

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Skill Development, Entrepreneurship and Information Technology: Strategic Pathways for Nation Building**Neeraj Kumar Joshi, Dr. Neelam kalla**

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ABSTRACT

In the contemporary economy, skill development, entrepreneurship and the application of information technology are significant in enhancing an economic growth and in contributing to nation building. The current paper investigates the strategic importance of skill development programs, entrepreneurship development and digital technologies to enhance employability and economic development in India. The research methodology is qualitative based on secondary data pertaining to skill development initiatives based on the government reports, policy documents, research articles, and other official publications. According to the findings, skill development programs can be used to improve the employability of the youth by equipping them with technical and professional industry skills. Entrepreneurship also helps in economic development through creation of jobs, promotion of innovation and development of small and medium enterprises. The information technology also enhances these processes by facilitating digital learning, aiding business innovation, and providing more market opportunities to the business people. The paper also mentions some of the government programs like Skill India, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana and Digital India which enhance skill building and digital empowerment. On the whole, skill development, entrepreneurship as well as information technology should be combined to produce a skilled workforce, promote innovation and sustainable economic and social development in the country.

Keywords: Strategic, Entrepreneurship, Skill Development, Nation Building, Information Technology

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INTRODUCTION

The importance of skill development has become one of the pillars of sustainable development of the global economy today. It is aimed at providing people especially vulnerable groups with the skills needed to effectively work, in entrepreneurship, and socio-economic life. Skill development can help cut down poverty, inclusive growth, and social equity, by enhancing the abilities of people. In most developing countries building the skill ecosystem has become a strategic agenda as it increases the labour productivity and a better chance of getting decent employment and livelihood security. [1]. Governments and institutions in that respect are putting more and more attention on organized training, vocational education and competencies that are relevant to industries so that a workforce that would assist in addressing the current economic needs could be secured. [2]

The significance of the development of skills becomes even greater in economically changing countries. In the case of countries like India that slowly go towards knowledge based economy, building in a massively skilled workforce is the only way to remain competitive in the world. It is due to the rapid technological change and globalization that has transformed the nature of work, now workers are expected to not only be technically skilled, but also to be flexible, creative and digital. Research shows that the developing countries need to be human capital developing with education and training systems that address the demands of the labour markets to fill the existing gap between employability and work force demand. [3][4] The enhancement of the alignment of educational systems with the needs of industries can help to eradicate the long-standing gap between the employability and the workforce demand.

Moreover, skill building is crucial in the resolution of socio-economic issues of unemployment, underemployment and poverty. It is generally considered as a strategic tool of empowering the marginalized communities, informal employees, and school dropouts through offering them economic participation opportunities. Studies have shown that learning market-relevant skills can greatly enhance the level of employability, productivity, and income opportunities and overall national development objectives as they provide individuals with practically oriented and industry-specific skills. Because of this, people receiving formal vocational and technical education have better chances of getting steady jobs and ameliorating their social-economic status. Moreover, skill-oriented learning is also often defined as a process that builds certain competencies connected to his or her profession or

career development or personal interests that make people able to operate efficiently in the dynamic and competitive labour markets. [7]

Entrepreneurship and information technology (IT) have in recent years continued to be integrated in the skill development structures, which has enhanced its contribution in nation building. Entrepreneurship stimulates innovation, employment, and economic diversification, and the digital technologies widen knowledge, market, and services accessibility. As the role of digital transformation, automation, and artificial intelligence grows, IT-enabled skill development programs will become more significant in improving workforce preparedness and accelerating digital inclusion. [8]. These programs assist people in adjusting to a fast changing workplace; as well as allow companies to stay competitive in the international market. [9]

In addition, the labour markets are constantly redefined by global megatrends that include technological progress, digitalization of services, shifts in climate conditions and demographic patterns. These changes require a workforce capable of multidisciplinary skills, which is a

combination of technical skills, digital literacy, and entrepreneurial thinking. As a result, current education and training approach should concentrate on creativity, innovation and lifelong learning to equip people with new opportunities and challenges. [10]. In this respect, strategic combination of skill building, entrepreneurship, and information technology is one of the core pillars in strengthening human capital, economic resilience, and nation building sustainability. [11]

