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Q18

Skill development programs have succeed in increasing human resources supply to various sectors. In the context of the statement analyze the linkages between education, skill and employment.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2023 · GS II · 15 marks · Health, Education and Human Resources

Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector / Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

Core demand of the question

- Skill development programmes have succeeded in increasing human-resource supply to various sectors
- Analyse the linkages between education, skill and employment in that context

Revision summary

Education, skill and employment are a pipeline, not three separate missions.

PMKVY and **Skill India** increased certified supply in several sectors.

NEP 2020 wants vocational exposure inside schooling so skill does not start after dropout.

Apprenticeship is the strongest education-skill-job link.

Breaks are weak foundations, short courses, informal hiring and weak labour demand.

Success should be measured by placement and wage, not by certificates issued.

Introduction

Education builds foundations, skill programmes add job-ready tasks, and employment is the demand for those tasks at a wage. India's missions have increased certified supply; the linkage fails when schooling is weak, certificates are short, and firms do not hire.

Body**The three links**

- School and higher education under the **National Education Policy, 2020**, are supposed to provide literacy, numeracy, and multiple-exit credentials that already include vocational exposure.
- **Skill India**, the National Skill Development Mission, and the **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana** provide short-term training and Recognition of Prior Learning for those who left school or who need a trade certificate.
- Employment is created by firms, farms, public works, and self-employment; the State can match through apprenticeships, employment exchanges, and public hiring, but it cannot invent private demand by printing certificates.

Where programmes increased supply

- PMKVY and related courses have produced large numbers of trained or certified workers in construction, logistics, beauty, electronics, and healthcare support.
- Industrial Training Institutes, polytechnics, and the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme feed manufacturing and services more slowly but with longer workshop hours.
- Sector Skill Councils were meant to write employer-led National Occupational Standards so that a certificate matches a shop-floor role.

Breaks in the chain

- Foundational learning is still weak; a short PMKVY course cannot repair missing Grade 8 mathematics.
- Many certificates are too brief for employable competence; employers retrain or ignore the card.
- Informal enterprises hire on networks, not on **National Skills Qualifications Framework** levels, so supply does not meet the actual hiring channel.
- Female trainees face safety, hostel, and care constraints, so supply statistics overstate the labour that can take a night or factory shift.
- On the demand side, slow manufacturing employment and capital-intensive growth mean that even a good plumber or fitter may not find a formal contract.

Making the linkage work

- NEP 2020's integration of vocational education from the school years is the right structural fix: skill should not begin only after dropout.
- Apprenticeship under the **Apprentices Act, 1961**, with stipend support, is the proven link because the workplace teaches what the classroom cannot.
- Outcome funding - payment to trainers for placement and surviving wage, not for enrolment - aligns **Skill India** with employment.
- Portable social security and the e-Shram database help informal workers re-enter training without losing identity.
- District industry-ITI-college clusters, rather than parallel missions, close the last-mile match.

Flow diagram

Education NEP foundations -> Skill PMKVY ITI
Skill PMKVY ITI -> Apprenticeship
Apprenticeship -> Employment wage
Firm demand -> Employment wage
Short certificates weak learning -> Skill PMKVY ITI

Conclusion

Skill programmes have expanded certified supply, but education, skill and employment link only when foundations, apprenticeship and real vacancies move together. Certificates without NEP-level schooling and without employer demand are a stock of paper, not a labour market.

Facts & figures

National Education Policy, 2020

Seeks to integrate vocational education into schools and higher education with multiple entry and exit.

Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana

Flagship short-term skill certification and Recognition of Prior Learning scheme.

Skill India Mission / National Skill Development Mission

Umbrella for PMKVY, apprenticeships, ITIs and Sector Skill Councils.

Apprentices Act, 1961

Statutory apprenticeship in designated trades; later amendments and the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme expanded stipend support.

National Skills Qualifications Framework

Level-based skill standards intended to make certificates comparable across sectors and with education levels.

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