

## HARNESSING THE POWER OF YOUTH FOR VIKSIT BHARAT

**\* Ms. Amisha Meharbansingh Rana & \*\*Prof. Shafaq Heyat Khan**

*\* Research Student , \*\* Research Guide , KLE Society's Science and Commerce College.*

### Abstract:

India's large youth population offers a unique opportunity to drive the country toward becoming a Viksit Bharat (developed India). This research explores how young people can contribute to India's growth while addressing the challenges they face. Key issues such as skill gaps, high unemployment, mental health problems, and the increasing trend of brain drain prevent many young people from realizing their full potential. The paper highlights the role of education, technology, and entrepreneurship in overcoming these obstacles and empowering youth to succeed. It also emphasizes the importance of targeted policies and programs that can equip young people with the skills needed for the job market, provide mental health support, and create more employment opportunities. By focusing on innovation, skill development, and entrepreneurship, India can turn its demographic dividend into a driving force for national development. The study proposes practical strategies to help young people actively participate in nation-building. It advocates for a comprehensive approach that brings together government, businesses, and civil society to create a supportive environment for youth. The research concludes that by addressing these challenges, India can unlock the full potential of its youth, helping them contribute to the country's growth and the vision of a Viksit Bharat.

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### Introduction:

Like everywhere else in the globe, our country's youngsters are a tremendous asset for social change, innovation, and progress. And in India the youth or young population is large and for India to become a developed nation, the involvement of its youth is crucial. Young people, aged 15 to 35, bring fresh ideas, energy, and a willingness to embrace challenges. Giving our young people the skills they need improves their employability and develops the country as a whole.

Their contributions are key to achieving the vision of a Viksit Bharat, which means a developed India. This vision includes not only economic growth but also social inclusion, sustainability, and global competitiveness. By aligning their ambitions with the country's goals, we can unlock their potential to drive progress in areas like technology, entrepreneurship, social welfare, and governance. India's youth are

crucial to the nation's transformation into a Viksit Bharat. Their energy, creativity, and determination can push India toward becoming a leader on the global stage, provided they are given the right tools, opportunities, and guidance to realize their full potential. This research paper explores how the youth can contribute to this vision, the challenges they face, the opportunities available to them, and the policies needed to support their growth and impact.

### Review of Literature:

In 1952, the first "Planning Commission" acknowledged the critical role that young people may play in the Country's growth. Following the United Nations' declaration of 1985 as the International Year of the Youth, Indian policymakers started preparing a national youth policy, which was subsequently amended in 2003 And adopted in 1988. Nevertheless, few steps were taken to put these policies into practice locally.

The "Youth In India 2022" report by Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), Government of India, emphasizes India's demographic advantage, with an important portion of the population being young. To harness youth for development, the report emphasizes the importance of education, skill development, and employment opportunities. Addressing challenges like unemployment, gender inequality, and health disparities is crucial. Encouraging entrepreneurship, promoting innovation, and fostering leadership can transform India's youth into agents of progress. With the right policies and investments, this demographic can significantly contribute to the country's economic and social growth.

In the study "**Harnessing Indian Youth Power,**" by **Dr. Rajesh Shukla** emphasizes the crucial role of India's youth in driving economic growth. With a large youth population, India has a demographic advantage, but challenge like high unemployment and underemployment remain. Shukla stresses the need for policy focused on skill development, job creation, and entrepreneurship to enhance youth employability. He also highlights the importance of infrastructure and social policies that empower youth, ensuring India can fully utilize its demographic dividend for long-term growth.

The study "**Harnessing Demographic divided Before it is Lost Forever in India**" by **Jajati Keshari Parida, S Madheswaran**, highlights India's youth population as a key driver of economic growth. It stresses the need to address youth unemployment and underemployment through policies focused on skill development, job creation, and entrepreneurship. The research also emphasizes the importance of infrastructure and social policies to empower youth for long-term growth.

#### **Research Methodology:**

This study looks at how young people can help build a

"Viksit Bharat." This paper is based on primary as well as secondary data. Primary data was collected using a Google Form with multiple-choice questions and one short note. The participants were selected based on convenience. The answers to the multiple-choice questions were counted and shown as percentages, while the short note answers were looked at for common ideas. The study is limited because of the small number of response.

