

Vocationalization: A Catalyst In Making Aatma

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Abstract

The progress, innovation, self-reliance, and growth of a nation heavily rely on education. NEP 2020 policy aims to guide India towards growth, innovation, and self-sufficiency by implementing substantial changes in the school education system to set a robust foundation for Aatma Nirbhar Bharat. One of the key changes is the integration of vocational education into mainstream education within schools, starting from class 6. This means that vocational education, which focuses on practical skills and job-specific training, will be incorporated into the regular curriculum of schools. The policy also emphasizes the development of 21st-century skills and the fostering of entrepreneurship education within schools. This includes utilizing innovative teaching techniques and digital resources, promoting vertical mobility in vocational education, creating school complexes, raising awareness about diverse opportunities, and offering training programs. This article delves into the Aatma Nirbhar Bharat initiative, the National Education Policy 2020 on the integration of vocational education in schools with specific reference to Himachal Pradesh. It also provides valuable recommendations for the effective implementation of vocational education at the school level as per NEP 2020.

KEYWORDS: - Aatma Nirbhar Bharat, Five Pillars, Vocational Education, NEP 2020, Himachal Pradesh

Introduction

An economy can only become self-sufficient through education, which also helps to lower unemployment and poverty. This allows a nation to grow economically without depending on outside help. NPE 1968 was the first national policy on education. The second National Policy on Education was in 1986 which highlighted the importance of educational provisions for women, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, children from backward classes, and those with special needs. The policy

also mandated free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of 14, school facilities, classrooms, number of teachers, and 50 % female teachers in school. The policy aimed to provide primary and elementary education through formal and non-formal means, universalize elementary education and promote manpower development. However, with the changing times, there is a need to update the educational policy to meet the demands of the modern world.

Now we are living in the 21st century where

the development of a nation purely depends on how self-reliant a nation is. To achieve this goal of making Bharat a self-reliant country, National Education Policy 2020 gives recommendations where stakeholders of education can play an important role. This policy talks about developing an education system whose roots are linked to Indian ethos, morality, ethics, culture, and traditional education. It focuses on making Indians a true global citizen, who feels proud of being an Indian. High-quality education can create a just, prosperous, and knowledgeable society and make India a global information superpower. National Education Policy 2020 wants to make India self-reliant or Aatma Nirbhar in all fields. Now the question is what is Aatma Nirbhar Bharat?

Literature Reviews

The literature reviews for this study are: -

Das & Malik (2020) studied vocational education and entrepreneurship in NEP 2020. The study suggested that to make India self-reliant, schools should promote various skills, provide well-trained teachers, and make the students comfortable by teaching them fundamental vocational skills. The institution, schools must focus on skill development rather than grades and content delivery.

Juttler, Schumann, Neuenschwander & Hofmann (2020) studied general or vocational education? The role of vocational interests in educational decisions at the end of compulsory school in Switzerland. The sample for this study was 609 lower secondary school students from Switzerland. Respondents were from three categories (1) VAT (Vocational education and training), BAC (general education) and FVB (Another type of vocational education). Analysis was based on the six dimensions based

on the Holland Interest Model. Findings show that students with higher scores on realistic and social dimensions choose VET as their post-compulsory track, BAC by those with higher scores in artistic, investigative, and enterprising dimensions and FVB by higher scores in conventional dimensions.

Nandan & Prathima (2020) studied Aatma Nirbhar Bharat: A New Self-resilient India. The study focuses on the vision of this Aatma Nirbhar Bharat scheme for making India self-reliant, self-sufficient, self-empowered to restore the nation's economic stability and inject liquidity into the economy, necessitating assistance and support to enhance global competitiveness and attractiveness, privatization of public entities, schemes for uplifting of poor are the goals of Aatma Nirbhar Bharat.

Pathak (2020) studied the NEP 2020: A Road Map to Vocational Development. This paper focuses on the level of vocational education programs with respect to NEP 2020, its importance for the development of any country, and the inclusion of vocational education in schools not only for employment purposes but also to identify and pursue their passion.

