

SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN INDIA WITH POLICY IMPLICATIONS FOR ANDHRA PRADESH AND VIKSIT BHARAT 2047

Dr. A. Lavanya Kumari
Assistant Professor in Economics
Adikavi Nannaya University, Rajamahendravaram

Abstract

This paper examines skill development as a component of youth employment policy in India and considers implications for Andhra Pradesh within the Viksit Bharat 2047 framework. It uses a descriptive review of official labour statistics and selected policy and research publications. The national statistical analysis covers 2019–20 to 2023–24 and defines youth as persons aged 15–29 years. Officially reported Periodic Labour Force Survey figures show that youth unemployment in usual status declined from 15.0 percent to 10.2 percent over this period, although it increased slightly from 10.0 percent in 2022–23. This trend describes labour market change and does not establish the contribution of skill programmes. The policy analysis distinguishes training participation, employability, employment access and job quality. It proposes employer involvement in course design, practical workplace learning, inclusive access and follow-up of employment and earnings. Andhra Pradesh is treated as a policy application rather than a separately estimated empirical case. The paper concludes that skill development should be coordinated with job creation and evaluated through verified participant outcomes rather than training totals alone.

Keywords: skill development; youth employment; labour market; Andhra Pradesh; Viksit Bharat 2047

1 Introduction

The employment contribution of skill development depends on whether young people can use their learning in productive work. A training certificate may indicate completion of a course, but it does not by itself demonstrate job readiness, access to employment or an improvement in earnings. For the Viksit Bharat 2047 agenda, the relevant question is how education and training can support sustained participation in the economy.

This paper examines that question through national youth unemployment statistics and a selective policy review. The statistical coverage is deliberately limited to 2019–20 to 2023–24 to retain a consistent annual period. It is not presented as a review of the latest labour market conditions. Andhra Pradesh provides the setting for discussing state policy implications, but the paper does not claim to measure a state-level programme effect.

The central distinction is between a supply of skills and demand for workers. Better training can improve a candidate's capacity to perform a job, while recruitment depends on vacancies, wages, location and employer requirements. Policy therefore needs an account of both sides of the labour market. Treating aggregate unemployment changes as evidence of programme success would overlook this distinction.

2 Literature and policy context

The India Employment Report 2024 identifies youth employment, education and skills as linked areas of labour market analysis (International Labour Organization [ILO] & Institute for Human Development [IHD], 2024). Its scope is relevant to the present paper because education-to-work transitions require consideration of employment opportunities as well as qualifications. The report supplies national research context; it is not used here to estimate outcomes for Andhra Pradesh.

The ILO's Global Employment Trends for Youth 2024 emphasizes that employment quality and exclusion from employment, education or training remain important even where unemployment improves. Its review of interventions also indicates that programme effects vary by setting and design, with combined interventions offering advantages in some contexts (ILO, 2024). These findings support examining a package of services rather than assuming that classroom training alone produces employment.

National Education Policy 2020 proposes integrating vocational exposure with school and higher education, including interaction with local expertise and practical learning (Ministry of Education, 2020, Section 16). This is a policy intention and should not be interpreted as evidence that the intended coverage or employment outcomes have been achieved.

The PMKVY 4.0 guidelines provide an implementation framework for short-term training, recognition of prior learning and special projects. They include industry involvement, on-the-job learning and attention to emerging skill areas. Importantly, the guidelines separate placement from skilling and recognize different livelihood and entrepreneurship pathways (Ministry of Skill

Development and Entrepreneurship [MSDE], 2023, Sections 4–5). Accordingly, training completion and placement should be measured separately.

The contribution of the present paper is a descriptive synthesis that connects a clearly defined national unemployment series with a proposed state policy framework. It does not offer a new causal estimate, a systematic review or a comprehensive assessment of the literature. A more demanding evaluation would require verified programme records linked to individual employment outcomes.

3 Objectives and research questions

The objectives are to describe national youth unemployment during 2019–20 to 2023–24; clarify the indicators required to assess skill-led employment; review selected policy directions; and propose an evaluation and delivery framework relevant to Andhra Pradesh.

The analysis addresses three questions. How did national youth unemployment change over the selected period? What can this series establish about the role of skill development? Which delivery and monitoring arrangements would allow state programmes to assess employment outcomes more credibly? No formal statistical hypothesis is tested because the study has no verified dataset connecting training exposure to subsequent employment.

