

## 'Make in India' is our collective responsibility

Prashant C. Trikannad



Sanjeev Duggal CEO and  
Director Centum Learning  
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*The logo "lion" can truly come alive in the form of India becoming a manufacturing hub only if India's youth or 65 per cent of its population were to be transformed from being cubs to lions through appropriate skilling. Make in India is our collective responsibility and the first step in that direction is "First Develop Youth," says **Sanjeev Duggal**, CEO and Director, Centum Learning.*

### **Do you have suggestions as to how the government can make India a manufacturing hub through its 'Skill India' and 'Make in India' programmes?**

The "[Make in India](#)" campaign launched by the Prime Minister echoed the voice of industrialists for the need of skilled manpower. It is a startling fact that 2 per cent of India's youth and only about 7 per cent of the working population have received any formal training so far.

Manufacturing cannot become a growth driver if the lack of skilled workers continues to be the greatest constraint in this journey. A survey conducted in 2014 reveals that around 78 per cent of the surveyed employers said they are concerned with the growing skills gap in India while 57 per cent said they currently have open positions for which they cannot find qualified candidates.

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### **Can you briefly discuss the current skill development scenario in India?**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi made a historical announcement with the launch of "Make in India" campaign in September 2014. Make in India, according to the PM, is not a slogan – it's a mission to be accomplished, with new sectors to be opened, new mindset, and new ray of hope for making India a world leader in manufacturing. Making India the manufacturing hub will increase the share of manufacturing in GDP and will also create opportunities for employment in the manufacturing and allied services sector.

The new government has also been able to recognise the disparities in the extent to which young people have been able to acquire formal skills. Subsequently, the government has made provisions for upgrading skills under multiple disciplines and allocated resources across the length and breadth of the country. Further, a separate Ministry for Skills Development and Entrepreneurship has been tasked to coordinate and streamline multiple skill development initiatives undertaken by the government to build a skilled and employable India.

As per the statistics: India has a demographic dividend advantage over many countries because of the fact that 75 per cent of its population falls in the working age group of 15 to 59 years.

By 2050, as per the forecasts, India's working population would be in excess of one billion resulting in number of people in the age group 20-60 being higher than as compared to today.

The foremost action that needs to be taken in order to make this workforce employable is by imparting right kind of skills and knowledge in this respect.

Skill-based education is not a choice but a need in India where the demand for skilled professional is still

very high and the desire to get skilled is low. Learners, parents and society prefer socially acceptable qualifications in pure academic subjects. Youth still incorrectly believe that skill-based education leads to low paid jobs and it is perceived to be meant for only academically weak students, school dropouts and for people in the lower strata.

Besides, it is not about skilling alone. Challenge is to create right kind of jobs for which people are skilled. Maximum skilling, through government initiatives, happens in rural areas; but rural youth or the candidates enrolled in these skilling programmes are hesitant to make a shift from their comfort zone to experience city life.

### **How critical is training and skill development in the industrial and infrastructure sectors?**

Infrastructure has been identified as the only sector which has the potential to bridge gaps and lift our economy out of the current financial turmoil. Although the [construction](#) industry faces a number of bottlenecks, the primary challenge for them is sourcing skilled manpower.

Skill requirements in infrastructure sector:

- \* Acquisitions in steel sector
- \* Move towards semi-automatic and automatic operations for long product manufacture
- \* Further automation in steel processing
- \* Increasing complexity of operating and maintenance of equipment

### **How can skill training be imparted to India's vast and unorganised workforce?**

In order that the human resource is developed for gainful employment/self-employment, the training must be need based, and should provide employable/self-employable skills. The purpose of the skill development is to create skilled and knowledge based manpower by empowering them technically so that they can earn their sustainable livelihood. All training programmes should be well-designed through graded exercises, keeping in view the market requirements for various trades. Short-term non-formal, modular courses of three-six months duration, depending on the local needs and commensurate with the available local resources with proper structures, yet having the desired flexibility to pave the way for self-paced open learning mode (OLM), should be offered. Depending upon local circumstances in some cases multi-skill training may be offered to make self-employment viable in the rural economy. In some of the trades, advance skill course for three to six months duration may be designed and offered as per the interest of trainees or as per the demands of local companies/industries/market.

Preferences may be given to the training courses with technical bias.