Suharno, Pambudi & Harjanto (2020) studied vocational education in Indonesia: History, development, opportunities, and Challenges. This study used a qualitative approach with a cross-sectional design and included 44 principals, 152 teachers, and 202 students from Indonesia. The focus was on the historical background, development, opportunities, and challenges in vocational education. The findings show that vocational education has a long history in Indonesia and the government prioritizing it to better prepare students for the job market. Notably, 74% of respondents felt bored in their education, possibly due to excessive

focus on social aspects. Obstacles included a lack of resources, educators, and industry support.

Kulkarni & Dash (2021) studied the integration of NEP with FTVET for achieving SDG4 goals: Towards a strong “Aatma-Nirbhar”. This study focuses on NEP 2020 reforms and focuses on greater industry-academic partnership for vocational literacy, strong ICT infrastructure, redesigned classrooms, and labs, new models of school-college-informal education centers, and redesigning the curriculum.

Patel (2021) studies the dynamic factors affecting “self-reliant India”. It focuses on five pillars of self-reliant India: - Economy, Infrastructure, system, Vibrant demography, and demand. This study talked about dynamic factors for making self-reliant like social factors, structural factors (intent, inclusion, investment, infrastructure, innovation), economic factors (economic independence), nutrition, and hygiene.

Suman, Narayan & Singh (2021) studied bridging skill in India: A roadmap for Atmanirbhar Bharat. The study shows only 20% of people are employed. Higher education and industry in India operate in isolation, resulting in a lack of industry-specific skills, posing challenges for youth and job seekers. The study focuses on providing skill-based education and increasing job opportunities.

Chowdhury & Mondal (2022) studied the Fostering of vocational education among students through the lens of the National Education Policy 2020. For this paper secondary sources like journals, e-content, documents, books, and websites were used. This study focuses on the challenges of vocational education like rigid regulations, less focused pathways, and ceased verticle mobility.

Ways for vocational education integration into the mainstream are by establishing a formal structure, quality training, assurance of vertical and horizontal mobility and creating an inclusive environment.

Ganie (2022) studied the NEP, 2020: Challenges and possible solutions of vocational education and training in India. The study on vocational education and training (VET) in India has several limitations, including suggestive results, data collection difficulties, the need for a systematic model, infrequent updates on government portals, and a lack of coverage of professional development and women’s participation. This study focuses on the role of National Education Policy 2020 for vocational education, its challenges, and solutions for making India self-reliant.

Naveen (2022) studied the NEP, 2020: General Education Embedded with Skill and Vocational Education. The research centres on the NEP 2020 suggestions concerning vocational education and its impact on economic development. It also delves into the obstacles such as Inadequate infrastructure and resources, the lack of skilled and trained educators, robust industries connection and collaboration, and insufficient awareness and understanding of vocational education among students, parents, and society.

Tippa & Mane (2023) studied an effort to make the Atmanirbhar Bharat mission through the National Education Policy 2020. The study focuses on the role of the national educational policy 2020 in making India Atam Nirbhar Bharat in terms of providing skills, preparing students for new challenges, radical reforms, digital and self-reliant country.

Objectives Of This Study

Objectives for this study are: -

- To understand the role of National Education Policy 2020 in making Aatma Nirbhar Bharat.
- To analyze the National Education Policy 2020 in the context of strengthening vocational education in India.
- To study the current status of vocational education in Himachal Pradesh.
- To provide suggestions for the implementation part of vocational education at the school level.

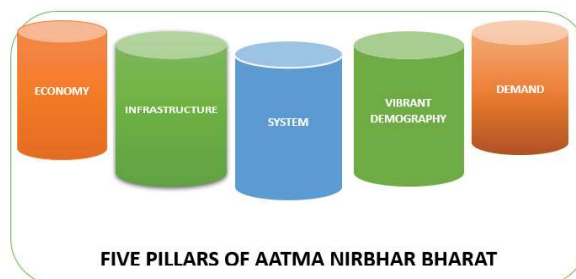
Research Methodology

Document analysis was used for this study. Secondary data were collected from government reports like NEP2020, records from government websites like NCERT, Ministry of Education, India census, and research studies related to Aatma Nirbhar Bharat, National Education Policy 2020, and vocational education.

