

# VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR PWDS- AN OVERVIEW

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**Abstract:** Vocational education is equally important concept for all – be it non disabled person or PWD. In this article we have tried to know why vocational education is important for adults as well as person with special needs. Vocational education with its emphasis on preparation for jobs and careers in diversified vocational – professional fields, occupies an important place in bringing up young workers entrepreneurs. It is need of the hour to place emphasis on vocational education by way of making this to be integral part of school education system. School drop-out and adults, PWDs can also receive these types of education as it provides opportunity to learn a skill or trade. Our Hon'ble Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Damodardas Modi has focused special attention on the skill development including that of PWDs. For this 'Skill India' scheme has been launched and a special ministry ( Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship) has been created for looking into this flagship scheme. These days we have many well paid career fields in which a college degree is not required. In this article various components and concepts pertaining to vocational education have been discussed.

**Key words :** Vocational Education, NPE, VET, CTE, ,ILO, TRANSITION, OSERS,

## Introduction

Rehabilitation is a broad term and comprised of various aspects of human life. Of any rehabilitation programme, 'Vocational Education' is an important and integral part of successful rehabilitation. Vocational education prepares a PWD towards a better vocationally trained. The social exclusion and discrimination faced by person with disability has increasingly been acknowledged as a human rights issue. A paradigm shift, from a medical and charity based welfare model of disability to that of empowering PWDs. Today's right based model acknowledge the movement to link disability issues to a full range of civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights. Evidence already shows that right based frame work for looking at disability has increased social and economic developments.

Vocational education or skill based education available in certain disciplines that enables students to acquire skills which are traditionally non –academic and totally related to specific trade, occupation or vocation. They are also known as 'Technical Education'. Career and Technical Education (CTE) or Vocational Education and Training (VET) as they directly develop expertise in a particular group of techniques or technology through manual or practical activity<sup>1</sup>. "Vocational Education and Training (VET) may be defined as an education and training which aims to equip people with knowledge, know-how, skills and /or competences required in particular occupations or more broadly on the labour market.

Vocational education as the term itself denotes the students receiving this are specialized in particular trade/ vocation & skills and therefore they have more chances getting gainfully employed and a better place in the society as compared to others. It makes an individual a responsible and independent where as those who study regular, traditional and lack of skill developing courses lack in this sphere. This education provides stable jobs as these are the jobs whose demand is never fulfilled.

It is the need of the hour to make 'Vocational Education' to be integral part of school education system. School drop-outs, uneducated adults and PWDs can also receive these types of education as it provides opportunity to learn a skill or trade as per interest and aptitude of the learner. There are many well paid career fields in which a college degree is not required. Vocational education is very important for PWDs as well -the first when the parents become aware that their child is special need or *divyang*. The next is when the child becomes eligible for educational services and the parent must find the level of disability. Another period is when the child leaves school .and the last is when the aging parents no longer assume responsibility for the child well being.

## Aim & Objectives of vocational education

- Vocational education is concerned with the training wrt vocation. It is linked with productivity.
- Vocational education prepares individual for jobs and hence making him/her a productive member of the society.
- It has adequate employment potentialities- means opportunity for all.
- It leads to dignity of labour –a well trained hierarchy of work- force.
- It is helpful in the maximum and judicious utilization of the material resources of the country.

The first education commission of India, *popularly known as Kothari Commission* (1966) pointed out that vocationalisation can bring education into closer relationship with productivity. It also recommended to give a strong education and to increase the emphasis on agricultural and technological education at university stage<sup>1</sup>.

Present NPE i.e. The National Policy on Education (1986) and its revised formulations gave stress on the introduction of systematic, well planned and rigorously implemented programmes of vocational education.

Following are the aims and objectives of vocationalisation of education according to the National Policy on Education – 1986<sup>2</sup>:

1. To develop a healthy attitude among student towards work and life.
2. To enhance individual employability.
3. To reduce the mismatch between the demand and supply of skill man –power.
4. To provide an alternative for those intending to pursue higher education without particular interest or purpose.
5. To prepare students for identified vocation spanning several areas of activity.
6. An emphasis in vocational education will also be on development of attitudes, knowledge, and skills for entrepreneurship and self – employment.

7. To provide opportunities to fulfill the needs of women, rural sections of society.
8. To give opportunities for professional growth, career improvement and lateral entry into courses of general, technical and professional education through appropriate bridge courses<sup>2</sup>.