OBJECTIVES

To examine how skill development programs are used to enhance youth employability in India.
To test the role of entrepreneurship and skill formation in economic development.
To determine the effectiveness of government skill development programs.
To determine issues on how to implement skill development programs.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current research took a qualitative research approach and used predominantly secondary sources of data in the study to investigate how skill development, entrepreneurship and information technology contribute to nation building. The sources of data used in the study were different and trustworthy including research articles, government reports, policy documents, official websites, and published literature concerning skill development initiatives in India. It further obtained pertinent data based on the reports of such institutions such as the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and other relative bodies. This analysis was done with the help of the descriptive and analytical approach to the collected information to have the understanding of the developments of the skill development programmes and the role of these programmes in the development of entrepreneurship and the influence of these programmes on the youth employability. It also discussed the difficulty in instating the skill development programs and adoption of information technology in the training and venture programs. The approach was aimed at the review of the literature, the analysis of available statistical data, and the interpretation of the findings to describe the strategic value of the skills development and entrepreneurship as contributing to the economic and social growth of the country.

RESULTS

Impact of Skill Development Programs on Youth Employability

India, the ministry organizations are offering skills training to the youths to be employed in wage and self-employment. The Government of India also offers skill up-gradation to the available entrepreneurs and working workforce so that they can increase their performance and productivity. These training schemes are executed under different programs which include MSME-TCs, Assistance to Training Institutions (ATI), National SC/ST Hub, Capacity Building, Coir Vikas Yojna -Skill Up-gradation and Mahila Coir Yojna. Besides that, different organizations under the ministry provide modified demand-driven training courses according to the industry requirements. [12]

The development of the skill development programmes undertaken by the Ministry of MSME between 2018-19 and 2022-23 (data until October 2022) shows that the youth take a significant role in different training programs. The statistics reveal that there are organizations like Tool Rooms & Technology Centres (TCSP), NSIC, NI-MSME, KVIC and Coir Board that have a significant impact in the country in terms of skill development activities. Among such organizations, the number of

trained personnel was greatest in the year 2019-20 than in the other years and this explains why Tool Rooms and TCSP played a significant role in improving technical skills among the youth. [13]

On the whole, these programs have been significant in enhancing employability in that they prepare people with industry applicable technical and entrepreneurial skills and hence lead to employment creation and economic growth in India.

Table 1: Personnel Skilled by Various Organizations of MSME during 2018-19 to 2022-23

Year	Tool Rooms & TCSP	NSIC	Coir Board	KVIC
2018-19	208, 174	41, 320	1, 153	81, 906
2019-20	275, 361	54, 624	1, 325	74, 938
2020-21	134, 853	29, 022	1, 145	81, 221
2021-22	140, 526	44, 273	1, 755	111, 597
2022-23*	102, 799	22, 242	1, 473	10, 420

Contribution of Entrepreneurship Development to Economic Growth

The entrepreneurship development is very important in enhancing economic growth as well as enhancing the general development of a country. Businesspersons come up with new business establishments, bring new products and services to the market, and bring about competition in the market. The activities enhance productivity and efficiency in the various sectors of the economy. Consequently, entrepreneurship will help in the growth of industries and long run economic growth. [14]

Among the greatest achievements of entrepreneurship is job creation. New businesses and enterprises generate a source of employment to both the skilled and unskilled workers when they are started. This also decreases the level of unemployment and enhances the standards of living of individuals. SMEs, especially small and medium sized enterprises, contribute greatly to the creation of employment opportunities both in cities and in the rural regions.

Innovation and technological development is the other thing that is fostered through entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs have a tendency of detecting gaps in the market and creating new concepts, products or services that satisfy the needs of the consumers. They enhance production processes, take up new technology and increase the efficiency of the business operations through innovation. Not only does this enhance individual enterprises but also to the general industrial growth and economic competitiveness. [15]

The other significant input of the entrepreneurship development is the facilitation of the regional and balanced economic growth. The entrepreneurship activities promote the location of industries within various geographical settings, such as rural and the less developed ones. This can be used to lessen the

economic imbalances in the region and can be used to enhance local economic growth by using the resources available to it and generating local jobs.

