
The Role of Vocational Training in Enhancing Employability Among Indian Graduates (2024–2025)

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Abstract: The research explores the relationship between vocational training and graduate employability in India, using recent data from the *India Skills Report 2025*. With employability reaching 54.81% in 2025, a noticeable increase from the previous year, this study examines whether this growth is attributable to vocational initiatives. The paper presents statistical data, trend analysis, and policy evaluations to support the argument that vocational training is a critical enabler of workforce readiness in India. Challenges such as gender difference and uneven regional development are also examined. Recommendations emphasize on expanding access, improving program quality, and fostering public-private partnerships to enhance training effectiveness.

Keywords: Vocational Training, Employability Skills, India Skills Report 2025, Workforce Readiness, Technical Education, Skill Development, PMKVY, Gender Gap, ITI Modernization

1. Introduction: India is undergoing a demographic transition with a rapid increase in youth population. However, in spite of educational expansion, graduate unemployment remains a major matter of concern. According to the *India Skills Report 2025*, only 54.81% of Indian youth are deemed employable, even with academic qualifications. This raises the question: Are Indian graduates truly job-ready, or is there a disconnect between education and employment?

Vocational training has emerged as a solution to this skill mismatch. By equipping students with practical, job-specific skills, vocational education is believed to improve employability. Government programs such as PMKVY and ITI modernization efforts are aimed at building a skilled workforce. The paper investigates how these efforts have influenced employability trends, especially between 2024 and 2025.

2. Literature Review: Several studies highlight the importance of vocational training in improving employment outcomes. A 2022 meta-analysis of 26 empirical studies found that

technical and vocational education and training (TVET) significantly enhance employment and earnings, especially among youth and women. The World Bank, in a study on Nepal, observed a 10–31% increase in non-farm employment among TVET graduates.

In India, studies by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship indicate a positive correlation between vocational training and employability. However, empirical studies that combine recent national-level data with government policy analysis are limited. This paper attempts to fill that gap by leveraging *India Skills Report 2025* data.

3. Research Objectives:

- To examine the role of vocational training in improving the employability of Indian graduates.
- To analyse trends in employability across different domains and regions.
- To assess the effectiveness of national vocational training programs.
- To identify barriers such as gender disparity and suggest future directions.

4. Methodology: This research adopts a mixed-methods approach:

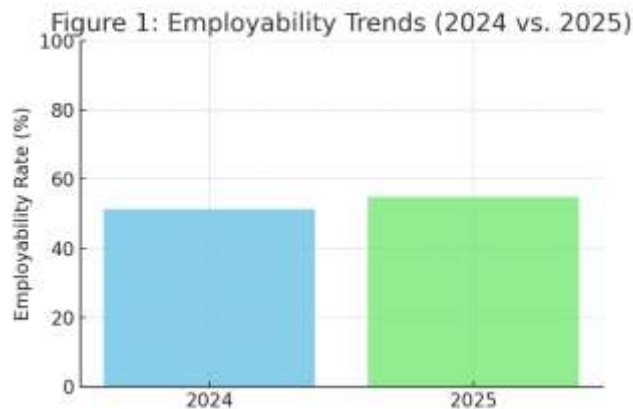
4.1 Quantitative Analysis: Data was sourced from the *India Skills Report 2025*, which surveyed over 650,000 candidates and 150+ corporates. Employability scores were compared year-on-year and across domains such as Engineering, Management, and Arts.

4.2 Policy Review: Government schemes such as PMKVY, Skill India, and the modernization of Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) were evaluated for their implementation status and effectiveness.

