

Gist of

KURUKSHETRA

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Empowering Youth:
Towards Rebuilding
Rural India

Rural Youth
and **Agricultural**
Transformation

Empowering Rural Youth:
Need, Challenges
and Way Forward

Role of Allied Sector in
Rural Employment Generation

Employment and **Entrepreneurship**
Opportunities for Skilled Youth

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04

Ranks in
Top 10

09

Ranks in
Top 20

13

Ranks in
Top 50

22

Ranks in
Top 100



RANK 03

Pratibha Verma



RANK 06

Vishakha Yadav



RANK 08

Abhishek Saraf



RANK 10

Sanjita Mohapatra



RANK 11

Nupur Goel



RANK 12

Ajay Jain



RANK 14

Anmol Jain



RANK 16

Gunjan Singh



RANK 19

Shresta Anupam



RANK 23

Nidhi Bansal



RANK 24

Abhishek Jain



RANK 30

Pari Bishnoi



RANK 34

Apurv Chauhan



RANK 52

Om Kant Thakur



RANK 56

Pankaj



RANK 66

Saurav Pandey



RANK 69

Navneet Mittal



RANK 81

Anil Kumar Rathore



RANK 84

Jivani Kartik Nagjibhai



RANK 85

Shubhank Mishra



RANK 96

Hardik Aggarwal



RANK 98

Y Megha Swaroop

INCREDIBLE RESULTS

CSE 2018 Results

11 Ranks in Top 50

28 Ranks in Top 100

183 Ranks in the Final List



Rank 11
Pujya Priyadarshni



Rank 16
Dhodmise Trupti Ankush



Rank 21
Rahul Jain



Rank 24
Anuraj Jain

CSE 2017

5 Ranks
in top 50

34 Ranks
in top 100

236 Ranks
in the final list



Rank 3
Sachin Gupta



Rank 6
Koya Sree Harsha



Rank 8
Anubhav Singh



Rank 9
Soumya Sharma



Rank 10
Abhishek Surana

CSE 2016

8 Ranks
in top 50

18 Ranks
in top 100

215 Ranks
in the final list



Rank 2
Anmol Sher
Singh Bedi



Rank 5
Abhilash Mishra



Rank 12
Tejaswi Rana



Rank 30
Prabhash Kumar



Rank 32
Avdhesh Meena

CSE 2015

5 Ranks
in top 50

14 Ranks
in top 100

162 Ranks
in the final list



Rank 20
Vipin Garg



Rank 24
Khumanthem
Diana Devi



Rank 25
Chandra Mohan
Garg



Rank 27
Pulkit Garg



Rank 47
Anshul Agarwal

CSE 2014

6 Ranks
in top 50

12 Ranks
in top 100

83 Ranks
in the final list



Rank 4
Vandana Rao



Rank 5
Suharsha Bhagat



Rank 16
Ananya Das



Rank 23
Anil Dhameliya



Rank 28
Kushaal Yadav



Rank 39
Vivekanand T.S

CSE 2013

5 Ranks
in top 50

62 Ranks
in the final list



Rank 9
Divyanshu Jha



Rank 12
Neha Jain



Rank 23
Prabhav Joshi



Rank 40
Gaurang Rath



Rank 46
Udit Singh

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Team BYJU'S

Gist of Kurukshetra February 2021 Issue: Empowering Rural Youth

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Chapter 1: Empowering Youth: Towards Rebuilding Rural India

Introduction:

- Youth-led development is the key to a nation's advancement.
- With about 65 percent of its population under 35 years of age, India is one of the youngest nations in the world.
- According to Census 2011 estimates, 70 percent of the youth population in India comprises rural youth. India's rural youth then have the potential to be the drivers of its economic engine to power its growth.

Government initiatives:

- The policy focus on empowering youth has been on the aspects of skill development, employment, entrepreneurship, innovation and talent development.

Skill development:

- The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) was formed in 2014, as an exclusive ministry to advance skill development.
- The [National Skill Development Mission \(NSDM\)](#) was launched in 2015 to provide a strong institutional framework to implement and scale up skill development efforts across the country. Under NSDM, more than one crore youth are being imparted skills training annually under various long term and short term training programmes.
- Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) is a skill and placement initiative for rural India.
- Over one crore candidates have been trained under the short-term training programme of Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY). Long-term skill training is provided through the Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs).
- As a part of the 'Transformation of Aspirational Districts', there has been a special focus on skill training of youth in 112 aspirational districts, including those from vulnerable and marginalized sections of society.
- The newly launched [National Education Policy 2020](#) targets phase-wise integration of vocational education programmes into mainstream education by exposing vocational subjects in middle and secondary schools. The emphasis on Vocational Education will be significant in enhancing the employability and all-around development of rural youth. Vocational education can benefit the career prospects of students.

Employment and entrepreneurship:

- The government promotes rural livelihoods under the Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission ([DAY-NRLM](#)). It aims to work towards poverty reduction.
- Rural Self Employment and Training Institutes (RSETIs) enables trainees to take bank credit and start his/her own micro-enterprises.
- The digital livelihood access platform Unnati has immense potential to connect blue and grey collar workers of India with job opportunities offered by employers across the country.

- 'Aatma Nirbhar Skilled Employee Employer Mapping (ASEEM)' digital platform aims to bridge the demand-supply gap of skilled workforce across sectors.

Innovation:

- Under the Government flagship initiative, Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), implemented by NITI Aayog, Atal Tinkering labs set-up across the country are helping school students find innovative solutions to problems facing their communities. 68 Atal Incubation Centres (AIC) support more than 1500 startups in the country and over 6000 Atal Tinkering Labs have been set-up to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in the country.
- The National AI Portal and 'Responsible AI for youth' was launched recently to lay the foundation for an AI-powered future.

