand in hand.

Increase in efficiency

Multi-skills help to achieve efficiency in work. It helps to achieve the organizational goals. The work experience of different fields and abilities to handle various responsibilities lead to develop efficiency. Efficient man power is valued by the industry. Hence, the efficient labor force effectively contributes in the growth of the organization and deserves benefits in return.

Recommendations

Implementing multi-skills approach at wider level is an urgent need. The following recommendations are given for effective implementation of multi-skills approach:

- There is need of maximum utilization of the resources to create awareness about the need of multiskilling.
- The emphasis should be given on active engagement of trainers and trainees involved in multiskilling process.
- The industry should collaborate with education institutions and should make the platforms available to train the students according to their needs.
- The awareness should be created about how to avail the earning sources to be financially independent with multiskilling.
- The proper guidance and provision for required resources should be made available for the skills that to be developed.

Conclusion

Multi-skilled workforce is the need of the industry. It contributes to the growth of the organization in

various ways. Accommodating the man power with proper employment is very essential in the economic growth of the country. Hence, multi-skilled man power is one of the crucial aspects that need to be considered seriously. There are challenges in the development of multi-skilled man power. Accordingly, there are benefits of having multi-skilled man powers. The paper is of the view that considering the current industry demand, there is need to develop multi-skilled man power. The government, education institutes and industry should work hand in hand to match the needs of industry and man power. The cohesive environment in them will lead to economic growth of the country.

Acknowledgement

Nil

Conflict of Interest

None

Funding

Nil

References

1. G. B. Shaw. How Wealth accumulates and Men Decay. In Literary Pinnacles, Ed. Board of Editors, Orient Blackswan; 2015.
2. Toner, P. (2011), "Workforce Skills and Innovation: An Overview of Major Themes in the Literature", OECD Education Working Papers, No. 55, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/5kgk6hpnhxzq-en>.
3. A Skilled Workforce for Strong, Sustainable and Balanced Growth A G20 Training Strategy. International Labour Office, Geneva, 2011. <https://www.oecd.org/g20/summits/toronto/G20-Skills-Strategy.pdf>
4. Gandhi, M. K. India of my Dream. Compiled by: R. K. Prabhu. Navajivan Mudranalaya Ahmedabad; 1960. <https://www.mkgandhi.org/indiadreams/chap01.htm>.
5. India Skill Report: Road Map to India's Skill and Talent Economy 2030. Wheebox; 2023. https://do3n1uzkew47z.cloudfront.net/siteassets/pdf/IS R_Report_2023.pdf