

Chapter II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the research already being done on vocational education and attitudes of students and teachers towards it. The objectives of this literature review are to show the arguments of the past observations and investigations about the attitude towards vocational education existing among students and teachers. The discovery from the past studies will be used to both inform and structure the investigation methodologies. Here a view of National Education Policy 2020 on vocational education is also included in literature review as it forms the basis of new ideology and outlook towards vocational education.

2.2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Vocational Education in NEP 2020

NEP 2020 looks at the complete re-imagining of how vocational education should be offered. It envisions integration of Vocational Education programs with mainstream education and vocational exposure at early ages in middle and secondary schools, with vertical mobility and multiple career pathways to be available for students from vocational streams. Emphasis is on dignity of labour, importance of various vocations, arts and artisanship. By 2025, it aims to get at least 50% students through school and higher education systems to have exposure to Vocational Education.

Vocational Education versus General Education

India has one of the largest technical manpower in the world but the importance was given to general education compared to vocational education. This has caused large number of educated people to remain unemployed. From a systemic perspective, the poor standing of Vocational Education in India is highly problematic. General education, and especially academic education, is considered highly valuable in Indian society, mirroring an attitude prevalent in the rest of Asia (Pilz M. , 2016)

According to **V.K. Rao (1999)**, the term vocational education is used to mean that education should prepare people to work more efficiently. Vocational education implies specific education in training in the usable knowledge skills and competencies for occupation. The term general education is used to mean that education should prepare people to live more intelligently as citizens and to understand and enjoy life. General education implies the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed by persons for successful and purposeful living. School education provides both general and vocational courses at secondary level but the general public tends to regard the former as preparing intelligent youth for University entrance and accordingly for better employment opportunities and the latter as accommodating the less intelligent who are to enter lower occupations. Industry generally expects schools to turn out youth with a good level of academic achievement and adaptability and does not attach much importance to pre-employment training designed to prepare young people for specific occupations.

U.K Singh and K.N Sudarshan (2006) in their book on Vocational Education say, “the modern trends to avoid multi-streams at the school stage and instead dividing education in watertight compartments of general and vocational education and segregating students at an early age is rather unsound and unfair

educationally”. If they are offered a common or comprehensive system of school education bivalent in character and content, that is a combination of general academic subjects and vocational subjects such an arrangement could not only provide academic learning but also learning experiences for some vocation.

Vocational training may start from grade nine onward and goes on into post-secondary education, depending on the type and level of course offered (International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training, 2018). It is not associated to higher education but refers to certificate-level training in a variety of craft skills. While vocational education as part of higher and tertiary education may be viewed as ‘the poor cousin’ of academic education, the standing of vocational training in Indian society is even worse (Kumar, 2016). The current status of VET in India has severe effects on adverse selection, as students who comply with given requirements will always opt for an academic pathway. Formal VET in India is rooted strongly in theory, while practical components, in-service training, and the application of theoretical knowledge is neglected. Coming back to the status of general versus VET, the emphasis on theoretical teaching may also be related to the issue of the low value placed on manual labour and the overall poor standing of VET in society. (Pilz M. &, 2021).

Attitude towards Vocational Education

Investigations present that the general view that vocational education is not a favoured option of study among students and that the VET programs are suffering from the low reputation and bad image in the society. There is a need to look into the reasons for this perspective about vocational education in society, including teachers and parents which also influences the perspective of students.

Positive attitude towards a subject motivates students to spend more time studying and thinking about it, making them feel good about the subject and interested in pursuing it further (Lewis R. Aiken 2002). Attitudes serve both motivational and cognitive functions combining elements.

The choice toward vocational education is a choice towards a career. Lam (1982) classified barriers that influence a student to not enrol in further educational pursuits. This classification system divides the reasons into three main categories. Intrapersonal reasons include: attitudes, perceptions, images, motivation, career maturity and value systems. The second category is immediate external reasons that include two subcategories: school factors (distance to schools, friends, extracurricular school activities) and influence of others (friends, parents, counsellors, school personnel, neighbours, teachers and other relatives). The third category is remote external reasons which include: socioeconomic status of students, family size, parental income and parental educational levels.