Miscellaneous:

- Swami Vivekananda was of the view that the youth can lead a successful life for themselves or for others only when they are physically fit. The Fit India movement was launched by the Government to harness the power of youth by creating mass awareness about the importance of fitness. Engagement of rural youth in sports at a competitive and recreational level will help instill pride and also provide them with career and vocational opportunities.
- The Common Service Centres have an important role to play in empowering citizens, particularly the youth, through access to information, knowledge and digital skills.

Recommendations:

Decentralization of skill development:

- There is a need for adopting a decentralized approach to skill development.
- The focus should be on identifying the unique challenges, strengths and potentials of each district. The district administration and civil society organizations would explore the local skills and the local produce that can be tapped and marketed.
- Decentralization of skill development is important for enhancing the outreach of skill training, it is also important from the point of view of social inclusion in rural areas, to ensure that different social groups are able to easily access skill development programmes.

Scaling of skilling infrastructure:

- A mapping of the existing skill imparting capacities and identification of potential skilling infrastructure can enable better capacity building and infrastructure utilization.
- There is the need to come up with innovative methods for providing access to skill and for making skills relevant to the needs of the local population and realize their aspirations.

Collaborative approach:

- Youth leaders, civil society, government and non-government organizations all need to work together in close coordination for the all-around development of youth in rural India. Government functionaries — right down to the grassroots level of the village secretariat — should treat youth as stakeholders, as equal partners and not just as beneficiaries.

- Initiatives need to be taken by State governments, private enterprises and civil society organizations to nurture the talent of youth through various programmes aimed at greater outreach to rural youth.

National digital platform:

- To allow for collaboration among rural youth across the country, a one-stop digital platform may be considered where youth can exchange ideas and come together to implement them. The platform can also link young entrepreneurs to financing and investment.

Conclusion:

- A policy focus on empowering youth with an increased thrust on skill development, employment entrepreneurship, innovation and talent development would be critical to the all-round development of youth, which can, in turn, ensure the development of the country.

Chapter 2: Rural Youth and Agricultural Transformation

Background:

Significance of the agricultural sector in India:

- The agricultural sector is vital for the growth of the national economy as it contributes around 17 percent in GDP, 13 percent to exports and 55 percent to employment.
- Agriculture sustains food and nutritional security for a 1.32 billion strong nation.

Rural-Urban Migration —A Big Challenge:

- India is struggling with the grim challenge of rural-urban migration. Every minute, 20-25 rural dwellers migrate to cities in search of better livelihood and lifestyle. If the trend and pace continue, the Indian urban population is likely to reach 600 million by 2030.
- Out of total migrants from rural to urban areas, youth account for nearly 30 percent.
- The majority of rural youth have lost interest and confidence in agriculture and allied activities mainly due to unstable income, depleting natural resources, shrinking land holdings, inadequate access to finance, limited marketing avenues and the poor image of farming as a profession.
- The limited opportunities for higher education, especially for enhancing technical skills and competence add to the existing woes of the rural youth. Rural youth move towards urban centres mainly for acquiring vocational education and technical skills that will fetch a secured and 'white-collar' job in cities.

Impact on the agricultural sector:

- The waning interest of rural youth has led to the ageing of the Indian farming community which is a bad omen for the future of agriculture and food security. While the average age of the Indian population is only 29 years, the average age of farmers is 55 years.

Significance of youth in the agricultural sector:

- The involvement of youth is integral to agriculture as they possess requisite zeal, energy and vigour along with an innate drive to take risks.
- The rural youth are now more qualified and tech-savvy with basic management skills and business orientation as well. The present-day rural youth is also fit enough to take up specific entrepreneurship projects in the agri-sector.
- In this context, the development and harnessing of talents and energies of rural youth towards agriculture and allied activities have assumed greater significance.
- In 2006, the National Commission on Farmers first raised the issue of participation of rural youth in agricultural development. Later, the subject was included in the National Policy for Farmers. The government of India has been organizing planned and systematic programmes to enhance the greater participation of rural youth in the agricultural sector. The focus has been to train, empower, orient and encourage rural youth to take up self-employment in the agriculture and the allied sector as a reliable livelihood.

Government initiatives:

Impetus to agri-start-ups:

- Several programmes have been launched to promote agri-start-ups. As per the 2019 NASSCOM report, India is home to more than 450 agritech start-ups, growing at a rate of 25 percent year-on-year basis. This indicates the growth potential of agri-tech startups that can be realized by rural youth for earning dignified livelihoods. Agri-startups are likely to play a seminal role in strengthening the rural economy by pushing agriculture growth.
- Agri-India Hackathon 2020 is a novel attempt to create dialogues, and accelerate innovation in agriculture to help tackle the big challenges Indian agriculture is facing today by making use of tech-based solutions.
- 'Agri-clinic and Agribusiness Centres' is another scheme of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' welfare to foster entrepreneurship in the agriculture sector. Fresh and unemployed agriculture graduates are imparted short-term training (2 months) on entrepreneurship development.

ARYA to MAYA:

- The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), the apex body for spearheading agricultural research, education and extension in the country, launched a special project in 2015-16 to attract and empower rural youth to take up entrepreneurship in the agriculture sector. Titled 'Attracting and Retaining Youth in Agriculture' (ARYA), this project identifies rural youth (under the age of 35 years) and orients them towards entrepreneurial skill development for gaining sustainable income and livelihood. Enabled youth are facilitated and supported to establish micro-enterprise units in vocations such as apiary, mushroom, seed processing, poultry, dairy, goat farming, carp hatchery vermicompost, etc.
- ICAR organized a specific conference in 2018 on the theme, 'Motivating and Attracting Youth in Agriculture' (MAYA). The MAYA roadmap envisages the grooming of rural youth in the application of modern technologies in agriculture for economic growth and social respect. Rural youth can set up agri-service centres to offer custom-hiring facilities for small and marginal farmers for mechanizing their farm operations to enhance per unit productivity. MAYA strategy also proposes the involvement of youth in the marketing of agri-produce through physical and online markets.

