



Continuous issue-21 | April - May 2016

An empirical study about the status and utilization pattern of skills among rural youth

Preamble:

Lack of skills among the present day youth is a critical issue for transforming our economy. Youth, either urban or rural can only be empowered if we analyze their existing situation and accordingly formulate suitable strategy for their overall development. In this empirical study an attempt has been made by the researchers to find out the status of skills among rural youth. In the introductory part need for skill development among rural youth has been discussed in brief. Later on the adopted research methodology, findings and major conclusions are discussed in brief.

Rural Youth

Youth are the growth points of a society, and as has often been said, they are the leaders of tomorrow. There is a lot of literature on youth. They have been described as a powerful section of society; as the pulse of society; as the nuclei of development, as pivots of social changes and so on. Researchers and writers hypothesized that greater the proportion of youth in a society, the greater the likelihood of socio-cultural and political changes. They observed that youth around the world have taken professed aims of society more seriously than their elders. Compromise and corruption do not find favour among young people in most societies world over. Youth is by and large a highly idealized and motivated group of any society. However, the youth today does not have the confidence they should normally have in their moral self. They are always dependent on someone but they don't depend on themselves. Today, they are suffering because they feel they don't have any required knowledge, skills and particular abilities to perform. They think they were not taught. They say. "We never learnt about this." It means that youth has not been prepared to be a good social activist or to be a good employer or simply to be a good citizen. At present, the most important problem in all countries including India is the high level of unemployment and under employment among youth. The low level of education and lack of skills specially among rural youth creates lack of opportunity for successful employment. The unskilled youth are liable to be exploited in the present depressed economic situation.

Long back an eminent economist prof. Rao V.K.R.V. (1968) in his article had discussed briefly the learning and training needs of rural youth, he said that the rural youth badly need. (i) training in occupational skills, (ii) knowledge of the environment and ways of utilizing it to human advantage, (iii) knowledge of the different types of economic activities can be made more efficient, more productive and more profitable: (iv) knowledge of the working of legislation and institutions, both governmental, which are relevant to rural economic activity and the ways in which they could be used for bettering production and personal income, (v) knowledge of civic rights and responsibilities and community living, including political rights and duties, local, state and national, (vi) knowledge that can improve the quality of life such as nutrition, hygiene, sports, aesthetics, family life and welfare, and moral and spiritual values, and (vii) positive attitude to life such as cooperativeness, discipline, dignity of labor, pride in one's work, persistence, scientific temper, self-reliance, and self confidence. He further said that these all seven factors were mostly absent in the formal educational system embodied in schooling and as such it largely left out account the learning skills, and attitude relevant to the task of facing the challenge of rural life and making a good job of living in the rural areas. His statements are still valid and relevant in case of Indian rural youth.

Labour Bureau Report (2014) also reflects that the current size of India's formally skilled workforce is merely 2 per cent whereas in smaller countries like South Korea and Japan skilled workforce size is 96 per cent and 80 per cent, respectively. At all-India level around 6.8 persons aged 15 years and above are reported to have received/be receiving vocational training. Skilling workforce and using it in productive work is a great challenge before us because the skills if not used are lost.

The Economic Survey (2014-15) also mentioned that studies conducted by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) for the period between 2013 and 2022 indicate that there is an incremental requirement of 120 million skilled people in the non-farm sector whereas current capacity for skilling is grossly inadequate in the country. Hence, there is a need to increase speedily size of the skilled person power to meet out skill person power needs of the nation, The shortage of skilled person power has been attributed by lack of a formal vocational education framework, with wide variation in quality, high school dropout rates, inadequate skills training capacity, negative perception towards skilling, and lack of 'industry-ready' skills even in professional courses.

As per Census 2011, India has 55 million potential workers in the age group of 15-35 years in rural areas. And at the same time, it is expected that there would a shortage of 57 million workers by 2020. Hence, India has historic opportunity to transform its demographic surplus into a demographic dividend. Keeping this in view, the Budget 2015-16 has put forward to get demographic dividend in an inclusive mode by way of developing skills and productive capacity of the youth from both BPL and APL families. The Finance Minister in his speech spelt out the proposal for skilling population to meet out demand domestically and internationally, National Skills Mission through the Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Ministry has been created with the purpose to consolidate skill initiatives spread across several Ministries and allow government to standardize procedures and outcomes across 31 Sector Skill Councils.

Deen Dayal Upadhyay Grameen Kaushaya Yojana had also been launched to unlock the potential of rural youth in the country. An amount of Rs.1500 crore has been earmarked for this scheme and disbursement funds under it would be through a digital voucher directly into qualified students' bank accounts. With a view to enable all poor and middle class students to pursue higher education of their choice without any constraint of funds, a IT based Student Financial Educational Loan Schemes, through the Pradhan Mantri Vidya Lakshmi Karyakram has been proposed to setup so that no student misses out on higher education for lack of funds.