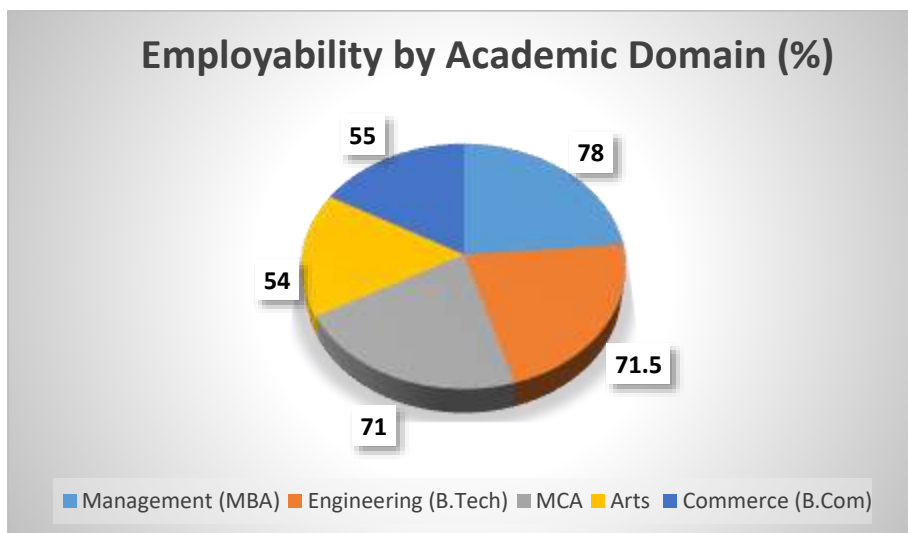
4.3 Limitations: While data is comprehensive, it is aggregated and does not allow for individual-level analysis of vocational vs. non-vocational training impacts.

5. Findings and Analysis:

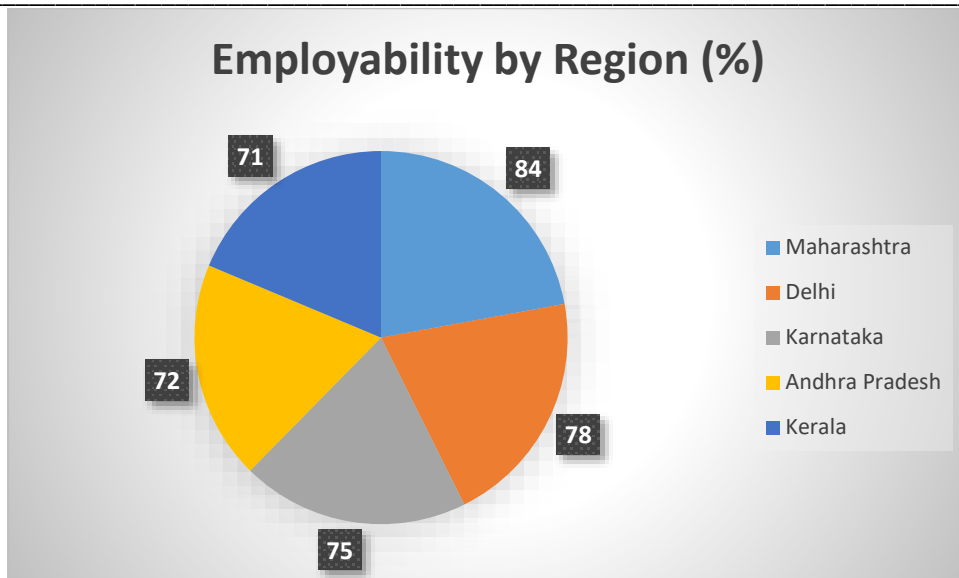
5.1 Employability Trends: In 2025, India recorded an employability rate of 54.81%, up from 51.25% in 2024.



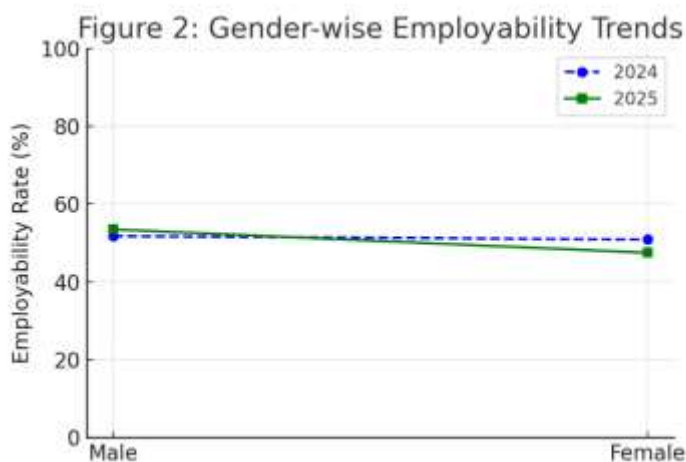
The highest employability was observed in Management (78%), followed by Engineering (71.5%) and MCA (71%). These fields typically involve some form of vocational or technical training.



