

## **Youth Development Programmes in NCT of Delhi : The Need for Direction and Guidance**

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*Youth is an important section of any society. In India it constitutes about sixty-six percent of our population. Youth is considered the productive population. Youth is the stage of energy, enthusiasm and dynamism but it is also a force that can be violent and destructive if not guided properly. Today's youth are our future generation that will take care and build up the economy of the country. In India for the next few decades we are going to have the maximum youth in our population and then there would be a decline. Thus, we need to maximize on the potential and productivity of this demographic dividend stage that we are in. Youth development is important for India's development. This paper summarizes various programmes for the youth by ten organizations located in NCR of Delhi. It has been shown that Youth need to be developed by healthy nutrition, physical exercise, education, skill training, job opportunities, safe and caring community and environment. To add to all this, the youth need guidance, motivation and direction for themselves and for their society.*

[**Keywords :** Youth, Youth development programmes, Government organization, Non-government organization]

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The present-day youth lives in a disconnected and dynamic world, where instances of mental illness is on the rise. The youth wants to do a lot but needs the direction and guidance. Various government and non-government organizations dealing with youth, understand this need and provide youth development programmes. There is a need to examine these youth development programmes and increase their efficacy. The present research study is an attempt to explore the youth development programmes available in Delhi and through feedbacks develop a model youth development programme that would be applicable to the contemporary times. The study will also attempt to contribute to the theoretical framework that is applicable for youth development in the present changing society.

## **1. Introduction**

The youth that we see today are our future leaders, policy makers, entrepreneurs, workers, parents and participating citizens, in their hands will rest our country and the world. Youth of our country is the most important resource for India's development. The youth population are energetic, enthusiastic, dynamic and a force that needs to be channelized. This energy force is intelligent, hardworking, innovative, this resource needs to be harnessed and directed for community development and nation building.

The National Youth Policy launched by the Government of India in 2014 defined Youth in the age group of 15-29 years. This policy stress on the areas that needs to be developed, these are Education, Employment and Skill Development, Entrepreneurship, Health and Healthy Lifestyle, Sports, Promotion of Social Values, Community Engagement, Participation in Politics and Governance, Youth Engagement, Inclusion, and Social Justice. As per India's Census in 2011 there are 422 million youths in our country, out of which 70% are in the rural areas. The large youth population is very diverse in its education, skills, socio- economic and health status and the available opportunities for development, as India itself is a diverse population vis-a vis its gender, urban-rural, regional, religion, caste, social and economic differences. The Government of India in 2015 started the National Policy for skill development and entrepreneurship for providing skills and opportunities for development for the youth.

The Government of India recognizes its responsibility and has made initiatives for the skill and entrepreneurship development of

the youth, but due to various factors (COVID 19 and world recession), there is an economic slowdown which again directly affect the job market and increases the unemployment and underemployment. The youth today all the more need youth development training programmes so that they are able to gear themselves to face the situation with renewed energy and enthusiasm. Various Government and Non-government organizations are providing different kinds to youth development training programmes in India. Some of them are specifically skill oriented and the others deals with overall development of the youth. Some organizations also provide preventive programmes for the youth that are in difficult situation like substance abuse or delinquency.

Delhi the national capital of the country according to United Nations Population Fund - India (2014) reported that in 2011 there were 34,31,435 Youth (persons aged between 15-29 years) in NCT of Delhi, this constitute 1.5% of the total youth in the country. Delhi has a number of Government and Non-government organizations working for the youth development. A social impact assessment of these youth development programmes will help us understand the efficacy of these programmes and how we can make these programmes better.

## **2. Review of Literature**

Youth development can be seen as a process that helps an individual in the age group of 15 - 29 to evolve from a child to becoming an adult achieving their full potential. Youth development can be a guided experience with activities from family, peer, community and organizations around the young person. The process of youth development supports the youth to develop the ability to analyze their own strengths and weaknesses, plan their future course of action, build up their confidence, self-esteem and learn to manage their behaviour. Schools, colleges and other organizations working for youth need to take up the responsibility to provide a positive youth development environment so as to develop healthy participating and contributing youth.

We often hear that India is in the phase of demographic dividend, that is we have a larger population of working group (persons aging from 15-64 years). India is going to be in this phase for 37 years starting from 2018 - 2055 (Thakur, 2019). The country's potential to grow and develop lies in this productive population.

India is at an advantageous stage now. India's population has a large percentage of youth and this stage will be changed in the course of time to a large grey or elderly population. Thus, we are running out of time we need to make the most of the present situation. We need to recognize the hidden potential of the youth to improve the economy of the country.

