

A Study on International Law relating to Skilling of Youth vis-à-vis Indian Law on Skilling of Youth

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Abstract: Skills and knowledge are the driving forces of economic growth and social development for any country. Countries with higher and better levels of skills adjust more effectively to the challenges and opportunities of world of work. In this juncture, it is required to explore current state of international law and standards on skill development of youth vis-à-vis national law and standard and find out lacunae thereof. Skilling of youth is a facet of human right of education, work and health and above all a right to life. And, the future prosperity of nations is also depends ultimately on the number of persons in employment and how they are at work. In case of India, the management of the Vocational Education and Training System/Skilling is fragmented and shared between various institutions, which are in confusion. In this regard, simple and only answer is the adoption of a comprehensive legislation on Skill Development and Vocational Education and Training for providing legal backing for skill development, vocational education and training in the country. Otherwise, instead of harnessing ‘demographic dividend’; we could be facing a ‘demographic nightmare’.

Key words: Skills, international law, national law, human rights, skill development law and demographic dividend

Introduction

Education, vocational training and lifelong learning are central pillars of employability. Skilling of youth or skill development is a key in stimulating a sustainable development process and can make a contribution to facilitate the transformation from the informal to the formal economy. Skills development is also essential to address the opportunities and challenges to meet new demands of changing economies and new technologies in the context of globalization.

Skills and knowledge are the driving forces of economic growth and social development for any country. Countries with higher and better levels of skills adjust more effectively to the challenges and opportunities of world of work.

In recent years, heightened social and economic challenges have placed skills development at the centre of the global and national education debate.

Defining youth and skills

Youth is a more fluid category than a fixed age-group. 'Youth' is often indicated as a person between the age where he/she leaves compulsory education, and the age at which he/she finds his/her first employment. Often, Youth age-group is defined differently by different countries/agencies and by same agency in different contexts.

- UN – between 15 and 24 years of age
- NYP 2003 - between 13-35 years
- NYP 2014 – age group between 15-29

However, it needs to be recognized that all young persons within this age-group are unlikely to be a homogeneous group. Different segments of the Youth would have different needs and concerns, which need to be addressed.^[1]

Many languages distinguish between capabilities that are innate and competencies that are acquired through experience in schools and non-school settings. English uses the words 'intelligence' and 'talent' to refer to capabilities that are inborn or acquired early in childhood. The Dakar Framework for Action used the English word 'skills' to refer to competencies that can be gained from experiences during and after childhood, especially through education.^[2]

Skills are understood by the EFA movement to originate from deliberate and intentional experiences offered by formal, non-formal, employer-based or other lifelong learning opportunities. 'Skills' is more specific than general 'knowledge' because skills are intended to yield economic, social, developmental or political consequences.

The Dakar Framework referred to 'life skills', advocating not only the capability of generating or adding value to an economic product (what economists term 'human capital'), but also the skills individuals need for a fulfilling and healthy life and full participation in society. The World Health Organization (WHO) described life skills as 'a group of psychosocial competencies and interpersonal skills that help people make informed decisions, solve problems, think critically and creatively, communicate effectively, build healthy relationships, empathize with others and cope with and manage their lives in a healthy and productive manner.'^[3] The Interagency Working Group on Life Skills in EFA stated that life skills are 'cross-cutting applications of knowledge, values, attitudes and skills that are important in the process of individual development and lifelong learning.'^[4] In short, life skills were perceived as necessary to promote good health in oneself and one's family, and to maximize one's contributions as a citizen, beyond just earning a livelihood.