Aatma Nirbhar Bharat

The idea of a self-reliant nation, known as the Atma Nirbhar nation, has its roots in the Swaraj and Swadeshi legacy of India's freedom movement. However, until the 1990s, self-reliance was often seen as protectionist and isolating, which hindered global competitiveness (Garg, 2021). On 12 October 2020, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched the "Aatma Nirbhar Bharat" or "Self-Reliant India" campaign with a strong focus on supporting and promoting local products (Dinakar, 2022). The campaign aims to make India self-reliant by producing goods domestically and reducing dependence on foreign countries. India will continue to import and export as needed, but the focus will be on reducing imports and increasing domestic production. Aatma Nirbhar Bharat talked

about five pillars. These pillars are economy, infrastructure, system, vibrant demography, and demand (Srivastava, 2022).



1. **Economy:** - The economy of a nation plays a vital role in its development. To make a country self-reliant, the economy is the first and foremost pillar. This pillar includes operational, administrative, and policy changes to achieve the objective of self-sufficiency.
2. **Infrastructure:** - To make the country self-reliant, it is necessary to have infrastructure in the country like transportation, IT sector, network, electricity, internet connection etc.
3. **System:** - Our ability to progress hinges on our use of technology, which is why the third pillar emphasizes the need for efficient supply and demand tracking systems.
4. **Vibrant Demography:** - Fourth Pillar, attention has been given to the country's population. Up to 65% of the population constitutes the working force and they must be empowered to become self-sufficient.
5. **Demand:** - The fifth pillar is demand. We have about 142 crore population. Purchasing power will help us to become self-reliant based on demand.

National Education Policy 2020

Under the chairmanship of Dr. K. Kasturirangan,

National Education Policy 2020 was developed, with the fundamental pillars of access, equity, quality, affordability, and accountability. The 2020 education policy in India focuses on quality, moral education, ethics, and ancient knowledge. The old concept of education structure was 10+2 which was replaced with the new structure of 5 + 3 + 3 + 4. Where first five years (3–8) are foundational stages followed by a preparatory stage spanning 8–11 years, a middle stage (11–14) involving experimentation and discussion, and a secondary stage spanning 14–18 years, focusing primarily on critical thinking and in-depth learning (NEP Para 4.1). Stream systems like arts, science, and commerce have been removed and students are free to choose any subjects according to their interests (Kalyani, 2020)

Right to Education, implemented in April 2010, provides free and compulsory education for children aged between 6 to 14 years. Now it has been talked about including pre-primary education in Right to Education for the children aged between 3 to 6 years. Most schools are only concerned with academic performance. However, the National Education Policy 2020 focuses on skills, specifically five skills: communication, exposure, collaboration, critical thinking, and conceptual clarity. The 2020 policy places a strong emphasis on the enhancement of professional development, alleviating the burden of academic pressure on students, mitigating the stress associated with examinations, highlighting the importance of skill development, integrating technology into education, and offering vocational education opportunities at the school level.

Key Determinacies For Making Aatma Nirbhar Bharat

There are some key determinants for making

Aatma Nirbhar Bharat. These are:

Making India self-reliant: - To develop India's self-sufficiency encourage exports, become self-sufficient, and stop relying on other nations for the goods that we can produce.

Providing job opportunities: - By providing job opportunities to the people of the country, the country can also become self-sufficient. For this, people should be given education based on it.

Affordable Education: - Free and compulsory education is provided to children aged 6 to 14, but due to the high cost of vocational education or skill-based education, not all students can participate. To become self-reliant skill-based Education, professional education should be affordable.

Infrastructure: - Infrastructure is necessary for making Aatma Nirbhar Bharat. It focuses on developing valuable infrastructure, investing in tourism and education, and implementing digital transformation for smart, sustainable cities and sustainable energy and water production.

Awareness of different vocational courses: - Aatma Nirbhar Bharat focuses on awareness of different vocational courses, which will help to increase awareness and enrolment and reduce the unemployment rate.

Working Population: - 65% of the population is under the age of 35. Our nation needs to support its workforce's pursuit of technical, vocational, and entrepreneurial education.

