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## Empowering the Future: A Comprehensive Education and Skill Development Initiative

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### Abstract

The "Empowering the Future: A Comprehensive Education and Skill Development Initiative" is a transformative program aimed at fostering equitable access to education and equipping individuals with critical skills for success in a dynamic global economy. The initiative addresses gaps in basic education, promotes vocational training, enhances digital literacy, and nurtures entrepreneurial capabilities. Through a holistic approach combining innovative learning methods, community engagement, and industry partnerships, the program empowers underprivileged and marginalized populations, enhances employability, and drives economic growth. Implemented in phases—research, pilot programs, scaling, and evaluation—the initiative ensures adaptability and long-term sustainability. By bridging educational disparities and fostering lifelong learning, this initiative contributes to social empowerment, workforce readiness, and sustainable development on a global scale.

**Keywords :** Education Access , Skill Development, Vocational Training, Digital Literacy, Entrepreneurship, Lifelong Learning, Workforce Development.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In a rapidly evolving global landscape, education and skill development are essential for fostering innovation, reducing inequality, and ensuring sustainable economic growth. "Empowering the Future" is a holistic initiative designed to equip individuals with the knowledge and practical abilities they need to thrive in the modern world. This program focuses on bridging educational gaps, enhancing employability, and promoting lifelong learning.

"In today's rapidly advancing technological landscape and evolving global environment, there is an urgent need for an education system that is both adaptable and inclusive. As the workforce transforms, future jobs will demand not just academic knowledge but also a range of technical and interpersonal skills that many current educational systems are not addressing. The gap between traditional education outcomes and the skills needed in the modern job market continues to grow, making it crucial to implement a comprehensive initiative for education and skill development that will ensure future generations are adequately prepared to succeed in an increasingly interconnected and complex world."

The Government of India has several initiatives to help improve education and skill development, including Skill India, the Skills Development Initiative (SDI), and the National Skill Development Mission (NSDM).



### Objectives

To provide accessible, inclusive, and high-quality education and skill development opportunities that empower individuals to achieve personal growth, economic independence, and active participation in their communities.

## **Literature of Review**

**(Tiwari &Malati, 2020)** Skill-based, industry-oriented education can help students bridge skill gaps and increase their job options. In this backdrop, the Government of India has launched a slew of initiatives to boost technical vocational education and training. Confirmatory and regression models containing all parameters were evaluated and their importance was examined in the current article. The study discovered that skill improvement had a beneficial influence on employability. It has been claimed that emphasising on vocational education for skill development might help with employment.

**(HUSSAIN ANSARI, 2018)**There is a pressing need to expand possibilities for people to develop their personality, functional aptitude, and consequently economic productivity. Because of restricted access to education, skill training, and massive mismatches in the labour market, India has a severe lack of skilled people. This article examines the present situation of education, skill development, and employment in India, as well as the obstacles facing the skill development system.

**(AGRAWAL & AGRAWAL, 2017)** A significant fraction of formal trainees in the workforce stay jobless, indicating underutilization of human resources. They also investigate the extent to which individuals' training matches their vocational levels, discovering that around two-thirds of trainees are engaged in jobs linked to the field of training. Their findings suggest that vocational education has greater relative returns than regular secondary education.

**(JYOTI DEKA BHARATI VIDYAPEETH & BATRA, 2016)** Manufacturing in India by international and native industries in numerous areas might offer job opportunities. As a result, Indian labour and potential workers must acquire skills and information in order to secure employment. Just 10% of the labour force obtains formal training to meet skill requirements. Yet, just 4.3 million of the 22 million workforces are receiving formal training out of the real industrial training demand.



## Overview of Education in India

Education in India is a diverse and complex system that encompasses a wide range of institutions and approaches.

- **Structure:** The education system in India is broadly divided into three levels: primary education (grades 1-5), secondary education (grades 6-12), and higher education (colleges and universities).
- **Primary Education:** Primary education is free and compulsory for children aged 6 to 14 under the Right to Education Act (2009). However, access and quality vary significantly across different states and regions.
- **Secondary Education:** Secondary education includes middle school (grades 6-8) and high school (grades 9-12). The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and the Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE) are two of the prominent national boards, while each state also has its own boards.
- **Higher Education:** India has a vast higher education system with universities, colleges, and institutes offering undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral programs. Major universities include the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), and numerous state and private universities.
- **Challenges:** The education system faces challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, teacher shortages, uneven quality of education, and disparities in access between urban and rural areas.
- **Reforms:** Efforts are ongoing to improve the quality and accessibility of education through policies like the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which aims to overhaul the education system by focusing on holistic development, vocational training, and integrating technology.