Entrepreneurship also helps in creation of wealth and capital. Business ventures that are successful yield profits and investments which enhance the economy of a nation. The more the entrepreneurs grow their businesses, the more they create more production and exports as well as national income. Through this process, sustainable economic growth is created and more entrepreneurship stimulated. Moreover, entrepreneurship boosts self-employment and enhances people to become financially empowered. Through entrepreneurship, individuals are encouraged to seek out business opportunities and build their own business through innovativeness, taking risks, and being creative. Thus, the development of entrepreneurship can be viewed as a significant factor of economic growth, innovation, and social progress of contemporary economies.

Information Technology in Skills and Entrepreneurship.

IT is a key to enhancing the skills and fostering entrepreneurship in contemporary economies. The introduction of digital technologies to the training systems changed the manner in which people obtain knowledge and their professional competences are developed. Online learning, virtual training modules and digital certification programs which can enable people to upgrade their skills are available on IT-enabled platforms. These platforms are also useful in closing the gap between education and industry needs through providing latest technical knowledge and hands-on learning programs. [16]

Entrepreneurship and competency development play the basic roles of development of economic growth, innovation and social development. The Information Technology is also expanding these functions by providing a digital avenue to business growth, innovation as well as expansion of the market. E-commerce platforms, digital marketing, cloud computing and online payment system are IT tools that help entrepreneurs to start and manage businesses more easily. The solutions which are based on technology allow the entrepreneurs to serve wider markets, enhance productivity and generate new jobs.

Economic Growth: Entrepreneurship is an economic driver which is facilitated by the skill generation and digital technologies, to develop new business, products and services. When people use IT tools to start businesses, they create job opportunities, growth in productivity, and economic production in general.

Innovation: Information Technology promotes innovation because it allows entrepreneurs to recognize the market gaps, innovate with new technologies and also introduce new innovative business models. The organizational efficiency and competitiveness is enhanced and this technological innovation leads to the betterment of industry.

Job Creation: Digital platforms and technological tools have played a key role in the creation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that are key creators of jobs. As these

enterprises grow, the demand is greater in trained manpower so that these enterprises will need highly skilled workers who have technical and digital expertise.

Wealth Creation: The wealth creation is achieved through successful entrepreneurship with the aid of technology. Online companies make money and investments that bolster the economy and bring about additional entrepreneurial behavior.

Skill Development: IT facilitates the acquisition of a range of professional skills: digital literacy, problem-solving, creativity, and communication. Entrepreneurs need these abilities to operate in the contemporary business environment and with changes in technology.

Empowerment: Through digital business and online entrepreneurship, IT-based skill development programs empower people, particularly those of ill-fated situations to become self-employed and economically self-sufficient.

Regional Development: Technology-based entrepreneurship has the capacity to boost regional development through the formation of digital business clusters, to draw investments in new regional industries like IT services, digital marketing, and software development.

Global Competitiveness: The deep integration of Information Technology and entrepreneurship leads to the competitiveness of a country in the global market because of the promotion of innovation, improved productivity and development of digital business.

Table 2: Contribution of Information Technology to Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

Area of Impact	Role of Information Technology	Example Application	of Outcome
Skill Training	Online learning platforms and digital training programs	E-learning portals, virtual classrooms	Increased access to skill education
Entrepreneurship	Digital tools for business development	E-commerce platforms, digital marketing	Growth of startups and small businesses
Innovation	Development of new technologies and digital solutions	Software development, mobile applications	Technological advancement
Job Creation	Expansion of IT-based enterprises	IT services, freelancing platforms	Increased employment opportunities
Market Expansion	Access to national and global markets	Online marketplaces, digital payment systems	Higher business growth
Financial Inclusion	Digital financial services for entrepreneurs	Online banking, fintech platforms	Improved business sustainability

Government Initiatives Supporting Skill Development and Digital Empowerment

The Government of India introduced several initiatives to strengthen skill development and promote digital empowerment across the country. These initiatives aimed to develop a skilled workforce capable of meeting the demands of modern industries and the growing digital economy. By focusing on vocational education, technological training, and entrepreneurship development, the government attempted to bridge the gap between education and employment. These programs also supported innovation, productivity, and inclusive economic growth by improving access to training and digital resources for youth and working professionals. [17]

One of the most significant initiatives was the Skill India Mission, which focused on providing industry-oriented skill training to millions of young people across the country. Similarly, the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) offered short-term training

programs and certification to enhance employability in different sectors. These initiatives helped individuals gain practical and technical skills that increased their chances of employment and encouraged self-employment opportunities.