The 2012 GMR, subtitled 'Youth and Skills: Putting Education to Work', focused on skills for employment – sometimes also called 'livelihood skills' – that could be considered 'foundation', 'transferable' or 'technical and vocational'. Foundation skills, as they relate to employment, are those needed to obtain work or continued training and include literacy and numeracy skills. Transferable skills are the broader range of skills that can be transferred and adapted to different work environments, and allow people to retain employment. They also include the capabilities to analyze problems, reach creative solutions, communicate ideas, and exercise collaboration, leadership and entrepreneurship. Skills include what are sometimes called 'socio-emotional' and non-cognitive competencies that can be acquired both through experience and education. In one sense, TVET skills are the specific technical know-how related to particular work activities, whether growing vegetables, using a sewing machine, engaging in bricklaying or carpentry, or working on a computer in an office. In a broader sense, such skills also can be seen as life skills.^[5]

The goal of cutting carbon emissions poses significant challenges to the world of work. In this regard, another emerging dimension of skills is the skills for green jobs.

International Law on Skilling of Youth

It is not possible to discuss analytically all the aspect of law concerning skilling of youth in global level. Following table shows an overview of the current state of global standard in the subject matter.

Table 1 showing important international treaty and soft laws concerning skilling of youth

Name of the Instrument	Year of adoption	Remarks
ILO Convention concerning Unemployment	1919	No. 2
Universal Declaration of Human Rights	1948	
ILO Recommendation concerning Vocational Rehabilitation of the Disabled	1955	No. 99
ILO Convention concerning Employment Policy	1964	No. 122
ILO Recommendation concerning the Vocational Training of Fishermen	1966	No. 126
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	1966	India is a State Part Entered into force on 3 rd January 1976
ILO Recommendation concerning Vocational Training of Seafarers	1970	No. 137
ILO Recommendation concerning Special Youth Employment and Training Schemes for Development Purposes	1970	No. 136
ILO Convention concerning Vocational Guidance and Vocational Training in the Development of Human Resources	1975	No. 142 India is a State Part
ILO Convention concerning Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons)	1983	India not ratified
ILO Recommendation concerning Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons)	1983	No. 168
Recommendations of the International Congress on the Development and Improvement of Technical and Vocational Education	Berlin, 1987	
Convention on the Rights of the Child	1989	India is a State Party
UNESCO Convention on Technical and Vocational Education	1989	Entered into force on 29 th August 1991 India not ratified
Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion	1989	
World Declaration on Education for All (EFA)	Jomtien, 1990	
ILO Recommendation concerning General Conditions stimulate Job Creation in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises	1998	No. 189
Recommendations of the Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education	Seoul, 1999	
Dakar Framework on EFA goals	2000	
UNESCO Revised Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education	2001	
CESCR, General Comment No. 14 on the right to the highest attainable standard of health	2000	
CRC General Comment No. 1 on the Aims of Education	2001	
UN Declaration of Commitment on HIV and AIDS	2001	
CRC General Comment No. 4 on Adolescent health and development in the context of the Convention on the Rights of Child	2003	
ILO Recommendation concerning Human Resources Development: Education, Training	2004	No. 195

and Lifelong Learning		
ILC Global Jobs Pact guideline	June 2009	
Bonn Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development	2009	
G20 Multi-Year Action Plan on Development	Seoul, 2010	
World Bank's Skills Toward Employment and Productivity (STEP) framework	Washington, D.C. 2010	
Shanghai Consensus	2012	Recommendations of the third International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education and Training "Transforming TVET: Building skills for work and life"
OECD's Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)	2012	
UNESCO's Strategy for TVET	2012-2015	

(Compiled by Author)

If education, learning and skills are to be seen as both enablers and drivers of inclusive and sustainable development, it is important to review the experience of education within the framework of the international development agenda. The more comprehensive international education agenda is that of six 'Education for All' goals adopted in the 2000 Dakar Framework for Action. The annual EFA Global Monitoring Report has been monitoring progress towards these goals since 2002/2003. ^[6] The expansion of access to primary education has also resulted in the recognition of a growing demand for secondary and tertiary education and increasing concern for vocational skills development, particularly in a context of growing youth unemployment. Beyond these trends, however, it is important to underline that the Millennium Development Goals narrowed the international education agenda to Universal Primary Education and gender equality.

UNESCO's Convention on Technical and Vocational Education, 1989 along with Revised Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education (2001) are considered as framework convention and guideline and thereby useful piece of legislation and standard setting in this regard.