Agriculture education:

- A comprehensive scheme, entitled 'Student READY' (Rural Entrepreneurship Awareness Development Yojana), was launched as a well-structured one-year programme that included several components

designed to provide the requisite skills to agricultural graduates. 'Student READY' programme effectively stimulated undergraduate students for starting up their own venture.

- The Indian Council of Agricultural Research has established 452 Experiential Learning Units in Agricultural Universities across the country with the objective to promote professional skills and knowledge through meaningful hands-on-experience.
- Indian Council of Agricultural Research recently revamped the higher agricultural education network and launched World Bank assisted 'National Agricultural Higher Education Project' (NAHEP) in Agricultural Universities across the country.
- To attract students to higher agricultural education, a variety of scholarships and fellowships are awarded to students at UG, PG and doctoral levels.
- Continuous emphasis on agricultural education has made the agricultural education system of India one of the largest national networks in the world.

Miscellaneous:

- The Government is supporting and motivating the country's youth to take up some off-beat agri-allied activities, such as beekeeping, sericulture, lac farming, as a profitable venture for livelihood.
- The Government is supporting farm-gate processing facilities to increase income, enhance employment opportunities and also minimize wastage of produce.

Recommendations:

- To attract rural youth towards agriculture, as a first step, agriculture needs to be transformed into a high-profitable venture with low risks and stable income. Farm activities will have to be diversified with cash yielding, low volume, high-value and demand-driven quality output.
- Sectors of interest in this regard would include organic farming, vertical use of farmland, pisciculture, horticultural products, such as exotic flowers and vegetables, medicinal mushrooms and herbs, high-value spices, animal husbandry sector, etc.
- Value-addition and primary food processing are easy to adopt enterprises, especially for youth.
- India needs to constantly push-up agriculture and allied activities for enhancing per unit productivity in a sustainable manner to meet the future demand for food, fodder and fibre. The focus must be on transforming agricultural practices by leveraging science, technology and adoption of modern techniques and acceptance of innovations.

Conclusion:

- The involvement of youth is integral to agriculture.
- To attract and sustain the youth in the agriculture sector, we need to develop a potent strategy with comprehensive backing from government bodies and public policymaking institutions.

Chapter 3: Empowering Rural Youth: Need, Challenges and Way Forward

Demographic dividend:

- India is sitting on a goldmine of raw talent, waiting to be nurtured, developed, and added to the growing human resource pool.
- India is a young country, with 70 percent of people below the age of 35 years. It is this young population, which constitutes a potential [demographic dividend](#).
 - As of 2017-18, youth participation in India's labour force was 38.3 percent.
- By the beginning of the third decade of the 21st century, the population of India would have a median age of 28 years only as against 38 years for the United States, 42 years for China and 48 years for Japan.
- To capture this demographic bonus, it is essential that our economy has the ability to support the increase in the labour force and the youth have the appropriate education, skills, health awareness to enable them to productively contribute to the economy. Demographic dividend needs to be harnessed appropriately by imparting quality education, skill-based training, access to Information and Communication Technology.

Youth empowerment:

- Youth empowerment is an attitudinal, structural, and cultural process, whereby young people gain the ability, authority and agency to make decisions and implement change in their own lives as well as the lives of other people.

Challenges:

Low state expenditure:

- Central Government spends about Rs 2,710 per youth on education, skill development, employment, and healthcare and food subsidies. This is hardly commensurate with their population and potential.

Constraints related to access:

- Rural folks' access to education and training is often limited by financial barriers (e.g. training and transportation costs) and non-financial barriers (e.g. scarce education and training infrastructure, inflexible training schedules.)
 - In India, only 4.69 percent of the workforce has formal vocational skills compared to 60 to 90 percent of the workforce in developed countries.
- All-India data from the Periodic Labour Force Survey (2018-19) shows that only 11.3 percent of the workforce in the age group of 15-59 years has received some form of Vocational Education and Training (VET).
- Many rural people do not have basic education. This also hampers their access to technical and vocational training or other skills development.
- The unequal gender relations and traditional gender roles entail specific difficulties for rural girls and women in accessing education and training.

Poor quality of education and skill set:

- Education and training are often of inadequate quality. In fact, poor quality education is one of the big risks India faces, adding to its unemployment crisis.
- The mismatch between the supply of skills and demand and the lack of skills to match the changing needs of the digital world, such as [Artificial Intelligence](#), Machine Learning and Cloud Computing, etc. are major challenges.
- In many developing countries like India, training systems tend to operate in isolation from the labour market and employers' needs, so training does not always match skills demand.

Governmental initiatives:

The following efforts are being made by the Government for empowering our rural youth.

