

Improving employment prospects for youth in India:

Measuring Outcomes



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India's Demographic Dividend

India's population is currently 1.2 billion and rising. A unique characteristic of India's population is the large proportion of young people in India as seen in the graph below¹.

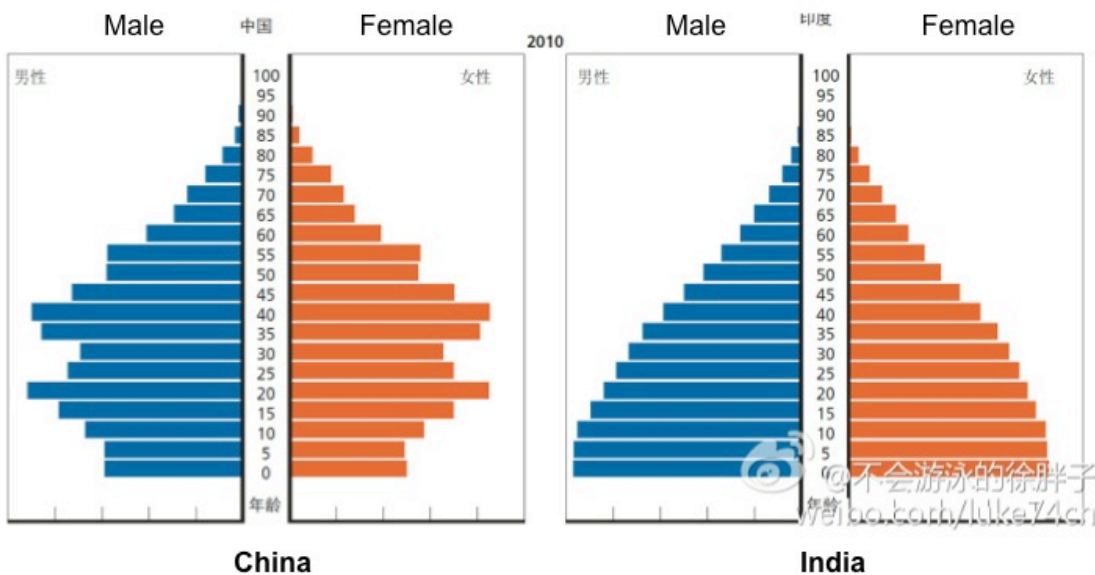


Fig 1. India's demographic Dividend

The y-axis represents age, and the two sides represent the proportion of males and females at a specific age group. A key question for India, and globally since Indians constitute 14% of the world's population, is what will it do with its young population or its 'demographic dividend'?

If India is not able to give its young population guidance and opportunities to utilise their full potential or at least take a step towards improving their socio-economic status, India's 'Demographic Dividend' can quickly become a 'Demographic Burden'. India will need to take care of a large marginalised population that cannot contribute to the country and will instead sap its resources and drive India more and more towards becoming a welfare state.

Asha for Education

Asha for Education (AfE) is a worldwide charity focused on catalysing socio-economic change in India by promoting basic education of underprivileged children and youth in India. AfE believes that the most effective means of social and economic development is through the education of children and youth.

AfE currently supports over 60 Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) across most states in India, which work with youth through Active Labour Market Programmes (AMLMP) and Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) to help them gain skills to enter the labour force.

Evaluating AMLP and TVET strategies in India

Our goal in this project is to evaluate the AMLP and TVET programmes run by the 60 NGOs we support to determine which deliver greatest value in utilising India's 'Demographic Dividend'.

Designing the Evaluation – the REAP model

Our ambition is to undertake our project in a manner outlined by the Rural Education Action Program (REAP)², an "impact evaluation organisation" that helped tackle China's education, health and nutritional problems. A summary of REAP's key criteria are listed in Table 1 below.

