

Vocational training for women: from gender divide perspective

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National skill development council aims to skill 150M Indians by 2022. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, launched his campaign "Skill India" in July 2015, emphasizing on the need for greater skill development efforts. The renewed and stronger focus on skill development, visible through several government and non-government efforts highlights the growing importance of skill development, especially in today's context. This [report](#) tries to address the skill development need for a deeply neglected yet willing segment of the society - rural women. By taking the example of 2 states - Kerala and Assam - it elaborates on the situation, inclination & preferences of the rural women, discusses the emerging insights and suggests implementable solutions. It also emphasizes on developing tailored region specific solutions which take into consideration various demographic and cultural factors.

The below given article is an introductory excerpt from the report...

India witnesses an entrenched gender divide wherein the patriarchal prevalence often subsumes and even neglects the interests of its female population. Despite our struggle to modernise mind-sets and ameliorate the position of women in our country, they continue to be deprived of rudimentary amenities like education, sanitation, safety and most pertinently: a sustainable income. Nearly 70% of India's population qualifies as rural, amongst whom this patriarchal mind-set is all the more prevalent. Though measures like reservations in local governments and SHGs have gone a long way towards the cause of rural women, we are still a long way from equity especially in the economic and employment sphere. According to the 2011 Census of India, the workforce participation rate for females was 25.51% as opposed to the 53.26% for males; hence validating the existence of a lopsided ratio of women who are perhaps bound by household duties and tradition. Given the burgeoning gender disparity and alarming decline in female workforce participation rate, it is important to understand rural women's current education/employment situation and identify skill development opportunities, given the education, cultural and social constraints.

It is shocking that the problem of unemployment exists amongst the uneducated populace almost as much as it does amongst the educated. 'Disguised unemployment' and 'educated underemployment' are fast-prevailing terms that help us realise that formal education may be a well-suited mission for a younger female demographic, however older women need employment more than they need a degree. Conventionally, education is viewed as a means to achieve employment, but in the current context the means does not necessarily guarantee the end. Ergo at this point, it is fundamental to transcend beyond conventional education into the realm of vocational education in order to empower these women. Furthermore, vocational training acts as an answer to the problems of the educated as well as the uneducated female population. A rural woman's most urgent requirement is to earn a livelihood substantive enough to meet household needs. Learning an income-enhancing/income-generating skill will financially ameliorate these women more effectively and expeditiously than earning a degree. Therefore, vocational education emerges as a highly pragmatic approach to tackling the problem of unemployment and underemployment amongst our chosen demographic.

[Read more by accessing the full [report](#) here]

Link: <https://vocationaltrainingforwomen.files.wordpress.com/2016/02/vocational-training-for-women.pdf>