- The National Youth Policy, 2014 identifies the key areas in which action is required to realise the optimum potential of our youth. These include education, employment and skill development, entrepreneurship, health and healthy lifestyle, sports, promotion of social values, community engagement, participation in politics and governance, youth engagement, inclusion and social justice.
- Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship through National Skill Development Corporation has implemented [Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana \(PMKVY\)](#). PMKVY is a grant-based scheme, providing free of cost skill development training and skill certification in over 252 job-roles to increase the employability of the youth.
- Ministry of Rural Development is undertaking the initiatives in skill development under the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM).
- The Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) is a placement linked skill development programme for rural youth between 15-35 years and allows skilling in a PPP mode and also assures placements in regular jobs.
- Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood (SANKALP) is a centrally-sponsored scheme aimed at creating convergence among all skill training initiatives. It aims to improve the quality of skill development programmes through building a pool of quality trainers and assessors, model curriculum and content and establishment of robust monitoring and evaluation system.
- Skills Strengthening for Industrial Value Enhancement (STRIVE) targets improved performance of ITIs, increased capacities of state government to support ITIs and apprenticeship training, improved teaching and learning, and improved as well as broadened apprenticeship training.
- National Career Service (NCS) is a Mission Mode project set in motion by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, for establishing quick and efficient career-related services across the country.
- Stand-Up India and [Start-up India](#) are other worth-mentioning feathers of the Government of India to support entrepreneurship by funding support and incentives, promoting Industry-Academia Partnership and Incubation, and Simplification and Handholding. Stand-up India scheme facilitates bank loans between 10 Lakh and 1 crore to at least one SC/ST borrower and one woman per bank branch for setting up a greenfield enterprise in the manufacturing, service or trading sectors.
- The Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Rurban Mission aims at the development of rural clusters which have the potential for growth by provisioning economic activities, developing skills and local entrepreneurship and providing infrastructural amenities and thus developing a cluster of smart villages.
- Gram Uday Se Bharat Uday Abhiyan, started in 2016, is a village self-governance campaign, with a view to improving rural livelihood.
- The role played by [NABARD](#), the apex development bank of the country and other similar institutions is also worth mentioning here. It has been involved in efforts for building the capacity of rural youth through its various skill development programmes like Rural Entrepreneurship Development Programme/Skill Development Programme (REDPs/SDPs).
- Skill India is encouraging skill seekers to acquire new skills and utilize their time effectively. NSDC's e-Learning aggregator portal-eSkill India has been offering curated courses in partnership with various knowledge partners to provide varied online skilling opportunities.
- India's New Education Policy 2020, based on the pillars of 'access, equity, quality, affordability and accountability', focuses on the empowerment of rural youth by transforming India into a 'vibrant knowledge hub'. Grades 6-8 students will be required to take a course that will provide hands-on experience of a number of important vocational crafts as well. Objectives of NEP also include increasing the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education, including vocational education from 26.3 percent of 2018 to 50 percent by 2035.

- NISHTHA-National Initiative on School Teachers Holistic Advancement Programme aims to train over 4.2 million teachers across the country.

Recommendations:

- The public expenditure in the education sector should increase. It needs to be raised to nearly 6 percent of GDP by 2022, in order to provide quality education.
- Full-fledged online courses may be launched by the institutions featuring in the top 100 national rankings to ensure accessibility of quality education to everyone.
- Apart from the technical skills, the rural youth have to be trained in cognitive skills, management skills and interpersonal skills to adapt to a technology-enabled world.
- India should also consider launching an Indian Youth Guarantee (IYG) programme, akin to the European Union Youth Guarantee (EU-YG) but tuned to our country's context. Such an initiative, with statutory backing, can function as a facilitatory framework for ensuring the gainful and productive engagement of youth to good quality jobs suited to their education and experience or acquire skills required to find a job through an apprenticeship.
- The Youth Development Index (YDI) can help recognize priority areas, gaps and alternative approaches specific to each State. Succinctly, YDI can be revisited and deployed to play a vital role in crafting a region-specific IYG.

Conclusion:

- The aspirational younger generation holds the key to India's economic and political future. It is high time all the stakeholders seriously pay attention to guarantee our youth, especially the rural folks, a viable future.

Chapter 4: Role of Allied Sector in Rural Employment Generation

Significance of the agricultural sector:

- Due to structural changes in the economy, the contribution of the primary sector to Gross Domestic Product has steadily declined from 53.71 percent in 1951 to 16.87 percent in 2020. Similarly, the contribution of this sector to foreign exchange earnings (share in exports) have come down from 44.24 percent in 1960-61 to 10.59 percent in 2019-20. On the contrary, the share of agricultural and allied products in employment generation not only declined at a slow pace from 69.40 percent in 1951 to 41.49 percent in 2020, but still is very high. Despite a fall in its share in national output and employment, the agriculture and allied sector still remains the country's major source of livelihood for more than half of the population of the country. As per census 2011, of the 313 million main workers in the country, 166 million (56.6 percent) were engaged in these activities.
- India is predominantly a rural economy where agriculture and allied sectors play a vital role in national income, output, employment generation and foreign exchange earnings.

Challenges in the agricultural sector:

- Agricultural production is very much dependent upon rainfall. It is highly susceptible to natural calamities and risks like droughts, floods, pests, diseases, etc.
- Indian agriculture is characterized by the presence of excess manpower in the form of large scale disguised and seasonal unemployment. Nearly 25 percent of manpower engaged in agriculture is disguisedly unemployed.

Allied sectors:

- In addition, to boost income from crop cultivation, the focus of attention should be on promoting allied and non-farm activities in rural areas so that farmers can get gainful employment during the slack season. Ancillary activities not only supplement the income generation from cultivation but also act as insurance to the farmers against the shocks and fluctuations in farm income due to natural calamities.
- Given the challenges in the agricultural sector, it is extremely critical to promote the allied sector activities like animal husbandry, pisciculture, horticulture, floriculture, apiculture, sericulture, forestry and logging and mining and quarrying, etc.

Animal Husbandry:

- Among the ancillary activities, animal husbandry being an integral part of farming in India, is at the top.
- Nearly 19 percent of the world's total milk production is contributed by India.
- The livestock sector has emerged as a sustainable secondary source of income and is generating gainful employment during the phases of seasonal unemployment, particularly to the landless, small and marginal farmers.
- Realizing the potential of the animal husbandry sector, various schemes and initiatives have been announced like National Livestock Mission, [Rashtriya Gokul Mission](#), National Programme for Dairy Development, National Programme for Bovine Breeding, National Kamdhenu Breeding Centres, etc.

Pisciculture:

- The fisheries sector is also an important source of income and employment generation in India.
 - The sector provides livelihood to about 16 million fishers and fish farmers at the primary level and almost twice the number along the value chain.
 - The sector has been one of the major sources of foreign exchange earnings, with India being one of the leading seafood exporting nations in the world.
- The country has rich and diverse fisheries resources due to its vast coastline and varied inland resources in the form of rivers, canals, lakes, ponds, tanks, reservoirs, etc.
- The government has taken several initiatives in this sector.
 - Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF) aims to boost annual fish production to 20 million tonnes by 2022-23 and generate over 9.40 lakh employment opportunities.
 - To bring about the blue revolution through sustainable development of the fisheries sector, [Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana](#) was launched recently. Under the scheme, a total estimated investment of Rs. 20,050 crores are to be implemented over a period of 5 years from FY 2020-21 to FY 2024-25. The scheme sets an ambitious target to enhance fish production to 22 million tonnes by 2024-25 and generate about 15 lakhs of direct gainful employment opportunities.