Criteria	Description
Randomness	This is the closest we can come to prove causation as well as correlation. There are two sets of participants, with one group as beneficiaries and the other as a control group. Ideally, this should be the only difference between the two groups such that other random variables affect both groups equally. The group members must also be selected at random, in an unbiased manner to include people of all genders, nationalities, socio-economic backgrounds and education levels.
Relevance	The impact evaluation must be carried on a program that is realistic and addresses the situation. The input of local councils, governments and organisations is essential - the people who can make a difference must be involved with the evaluation at every stage. The aim is not to conduct research or gain a theoretical understanding; it is to make a practical difference on the ground.
Ambitions	The policy should start small with evaluations carried out at every stage of development. Both the positives and negatives from the smaller pilots should be taken into account before moving on to design the policy with a bigger group.
Continuity	Impact evaluations are not one-off events; continuous monitoring of a scheme is required to ensure that the highest standards are maintained. In particular, tying further funding to performance is a good incentive to learn from the evaluations and implement the changes suggested.
Communication	The right data has to be made available to the right people in the right format. As a simple example, policy-makers will want a yes/no answer with a short justification as the result of an evaluation. A more scientific audience would require the data collected and the conclusions drawn in more detail so that the work can be independently reviewed. For the general public, a summary of the intervention and its impact suffices.

Table 1 – REAP project criteria

We aim to adhere to all of these criteria with the exception of 'Randomness'; our project will instead be observational prospective cohort study. Following on from the REAP model, our goal is to influence how NGOs run their AMLP and TVET programmes so that they deliver greater value and our evaluation will consist of two components – an evaluation of the individual NGO (Figure 2) and comparisons across NGOs to determine the strategies that deliver greatest value (Figure 3).