In 2008, the International Labour Conference adopted a set of conclusions on skills for improved productivity, employment growth and development. The Conference ^[7] called for a holistic approach to skills development encompassing the features viz. continuous and seamless pathways of learning - starting with pre-school and primary education, development of core skills, development of higher-level of skills, portability of skills and employability. The ILO Recommendation on Human Resources Development ^[8] identifies shared responsibilities for skills development:

- Governments have primary responsibility for education, pre-employment training, core skills, and training the unemployed and people with special needs.
- The social partners play a significant role in further training, workplace learning and on-the-job training.
- Individuals need to take advantages of education, training and lifelong learning opportunities.

The Shanghai Consensus ^[9] recommended and called for that governments and other Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) stakeholders in UNESCO's member States consider implementing the following actions:

- Enhancing relevance of TVET
- Expanding access and improving quality and equity
- Adapting qualifications and developing pathways
- Improving the evidence base
- Strengthening governance and expanding partnerships
- Increasing investment in TVET and diversifying financing
- Advocating for TVET

Moreover, the Shanghai Consensus recognized that the active engagement of the international community, including multi- and bilateral actors as well as private institutions and civil society, is of vital importance to addressing the policy challenges for TVET, and accordingly recommended among others that;

- Recognize the essential role played by TVET in tackling youth unemployment and underemployment
- Ensure better visibility and support for TVET as an integral part of the post-2015 international education and sustainable development agendas
- Align international cooperation with national needs in TVET and cross-sectoral strategies to enhance ownership of development programmes and encourage further support in this area

The Education for All (EFA) Monitoring Report ^[5] provides a complete assessment of progress towards the EFA goals established in 2000 at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal. The report takes stock of whether the world achieved the EFA goals and whether EFA partners upheld their commitments. It also explains possible determinants of the pace of progress and identifies key lessons for shaping a post- 2015 global education agenda. It is not possible to highlight all the details of the report but it is evidence that 'youth and adult skills' is an important and integral part of EFA goals. EFA goals are all mutually interrelated but particularly goals 3 and 6 are direct bearing in skilling of youth (life skills). The UNESCO's EFA goals ^[5] are listed as follows:

Goal 1 – Early childhood care and education

Goal 2 – Universal primary education

Goal 3 – *Youth and adult skills*: Ensure that the learning needs of young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes

Goal 4 – Adult literacy

Goal 5 – Gender equality

Goal 6 – Quality of education: Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and *essential life skills*

Studies like the OECD's PIAAC ^[10] and the World Bank's STEP framework gauge the importance of cognitive and non-cognitive skills that matter to adults' livelihoods, well-being and citizenship.

Skilling of youth as a facet of human right of education

Education narrowly refers to formal institutional instructions. In a wider sense education may describe "all activities by which a human group transmits to its descendants a body of knowledge and skills and a moral code which enable the group to subsist". ^[11]

The right to education is a universal entitlement to education. Education has been formally recognized as a human right since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. This has since been affirmed in numerous global human rights treaties, including the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) and a number of regional human rights instruments.

These treaties establish an entitlement to free, compulsory primary education for all children; an obligation to develop secondary education, supported by measures to render it accessible to all children, as well as equitable

access to higher education; and a responsibility to provide basic education for individuals who have not completed primary education. Furthermore, they affirm that the aim of education is to promote personal development, strengthen respect for human rights and freedoms, enable individuals to participate effectively in a free society, and promote understanding, friendship and tolerance.

The UN *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989) (CRC) [child - every human being below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable, majority is attained earlier, Article 1] further strengthens and broadens the concept of the right to education. Article 29(1), the CRC is the foundation of skill development of youth in the framework of right to education. Article 29(1) read as:

Article 29(1), CRC: Aims of Education

"1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:

"(a) the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;

"(b) the development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;

" (c) the development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;

"(d) the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;

"(e) the development of respect for the natural environment."

