

EMPOWERING FUTURES: UNLEASHING THE IMPACT OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS ON EMPLOYABILITY IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Globalization and technological disruption put challenges as well as offer opportunities for economic expansion and job creation. The Nation can transform into a productive, innovative and competitive economy with skilled human potential. Skill Development can expand one's horizon and chances of his employability by nurturing talents and honing skills and knowledge. It is instrument for improving effectiveness and enables a person to perform with greater efficiency. The researchers have tried to understand how Skill development trainings is enhancing employability in India. India is recognized as one of the youngest nations in the world with over 50% of the population under 30 years. It is estimated that by about 2025, India will have the 25% of the total global workforce. Hence, there is a need to further develop and empower the human capital to ensure the nation's global competitiveness. Youth plays a crucial role in achieving economic prosperity of the country. This study is to investigate the existing literature for the skill development programmes and leveraging the demographic proportion in India by making them more skilled and employable. Hence, the paper will highlight the programs enhancing employability in India, gaps in skill, employment & Entrepreneurial development programmes.

Keywords: Skill, Development, Programs, Enhancing, Employability, Education, Government , Population

1. INTRODUCTION

Skills may change people's lives and increase the economic productivity of both individuals and society as a whole. People with lower skill levels are more likely to struggle because they are more likely to be unemployed or to be locked in low skill, low income positions. Since they give people the ability to do acceptable employment and enhance their well-being, skills can have a profound impact on social behaviour. Skills and knowledge are the driving forces of economic growth and social development for any country. In fact, investment made in skills can make countries to invest in social welfare programmes. Lack of the appropriate skills in the workforce can have serious negative impacts on people, societies, and countries. The key that unlocks equitable opportunity for the disadvantaged and underprivileged segments of society can be skilled. The neglected and underprivileged segments of society can move up to the social ladder with equal access to education, training, and work. As India moves progressively towards becoming a 'knowledge economy' it becomes increasingly important that the country should focus on advancement of skills and these skills have to be relevant to the emerging economic environment. In today's rapidly evolving job market, employers seek candidates with not only academic knowledge but also practical skills that align with industry requirements. While they are working research in this area can provide insights into the types of skills that are in demand and how skill development opportunities can bridge the gap between education and employment.

Key skill development initiatives of the government:-

- Establishment of 1,500 new it is through the DGET
- Establishment of 50,000 Skill Development Centres through the DGET
- Setting up of PM National Council on Skill Development (already operational)
- Setting up of the National Skill Development Coordination Board (already operational).

The Prime Minister of India stated that "skill development should be accompanied by a spirit of 'Shram-evJay ate' – giving dignity to labour." One of the major priorities of the Government is entrepreneurship and skill development. Shri Narendra Modi delivers first address to Lok Sabha, talks about Centre's commitment to serve the poorest of the poor. Thus, for the first time an autonomous ministry has been established to carry out the task. It is crucial that the intended recipients of the skill development programme enrol in training programmes with a desire to study and become independent so they can lead better lives.

Graduates face challenges when they transitioning from education to employment. Effective skill development opportunities can empower students with the skills needed to excel in their chosen careers, thus enhancing their employability and reducing unemployment rates. Institutions can use research findings to refine their curriculum and

teaching methodologies. By understanding which skill development initiatives positively impact employability, educators can design more relevant and practical educational programs. Governments and educational institutions often invest in skill development initiatives. Research can inform policy decisions by highlighting the most effective approaches for improving students' employability, leading to more targeted and impactful policies. A skilled workforce contributes to economic growth and stability.

When students are better prepared for the workforce, they are more likely to secure meaningful employment, contribute to economic development, and reduce the burden on social welfare systems. Skills mismatch occurs when there is a disparity between the skills possessed by Job seekers and the skills demanded by employers. Research can help to identify the specific skills that are lacking and guide educational institutions to focus on relevant skill development. Skill development opportunities can play a key role in promoting diversity and inclusion in the workforce. Understanding the impact of these opportunities on different demographic groups can help to create more equitable employment outcomes.

Skills acquired through development opportunities can contribute to long-term career success. Research can provide insights into how certain skills acquired during education can lead to higher job satisfaction, career advancement, and overall professional growth. Countries that prioritize skill development and employability have a competitive edge in the global market. Research can shed light on best practices from around the world, enabling countries to learn from one another's successes and challenges. Keeping in view the great importance of skill development opportunities acquiring the students through the vocational education programmes and getting better employment at different industries, organisations, enterprises, workshops. We propose this study entitled "Skill development opportunities and its influence on employability of students".