#### **Objectives of the Study:**

1. Analyze the role of youth in driving innovation, economic growth, social change, and sustainability in India.
2. Identify the challenges faced by young people in contributing to national development, such as unemployment, lack of skills, and unequal opportunities.
3. Explore the opportunities available to the youth for empowerment through education, skill development, entrepreneurship, and technology.
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of current government policies and initiatives, such as Skill India and Digital India, in supporting youth development.

#### **Limitations of the Study:**

1. **Limited Data Availability:** Getting accurate, updated, and detailed data about India's youth—such as their education, jobs, and skills—is often difficult. For example, there may not be enough recent surveys or reports, or the data available might not cover all regions or social groups. Without proper data, the study might miss some important details.
2. **Regional Differences:** India is a vast and diverse country with big differences in culture, economic conditions, and opportunities. A solution that works well in one part of India might not be effective in another. For instance, urban areas have better internet and infrastructure, while rural areas may struggle with basic facilities. This makes it hard to

create plans that fit everyone's needs.

3. **Rapid Changes in the World:** Technology, global trends, and government policies are changing very quickly. For example, industries are shifting due to automation and artificial intelligence, and new opportunities are emerging all the time. By the time the study is completed, some findings might already be outdated.
4. **difficult to Measure Certain Aspects:** It's hard to measure things like creativity, leadership skills, or the innovative potential of youth because they are subjective. People might have different opinions about what counts as innovation or creativity, and there are no clear rules to measure these qualities.
5. **Challenges with Government Policies:** While there are many government programs to support youth, they don't always work as planned. For example, some schemes may not reach rural areas, or there may not be enough funding to make a big impact. Evaluating the actual success of these programs can be challenging due to lack of clear data.
6. **Broad Scope of the Topic:** The topic of "Harnessing the Power of Youth for Viksit Bharat" is very wide and covers many areas like education, jobs, health, and entrepreneurship. It might not be possible to cover all these areas in one study, so the focus may remain on just a few aspects, leaving out others.
7. **Limited Resources:** Conducting a large-scale study requires a lot of time, money, and people. For example, visiting different parts of the country to conduct surveys or interviews may not be possible if the resources are limited. This could mean relying on existing data, which might not give the full picture.
8. **International Comparisons:** Comparing India's strategies with those of other countries can provide useful insights, but it might be hard to find or

analyze such data. For example, countries like China or the U.S. have successfully empowered their youth, but studying these models in detail requires extra effort and resources.

9. **Underrepresented Groups:** Not all youth have the same opportunities or challenges. For instance, rural youth, women, or those from marginalized communities may face different problems than urban or privileged youth. If the study focuses mainly on urban or educated youth, it might overlook the needs of these underrepresented groups.

**10. Defining Innovation:** Innovation is an important part of youth development, but it can mean different things in different contexts. For example, innovation in farming will look very different from innovation in technology. Without a clear way to define and measure it, the study might struggle to show the real impact youth can have.

### Data Collection:

#### Primary Data Collection:

The primary data for the study was collected using a Google Form survey. The form included multiple-choice questions and a short note section to gather useful information. It was shared with a small group of people, focusing on young individuals. A total of 19 responses were received. Even though the number of responses was small, the data provided helpful insights into how youth see their role in building a developed India.

#### Secondary Data Collection:

##### 1. Youth Demographics and Employment:

**Youth in India- 2022 (Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation): Population Data:** India's youth, defined as individuals between the ages of 15-35, forms a large and vibrant segment of the population. As of 2022, youth make up about 36% of the total population, with substantial variation in age distribution across regions. The data

indicates that the urban youth population is growing faster than the rural youth, reflecting migration patterns and urbanization.

**Education and Employment:** The report provides insights into how the youth are accessing education, with rising enrolment rates in secondary and higher education. However, it also highlights the continued gap in education quality, especially in rural areas, leading to mismatched skills for the labor market.

## 2. Understanding Youth Unemployment in India (PLFS Data):

**Unemployment Rates:** According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2022, the youth unemployment rate is significantly higher compared to the general population. For youth aged 15-29, the unemployment rate stands at 12.9%, much higher than the national average.

**Causes of Unemployment:** This high rate is largely due to the lack of skill alignment with available job opportunities, gender disparities, and the slow pace of formal sector job creation. Rural youth, in particular, face additional challenges such as limited access to quality education, skill development programs, and job opportunities.

## 3. Innovation and Entrepreneurship Programs:

**Youth Co:Lab India (UNDP):**

**Focus on Social Entrepreneurship:** Youth Co:Lab India, part of a regional initiative across Asia-Pacific, nurtures young social entrepreneurs by providing them with access to funding, mentorship, and a platform to their innovative solutions. The program focuses on addressing critical issues like climate change, education, health, and poverty through youth-led enterprises.