From the above discussion we conclude some of the common aims and objectives of **Vocationalisation of education**

These are as follows:

1. To increase the productive potential of the country.
2. To raise the economic standard of people.
3. To reduce the level of unemployment by providing self –employment schemes.
4. To utilize man-power to fullest extent
5. To make the students skilled technician.
6. To help for equitable sharing of benefits of economic development to ensure social and economic justice.
7. To help students understand the scientific and technological aspect of contemporary civilization.
8. To make use of material
9. To exploit the scientific and technical knowledge for betterment of the society
10. To generate in pupils a love and appreciation for work.

Now-a day's vocational education has got impetus due to the development of science and technology. So planning and implementation of the programme will certainly help in controlling and solving the problem of educated unemployment of our country.

“The wealth and prosperity of a nation depends on effective utilization of its human and material resources through industrialization. The use of human material for industrialization demands its education in science and training in technical skills. Industries open up possibilities of greater fulfillment for the individual. India's enormous resources are an asset in the modern world, when trained and educated.”- *Science policy resolution, Government of India (March 4<sup>th</sup>, 1958)*

### Definition of vocational education

The federal board for vocational education, U.S.A. defined vocational education in 1917 in the following manner

“.....vocational education must be compatible with vocational training for the common wage earning employments. It may be given to boys and girls who, having selected a vocation, desire preparation for entering it, to boys and girls who having already taken up a wage earning employment, seek greater efficiency in that employment, or to wage earners established in their trade or occupation, who wish through increase in their efficiency and wage earning capacity to advance to positions of responsibility”

Hill (1922) held the view that “vocational education is a phase of education where in emphasis laid on preparation and participation in occupation of social value. Its means are both within and outside the school<sup>3</sup>.”

The Encyclopedia Britannica (1997) emphasizes more on the format of education than on other things when it defines vocational education as,

“Instruction needed to equip persons for industrial or commercial occupations. It may be obtained either formally in trade schools, technical secondary schools, or more informally, by picking up the necessary skills on the job<sup>4</sup>.”

Training for specific occupation in agriculture, trade or industry through a teaching and practical experience provided by many high schools in their commercial institutions of collegiate standing

Educational training that provide practical experience in as agriculture, home, economics or industry.

The term vocation” means an individual's development of talents and abilities in the choice and enjoyment of a career.

What is vocational education is education within vocational school that prepares people a specific trade. It directly develops expertise in techniques related to technology, skill and scientific technique to span all aspects of the trades.

### The Models

1. **The School Model:** The school model covers all public and private school and other institutions which provide a wide range of general, technical and vocational courses between compulsory and higher education. Learning takes place on a full –time basis in a vocational high school or technical school. Students progress on a yearly basis and usually graduate with vocational certificates.
2. **The Dual Model:** The Dual model encompasses all kinds of apprenticeship programmes offering initial vocational training under the formal system with highly structured program of one to four years duration. It usually involves part-time enterprise training and part time school or further education under the shared responsibility of employers and educational bodies. The dual model characterized by a strong and highly developed apprenticeship sector, is found in Austria, Germany and Switzerland.
3. **The Mixed Model:** The mixed model which bears a strong resemblance to the dual model and gives greater emphasis to the non – formal sector is generally found in countries where the school model is the dominant form. The rationale is to develop TVET outside the formal sector. So that the school sector does not unduly dominate. The mixed model in the united kingdom has a long traditional linked with on –the –job education and training.<sup>5</sup>

### Challenges in general:

1. The need for vocational education training is growing.
2. This is caused by population growth.
3. Education is seen as key –factor in development
4. Educational programs do not match the skills needed on the local labour market.
5. National governments are upgrading TVET institutions to universities, leaving a gap at the bottom of the educational pyramid.
6. Higher education is concentrated in the bigger cities, leaving the countryside underserved.

### Need for vocational education in India

- Reduction in unemployment
- Creation of SMEs
- World class productivity & quality

- Export & tourism surge
- Traditionally, the vocational education has been provided to the adults and adolescent student as post school programmes.
- The prevocational curriculum has been designed to provide work related skills and work skills to the age group of 14 years and above for MR, MD, deaf blind and other disabilities.
- Many a time at the prevocational level, students find job available in the sheltered workshop only.
- Recent trend is to train the PWDs in the skill that are directly useful for daily living.

From the pre-primary level, the child needs to be trained in those skills that are required frequently in school, domestic, vocational and community environments. Hence there is a need not to compartmentalize the educational and vocational activities on the logic that the prevocational skill training can go together with teaching of other skills to achieve the objective of making them ready to enter into work environment initially as a trainee, an apprentice and consequently as a worker.