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Dr. S.C. Patil & Prof. Amaresh B. Charantimath (2021) conducted a study on "Employability through Skill Development Programmes – an overview of significance of Employability skills" with the objective to understand the importance of employability skills and ascertain the gap between Expected Skills and Skills inculcated. The study concluded that the rate of employability can be bettered with effective involvement of the stakeholders such as candidates, Governments, Education Institutes and Training partners. Focus is required on improving the infrastructure facilities, curriculum upgradation with industry-institute interface.

The public-private-partnership can ensure proper funding, controlling and reviewing of the skill development programs.

Dr. Rajni Arora & Manoj Chhadwani (2019) conducted a study on "Analysing the impact of skill India as a tool for reshaping Indian economy" for analysing the essence and impact of skill India mission in reshaping the economy of the country. The study concluded that to enhance the momentum proper implementation of the Skill India Mission is required.

The government has set an ambitious target of Skilling around 400 million people by 2022, but it has been seen that the pace is much slower and the training/skilling to job/placement transition rate is not meeting expectation. In its first phase, the target was to train 2.4 million but only 1.97 million people were trained. There is acute shortage of trained workers in India with just 2.3% of workforce having formal skill training compared to South Korea (96%), Japan (80%), Germany (75%), United Kingdom (68%), and United States of America (52%). This emphasises an immediate focus on skilling people and effective implementation of the entire process of skill India Mission.

A.Krishnamoorthy & H. Srimathi (2019) conducted a study on "Skill Development – The Future of India" with an aim of reviewing the prevailing practices in various available skill sets and suggesting way forward. The study concluded that India would possibly have the best young workforce in next two decades but this alone would not be sufficient. This feat cannot be achieved through arbitrary governance. It requires careful analysis of global requirements of workforce, and adequate steps needs to be undertaken for imparting vocational and related skills as per industry requirement. Indians can have a strong hold in the global workforce and also sustain growth & development with a mixed strategy of all the best practices in skill development on need-based analysis, introspections, periodic Revisions and cohesive contribution of all stake holders.

Dr. Yathish Kumar & K R Ramya (2017) conducted a study on "Review of the Skill Development Initiatives and its Effect on the Indian Economy" for understanding the concept of skill development, challenges being encountered in self-employment and provide suggestions on basis of observations. It was arrived that the Skill India concept is a great move in transforming India into a developed country by motivating its talents and making a bright future for its youth. The youth needs to come up and accept responsibility, not remain idle in the society and focus on job creation & social security. With this new approach India can definitely march towards its goal.

Ankul Pandey & Prof. D. K. Nema (2017) conducted a study on “Skill development strategy and employability of workforce in India (Make-in-India movement)” to ascertain the employment potential of the ‘Make in India’ and ‘Skill India’ initiative, analysing the role of Skill Development programme in bridging the skill-gap and ascertain the impact on the Indian Economy. It was arrived that in any business both man and money are of paramount competitive advantage. It is imperative to upgrade quality and enhance the performance management of organization to monitor, guide and boost the skill capability of its workforce.

Patil & Charantimath (2021) conducted a study on “Employability through Skill Development Programmes – an overview of significance of Employability skills” with the objective to understand the importance of employability skills and ascertain the gap between Expected Skills and Skills inculcated. The study concluded that the rate of employability can be bettered with effective involvement of the stakeholders such as candidates, Government, Educational Institutes and Training Partners. Focus is required on improving the infrastructure facilities, curriculum upgradation with industry-institute Interface. The public-private-partnership can ensure proper funding, controlling and reviewing of the skill development programs.

Sanjeeb & Hazarika (2021), conducted a research on the topic Skill Development for Rural Entrepreneurship: A study on State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD), Assam. The purpose of this research is to investigate the various skill-development resources offered by the State Institute of Rural Development for rural entrepreneurship as well as the Motivational value of the training that the institution offers in Assam. The area covered was Assam and data was collected from the district of Assam and analysis was done and it was found that a progressive growth in the rural area as people got skilled and subsequently got employment.

Paul Benell (2020), “Opportunities for Rural Youth” according to this study, cooperation between the public and commercial sectors as well as a multi-sector approach are particularly important for helping rural youngsters find work. The International Fund for agricultural Development plays a significant part in creating jobs and revenue. The importance of the role that policy development and implementation play was also emphasised. Vocational education helps in understanding the opportunities of Rural youth and generates employment for them.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1) To assess the overall impact of skill development programs on student employability by examining changes in confidence, readiness, and soft skills.
- 2) To identify and address skill gaps within educational frameworks to ensure alignment with practical industry needs and enhance students’ preparedness for the workforce.
- 3) To examine the development of soft skills, such as communication and teamwork, to understand their role in shaping students’ career readiness and success in the professional world.
- 4) To investigate the impact of skill development programs on the employment outcomes of youth in the commerce field, particularly in terms of employment rates, salary levels, and job satisfaction.
- 5) To determine whether participation in skill development programs directly influences employment opportunities in the commerce field, comparing the employment status of youth who have undergone such programs to those who have not.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As it is an exploratory study, the research paper is primarily dependent on secondary data that was gathered from many journals, periodicals, and publications. The needs of the study’s objectives are taken into consideration when using a descriptive study. The study made considerable use of secondary data.