Nep 2020 In Making Aatma Nirbhar Bharat:

Here are some points that will tell the role of NEP2020 in making Bharat Aatma Nirbhar. These are: -

Flexible Curriculum: - 2020 tells students to choose subjects according to their interests and there will be no hard separation in the streams. If a science student wants to take an arts subject, then he can do so.

Use of technologies: - The training of teachers will be facilitated through the introduction of innovative learning methods and digital tools such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC), Flipped learning, and Virtual learning.

Vocational Education: - Vocational education has been integrated with general education, National Education Policy, 2020 has talked about providing pre-vocational education from class 6th.

Lokvidya: - National Education Policy, 2020 talked about Lokvidya which will provide vocational courses to the students, and teachers who want to develop their skills can also take training from Lokvidya.

Vocational Education in schools: - Whatever vocational education will be given, will be based on the Hub and spoke model. Here, skills will be delivered with the help of industrial training institutes, polytechnics, neighbourhood companies, industries, hospitals, farms, local artisans, and non-governmental organizations.

21st century skills: - National Education Policy, 2020 talked about 21st Century Skills. Skills include communication, exposure, collaboration, critical thinking, and conceptual clarity.

Training courses: - The States Council of Education Research and Training (SCERT) and District Institutes of Educational Training (DIETs) will provide pre-service training and short-term training courses to prepare vocational teachers/

trainers. These courses will be offered both online and offline. The Cluster Resource Centres (CRCs), Block Resource Centres (BRCs), and DIETs will invite outside trainers and experts in a range of fields to train their teachers.

Vertical mobility: Vertical mobility Vertical mobility is mentioned in the National Education Policy 2020. Students can pursue higher education in any vocational field they choose. This policy has also allowed B.Voc, which was closed in 2013, to reopen.

School Complexes: The National Education Policy 2020 proposes the creation of school complexes to facilitate practical training and skill development. School complexes will share their resources, finance workbenches, and make available local community resources and infrastructure to students.

Awareness about various opportunities: - Low demand for Vocational Education Tests (VET) in India is often due to students' lack of awareness about the various opportunities available. NEP, 2020, recommends the nationwide use of VAT and Career Guidance Services (CCG) to help students explore their interests and academic paths.

Vocational Education And Nep 2020

Gaining employment in any field requires having certain skills. Just as we talk about teaching, teaching demands teaching skills. Like this, every field has particular skill requirements. Like in the IT sector, it is necessary to have computer-related knowledge. Depending on the field, vocational education offers skills relevant to the workplace.

National Education Policy 2020 talks about reimagining vocational education. The 2020 policy

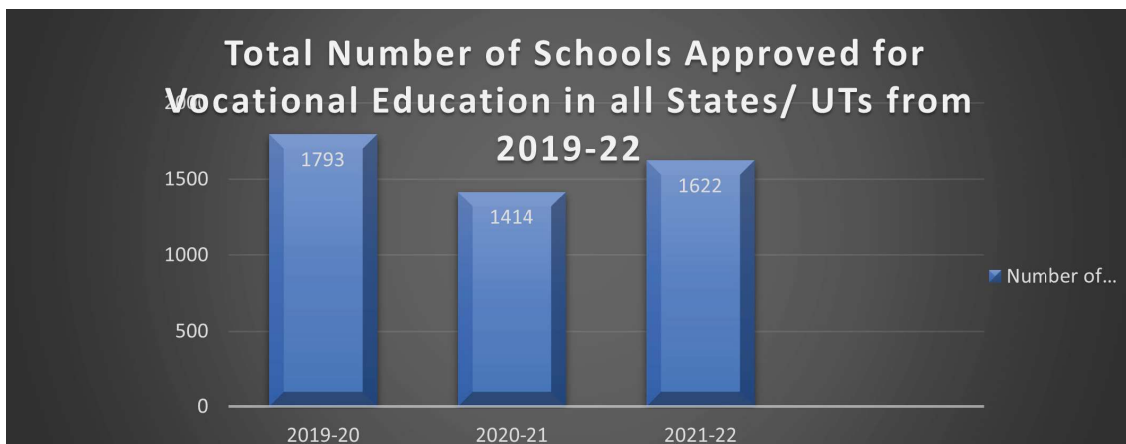
aims for 50% of all students in school and higher education to be exposed to vocational education. (Parvanda, 2022). as mentioned in Sustainable Development Goal 4.4, and will help India realize its entire demographic dividend potential (Naveen, 2022).