#### Advantages:

- Shorter duration
- Lesser cost
- Hands on experience
- Labor-market outcome
- Career minded education

#### Disadvantages:

- Limited flexibility
- Add on cost
- Wrong attitude
- Dearth of institution
- Narrow curriculum
- Unsuitable medium of instruction
- Lack of continuous education

#### Purpose of vocational Rehabilitation:

As we are aware that about 600 million PWDs live around the world, out of which 370 million PWDs reside in Asia. Around 238 Million PWDs are of working age in Asia and mostly live in rural areas that need to be economically rehabilitated. Vocational education enables a person with disability to prepare for and obtain/ retain suitable employment so as to make him / her suitable for vocational rehabilitation.

It is really alarming that unemployment rate of PWDs is getting doubled compared with that of general population and nearly 80% belong to developing countries. Some of features are:

- ❖ PWDs are among the poorest in the population
- ❖ Socio economic costs to the country are high
- ❖ Untapped resource of workers

#### Trends affecting vocational rehabilitation models

- ❖ Form charity based to rights based
- ❖ From medical to social model
- ❖ From centralized to community based services
- ❖ Increased cost of welfare
- ❖ Recognition of business benefits of hiring workers with disabilities

#### Benefits of hiring people of disabilities

1. PWDs benefits: Provides economic rehabilitation and making them a productive member of society.
2. Employer benefits: Making them a part of 'inclusion' of PWD; also eligible for government's various schemes & incentives.
3. Society benefits: A role model of 'inclusive society'- a positive attitude of the society.

#### Transition for any student with a disability involves several key components which include:

1. An appropriate school programme
2. Formalized plans involving parents and entire array of community agencies that are responsible for providing services.
3. Multiple, quality option for gainful employment and meaningful post-school training

#### Transition Models:

Various transition models have been put forward which may be summarized as below:

1. **OSERS** definition of Transition (Will 1984) : Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) has made school to work transition a national priority. Transition from schools to work life is an outcome-oriented process encompassing a broad array of services and experiences that lead to employment transition is a period that includes high school, and the initial years in employment. Transition is a bridge between the security and structure offered by the school and opportunities and risks of adult life.
2. **Wehman, Kregal and Barcus Transition Model (1985)** : This is another model available for the transition process which has three stages namely **input and foundation**, **process** and **employment outcome**, each stage explains various aspects of the transition process.
3. **Pathways Model**: Pathway Model has four stages in the process of making an employment related decision: **the action, service, outcome and review stage**. The pathways model focus on the role of the adult with developmental disabilities in the decision making process and looks at the outcome not as job placement but as employment that leads to increased degrees of economic-self sufficiency for individual worker. This model look at the disabled as a person with strengths and needs similar to the non-disabled individual.<sup>6</sup>

**Importance of parent involvement**

The role of the family as an advocate and case manager for young adult with PWDs is critical during this phase. The service and resources require a long term vision. Only family is in a position to demand outcomes that enhance the individual's quality of life. The family member especially their parents should begin planning which provides a vision of what their special need son/daughter will be doing after 15 years and so. The planning should include where the person will work, earn, recreate and live.

**Recognizing the Parents Role**

1. They should join hands with the professional to identify suitable job for their children
2. They should approach the professionals to assess their children functionally and give sufficient information.
3. They should co-operate with the employers regarding the training and placement of their children when the professional act as liaison the employer and parents of the PWDs employee.
4. They should initiate training in different training sites in consultation with the professionals.

**What is ITVP?**

Individualized Vocational Transition Plan is developed by special educators at secondary and pre-vocational level in consultation with parents, vocational staff, the student and possibly an employer.

**Employment Models**

Inclusive employment: The International Labour Organisation (ILO) believes that the best opportunities for women and men with special need in developing countries are the same as those for the working age population for working age population in general. The various models are as

**Competitive Employment**

Open employment is an employment with PWDs which enables them to be placed, trained and supported in competitive job in integrated environment with the assistance of qualified persons.

**Sheltered Employment:**

Sheltered workshop provides non-competitive long term employment to PWDs. Its uniqueness lies in its ability to provide them with an opportunity to make a useful contribution to society and to their own well-being productive work.

**Group Employment**

Sheltered workshop has its own limitations to provide its own limitations to provide remunerative employment, parents and community interaction and overall personality development of the trainees is a modified version of sheltered employment. It is organized by the group of parents of an adult service providing agency. It provides vocational skill training, remunerative employment and community interaction and personality development persons with PWDs<sup>6</sup>.