The approach to the Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-17), focuses on mainstreaming skill formation in the formal education system right from class 10 onwards and establishing an institutional mechanism for providing access to information to skill inventory and skill maps on a real time basis. The approach of the Government is that while the accreditation of certification process should be done by independent, specialized agencies with certification be left to the institutions. A system of funding poor people for skill development through direct financial aid or loan and Apprentice training as another mode for on-job training has also been emphasized. By eliminating the constraints of Skill development programmes, India would not only succeed in helping the countries with graying populations but it would also be able to provide/ upgrade requisite skills of the new entrant in the labour force. This approach would help India out beating China, which is leading the world at present.

Main Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of this study is to explore/investigate the availability of skills, asses the level of utilization of skills, find out the different area of skills utilization & identifying the problems in skills utilization among the rural youth.

Research Methodology-

Selection Procedure of Research area-

The multi stage random sampling design was adopted for selecting the sample for the present study. The task of drawing the sample for the study was accomplished in three stages. At the first stage, out of 71 districts of UP one district was selected randomly. After selecting the one district i.e. Mathura and identifying, its blocks, one block i.e. Baldeo was selected randomly out of 10 blocks at the second stage. At the third stage, the researcher identified the total villages in the selected block and classified them in two categories i.e. developed and under developed villages by following certain standard parameters. Finally two villages i.e. one developed (namely Bandi) and another undeveloped village (namely Basai) was selected randomly for the present study.

Sample Design: size of the sample-

It was considered essential to cover all the youth population (male as well female from 15-35 years of age) of the study villages. Hence, the census sampling of total population of the youth was adopted in this study. Finally, the researcher got a sample of 582 youth. Out of which 312 youth were from the developed village and 270 youth were from the underdeveloped village. Though the total number of the youth including male and female was 887 according to the list. But, when the researcher tried to located and identified the youth actually residing in the study village during the study period, the actual number was 303 male 279 female youth from both the study village. 160 youth from developed Village and 145 youth from underdeveloped village had migrated / shifted to big cities and towns in connection with job, Government or private services, study, marriage etc.

Findings and analysis of Data

The main findings about the study are given in following tables from 1 to 4 along with brief analysis

TABLE NO.1

Showing the availability of skills with the respondents apart from their primary occupation.

Skills	No. of the respondents in developed village	No. of the respondents in Underdeveloped village	Total
1. Animal husbandry and dairying	27	10	37
2. Teaching	21	5	26
3. Shop keeping	19	6	25
4. Driving of light/ heavy vehicles	16	7	23
5. Sewing	12	3	15
6. Typing, stenography	9	1	10
7. Musical instruments(Band Baja)	2	7	9
8. Operator(flour mill, crane, water works)	5	3	8
9. hair cutting saloon	6	1	7
10. Salesman (Medical)	6	1	7
11. Para-medical worker	4	2	6
12. Legal practice	5	1	6
13. Masonry	3	2	5
14. Repairing of Tractor/Diesel Engine	5	0	5
15. Poultry Farm keeper	4	1	5
16. Doctor(BAMS)	4	0	4
17. Turner	2	1	3
18. Fitting	2	0	2
19. Welding	2	0	2
20. Brick making	2	0	2
21. Radio/ T.V Repairing	2	0	2
22. Carpet weaving	1	1	2
23. Sweet making	1	1	2

