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ESSAY: HIGHER EDUCATION VS. SKILL ACQUISITION

OUTLINE:

1. Introduction

Thesis statement: In an era where technology industry and careers landscapes are undergoing profound transformations, prioritizing skill development over higher education has become pertinent. While higher education provides comprehensive understanding of specific subjects, skill acquisition enhances practical learning. Hence, sagacious approach towards skill acquisition proves beneficial.

2. Higher education as stepping stone to skill acquisition.

3. Skill acquisition as pivotal component of individual's practical life. (Thesis)

- a- Shifting landscape of job market demands skills
- b- Inculcates practical skills and hand-on knowledge.
- c- Less expensive than traditional higher education. 7 million per year
- d- Takes short time span.
- e- More valuable for career advancement.

4. Necessity of higher education in individual's

life. (Anti-thesis)

- a - Educational programs often incorporate practical skills
- b - Provides comprehensive understanding of subjects
- c - Higher education is costly.
- d - More time consuming owing to in-depth information.
- e - Gives no guarantee of immediate employment opportunities. but develops ^{content} understanding.

5. Need of skill acquisition surpasses higher education's worth. (Synthesis)

- a - Entrepreneurs advocate proficient trainers beyond educational skill-building.
- b - Workplace environment demands adaptability over knowledge depth.
- c - Unemployed youth cannot afford expensive impractical knowledge (education)
- d - Higher education enhances knowledge without polishing necessary skills required for employment. ^{well if}
- e - Skill acquisition provides employment in less time.

6- Conclusion

ESSAY:

"Knowledge is of no value unless you
out it into practice" (Anton Chekov). This saying
of Anton Chekov highlights the importance
of practical skills in an individual's life.
From workplace to economic prosperity of a
country, skilled individual workforce is required.
Moreover, proficient and trained individuals
serve as an asset for a country. In an era
where technology, industry and career landscapes
are undergoing profound transformations, prioritizing
skill development over higher education has
become pertinent. While higher education
provides comprehensive understanding of specific
subjects, skill acquisition enhances practical
knowledge. Hence, sagacious approach towards
skill acquisition proves beneficial. Owing to the
fact that modern job market desires practical
skills and quick information. Moreover, skill acquisition
is cost effective, time efficient and ensures
career development. On the contrary, mere higher
education is inefficient in individual's skill
development. Though it provides deeper information
regarding subject and inculcates practical skills
to some extent, yet it consumes more time, and
money without ensuring career advancement. Never-
theless, skill acquisition precedes higher education.

as it is required for business, workplace and employment. Besides, ^{high} skill acquisition develops professional skills in less time and expense.

Both higher education and skill acquisition go side by side in an individual's professional development. Skills encompass practical abilities acquired through training and practice, enabling individuals to perform specific tasks efficiently. Higher education, on the other hand, serves as a stimulus to the skill development. It refers to the formal learning process within academic institutions. Without having basic knowledge, skills cannot be acquired in professional life. Both have unique roles to play in personal and professional life development. With the advancement in technology, adaptability and innovation are in demand, surpassing the need of traditional higher education. Additionally, time saving, cost effective and innovative nature of skill acquisition necessitates its use in ever-changing world.

Globalization and automation have transformed the world job market. Many traditional careers are disappearing while new specialized roles emerge. This shift demands skill diversification. In **Dubai** alone, the demand for **IT professionals** is approximately **4000**. Skills are the building blocks of innovation and productivity.

The ability to code, design, write or communicate effectively holds immense value in today's workforce. They are often the differentiators that set individuals apart. Hence, skill acquisition is evolving with the changing world.

Moreover, skill acquisition is crucial to incorporate practical skills in individuals. These skills are sine qua non for career advancement. Both verbal and non-verbal skills are included in it. For example, **soft skills** like communication, leadership and teamwork as well as maintaining composure amid stressful situations. Several internships, workshops and online courses offer opportunities to acquire practical skills. Besides, these pragmatic skills only require a handful of information and do not delve into minor details of bookish knowledge. In this way, skills prepare individuals to be a part of skilled workforce of a country.

Besides, skill acquisition is cost-effective. It does not require extensive fee ~~structures~~ and more resources. These vocational ~~Procedures~~ training and workshops train a wide large number of people. Over and above, where higher education programs demand additional fee charges over long span of time, skill acquisition is done in ~~less~~ minimum.

amount. Through proper training, a variety of factors including sales, teamwork and workplace safety can be improved. Therefore, skill acquisition provides vital skills to the individuals in ~~in~~ low costs.

In addition to this, skill acquisition is done in less time with broader ~~with~~ aim.

This is because it does not go for in-depth knowledge and gives instantaneous training. Skill acquisition depends on soft skills.

For example, at workplace, effective communication skills of an employee are required for the promotion of organization. These skills develop over time but they do not need to be developed through long academic courses and degrees. In order to master soft skills, internships, short courses and time-specific training prove beneficial. Hence, skill acquisition saves one's time and effort.

As skill acquisition is pivotal component of professional life, it paves the way ~~to~~ of advancement in one's career. Though it may not provide the same level of depth and breadth of knowledge as higher education does, it enhances one's practical understanding of ~~things~~ matters in workplace. In **medical** field, without practicals and

interaction with patients, students would not be able to become professional doctors with mere theoretical knowledge. So, skill acquisition is more valuable for career advancement.

