

Govt should look at vocational education as equivalent to normal education

Budget should allocate funds towards research for developing teaching methods

Gayathri Vasudevan January 16, 2017 Last Updated at 17:02 IST



The annual budget in 2016 focused adequately on skilling, new job creation, and research-focused higher education which would help in new job creations both in manufacturing and service sector. NDA Government has always emphasised on skill development since its formation; a provision of Rs 1,700 crore was made for setting up 1,500 multi-skill training institutes.

It was also announced that 10 million youth would be provided skill training under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojna (PMKVY) during 2016-19. A Digital Literacy Scheme was announced in the budget to cover 60 million additional households. The greater focus on training and entrepreneurship, especially in the rural sector, helped in faster economic revival and overall development. This increase in the allocation of the budget towards the skilling sector is mainly because the significant shortage in skill sets is making people realise the need for it.

Non-farming employment has started steadily growing over the last few decades. Urban migration has caused a greater increase in jobs. However, employees have started to prefer full-time employment in a vocation of their liking.

Unfortunately, the trend of a full-time employment seems to be currently decreasing due to lack of choice in the vocational sector. This is where one needs to be cautious about the age group one is dealing with. Migrant workers after 35-40 years of age, tend to return to their villages and communities to settle there. Therefore, second careers need to be made available in their home towns.

Most of these people enter the agricultural sector, which is a seasonal profession and doesn't give enough earnings as a job in an urban city. Therefore, a greater amount needs to be allocated to increase the number of jobs for people in this age group, primarily in the rural areas.

In contrast to the older generation, the Indian youth require a longer exploration period and thus spend shorter periods in a specific job. The present generation expects instant gratification in terms of income and salary without receiving a rigorous vocational training. Since they lack awareness about whether the training they have received is of a good quality or not and simultaneously are unable to understand that one needs to work hard in a specific profession to get the desired income, the present generation has a tendency to get very easily frustrated.

Presently there still remains a social stigma associated with blue and grey collar jobs, as most of these jobs are considered non-aspirational. Therefore, no one is practically aware on appropriate techniques to teach a certain skill, also academic organisations have shown little interest in researching on the same



The annual budget plan for 2017-18 should allocate some funds towards research in how to develop appropriate teaching methods for such skills. The Union Budget for 2017-18 should bring about changes in two to three elements in the skilling and employment sector.



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classroom training.

For starters, service tax exemptions are important in vocational training. This is because the cost of providing the training is much higher than the returns one can expect. There should be a control on frequently policy changes as well as extra care to segregate skilling from entrepreneurship and employment. Vocational training should be in conjunction with full-time employment. Lack of recognition of practical and work-integrated learning has also contributed to a decrease in full-time employment. It is as important to acknowledge such teaching methods as channels of learning, as has been done for theoretical

It is important for the public and the government to look at vocational education as equivalent to normal education. One way this can happen is through credit transfers, which is equivalent to a graduation.

It is safe to foresee that in the Union Budget for 2017-18, the allocation of funds for skill training will either remain static or rise. Due to the current demonetisation issue, the effect of which is expected to last at least till April, the government is not going to touch issues related to taxation either, as the implications for it still remain unclear.

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