India has the largest youth population of the world. United Nations (2003) have reported that 66 per cent of our population is under the age of 35 years. This also means that we are responsible to guide and make available opportunities for this population otherwise this demographic dividend must not become a demographic disaster (Verick 2009). If there is a rise in unemployment and under-employment there is also a rise in mental health problems, violence and substance abuse (Bell and Blanchflower, 2009). So, it is important to understand we can have dividend if we make the necessary investment for this productive age group.

Various research studies have addressed their concerns that youth is a stage of stress and strain (Kai-Wen, 2010; Morrison, et al. 1997) The present modern life demands have increased the stress that effects the quality of life of the young population (Ribeiro et al., 2017; Craciun, 2013). Students in schools and colleges have expressed high anxiety due to various factors like economic hardship, future unclear, academic pressure and relationship issues (Shek. 2005). This then results in substance abuse, delinquency and mental health issues (Pariat et al., 2014; Stern et al., 1999).

Small and Memmo (2004) in their study highlight that over the years efforts to address youth problems and enhance youth development have been on the rise. The study classifies the contemporary models of youth development into three types: Prevention, resiliency and positive youth development. Jennings et al. (2006) in their research paper contributed to the development of a critical social theory of youth empowerment analyzing four youth empowerment models.

Chitra (2017) in a study emphasized how college time poses challenges to youth in the form of conflicts among peers and failures which causes self-esteem issues that ultimately effect academic performance and their well-being. The study proposed personality development programme to increase the self-efficacy of the youth. Naik and Bobade (2016) also examined the need for training Indian

youth so that their employability is increased which will help improve our economy.

The review of literature shows how youth is a stage for performance but is also clouded with confusion thus there is need for youth development programmes. Appropriate youth development programmes are important to address the youth concerns and this will help the country's development.

### **3. Research Gap**

The review of literature highlights on the importance of taking care of youth in the present times as youth is under immense pressure due to the fast-changing times. The pressure and stress get manifested in emotional and behavioural issues. Various government and non-government organizations are working with youth. The government understands the need to develop the youth and has made new policies for skill development among the youth. But there is a need to study to social assessment and impact of these initiatives. There is a need to develop new youth development models and social theory for the contemporary youth in the present times. There is a need to understand the youth, their needs, issues, concerns and their mental health and steps need to be taken to address these issues and concerns. This research study will attempt to understand the programmes undertaken by government and non-government organizations in the National Capital Region (NCT) of Delhi.

### **4. Research Questions**

The present paper is an attempt to find out the answers to following questions :

1. Which are the government and non-government organizations working for the youth in Delhi?
2. What are the programmes conducted by these organizations for youth development?
3. What are the components of the youth development programmes offered by organizations?

### **5. Rationale of the Study**

Youth is the stage between childhood and adulthood. As an individual enters this stage, they have a body and mind of a child which slowly develops and grows physically, cognitively,

emotionally, socially, morally and sexually. Youth as a life stage, is many a times referred to the golden age as we are in the prime of our life as we have grown to our maximum physically and then we are going to slowly decline. Youth is the time for dreams to fly and when energy is boundless and with possibilities to do a lot. Youth need the support and guidance of their family, friends and community so as to utilize the energy constructively. But when this youth energy is misguided it can get violent and destructive. Youth can get off track by deviations like illegal activities, substance abuse and violence. For some this period can be smooth and for some challenging. There is a lot of confusion and identity crisis which needs to be addressed constructively.

Schools, colleges and organizations working for the youth need to be sensitive to the needs of the youth. These organizations need to guide and mentor the youth and sometimes also provide individual attention to those who need extra attention. Organizations dealing with the youth often have youth development programmes to address the youth's overall development. Some organizations have personality development programmes or career guidance or life skill courses or teaching soft skills or communication skills. These programmes can prove to be very vital for the youth to introspect their future plans and how to reach their goals in life. These programmes can address various preventive dimensions like knowledge of ill effects of substance abuse, how youth need to take care of themselves for better mental health. These programmes can offer a platform for the youth to discuss and get guidance for the various doubts, myths and misconceptions that are in their minds so that they are able to get some kind of counselling to work towards their growth and development. Society needs to be responsible to the youth. This study will help us understand different youth development programmes being organized by different government and non-government organizations in NCT of Delhi.

Youth in the age group, 15-29 years includes 27.5 per cent of the Indian population. This important section of population can increase its labour participation and productivity for betterment of the economy. It is predicted to contribute about 34 per cent of the Gross National Income (National Youth Policy, 2014). Thus, if we want India to progress to its maximum, we need to handle our youth with care helping them achieve their maximum potential. This study will help government officials and policy makers understand the youth

better and develop youth programmes that will give them a perspective how to handle the youth issues and concerns.

## **6. Aim of the Study**

This study investigated the Youth development programmes available in NCT of Delhi by Government and Non-government organization. The study also looked into programmes that are available to high school students and college students in Delhi. What were the different dimensions that were incorporated in the youth development programmes?