In National Education Policy 2020, students of classes 6 to 8 will be taught and given exposure to a vocational skill and provide exposure to many vocational skills. National Education Policy 2020 also talked about SDG goal 4.4. Vocational education will be given in schools and schools will be linked with vocational training partners. These training partners will provide training related to their field. A total of 4829 schools under Samagra Shiksha were approved for vocational education in all States/UTs from 2019- 22.

Table of total number of schools approved for vocational education in all States/UTs from 2019-22.

Years	Total number of schools approved for vocational education in all States/UTs
2019-20	1793
2020-21	1414
2021-22	1622
Total	4829

Source: Data.govt.in. State/UT-wise Number of Schools Approved for Vocational Education Courses from 2019-20 to 2021-22.



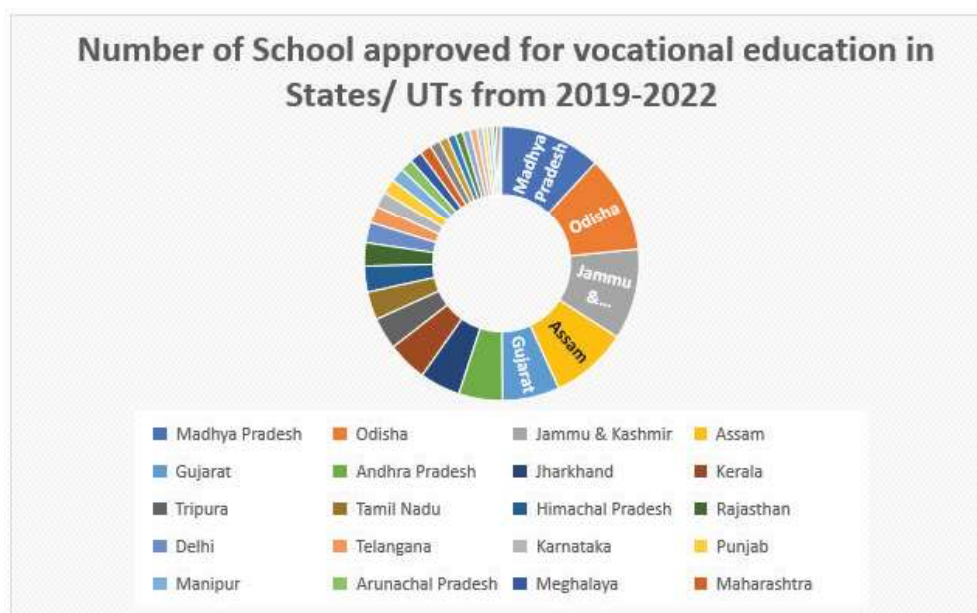
Madhya Pradesh has the highest number of schools approved for vocational education that are 574, Odisha in second number 557 schools, Jammu and Kashmir UT 514, and 147 schools in Himachal Pradesh approved for vocational education.

List of States/UTs with the highest number of approved schools for vocational education (2019-2022)

Sr. No	State/UT	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Total Number of Schools Approved in the Last Three Years
	Madhya Pradesh	574	0	0	574
	Odisha	142	385	30	557
	Jammu & Kashmir	84	77	353	514
	Assam	70	156	213	439
	Gujarat	102	138	85	325
	Andhra Pradesh	181	40	28	249
	Jharkhand	128	58	44	230
	Kerala	73	100	54	227
	Tripura	56	55	70	181
	Tamil Nadu	53	64	42	159
	Himachal Pradesh	0	50	97	147
	Rajasthan	0	0	132	132
	Delhi	43	37	36	116
	Telangana	100	0	0	100
	Karnataka	0	53	37	90
	Punjab	0	34	50	84
	Manipur	16	19	43	78
	Arunachal Pradesh	2	0	70	72
	Meghalaya	1	30	38	69
	Maharashtra	43	3	20	66
	Haryana	14	9	34	57
	West Bengal	50	0	0	50
	Chhattisgarh	0	32	14	46
	Bihar	0	0	43	43
	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	6	12	24	42
	Goa	20	2	18	40
	Nagaland	8	8	19	35
	Mizoram	2	17	6	25
	Chandigarh	6	6	10	22

