

An Analytical case study on AISECT and Skill Development Initiatives: A Journey from Pre to Post Globalization Era

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Abstract

The issue of imparting skill and skill based knowledge is a critical element. It has been observed in the recent past that there is a sudden shift in the India's economy as a knowledge based economy. To strengthen this base a new generation of educated and skilled young force is required. It has been found out that only 2 % of the Indian workforce has formal vocational skill. This need of imparting skill base knowledge has been realized way back in the year 1985 by a group named as (AISECT) - All India Society for Electronics & Computer Technology, with a mission to impart the technological knowledge to the rural and semi urban and tribal area of the country and promote ICT-based training and services to empower people, generate employment for the youth and unfold entrepreneurship based initiatives to create an inclusive society. Along with this mission, the group has taken the initiatives by offering a wide range of vocational education courses with the objective of addressing the skill gaps. The group supports about 11000 centers in 27 states and 3 union territories of the country. The organization including its institutions has to date transformed the lives of over 12 lakhs students through a host of skill enhancement programme and generated over 10,000 entrepreneurs in the country. The group has formally joined hands with National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) with a mission to skill around 1.3 million youth across rural and semi urban India over the next ten years. I.I.M. – World Bank has incorporated this group as a successful case study in the compilation of case studies from India. The present case study is mainly exploring the efforts & initiatives so far have been taken under the umbrella in the area of skill development from the period of pre globalization to post globalization era to meet the challenges of the education and technology. The data used for the study is purely secondary in nature and case study method has been used.

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Introduction & Historical Perspective of AISECT:

The last decade of 20th century has witnessed that information technology emerge as the most prominent technology to have a revolutionary effect on the lives of the people. During this period Indian engineers and scientist have earned a high degree of respect around the world for their highly professional and innovative contribution to the technological advancement in this field. Large number of Indian occupies position in the IT companies of developed countries like USA. Recognizing the contribution of Indian Software professionals in USA the countries like Germany and Japan have recently shown interest in inviting Indian software professionals to their countries. On the domestic front also IT industry has shown highest growth rates consistently over the last many years compared to any other industry. Information technology is being considered as a major vehicle for all round socio economic development in the country as it's by product, for creation of a strong domestic IT market. Providing an add to this growth it was in the year 1984 that a few engineers and academicians from Bhopal (Capital City of Madhya Pradesh) came together to form a core group to undertake computer literacy and electronics awareness programmes in the schools of Madhya Pradesh. They initialized themselves as SECT (Society for Electronics and Computer Technology).since the inception SECT has Spread out to each and every state of the country. In the year 1997 the group has redesignated itself as AISECT – All India Society for Electronics and Computer Technology. The group has got its recognition as a major movement for information technology and for introducing the skill based programmes within the country in short span of time.

AISECT an ISO 9001:2008 certified organization works with a mission of promoting ICT based training and service to empower people, generate employment for the youth and unfold entrepreneurship based initiatives to create an inclusive society. The group has established 12,000 multipurpose information technology centers across 27 states and 3 union territories. The AISECT Centers are essentially engaged in delivering software, hardware and vocational skill base training programmes over the last 28 years. The group has proven models and solutions which cater to the educational requirements of various sections of the semi urban and rural India.

Starting from over 500 computer centers in October 1997, AISECT has grown to over 754 centers in October 2000, a growth of about 50 % in the three intervening years. The group has been implementing an All India Coordinated programme (AICP) to set up multipurpose electronic and computer centers being called as Multipurpose Information Technology Centers, with the advent of the convergence era in the rural and tribal areas of the country. The programme got support by the department of electronics (DOE) and the Department of Science and technology (DST) ,GOI. At the initial level over 13 nodal points and 60 training centers have been set up under this programme .The training module was prepared in Indian Language so as