From the provisions above, it is clear that Article 29 (1) not only adds to the right to education recognized in article 28 a qualitative dimension which reflects the rights and inherent dignity of the child; it also insists upon the need for education to be child-centered, child-friendly and empowering, and it highlights the need for educational processes to be based upon the very principles it enunciates. The education to which every child has a right is one designed to provide the child with life skills, to strengthen the child's capacity to enjoy the full range of human rights and to promote a culture which is infused by appropriate human rights values. The goal is to empower the child by developing his or her skills, learning and other capacities, human dignity, self-esteem and self-confidence. "Education" in this context goes far beyond formal schooling to embrace the broad range of life experiences and learning processes which enable children, individually and collectively, to develop their personalities, talents and abilities and to live a full and satisfying life within society. ^[12]

Education must also be aimed at ensuring that essential life skills are learnt by every child and that no child leaves school without being equipped to face the challenges that he or she can expect to be confronted with in life. Basic skills include not only literacy and numeracy but also life skills such as the ability to make well-balanced decisions; to resolve conflicts in a non-violent manner; and to develop a healthy lifestyle, good social relationships and responsibility, critical thinking, creative talents, and other abilities which give children the tools needed to pursue their options in life.

Right to health vis-à-vis skilling of youth

The concept of a right to health has been enumerated in international agreements which include the WHO Constitution, the UDHR, ICESCR, CRC and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The WHO Constitution, notably, marks the first formal demarcation of a right to health in international law.

The 'Health' is mentioned on several instances in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). Article 3 calls upon parties to ensure that institutions and facilities for the care of children adhere to health standards. Article 17 recognizes the child's right to access information that is pertinent to his/her physical and mental health and well-being. Article 23 makes specific reference to the rights of disabled children, in which it includes health services, rehabilitation, and preventive care. Article 24 outlines child health in detail, and states, "Parties recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. States shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such health care services."

In this background, the Committee on the Rights of Child (CRC) concludes that adolescents have the right to access adequate information essential for their health and development and for their ability to participate meaningfully in society. It is the obligation of States Parties to ensure that all adolescent girls and boys, both in and out of school, are provided with, and not denied, accurate and appropriate information on how to protect their health and development and practice healthy behaviours. This should include information on tobacco, alcohol and other substance use and abuse, safe and respectful social and sexual behaviours, dietary habits and physical activity.

In order to act adequately on the information, adolescents need to develop skills to promote healthy development and prevent particular health problems. Skills are needed to enable adolescents to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. Life skills include self-care skills, such as how to plan and prepare balanced nutrition or ensure adequate personal hygiene; and skills for dealing with particular social situations such as interpersonal communication, decision-making, coping with stress and conflict. States Parties should stimulate and support opportunities to build such skills through, inter alia, formal and informal education and training programmes, youth organizations and the media.

The Committee draws the attention of States Parties to the General Comment No 14 of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) stating that: "States Parties should provide a safe and supportive environment for adolescents that ensures the opportunity to participate in decisions affecting their health, to build life-skills, to acquire appropriate information, to receive counseling and to negotiate the health behaviour choices they make. The realization of the right to health of adolescents is dependent on the development of youth-sensitive health care, which respects confidentiality and privacy and includes appropriate sexual and reproductive health services."^[13]

Right to work – a facet of skilling of youth

The right to work is the concept that people have a human right to work, or engage in productive employment, and may not be prevented from doing so. The right to work is enshrined in the UDHR and recognized as a human right through its inclusion in the ICESCR.

Article 23(1) of the UDHR declares that "Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment." The ICESCR goes a step further in this regard i.e. obligation of States to provide productive employment through technical and vocational education (Article. 6). The relevant part of the Article is reproduced below:

- (1) The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right to work, which includes the right of everyone to the opportunity to gain his living by work which he freely chooses or accepts, and will take appropriate steps to safeguard this right.

- (2) The steps to be taken by a State Party to the present Covenant to achieve the full realization of this right shall include technical and vocational guidance and training programmes, policies and techniques to achieve steady economic, social and cultural development and full and productive employment under conditions safeguarding fundamental political and economic freedoms to the individual.

