



Changing Youth Concerns and Aspirations

For Prelims: [Youth in India 2022 Report](#), [Y20 Summit](#), [Unemployment](#), [Agricultural productivity](#), [Demographic Dividend](#)

For Mains: Opportunities and Challenges Related to Youth Population in India

Source: IE

Why in News?

In the ever-evolving landscape of youth concerns and aspirations, a recent survey conducted by **Lokniti-CSDS** across 18 states in India sheds light on the **shifting priorities of the young population**.

- The survey highlights the **rising prominence of unemployment and price rise as pressing issues**, the intersection of these concerns with **economic classes and gender**, and the **evolving preferences in job aspirations**.

What are the Major Highlights of the Survey?

- **Unemployment, Price Rise and Gender Disparity:**
 - A **7% point increase** in the share of respondents **identifying price rise as a primary concern**.
 - **40% of highly educated respondents** (graduate and above) pointing to **unemployment as their most pressing concern**.
 - **27% of non-literate individuals** expressed concern about unemployment, attributed to their flexibility in undertaking various job opportunities.
 - Poverty and price rise emerged as more prominent issues for young women, regardless of their economic background.
- **Occupational Diversity: Insights into Youth Employment:**
 - Almost half (49%) of the respondents were engaged in some form of work.
 - 40% held full-time jobs, while 9% worked part-time.
 - 23% of employed youth were self-employed, showcasing a significant entrepreneurial inclination.
 - Professions such as doctors and engineers constituted 16% of the workforce.
 - Agriculture and skilled labor comprised 15% and 27% respectively.
- **Job Aspirations and Preferences:**
 - **16%** of respondents expressed a preference for jobs in the **health sector**.
 - The education sector was the second most preferred, chosen by **14% of youth**.
 - Science and technology-related jobs, along with starting their own businesses, garnered 10% support each.
 - Government jobs continued to hold allure, with **60% of respondents opting for them when given a choice between a government job, a private job, or starting their own business**.

- The **preference for self-employment has grown steadily from 16% in 2007 to 27% in 2023**, indicating an increasing entrepreneurial inclination among the youth.

What are the Opportunities and Challenges Related to Youth Population in India?

- **Status of Youth Population: India** has more than **50% of its population below the age of 25** and more than **65% below the age of 35**.
 - India is home to a **fifth of the world's youth demographic** and this population advantage could play a critical role in achieving the nation's ambitious target to become a **USD 5 trillion economy**.

Note: There is no universally agreed international definition of the youth age group. In India, as per [National Youth Policy 2014](#), the persons between the age group of **15 and 29 years are considered youth**. Several UN entities, instruments, and regional organizations have differing definitions of youth:

Entity/Instrument/ Organization	Age (years)
UN Secretariat/UNESCO/ILO	Youth: 15–24
UN Habitat (Youth Fund)	Youth: 15–32
UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA	Adolescent: 10–19 Young people: 10–24 Youth: 15–24
UNICEF/ The Convention on Rights of the Child	Child under 18
The African Youth Charter	Youth: 15–35

▪ Opportunities:

- **Human Capital Investment:** India's youth population is a potential demographic dividend, which means if harnessed correctly, it can **contribute significantly to economic growth**.
 - A youthful population provides an opportunity to focus on **education and skill development**, creating a highly skilled workforce that can meet the demands of various industries.
- **Innovation and Entrepreneurship:** The youth are often more **open to innovation, new technologies, and entrepreneurship**.
 - They can drive the development of new industries and start-ups, fostering economic diversification.
 - Also, with a significant portion of India's population engaged in agriculture, youth involvement in modernizing and optimizing farming practices through technology and sustainable methods **can lead to increased agricultural productivity**.
- **Digital Connectivity:** India's youth are **tech-savvy** and can play a crucial role in **adopting and promoting digital technologies**, contributing to the growth of the digital economy.
- **Social Change and Activism:** Young people are often at the forefront of **social and political change**.
 - They can **drive positive social movements, advocate for change, and raise awareness** about critical issues.

▪ Challenges:

- **Underemployment and Skill Mismatch:** While unemployment is often discussed, **underemployment and skill mismatch are equally pressing issues**. Many young Indians find jobs that are below their skill levels or do not align with their education.
 - This not only leads to dissatisfaction but also hampers productivity and economic growth.
- **Mental Health and Stigma:** [Mental health](#) problems among the youth are on the rise, yet

there is a significant stigma associated with seeking help.

- This stigma is **deeply ingrained in Indian society** and can discourage young people from accessing proper care.
- **Digital Divide within Youth:** While India has a large and growing youth population, access to digital technology is still uneven.
 - This digital divide creates **disparities in education, employment opportunities**, and access to information.
- **Gender Inequality and Traditional Norms:** Despite progress, gender inequality remains a significant concern.
 - Traditional norms and patriarchal attitudes persist, affecting young **women's education, employment, and agency**.
- **Political Apathy and Youth Representation:** Despite comprising a substantial portion of the population, the youth in India often feel disconnected from the **political process**.
 - This leads to **inadequate representation of their concerns and aspirations**.

What are the Government Schemes Related to Youth?

- [Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana](#)
- [YUVA: Prime Minister's Scheme For Mentoring Young Authors](#)
- [Integrated Child Development Services \(ICDS\) Scheme](#)
- [National Youth Policy-2014](#)
- [National Skill Development Corporation](#)
- [Rashtriya Yuva Sashaktikaran Karyakram Scheme](#)

Way Forward

- **Integrated Skill Ecosystem:** There is a need to **develop a comprehensive skill ecosystem** that combines formal education with experiential learning, apprenticeships, and online platforms.
 - This can bridge the gap between **theoretical knowledge and practical skills**, enhancing employability.
- **Gamified Civic Engagement Platforms:** Develop gamified mobile applications that engage youth in civic activities and political processes.
 - By turning civic participation into an interactive and rewarding experience, these platforms can encourage **more informed voting, increase political awareness, and foster a sense of ownership in governance**.
- **Entrepreneurship in Traditional Crafts:** Foster entrepreneurship among young artisans by combining traditional crafts with modern design and marketing techniques.
 - This could involve **creating platforms for selling handcrafted products online**, preserving cultural heritage while generating income for youth in rural areas.
- **Youth Diplomacy and Cultural Exchanges:** Facilitate cultural exchanges between young people from India and other countries to foster global understanding, diplomacy, and cross-border friendships.
 - [The Y20 Summit](#) can facilitate this.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Q. Disguised unemployment generally means (2013)

- (a) large number of people remain unemployed
- (b) alternative employment is not available
- (c) marginal productivity of labour is zero
- (d) productivity of workers is low

Ans: (c)

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