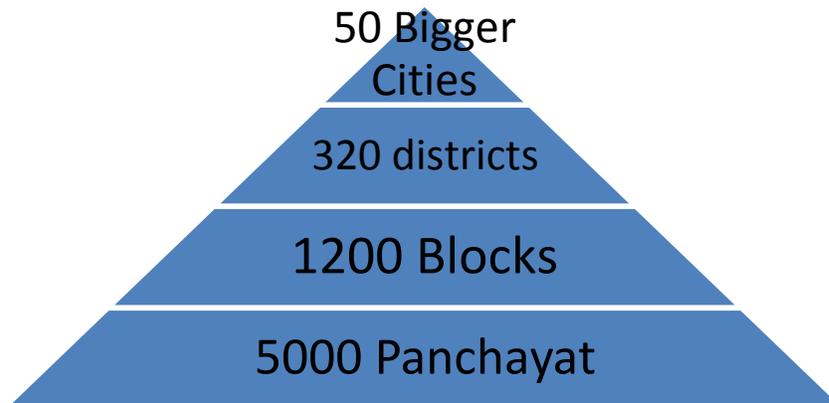
to reach to masses. Considering the success of the Multipurpose Information Technology centers in rural and tribal areas the department of science and technology (GOI) accorded another project to AISECT, which envisages to set up all 13 all women IT centers in ten states of the country. The group has prepared extensive guidelines for women entrepreneurs and a separate entrepreneurship training module for training of women. AISECT was the architect of the computer literacy and awareness programme (CLAP) which it implemented in over 200 schools with SCERT (Govt of M.P.) for over 10 years. The programme was later converted into a All India Coordinated Programme with support of MIT (GOI). Over a period of time it has been gradually realized by the group that there is an invariable demand of vocational education in the country. AISECT over the years has developed several vocational courses in association with National open school (GOI). Variety of Vocational Programmes based on Information technology, basic household appliances, fashion designing, electronics and instrumentation etc. are being operational at various vocational centres of AISECT spread across various locations of India.

AISECT Institutions:

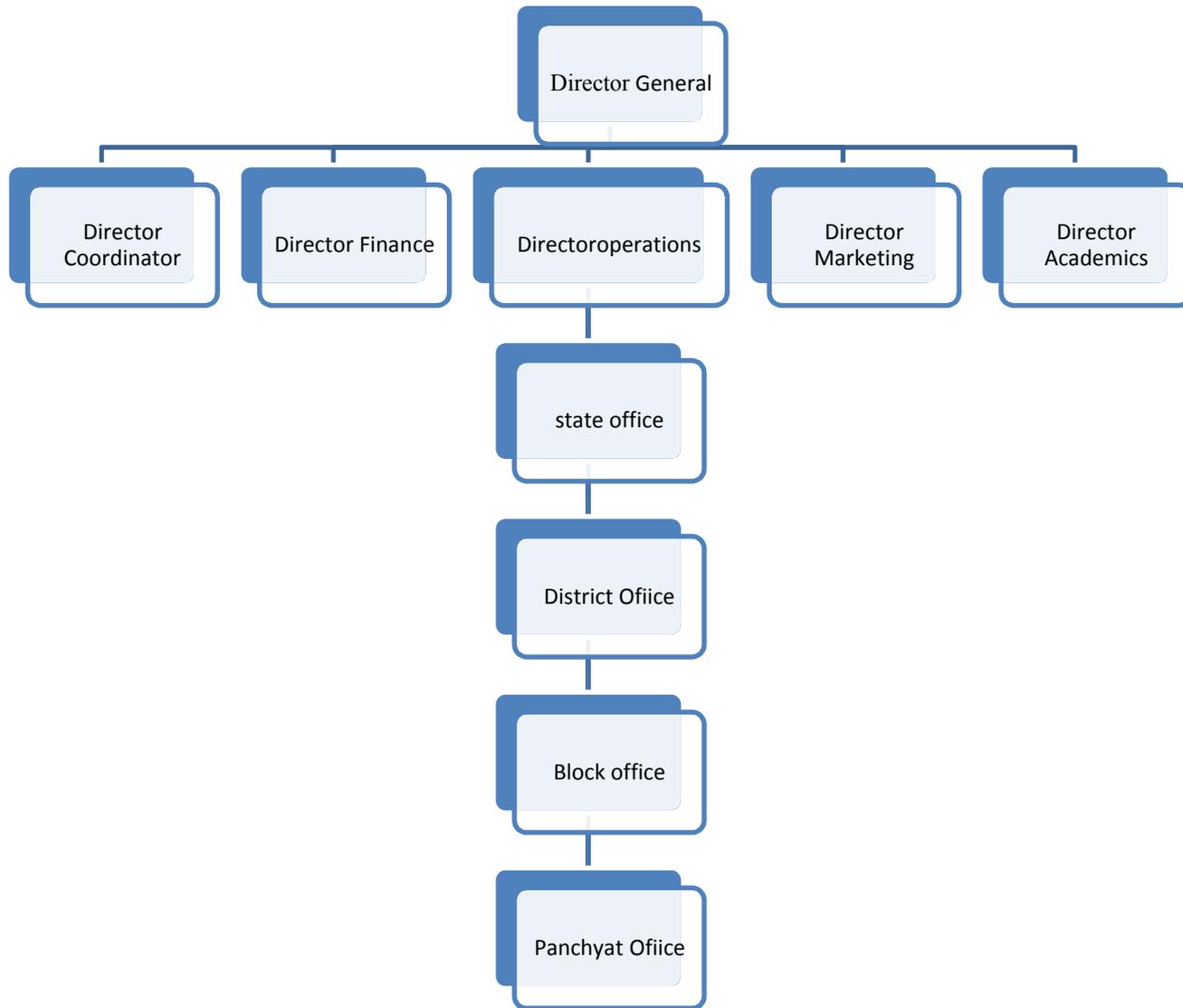
AISECT has set up the educational institutions in its umbrella which act as a resource centers to its network in addition to providing quality training and education to students in their area. The institutions are:

- **Dr. C.V. Raman University:** It is a premier science, technology and professional education university of Chhattisgarh providing open and distance education in IT, commerce and Management. It is the first university in the state of Chhattisgarh to be awarded an ISO 9001: 2008 certification.
- **AISECT University:** First Private University of Madhya Pradesh aiming to impart right set of skills along with industry based education. The University is providing Diploma and certificate programmes offered through AU-NSDC academy for skill development
- **Scope College of Engineering:** An ISO 9001: 2000 certified institute works with a vision of transforming its students into competent, inspired and professional engineers.

The group has its headquarters in Madhya Pradesh recognized as central office .Parallel to this another office of the group is situated in Delhi. It is further followed by the offices at state level across India, then to district level, block level and finally to Panchayat. The Below stated figure depicts the Indian network .The AISECT network coverage is in context to the Indian pyramid, covering 27 states and 3 union territories with the figures of 12,000 centers,13 lakh students ,1500 banking kiosk and 11,000 Entrepreneurs.



The group has a modus operandi through distinctive centers at regional and state level. Setting up of center requires initial financial support and linkages with other institutions. For setting up a center a preliminary survey is the first step to begin with which is further followed by data analysis and selection of a nodal point and then proceed to procuring and installing equipment. Household and market survey are conducted typically in parallel with setting up the servicing and production function of the center. Centers then diversify into other areas and institutional activities. Various organizations like the state electronics development corporations, the national open schools, Indira Gandhi National Open University, NABARD, Department of rural development and voluntary organizations like society for rural industrialization, the center for quantitative research and institute of vocational training are being linked to such centers for providing support services. The hierarchy being operated in the group in terms of operating the activities is being depicted with the help of an organizational hierarchy chart:

