

CONTRIBUTION OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF WORKING WOMEN IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020

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ABSTRACT

Education is very important for realizing one's full potential, building equitable communities and advancing national progress. The Central Government of India gave the green signal to the National Education Policy 2020 on 29 July 2020. Which states a goal for India's education system? The National Education Policy 2020 has been brought by replacing the earlier policy on education 1986. In this, along with higher education, education has also been initiated through vocational training. In this policy, there has been a wide discussion on the revival of vocational education. Vocational education is education based on employment, skill development and vocation. Vocational education has an important place in the economic self-reliance of women. Through vocational education, many changes have taken place in the life of women such as labour force participation, saving, financial independence, protection from exploitation etc. Through these, women have been able to get not only themselves but their entire family out of poverty. Now the time has come that the participation of women is being promoted by the government as well. Women's participation is now being felt in every. the (2011) census of India, the Directorate General of Employment and Training recorded the presence of about 59.54 lakh women employees in the organized sector. Out of this, about 32.14 lakh women were employed in the community, personal and social sector. The government has given Rs 1,12,899 crore to promote education in the budget of 2023-24. Of all the schemes run by the Government of India, 80 percent of the schemes include women. The purpose of this research is to show the participation of women in the social and economic sector through vocational education. To promote this, the government has established various vocational training centres, industrial training institutes, National Council of Vocational Education etc. Apart from this, there are many schemes like Skill India Mission, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 4.0 etc. PSE, UT Labour Ministry and International Labour Organization, all of these also aim to promote technical education along with practical skills. Diploma degree courses in vocational education have also been started by the PBSM under the National Skill Qualification.

Keywords - Vocational education, women's development, National Education Policy, National Skill

INTRODUCTION

Education is a process through which man develops himself. Education promotes equitable national development, national integration, social justice, equality, cultural preservation and scientific advancement in the society. Therefore, the National Education Policy was introduced by the government on 29 July 2020. The National Education Policy came before everyone as a role model. This is a document in which the development of vocational education has been talked about because earlier, recommendations for reform were being made by commissions for many years. The Kothari Report of 1966 talks about bringing diversity in vocational courses, higher education and secondary education. In 1986, the National Education Policy made recommendations to improve the management and level of vocational education. But in many years, the pace of vocational education seemed to be slowing down. NP 2020 addresses both the demand and supply of vocational education everywhere.

MHRD.2020 also emphasizes on the credit-based National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF) which was introduced in 2013. It works to connect vocational education to the mainstream. The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Human Resource Development and National Skill Development Council are the primary agencies for the implementation of vocational education and training in the country. The Manobala India Mission set a target of reaching 3000 million youth by 2022. Under this policy, there was also talk of promoting digital literacy.

Vocational education is known as the training or education that is related to vocation or employment. Vocational education is also called special education or special and professional education and training (Voice Education). This education is for training workers. The objective of vocational education is to increase the efficiency of women to earn a livelihood and also to discharge their family responsibilities well and through this the economic capacity of women also increases. Through vocational education, women become talented, perform work in a better way and gain experience in working.

Employment, skill and professional education are considered important education today. Vocational education does not include general education but it includes practical and training related education. Through general education, women do not get many employment opportunities but through vocational education, they get knowledge of the art of working with their hands. Through this education, women also get opportunities to get better employment opportunities. This gives experience of management skills and what you will get by starting your own business.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

Vocational education has been implemented in the National Education Policy 2020, but there is still a lack of information about it among working women. The reasons behind this are differences in place, lack of time, ignorance, and family problems. This type of problem prevents women from learning something new in the society. The objective of this paper is to know whether vocational education will help in providing employment to women, increasing their efficiency, removing regional and social disparities and whether women will get out of their traditional customs.

Status of working women before vocational education.

Before accessing vocational education, women faced severe employment constraints due to lack of marketable skills. Most possessed only basic general education without specialized technical competencies, limiting them to low-paying, unskilled jobs such as domestic work, agricultural labor, or simple manufacturing tasks. The majority remained economically dependent on male family members for financial support, creating vulnerability and limiting their control over household decisions. Women's work was largely confined to traditional gender-specific roles centered around household management and childcare, with income-generating activities typically being extensions of domestic skills like cooking or sewing that offered minimal earning potential.

The few employment opportunities available were characterized by extremely low wages, irregular income, and lack of job security in the informal sector. Women worked without benefits, social security, or legal protections, often subjected to unfair labor practices and unsafe working conditions. Geographic constraints due to safety concerns and social expectations further limited their employment options to immediate neighborhoods, forcing acceptance of whatever local work was available regardless of pay or conditions. Social stigma and cultural resistance from families and communities created additional barriers, as working women were often viewed as challenging traditional values.