**Impact:** Over 200 startups have emerged through this initiative, many focusing on sustainable development goals (SDGs), demonstrating youth-driven solutions that align with national

development goals.

## 4. Young Innovators Program (YIP) by IIT Kharagpur

**Platform for Aspiring Innovators:** The YIP provides a nurturing environment for young innovators to work on scientific research and create products that address pressing societal issues. It provides aspiring innovators with mentorship, resources, and access to state-of-the-art labs and equipment, fostering an entrepreneurial spirit among youth.

**Success Stories:** The program has resulted in several groundbreaking innovations, many of which have been commercialized into startups, driving solutions in sectors such as renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and clean technologies. These innovations have attracted significant investment and attention from global markets, leading to patents and recognition at international forums.

## 5. Government Policies and Initiatives:

### 1. Skill India Mission:

**Objective and Reach:** The Skill India Mission was launched with the goal of equipping over 50 million youth with industry-relevant skills by 2023. This initiative aims to bridge the gap between education and employment by offering training in sectors like manufacturing, construction, IT, and healthcare. The program involves collaboration between government agencies, private sector companies, and educational institutions to provide vocational training to young people.

**Successes and Gaps:** While millions of youth have benefited from Skill India, challenges remain in terms of ensuring that the training provided matches the ever-changing demands of the job market. Moreover, the lack of training infrastructure and qualified trainers, particularly

in rural areas, remains a significant barrier to achieving the program's full potential.

## 2. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY):

**Vocational Training:** The PMKVY program has been instrumental in providing skill development training to over 12 million individuals across various sectors, such as healthcare, construction, and IT. It aims to improve employability by offering short-term courses that enhance skills relevant to specific industries.

**Challenges:** Despite its success in urban areas, PMKVY faces challenges in rural and underserved regions. Lack of adequate infrastructure, shortage of skilled trainers, and insufficient connections with local industries hinder the program's effectiveness in these areas.

## 3. Digital India:

**Focus on Digital Literacy:** The Digital India initiative seeks to empower youth by enhancing digital literacy and providing access to online resources for education, employment, and entrepreneurship. Through initiatives like the Digital Literacy Mission, millions of young

people, especially in rural areas, have been trained in basic digital skills.

**Growth and Gaps:** The success of Digital India is visible in the growing internet penetration and digital service access. However, challenges such as inconsistent internet connectivity, particularly in remote regions, and digital illiteracy continue to pose obstacles to achieving complete digital inclusion.

## 6. Global Comparisons:

### *Youth Development Index (YDI):*

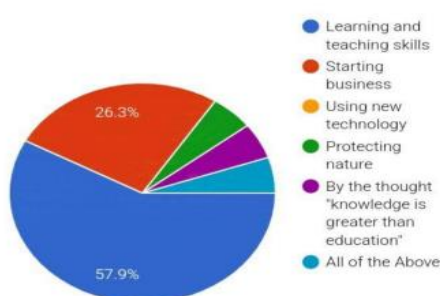
**Indian Youth Index:** India's Youth Development Index, published by the Ministry of Youth Affairs, ranks Indian states based on key indicators like education, employment, health, and civic participation. The data collected from these indicators helps policymakers design targeted programs for youth development.

**International Benchmarking:** When compared to developed nations, India's Youth Development Index tends to lag, particularly in areas like health, education, and employment. However, states like Kerala and Tamil Nadu have shown better performance in these indicators, suggesting that localized initiatives can have a positive impact on youth development.

## Data Analysis and Data Interpretation:

1.How can youth help in making India a better country?

19 responses

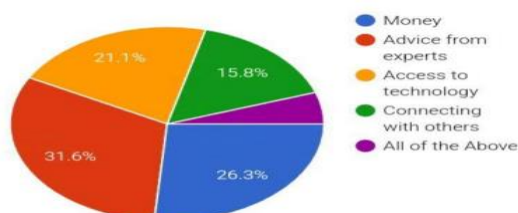




The data shows 57.89% believe learning and teaching skills are the best way for youth to help India, showing the importance of education. Starting businesses (26.32%) is the next choice, highlighting the role of entrepreneurship. Protecting nature (5.26%) and other ideas (10.53%) were also mentioned. No votes for using technology suggest a gap in its awareness. This shows the need to guide youth in education, business, and technology for a better India.