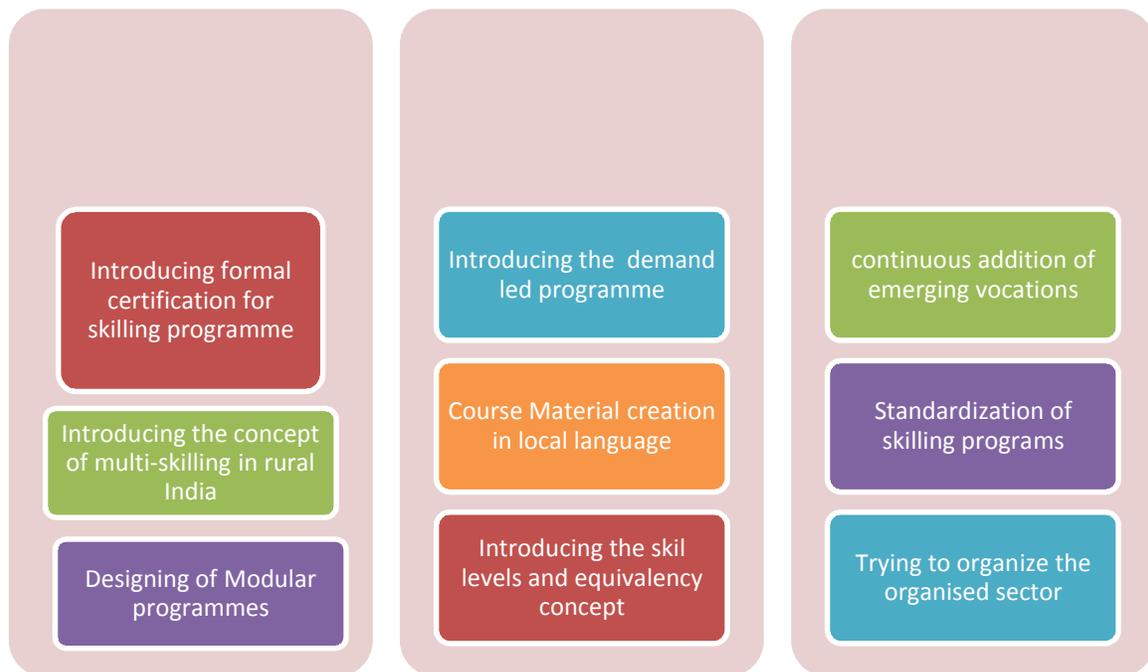


Innovations in Skill Development:

AISECT offers over 40 certificates, diploma and PG diploma level programmes through its six academies having due recognition from the certified bodies:

- AISECT Academy for IT and Management.
- AISECT academy for Hardware and Networking.
- AISECT academy for Livelihood and Vocational Training.
- AISECT academy for Teacher's Training.
- AISECT academy for Agriculture.
- AISECT academy for Insurance, Banking and Finance.

The group so far has been able to train over 10 lac students till date, with over 1 lac students graduating over from the AISECT network every year. AISECT has a rich experience in penetrating rural areas and has implemented many innovations in the field of skill development in the unorganized sector:



INNOVATIONS IN SKILL DEVELOPMENT

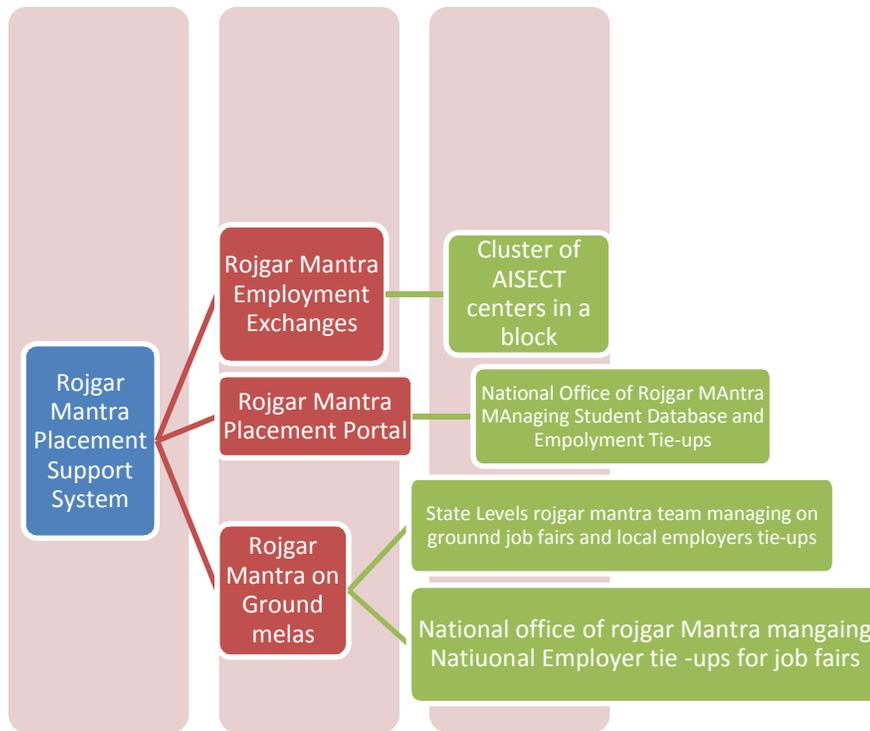
The group has formerly joined hands with NSDC in the year 2012. The main objective of the partnership was to contribute significantly to the overall target of skilling /Upskilling 500 million people in India by 2022 mainly by fostering private sector initiatives in skill development programmes. The NSDC (National Skill Development Corporation) was set up by Ministry of Finance in his budget speech (2008-09) to fulfill the growing need in India for skilled manpower across sectors and narrow the existing gap between the demand and supply of skills. Under the SGSY project the group has implemented employability oriented skill development projects for central and state government agencies.

