

# Pressing Challenges for India's Youth

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**Context** - A recent report released by Lokniti-CSDS has unveiled significant insights into the perspectives of India's youth, aged 15 to 34, regarding the most pressing challenges confronting the nation.

The Lokniti-CSDS report provides a comprehensive insight into the concerns and preferences of Indian youth, shedding light on their perception of the country's key challenges and their aspirations for the future. The report, conducted across 18 states with a sample size of 9,316 respondents, reveals a comprehensive picture of the concerns, hopes, and choices of India's young population.

## Findings of the Report

### Unemployment

- 36% of the surveyed youth view unemployment as the most critical challenge facing India.
- This represents an increase of 18 percentage points since the previous survey in 2016.
- 40% of highly educated respondents, including graduates and those with advanced degrees, identify unemployment as the most pressing issue.

## Other Concerns

- 16% of respondents expressed concerns about poverty.
- 13% highlight inflation as a major challenge.
- Gender plays a role: 42% of males compared to 31% of females see unemployment as their top concern.

## Occupational Diversity

- About 49% of the surveyed youth are currently engaged in some form of work.
- Among those working, 23% are self-employed, indicating an entrepreneurial inclination.
- Various sectors are represented: 16% are professionals, 15% are engaged in agriculture, and 27% are skilled or semi-skilled workers. Only 6% are employed in government jobs.

## Significance of Youth between 15-34 Years

- **Demographic Powerhouse:** The youth aged 15 to 34 constitute a considerable 34% of India's population, making it a demographic powerhouse. With over 40 crore individuals, their collective influence is significant in determining societal trends, economic patterns, and policy priorities.
- **Human Capital Reservoir:** This age group forms the core of India's human capital reservoir. Their energy, creativity, and potential can drive the nation's progress across various sectors. The report's insights highlight the youth's aspirations, which, if harnessed, can contribute to the nation's growth.
- **Agents of Change:** As the report suggests, the youth possess a dynamic outlook and are open to exploring diverse career paths. Their adaptability and willingness to embrace new opportunities position them as agents of change, capable of shaping industries and driving innovation.
- **Future Workforce:** This age range encompasses individuals in different stages of education and employment preparation. Their choices and preferences, as illuminated by the report, offer insights into the future composition of India's workforce, guiding policy decisions and skill development initiatives.

## Measures to address Youth Concerns

- **Targeted Employment Generation:** Address the rising concern of unemployment by implementing policies that stimulate job creation across sectors. Encourage public-private partnerships to create diverse and suitable job opportunities for educated youth.
- **Inclusive Economic Policies:** Formulate and execute inclusive economic policies that uplift marginalized sections of society. Tackling poverty and controlling inflation will directly alleviate concerns among youth from lower economic backgrounds.
- **Gender-Responsive Initiatives:** Develop gender-specific initiatives to provide equal opportunities for education and employment. Empower young women with skills and education to bridge the gender gap in the job market.

- **Education Reforms:** Align educational curricula with the aspirations of youth. Promote practical skills alongside traditional academic subjects, enabling them to pursue careers that resonate with their interests.
- **Fostering Entrepreneurial Ecosystems:** Establish supportive ecosystems for entrepreneurship. Offer mentorship, funding, and regulatory frameworks that encourage young individuals to embark on entrepreneurial ventures.

## Conclusion

The prominence of unemployment as a pressing issue underscores the need for focused efforts to address this concern, especially among educated youth. As the nation strives to harness the potential of its youth population, understanding their viewpoints and preferences becomes essential for shaping policies and initiatives that align with their aspirations and drive sustainable growth.