Table 3: Major Government Initiatives for Skill Development in India

Initiative	Launch Year	Implementing Authority	Key Objective
Skill India Mission	2015	Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)	To provide industry-relevant skill training and improve employability
Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)	2015	MSDE / National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)	To offer short-term skill training and certification
National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS)	2016	Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship	To promote apprenticeship training and practical industry experience
PM Vishwakarma Scheme	2023	Government of India	To support traditional artisans through skill training and financial assistance

Along with skill training initiatives, the government also focused on digital empowerment through several technology-based programs. The Digital India initiative played an important role in expanding digital infrastructure, promoting digital literacy, and enabling citizens to access online services. These digital initiatives encouraged the use of technology in education, entrepreneurship, and employment, allowing individuals to participate more effectively in the digital economy.

Programs such as Startup India and Atal Innovation Mission also supported innovation and entrepreneurship by providing financial support, mentorship, and incubation facilities to young entrepreneurs. These initiatives created opportunities for technology-based startups and encouraged youth to develop innovative business ideas.

Table 4: Major Digital Empowerment Initiatives in India

Initiative	Launch Year	Implementing Authority	Key Objective
Digital India	2015	Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology	To promote digital infrastructure and digital literacy
Startup India	2016	Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)	To encourage entrepreneurship and startup ecosystems
Atal Innovation Mission	2016	NITI Aayog	To promote innovation and technology-based entrepreneurship
National Digital Literacy Mission	2014	Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology	To provide basic digital literacy to citizens

Overall, these government initiatives significantly contributed to the development of a skilled and digitally empowered workforce in India. By integrating skill development programs with digital technologies and entrepreneurship support, these policies strengthened employment opportunities, promoted innovation, and supported sustainable economic development.

Problems with the Interconnection of Skill and Entrepreneurship with IT.

Skill development coupled with entrepreneurship and information technology should be integrated to empower the workforce and facilitate innovation in India. Nonetheless, these initiatives are faced by some challenges that impede the successful implementation and coordination of such initiatives. The biggest problems are as follows:

Awareness and Disgrace: There is awareness among certain groups of the social order that occupational training is worse than traditional education, and this creates a stigma in the country of taking skill development courses in India. Such a perception prevents young people from having to do business and technology-based skill programs.

Funding and Sustainability: Skill development programs require significant investment in infrastructure, training as well as other facilities. The sustainability of the initiatives regarding the development of entrepreneurship and training skills based on IT requires sustainable funding to guarantee its success.

Awareness: In India, there are a big number of people especially in rural regions who are not aware about the skill development programs and their advantages. They are not aware of what opportunities are available and how to reach them. It also restricts their enrolment to entrepreneurship and IT-based training initiatives.

Mobility and Accessibility: Candidate source of revenue in remote or disadvantaged regions may be a challenge due to the right of entry to skill development programs. Access or lack of access to digital infrastructure and internet access also limits access to IT-enabled learning and entrepreneurship.

Absence of Industry connection: insufficient interactions between the institutions of skill guidance and industries causes a disparity between the skilled and the demand of the job market. The effect of this gap on entrepreneurship development and adoption of modern IT-based skills needed by industries are also felt.

Quality of Training: The eminent skill training programs differ widely. Not all programs of Skill India can meet the standards in the industry thus the graduates lack proper skills and knowledge to work in the job market, especially in new IT and technology industries.

Trainer Quality: The quality of skill training could be affected by the training and capability of the instructors and trainers. The impact of integrated skill, entrepreneurship and IT education programs on trainers with little exposure to modern technologies and entrepreneurial practices could be minimized.

Industry Need Relevancy: The Skill development programs are not always straight in line with the present needs and future needs of industries. Such a gap between the taught skills and those required by the employers may result in underemployment or unemployment and also hamper the development of technology-based entrepreneurship.

Infrastructure and Resources: poor infrastructure and resources may restrain the effectiveness of skill development programs. The absence of modern equipment, digital tools, and facilities is an obstacle to practice training in technical and IT-related areas.