Daman & Diu and Dadra & Nagar Haveli	0	11	4	15
Ladakh	0	11	4	15
Sikkim	10	0	4	14
Lakshadweep	5	4	0	9
Puducherry	4	3	0	7
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
Uttarakhand	0	0	0	0
Total	1793	1414	1622	4829

Source: Data.govt.in. State/UT-wise Number of Schools Approved for Vocational Education Courses from 2019-20 to 2021-22.



The Ministry of Education has formed a committee that will work to integrate vocational courses and general courses. It has been told in the policy that there will be 10 bagless days for VI-VIII grades in which local vocational experts will tell them about their vocations and similarly, similar opportunities will be provided during holidays for children of 6 to 12 grades. NCERT has introduced guidelines with the document “Implementation of 10 bagless days in School”. Engaging in a 10-day bagless period can significantly contribute to the enhancement of soft skills, teamwork, utilization of raw materials, creativity, and more. This document outlines various activities, their respective goals, and objectives for teachers and students, as well as the significance of these activities for one’s career development.

The Ministry of Education has focused on pre-vocational courses for VI-VIII grade students in which students are taught what the working environment is like in each vocation and what are their career

options. All this will be told through technology, social media, and Vocational Experts. After opening so many vocational courses, there has been talk of LokVidya which will provide vocational courses to the students.

Vocational Education In Himachal Pradesh

Himachal Pradesh, the land of snow with a 7,503,010 estimated population in 2023 of 82.80% literacy rate (India census). In Himachal, there are 10,550 government primary schools, 1,876 elementary, 2,956 secondary schools, and 134 colleges of general education. 953 government schools in Himachal Pradesh have been selected to provide vocational education through training partners (NGOBOX). Courses for vocational education that will be provided in these schools are: -

Sr. No.	Name of vocational courses in Himachal Pradesh
1	Sewing machine operators
2	Auto Service Technician L3,
3	Assistant Beauty Therapist
4	Field Technician – Other Home Appliances
5	Domestic Data Entry Operator
6	Plumber (General)
7	Unarmed Security Guard
8	Optical Fibre Splicer
9	Food and Beverage Service Trainee
10	Store Operations Assistant
11	Floriculturist (Open Cultivation)
12	Auto Service Technician L4
13	Beauty Therapist

14	Field Technician – Wireman Control Panel
15	General Duty Assistant
16	Domestic CRM Voice
17	Domestic Biometric Data Operator
18	Plumber (General)-II
19	Sales Associate

Source: Samagra Shiksha Himachal Pradesh

These courses will be provided in Himachal Pradesh from classes 9 to 12. Vocational trainers will provide training according to their field.

Points Of Discussion With Suggestions

- The goal of Aatma Nirbhar Bharat is to equip human resources with the necessary skills so that we can become self-sufficient. To provide students with exposure to a wide range of vocational courses, the National Education Policy of 2020 initiated vocational education as early as grade VI. However, the problem could surface if, for instance, legislators propose that at this stage in the future, students be fully directed toward the path of vocational education. A similar program was implemented in Madras in 1953. Students were taught general line subjects in the first half and then sent home to work in their families' fields like agriculture and housekeeping, constructing passenger sheds, laying bricks, building roads, and sanitizing the community or village development projects (Ganie,2022). The plan was finally dropped entirely in 1954 after it was strongly criticized for encouraging caste hegemony and forcing low-income students into low-paying jobs. Therefore, it should be evident that while vocational courses are important, they cannot be the sole focus.