Without independent income or recognized skills, women had minimal influence in household and community decision-making processes. They lacked professional networks, mentorship opportunities, and awareness of workplace rights. Many suffered from low self-esteem and confidence issues, doubting their abilities to learn new skills or succeed professionally. The limited earning capacity had significant implications for their families, particularly children's educational opportunities, potentially perpetuating cycles of poverty across generations. This baseline condition of economic vulnerability, limited opportunities, and systemic barriers kept women trapped in dependency, making vocational education a crucial intervention for breaking these cycles and achieving economic empowerment.

According to the World Bank report 2019, India has the lowest rate of participation of women workers globally.

- Social reasons: Indian women often face difficulty in getting employment due to household chores.

Lack of education: Due to lack of education among women workers, they also face problems in getting employment.

- Reasons for insecurity: Many times women workers also consider insecurity as a reason for employment.

Lack of family support: Many times women also lack family support, due to which women are unable to get employment.



No attainment of economic rights: Many times women also face problems in getting employment due to lack of economic power.



Lack of participation in decision making: Women often do not have the ability to take decisions for themselves. They are dependent on the decision of the family.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

- To study the provisions of vocational education under the National Education Policy 2020.
- To evaluate the impact of vocational education on the standard of living and economic status of working women.
- To identify the challenges and obstacles in the lives of working women.
- To analyze the possibility of increasing employment opportunities in the lives of women through vocational education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India (2020) “The National Education Policy 2020” document outlines a strategy for school education, higher education, vocational education and various levels of education and its implementation across the country. Previous policies on education such as the National Education Policy of 1986, which was revised in 1992, followed by the Compulsory Education Act in 2009, require a collaborative effort at the national, state, institutional and individual levels for the successful implementation of this policy.

Singh Dr. Abhishek Kumar, Agrawal Dr. Amit (2022) “A Study on Reimagining National Education Policy 2020 for Vocational and Professional Education India's new education policy 2020” based on a report headed by space scientist Kasturirangan, was announced by the Government of India on 29 July 2020. The 12th Five Year Plan (2012-2017) estimated that less than 5 percent of the Indian workforce received formal vocational education. Vocational education aims to ensure that every child learns at least one occupation and is exposed to multiple occupations. The aim of this research paper will be to analyze the development of vocational and professional education.

Cole Dr. Ramesh Prasad (2023) “National Education Policy 2020 and Vocational Education” states that vocational education refers to educational programs designed to enable individuals to acquire skills. Vocational education in India is directly applicable to the workplace. Vocational education will provide a skilled labour force in the informal sectors in the country. This education also aims to prepare for the demands and challenges of the modern workplace in the 21st century.

Shrivastava Dr. Dharmesh, Rao Dr. Ajay Kumar Govind (2024) “A Study of Vocational and Employment-oriented Education in National Education Policy 2020” describes the current education system. Its main objective, starting from literacy, has been limited to a means of livelihood. This has not only hindered the overall development of man, but has also developed many evils in society, which have violated moral values and social consciousness. Undoubtedly, there are fundamental characteristics based on the utility of the current education system. On the basis of these fundamental characteristics, conflict has increased in the society, but the class structure of society has also been born in the form of different classes. While certainly, the basic objective of education is to make it free from inequality, disintegration, hatred and conflict.

Yoganandham Dr G (2024) “Advancing Indian technical education - Navigating Challenges, embracing innovations, and Ethical and social responsibility states “that the system of technical education in India is at a crucial juncture. This system is balancing tradition with change. There are many shortcomings in the Indian technical education system such as outdated curriculum and poor facilities, lack of skilled trainers and lack of industry-academic collaboration etc. The objective of this paper is to suggest changes in technical education such as curriculum development, technology-enabled learning platforms, creative pedagogy and artificial intelligence etc.

Singh Nandita (2008) “Higher education for Women in India - choices and challenges” The research paper analyses gender inequality on social and economic basis. In the last few years, the education system for girls has improved a lot. Girls leave their studies due to many reasons. But there is a need to bring more flexibility in the higher education system so that women can take some time out from household responsibilities and fulfil their aspirations.

