THE E-SKILLS MANIFESTO AND EQUITY AND QUALITY OF ICT EDUCATION!

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- **Introduction :**

The e-skills Manifesto is published by European School net and Digital Resources, as a part of the e-skills for jobs 2014 campaign which is an initiative of the *European Commission* financed under the EV programme for competitiveness of enterprise and small and medium sized enterprises (COSME) and organized in synergy with the EV Grand coalition for digital jobs.

This Manifesto is a blue print for making ICT skills development happen. It is based on a broad cross section of perspectives and is a must read for those that have a stake in acquiring, nurturing and retaining e-skills talent in the 21st century.

- **Equity** : *'The quality of being fair and impartial','The value of the shares issued by a company'* - Oxford Dictionary

    As mentioned in above definitions, technology will help education to provide equity of resources as per the need of the learner. The second definition says that equal share of the resources and opportunities should be given to all learners apart from ones socio-economic status.

Equity and **equality** are two strategies are used for treating fairness. **Equity** is giving everyone what they need to be successful. **Equality** is treating everyone the same. **Equality** aims to promote fairness, but it can only work if everyone starts from the same place and needs the same help.

- **Quality :***The standard of something as measured against other things of a similar kind; the degree of excellence of something*- Oxford Dictionary

    Quality is measured in education with reference to objectives. All learners should get equal opportunity to reach the objectives and necessary resources should be provided to them.

▪ **e-Skill Manifesto :**

'Europe is at a critical juncture, faced as it is with a growing gap between the demands for digital transformation on the one hand, and the skills, know-how and capability of the workforce on the other. To harness the potential of new technologies, and to keep pace with global competition, Europe urgently needs to build an eSkilled workforce. Working together, industry, education and government have the power to ensure long term action and success that will deliver jobs, competitiveness and growth.' – European Union (2014)

The e-Skill Manifesto is a curtain raiser on inequity and lack of quality in case of e-skillfulness. The manifesto has been published on the behalf on European Union. In the introduction of the Manifesto *Mr. Gilles Babinet*, Digital Champion says that the third industrial revolution is underway and our action will determined Europe's position in the emerging new economy. We also have to rethink education, from the way we learn to the way we think, work and live together.

The concern is expressed in the manifesto about lacking of e-skills in the job seeking conditions. Even the inequity in eskill found by the commission in developed countries from Europe.

Incentive for teachers to update their own IT training and modernize their teaching methods so as to main stream digital teaching / learning should introduced. Certification for teacher attesting to their e-skills could be introduced. Employers and educators must work in close collaboration in order to provide a more agile skill acquisition framework.

The chapter 5 in the manifesto is 'The New Innovative Education' 'Preparing for digital future e-skills in education'. Considering that to function in the digital society one needs more than low levels skills, almost half the EU population can be considered as insufficiently digitally skilled (having low or no digital skills).

Despite a clear gap in the competence of students compared to expectations, basic ICT knowledge is encouraged widely across the education system from a policy point of view. It is typically dealt with in a holistic manner of various levels of education, teacher's competence, student competence, e-safety for all.

European school net 2013 insight country reports from European member states variety of approaches to implement the teaching of digital literacy and competency of national level, from stand alone ICT curriculum, typically focusing on ICT use skills, through embedding ICT into every subject.

"Industries suffer from an education system that doesn't understand their needs. This is reinforced by school curriculum that focuses in ICT on office skills rather than the more rigorous computer science and programming skills".

▪ **Applicability of the Recommendations of e-skill Manifesto toEquity and Quality of ICT Education in India:**

In the Manifesto, e-skills are supposed to be a tool to build e-society. So some recommendation made in the manifesto. The recommendations are made in manifesto which can be applied to the equity and quality of teacher education in Indian scenario. Following recommendations are given:

• Build digital competence from the bottom up, Ensure that e-skills are encouraged through primary and secondary education and at upper levels, focus on higher level e-skills in addition to digital competence.

In the manifesto the future of ICT skills role is also stated in the following words:

Technology innovations share the future of work so global trends in technology and innovation must be reflected in the delivery of education. Teacher needs flexible learning solution to engage and re-engage young people lifelong learners, as well as the needed infrastructure in schools.

In India we do find digital divide in urban and rural area which is one of the obstacles to established equity and quality in education. ICT structure is less in primary section and it increases as we move higher level of education.The manifesto says the digital infrastructure should build from primary school. Then we can see more effective reflection of e-skills.

• In the first insight they state the *need of basic ICT training, embedded in their education. Schools and universities are needed to provide e-skills based education.*

The recommendation is also can be applied to Indian scenario. In our school education system, ICT is an optional or graded subject. In traditional courses in higher education, ICT subject is not dealt properly. ICT is a part of curriculum to technical subjects in university education. As per the recommendation ICT should be the embedded part of the curriculum for all level, so e-skill divide may not take place education.

• In the second sight, *they gave emphasis of joint efforts by corporate, educational institutions and NGO's to ICT skills.*

Human and physical resources are main concern in the implementation of equity and quality of ICT education in India. Due to lack of financial support computers and related

infrastructure cannot be made available in schools& colleges. Some places computers are there but teachers are not trained to make use of it. The above recommendation can be useful to cater this issue successfully. The corporate sector can contribute to build infrastructure through Corporate Social Responsibility Fund (CSR). Some NGO or institutions which work in the field of eskill, technology and computer etc. can help educational institutions for the training of teachers.

- At the end of e-skills manifesto the training of e-skills is discussed in future perspective. Also expected that various innovative models should be explored more effective. *ICT skills should be started from primary and secondary schools, so teachers of these levels should be trained for ICT skills development.*

  The recommendation is about teacher training. The eskill manifesto emphasis on eskill training should be started from primary school, so training of ICT should be started from primary teacher education. In India, NCTE has integrated ICT in the teacher training of all level. So we do find ICT elements in teacher education.

Under the title of "Partnership for innovation in ICT education and e-skill development" e-skills manifesto stated the importance of combined efforts of government, industries and academia for ensure that e-skills development will be done as per demand of future of European countries.

▪ **Conclusion :**

The manifesto stated few challenges. Following challenges are related to education and teacher education-

- Create the integrative e-skills needed for the ICT professional of the future.
- Advance the role of ICT and learning in primary and secondary education to achieve wider interest and motivation for ICT careers.
- Create new partnership models between industry and academic institution to faster student involvement in ICT based innovation and entrepreneurial learning.

We find same challenges in India too. Though the recommendations are made by European Commission for European countries, still those are applicable to Indian scenario. The inequality of ICT education in India can be tackle with the eskill manifesto. If human and physical resources are provided to students with the principle of equity, to all the students from primary education, there will be possibility of better quality in education. ICT is not only a subject but also it's a media of all subjects. If one is well acquainted with ICT subject,

one can use ICT to learn effectively other subjects. So this opportunity should be given to all with the principle of equity and quality.

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