Above table was showing the skills available with the respondents of DV & UDV apart from their primary occupation. Out of 582 respondents, 37 respondents (27 from DV and 10 from UDV) said that they had skill of animal husbandry and dairying apart from their primary occupation. 26 respondents (21 from DV and 5 from UDV) told that they had teaching skills apart from their primary occupation. 25 respondents (19 from DV and 6 from UDV) reported that they had skills in shop keeping apart from their primary occupation. 23 respondents (16 from DV and 7 from UDV) said that they had skill of driving light/ heavy vehicles apart from their primary occupation. 15 respondents (12 from DV and 3 from UDV) told that they had sewing skill apart from their primary occupation. 10 respondents (9 from DV and 1 from UDV) said that they had typing and stenography skills apart from their primary occupation. 9 respondents (2 from DV and 7 from UDV) told that they had skill of playing musical instruments (Band Baja) apart from their primary occupation. 8 respondents (5 from DV and 3 from UDV) reported that they had skill in operation of floor mill, crane, water works apart from their primary occupation. 7 respondents (6 from DV and 1 from UDV) said that they had hair cutting skill apart from their primary occupation. Another 7 respondents (6 from DV and 1 from UDV) told that they had salesman (Medical) skill. 6 respondents (4 from DV and 2 from UDV) reported that they had para-medical worker skill apart from their primary occupation. Another 6 respondents (5 from DV and 1 from UDV) said that they had skill of legal practices apart from their primary occupation. 5 respondents (3 from DV and 2 from UDV) told that they had masonry skill apart from their primary occupation. Another 5 respondents (5 from DV and 0 from UDV) said that they had skill in repairing of tractor/diesel engine. 5 respondents (4 from DV and 1 from UDV) reported that they had poultry farm keeping skill apart from their primary occupation. 4 respondents (all from DV) said that they had skill in Ayurvedic medicine. 3 respondents (2 from DV and 1 from UDV) told that they had skill of turner apart from their primary occupation. 2 respondents (2 from DV) had fitter skill apart from their primary occupation. Another 2 respondents (2 from DV) told that they had skill in welding and another 2 respondents (2 from DV) said that they had brick making skill apart from their primary occupation. 2 respondents (2 from DV) had skill of Radio/ T.V repairing apart from their primary occupation. 2 respondents (1 from DV and 1 from UDV) said that they had carpet weaving skill apart from their primary occupation. 2 respondents (1 from DV and 1 from UDV) reported that they had sweet making skill apart from their primary occupation. From the table it was very clearly observed that a very few number of respondents had skills other than their primary occupation which could supplement their income or help in getting the job in market. Apart from this finding it, was also observed that respondents of developed village were having more number of skills in comparison to the respondents of underdeveloped village.

TABLE NO.2

Showing the level of utilization of skills possessed by the respondents of DV & UDV

Nature of reaction	No. and percentage of the respondents developed village	No. and percentage of the respondents Underdeveloped village	Total
Utilizing	158(66)	81(34)	239(41)
Not-utilizing	154(45)	189(55)	343(59)
Total	312	270	582(100)

***The figures given in the bracket showing the percentage value**

Table 2 was showing the level of skill utilization by the respondents of two different studied villages. Out of 582 respondents, 239 respondents i.e. 41 percent (158 from DV and 81 from UDV) had reported that their skills were being utilized properly whereas 343 respondents i.e. 59 percent (154 from DV and 189 from UDV) had said their skills were not being utilized properly. The skills of the respondents from developed village were being utilized almost 50:50 percent whereas the skills of the respondents from underdeveloped village were mostly not utilised and the ratio of their skill utilisation and non-utilisation were 30:70. The same finding were being depicted by the bar-chart and pie-diagram. On the basis of this analysis, it was clearly observed that skills possessed by respondents were not be utilized in proper way. The ratio of non-utilization of skills was much more among the respondents of underdeveloped village in comparison to the respondents of developed village.

TABLE NO.3

Showing the different areas of skill utilization of the respondents from DV & UDV

Areas	No. of the respondents in developed village	No. of the respondents in Underdeveloped village	Total
1.Doing business/Agriculture	56	33	89
2. Giving services to the patients, parents	48	29	77

3. In the field of Horticulture, Agriculture	50	23	73
4.Small and cottage industry	42	26	68
5. Through self-employment	38	23	61
6. Teaching the children	29	12	39
7. Animal husbandry	18	7	25
8. Tailoring	13	5	18

The above table was showing the different areas of skill utilization of the respondents from studied villages. Out of 582 respondents, 89 respondents (56 from DV and 33 from UDV) said that they were utilising their skills in the field of business/agriculture. 77 respondents (48 from DV and 29 from UDV) told that they were utilising their skills by giving services to the patients, parents. 73 respondents (50 from DV and 23 from UDV) reported that they were utilising their skills in field of horticulture and agriculture. 68 respondents (42 from DV and 26 from UDV) said that they were utilising their skills in the field of small and cottage industry. 61 respondents (38 from DV and 23 from UDV) said that they were utilising their skills in doing self-business. 39 respondents (29 from DV and 12 from UDV) reported that they were utilising their skills by teaching the children. 25 respondents (18 from DV and 7 from UDV) said that they were utilising their skills in field of animal husbandry. 18 respondents (13 from DV and 5 from UDV) told that they were utilising their skills in field of tailoring. On the basis of above discussion, it was clearly observed that the skills of respondents were being utilized only in very limited areas of occupations. There was no remarkable difference between the respondents of developed and underdeveloped in terms of their skills utilization in various fields.