Nevertheless, education does not necessarily exclude skill development. Many educational programs now incorporate practical skill-building components, creating a bridge between theory and application. Certain professions prioritize skills over degrees. These include **technology** and **creative arts**, as both focus on creativity and innovation. Besides **medicine** also necessitates practical work for students to hold the title of doctor. In this way, students can strike a balance by enhancing skills while pursuing higher education. These skills complement both education and technical proficiency. Therefore, educational programs provide some degree of skills to the individuals.

Higher education ~~is~~ leads to a degree, such as bachelor's or master's degree. This type of education focuses on a wide range of subjects, including social sciences, natural sciences and humanities. Owing to this fact, it intends to provide a well-rounded education to students. A **bachelor's or master's degree**

last for years, covering in-depth knowledge of the subject. In order to serve this purpose, higher education demands more time and expense. So, higher education broadens the horizon of students, relying on theoretical information.

Contrary to the skill acquisition, higher education is expensive. The long duration of academic course requires huge expenses. Higher educational institutions including colleges and universities has high charges. In **Pakistan** several high-ranking universities such as **NUST, GIKI, FAST, LUMS** and so on deliver their expertise through huge fees. In developing countries due to inflation and poverty, not everyone affords costly education. So, skill acquisition is more appealing to the people in countries where youth bulge surpasses employment opportunities. Therefore, skill acquisition has low cost and vice-versa. (higher education)

Over and above, higher education takes years to complete a degree. It is based on theoretical information with ~~little~~ less focus on pragmatic skills. The amount of time that students spend studying and attending class may have long-term consequences for educational achievement, labour market success and

and health. However, students lag in soft skills and ~~sk~~ proficient expertise required at workplace. By merely studying theoretical knowledge, individuals end up being unskilled. Hence, higher education consumes more time without giving fruitful results.

Higher education may not lead to immediate employment opportunities. In today's dynamic world, long-term success requires skill acquisition rather than theoretical knowledge. This is the basic reason behind youth unemployment. Life-long learning and skill acquisition are vital for career longevity. As soon as students complete their higher education, they find themselves inept for employment. The reason behind this is inadequate professional skill-learning in higher education. Hence, higher education does not ensure employment opportunities.

Entrepreneurs often advocate for skill acquisition as a means to start and grow businesses. They value practical know-how and adaptability in the competitive business landscape. These skills are not taught in academics and higher education. To thrive in the future, individuals need to continually

update their skills. Staying up-to-date with industry trends are vital for career longevity. Therefore, individuals with advanced skills thrive in business.

56 Furthermore, adaptability has become a critical skill in an ever-changing world. Those who can learn and adapt quickly are better equipped to navigate the uncertain terrain of the job market. Individuals having the ability to adapt in changing environment are considered more productive and appropriate for workplace. As stated by Alvin Toffler; "The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read or write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn." Hence, in the century ahead, mere traditional education will not be the sole criteria for literate people. Skills are most important to adapt according to the workplace demands.

Over and above, in poverty ridden countries, socio-economic condition of people does not allow individuals to spend money on extensive higher education, without job ensueity. Theoretical knowledge is supplanted by skill acquisition. Youngsters cannot afford purposeless education, lacking required skills for jobs.

According to In Pakistan, unemployment rate is projected to trend around 8.50% in 2024 (SRI, 2024). Figures show that high ratio of youth remained unemployed despite highly qualified academic degrees. In this way, unemployment is directly related to poverty and affordability crisis. Therefore, skill acquisition is cost-effective and more useful for unemployed youth.

Similarly, in the era of technology, skill acquisition teaches practical skills. This is due to emphasizing the personality development of individuals. On the flip side, higher education only polishes the knowledge and information of individuals. 47 percent of Americans surveyed throughout thought that four-year degrees were not worth the cost because people often graduate without specific job skills and with a large amount of debt to pay off. (NBC, The Wall Street Journal, 2024). In this way, a large population of individuals remain unskilled even after receiving higher education.

Skill acquisition is also done in minimal time. Adroit individuals find jobs more easily and quickly. Modern workplace environment prefers skills over knowledge. For example, individuals having diplomas in specific courses

have more job opportunities than those having long time span degrees. So, skill acquisition is time saving and less strenuous.

In a nutshell, in the skill acquisition vs. education debate, there is no one-size-fits-all answer. The right choice depends on individual's goals, industries and circumstances. However, it is clear that in today's dynamic world, willingness to learn, adapt and acquire relevant skills is essential for long-term success. On one hand, where higher education is deemed as pivotal part for ~~an~~ individual's career, ^{on the other side, the} significance of skill acquisition cannot be undermined. Besides, the benefits of skill acquisition outweighs the higher education at workplace and career advancement. While higher education provides comprehensive understanding of subjects, skill acquisition enhances the practical knowledge. With the innovative technology, productivity, adaptability and innovation are the skills in demands surpassing the need of traditional higher education. As ~~these~~ are associated with the real intelligence of man.

"The measure of intelligence is the ability to change"

- Albert Einstein.