
Future prospects for women's skill development programs in India

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Abstract

Every nation in the world advances economically and socially via the application of skills and information, and women play a crucial role in this process. Achieving gender equality in the workplace requires expanding women's access to education and training programs. To raise women's socioeconomic standing and increase their economic contribution to the nation, the Indian government is offering numerous skill development programs. This also aimed to increase the number of workers in the industrial and service sectors and promote gender equality. However, before the government's goal of skill development can be achieved, a number of obstacles to the skill development of rural women must be overcome. It is crucial to comprehend the difficulties faced by rural women and come up with solutions that will enable them to develop new skills. We have covered the issue and difficulties associated with skill development training for women in India in this review article, as well as the impact of skill development programs on women's socioeconomic standing, self-image, and confidence.

Keywords: Skill development programmes, Workforce, Rural women, Entrepreneurship; Socio-economic status

1. Introduction

Skill development involves identifying and addressing youth skills gaps with training and jobs. Skill development programs help young people realize their potential by giving them opportunity and support. Everyone needs education and talent, which are essential for economic growth and societal development. Thus, the national and state governments collaborate with skilling industry partners to develop young people's skills. Skill development improves company earnings, performance, accuracy, quality, communication, compliance with laws and regulations, recruiting and career opportunities, and customer relationships. MSDE launched Skill India in July 2015. Since then, skill development has helped nearly 35.36 lakh women find better, more stable jobs. PMKVY taught 19.85 lakh applicants for 375 jobs throughout its trial period. A merit-based scheme paid full training costs to winners. Women made up a small percentage of the 2.53 lakh training candidates who placed. We have different training requirements for men and women since women take care of the home, raise children, and work as low-wage laborers or subsistence farmers. Women make up over half of India's population, but their economic engagement is minimal. Indian women make up 31.8% of the workforce, compared to 73.2% for men. Due to a lack of education and training, they



have historically been paid less than males for the same work. Additionally, the gender pay gap has become a substantial financial barrier to launching a firm. They must expand their talents to increase their household's capability, independence, and employability. Income-generating solutions boost long-term growth and sustainability. Vocational training programs aim to enhance the livelihoods of disadvantaged women without technical skills . By the 11th Five-Year Plan, India would have 15 million skill development participants per year, up from 3.1 million. India wants 500 million skilled workers by 2022. Thus, skill development programs must boost economic production and women's employment . Ayushman Bharat, Swachh Bharat Mission, Smart City Mission, and other government projects have partnered with Skill India to ensure a skilled workforce for these national goals. These initiatives are providing thousands of jobs, many for women . Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), the ministry's flagship programme, aims to increase women's labour participation through gender mainstreaming and training. PMKVY has taught 56 lakh applicants, 50% of whom are women. Female professionals are needed, thus the company adjusts job profiles based on market need. The Skill India Mission teaches women the skills corporations want while providing safe transportation, flexible schedule, and childcare. Women dominate apparel, beauty and wellness, and healthcare, but 1.03 lakh women work in electronics and hardware as field technicians-computing and peripherals . Empowerment and workforce participation are women's essential rights, which allow them control over their life and increase their social influence. Some women are excluded and discriminated against due to social barriers and low educational success . Despite India's GDP growing by 7%, women's labour force participation is dropping. World Bank data shows that working Indian women declined from 26% in 2010 to 19% in 2020. Due to the epidemic, Mumbai analysts expect female employment to shrink to 9% by 2022. The Oxfam poll found that many skilled women stay out of the workforce to care for their family and meet social expectations . Skill training under centrally subsidized programs resumed nationwide in June 2021 as cases declined after a 15-month hiatus. The future of skilling in India is uncertain as training institutes close again due to restrictions. Most schools and for-profit coaching centres offer online courses. However, people who want to improve their abilities may have to wait to work . Labor, money, technology, information, and skills are less important in today's economy. Women are also more likely to work in the unorganized industry, have less education, and earn less. Studies suggest that education increases female labour force participation. India needs an employment and skill development or educational revolution to maximize women's economic potential . Additionally, technical training and skill development for women should go beyond imparting technical and managerial competencies to include basic literacy, numeracy, critical social and political awareness, gender awareness, and life skills for future entrepreneurial development . Income-generating solutions boost long-term growth and sustainability. We needed digital technologies and adaptability to the pandemic. The

nation's digital deficit has prevented an equitable playing field. It shows that access to education has been limited, especially for practical skills for women. The present review article addresses the issues of skill development training women to help them become successful entrepreneurs and boost the nation's economy.

2. Material and Methods

Google Scholar, Web of Science, Publons, and Research Gate provided articles. Search terms for articles included skill development, skill India, entrepreneurship, startup-ecosystems, agricultural, socio-economic profile, and livelihood.