- **Technology:** With the advent of digital learning, there's a growing emphasis on integrating technology into education delivery, though access to technology remains uneven across different segments of the population.

### **Current State of Education and Skills Development in India**

The current state of education and skills development in India reflects significant progress while facing persistent challenges.

#### **Education in India**

##### **Primary and Secondary Education**

###### **1. Enrolment Rates:**

- India has achieved near-universal enrollment in primary education, with a Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of over 95%.
- Secondary and higher secondary levels still face dropout rates due to socioeconomic challenges, especially among marginalized communities.

###### **2. Quality:**

- Learning outcomes remain a concern. Reports like the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) indicate that many students lack foundational skills in literacy and numeracy.
- Teacher shortages and inadequate training continue to affect the quality of education.

###### **3. Infrastructure:**

- Progress in building school infrastructure (classrooms, sanitation, digital facilities) is notable, but rural and remote areas lag behind urban centers.

##### **Higher Education**

###### **1. Expansion:**

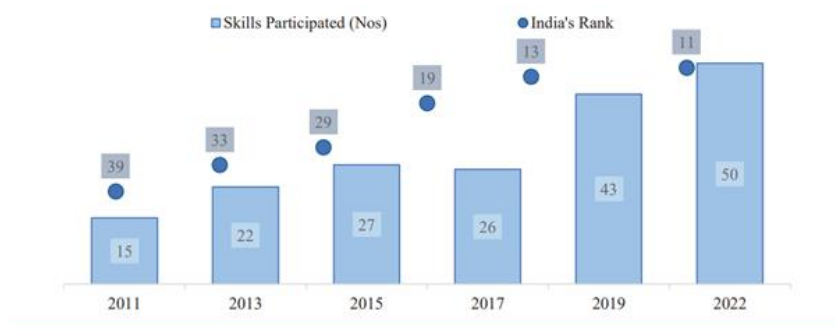
- India has the third-largest higher education system globally, with over 1,000 universities and 40,000 colleges.
- Private institutions have proliferated, though quality varies widely.

###### **2. Focus Areas:**

- Emphasis on research and innovation is growing but still underfunded compared to global standards.
- Vocational and technical education integration is a priority under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

###### **3. Challenges:**

- High unemployment among graduates suggests a gap between academic training and market demands.
- Access and affordability remain barriers for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.



Source: MSDE Annual Report 2022-23

## Skills Development in India

### 1. Demand-Supply Gap:

India's demographic dividend, with 65% of the population under 35, creates a vast workforce potential.

- However, only a small percentage of the workforce is formally skilled (approximately 10% compared to 55-75% in developed countries).

### 2. Government Initiatives:

- Skill India Mission: Aims to train over 400 million people in different skills by 2025.
- National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC): Facilitates public-private partnerships to deliver industry-relevant training.
- Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY): Provides short-term skill training to youth in various sectors.

### 3. Technology Integration:

- Online platforms (e.g., e-Skill India, edtech startups) are expanding access to digital skills and job-oriented training.
- AI, machine learning, and robotics are increasingly part of the curriculum to prepare youth for Industry.

### 4. Challenges:

- Mismatch between training programs and industry needs.
- Lack of awareness and access to skilling opportunities in rural areas.
- Informal workforce (about 90% of total employment) struggles to access formal training programs.

## **Government Initiatives towards Skill Development in India**

Steps taken by the Government to promote Skill Development & Entrepreneurship across the country.

Name of Scheme	Number of Trained Candidates
PMKVY (Since inception to October, 2023)	1,40,22,926
JSS (Since 2018-19 to October, 2023)	21,74,056
NAPS (Since 2018-19 to October, 2023)	25,48,023
CTS (ITI) (2018-19 to 2022-23)	65,10,839

## **Challenges in Education and Skills Development**

Education and skills development face several challenges globally, and India is no exception. These challenges span issues related to access, quality, infrastructure, equity, and relevance to the job market.