Mehrotra Santosh, Raman Ravi, Kumara Neha, Kalaiyarasan, Rob Daniela (2014) a “vocational education and training reform in India states” that this study has been done on the issue of reform in Indian vocational education and training. This paper states that only 2.4 percent of the workers in India have technical education. The Indian government has set a target of providing technical education to 500 million people by 2022. The help of German dual system was taken for reform in technical education. This research paper includes three major objectives 1. To study four major areas of India 2. To investigate the possibility of transferring some elements of the German dual system to the Indian context 3. To develop practical recommendations regarding the areas in which the Indian system can be improved.

Vyas Lina (2023) “Experiences of working women in India under family-friendly policies: straight from the horse's mouth” it has been told that achieving work-life balance is one of the major challenges faced by women across the world. This research has found that women in the workforce carry more responsibilities than their male counterparts. And also experience interference between family and work and it has also been found that while trying to achieve balance, one goes into stress. The result of this study came out that if the conditions in the family are favourable, then women are able to balance family and work.

The National Education Policy 2020 gives due importance to vocational education and capacity development of teachers to promote employment skills and vocational skills of learners at all

levels. The quality of the term is enhanced by identifying, designing and developing vocational courses. The participation of women in vocational education and training is particularly low compared to men. To increase women's participation, mobile training units and training based on local needs should be started. In India, female labour force participation is lower than that of men. According to the report of the Labour Force Survey 2019-20, female labour participation is lower than that of men. In 2020, the male participation rate was 56.8 percent and that of women was only 22.2 percent.

The Economic Survey for India conducted by GIDC in 2014 clearly states - at present the contribution of women in the workforce is limited to only 24 percent. Directorate General of Training: The two verticals of training and apprenticeship training under GIDC have been transferred to GIDC from 16 April 2015. Its large institutional structure, which includes IITs, GIDCs and other national institutes, is to prepare a framework for the structure, assessment, curriculum development, affiliation and accreditation of institutions under GIDC. GIDC was formed in 1956. India is ranked 76th out of 143 countries in the Global Innovation Index (2014). It aims to accelerate entrepreneurship, especially innovation-based, for large-scale employment generation in India. In 2014, the annual skilling in the country was estimated to be around 7 million.

India has more than 1.55 million schools, 25000 colleges, 3200 polytechnics and 83 youth hostels. According to the 2001 census, women constitute 48 per cent of the total population in India. If their participation in the workforce is increased, the potential of women to drive the economy will also increase.

Recognizing the imperative need for skill development, the National Skill Development Policy was formulated in 2009. The Policy on Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (2015) replaces the National Policy 2009. Skill and knowledge are the driving forces of economic growth and social development of any country. The first Industrial Policy in the country was notified in 1956, Science and Technology Policy in 1958, Housing Policy in 1988, National Labour Policy in 1966. The National Policy on Skill Development in the country was first notified in

2009. Following this policy, the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) was set up in 2009 to promote private sector participation through innovative funding models. NSDC has tied up with over 20 training providers since 2011.

The National Skill Development Agency (NSD) was set up in 2013. It is working with the State Governments to revitalize and coordinate skilling efforts across the States.

National Skill Development Framework with six competency-based level Sixth Skills and Learning Outcomes: These efforts are based on the legacy vocational training infrastructure of Industrial Training Institutes and Polytechnics which now number about 12000 and 3200 respectively. In India, only 4.69% of the total workforce has received formal skill training so far. The number of people entering the work force age group every year is estimated to be 26.14 million. Assuming an average labour participation rate of 90 percent (male) and 30 percent (female), at least 16.16 million persons will enter the workforce. 104.62 million people will be skilled in 2022. All formal and vocational education, including skill training, was to be aligned with the Sixth Schedule by December 2018. Skill development aims to train over 40 crore people in India in various skills by 2022.