3. Skill Development Programmes

The Indian Prime Minister launched "Skill India"—the National Skills Development Mission. The Indian National Skills Development Corporation manages it. The programme began on October 2, 2016, with these goals: Through short-term courses, provide school dropouts, college dropouts, and young people without jobs with new skill development training, recognize the current workforce's skills by certifying them, encourage states to participate in the execution of the plan to increase states' capabilities, promote uniformity in the certification process and start a register of skills, and improve training and alignment infrastructure. Skill development programs ease social difficulties, boost economic growth, use demographic benefits, and empower marginalized groups. Institutional systems including PMKVY, NSDC, and the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship have yielded results, but not as planned. It argues that skill development is essential for technology adoption and women's empowerment. As India becomes a global information economy, its youth must realize their dreams . It can be partially achieved by emphasizing new economy-relevant skills. The issue is the tremendous expansion of juvenile skill training and the more important goal of enhancing its quality. Therefore, it prioritises youth skill development as one of its pillars to create opportunity, space, and scope for developing Indian youth talents and technological knowledge. This skill certification initiative aims to help many Indian youth engage in industry-relevant training to boost their job prospects. RPL will examine and certify persons with past learning experience or skills . Major government programs and skill development training for Indian youth

4. Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

Any nation's economic and social progress depends on skill development and entrepreneurship. Countries with higher skill levels and stricter criteria can weather local and global employment market instability. Creative thinking, which generates new ideas, may stimulate entrepreneurial ventures, which boost the economy. The entrepreneur's role grows as the company and management create relationships with customers, suppliers, and employees . Potential investors are also interested in how well the



company's management team or CEO can work in groups and solve problems quickly and logically. Entrepreneurs must know how their products are made, the industry and market they will enter, and, most importantly, their customers and competitors. Entrepreneurs and innovators are different, and using one's knowledge can help improve leadership .

With more individuals looking for work and a trend toward technology, there are fewer jobs for young people. Public sector employment are disappearing, and career prospects are deteriorating daily. Job outsourcing, casualization in the oil and gas sector, and rightsizing labour in huge firms are all contributing to this bleak picture. Initially reluctant to see the need for a skilled, entrepreneurial, and inventive framework, India has accelerated its implementation . Understanding and assessing the growing need for technical skills and entrepreneurship requires understanding economic employment factors. Population age distribution, labour force mix, and economic organization are all factors. Formal education provides students with a systematic orientation, technical, vocational, and further education. It ensures pupils receive a good education and attend school.

Skills development, on the other hand, improves the skills of the current workers, jobless (both educated and uneducated dropouts), and some students. Technical knowledge and skills can increase capacity, and some sectors require innovative and entrepreneurial approaches. Skills improve labour force participation, quality, and production, which boosts the economy . You can consider it as a major economic engine that drives the economy. However, entrepreneurship and the demand for entrepreneurship skills may help solve the above problems by empowering people to create jobs and wealth. Entrepreneurship to create knowledge-based social businesses is essential to address social and environmental issues. Our postsecondary institutions must immediately and favourably embrace entrepreneurial education. Not enough general knowledge and business abilities are thought to turn graduates become entrepreneurs . It's tough to overstate the importance of developing entrepreneurial skills. Business ownership is a key role in creating jobs and a unique type of employability. Government and academia are interested. In particular, universities are altering their curriculum and business practices to improve the variety of ways they may train students in business and technical skills. Thus, business education now centres on entrepreneurial programs.

5. Skill Development for Women Entrepreneurs: Problem and Challenges

About half of India's population was female. Female participation in formal economic and entrepreneurial activities in manufacturing, service, and agriculture can be quantified, but their participation in informal economic activities like caring for children and the elderly, working in the home, raising livestock, and farming is harder to quantify . India's low female literacy rate is a major issue. Measurement and bookkeeping are basic

economics abilities that unschooled rural women often lack. This led it to think rural women are unfamiliar with or unable to use modern technology. Enrolment percentages at a specific level of schooling may indicate access and perseverance for researchers and educators who struggle to reach these communities. Lack of education for girls causes global gender inequity and prejudice. Not enough attention is paid to social and cultural barriers to girls and women's education. Poverty, poor sanitation, and long school distances contribute to girls' high dropout rates. Rural women often only have access to vocational education and training in majority-female fields, reinforcing their established positions. This could boost their earnings, but it would prevent them from taking advantage of opportunities in emerging sectors like ICT, renewable energy, and agriculture exporting, which are traditionally male-dominated . Millions of Indian women must compromise their independence for their spouses, children, extended family, and neighbours. Women have always cared for animals and inanimate objects. Indian culture views networking with other businesswomen as a sin, therefore ladies are taught to be good wives rather than great businesswomen and entrepreneurs . Women make up little less than 50% of the economically engaged population, although their economic contributions are low. Being female is the biggest barrier to entrance for female entrepreneurs. Establishing a patriarchal and male-dominated social order is crucial to their business success. Male members of the organization view financing women-led firms as high-risk. Female entrepreneurs are mistrusted by financial institutions . To boost women in various professions, the Indian government has implemented several constitutional rules and regulations. Most Indian women workers are unskilled. Improved women's employment and income prospects and sustained rural development and livelihoods depend on skill development. Since women are responsible for taking care of the home, raising the children, and sometimes working as low-wage laborers or subsistence farmers, most women and men in rural and urban India lack formal education or training .