Skills development law of India

It may say that India is also approaching towards the global standard on skilling of youth or skill development in generic sense. Following table highlights the relevant law on the subject in India.

Table 2 showing skills development related law in India (both binding legislations and mere policy and guidelines):

Instruments	Year of Notification	Remark
The Common Norms for Skill Development Schemes implemented by Government of India	15 th July, 2015	Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, GOI
National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship	2015	
National Youth Policy	2014	
Credit Framework for Competency based Skills and Vocational Education under NSQF	11 Nov, 2014	Dept. of Education, MHRD
National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF)	19 th Dec. 2013	Ministry of Finance
Chhattisgarh's Right of Youth to Skill Development	2013	
UGC Guidelines for Community Colleges	2012-2017	Schemes of Community Colleges for Universities and Colleges (2012-2017)
UGC Guidelines for Introduction of Bachelor of Vocation (B.VOC.) Programme in Universities and Colleges under the NSQF		
National Skill Development Mission	2015	
Apprentices Act	1961	
National Occupation Standards		National Skill Development Corporation
The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act	2009	
National Charter for Children	2003	
National Policy on Education, 1986 (as modified in 1992)		The New Education Policy is likely to be formulated by December, 2015

(Compiled by Author based on official websites of various Ministry, Govt. of India)

In India, Constitution is the fundamental and supreme law of the land. Right to education (6 to 14 years of age) is a fundamental and statutory right in India but right to health and work are directive principles. India is a state party to major human rights treaties including CRC and therefore there is international obligation on the part of India in this regard.

In this aspect, the National Charter for Children, 2003 linked the skilling of youth as a part of education in India as a vision document by instrument of empowering adolescents. The Charter states that the State and community shall take all steps to provide the necessary education and skills to adolescent children so as to equip them to become economically productive citizens (Article 12).

There are seventeen ministries and departments of GOI which are imparting vocational training to about 3.1 million persons every year (12th plan). India has set a target of skilling 500 million people by 2022. Vocational training is a concurrent subject, Central Government and the State Governments share responsibilities and both can make law on this subject. At the national level, Director General of Employment & Training (DGE&T), Ministry of Labour is the nodal department for formulating policies, laying down standards, conducting trade testing and certification, etc. in the field of vocational training. At the State level, the State Government departments are responsible for vocational training programmes.

The Apprentices Act, 1961, as amended from time to time, regulates the training of apprentices. The Act serves a dual purpose—first, it regulates the programme of training apprentices in industry so as to conform to the prescribed syllabi, period of training, etc. prescribed by the Central Apprenticeship Council and second, to utilize fully the facilities available in industry for workers.

It is also worth to mention that the National Policy on Education, 1986 highlights the essence and role of education in national perception. It gives due importance to vocational education and skill development. ^[14]

The Government has initiated the consultation process of formulating a New Education Policy to meet the changing dynamics of the population's requirement with regard to quality education, innovation and research, aiming to make India a knowledge superpower by equipping its students with necessary skills and knowledge and to eliminate the shortage of manpower in science, technology, academics and industry. PIB (2015) has forecasted that the New Education Policy is likely to be formulated by December 2015. ^[15]

Youth in the age group of 15-29 years comprise 27.5% of the population. At present, about 34% of India's Gross National Income (GNI) is contributed by the youth, aged 15-29 years. However, there exists a huge potential to increase the contribution of this class of the nation's citizenry by increasing their labour force participation and their productivity. The National Youth Policy, 2014 ^[16] seeks to define the Vision of the Govt. of India for the Youth of the Country and identify the key areas in which action is required, where not enough is being done, to enable youth development and to provide a framework for action for all stakeholders. It is intended to serve as a guiding document, and it provides a holistic Vision for the youth of India which is "to empower the youth of the country to achieve their full potential, and through them enable India to find its rightful place in the community of nations".