This study will be of interest to schools, colleges and different organizations that cater to youth, as it will help them understand the issues and challenges of the present youth and how do different organizations deal with them. The study will also help policy makers to examine the present youth development programmes and how to improve ways of handling youth concerns.

## **7. Specific Objective of the Study**

The specific objective of the study is to Explore the youth development programmes available in NCT of Delhi.

## **8. Methodology of the Study**

**1. Operational definitions :** Operational definitions of the concepts used in this study are as under :

**Youth :** The youth are persons in the age group from 15-29 years.

**Youth development programme :** Programmes for the youth for their development, incorporating topics like Life skills, personality development, soft skills, career guidance, leadership training. These programmes could be of one day or for a longer period.

**Development :** A process to evolve, change, grow, advance and improve the present person or situation.

**2. Research Design :** As regards the research design, the present research is descriptive in nature, exploring the initiatives of different government and non-government organization for the development of youth. The descriptive research helped direct careful observations and detailed documentation in investigating youth development programmes.

**3. Universe of the study :** The present study was conducted in NCT of Delhi, as this is the capital city of the country and there is a mix of urban and rural population in the city. Delhi also has many organizations working for the youth.

**4. Sample :** The sample of ten government and non-government organizations working for youth and conducting youth development programmes was included.

**5. Data collection process :** The researcher first procured and developed an elaborate list of Government and Non-government organizations that have been conducting youth development programmes. From this list, ten organizations were randomly selected. The ten organizations were contacted and the research purpose was explained, and then the organization officials elaborated on their youth development programmes.

## **9. Programmes for the Youth by Ten Organizations located in NCR of Delhi**

This research study has contacted ten organizations out of which one was a government organization and the remaining nine were non-government organizations working with the youth population and conducting programmes for youth development.

### **9.1 Vishwa Yuvak Kendra**

Vishwa Yuvak Kendra is an organization in central Delhi established in 1961, conducting youth development programmes dealing with enhancing the capacities of the youth. The organization engages in youth centric training and orientation programmes to motivate the youth in participating in nation building. Their in-house training programmes are designed to create young grassroot workers equipped with skills for social awareness in their own geographical areas. The organization also organizes a program named 'Talk with amazing Indians' providing the youth participants to interact with courageous and path breaking individuals. The speakers are individuals who have been consistent and innovative in their ideas and fought against odds to make a difference in the community.

Vishwa Yuvak Kendra organizes skill development programmes for the underprivileged youth across the country including vocational trainings. Some of the skill development programmes held at state level cover different themes like :



- Climate change and global warming,
- Disaster management,
- Energy conservation,
- Fund raising,
- Right to information,
- Women empowerment and
- Water resource management.

The organization also has an Integrated Community Development Programme for social, economic and educational development of two slum cluster adopted by the organization.

### **9.2 ChildFund India**

ChildFund India was registered since 1984, working from south Delhi and reaching out to 85 districts across 15 states of India. ChildFund works with maternal health, children, adolescents and youth. The organization has signature programmes for healthy and secure infants, educated and confident children and youth programmes.

The youth programme is focussed around skill development and involvement of the youth. The aim of the organization is to make the youth prepared with technical and vocational training, enhance their life skills by personal competencies, problem-solving, managing conflicts, effective habits and entrepreneurship. The main goal is to support the youth in economic, physical and social well-being so that the youth bring positive change in their families and the community.

The main components of the ChildFund India's youth training programmes are life skills education, entrepreneurial & vocational training and civic engagement & leadership training. The challenges reported are the low aspirations among youth from tribal and disadvantaged groups in acquiring skills as they prefer following their traditional practices.

### **9.3 Youthreach India**

Youthreach India founded in 1997 as a non-profit organization in Delhi. This organization works to inspire individual and collective transformation to bring in positive social change. Youthreach has associates with 112 NGOs across 8 states in India working with

children, women and youth for education, health care, skill training, livelihood, water and sanitation and other areas.

The initiatives of Youthreach are : CSR programme that helps corporate houses to work with communities, Awareness programme to sensitize the civil society and build enabling insights, Volunteer programme to mobilize and sensitize volunteers to work with NGOs working in the community, Knowledge Bank programme is mainly to create a resource cell in the society to offer a helping hand to the youth. Through these initiatives the organization works with the youth and addresses community development and skill development.

#### **9-4 Youth Alliance**

Youth Alliance an organization in south Delhi connects youth with a cause and aims to nurture empathic leaders to serve the society making it more equitable, cooperative and sustainable. This organization works with young people through different programmes like immersive journeys, Leadership retreats, Alumni community. Through each of these programmes the youth are oriented to learn by service the social realities and work towards social change, building their own capacities for work and strengthening interpersonal relationships. The youth become resource and are further supported by each other as a community. The organization through innovative programmes like Padh-yatra (a walking journey of 3 days into the rural interiors) strives to build an environment of self-awareness and discovery.