4 Data and methodology

The study combines descriptive statistical analysis with a narrative policy review. The unemployment observations are taken from two Ministry of Labour and Employment parliamentary replies published by the Press Information Bureau. The reply dated 29 July 2024 reports the PLFS youth series through 2022–23; the reply dated 25 November 2024 supplies the 2023–24 value (Ministry of Labour and Employment, 2024a, 2024b). These are official reproductions of PLFS estimates, rather than calculations from unit-level survey data.

Youth is defined as persons aged 15–29 years. The unemployment series uses usual status and covers India. Annual PLFS periods run from July to June. The analysis reports the observed levels and changes in percentage points, using a consistent series rather than combining usual-status and current-weekly-status estimates.

Unemployment rate equals unemployed persons divided by the labour force, multiplied by 100. Worker-population ratio equals employed persons divided by the relevant population, multiplied by

100. Labour force participation rate equals the labour force divided by that population, multiplied by 100. Hence, 100 minus the unemployment rate is the employed share of the labour force; it is not the worker-population ratio. Confusing these denominators can substantially overstate employment among all young people.

The policy review includes NEP 2020, PMKVY 4.0 guidelines and selected ILO publications. Documents were selected for direct relevance to youth, skills and employment measurement. The review is selective and does not follow a systematic search protocol. Policy proposals are the authors’ interpretation of the measurement and delivery needs identified through this exercise.

The state-level component is a discussion of policy implications. No verified Andhra Pradesh dataset linking training exposure with employment is analysed. The study therefore does not estimate state-level correlations, regression coefficients or programme effects.

5 National youth unemployment trends

Table 1 :National youth unemployment in usual status for persons aged 15–29 years

PLFS year	Unemployment rate percent	Annual change percentage points
2019–20	15.0	—
2020–21	12.9	–2.1
2021–22	12.4	–0.5
2022–23	10.0	–2.4
2023–24	10.2	+0.2

Source: Ministry of Labour and Employment (2024a, unnumbered table of youth unemployment rates; 2024b, paragraph reporting the 2023–24 youth rate), based on annual PLFS. Changes are calculated by the authors. All-India coverage; annual periods July–June; usual status.

The unemployment rate declined by 4.8 percentage points between the first and last observations. The improvement was not continuous: the final year recorded a 0.2 percentage point increase. The series therefore supports a description of an overall decline over the selected period, rather than a claim that unemployment fell every year.

These aggregate observations do not identify the number of jobs created by a skill programme. Changes can reflect labour demand, participation decisions, education enrolment or shifts in the composition of the labour force. The paper does not quantify these explanations. It also does not infer pandemic effects from the direction of this annual series alone.

A lower unemployment rate should be interpreted alongside labour force participation and the worker-population ratio. The Ministry's November 2024 reply separately reports a youth worker-population ratio of 41.7 percent in 2023–24 (Ministry of Labour and Employment, 2024b). That measure illustrates why the employment situation cannot be described by subtracting unemployment from 100. Neither statistic supplies evidence about wages, hours or employment security.

6 Skills and employment outcomes

Skill policy involves several distinct stages. Enrolment records access to a programme; completion records continued participation; certification records an assessment outcome. Employment after training is a further outcome, and sustained employment or improved earnings requires additional follow-up. Reporting these stages separately makes it possible to identify where participants encounter difficulty.

A programme may train candidates successfully while suitable vacancies remain scarce. Conversely, employment may rise in a growing sector without a corresponding increase in formal training. This is why a correlation between aggregate training totals and employment indicators is insufficient to identify a programme effect. A common upward trend, changes in programme coverage or repeated enrolment of the same person could influence the result.

The policy inference is that training providers and employers should agree on observable competencies before delivery. Practical assessments can test whether a participant can perform relevant tasks, while follow-up can examine whether the skill is used at work. Such arrangements are proposed evaluation practices, not demonstrated findings about existing programmes.

7 Policy implications for Andhra Pradesh

For Andhra Pradesh, the national evidence offers a reason to investigate the connection between training and work locally; it does not establish a state unemployment trend. State planning should begin with verified district information on occupations, recruitment requirements and participant constraints. Course selection should respond to documented demand rather than assume that an expanding sector automatically provides accessible entry-level jobs.

