

MAKING YOUNG HANDS COUNT

For India's young demography to become a powerful growth engine, millions will need to be skilled and made employable, write Anumeha Chaturvedi & Devina Sengupta



A Laurus Edutech training session in progress. Laurus aims to train 1.1 million by 2022



Case Study 2

ARTHAVIDHYA

Established in August 2012, Arthavidhya aims to plug skill gaps in corporate requirements for commerce services.

Founder and MD of Bangalore-based ITeS G Nagarajan launched Arthavidhya in August 2012, when he and his co-founder identified a huge gap between what the colleges offer and what the industry expects from accountants. Through assessments in finance and accounting, courses, training and placement assistance, Arthavidhya aims to remove skill gaps in corporate requirements for shared services, finance and accounting.

Arthavidhya offers services in transaction processing, data management, compliance management, financial analysis, and Nagarajan is a chartered accountant and former CFO of Redington. Promoted by a group of chartered accountants with over 100 years of combined experience in the corporate sector, Arthavidhya has assessed 4,500 commerce students so far and has signed agreements and run courses with six institutions: CMS College and Ramakrishna Mission in Coimbatore and MOP Vaishya in Chennai. "We have launched online courses on business processes and another one on receivables and accounts payable compliance and partnership," Nagarajan says. Arthavidhya's focus is on business accounting processes. "We have identified processes which are relevant for a basic accountant. We give the students a virtual environment and make them work on over 400 cases which would give approximately six months of experience," he says. Students are then assessed through intermediate quizzes/revision exercises, VIVA and an employment readiness assessment.

The courses are coupled with an online discussion forums and webinars. Nagarajan's main challenge is around sourcing the training. "Skilling them has never been as our model works like an online game. Students are more interested in the students. We learn by giving them additional attention. Arthavidhya's aim is to ensure the student minimum of 60% in their assessment post-training."



Case Study 3

NIIT YUVA JYOTI

A 2011 PPP between NIIT and NSDC for industry-specific training has given a lease of life to many

May 2012 address to global audience, S. Radhakrishnan, advisor to the Prime Minister on National Council on Skill Development led to the task of skilling 500 million people by 2022 as a task with no precedent in the world, previous models to follow. To chart our own path for achieving this and highly aspirational target. While the task is daunting, the global demographic indicators herald a huge opportunity — an opportunity available to every country only once in its history, Radhakrishnan stated. In an economy where the unorganised sector accounts for 30% of the labour demand, the mammoth task of skilling 500 million Indians is indeed no mean feat. India has to make use of the huge demographic dividend in the years to come (India's work force population will be far in excess of those not only in the developed nations, but also in the emerging nations), employment generation through skilling programmes and more robust public-private partnerships are going to be key. The government and skilling firms will have to build scalable models and collaborate with the industry to identify job opportunities for those being trained. Rituparna Chakraborty, co-founder and president of TeamLease puts it: the only way that will be successful, will be those that are job-oriented. Finance minister P Chidambaram launched India's first 'skilling card' under the STAR scheme, encouraging students to open bank accounts and get financial literacy training. The National Skill Certification and Monetary Policy Committee, branded STAR, seeks to motivate 10 million youth to voluntarily join skilling programmes by providing them financially on completing approved

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courses. This should help in meeting the target of skilling 500 million people by 2022 by rewarding students at an approximate cost of ₹1,000 crore. But, it also indicates the challenges faced by the government and skilling agencies in helping people become gainfully employed. For starters, being skilled doesn't necessarily translate into immediate employment. In 2012-2013, of the 402,506 people trained as part of National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) programmes, only 216,741 could be placed in jobs. In 2011-12, NSDC skilled 181,691 people, out of which 144,238 got jobs. "Apart from being volatile due to macro-economic parameters, the labour market in India is also quite elastic. The fact that over 30% of labour requirement is from the unorganised or informal sectors is certainly a challenge, and innovative models and mechanisms need to be evolved," said Dilip Cheny, MD and CEO of NSDC, tasked with the objective of getting 150 million trained in skills by 2022. NSDC is developing a labour market information system to address issues related to supply-demand mismatch, and ensure appropriate capacity is developed to meet demand in terms of quantity and quality. New job roles and partners are being added periodically to ensure at least 80% of all entry-level jobs are within NSDC's ecosystem by 2014. "Over the past few months, the council has been expanding targets and processes. "It took us three years to cross our first million, the next million would come in another one year and the million after that would come in next six months. This would give you an idea of the scale at which we are operating," said Cheny. Since its inception in 2008, NSDC has trained 13.5 lakh people. "Our target for 2013-14 is to train 10 lakh and we are well on course to achieve the same. Next year our target is to train 33 lakh people across the country," says Cheny. The 29 sector skill councils affiliated to NSDC are also part of various central government schemes such as STAR and Ajeevika of the rural development ministry. The IT sector skill council has the maximum number of certified candidates (61,828) followed by security and retail. The sector skills council for the IT and ITeS industries

challenges have not discouraged training partners and sectoral councils from launching ambitious initiatives. TeamLease chaired a committee at the Prime Minister's National Council on Skill Development, which proposed 14 specific changes to the Apprentices Act of 1961, which got stuck in Parliament and will now have to wait for the next Lok Sabha. "India has only 3 lakh formal apprentices while Germany has 3 million, Japan 10 million and China 20 million. Given that parliamentary changes take time, we decided to move from talking to doing," said Rituparna Chakraborty, co-founder and senior vice-president, TeamLease. TeamLease aims to go ahead and appoint 2 lakh apprentices every year for the next 10 years in 21 trades for a duration of three months to two years. In an attempt to bridge the gap between employability and education, the firm formed a public-private partnership with the Gujarat government to launch India's first vocational university in April last year. "Our aim is to design and put into practice course syllabi focusing on academic, vocational, professional, technical and life skills domains," Chakraborty said. Efforts are also under way to work with youth from states such as Jammu & Kashmir and in the North East through diverse projects. The Indian Institute of Skill Development (IISD) is working with the ministry of home affairs on a project called Udaan, now in its second year. Centum Learning manages 14 Bharti Walmart Training centres located at Amritsar, Aurangabad, Bangalore, and Delhi and provides end-to-end manpower management involving sourcing, training and hiring. It has also partnered with Jharkhand's Ministry of Women & Child Development to offer training programmes in candle-making to girls aged 14 to 18. It also provided skills training to over 7,800 youth from the Mahadalit community of Bihar under the Dashrath Manjhi Kaushal Vikas Yojana along with the Bihar Mahadalit Vikas Mission (BMVM). The Agriculture Skill Council of India (ASCI) is trying to come to grips with the unorganised nature of the sector besides projecting farming as a voca-