#### **9-5 The YP Foundation**

The YP Foundation is a youth run and led organization situated in Delhi that works on developing youth through leadership training, building on the rights of young women and other marginalized youth. The organization has planned various programmes for the youth like sexual & reproductive health & rights, gender rights, youth leadership. The YP foundation believes that the youth can be trained to work towards an egalitarian society, working to develop feminist right based leadership to bring in social change. The organization works in states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar changing the minds of young women towards gender based violence, de-stigmatizing mental health, sexual and reproductive health so as to build an equal society for all.

**9-6 YUVA**

YUVA stands for Youth for unity and voluntary action founded in 1984 in Mumbai and working in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Assam and Delhi. This non-profit NGO is committed to work for the rights of the vulnerable population. This organization enables people's collective to discuss development and stimulate collective action towards it. Thus, advocacy and policy recommendation are also part of their people's participation.

YUVA works with communities enabling the youth to look for solutions to issues of housing, livelihood, environment and governance. Research is also focused to enhance the capacities of the youth to bring in social change for a society to end poverty and promote human rights.

**9-7 Youth Empowerment Foundation**

Youth Empowerment Foundation (YEF) an NGO operating from south Delhi aims to spread education across India through teams of youth volunteers and in return focuses on youth empowerment. YEF works through their programmes of reaching out to the migrant and daily wagers, deprived children supporting and helping them through education and all other needs required for their betterment. All the outreach is through youth volunteers thus helping the youth to change the society they live in. The organization provides various training programmes like computer training, LED bulb making, English learning, candle making, art, music and dance learning. These training is a method to empower the young minds and realize their dreams by living their lives fully.

**9-8 CHETNA**

CHETNA a registered public charitable trust in Delhi started in 2002 to create awareness and bring about empowerment. CHETNA - Childhood enhancement through training and action works with youth in the YUVA project. This project focuses on employability for the youth on street. This initiative aimed at making job opportunities by providing skill training. They also did research to understand social realities better and plan appropriate interventions of the street children and youth. The organization closely worked for bonded labourers, planning out their identification and rehabilitation.

### **9-9 Bharatiya Yuva shakti Trust**

Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust works for empowering the youth of India so as to encourage them to think of business and mentor them to make it a possible profitable reality. Several disadvantaged, young, men and women were able to dream and their dreams were transformed into success stories. These job seekers became job creators. This was not an easy task as there were many handicaps to be removed like these were from the school dropout, differently abled and financially disadvantaged youth, who needed to be supported in all fronts to make them confident to dream. The organization had partnered with banks for financial assistance and mentoring from industrial and other institutions for training and capacity building. Over 25 years this organization has expanded in NCR Delhi and many other states.

### **9-10 Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan**

Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan under the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports was established in 1972 catering especially for the rural youth by developing them in their personality and skills so that they contribute to nation building process. This organization was set up by the Government of India to channelize the youth energy through voluntarism to self-help and community participation. This large group of youth volunteers work through youth clubs at village-based organizations for community development and youth empowerment.

This organization provides various programmes for youth development like Youth Club Development Programme, Awards of outstanding youth clubs, Training on youth leadership and community development, Promotion of sports at block and district levels, Skill up-gradation training programme (vocational training), Promotion of Folk art and culture, celebrating national and international days of importance, District youth convention. The organization works in coordination with other agencies to reach out to maximum rural youth all over the country.

## **10. Conclusion**

Data shows that Government and non-government organization are working for youth development in cities and in the rural regions of our country. These organizations believe in the power

of youth and encourage them to develop themselves and their communities. The organization's programme instils in the young minds new and innovative thinking that will inspire community participation. An investigation into the youth development programmes show that the youth need to be supported and mentored especially as majority of the youth in India come with disadvantages of poverty, lack of schooling, low opportunities and malnutrition. The youth need to be partners in nation building as they are the future generation that will lead us forward. They need to recognize that they are equal stakeholders in the country's development roadmap.

The innovative youth development programmes make the young minds think of a better society. How to usher in social change where we break away from draconian laws of inequalities and work towards an egalitarian society. The youth are also rethinking the new indicators of success and status that defy the traditional rat race of status and hierarchy. As a society we need to encourage the youth to rediscover and recreate a community removing the evils of modernization, urbanization, greed and aggression destroying our countries and the world as a whole.

This is possible by youth programmes that need to be provided by schools, colleges and communities. So that the youth are able to get together and work out new ideas for self and community development.

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