The group with the availability of its 8,500 CSC's across M. P., Chhattisgarh and other parts of Punjab imparts skill development training programmes in the identified sectors like IT, ITES, Electronics and Hardware, Banking and financial services, Teacher's and assessors training, textiles, organized retail and agri skills. These training programmes are being conducted through the way of interactive learning management system. In this system online mode of training is being opted where students can have accessibility anywhere and anytime.

The pedagogy which is being followed in this online method of imparting education and training is that the group provides the flexibility in terms of content and delivery. The study material related to the concerned skill based programme is readily available to the students irrespective of any geographical barriers. Further to impart practical and hands on training pertinent to a particular skill the group has tie ups with the local vendors and domestic industries. With this unique model of blending the online knowledge and hands on training system the trains and placed 1 lakh student every year.

One stop solution for Employment:

To provide complete assistance and support to the remote areas of the country so far the placement is concerned AISECT has provided a mantra named as ROJGAR MANTRA in which, a dedicated team of experienced and dedicated people working towards providing placement support to students. The team acts as a bridge between the job seekers and the job providers. ROJGAR MANTRA delivers the placement support to AISECT students in the following way:



ROJGAR MANTRA SUPPORT SYSTEM

Recognitions & Futuristic View:

AISECT's innovative work was first listed in the IIM(A) –World Bank Institute's report in 1999 as a successful strategy and has since received awards and accolades like :

- The Indian Innovation Awards, 2005,
- NASSACOM I.T. Award, 2006,
- Golde4n Icon in National e- Governance Awards for Exemplary Leadership in ICT applications,
- The Asian Forum I4D Award, 2007,
- Received NASSCOM Emerge 50 Leader Award and the TiE –Lumis Partners Entrepreneurship Excellence Award,
- AISECT's mentor Shri Santosh Choubey has been honored as the finalist of the "Social Entrepreneur of the year 2010" by Schwab Foundation for his unparallel contribution in the field of ICT for Education and Development,

- CSI award for Excellence in IT education, 2011,
- Manthan South Asia Award 2012.

It has been foreseen that there will be increase in thrust on creating a pool of skilled personnel in appropriate numbers with adequate skills in line with the requirements of the ultimate users such as the Industry, trade and service sectors. There is a proposal by the GOI to launch a major skill development mission (SDM) with an outlay of Rs. 22,800 crores. It is being projected that there will be huge requirement of skilled manpower in the fields of banking and financial services, retail, Insurance in coming 5 years. To prove as a support to accomplish these projections AISECT has expand the ambit of ongoing skill development projects to cover more districts and states across country to facilitate skill based training. The group has explored to set up of private industrial training centers (ITC's) in select industrial areas /clusters. The group has a plan to participate in the central government DGE &T scheme of upgradation of ITI's in PPP mode across MP/CG. The group has setted a target to skill around 1.3 million youth across rural and semi urban India over the next ten years, in seven of the twenty one priority sectors identified by NSDC.

REFERENCES:

Annual Reports of AISECT Group