### **Challenges in Education**

#### **1. Access and Enrolment**

- **Rural-Urban Divide:** Schools in rural areas often lack basic facilities such as classrooms, electricity, and toilets, making access to education difficult.
- **Dropout Rates:** Despite near-universal enrollment at the primary level, dropout rates increase significantly at the secondary and higher secondary levels, often due to poverty, child labor, or early marriages.
- **Digital Divide:** The shift to online education, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighted the lack of access to devices and internet connectivity for many students.

#### **2. Quality of Education**

- **Learning Outcomes:** Studies like the ASER report show that many students fail to achieve basic literacy and numeracy skills even after several years of schooling.
- **Teacher Shortages and Training:** A lack of qualified teachers and insufficient teacher training programs adversely affect the quality of education.
- **Overemphasis on Rote Learning:** The education system often prioritizes memorization over critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

#### **3. Infrastructure**

- Many schools lack proper infrastructure, such as safe buildings, adequate seating, clean drinking water, and functional toilets, particularly for girls.

- Poorly maintained and under-resourced schools deter both students and teachers.

#### **4. Equity and Inclusion**

- Gender Disparity: While strides have been made, girls in many regions still face barriers to education due to social norms, safety concerns, and lack of sanitary facilities.
- Marginalized Communities: Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and economically weaker sections face systemic discrimination and limited access to quality education.

#### **5. Curriculum Irrelevance**

- The curriculum often does not align with the skills needed in the job market, leaving graduates underprepared for employment.
- Vocational education is poorly integrated into the mainstream curriculum.

### **5.5. Challenges in Skills Development**

#### **1. Mismatch Between Skills and Industry Needs**

- Many training programs focus on traditional skills that do not match the demands of modern industries, particularly in sectors like technology, healthcare, and renewable energy.
- Soft skills, critical thinking, and adaptability are often overlooked.

#### **2. Awareness and Accessibility**

- Many youth, especially in rural areas, are unaware of available skill development programs or face difficulties accessing them due to financial and geographical barriers.

#### **3. Fragmented Ecosystem**

- Multiple agencies and organizations offer overlapping skill development initiatives, leading to inefficiency and duplication of efforts.

#### **4. Quality of Training**

- The quality of training provided under many skill development programs is inconsistent, with inadequate facilities and poorly trained instructors.

#### **5. Recognition of Informal Skills**

- A large portion of India's workforce operates in the informal sector, and their skills are often unrecognized and uncertified, limiting their mobility and earning potential.

#### **6. Funding and Resources**

- potential. Limited budget allocations for skill development programs result in underfunded initiatives that fail to achieve their

#### **7. Retention and Employment**

- Even after completing training, many individuals struggle to secure jobs due to a lack of demand for their skills or a lack of industry partnerships in training programs.



## Placement Under Skill Development Scheme as a Total Employment



### Placement and Skill Development in India

#### Skill Development Schemes Launched by the Government of India

- Pradhan MantriKaushalVikasYojana (PMKVY)
- Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP)
- UDAAN.
- Standard Training Assessment and Reward Scheme (STAR)
- Polytechnic Schemes.
- Vocationalisation of Education.
- RozgarMela.



#### Key Skill Development Schemes

##### 1. Pradhan MantriKaushalVikasYojana (PMKVY):

- A flagship program under the Skill India Mission aimed at providing short-term training and certification.

- Placement under PMKVY has been a challenge, with many trained candidates struggling to find stable or relevant jobs.
- 2. DeenDayalUpadhyayaGrameenKaushalyaYojana (DDU-GKY):**
    - Focuses on skilling rural youth and mandates a minimum placement target of 70% for trained candidates.
  - 3. National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS):**
    - Encourages industries to offer apprenticeships, linking skills directly to employment opportunities.
  - 4. Other Initiatives:**
    - Sector Skill Councils (SSCs) and state-specific skill development missions also work towards training and placement goals.

## II. CONCLUSION

"Empowering the Future" represents a commitment to building a world where education and skills are accessible to all, enabling individuals to unlock their potential and shape a brighter future. By fostering collaboration among stakeholders and focusing on innovation, the initiative seeks to create lasting impacts on individuals and communities globally.

### Expected Outcomes

**Increased Employability:** Participants acquire skills aligned with industry demands, enhancing job opportunities.

**Economic Growth:** Skilled individuals contribute to local and national economies through employment or entrepreneurship.

**Social Empowerment:** Education and skills foster self-confidence and enable individuals to participate in decision-making.

**Sustainable Development:** Programs are designed to address environmental and societal challenges, promoting long-term resilience.

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