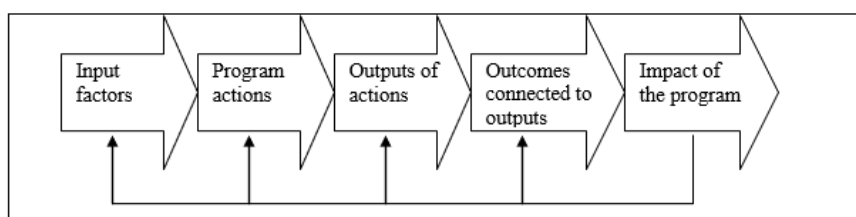


Figure 2 – Evaluating individual NGO AMLP and TVET strategies

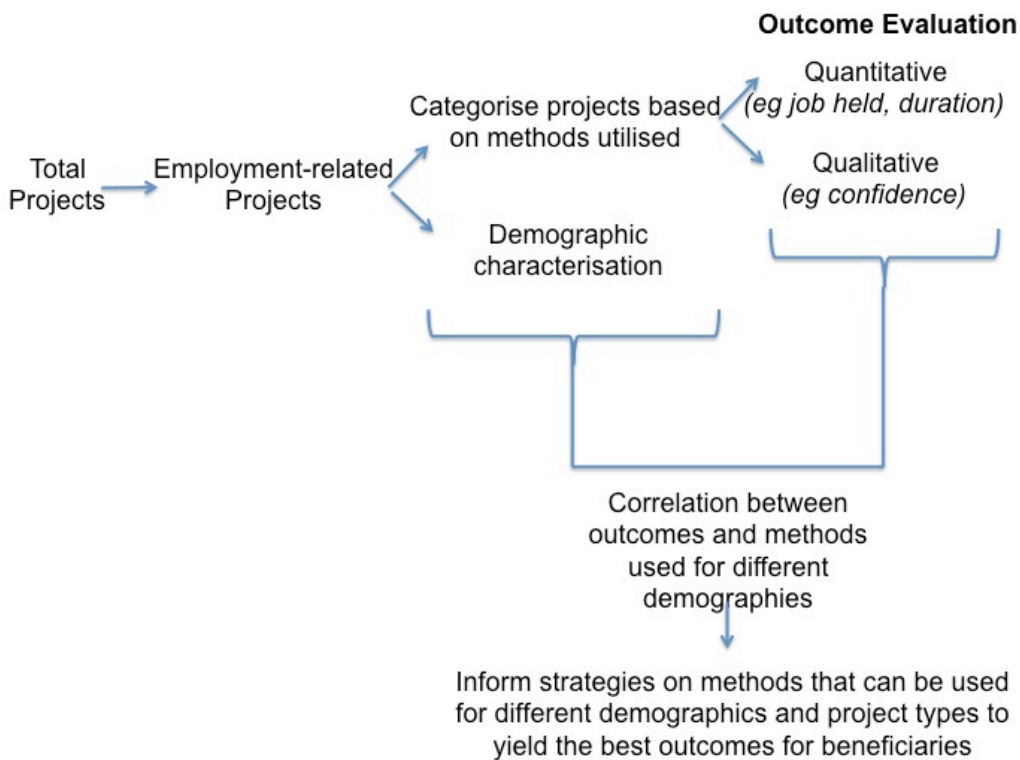


Fig 3. Comparing NGO AMLP and TVET programmes

Assessment Criteria (Outcome Metrics)

To determine the criteria we will use to assess the NGOs we needed to strike a balance in choosing criteria that were relevant and evidence-based but were also not too onerous to collect. Our ambition is to create a system that will see our NGO project partners in India collecting this data on their own on an annual basis so that we can rigorously evaluate individual NGO AMLP and TVET strategies and also compare strategies employed by different NGOs. We hope to catalyse behaviour change in the NGO project partners such that they see the value of collecting this data to improve their operational efficiency.

The first step we took in determining the assessment criteria was to do a search of the literature, through databases like 3ieimpact and the Campbell Collaboration, to identify studies and systematic reviews that specifically assessed AMLP and TVET programmes. We were broad in our inclusion criteria and included studies conducted in all low and middle income countries because we were interested more in the criteria used to assess the AMLP and TVET programmes rather than the impact of the programmes themselves. Based on this strategy we identified eight papers²⁻⁸ and created a composite list of outcome metrics used by each of the papers to assess AMLP and TVET programmes.

Employment Outcome	Quality	Access (Participation)	Sector	Demographics
Employment status	Student/Teacher ratio	Enrolment by demographics	<i>finding the number of vacant jobs per sector in different geographical locations would be very</i>	Age

			<i>interesting and could help guide the specific sectors the project partners target for their TVET programmes</i>	
Employment by economic sector	No. of drop outs (completion rate)	Enrolment by type of TVET		Gender
Employment by occupation	% of qualified teachers	*Number of applications to each project		Marital Status
Employment to participants ratio	% of completers who work in related occupations	*people who would have attended but for obstacles		Level of education attainment
Unemployment rate	Hours of training	<i>some of the subjective measures listed in Tripney would be useful but out of scope for now because they may be too resource intensive to collect. we might look to create a multiple choice framework a la Alzua et al for these questions</i>		
Unemployment duration	literacy skills			
Monthly earnings				
Reported income	Self reported skills			
Hours worked by day or month				
	% employers satisfied with skills of tvet students			
<i>employment type (as described in Tripney might be useful)</i>				
	Find out ourselves:			
	Investment in training of teachers			

Table 2 – Composite AMLP and TVET assessment criteria

We realised that it would be too onerous to collect all of these outcome metrics so we refined these to identify the metrics which would be relevant but also feasible for our NGO project partners to collect in the settings they work in:

1. Employment status of graduates (by type - full time, casual, self-employed, unemployed, further education)
2. Employment by sector (agricultural, manufacturing, services, other)
3. Student : Teacher ratio (by course)
4. No. of dropouts / completion rate (by course)
5. Demographics of participants (by course)

- a. Age (below 20 / over 20)
 - b. Gender (male / female)
 - c. Marital Status (single / divorced / married)
6. Total number of seats offered
 7. Number of unfilled seats

Next Steps

Our immediate next step will consist of deploying our refined list of outcome metrics to our project partners undertaking AMLP and TVET programmes to determine the true feasibility of collecting this data. Once we are satisfied that these metrics are collectable, or after making any necessary further refinements, we will begin our formal data collection process.

References

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