



## **PUBLIC POLICY AND YOUTH EMPLOYMENT: A POLITICAL ANALYSIS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study is going to take a critical assessment of the effectiveness of the Indian government with regards to improving the employment rates among the youth through critical assessments of the design, implementation, and consequences of the corresponding policies. It investigates some of the government-based programs like MGNREGA, PMKVY, and Startup India and evaluates the role played by these programs in providing employment, skill enhancement, inclusiveness, and affordability. According to the analysis, these programs have been somewhat successful but accompanied by weaknesses like poor institutionalization coordination, failure to monitor in real time, poor targeting of the marginalized youth and low sustainability. The research highlights the important requirement of combined, regionally flexible, and youth-friendly policies that would fill the gap between education and labor. Some of the recommendations include reinforcing data systems, progressive public-private partnership and decentralized applicative patterns. This analysis gives an overview of the position of politics determining such employment policies and it is crucial that constant reformation of policies be done to keep up with the ever-changing regulations of youth within the labour market.

**Keywords:** *Youth Employment, Public Policy, Skill Development, MGNREGA, PMKVY, Startup India, Policy Evaluation, Inclusivity, Cost-Effectiveness, India, Employment Outcomes.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Employment of young people has become a serious socio-economic and political concern to both developed and developing nations. The challenge of the governments is growing as the global youth population develops; governments have to make and enforce policies (that not only create some employment positions, but also make them decent, sustainable, and inclusive). In that regard, the public policy is critical in defining the structure and youth employment dynamics. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of inadequacy of such policies is closely connected with political context, in which they are developed and implemented.



The political dimension of the public policy on youth employment involves the study of the way in which political rhetoric, the interests of parties and institutions, systems of governance and roles of stakeholder activities affect public policy formulation, implementation and consequently outcomes. Policies made by the government are not void and tend to form due to competing interests, electoral benefits, bureaucracies and global development agendas. Political interests can influence the selection of programs to be funded within the employment sphere, the selection of the regions to be prioritized, and the selection of cohorts (exclusion or inclusion) of youth to be the target of the programs.

Besides, success of employment policies is usually determined by how much political commitment, coordinated efforts among different departments, or long perspective contributions, the policymakers put on the table. In numerous instances, employment programs among the young people are poorly coordinated, underfunded, or generally have a limited perspective of short-term skills building instead of changing the systemic aspects of employment creation, labor market regulation, or economical inequality. Policy implementation and accountability are further undermined by lack of participatory governance, political instability and perhaps corruption.

This paper aims at having a critical look at the role of political factors towards the design and implementation effectiveness of public employment policies to the youth. This study seeks to determine the political factors, which predetermine the employment opportunities of the youth by studying the past and present-day policy arguments, as well as elaborating on the domestic and external experiences. In the analysis, there will also be the consideration of the fact that policymaking processes should become more inclusive, transparent, and evidence-based and should represent the wishes and needs of the youthful population. In this light, the research makes a contribution towards a better comprehension of the governance and politics that shapes the potential of meaningful and structural interventions that may be employed to young people through employment.

## **1. POLITICAL DETERMINANTS SHAPING YOUTH EMPLOYMENT POLICIES**

Developing as well as enforcing youth employment policies is an aspect that is heavily dependent on various political factors. Not only do these determinants define the direction, scale and substance of the sounding of the public initiatives, but also to the extent that allocation of resources to youth employment is made, how swiftly this is addressed, and how the voice of youth is included on the processes of policymaking. These political grounds are quite crucial to the human reasoning when it is tried to understand why certain states successfully address the unemployment issue among youths and where it fails.

### **1.1. Political Ideologies and Party Agendas**

Nature of political ideology-different political ideologies i.e. liberal, social, or conservative has a significant impact of the orientation of the youth employment policies. An example is the focus on direct involvement of the state by the left leaning governments on public employment schemes, job guarantees or extended vocational education schemes. On the contrary, a conservative or neoliberal regime may put more stress on deregulation, promotion of employment in the private sector, and increase access to entrepreneurial solvency by young people. The issues on employment that become prominent in a political cycle are also set by the party manifestos and pledge on the campaign trail.