Training records should identify the programme, cohort, age range and reporting period. Annual entrants, annual completions and cumulative beneficiaries must remain separate. A participant identifier can help prevent repeated training from being counted as multiple beneficiaries. Employment records should distinguish wage employment, self-employment, further education and those seeking work.

Access measures should be designed around actual barriers reported by applicants. Travel costs, class timing, language, digital access and care responsibilities are candidates for assessment, rather than findings established by this study. Pilot support can be evaluated against completion and subsequent outcomes, with results disaggregated by gender, location and social group where sample sizes permit.

Employer partnerships should specify tasks, supervision and learning outcomes for practical placements. Small enterprises may need shared arrangements to host learners. Entrepreneurship support should include market assessment and mentoring, with survival and earnings examined after start-up. Registration of a business alone is an incomplete measure of a successful livelihood.

Table 2 : Proposed framework for state skill delivery and evaluation

Policy area	Proposed action	Suggested measure
Course relevance	Use employer consultations and occupation-level demand evidence	Competency attainment and use of skills at work
Workplace learning	Define supervised practical tasks and learning outcomes	Completion and subsequent employment retention
Inclusive access	Pilot support for documented participation barriers	Enrolment and completion by participant group

Policy area	Proposed action	Suggested measure
Outcome follow-up	Track cohorts at 3, 6 and 12 months	Employment status, earnings and hours
Entrepreneurship	Combine training with market assessment and mentoring	Business survival and net earnings
Data quality	Separate enrolment, completion, certification and employment	Verified unique participants and follow-up response rate

Source: Authors' proposed framework. Measures are recommendations and do not represent observed programme performance.

8 Limitations and further research

The statistical analysis contains five national annual observations and measures unemployment rather than training impact. Published aggregate estimates do not allow individual comparisons or adjustment for differences in participant characteristics. State implications remain proposals because verified Andhra Pradesh programme and labour market data are not analysed. The selected publications provide context but do not constitute a systematic literature review.

A future empirical study should link a defined training cohort to baseline characteristics and subsequent employment. A credible comparison group and an explicit identification strategy would be needed for causal interpretation. Survey weights and sampling design should be incorporated when analysing PLFS microdata. For administrative follow-up, non-response and losses to follow-up should be reported, because employed and unemployed participants may differ in their likelihood of responding.

Evaluation should also consider displacement, where a trained participant obtains a position that would otherwise have gone to another worker. Placement gains for participants are not necessarily equivalent to net job creation. This distinction matters when programme objectives include both employability and employment generation.

9 Conclusion

Officially reported national PLFS figures show an overall decline in youth unemployment between 2019–20 and 2023–24, with a small increase in the final year. These observations do not demonstrate that skill development caused the change. A defensible employment strategy should connect relevant training with workplace opportunities and assess outcomes after completion.

For Andhra Pradesh, the proposed priorities are verifiable programme records, employer-informed learning and follow-up of employment quality. In the Viksit Bharat 2047 framework, the practical test of skill policy is whether participants can obtain and sustain productive work. That question requires evidence beyond beneficiary counts and cannot be answered by the present descriptive study alone.

References

- International Labour Organization. (2024). Global employment trends for youth 2024: Decent work, brighter futures. <https://doi.org/10.54394/ZUUI5430>
- International Labour Organization, & Institute for Human Development. (2024). India employment report 2024: Youth employment, education and skills. International Labour Organization. <https://www.ilo.org/publications/india-employment-report-2024-youth-employment-education-and-skills>
- Ministry of Education. (2020). National education policy 2020. Government of India. https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf
- Ministry of Labour and Employment. (2024a, July 29). Decline in unemployment rate for youth workers and labourers [Parliamentary reply]. Press Information Bureau. <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2038695>
- Ministry of Labour and Employment. (2024b, November 25). Youth unemployment rates in India lower than global levels: Labour force indicators providing evidence of improved employment scenario in India [Parliamentary reply]. Press Information Bureau. <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2076956>
- Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. (2023). Guidelines for Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 4.0. Government of India. https://www.msde.gov.in/static/uploads/2024/02/PMKVY-4.0-Guidelines_final-copy.pdf