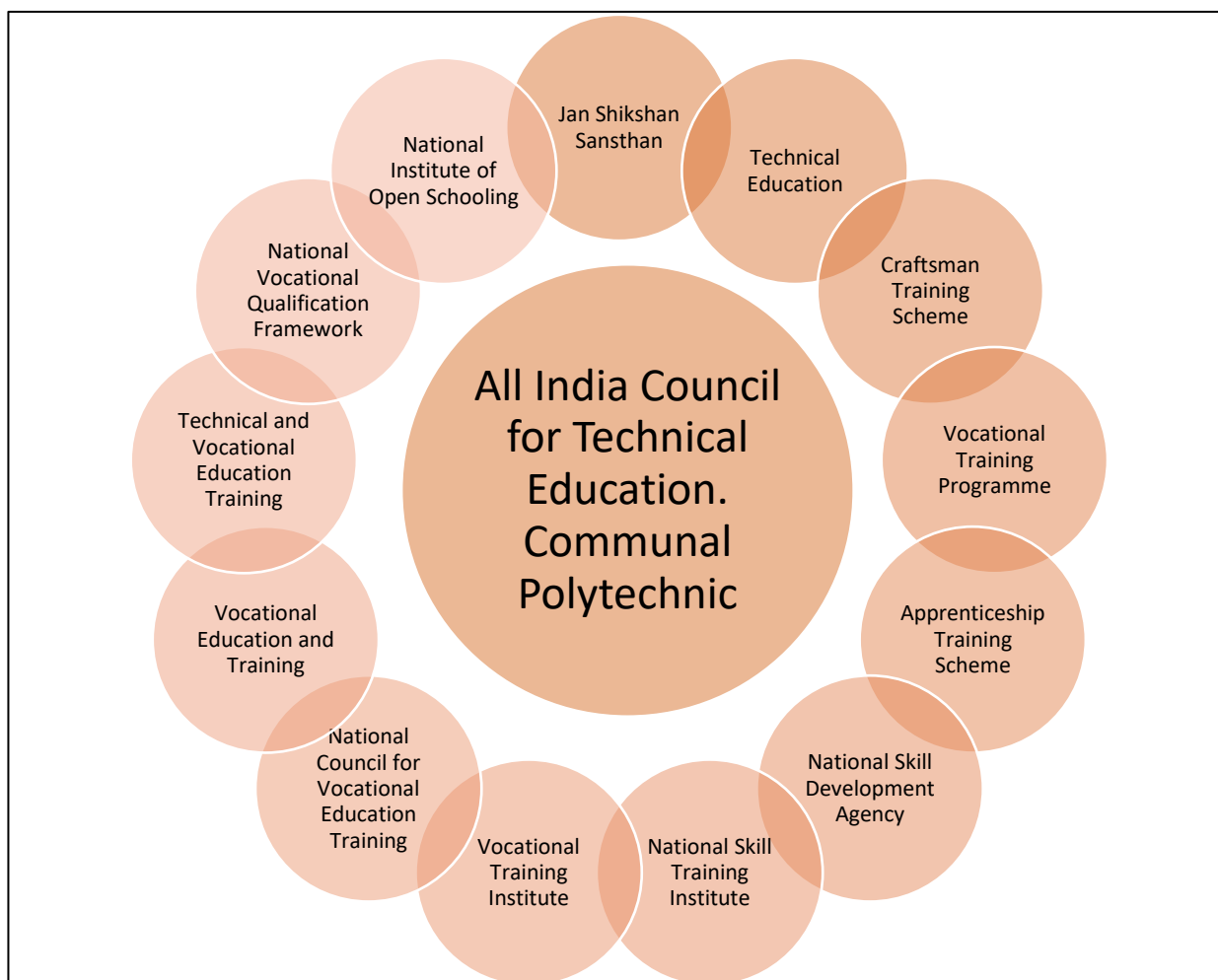
1. The Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-2017) also talked about women's access to higher education.

2. The Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012) emphasized on distance education, formal education, non-formal education, convergence of distance and IT education institutions and empowerment through education and skill development. The main purpose of vocational education is to help develop a person's skills in a specific field by providing applied or concrete experience in that specific occupation or trade.