The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship formulates the National Policy on Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, 2015 (NPSDE) (that replaced National Policy on Skill Development, 2009). ^[17] The objective of the NPSDE is to meet the challenge of skilling at scale with speed and standard (quality). It will aim to provide an umbrella framework to all skilling activities being carried out within the country, to align them to common standards and link the skilling with demand centres. In addition to laying down the objectives and expected outcomes, the effort will also be to identify the various institutional frameworks which can act as the vehicle to reach the expected outcomes. The national policy will also provide clarity and coherence on how skill development efforts across the country can be aligned within the existing institutional arrangements. This policy will link skills development to improved employability and productivity.

In order to bring about uniformity and standardization in the implementation of various Skill Development Schemes by different Central Ministries/Departments, the Government of India has approved constitution of a Common Norm Committee as the apex body to update and suitable revise the Common Norms. The Common Norms for Skill Development Schemes (CNSDS) implemented by GOI are notified on 15th July, 2015. The CNSDS defines 'skill development', Courses for skill development, input standards, outcome of skill development, funding norms and other related matters in the Annexure 1 of the notification.

All Skill Development courses offered under the scheme framework must conform to the National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) notified on 27.12.2013 which provides for transition of all training/educational programmes/courses so as to be NSQF compliant by the third anniversary date of the notification of the NSQF (i.e., after 27.12.2016). Government funding would not be available for any training or educational programme/course if it is not NSQF compliant. All training providers empanelled/approved by the various Ministries/Departments of the Government of India/State Governments/NSDA/NSDC/Sector Skill Councils would need to comply with this requirement of the NSQF failure to do which would lead to their de-listing by the concerned empanelling/approving authority. ^[18]

In addition to these developments, the National Skill Development Mission was approved by the Union Cabinet on 01.07.2015, and officially launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 15.07.2015 on the occasion of World Youth Skills Day. The Mission has been developed to create convergence across sectors and States in terms of skill training activities. Further, to achieve the vision of 'Skilled India', the National Skill Development Mission would not only consolidate and coordinate skilling efforts, but also expedite decision making across sectors to achieve skilling at scale with speed and standards. It will be implemented through a streamlined institutional mechanism driven by Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE). ^[19]

Conclusion and major recommendations

It is found that skilling of youth is a part of human right of education, work, health and above all right to life. And, the future prosperity of nations is also depends ultimately on the number of persons in employment and how they are at work.

In a nutshell, the building blocks of any skills strategy must be solid foundation skills and stronger links between the worlds of education and work. This in turn requires good-quality education in childhood; good information on changes in demand for skills; education and training systems that are responsive to structural changes in economy and society; and recognition of skills and competencies, and their greater utilization in the workplace. To be effective, policy initiatives in these areas will also need to be closely linked with economic and social policy agendas.

It is also found that it is also required to relook and consider the relevance and currency of UNESCO's Convention on Technical and Vocational Education (1989) and the Revised Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education (2001), with a view to the possible development of new or revised normative instruments adapted to a changing world. In consultation with Member States and other concerned organizations, explore the possibility of setting up an international task force to develop international guidelines on quality assurance for the recognition of qualifications, based on learning outcomes, and identify a set of world reference levels, to facilitate the international comparison and recognition of TVET qualifications.

The concept of 'skills' has been broadened beyond livelihood skills to include those needed for citizenship and, even for sustainable development. In line with ILO Recommendation 195 and the Shanghai Consensus, greater information on skill provision outside school, and its outcomes, should make essential dimension of education.

In case of India, the management of the Vocational Education and Training System is fragmented and shared between various institutions, which are in confusion. There is a lot of scope to improve coordination between them and improve their effectiveness through more functional partnership. In this regard, India needs a comprehensive legislation on Skill Development and Vocational Education and Training for providing legal backing for skill development, vocational education and training in the country in the line of 1996 Vocational Education Law of the People's Republic of China or South Africa Skills Development Act, 1998. In addition, India needs to ratify the UNESCO Convention on Technical and Vocation Education, 1989 and other relevant treaties on skill development as early as possible.

Last but not the least, the criticality of Skill Development in our overall strategy is that if we get our skill development act right, we will be harnessing 'demographic dividend'; if we do not get there, we could be facing a 'demographic nightmare'.

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