

Use of English Language to Empower Youth: Skill Development and Sustainable Society

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Introduction

- Like other BRICS countries, India as symbolic shift in global economic power.
- China has become world's manufacturer, India is thriving on human centric services industry.
- *The demographics*
- *The adaptability of Indian youth to language*
- *Logic and mathematics*
- *Favorable time zones*
- *Shown impressive economic growth*
- *Sought favorably by the MNCs as an outsourcing hub*

The Other Side

- About 40% of Indian population is poor and over 50% of them is youth.
- No enough education resulting in consequent shortage of employment opportunities.
- Services sector has the potential to address the employment problem, but needs people with business communication skills.
- *This paper evaluates and explores various skills training programs based on business change, English communication and soft skills, which are influencing socio-economic and cultural aspects to make significant impact on the Indian society .*

- *“Developing countries, not affected by ageing populations (the workforces of India and Brazil will grow by more than 200 Million people over the next two decades) will also face huge skill gaps in some job categories due to low employability”.*

(Global talent Risk Report 2011, World Economic Forum)

Objective

- As per **Millennium Development Goals**, a major goal of education is poverty alleviation.
- ***The Declaration of Education for All***, signed by over 150 nations, reaffirms the close link between education and development at the individual, national and global levels.
- A major role played by international development organizations and conferences in rationalizing a discourse that strongly links development and education for development.

- *By 2040, the global population, aged 65 and above, is expected to reach 1.3 billion.*
- Would result in shortage of skilled workers in the US, France, Japan and Germany
- *Human intensive economic activities would shift to developing countries like India.*
- India has a potential to lead outsourced services industry, even as it struggles with poverty.
- *The Indian situation here is a classic example of mis-match in global demand and supply.*

Sector	2008	2022
Textile and Clothing	35.4	61.6
Building and Construction	25.0	58.0
Auto and Auto Components	13.0	48.0
Real Estate	11.0	25.0
Organized Retail	0.3	17.6
Banking , Financial Services and insurance	4.3	8.5
IT-ITes	2.2	7.5
Electronic- IT Hardware	0.9	4.2

Relevance

- In this context, this paper discusses citizen's initiatives and some CSR projects for the urban youth and how business communication equips them for the global placements.
- It exemplifies the prime role of communication skills in livelihood and how the Indian experience could be replicated in developing nations across Asia, Africa and Latin America

English and Business

- The spread of English as a global tool for business communication has several reasons.
- Numerical Argument: English speaking people 337 million across the globe, 1350 million speak English as 2nd language
- Physical Distribution: Urbanization in developing countries combined with international migrations to major English speaking countries is changing the world demographics.

English and Business

- Vehicular load: Preferred for scholarly, commercial, technological, diplomacy, tourism and entertainment purposes.
- Monetary and Political Power of English: facilitates capitalism, economic opulence and effects of globalization.

India in 2015

- India has a population of 1.2 billion and 40% earn just about a dollar a day.
- *50% are dependent on agriculture, which contributes very less to GDP.*
- There is a need to shift under-employed people from agriculture.
- *These low skilled, under educated people could easily move to services sector with little skill development.*

India Today

- Only 2% Indian receive formal Vocational Training while 8% get informal on the job training, compared to 93% in Korea and 72% in Germany
- *Approximately 80% of the workforce in rural and urban India does not possess any identifiable marketable skills.*
- India's education system is also characterized by a high "school dropout rate" -- 56.8% by the time students complete secondary schooling.

Challenges

- India's challenge is not just unemployment but also of un-employability.
- *Majority of the 400 million unskilled, unemployable youth live in slums or villages.*
- Cast-out from the social fabric they feel disempowered and can fall prey to undesirable elements.
- *The need is to engage them in easy to use and easy to learn skill building programs to gain confidence and livelihood.*

Challenges

- India's services sector industry accounts for 57.2% of the GDP.
- Provides employment to 23% of the work force and is growing.
- Information technology and BPO are among the fastest growing industries.
- Organized retail supermarkets account for 24% of the market as of 2008.
- English as the medium of business communication is the preferred option for jobs in retail, hospitality, healthcare, BPO and other sunrise sectors.

Why English?

- Three main drivers in India towards the greater use of English:

Education: increasing demand for English-medium schools, widening access to higher education, incorporation of English training in vocational education

Employment: many jobs in the organized sector now require good English skills

Social mobility: English is seen as an access route to the middle classes and geographical mobility within India and beyond.

Issues to Handle

- Achieving employability in services sector through Business Communication are threefold:
- 1. Students are not confident, as they do not have background or support system.
- 2. Teachers are not adequately trained to teach English and lack infrastructure.
- 3. Lack of good quality and localized curriculum linked content that enables learning.

Changing scenario

- A silent revolution is taking place in the field of education in India
- Non profits- Non Government Organizations playing a major role by utilizing Government's social welfare schemes leading to transformation of the society.
- A study has established that English-language proficiency among Indian workers leads to higher hourly wage earnings.
- vocational training programs with emphasize on business communication and human skills
- (Retailing, Hospitality, Beautician, Tailoring, etc)
- These NGOs address the issues of employability and income generation abilities.
- Leads to consequent improvement in quality of life of the deprived youth.

English v/s. Employment

- The objective here is how the benefits of English be enjoyed without damaging India's multilingualism, unique identity or cultural richness
- Analysis of the following case studies of NGOs involved in the skills development program, especially Business Communication and Soft Skills present unique strategies and implementation models
- Can be replicated across the globe.

1.Kotak Education Foundation

- It is based on Livelihood Advancement Business School (LABS), a unique training program, pioneered by Dr. Reddy's Foundation (DRF), Hyderabad.
- Trained and placed 125,000 youth in jobs in last 10 years.
- One of their projects 'Kotak Unnati' provides vocational training to under privileged school/college dropouts between 18 to 25 years from vernacular medium school to make them employable.