There are numerous factors that influence attitude. **R.Gopi (2012)** identified eight factors: maturation, physical factors, home influences, social environment, government, media, the teachers and the curriculum. These factors greatly influence whether students have positive or negative attitude towards vocational education and training. (Gopi, 2012)

In relation to the issue associated with Vocational education and Training(VET), and the negative perceptions of both VET and the students who participate in VET, it is essentially the case that VET has been seen to be a “soft” option and of low status, “vocational education remains limited by the conception that it is for lower achieving students”. (Dalley-Trim, 2007)

Knowledge of student aspirations and perceptions plays an important role in the education planning process (Conroy, 1998). Without a basic understanding of the factors affecting those aspirations and perceptions and considering the enrolment trends over the last decade, vocational education may cease to exist as an option for students. This knowledge would help in developing a positive outlook and attitude towards vocational education and their willingness to further pursue it as a career option. The education level needs to be raised in terms of quantity, but at the same time it is necessary to focus on the quality of institutions providing training. Otherwise, neither general education nor vocational education participation can be expected to move to a broader base.

Students have somewhat favourable attitude towards Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) program. Significant gender and educational level differences in attitude towards TVET program were found. It was found that male students favoured TVET program more than female students. Furthermore attitude was found to be rising as a student level of education is increasing (Devi & Chella 2003). Students were lacking adequate parental advice and teachers' guidance regarding vocational education and training (Ngogog 2014) Moreover it was suggested that secondary schools have to work with TVET institutions to create positive attitude towards TVET among students and to integrate TVET in the secondary school curriculum. The finding that the attitude of the students was uncertain / moderate towards vocational education contradicts the generally held opinions that the students, especially from the academic schools have low opinions towards vocational education. Generally, students are found to be more interested to vocational education. Majority of the students disagree that vocational education and training is designed for low performing students (Sudhakaran & Rathidevi, 2019).

2.3 RESEARCH GAP

It is widely accepted that there should be a link between education provided to the youth and the world of work. Moreover, there should be a link between subjects taught in school and industry. Education has the purpose of improving the economy of the country. First is to provide specific job skills, while the second is to prepare people for participation in economic, working and community life. There should be a balance between academic and vocational objectives of schooling which is desired but still very elusive. Whatever the objectives of secondary schools and colleges, the role of vocational education should be complementary and supportive.

The vocational education space, over the years has seen intensive attempts at modernisation, but it still faces challenges in quantity and quality areas, having witnessed a painfully slow and stagnant growth. An assessment by the National Institute of Open Schooling highlights that only 2% of the total population in between 15-29 years of age have received formal vocational training, and only 8% have received non-formal vocational training. Even the 12th Five-Year Plan (2012–2017) estimates indicate that fewer than 5% of the Indian workforce between the age of 19-24 received formal vocational education. Vocational schooling creates a sense of ‘second class’ citizenship in society. A person pursuing a vocational course is considered inferior to those students opting for mainstream higher education avenues (Raman, 2020).

Vocational education has conventionally been considered as a poorer alternative for students who have been considered unable to benefit from further general or academic education. Societal attitudes, employment situation, school related reasons, selection process for higher education are the factors that determine students' attitudes towards vocational education? (Sudhakaran & Rathidevi, 2019).

There are many steps being taken to popularise vocational education by the government by starting many programs to promote it and make it a preferred choice among students. Many skill development and education programs have been started and it has been made a mission to promote vocational education.

However despite such efforts most of the students still prefer academic education and are vary of joining vocational education. It is important to understand their outlook towards it and the factors influencing their decision to join this stream. There are societal as well as parental influences. Students are also largely influenced by their teachers and what their opinions are, as they look up to them as role models.

There exists a gap between the two worlds: the world of school and the world of work. As vocational education is an important element of the education system, it is paramount to know and understand the attitude and perceptions of secondary school students towards vocational education and analyse factors affecting formation of such attitude and perceptions.

There is a need to study how these influences form attitude of society, parents, teachers and students towards it, which in turn affect student's choice to take up academic or vocational education. Students' inclination towards particular type of education is also linked to their aspirations and ambitions of what they want to achieve in life and where they see themselves in future. Students' choice of education is also associated with the kind of job they want to do, and their perception of a respectable job. Generally job that one gets after doing any vocational course are not the kind of jobs desired by many. These jobs are considered lowly and not respectable. One of the reasons for not preferring these jobs is lack of dignity of labour in the society and looking down upon people who do these jobs. There is an

alarming trend of declining enrolment, increasing dropouts and shortages of skilled personnel.

This study therefore, attempts to close that gap after having determined the attitudes of students and teachers towards vocational education and the relationship that exist.

This chapter contains the related literature relevant to the attitude towards vocational education. These review present different views on vocational education, attitude of students and teachers towards it and factors affecting it. On the basis of above review, it was concluded that the investigation of present study regarding attitude of secondary school students and teachers towards vocational education is very essential. It will be helpful to develop an understanding about why students are not choosing vocational education.

The next chapter presents an in-depth look at the design of the study.