- Like how many little pickles make a muckle, every child is that little pickle for our nation, helping to create an Aatma Nirbhar Bharat. If pre-vocational education is not provided adequately, students will become confused and will not be able to pursue vocational courses that match their potential and interests, which will ultimately harm the nation's efforts to become Aatma Nirbhar Bharat.
- NEP 2020 have talked to providing vocational trade partners in schools, who will provide vocational education and give practical knowledge According to the Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE), the ratio of students to teachers in elementary schools is 24:1, while in secondary schools, it stands at 27:1 on a national scale. But there are many schools where 1 or 2 teachers running the school, subject teachers are not available then how it can possible to teach students vocational courses with academics. This study recommended all the seats should be filled before starting vocational courses at the school level. Infrastructure facilities should be provided to all schools without any limitation like terrestrial, and tribal areas.
- Students are frequently offered vocational courses without sufficient information about the demands of the labour market, which results in a skills mismatch. At the state level, the NSDC (National Skill Development Corporation), IP Intelligence Platform and SANKALP (Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion) platform at the district level are two examples of current analyses that fall short. The study recommends a thorough skills gap should be analysed.
- Learning vocational skills such as sewing, beauty, and automobile repair can be beneficial in terms of increasing one's purchasing power and self-reliance. However, most of the population in India, around 142 crores, mostly belonging to the poor and middle-class, find it challenging to fulfil the five pillars of purchasing power, which are crucial for achieving self-reliance. The government should generate jobs, give the impoverished government incentives, and—above all—avoid making numerous policies that may occasionally be detrimental to the populace when they change at the state or federal levels. It will waste the working force's time and energy.
- Vocational education starts in grade 6. It is a positive change in the education system. Now a proper guideline for teachers and vocational trainers should be there. Creativity and innovation in education, accepting professionals from industries, well-organized and systematic handbooks should be provided for teachers, vocational trainers, and local guides.
- The National Education Policy, 2020 places a strong emphasis on vocational education for Atam Nirbhar Bharat; however, this could result in low enrolment in higher education. The German model, which encourages early vocational education, may increase inequality and limit students' potential for highly paid occupations (Ganie, 2022) It is a very concerning point that may occur in the future. Higher education should be promoted and students encouraged to pursue it. Guidance and counselling should be provided to students to encourage them to pursue higher education. Even NEP 2020 have talked about Career Guidance Services (CGS, but with career guidance, a counsellor, a professional counsellor, should

be there to read the minds of students, guide them on what should they do or not, to reduce the dropout rate, for encouraging for higher studies.

- According to their session, all political parties should have a strong desire to make India Aatma Nirbhar Bharat. Evaluate the results and limitations of the policy periodically and work to create the best possible version.
- Infrastructure is one of the pillars of Aatma Nirbhar Bharat. Without basic amenities like school buildings, qualified teachers, power, networks, and internet connections, we cannot imagine Aatma Nirbhar Bharat. The government needs to provide funding and work to upgrade infrastructure continuously.
- Most importantly we have to re-innovate ourselves by changing the mindset and perception of teachers, parents, administrators all the stakeholders in the education field. This new system of education is something we must accept.
- In Himachal Pradesh, more courses in vocational education ought to be offered. More courses in teaching, commercial cooking, jewellery making, photography, tool building, and game development should be added.
- NCERT has introduced the 10 Bagless Days handbook with information related to activities, skills and different types of career opportunities. It is now the responsibility of the school management, principals, and teachers to utilize this information not merely as a formality, but with a progressive and positive attitude.
- When incorporating vocational education into the school curriculum, it is crucial to prioritize

implementation at the grassroots level. Teachers must ensure that they do not limit their focus to specific areas when exposing students to various career opportunities. For instance, in Indonesia, many students become disinterested in the learning process because of the excessive emphasis on social studies (Suharno et al, 2020).

Conclusion

The National Education Policy 2020 is the foundation for transforming Bharat into Aatma Nirbhar. The 2020 policy states that vocational education will begin in grade 6. National Education Policy 2020 have focused on making a flexible curriculum, providing vocational education at the school level, using technologies, focusing on 21st-century skills, and raising awareness about different opportunities. However, history shows that policies are not as effective when implemented in practice as they are when they are in writing. Political parties often make promises, but sometimes these promises remain mere words and are not put into action. For instance, in 2022, it was announced that every research scholar in Himachal Pradesh would receive 3000 rupees per month. However, it is now 2024, and this promise has still not been implemented. We must ensure, review its merits and drawbacks, and strive to make policy implementation successful in the manner outlined in the paper.

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