2.What kind of help  
do young people  
need to work on  
new ideas?

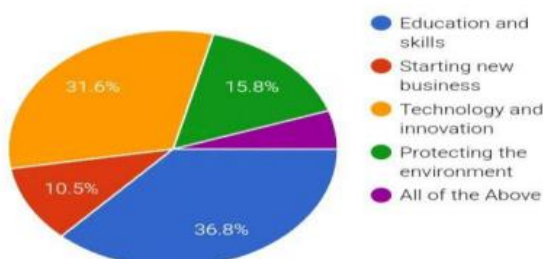
19 responses



This chart shows the support young people need to develop new ideas. Most of them (31.58%) need advice from experts, while 26.32% need financial help. Access to technology (21.05%) and chances to connect with others (15.79%) are also important. A small number (5.26%) mentioned other types of help. This shows the need for guidance, funding, resources, and teamwork to help. This shows the need for guidance, funding, resources, and teamwork to help youth contribute to building a developed Bharat.

3.What is the most important area where youth can help build a developed India?

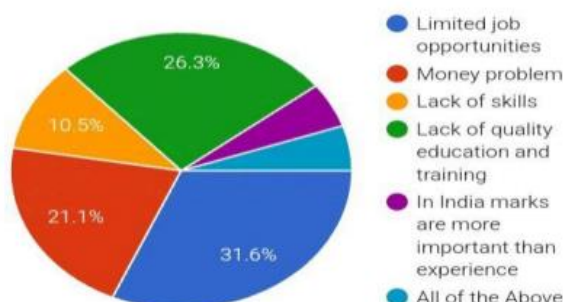
19 responses



This chart shows the key areas where youth can contribute to building a developed India. Most respondents (36.8%) believe education and skill development are the most important, as they empower youth to drive progress. Technology and innovation come next, with 31.6% emphasizing their role in advancing India's global competitiveness. Protecting the environment (15.8%) is also seen as crucial, as sustainable practices are essential for long-term development. Starting new businesses (10.5%) highlights the importance of entrepreneurship in creating jobs and boosting the economy. A small percentage (5.3%) feel all these areas are equally important, reflecting the need for a balanced and holistic approach to fully harness the potential of youth for national development.

4. What stops youth from helping in India's development?

19 responses

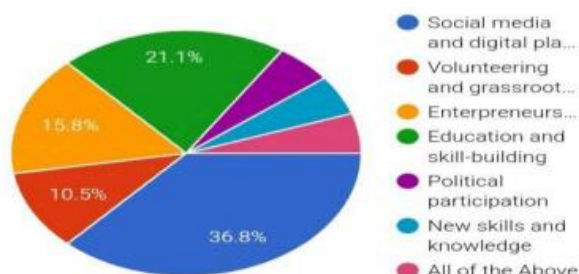


The pie chart shows the main reasons why youth are unable to contribute to India's development. Out of 19 responses, the largest portion (31.6%) said a lack of job opportunities is the biggest challenge. Financial problems were the second most common reason, chosen by 21.1% of respondents. About 10.5% felt that a lack of skills stops youth from helping in development. Additionally, 5.3% pointed to poor-quality education and training, while another 5.3% said that India values marks over practical experience, which discourages youth. Lastly, 26.3% of respondents believe all these factors combined are responsible. These responses show that creating more jobs, improving education, and offering better training are essential to enable youth to contribute more effectively to India's growth.



5. In your opinion, what is the most powerful tool that the youth can use to drive change in India?

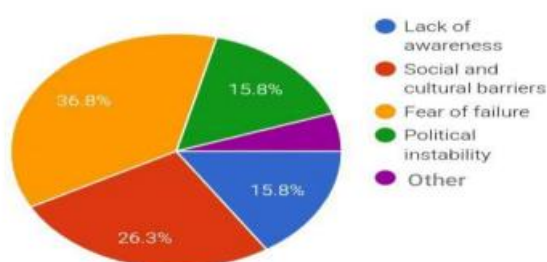
19 responses



The pie chart shows the opinions of people on how youth can bring change in India. Most (36.8%) think social media and digital platforms are the most powerful tools, as they help spread awareness and make an impact. Education and skill-building came next, with 21.1% saying it is important for solving problems and improving lives. Volunteering and grassroots work, chosen by 15.8%, show the value of helping communities directly. Entrepreneurship got 10.5%, showing the role of new ideas and businesses. Overall, the chart shows that people believe youth can drive change in many ways.