Horticulture:

- The diverse agro-climatic conditions and wide varieties of soil in the country make it possible to grow almost all types of horticultural products like fresh fruits, vegetables, root and tuber crops, flowers, aromatic and medicinal crops, spices and plantation crops.
- The horticulture sector is recognized to have the potential to augment rural income, enhance employment opportunities and promote exports earnings.
 - The production of horticulture crops in the country has outpaced the production of foodgrains since 2012-13.
 - India ranks second in fruits and vegetable production in the world, after China. The country ranks first in the production of banana, papaya, mango, lemon, ginger and okra.
 - The horticulture sector offers tremendous opportunities for their exports. Despite the huge production of horticultural crops, India's share in world exports amounts to less than 1.5 percent.
- For the holistic growth of the horticulture sector, Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) - a centrally sponsored scheme was launched. It provides financial, technical and administrative support to State Governments for the development of the horticulture sector covering fruits, vegetables, root & tuber crops, mushroom, spices, flowers, aromatic plants, coconut, cashew, cocoa, bamboo and saffron.

Floriculture:

- Floriculture has immense potential for generating gainful self-employment among small and marginal farmers.
- The diverse agro-climatic conditions enable the growth of all types of flowers in one or the other part of the country round-the-year.
- Recognizing the importance of this sector, the Government of India has identified floriculture as a sunrise industry and accorded 100 percent export-oriented status to it. The liberalization of industrial and trade policies paved the way for the development of export-oriented production of flowers. The [Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority \(APEDA\)](#) has introduced several schemes for promoting floriculture exports from the country.

Apiculture:

- Apiculture or beekeeping is a lucrative venture with very low or negligible investment. It can generate huge employment and improve the economic condition of rural people.
- It is not restricted to the extraction of honey only, but other products such as royal jelly, bee wax, pollen, propolis and bee venom also yield good income to the farmers.
- Increasing the number of bee colonies will not only increase the production of bee-related products but will boost overall agricultural and horticultural productivity.
- India is ranked eighth in the world in honey production in 2017-18. India is one of the leading honey exporting countries.
- A new central sector scheme named the National Beekeeping and Honey Mission (NBHM) has been launched to achieve the goal of [Sweet Revolution](#) in the country. It has the following objectives:
 - Adoption of scientific beekeeping methods for improvement in production and productivity of honey.
 - Develop requisite infrastructural facilities for post-harvest management including collection, processing, storage, marketing and value addition.
 - Research and technology generation keeping in view the varied agro-climatic and socio-economic conditions of different regions/states in the country.

Sericulture:

- The sericulture and silk industry has great potential to contribute towards rural income and employment generation, poverty alleviation and women empowerment.
- India's silk industry provides gainful employment to over 9.43 million persons of which a sizable number belong to the economically weaker sections of society. The Indian silk products have high export potential because of their distinctiveness and low cost of production.
- India is the only country producing all the four commercially known varieties of silk viz. Mulberry, Eri, Tasar and Muga.
- The Central Silk Board was established immediately after independence in 1948. It acts as a facilitator to the States in guiding them to improve productivity and quality of silk through research and development intervention, supply of basic seed, post cocoon technology intervention and capacity building.
- The central sector scheme-Silk Samagra was launched recently. It focuses on improving the quality and productivity of domestic silk and thereby reducing the country's dependence on imports of raw silk.

Agro-Processing:

- The agro-processing industry is seen as a key instrument for ameliorating the economic lot of the vast majority of people living in poverty in rural India, as this sector has high employment potential with significantly low investment.
- Rural areas provide abundant raw materials from agricultural, horticultural and animal produce to start entrepreneurship in the field of agro-processing.
- Agro-processing not only enables to reduce the post-harvest wastages but also helps to fetch fair and remunerative prices to the producers through value addition in their agricultural produce. Presently, the processing of fruits and vegetables is only two percent in India.
- With the availability of fresh, abundant & affordable raw material, rising consumer affordability, rapid urbanization and change in lifestyle, the preference for processed agro-products has been increasing rapidly. These factors would provide an impetus to the food processing sector.
- The central sector scheme, [Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana](#) was launched in 2016, aiming at the creation of modern infrastructure with an efficient supply chain for the processed food industry.

Conclusion:

- Strengthening the rural economy by reviving agriculture and allied sectors in the country is a necessity especially in the post-pandemic phase.
- A joint effort on the part of the Government, private sector and self-help-groups supported by the public at large can play a vital role in promoting ancillary and allied activities and ultimately enhance employment opportunities in rural India.

Chapter 5: Employment and Entrepreneurship Opportunities for Skilled Youth

Introduction:

- Agriculture is truly the backbone of India's economy, reverberating with a new dynamism and excitement. The sector is poised for a big leap forward. There are umpteen opportunities for youth in the agriculture and agribusiness sector.

- Technological breakthroughs increased concern for food safety and hygiene, innovations in agricultural marketing have created a range of new jobs across the agri value chain, demand for services of skilled professionals in farm machinery, greenhouse farming, pesticide and fertilizer application, micro-irrigation and solar energy.
- A raft of smart technology applications based on AI, Big Data, Internet of Things has enabled farmer-entrepreneurs to make smart decisions, adopt better farm management practices and access the best of market opportunities. This has triggered higher demand for professionals associated with scientific farm management, various specialized job roles in agri warehouses, cold storage and aggregation points.

Initiatives being taken:

Related to skilling:

- Radical changes are being implemented in the skilling ecosystem.
- The alignment of training programmes is being done by matching with the international standards which are making skill training aspirational and attractive to the youth.
- There is a growing synergy between all skill development efforts among different ministries and state governments, and a focussed attempt at improving the scope for more private sector participation.
- Foundation of the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) in 2008 and the launching of the [Skill India Mission](#) in 2015 mark an important landmark.
- The online modules have made new skills, technology and knowledge easily accessible.