Some technical programs run by the Central Government: -

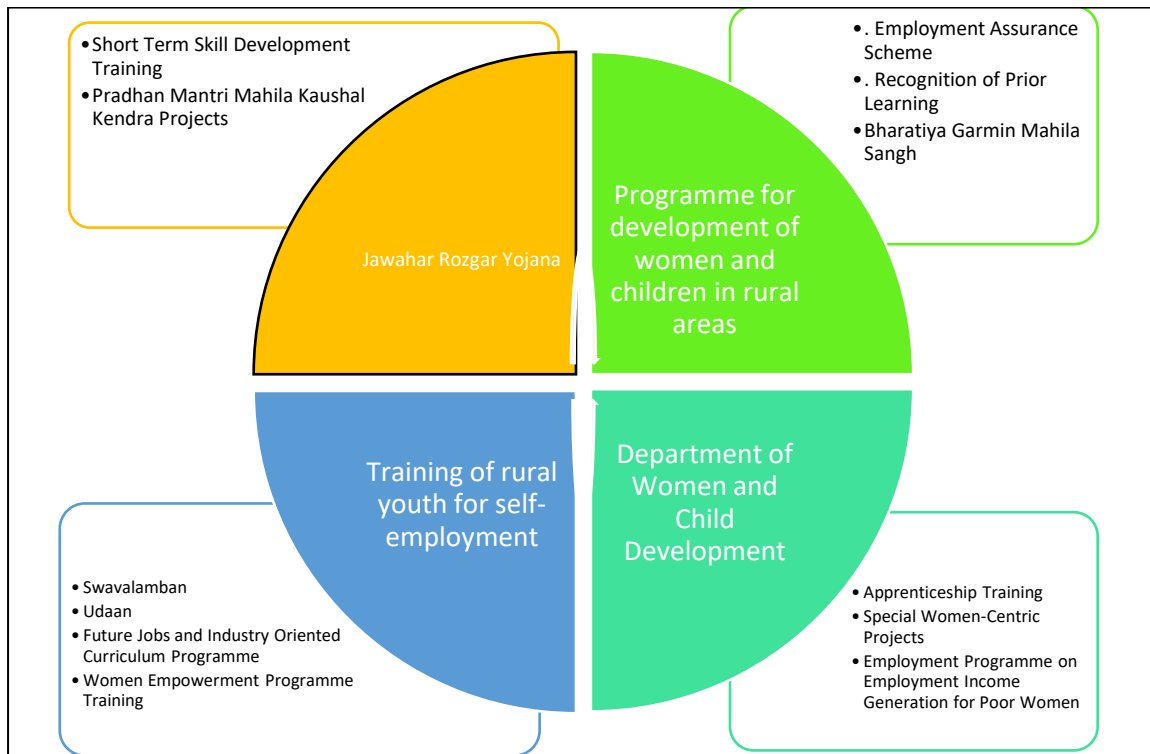
Before vocational education, the labour participation rate of women was low, and they were mainly employed in agriculture and unorganized sectors. The government had initiated various training programmes and schemes to increase their employability.

1. Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of India



Several schemes run by the government for vocational education: -

1. Ministry of Rural Development - Government of India

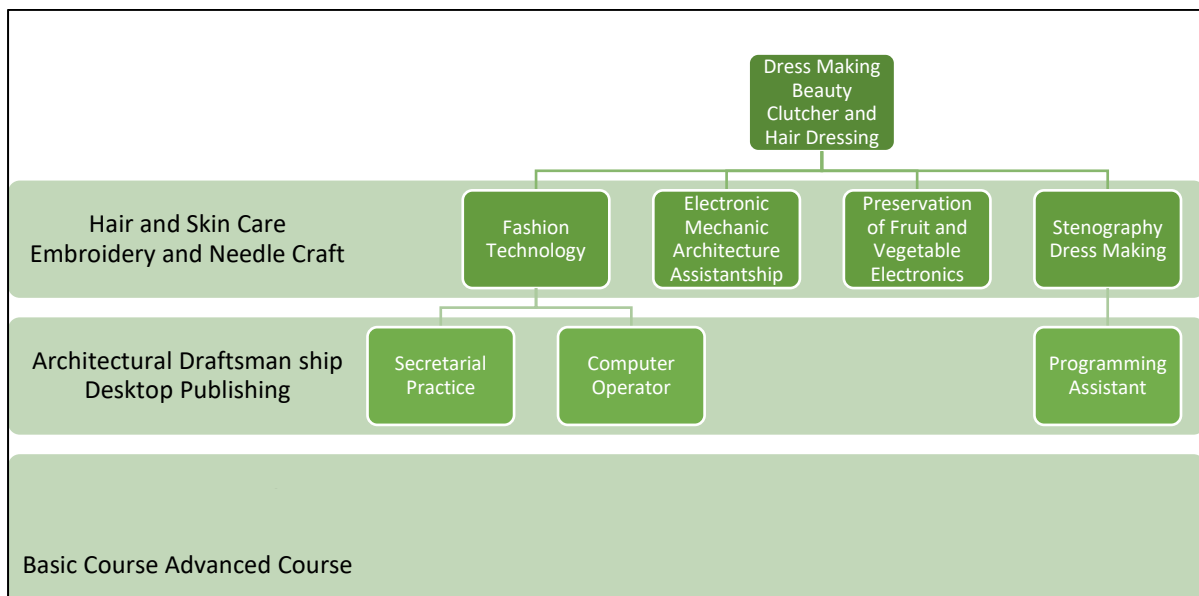


The vocational courses being run by the government for women are as follows-

Women Industrial Training Course: -

Ministry of Education (Formerly Ministry of Human Resource Development)

