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## Skill Universities: A Sustainable Solution to Bridging the Gap Between Education and Employment in the Modern Workforce



### HIGHLIGHTS

India's economic growth trajectory faces headwinds, with unemployment emerging as a critical challenge to its development aspirations.

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### Article Content:

India's economic growth trajectory faces headwinds, with unemployment emerging as a critical challenge to its development aspirations. The Economic Survey 2023-24 sounds a warning note with a striking disparity: that only 51.25% of graduates are deemed employable. Meanwhile, data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) reveals an alarming unemployment rate of 44.49% among individuals aged 20–24 as of early 2024. Approximately 16% of urban youth aged 15–29 were unemployed during 2022–23, driven by a dual challenge—a mismatch in skills and a persistent shortage of quality job opportunities.

India's traditional educational system faces a significant challenge of preparing students for the demands of a technologically advanced and skilled workforce. To address this gap, the concept of skill universities has emerged as a transformative approach to higher education. Skill universities are specialised institutions established to bridge the divide between traditional education and the practical skills demanded by the job market. In contrast to conventional universities, which often prioritise theoretical knowledge, skill universities strive to equip students with the essential skills and competencies for immediate employability. The National Skills Universities Bill of 2015, by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, marked the beginning of this new educational paradigm.

### Challenges and Variability in Outcomes

Despite the promising outlook, not all vocational universities have realised the anticipated outcomes. Unlike acceptance of technical and vocational training in some other countries like Germany, Singapore, Korea to name a few, public perception about vocational education as a

viable alternative to academic university education still needs to find a foothold in India. Probably as we see an increase of jobs, better infrastructure, standardisation, uniform training quality, relevance of programmes, placement cells, alignment with the NCRF and credits, ranking of Skill Universities, and involvement of industry in training and design of curricula, then we can hope for a more credible impression and impact of Skill Universities, to guarantee their capacity to prepare a proficient and employable workforce for the future.

In conclusion, the success of skill universities is not just about individual career prospects but also about India's economic development. By fostering a skilled workforce equipped with relevant competencies, these institutions can significantly enhance employability rates, reduce unemployment, and promote entrepreneurship. The potential of skill universities to contribute to India's economic growth is immense, and it is time for a collaborative effort from government, industry, and educational institutions to ensure that these institutions achieve their intended outcomes and contribute to India's growth and prosperity.