Agri sector:

- The Government of India also launched ambitious programmes for agri infrastructure, credit, market reforms, minimum basic income, and risk management, which are expected to improve the profitability of farming and farm ventures. Agricultural marketing is expected to attract more investments with the introduction of landmark reforms, reduce the market unpredictability and improve price realization.
- Agriculture Skill Council of India (ASCI), the nodal agency under the National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF), was set up in 2013 and works under the aegis of NSDC.

Central Schemes:

- The Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana or PMKVY was launched with an aim to train 10 million youth between 2016 and 2020.
- Other than PMKVY, opportunities for short-term training in agriculture-related job roles are available under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) and Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushal Vikas Yojana (DDUGKY), Ajeevika under National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), and Barefoot Technician Programme under Mahatma Gandhi National Employment Guarantee Act ([MGNREGA](#)).

State Schemes:

- States are running their own skill development schemes that are NSQF-aligned and linked to employment creation.
- Utkarsh Bangle scheme of West Bengal, Placement Linked Skill Training Programme of Assam, SURYA scheme of Haryana, Employment Linked Skill Training Programme of Rajasthan, Entrepreneurship and Employment Linked Skill Training Programme of Uttarakhand are some of these.

Skill Courses in Schools and Colleges:

- The New Education Policy 2020 proposed to make VET an integral part of school and higher education in a phased manner. This initiative would help address the long-standing issues of integrating vocational and academic education, ensure mobility, and make skill programmes aspirational.
- Skill-based programmes can also be taken as part of the higher education system under the University Grants Commission (UGC).

Apprenticeships:

- The National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS) has significantly improved the scope, access, and effectiveness of the apprenticeship programme.
- Apprentices are now eligible for a monthly stipend of Rs. 5,000-9,000 depending on educational qualification and experience.

Involvement of Industry:

- Industry participation in the skill ecosystem is critical for bridging the skill gaps, in-service and apprenticeship training, training of trainers, and absorption of trained candidates.

Support for Entrepreneurs:

- Many of the youth want to start their business enterprises after the training programme.
- Initiative for Development of Entrepreneurs in Agriculture (IDEA) under RKVY, Venture Capital Finance Assistance (VCA) of Small Farmers' Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC), ASPIRE scheme of the Ministry of MSME, Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP) are a few initiatives aimed at boosting entrepreneurship.

Chapter 6: Empowering Rural Youth Through Water and Tourism Sector

Background:

- The COVID-19 pandemic has had a marked impact on the global economies. There has been an approximately 5.2 percent contraction in global GDP in 2020. India also witnessed a dip in the Gross Domestic Product, an increase in unemployment, mass migration and other dire consequences.
- Loss of livelihood and reverse migration to rural India created a strain on local resources.

Impetus to rural economy:

- There is certain untapped potential in rural India that can use local resources in synergy with the skills the rural youth possess to empower and boost the economy.
- The skilled and unskilled workers residing in rural India need to be empowered through different interventions across sectors while defining their entrepreneurial skills to boost the Indian economy.

- Two such sectors can be the water and tourism sectors which have some hidden potential to push start the economy by empowering rural youth.

Water sector:

- The water sector is a very necessary and irreplaceable resource for economic growth. As per the United Nations report on water and jobs, it has been estimated that half of the world's workforce i.e. about 1.5 billion people are dependent and employed in one of the eight water and natural resources dependent industries. Hence, it is evident that the water sector in different facets has the potential to empower the rural youth.
- The rapid population growth, climate change and urbanization will put pressure on the water resources.
- Currently, India generates approximately 61,948 MLD of sewage against the treatment capacity of 23,277 MLD i.e., 37 percent of wastewater generated.
 - There is an urgent need to promote and push the economy to inculcate the habit of reusing, recycling and treating wastewater in the system. This can not only help in conserving and consuming water efficiently but can also create job opportunities in the wastewater sector.
- Water contamination is an important concern that poses a huge health burden on the rural community with a heavy toll on the health of the human and livestock population. Identification and removal of contamination are highly important as water-borne diseases are directly proportional to water quality. There is a need to invest in water purification plants at decentralized levels.
 - The [Jal Jeevan Mission \(JJM\)](#) operational guidelines provide for the identification and training of five women from every village to undertake water quality surveillance through Field Test Kits (FTKs) and sanitary inspection.
- Another important role of water is to support the major livelihood of the economy, the agricultural sector. Availability of water for effective irrigation is crucial to the agriculture sector and thus for ensuring food security for the country. Around 89 percent of India's groundwater is consumed by the irrigation sector.
 - The need of the hour is to build and revive surface water sources. Realizing the potential of traditional water harvesting structures in managing and supporting agriculture, several civil society organizations and government departments have tried and contributed to reviving traditional water structures.

Tourism Sector:

- The tourism industry, one of the largest contributors to India's GDP, has been hit due to the global spread of the coronavirus pandemic. As per the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), the Covid-19 pandemic cost the tourism industry at least USD 22 billion resulting in a loss of 50 million jobs globally.
- Revival of the tourism industry is one of the prime concerns of the Government of India wherein rural India can prove to be a hidden and unexplored asset. When international travel destinations are found to be risky and unreachable, the idea is to promote and revive domestic tourism. Uncharted rural India can attract a large number of domestic travellers offering them an authentic taste and serene beauty of India.
- The promotion of domestic village tourism can empower rural youth offering them an opportunity to earn a livelihood from logistics and accommodation support, travel guide services and much more.
- Recently launched Government scheme 'Dekho Apna Desh' is one such initiative to promote domestic tourism in India, intended to enhance tourist footfalls, so as to help develop the local economy.
- Another segment of the tourism industry that can empower rural youth can be 'Education tourism'. Practical training and exposure have always been considered important. There are several global organizations that used to develop educational tour programmes in India for international travelers.