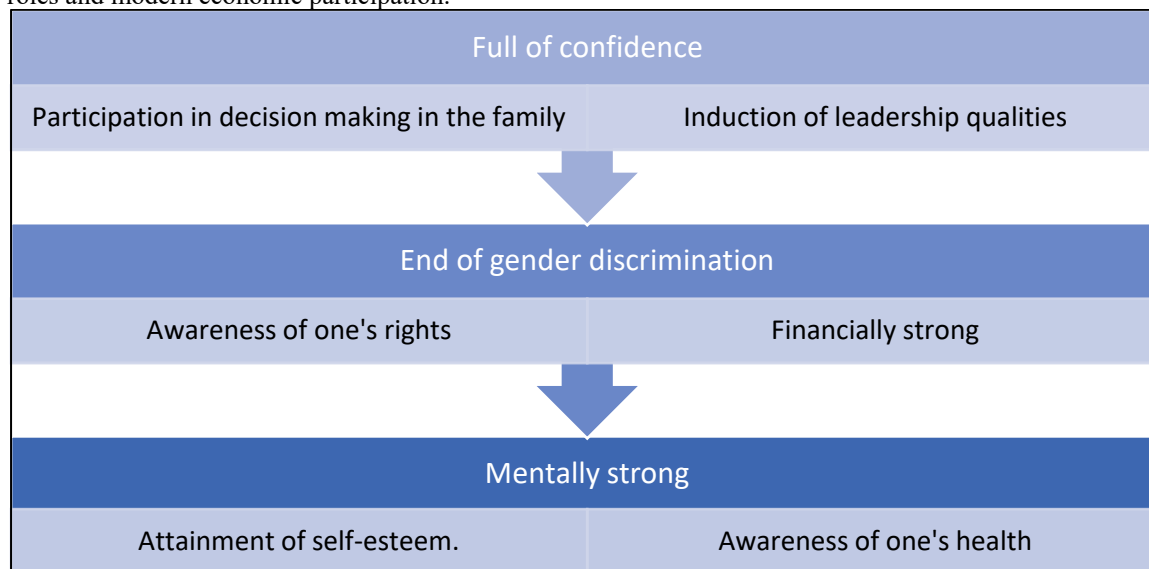
<https://www.education.gov.in/>



Status of working women after vocational education: -

Vocational education plays a crucial role in enhancing the skills of women, especially in India, where traditional gender roles often limit women's participation in the workforce. After receiving vocational education, women tend to experience a significant boost in their employability. Moreover, vocational training enhances their confidence and independence, leading to better economic stability. Vocational education has emerged as a transformative force in reshaping the professional landscape for women, particularly in developing economies like India. As traditional academic pathways often fail to provide practical, market-ready skills, vocational training

offers a more direct route to employment and economic independence. This educational approach focuses on specific trades, technical skills, and industry-relevant competencies that can immediately translate into livelihood opportunities. For women, who have historically faced barriers in accessing formal employment, vocational education represents not just a learning opportunity but a pathway to empowerment and social mobility. The significance of vocational education for women extends beyond mere skill acquisition. It challenges conventional gender roles, breaks down occupational segregation, and creates new possibilities for economic participation. In countries where women's workforce participation remains low due to cultural constraints, safety concerns, or lack of appropriate opportunities, vocational training provides a bridge between traditional domestic roles and modern economic participation.



CONCLUSION: -

Vocational education represents a powerful tool for women's empowerment and economic development. By providing practical, marketable skills, it enables women to achieve economic independence, gain social recognition, and build personal confidence. While challenges remain, the positive transformation in the lives of women who pursue vocational education is undeniable. As societies continue to recognize the importance of women's economic participation, vocational education will play an increasingly crucial role in creating opportunities for women to contribute to and benefit from economic growth. The success of women in vocational fields not only improves their individual circumstances but also contributes to broader social and economic development, making investment in women's vocational education a strategic priority for sustainable progress. Vocational education has proved to be extremely helpful in the overall development of working women and it provides better guidance to women in choosing their profession. Since the advent of the National Education Policy, the path of its development is opening up very fast. The impact of vocational education proposed in the National Education Policy has been seen on the development of women in the society. Although it has not completely, but to a large extent has come as a boon for women. Through vocational education, the social and economic development of women has taken place to some extent, but there is also a section of the society where this education has not yet reached. Nevertheless, it is hoped that soon working women will also get the benefit of vocational education, which will help them to become more empowered, self-reliant and progress socially.

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