TABLE NO.4

Showing the problems in utilization of skills among the respondents from DV & UDV

Problems	No of the respondents in developed village	No of the respondents in Underdeveloped village	Total
1.Economic scarcity/poverty	72	26	98
2. Family problems	63	24	87
3. Unemployment	58	25	83

4. Lack of knowledge of funding source	42	23	65
5. Scarcity of time	31	14	45
6. Non availability of shop/place	28	8	36
7. lack of self-confidence due to physical defect etc.	18	13	31
8. Lack of favourable environment	13	10	23
9. Due to continuation of study	16	4	20

Above table was showing the problems being felt by the respondents of developed and underdeveloped village in utilizing their skills. Out of 582 respondents, 98 respondents (72 from DV and 26 from UDV) said that economic scarcity/poverty was the main problems for not utilizing their skills. 87 respondents (63 from DV and 24 from UDV) told that family problems were the hindrance in effective utilization of skills. 83 respondents (58 from DV and 25 from UDV) reported that unemployment was the main problem in utilization of skills. 65 respondents (42 from DV and 23 from UDV) said that lack of knowledge about the funding sources was the problem in utilization of skills. 45 respondents (31 from DV and 14 from UDV) told that scarcity of time was the problem in utilization of skills. 36 respondents (28 from DV and 8 from UDV) said that non availability of shop/place was the problem behind the utilization of their skills. 31 respondents (18 from DV and 13 from UDV) told that lack of self-confidence due to physical disability etc, was the reason behind non- utilization of their skills. 23 respondents (13 from DV and 10 from UDV) said that lack of favourable environment in the family and society was the problem in utilization of skills. 20 respondents (16 from DV and 4 from UDV) told that due to continuation of their study they are unable to utilize their skills properly. On the basis of above analysis, it was observed that there was remarkable difference among responses given by the respondents of DV& UDV in relation to problems being faced by them in utilizing their time effectively. The respondents of developed village had perceived more number of problems in utilization of their skills in comparison to respondents of underdeveloped village.

Main conclusions of the study-

On the basis of above discussion, the main conclusions about the study are as following

1. It was found that the skills available with the respondent from both the villages apart from their primary occupation were animal husbandry and dairying, teaching, shop keeping, driving of light/ heavy vehicles, sewing, typing, stenography, musical instruments(band baja), operator(floor mill, crane, water works), hair

cutting saloon, salesman (medical), para-medical worker, legal practice, masonry, repairing of tractor/diesel engine, poultry farm keeper, doctor(bams), turner, fitting, welding, brick making, radio/ t.v. repairing, carpet weaving and sweet making etc. It was clearly found that a very few number of respondents had skills other than their primary occupation which could supplement their income or help in getting the job in market. Apart from this, it was also found that respondents of developed village were having more number of skills in comparison to the respondents of underdeveloped village.

2. Regarding the utilization of skills possessed by the respondents from both the villages, it was found that the skills of the respondents from developed village were being utilized and the ratio of their skills utilization and non-utilization were 65:35 whereas the skills of the respondents from underdeveloped village were mostly not being utilized and the ratio of their skill utilization and non-utilization were 30:70.

3. Regarding the utilization of the skills in different areas by the respondents of studied villages, it was found that they were utilizing their skills mostly in area of business/agriculture, giving services to the patients & parents, horticulture, agriculture, small and cottage industry, self-employment, teaching the children, animal husbandry and tailoring etc. It was found that the skills of respondents were being utilized only in very linked area of occupation.

4. Regarding the utilization of skills by the respondents from both the villages, the major problems faced by them were economic scarcity / poverty, family problems, unemployment, lack of knowledge of funding source, scarcity of time, non availability of shop/place, lack of self-confidence due to physical defect, lack of favourable environment and discontinuation of study etc. It was also observed that the respondents from developed village had perceived more number of problems in utilization of their skills in comparison to respondents from underdeveloped village.

Conclusion-

On the basis of above conclusions ,it can be said that rural youth are having very limited skills and whatever skills they are having those are not being utilized fruitfully. The rural youth are facing many problems in skill utilization. Hence, there is a urgent need to create the conducive environment and provide the opportunities to rural youth for skill generation and creating employment opportunity at the door steps of the rural youth, entrepreneurship development programmes have to be tailored according to the needs of the rural youth in all sectors of the economy so, that untouched, untapped, unutilized natural and human resources of the rural areas can be exploited judiciously. For that government have to provide all types and kinds effective & efficient support, free flow services needed for employment and self-employment generation in rural areas by building up proper backward and forward linkages across the system and stakeholders.

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Gulab Singh 'Azad',

Ph.D. Research Scholar & Prof.

(Dr.) Kiran Pandya, Research Guide,

Veer Narmad South Gujarat University,

Surat (Gujarat)

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