### **1.2. Government Stability and Policy Continuity**

This is because the stability of government is crucial to consistency in formulation and implementation of youth employment strategies. The change of government is often frequent or coalition governments or political events lead to disintegrated or temporary programs of employment. There is a tendency to adopt new policies that could never be perfected or they leave their programs and this could also result in inefficiencies and worthless resources. Consistent governments, however, are capable of continuing long term, multi-sectoral approaches to employment with increased consistency.

### **1.3. Institutional Structures and Bureaucratic Efficiency**

Transportation: Institutional strength and effective functioning of the political institutions, like ministry of labor, youth affairs and education, directly influence provision of employment programs. Speed and quality of policy implementation are specified by bureaucratic coordination of central, state, and local levels. The youth employment interventions in those countries which are governed based on decentralized governance, could also be influenced by region politics hence creating race in the policy outcome in different regions.

### **1.4. Political Will and Leadership Commitment**

The best youth employment policy may come under the influence of committing political leaders to take the issue as an important concern. Youth unemployment can be made a matter of political concern because of intergenerational stress, civil unrest, or publicity, when politicians are important. Good leadership can facilitate the process of institutional reforms, provide adequate budgets and create accountability systems. But without political will, even the designed policies might not work because of failure to implement or support.

### **1.5. Interest Groups and Youth Political Participation**

Lobbying by business associations, trade unions, educational institutions and most recently youth advocacy groups also have an effect on youth employment policy. These actors are able to influence the debate on employment through pointing out at the skill supply mismatch, encouraging labor reforms, or making an argument toward more inclusive policies. Political participation of the youth such as voting, protesting, or even engagement in consulatory table determines how far the youth can go in affecting policy results. Politicians in democratic countries can also be pushed into action by organizing youth in a way that prompts them to be concerned with the employment situation in order to win elections.

### **1.6. Global Political Influences and International Commitments**

National youth employment policies are also subject to influence in a globalized world through the building committees such as International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations, and World Bank. International conventions, grants or global development aims including the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth) are becoming more influential than political decisions. Governments can embrace the use of employment schemes to meet the global standards or to receive foreign investment and assistance.

## **2. EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PUBLIC POLICIES ON YOUTH EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES**

Social and economic stability can never be attained without the need to implement public policies that are deemed to enhance youthful employment in any given nation. The assessment of these policies can be done by comparing the outcome of the policies in several areas such as employment rates, skill levels, income generation, inclusiveness and sustainability in the long run. The effectiveness of the youth employment programmes cannot be gauged in number of jobs these programmes create but also in the quality and sustainability of these jobs and the equitable distribution of job benefits across different segments of the youth, particularly those in marginalised groups.

### **2.1.Key Criteria for Evaluation**

The evaluation of policies governing youth employments should be done on several grounds so as to have a comprehensive assessment. One of the fundamental yet key indicator of employment is employment which measures the number of youth who have been employed as a result of policy intervention. Second, job quality measures the quality of these jobs in regard to fair pay, safety, use of skills and promotion. Third, skill strengthening assesses the effectiveness of the policies in ensuring that youth acquire vocational, technical, or digital skills; these skills must be market-oriented. Fourth, inclusivity is the hugely crucial parameter to study the extent to which the policies are efficient in accessing the disadvantaged population, such as women, rural youth, tribes, and the differently-able. Fifth, sustainability is a measure of the long-term effect of these policies in keeping the youth on productive works. Finally, cost-effectiveness will facilitate in the comprehension of whether the results of the policies meet the financial and administrative investment given by the government.