**Empowerment of person with disabilities**

Many differently abled children are deprived from participating in games and activities that other children consider an integral and enjoyable part of their childhood. Women with disabilities feel particularly disadvantaged. Elderly disabled persons in the twilight of their lives are the most vulnerable. We need to involve people like these in more special and cultural activities where they can participate as their different abilities.<sup>7</sup>

**Job for PWD**

Any categories of PWDs may be provided job placement be it specific disability, intellectual disabilities, other severe disabilities (Deaf blind, multi handicapped) but when we are working with deaf blind and multiple disability they need more adaptation and help in many areas viz communication, social, physical environment, and orientation & mobility etc.

**Service oriented jobs (Open/Supported employment)**

Office dispatch section assistant, library helper, guest house helper, canteen helper, printing press helper, whole sale medical shop helper, grocery shop helper, socks press worker, LPG distributor helper etc.

**Production oriented trades (Sheltered /Group/Self employment)**

Paper work, Stitching or Tailoring, Candle making, lamination of photographs, Mushroom cultivation-helper, helper in growing vegetable, jute work, handloom work, socks packing, jewelry designing, food preparation, earning assembling, pickle making, soft toys making, painting, art and craft, preparation of stationary items, umbrella assembling, preparation of cleaning materials, screen printing, manufacturing of cardboard files, manufacture of wire cut bricks and tiles, preparation of poly bag nursery, vegetable garden & seed packets, Tea stall, assistant teacher or helper in school etc

**For example : Art & Carft ( Block Painting ) for Multiple Disability including Deaf blind**

- To develop fine motor skill
- To develop Aesthetic sense
- To develop money concept
- To develop vocational skill
- To develop cognitive skill
- To develop eye hand co-ordination

**CANDLE MAKING:**

Tasks	Pre-requisite skills
Preparation of dies	Fine Motor skills Sense of hygiene
Melting wax and mixing colours	Safety precautions Colour concept Eye hand coordination
Packing the candles	Number concept minimum up to 12

Through this activity learn so many skill for example money concept ,number concept , work related behaviour, quality of product , sense of responsibility , social skill, safety skills.

**Example other disability**

Visual Impairment	Hearing Impairment Mild disability	Physically challenged with Moderate Disability
Computer Operator , Receptionist, Typist, Front Office job, Telephone Operator, etc.	Cashier, Receptionist, Typist, Back Hand Operations , etc.	Receptionist, Typist, front Office job etc.

We have a number of successful stories of PWDs who after completing higher education and/or vocational training have made their place in the society and placed themselves as a role model since they knew the disability is only a state of mind.

Some successful persons with disability they are working / associated in different area and made name for themselves:

- Late Lal Advani (Visual Impairment) Supreme Court lawyer and disability rights activist.
- Late Javed Abidi (Physically challenged) disability rights activist.
- Devendra Jhanjhar (Physically challenged) Paralympian
- Ms Deepa Malik (Physically challenged) Paralympian
- Smt. Anuradha Dalmia, (low vision) Director, National Institute for Persons with Visual Disabilities, Dehradun.
- B.N Chadrashankar (low vision with progressive vision loss) working as a free lancer.
- Charls Rayabati (low vision) working as an E-content developer in Andhra Government.
- Zamir Dhale( Deaf blind ) working as a advocacy officer in Sense International India.
- Pradeep Sinha (Deaf blind) working in 'Enable India'.
- Akhtar (Deaf blind) working as Clerk in 'Morgan Stanley'.
- Pawan (Intellectual disabilities) working as a motor bike mechanic .
- Rajesh ( Deaf blind ) runs his own shop in Gujrat

Some other role models who have excelled in their fields are Ms Sudha Chandran , Ravindra Jain , Girish Sharma , Shekar Naik, H.Ramakrishnan, Preethi Shrinivasa ,Satendra Singh , H.Boniface , Sai Prasad Vishwanathan, Akbar Khan and Ms Arunima Sinha.

The list is very long and this is just tip of iceberg.

Disabilities (UNCRPD) in October 2007 Article (1) of the convention states that , “persons with disabilities include those who have long term physical , mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others”

**Work Participation by Person with Disabilities:** A recent draft of the “**Social Assessment Report**” on **National Rural livelihood Project** clearly mentioned that ‘some groups are more disadvantaged than others. Analysis show clearly that Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, some religious minorities, women and people with disabilities are amongst the disadvantaged groups’. The total work participation rate among the disabled is 34.5 % of which 25.8 % and 8.7 % shares .

Finally, it can be said without any hitch that strong and positive belief in the different capacities of people along with right direction and opportunities for success are the key ingredients of ensuring success of PWDs.

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