Strategic Position of the Development of Skills, Entrepreneurship and IT in Nation Building

In the process of nation building, skill development, entrepreneurship, and information technology are strategically important. To keep up with the fast growing globalized economy,

nations must have a talented and technologically competent workforce to keep them on the competitive stage and achieve a sustainable growth. Skill development programmes enable one to attain technical, professional and soft skills to enhance his/her employability and productivity. Simultaneously, entrepreneurship helps to motivate people to establish new enterprises, provide people with job opportunities, and contribute to the economic development. The combination of these elements with the information technology forms a powerful base of innovations and national development. [18]

Skill development program empowers human resource of a particular country as it trains the people to fit the changing needs of the industries and the labor market. Youth are empowered through training programs, vocation education and technical coursework that allow them to acquire practical skills that heighten their chances of getting jobs. Skilled workforce increases productivity not only at

organizational level but also the efficiency of the entire economy in the nation. Governments and institutions help in reducing unemployment and stabilizing economies by providing the person with the appropriate skills.

Entrepreneurship also plays a crucial role in nation building by encouraging innovation, creativity, and economic diversification. Entrepreneurs establish small and medium-sized enterprises that contribute significantly to employment generation and industrial development. Through entrepreneurial activities, new products, services, and business models are introduced, which stimulate market competition and technological advancement. Entrepreneurship also empowers individuals to become self-reliant and financially independent, thereby contributing to social and economic development.

Information technology further strengthens these processes by providing digital tools and platforms that support skill development and entrepreneurial activities. Online learning systems, digital training platforms, and virtual collaboration tools enable individuals to access knowledge and skill-building opportunities from different locations. Technology-based businesses and digital startups also create new employment opportunities and contribute to the growth of the digital economy. The integration of IT with skill development and entrepreneurship enhances efficiency, encourages innovation, and supports the transformation toward a knowledge-based society.

Overall, the combined impact of skill development, entrepreneurship, and information technology plays a strategic role in strengthening the economic and social structure of a nation. These elements contribute to employment generation, technological advancement, and sustainable economic growth. By investing in education, innovation, and digital infrastructure, countries can build a strong and competitive workforce capable of addressing future challenges and opportunities in the global economy.

The study results show that skill development, entrepreneurship, and information technology are important in enhancing employment opportunities and the national economic growth. Secondary data analysis reveals that under the Ministry of MSME, skilled development programs in organizations have trained many people in the last two years, 2018-2019 and 2022-23, thus enhancing youth employability due to technical and entrepreneurial skills that are relevant in the industries. The most significant role in the improvement of technical skills belongs to Tool Rooms and Technology Centres as they provided the largest number of trained personnel among these organizations. The research also indicates that entrepreneurship is beneficial to the economic growth through creation of jobs, innovation, promotion of small and medium enterprises and creation of a balanced development regionally. Also, information technology has become another important facilitator, which enhances skill acquisition and entrepreneurship using digital learning platforms, e-commerce, digital marketing and online financial services. The programs of the government like Skill India, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana, Startup India, and Digital India have contributed a lot to the creation of skilled and digitally empowered human resource. Similarly, the research points out a number of issues such as low awareness, inadequate infrastructure, industry-training disconnection and accessibility of rural locations, which could influence the successful implementation of these programs. On the whole, the results show that skill development, entrepreneurship, and information technology should be integrated strategically to enhance the nation building through employability, innovation, and sustainable nation building.

CONCLUSION

Finally, it has been seen that skill development, entrepreneurship, and information technology have a strategic contribution to nation building and economic development. Training on skills enables people to gain the technical, professional, and digital skills necessary to address the needs of the new industries and enhance their job marketability. Entrepreneurship continues to boost the economy through innovation, opening up new businesses, creation of jobs, and self-dependency among people. Information technology integration adds more value to these processes by offering digital platforms of learning, business enhancement and market expansion, which make them more productive and competitive in the global economy. The government programs and policies have also played a significant role in the increase of training opportunities, propelling startups, and digital empowerment in various sectors. Nonetheless, still issues like little awareness, lack of good infrastructure and disconnections between training and industry demands must be solved to ensure the most of the initiatives is realized. Consequently, a co-ordinated strategy incorporating the skill development programs, entrepreneurial support, and technological improvement will be critical in the creation of a skilled labor force, innovation and sustainable economic growth and national development.

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