Skill Development in India: Skill development in India is a vital initiative aimed at enhancing the employability and productivity of the country’s vast workforce. With a large youth population, India has a significant opportunity to capitalize on its demographic dividend by equipping its citizens with industry-relevant skills. To achieve this goal, the government has launched several initiatives, including the National Skill Development Mission, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), and Skill India. These programs aim to provide vocational training, apprenticeships, and entrepreneurship development opportunities to millions of Indians, with a focus on emerging technologies, soft skills, and sector-specific skills. The benefits of skill development in India are multifaceted. By acquiring industry-relevant skills, Indian youth can significantly enhance their employability, making them more attractive to potential employers. This, in turn, can lead to increased productivity, competitiveness, and economic growth. Moreover, skill development programs can provide better livelihood opportunities, enabling individuals to earn a decent income and improve their standard of living. However, despite these initiatives, challenges persist, including limited access to quality training, inadequate infrastructure, and low awareness about skill development programs. To overcome these challenges, the government, industry stakeholders, and training providers must collaborate to create a robust skill development

ecosystem. This can be achieved by investing in quality training infrastructure, developing sector-specific skill development programs, and promoting awareness about the benefits of skill development. Furthermore, there is a need to focus on emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, robotics, and data analytics, to ensure that Indian workers are equipped to thrive in an increasingly automated and digital economy. By prioritizing skill development, India can unlock the full potential of its workforce, drive economic growth, and become a global leader in the skills landscape.

Programs Enhancing Employability in India:

Government-Initiated Programs

1. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY): Provides industry-relevant skills training to youth.
2. National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC): Promotes skill development by catalyzing vocational institutions.
3. Rozgar Melas: Organizes job fairs to bridge the gap between job seekers and employers.
4. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendras (PMKK): Offers specialized training centers for skill development.
5. Udaan: Provides skill development training and job placement opportunities for Jammu & Kashmir youth.

Skill Development Initiatives

6. Skill Loan Scheme: Facilitates access to loans for individuals to invest in skill development.
7. India International Skill Centers (IISCs): Offers international-level skills training to elevate Indian youth's competitiveness.
8. Apprenticeship Training: Enables individuals to gain practical work experience and skills while employed as apprentices.
9. National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS): Provides financial support to establishments undertaking apprenticeship training.

Private Sector Initiatives

10. SMART Program: Provides skill development training to youth across 11 cities in India.
11. CII Model Career Centres (MCCs): Acts as a reservoir of skilled talent pool for the industry.
12. Sector Skill Councils: Develops curriculum for various sectors in consultation with industry.

Other Initiatives

13. Digital Literacy Programs: Enhances employability by providing digital skills training.
14. Entrepreneurship Development Programs: Encourages entrepreneurship and self-employment opportunities.
15. Vocational Training Programs: Provides training in specific trades and skills.
16. Soft Skills Training: Enhances employability by providing training in soft skills.
17. Industry-Academia Partnerships: Fosters collaboration between industry and academia to enhance employability.
18. Placement Cells: Facilitates job placement opportunities for students and job seekers.
19. Career Counseling: Provides guidance and support to individuals in choosing their careers.
20. Online Platforms: Leverages online platforms to provide skill development training and job placement opportunities.

Integrating Future Employment Needs in General Education:

Integrating future employment needs in general education is essential to prepare students for the rapidly changing job market. This involves reforming the curriculum to include 21st-century skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and collaboration. Additionally, incorporating emerging technologies like artificial intelligence, blockchain, and data analytics into the curriculum will enable students to stay ahead of the curve. Industry partnerships play a vital role in this integration, as they provide students with practical experience, mentorship opportunities, and exposure to real-world problems. By collaborating with industries, educational institutions can ensure that students acquire the skills and knowledge required to succeed in their chosen careers. Furthermore, teacher training and support are crucial to ensure that educators are equipped to teach emerging technologies and industry trends. By integrating future employment needs into general education, students will be better prepared to adapt to the changing job market and succeed in their future careers.

Integrating future employment needs in general education is crucial to prepare students for the changing job market. Here are some ways to achieve this:

Curriculum Reforms

1. Incorporate 21st-century skills: Teach skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and collaboration.

2. Integrate STEM and non-STEM fields: Combine science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) with arts, humanities, and social sciences.