- \* Providing basic skills, knowledge and attitudes for self/ wage employment to intended beneficiaries in their own villages/communities or nearby areas.
- \* Imparting entrepreneurial skills for initiating micro/tiny enterprises especially for the rural youth and community.
- \* Offering skill up-gradation programs in their own fields, or for adoption of appropriate technologies for enhancing their employment prospects.
- \* Identifying and conducting special skill training programs for Women, SCs/STs, OBCs, minorities, school dropouts, street children, physically handicapped, economically
- \* Weaker sections of the society and other under-privileged persons.

\* Special training programs may be organized on health and hygiene.

### **What are your views on the government's National Skill Development Mission?**

Our Prime Minister is passionate about skill development. Under his able leadership, India will provide workforce to power global growth. The new policy is expected to be in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a "Skilled India" that would also provide trained manpower to schemes such as Make in India.

### **Do you think the government's target of "skilling" 500 million by 2022 is achievable?**

National Skill Development Agency is encouraging innovation in skills development and promoting entrepreneurship in the country. PM has envisioned that skilling programmes can be held at not-so-busy railway stations to generate employment in rural areas. As it tries to give an impetus to vocational training in the country, the government is considering a plan to set up an university for skill development.

The newly set up skills ministry is determined to encourage innovative ideas and modules in skill development landscape and at the same time assist the youth of the country in the skilling and entrepreneurial domain, to translate the vision of the government into a concrete reality. With focus on self-employment as a key aspect to job creation, the government has chalked out a plan to set up incubation centres at all districts across the country to train budding entrepreneurs. The government has also decided to revamp the antiquated industrial training centres that will skill over 20 lakh youth annually and devise special courses based on industry needs. All these are positive signs to show that the government's target of skilling 500 million will be achieved.

### **How can the central and state governments work together to make a success of its National Skill Development Mission?**

The central and state governments work together with private players to make the Skilling movement a success. Corporates partner with government agencies pan India to roll out skilling programmes. With the Prime Minister's call to 'Make in India', there is a growing need being felt for skilled manpower which is hardly surprising considering that just 2 per cent of India's youth and 7 per cent of India's working population have received any formal training so far.

Manufacturing cannot be a growth driver if the lack of skilled workers continues. In a survey conducted in 2014, around 78 per cent of the employers said they were concerned about the growing skills gap in India while 57 per cent said they had opened positions for which they could not find qualified candidates. Therefore, there is a dire need to change the outlook of job-seekers and job-givers through skill development. And, towards this end, the central and state governments need to work together to make National Skill Development movement a success. Skill development on a massive scale cannot be envisaged if we don't get out of the "silo" syndrome, resist the temptation to corral broad policy like private participation from companies like Centum Learning.

### **What are the challenges and opportunities for skill development in India?**

The biggest challenge is that 'Vocational Skill Development is not aspirational'. Low intrinsic aspiration quotient leading to low demand for vocational programmes. The process of mobilising students in 'akin to evangelizing'.

Secondly, although industry cites absence of skilled manpower as a major constraint in its growth, it is not willing to offer a premium for skills. This further dampens a student's motivation to take up vocational skills.

A large percentage of our workforce is in the unorganised sector. Accessing this workforce and making skill development opportunities available to them is a challenge.

Also, a vast majority of our target segment comprises underprivileged youth, school dropouts etc. who cannot pay for skilling.

**Mobilisation:** Mobilisation of students to get trained has been a major concern. The traditional mindset, low willingness to migrate, low salaries at entry level, lack of recognition of long-term premium associated with skilling, inability to pay for training, lack of employers' endorsements, and illiteracy have made the workforce less responsive towards skilling initiatives.

**Employers' buy-in:** From an industry point of view and specifically in the unorganised segments the employer does not distinguish whether an employee has picked up skills on the job or he has acquired them through formal training and hence skill premium or any other financial incentives are lesser known components of the skilling ecosystem.

**Scalability:** Getting the right kind of training partners, effective stakeholder management, obtaining buy-in from the corporate sector who didn't realise the opportunity in this space till very recently, scaling up and alignment of aspirations to current jobs is important.

The other issue is identifying the right training partner who can meet the requirement of the industry and can fit into the new skilling ecosystem. Scaling up of these partners is another challenge that needs to be addressed considering markets behave differently from state to state

Government focus on skill development is one of its priority agendas. The government has set up sector skill councils to prepare standards required for training programmes. The industries are also proactively taking steps to partner with the government and reduce the skill gap.