The government is attempting to improve female enrolment and dropout rates in elementary, secondary, and higher education, although many degree-holding women are still unemployed. This shows that literacy alone cannot help women find work; social, historical, and cultural barriers must also be overcome. Women are further disadvantaged by gender stereotypes when they enter the workforce. Due to their unpaid household and caregiving tasks, women typically cannot work . Men and women in India have quite different social and economic conditions, therefore it's difficult to assume that their workforce preparation needs are the same. From education and training availability to training program administration, gender inequities exist . Technical and vocational employment training in India (TVET) is lacking in several key areas, including the large number of women who need to be trained because only 2% of the female workforce is formally trained, insufficient infrastructure, an acute shortage of trained women workers,

poor quality of training, a lack of mechanisms to judge and certify quality, and inequity in access to TVET for women. The comparatively high opportunity cost of learning associated with training women, the lack of acknowledgment of potential women trainees' past knowledge, and their low education level limit formal sector training opportunities for women. Access to facilities is key for skill and training development. Women face unique problems in obtaining competence, necessitating unique answers to teach them in varied skills and current technology to become independent businesswomen and entrepreneurs.

6. Suggestions and Future Recommendations for Skill Development

Over 90% of working women work in the informal sector, where they often have to take low-paying jobs without job security or social security. Thus, strengthening women's abilities would help them build life skills that would lead to improved livelihoods, higher-paid and high-quality work, financial independence, and family support. A sustained skill development program would address men and women's concerns. These are essential to developing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating skill development and training policies. Combining local institutions and policies to empower women is the fundamental strategy for gender equality. Social norms and institutional hurdles hinder her success. Rural women's vocational education and training are sometimes limited to women-dominated areas, reinforcing their traditional roles and obligations. Such activity increases their job options but decreases their prospects of advancement in non-traditional industries like ICT. Increasing men and women's engagement in various industries and enterprises requires skill training and awareness-raising to close the gap between women's abilities and desires.

For female students, this may include transportation, housing, and financial aid to encourage them to complete their academic programs. Additionally, literacy and numeracy lessons may be needed in the training. Complex skills like problem-solving, communication, learning, teamwork, and others, life-changing talents like conduct, self-esteem, and self-organization, and the capacity to negotiate a job. Women still struggle to go about due to poor infrastructure. Thus, modern educational facilities and safe transit routes must be built and supported to make them accessible to women. Excellent training at a reasonable cost with loans and scholarships is needed to encourage low-income students to engage in vocational training. Public and private ITIs and ITCs are important to India's artisan training program. ITIs and ITCs were created to meet the informal economy's skilled labor needs, but data shows they failed. Basic infrastructure, especially in remote areas, is needed to make ITIs more accessible, especially for women, as well as ICTs and ITCs. The training term should be extended since empowering young business owners with information builds their success over time. The internship term must be prolonged to teach them how to maximize productivity.

Skill centres should have the facilities and amenities to help candidates grow. Female students and vocational training graduates should receive grants and loans to realize their entrepreneurial ideas. Skill institutes should provide more courses so students can specialize in their interests. The curriculum and teaching methods should be updated to match labour and market changes. Any skill-based institution may benefit from young, successful businesses who could motivate students. The agency that regulates the country's skill-based institutions should undertake frequent on-site inspections to ensure quality and seamless operation. Developing and refining training programs requires regular input from instructors, students, and employers regarding their graduates. Recognizing and improving existing skills can boost training uptake by appealing to participants. Training women is essential after considering their changing expectations and ambitions. Safe transportation, bathrooms, etc. are needed to make training sessions accessible to women. It will improve school and teacher efficiency. Training through local government systems may also be useful. Job prospects after training will help women's long-term security and economic autonomy. Because all grantees must employ at least 70% of their trainees, NSDC has successfully placed them. Mobile training units, flexible afternoon batches, and localized training will be used to create an incentive system to engage and mobilize women. Implementing life skills and literacy training programs would encourage women to work in non-traditional fields. Awareness programs, family counselling to ease concerns about women training, and personality development to help women critically assess and challenge discriminatory practices are needed.

7. Conclusion

Specifically for women, the purpose of skill development is to improve the calibre of their work in order to improve employee performance in addition to preparing them for the job. Women's whole personality development and self-esteem will be aided by training and skill development. It's also advised to design exercise programs specifically to maximize women's abilities so that skill development is more successful. But improving oneself shouldn't come at the expense of picking up new skills, especially for women who would otherwise become more entrenched in traditional roles and abilities. The skill development courses aid in career advancement and job placement. The government and banks can stimulate the economy and create jobs for young entrepreneurs by helping them launch their businesses. Policies that promote women's empowerment through the use of digital platforms, mainstream gender representation in training content and delivery, and increase women's access to skill development should be made simpler.



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