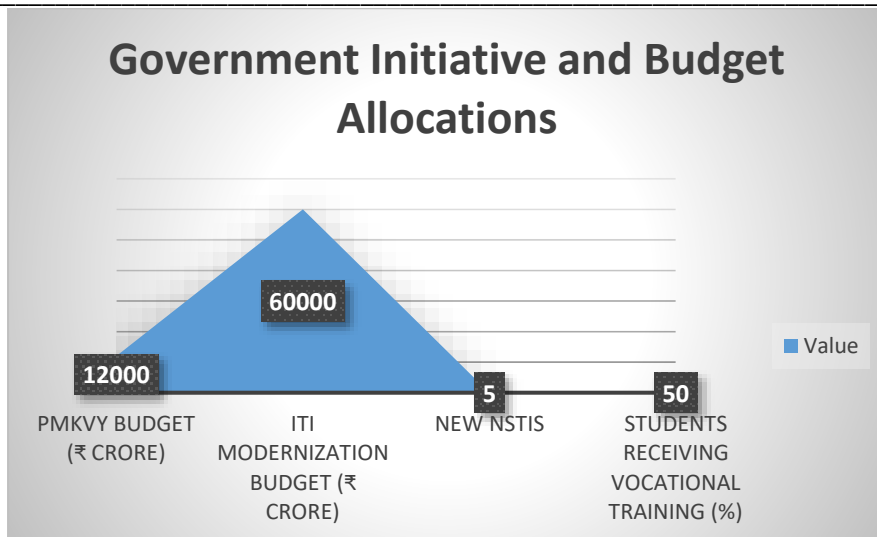
5.2 Regional Disparities: States with robust vocational infrastructure such as Maharashtra (84%), Delhi (78%), Karnataka (75%), Andhra Pradesh (72%), and Kerala (71%) reported higher employability. This suggests that regional investment in skill infrastructure yields results.



5.3 Gender Gap: The employability rate for men increased from 51.8% to 53.46%, whereas for women it dropped from 50.86% to 47.53%. This reflects a concerning trend where vocational training may not be equally accessible or effective for female candidates.



5.4 Vocational Training Penetration: Approximately 50% of secondary and tertiary students are now in receipt of vocational training. Government initiatives such as the setting up of 5 new NSTIs and the modernization of 1,000 ITIs with a budget of ₹60,000 crore are expected to enhance this figure further.



6. Discussion: The findings support the hypothesis that vocational training improves employability. Fields with strong vocational components show higher employment readiness. Moreover, regions that have invested in vocational education show superior outcomes, indicating the importance of state-level initiatives.

However, the gender gap poses a significant challenge. Cultural barriers, lack of awareness, and gender-insensitive training modules may be limiting the effectiveness of these programs for women.

Another challenge is ensuring quality. As vocational training scales up, maintaining the quality of instructors, curriculum, and industry linkage becomes vital. There's also a need for continuous curriculum updates to reflect changing industry needs, especially in AI, cloud computing, and automation.

7. Policy Implications:

- **Expand Access:** Increase enrolment in vocational courses through scholarships, awareness campaigns, and early intervention at the school level.
- **Ensure Inclusivity:** Tailor programs to be gender-sensitive and inclusive for marginalized groups.
- **Industry Collaboration:** Involve industry partners in curriculum development and training delivery.
- **Monitor Outcomes:** Implement robust assessment frameworks to track employment outcomes of trainees.

8. Conclusion: Vocational training has played a weighty role in improving the employability of Indian graduates. While national employability figures show positive growth, the

challenge remains to make this growth inclusive and sustainable. Investing in quality, access, and industry relevance will be key to future success.

9. Future Research Directions:

- Longitudinal studies tracking vocational graduates over 5–10 years.
- Experimental studies comparing vocational vs. traditional graduates in similar domains.
- Gender-focused research to identify and overcome barriers.
- State-wise evaluations to identify best practices and scalable models.

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