**Financial support:** The government has doubled the allocation of funds for skill development

- \* Allocation of Rs.1,500 crore towards Skills Development and Entrepreneurship.
- \* Allocation of Rs.196 crore for support for Skills-based Higher Education including Community colleges.
- \* Allocation of Rs.200 crore for National Mission in Education through ICT.
- \* Allocation of Rs.90 crore for National Mission on Teachers and Teaching.
- \* Allocation of Rs.1,000 crore towards establishment of Self-Employment and Talent Utilisation (SETU) fund to boost innovation and entrepreneurship in the country.
- \* Allocation of Rs.150 crore towards Atal Innovation Fund (AIM) an innovation platform that will draw upon the experiences of academics, researchers, entrepreneurs to foster a culture of innovation, R&D and scientific research in India.
- \* Fully IT-based student financial aid scheme for higher education.
- \* NayiManzil – an integrated education and livelihood scheme for minorities has been proposed. Establishment of new ITIs in underserved regions and the existing ITIs being upgraded to centres of excellence to produce multi-skilled workforce of world standards.
- \* MoUs with states and it is defining outcomes and reforms and imposing an obligation to transfer autonomy to PPP.

\* Setting up more polytechnics in **PPP mode** and 400 government polytechnics being upgraded

\* Expansion of vocational education from 9,500 senior secondary schools to 20,000 schools; intake capacity.

### **With regard to skill training and development, how does India compare with China and other emerging economies?**

China has a population of 1.45 billion of which a whopping 46 per cent is formally trained. India stands at a meagre 2 per cent of skilled workforce

### **How critical is technology to skill development and which sectors require skill training the most?**

In spite of the ongoing war on net neutrality, there is no doubt that technology has become an integral part of all curriculum including vocation education. Prime Minister Narendra Modi talks about “Digital India” with equal emphasis as “Skilling India” and “Make in India”. I will give you a live example of how technology is being used in skill development.

In Hisar, Haryana, 170 km from the corridors of power where policies are made, we are running a centre where technology and best-in-class training infrastructure is changing the way people are getting skilled to become job ready. The Skill Development Centre is offering candidates courses in retail, life skills and IT skills under the Deendayal Upadhyaya Gramin Kaushal Yojana of the Ministry of Rural Development. Sixty candidates in each batch from BPL category attend this programme which has:

- a. Biometric attendance – which students undertake twice everyday and is improving attendance, preventing spillage and therefore improving learning outcomes.
- b. Tablets – tablets which are provided to the students as a part of this programme as per DDU GKY guidelines are loaded with standardised learning content. This is enabling Technology Enabled Learning.
- c. IT Skills Lab – besides, IT skills lab at the centre allows students to work on the practical aspects related to IT vis-à-vis how to create presentations, how to create a column in MS Excel, how to apply formulas in MS Excel etc.
- d. Core/Domain Skills Lab – I was totally surprised to find that as many as 70 per cent of my class students, all of whom are from the BPL population, are on Facebook and as much as 50 per cent of this class operates Facebook on mobile phones.

### **Does Centum Learning have plans to participate in the National Skill Development Mission?**

Being the largest partner of NSDC and the first Indian MNC in the skills space, Centum Learning is one of the frontrunners partnering the government in the National Skill Development Mission. As the foremost partner of NSDC, Centum Learning has developed industry recognised National Occupation Standards (NOS) for various job roles. With its presence in 383 districts in India, Centum Learning will be a key enabler in government’s skilling mission setting out to change the picture of skill development in India.

### **Can you briefly talk about your company and its role as a “Learning and Skill Development Partner” in various fields of education and employment?**

Centum Learning is a leading skilling multinational which has already skilled 1.2 million people in emerging economies. Its mission is to improve business productivity and enhance youth employability. Centum Learning, with over 1,300 learning and development specialists and its domain expertise in 21 industry verticals, has skilled more than one million people. It is present in rural and urban locations across 21 countries including India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal, and 17 countries in Africa.

Winner of 28 national and global awards, Centum Learning has successfully partnered central and state ministries, Central Board of Secondary Education-CBSE, public sector enterprises and more than 350 corporates such as Delhi Airport, Bharti Airtel, Genpact, National Bank of Kenya, Lafarge Cement and Maruti Suzuki. Additionally, Centum Foundation, the non-profit wing of Centum Learning, partners leading corporates to fulfill their CSR mandate. In India, Centum Work Skills India, a wholly owned subsidiary of Centum Learning, has also been set up to enhance skills of 1.2 million youth across the country.