Pedagogy: Kotak Unnati

- Segregation by domain v/s learning level
- Some classes are segregated by the initial competence and aptitude. However, generally the classes are segregated as per domain (e.g. Sales, Hospitality, and Customer Relations etc).
- Syntax through Listening, Speaking and Thinking.
- Assembly and Attendance, Chorus, Individual evaluation ,Pair and Share
- Grouping, Scripts and Role Plays

2. Teach India Program

- An initiative of *Times of India*, a leading Indian news paper to teach spoken English to the poor urban youth.
- Launched in 2008, Teach India has grown into a national movement
- British council helped in designing the curriculum and for training the volunteers and teachers
- Target poor youth in age group 18 to 32 years with basic introduction to English and who seek to improve employability

Pedagogy: Teach India

- Curriculum includes Life-skills, capacity building, personality development, grooming & job preparedness.
- A learner-focused approach, with the teacher as a facilitator.
- Collaborative learning methodologies extensively used.
- Learners are trained on the use of language in IT and in customer service scenarios
- Assignments are based on examples from relevant industries like retail, financial services, hospitality, etc.
- Additional 2 week module 'Face the World' taught at the end of 10 weeks.
- Focuses on soft skills and interview skills

3. Yuva Parivartan

- Based in Mumbai
- Offers different vocational training Programs for the underprivileged youth.
- Founder Mr. B.G.Kher was an active Gandhian
- Helping unmotivated school dropouts become economically independent by imparting livelihood skills
- Started in 1998, is spread over 70 Centers in 4 States.
- Target learner is anyone aged 15 years or more, can read and write, from communities/ backgrounds where parents are illiterate, steeped in traditional mind set and whose family income is meager.

Pedagogy: Yuva Parivartan

- Livelihood Training (Electrical Wireman, Multi skill Technician, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration, Motor Mechanic, Tailoring & Fashion Designing, Beautician, Nursing, English Speaking & Life skills, Basic Computers)
- Community Engagement (Leadership development, Community work, Sports, Culture, Recreation & Life skills).
- Placement Support (employment in the organized sector and SMEs or guided to become self employed by the staff of each centre.).
- Industry partnership: Industry Partner / Professional Expert who assists in updating the curriculum

4. Etasha Society

- Providing placement as well as employability skill training and career guidance to young people from disadvantaged communities in India.
- Founded in 2006
- Target school drop outs, or those who want to work to support their families, rural agricultural families, small vendors and service providers in the unorganized sector.
- SPEC (Speaking English with Confidence) focuses on the ones who never had practiced the language, but have theoretical exposure to the language in schools.
- Microsoft Unlimited Potential with Spoken English (MUPSE) program for young people who have yet to complete basic schooling.

Pedagogy: Etasha Society

- Use the direct approach.
- Speaking Only in English for the entire duration of the course.
- Use of an innovative mix of cues, visual aids, role-play, visits etc .
- Focus on building each student's vocabulary and confidence so that they are able to present in public in the language at end-of program certificate ceremony.
- Learning is context based, using scenarios and settings that are relevant to them and will assist them in moving into the world of work in the future

Impact and Employability Quotient

- All the above mentioned initiatives show a substantial impact in terms of employment generated for the trained candidates.
- Speaking skills have put the target learners into the job race where the absorption in the job market is more than 70%.
- More than 85% of them are employed in the fields of Hospitality, retail and Information Technology.
- Trainees' starting salaries range from Rs. 5000 to Rs. 15000 (US \$ 100 to 300) per month, and some organizations offer free travel, subsidized food, life and health insurance.

Sustainability Challenges:

- Trained professionals and socially inclined staff
- Continuous process of community engagement & development by providing Free Education and training
- Networking amid the corporate and academic fraternity.
- Designing Customized Modules & Delivering Quality in Training Programs
- Theoretical & Practical Orientation as per Industry Requirements
- Focus towards Value Creation, Adaptation, Continuous Learning & Innovation.

Value proposition and Global Implications of this study:

- Some of these challenges are shared by other countries at a similar stage of economic and social development.
- Others are probably unique to India.
- language can increase the earning power of individuals by around 25% and that developing economies need access to English if they are to grow and position themselves in the global economy.
- These success models of India can be replicated worldwide.
- A comparison of situation in Bangladesh, Cambodia and Kenya and common Challenges in these diverse economies which can be solved by the similar approach and success models used in India:

Conclusion:

1.
 - Successful Indian models like the four above can be replicated through following model/ methodology in any of LDCs/developing countries which lack the infrastructure and resources:
 - a) **Community Channel**: Can be administered on an “Interest Inventory” which will in turn put the target in “Work Readiness Module”. Can be conducted with industry partnership.
 - b) **Direct Channel**: The objective is to acquaint the participants with the requisite know how about the sector / industry, desired by them to venture into.

Conclusion

- **c) Franchise Channel**: Training programs can be customized for companies and emphasis would be given on developing skills, knowledge and understanding required to achieve their key result areas
- **d) Self Help Group Channel**: Identifying & mobilizing Self Help Groups (SHGs) & assisting them in marketing their products effectively, to give them requisite skills training in entrepreneurship, retailing, packaging & branding, customer management, life skills, computer basics and Communicative English.

Conclusion

- 2. Replication/adaption of the Indian models would ensure that there would be no need to reinvent wheel .
- 3. Local resources in the Developing countries can be productively utilized without cost of experimentation. It would also ensure provision of low cost option of employment generation in growing services sector.
- 4. E-learning can help in adaptation of Indian modules as also Video/CDs

Thank you