3. Include emerging technologies: Teach students about emerging technologies like AI, blockchain, and data analytics.

Industry Partnerships

1. Collaborate with industries: Partner with industries to provide students with practical experience and exposure to real-world problems.

2. Mentorship programs: Establish mentorship programs where industry professionals guide students.

3. Internships and apprenticeships: Provide students with internships and apprenticeships to gain hands-on experience.

Skill Development

1. Soft skills training: Teach students essential soft skills like teamwork, time management, and leadership.

2. Digital literacy: Provide students with basic digital literacy skills, including computer programming and data analysis.

3. Entrepreneurship education: Encourage entrepreneurship and innovation by teaching students how to start and run a business.

Assessment and Evaluation

1. Competency-based assessment: Assess students based on their demonstration of specific skills and competencies.

2. Project-based learning: Evaluate students' learning through project-based assessments.

3. Industry-recognized certifications: Offer industry-recognized certifications to students who demonstrate expertise in specific areas.

Teacher Training and Support

1. Professional development: Provide teachers with ongoing professional development opportunities to stay updated on industry trends.

2. Industry partnerships for teachers: Establish partnerships between teachers and industry professionals to enhance teacher knowledge and skills.

3. Teacher training programs: Offer training programs for teachers to learn about emerging technologies and industry trends.

Gaps in Skill, Employment & Entrepreneurial Program :

The gaps in skill, employment, and entrepreneurial programs refer to the shortcomings or deficiencies in initiatives designed to provide skills training, employment opportunities, and entrepreneurial support. These programs often fall short in addressing the needs of the job market, resulting in a mismatch between the skills acquired and the requirements of industries. Furthermore, many programs lack accessibility and inclusivity, failing to reach marginalized or underprivileged groups due to factors such as location, cost, or lack of awareness. The quality of training provided is also a concern, with many programs not meeting industry standards, leaving participants without the necessary skills to secure employment or start a business. Additionally, inadequate job placement support, mentorship, and resources hinder the effectiveness of these programs. Insufficient funding, lack of industry connections, and inadequate data-driven decision making also contribute to the gaps in these programs. To bridge these gaps, it is essential to design programs that are tailored to industry needs, accessible to all, and provide high-quality training, mentorship, and resources.

"Gaps In Skill, Employment, and Entrepreneurial Programs" refers to the shortcomings or deficiencies in programs designed to provide skills training, employment opportunities, and entrepreneurial support. These gaps can exist in various aspects of such programs, including:

- 1) Relevance of skills training: Programs may not provide training in skills that are in demand by industries, leading to a mismatch between the skills acquired and the requirements of the job market.
- 2) Accessibility and inclusivity: Programs may not be accessible to all, particularly marginalized or underprivileged groups, due to factors such as location, cost, or lack of awareness.
- 3) Quality of training: The quality of training provided may not be up to industry standards, resulting in participants not acquiring the necessary skills to secure employment or start a business.
- 4) Employment opportunities: Programs may not provide adequate job placement support or entrepreneurship opportunities, leaving participants without a clear pathway to employment or self-employment.
- 5) Mentorship and support: Programs may lack adequate mentorship and support systems, leaving participants without guidance or resources to overcome challenges.
- 6) Funding and resources: Programs may be underfunded or lack access to necessary resources, such as equipment, technology, or industry connections.

- 7) Data-driven decision making: Programs may not use data and analytics to inform their decision-making, leading to ineffective strategies and inefficient use of resources.
- 8) Scalability and sustainability: Programs may not be designed to scale or sustain themselves over time, leading to a lack of long-term impact.
- 9) Industry connections: Programs may not have strong connections with industries, leading to a lack of understanding of industry needs and requirements.
- 10) Continuous evaluation and improvement: Programs may not have a mechanism for continuous evaluation and improvement, leading to stagnation and ineffectiveness.

Addressing these gaps is crucial to ensuring that skill, employment, and entrepreneurial programs are effective in supporting individuals and contributing to economic growth.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, skill development programs have a profound impact on employability in India. By providing individuals with industry-relevant skills, these programs enhance their employability, increase their productivity, and improve their livelihoods. The various initiatives launched by the government, such as PMKVY, NSDC, and Skill India, have been instrumental in promoting skill development and entrepreneurship in the country. However, despite these efforts, challenges persist, including the need for greater industry involvement, improved quality of training, and enhanced placement support. To address these challenges, it is essential to foster greater collaboration between the government, industry, and educational institutions to ensure that skill development programs are tailored to the needs of the job market and provide individuals with the skills required to succeed in their chosen careers. Ultimately, the impact of skill development programs on employability in India has the potential to transform the country's workforce, drive economic growth, and improve the lives of millions of Indians.

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