6.What factors discourage young people from contributing to India's development?

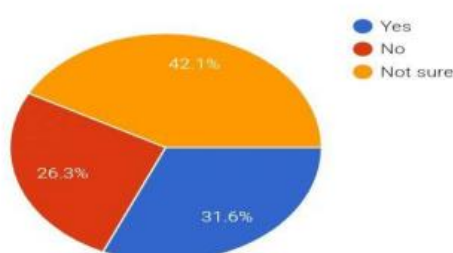
19 responses



The chart shows the reasons why young people feel discouraged from helping India develop. Out of 19 responses, most (36.8%) said political instability is the biggest issue, meaning unstable politics make it hard for youth to get involved. Next, 26.3% pointed to social and cultural barriers, like traditions or biases, which limit opportunities. Lack of awareness and fear of failure were both chosen by 15.8% of respondents, showing that young people need more knowledge and confidence. The rest mentioned other reasons. This shows that solving these issues can help youth contribute more to India's growth.

7. Do you think India provides enough opportunities for youth to innovate and lead technological advancements?

19 responses



The chart shows the opinions of some people about whether India gives enough opportunities to youth for innovation and leading technological advancements. About 31.6% think India provides enough opportunities, while 26.3% disagree. The largest group, 42.1%, is unsure. This suggests that although some recognize India's efforts, many are either doubtful or unaware of the opportunities available. This highlights the importance of improving initiatives and creating more awareness about the resources and platforms available for young innovators in India.



The pie chart illustrates opinions on whether rural youth have the same opportunities as urban youth to contribute to India's development. Out of 19 respondents, the majority (47.4%) believe rural youth do not have equal opportunities. An equal percentage (26.3%) of respondents think that rural youth either have the same opportunities ("Yes") or are uncertain ("Maybe"). These results suggest a significant concern regarding the inequality of opportunities available to rural youth compared to urban youth, while some remain optimistic or undecided on the issue.

#### Short note:

**9. What can be done to bridge the gap between rural and urban youth in terms of opportunities?** To reduce the gap between rural and urban youth in terms of opportunities, several ideas were suggested by the respondents:

- **IMPROVE EDUCATION:** Schools in rural areas need better facilities, skilled teachers, and programs that focus on practical skills to help youth find good jobs.
- **PROVIDE INTERNET ACCESS:** Rural youth should have access to the internet and digital tools, so they can connect to the same learning and job opportunities as urban youth.
- **BUILD BETTER TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE:** Roads, transport, and basic facilities in rural areas should be improved so that youth can easily reach urban areas for work or education.
- **ENSURE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES:** Both rural and urban youth should get the same chances for quality education, job training, and resources to grow and succeed.
- **CREATE AWARENESS:** Rural youth should be informed about the programs and opportunities available to them. This will help them participate in initiatives that can improve their future. These steps highlight the importance of making sure rural youth have access to good education, technology, better infrastructure, and proper guidance. This will help them compete equally with urban youth and contribute to India's growth.

The pie chart showcases the opinions of 19 respondents on the qualities essential for young leaders to contribute to a developed India. Most respondents (52.6%) believe that problem-solving abilities are the most important quality. Integrity and ethical leadership were chosen by 26.3% of participants, while 21.1% highlighted innovation and adaptability as key traits. Visionary thinking received no specific emphasis. These results suggest that practical skills and ethical behavior are seen as more critical than abstract or future-oriented thinking for young leaders aiming to drive India's development.

This chart explains the opinions of respondents on how youth can address issues like inequality, discrimination, and poverty in India. More than half (52.6%) of the participants believe that promoting awareness through education is the most impactful way. Around 15.8% think advocating for policy changes is important, while 10.5% each suggest direct action through NGOs or community programs, volunteering with hands-on efforts, and other approaches. The responses highlight that while education is seen as the most significant tool, other methods like advocacy and grassroots involvement are also considered valuable in creating changes.

**Findings:**

**1. EDUCATION AND SKILLS ARE KEY :** respondents (36.8%) feel that education and skill development are the most important ways for

youth to help India grow. Without the right skills and knowledge, young people struggle to find good jobs and contribute to the country's progress. Thus it is very important to provide them right education

and skill development programs.

