

Editorial

India is experiencing one of the most significant demographic transformations in the world. With nearly two-thirds of its population in the working-age group, the country possesses an unprecedented opportunity to harness its demographic dividend. However, the realization of this potential depends not only on the availability of employment but also on the awareness and preparedness of young people to navigate an increasingly dynamic labour market. In this context, the role of parents as the primary career influencers has become more critical than ever. Unfortunately, a considerable gap persists between parents' understanding of contemporary employment opportunities and the aspirations of their children. Addressing this knowledge gap is essential for building a skilled, confident, and globally competitive workforce. Traditionally, Indian parents have viewed career success through the lens of a limited number of professions such as medicine, engineering, civil services, law, banking, and teaching. These occupations undoubtedly remain prestigious and rewarding, but the employment landscape has changed dramatically over the past two decades. Technological advancement, digitalization, globalization, artificial intelligence, renewable energy, biotechnology, financial technology, creative industries, sports management, data analytics, cybersecurity, digital marketing, logistics, and entrepreneurship have created thousands of new career avenues that did not exist a generation ago. Yet many parents remain unfamiliar with these emerging sectors, often guiding their children based on outdated perceptions of job security rather than current labour market realities. The consequences of inadequate parent-child knowledge exposure are far-reaching. Many students choose academic streams or professional courses without sufficient understanding of their interests, aptitude, or employment prospects. Decisions are frequently influenced by social prestige, peer comparison, or parental expectations instead of informed career planning. As a result, graduates often encounter skill mismatches, dissatisfaction, unemployment, or underemployment despite possessing formal educational qualifications. The growing number of degree holders struggling to find suitable employment illustrates that educational attainment alone is insufficient without career awareness and market-oriented skills. The rapid evolution of India's employment ecosystem further emphasizes the need for continuous learning within families. Government initiatives such as Skill India, Digital India, Startup India, Make in India, PM Kaushal Vikas Yojana, National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, and the National Career Service have expanded opportunities for skill development and employment generation. Simultaneously, private industries increasingly prioritize competencies such as problem-solving, communication, digital literacy, critical thinking, creativity, teamwork, adaptability, and emotional intelligence over conventional academic scores alone. Parents who remain unaware of these changing expectations may unintentionally discourage children from pursuing careers aligned with future economic demands. Educational institutions bear a significant responsibility in strengthening parent-child career awareness. Schools and universities should organize regular career counselling programmes, parent orientation sessions, industry interaction workshops, alumni talk, internship fairs, and skill development seminars. Career guidance should begin during secondary education rather than after graduation, enabling students and parents to make informed academic choices. Collaboration among educational institutions, industries, government agencies, and career counsellors can create a comprehensive ecosystem where families receive reliable, updated information about employment trends.

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