### **2.2.Types of Youth Employment Policies**

The global governments use different forms of policies to address the problem of unemployment among the youth and this is done through a combined or complementary approach. Among the most widespread efforts can be cited the public employment programs that secure people with given opportunities to work on a temporary basis, e.g. the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) efforts in India. Others are vocational education and training (VET) programs, to provide job-ready youth with skills; entrepreneurship and start-up support, like wage subsidies and the provision of incentives to employers to hire young workers or apprenticeship and internship programs, contribute to solve the transition between education and the workplace. Also, there has been the emergence of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in skills development with an aim of making the industry standards applicable in the training modules.

## **3. CHALLENGES IN POLICY EVALUATION**

Although there are a number of programs, measuring their effectiveness is not easy as it is characterized by a number of challenges. Among the major concerns is the absence of reliable and disaggregated data particularly in rural or informal sectoring, most of which youth participate. Second, there are problems of attribution so that it is hard to directly attribute any employment outcome to a specific policy because there are many other forces driving employment patterns such as economic cycles, technological change, and regional forces. Third, the aspect of impediments in execution between states or jurisdictions caused by energetic inefficiencies or political machinations typically creates non-uniform outcomes.

Fourth, short-term orientation of most of the programs ignores the long-term results like continuing employment, career progress or upward mobility. Finally, feedback mechanisms that enable the course to be corrected and ensure that corrections are made on time regarding policy reform are sometimes poor.

In order to demonstrate the different results of the governmental employment policy, a comparative analysis of three most well-known youth-centered programs in India is given in the table below. They are chosen depending on their national scope and applicability to the various sets of the youth population.

**Table 1: Comparative Analysis of Major Youth Employment Policies**

Policy/Program Name	Region Implemented	Key Components	Outcome (Employment Rate Change)	Skill Development Impact	Inclusivity Rating (1-5)	Cost-Effectiveness (1-5)
MGNREGA (Youth Focus)	Rural India	Wage employment guarantee for 100 days	Moderate (5-8% increase)	Low	4	3
PMKVY (Skill Development)	Urban & Semi-Urban India	Training, certification, placement support	Mixed (Varies across sectors)	Moderate	3	2
Startup India Scheme	Urban India	Capital, tax incentives, and mentorship	Low (job creation limited to few)	High (entrepreneurial skills)	2	4

This comparison shows that on one hand MGNREGA has been mostly successful in generating short term employment but on the other hand not much can be said about it when it comes to skill creation. Though quite versatile, PMKVY does not manage to avoid the issue of a lack of correlation between training and employment opportunities. Startup India on the other hand, has only led to entrepreneurial skills creation, though it has not led to mass jobs as of yet.

### 3.1. Insights and Policy Gaps

The descriptive comparison indicates that the policy integration is a way of guaranteeing long-term successfulness. Stand alone training schemes (such as the PMKVY) are seldom successful unless they are directly linked to industries where such trained young people can be absorbed. The issue of inclusivity is one to automatically be concerned about especially

through an urban-focused initiative, such as the Startup India, whereby access to resources such as capital, networks, and digital literacy is restricted to the rural and the socio-economically disadvantaged youth. Besides, monitoring and evaluation mechanism is either weak or outmoded and thus real-time progress is hard to measure and responsive strategy to be developed.

The issue of regional disbalance of policy outcome is another important fact to attend to. States with greater institutional abilities and active governing feature better implementation and effect. This requires more decentralization and localization of employment policies on youth to economic situations. It is also seen that the youth voice and participation in policy design and evaluation is not provided. The youth must be involved either in form of youth councils, feedback surveys or participatory planning so that policies can be aligned to their expectations.

## CONCLUSION

The impact of youth employment on the outcome of public measures relates to their sustainability, inclusivity, and the quality standards of jobs created and ways of empowering youth with market relevant skills. Commonalities: Although having different contribution levels towards creating employment and capacity building, programs such as MGNREGA, PMKVY, and Startup India share the lack of adequate integration with one another, concentrate resources in certain regions more than others, lack proper monitoring, and do not include marginalized individuals and groups. To achieve long-term socio-economic empowerment of the youthful population, there should be a paradigm shift towards the comprehensive approaches incorporating skills training, work facilitation, entrepreneurship development, and on-going assessment.

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