2. **CHALLENGES FACING YOUTH :** A lack of job opportunities (31.6%) is the biggest challenge youth face, followed by financial problems and poor-quality education as per the respondents. Some also mentioned that practical skills are not valued as much as exam marks, which limits their growth.
3. **RURAL YOUTH NEED MORE SUPPORT:** Almost half of the respondents (47.4%) believe rural youth do not have the same opportunities as urban youth. To bridge this gap, rural areas need better schools, internet access, and infrastructure like roads and transport. To provide awareness to the rural youth about available opportunities is also very important.
4. **SUPPORT NEEDED FOR INNOVATION :** Young people need expert guidance (31.58%) and financial help (26.32%) to bring their ideas to life. They also need better access to technology and opportunities to connect with others who can support them.
5. **THE POWER OF TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL MEDIA :** Social media and digital platforms (36.8%) are seen as powerful tools for youth to bring change. These platforms allow young people to raise awareness, share ideas, and connect with opportunities to drive innovation and solve problem.

#### **Recommendations:**

1. **ENHANCING EDUCATION AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT:**  
There should be a stronger emphasis on improving the quality of education across both rural and urban areas. This includes expanding vocational training and digital literacy programs to ensure that youth are equipped with relevant skills for the modern economy. Government initiatives like the Skill India Mission and Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas

Yojana (PMKVY) should be further strengthened by aligning skill development programs with the evolving demands of industries, especially in rural regions.

#### **2. PROMOTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION:**

Increased access to financial resources, mentorship, and technology is crucial for encouraging young entrepreneurs. Government initiatives such as Start-Up India should be expanded to provide young people with the tools they need to launch businesses, particularly in sectors like technology and renewable energy. It is important to support youth-led innovations, including social enterprises that address pressing issues like climate change, poverty, and healthcare, through dedicated programs like Youth Co:Lab India and the Young Innovators Program.

#### **3. PROMTING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR RURAL AND URBAN YOUTH:**

Special attention should be given to bridging the gap between rural and urban youth by improving access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities in rural areas. This can be achieved through better infrastructure, improved internet connectivity, and increased awareness of available opportunities. Policies should be implemented to ensure that youth from rural regions have the same opportunities as urban youth has, by connecting them with resources and networks that can help them thrive.

#### **4. SUPPORTING SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP:**

Youth involvement in social change and environmental sustainability efforts should be encouraged. Government and non-government programs can offer platforms for young people to engage in community service, volunteerism, and leadership roles in solving societal challenges like



inequality and climate change. Establishing leadership development programs that focus on critical thinking, ethical decision-making, and social responsibility will empower young people to become the change-makers of tomorrow.

#### 5. **INCREASING GOVERNMENT SUPPORT AND AWARENESS:**

Government programs aimed at youth development need to be more inclusive so that they reach all communities, especially those that are marginalized or underserved. This includes improving the monitoring systems used to track the effectiveness of these programs and identifying and addressing any obstacles to their successful implementation. In addition, public awareness campaigns should be launched to educate young people about the various opportunities, government schemes, and resources available to them. These efforts will help ensure that all youth, regardless of their background, have the support they need to reach their full potential.

#### 6. **EMPOWERING YOUTH THROUGH TECHNOLOGY AND CONNECTIVITY:**

Expanding access to technology and digital platforms in rural areas will allow young people to better participate in education, entrepreneurship, and employment. Government and private sector partnerships should focus on providing the necessary digital infrastructure to connect youth to the global economy. Encouraging the use of technology for innovation, education, and communication will help empower youth, especially in underdeveloped regions, and open up new avenues for growth.

#### **Conclusion:**

India's youth are crucial to the nation's transformation into a Viksit Bharat. This research highlights that young people bring fresh ideas, energy, and skills to the table, which can drive change in areas like education, Business, technology, and social development.

However, the youth face several challenges, such as high Unemployment, lack of proper skills, and limited access to opportunities, especially in rural areas. From the primary data collected, it is clear that education and skill development are seen as the top priorities for youth to contribute effectively to India's growth. Secondary data also reflects that unemployment among youth remains a significant issue, with many lacking the skills required for available jobs.

Government Programs like Skill India, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana, and Digital India are helping, but challenges remain, particularly in rural regions where access to education and job opportunities is still limited. To India To fully harness the power of its youth, more emphasis needs to be placed on improving access to quality education, creating more job opportunities, and supporting innovation. By addressing these issues and providing better resources, guidance, and support, the youth can play a key role in shaping India's future. It's important for the government, businesses, and educational institutions to work together to help the youth realize their potential, which will lead to overall national progress and help India achieve its vision of becoming a developed nation.

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