Chapter 7: Employment Opportunities for Rural Youth

Introduction:

- In the 21st century, with the shift in occupational structure over the past few decades, employment has turned out to be one of the key tools of survival in the country.
- The employment of an individual depends on many factors. One of the major problems that exist is matching the requirements of employment generators to the profiles of the employment seekers. Literacy figures may provide a good picture of rising education amongst the masses, but the labour market is highly skill-oriented.

Government initiatives:

- MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) offers 100 days of guaranteed wage employment to every household whose adult member volunteers to do unskilled manual work.
- Skill India includes Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana which provides training opportunities to the youth. There are short term training programmes under this scheme for the college/school dropouts and the unemployed.
- Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP) scheme focuses upon strengthening the institutional mechanisms for skill development and increase access to quality and market-relevant training for youth across the country.
- The Udaan scheme was an initiative of the Government of India for the state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). It is funded by the Ministry of Home Affairs and was implemented by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) towards making the educated youth (graduates, post-graduates and three-year diploma holders in engineering) of Jammu and Kashmir employable.
- The National Skill Certification and Monetary Reward (STAR scheme) scheme has been launched for encouraging skill development among the youth by providing monetary rewards for the successful completion of approved training programmes.

Challenges:

There are many factors affecting the employability of youths.

- A larger fraction of the youth labour force resides in the rural areas, and most of them have to struggle for their livelihood and basic amenities, like, food, clothes and shelter. The food insecurity or lack of adequate nourishment of an individual affects the quality of human capital in a country.
- Besides nourishment, health and education are other such parameters that affect the employment scenario. A person with poor health reflects as a non-productive human capital.
- One major bottleneck affecting the employment of individuals in the rural region has been the lack of skills.
- Even after training, another challenge on the forefront in the present century is skill up-gradation. With the advancement in technology, the labour market requires individuals who can update themselves with new-age technology, and those who failed to acquire such skills are forced to move out of the system.
- There is a mismatch between the employment opportunities for youth and the demand for employment.

Conclusion:

- All the Government schemes aimed at providing employment have played a significant role in improving the employment scenario for the rural youths, but the Government schemes alone cannot bring along major changes which are required. A fraction of responsibility lies with the private sector via the medium of Corporate Social Responsibility for providing such societal goals.
- The rural youth have immense potential that can be nurtured in the right direction and be utilized to contribute to the country's economic growth.

Chapter 8: Empowering Rural Artisans to Make Them AatmaNirbhar

Significance of the handicrafts sector to India:

- India's rural artisans have contributed significantly to the nation's economy.
- The art and handicrafts sector is the second largest employment generator after agriculture.
- According to the 2011 Census, there are over 68 lakh artisans in the country of which 55 percent are women.
- Handicrafts have sustained lakhs of artisans through the years. The sector provides employment to a large number of craftspersons in rural and semi-urban areas and also generates substantial foreign exchange for the country.
- Its contribution to preserving India's cultural heritage deserves to be acknowledged.

Handicraft sector in India:

- The diversity of India's handicrafts is quite impressive. These include handicrafts of clay, paper, embroidery, bamboo, cane, jute, shell wood, rock, bell metal, bone, horn and brass.
- The handicrafts sector employs 7.3 million persons mostly from rural and semi-urban areas.
- India is the world's largest producer and exporter of handmade carpets since 2013-2014. 20 lakh of the total number of artisans are related to the carpet sector.

Government initiatives:

Skilling:

- To remain relevant in today's rapidly changing business and market environment it becomes extremely important to skill, reskill and upskill.
- To organize and standardize the Indian handicrafts, approximately 22.85 lakh artisans have been trained under the 'Pahchan' initiative.
- The Government introduced a programme called Poorv Kaushalya ko Manyata better known as Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) as a component of its flagship scheme - the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana. PMKVY is a grant-based scheme, providing free of cost skill development training and skill certification in 371 job roles to increase the employability of the youth. Almost a lakh artisans and weavers with traditional skillset who were so far in the unorganized sector have been empowered with upscaled technology and digital literacy.
- The Skill India programme of the government also has a dedicated handicrafts and carpet skill council aimed at preserving cultural heritage. The Skill India programme has identified close to 90 job roles

across sub-sectors such as carpets, ceramics, glassware, traditional fashion jewellery, and handcrafted textiles, handicrafts such as incense sticks and bamboo, metalware, papier mache, stone craft, woodware and handicraft toys. Besides RPL, the Skill India programme imparts fresh training in the above-mentioned sectors.

- The Odisha Government developed a project that aims to skill 3000 women artisans in golden grass craft in 12 villages of Kendrapara block in Kendrapara district. It was taken up as a national pilot project under a grassroots focused initiative SANKALP (Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion) of the Ministry of Skill Development. SANKALP aims to encourage best practices at the local level. The project is focused on skilling women artisans to provide basic, intermediate and advanced skill training along with entrepreneurship development and linkages.

Marketing support:

- The Central government has launched a trade facilitation centre and crafts museum in Varanasi. The objective was to bring weavers and artisans under the same roof and give them marketing opportunities.
- The government in 2017 launched the India Handmade Bazaar, an online portal to give the artisans direct market access by listing their products.
- The theme-based handicrafts portal of the government known as Theme Crafts showcases more than 45,000 products of approximately 9000 artisans, retailers, exporters and government awardees.
- The government has also taken positive steps to empower tribal artisans. One such initiative has been the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited ([TRIFED](#)). The sellers can directly sell their products to TRIFED from where they are marketed through its several retail outlets and e-commerce platforms to reach the genuine buyers out there.

Governmental schemes:

- The Ministry of Minority Affairs has been organizing Hunar Haats under USTTAD (Upgrading the Skills and Training in Traditional Arts/Crafts for Development) scheme. The USTTAD scheme aims at preserving and promoting the rich heritage of the traditional arts and crafts of the minority communities. The USTAAD scheme launched in 2015 is a centrally sponsored scheme. By building the capacity of master craftsmen/artisans and getting these master craftsmen to train the young generation, the government has been running the USTAAD scheme with the help of implementing agencies. It also helps to create a livelihood for marginalized minorities and bring them into the mainstream. The scheme also supports craftsman and artisans through Hunar Haats to market their products in exhibitions in India and overseas. 'Hunar Haat' is becoming an effective platform to strengthen the mission of "AatmaNirbhar Bharat" and "Vocal for Local" initiative by promoting and encouraging indigenous products of master artisans and craftsmen. The Minority of Affairs Ministry has organized nearly two dozen HunarHaats so far across the country where lakhs of artisans and craftsmen have been provided employment and employment opportunities. HunarHaat has also proved to be an effective platform to provide large scale employment and employment opportunities to master artisans and craftsmen from every corner of the country.
- The Mahila Coir Yojana scheme aims at training rural women artisans in the spinning of coir yarn. The scheme envisages the distribution of motorized coir processing equipment to women at subsidized rates after completion of training.
- The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises has been implementing a Scheme for Promoting Innovation, Rural Industry and Entrepreneurship (ASPIRE) to create new jobs in traditional and agri-based industries.
- The previous Budget presented in Parliament focused on reviving traditional industries such as bamboo, khadi and honey, through a cluster-based approach. This will be done under the Scheme of Fund for

Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI), which aims to organize such industries and artisans into clusters to make them competitive and provide support for their long-term sustainability. SFURTI works towards the development of khadi, village industries, and coir clusters by providing workers with improved equipment, common facilities centres, business development services, training, capacity building and design, and marketing support.

Credit support:

- Handicraft artisans can avail of MUDRA loan and margin money provided by the Office of Development Commissioner (Handicrafts).

Welfare measures:

- Under the National Handicrafts Development Programme in 2018-19 and 2019-20, the office of Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) implemented the Direct Benefit Scheme for artisans as a welfare measure.
- Other welfare measures are the Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Bima Yojana/Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana and Modified Aam Aadmi Bima Yojana through Life Insurance Corporation of India to provide life insurance protection to handicraft artisans.
- A subsection of the Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana named Dastkar Sashaktikaran Yojana facilitates community empowerment for mobilizing artisans into self-help groups and societies.

Geographical Indication Tags:

- According to the Compendium of Geographical Indication Tags of India, a good number of handicraft products have been registered under [Geographical Indication \(GI\) Tag](#). This will help artisans get credibility for their products.

Conclusion:

- Since rural artisans belong to the unorganized sector, government schemes are imperative to strengthen them economically.

Additional information:

- Dhokra is one of the oldest forms of handicraft made by tribals, which originated in Madhya Pradesh.
- Madhubani paintings of Bihar, Kangra paintings of Himachal Pradesh, Kutch embroidery of Gujarat, bronze ware from Karnataka, and Phulkari from Punjab have GI tags.

Chapter 9: Rural India- The Periphery of Development

Introduction:

- Since independence, rural India has remained at the periphery of development that urban India has achieved. Benefits have trickled down to the rural hinterlands, but they are a far cry from the prosperity urban India enjoyed.
- With half of India's population expected to be in rural India by 2050 and the bulk of the workforce emanating from rural India accounting for 70 percent of the total workforce, it is widely acknowledged that the country's overall development will move parallel to the development of rural India.

Government initiatives:

- To ensure the general development of rural areas, the government has assured to provide electricity and clean cooking facilities to all willing rural families by 2022 under Ujjwala and [Saubhagya Yojana](#). Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana — Gramin (PMAY-G) will provide 1.95 crore houses to eligible beneficiaries during its second phase (2019-20 to 2021-22) along with amenities like toilets, electricity and LPG connections.
- With the vision of developing the potential of tribal youth and women and integrating them into the mainstream, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs in collaboration with Facebook has introduced the GOAL programme to provide mentorship to tribal youth through digital mode. Dedicated to preserve the tribal culture and enhance the entrepreneurial capacity of tribal youth, the key focus is given to sectors like horticulture, food processing, beekeeping, tribal art and culture and medicinal herbs that are native.
- Additionally, rural women-focused programmes such as 'NaiRoshni' have been instituted to empower women who are key change agents, contributing to inclusive and sustainable growth in rural communities.
- The government's [Digital India](#) campaign that aims to connect the entire country digitally has provided a great impetus to transform rural India to match its urban counterpart. Internet will act as a catalyst to rural development. The digital infrastructure in rural areas has helped attract higher-paying jobs and allows remote work too; thus, helping address the issue of migration from villages. Rural youth also have increased gains from economic activities through easy access to market information and global markets. Perhaps the most significant impact of internet penetration is the support it provides to rural entrepreneurship. Digital penetration has also improved access to finance, education, and healthcare, which are important pillars to enhancing the quality of life, affecting rural economic productivity in the long term.
- Digitally enabled education is envisaged as a panacea to solving issues in imparting quality education in rural India. Various initiatives to promote digital learning under the National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NMEICT), SWAYAM, SWAYAM Prabha, National Digital Library (NDL) and Free and Open-Source Software for Education (FOSSEE) are critical in this direction.

Recommendations:

- The pandemic has created a situation where even the urban dwellers chose to temporarily migrate to the safer, untouched rural lands for months or more.
- The government and other social development organizations must grab this opportunity and initiate policies explicitly targeted at reverse migration. Companies can explore this window of opportunity to test the possibilities of 'rural shoring'. 'Rural shoring' is a great option for companies who want to realise the benefits of outsourcing by giving work to service providers in rural locations where the cost of living and operations will be much lower. With the expanding digital infrastructure and targeted interventions in skilling, this could prove to be a win-win situation for both companies and rural youth.

Conclusion:

- In India, the rural areas have seen substantial development because government policies aimed at improving rural housing, sanitation and welfare have contributed to transforming its landscape.
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