

The Impact of Digital Economy on Youth Employment in India

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ABSTRACT

The digital economy in India is growing fast. It is helping to create jobs, especially for young people. New technologies, internet access and affordable phones along with government plans like Digital India are changing the way people work. Now many jobs are available online through platforms, e-commerce, freelancing, remote work and entrepreneurship.

This study looks at how the digital economy affects peoples jobs in India. It focuses on job opportunities, digital skills, income, career growth and the problems that young workers face. We used a research design and a quantitative approach to collect data from 55 people, including students, job seekers, freelancers, self-employed individuals and employed youth through a questionnaire. We also gathered data from research articles government reports and published literature.

The findings show that the digital economy is helping young people find jobs making it easier to search for jobs and encouraging self-employment and entrepreneurship. Most of the people we talked to said that digital skills, online professional networks and digital tools are important for getting and keeping a job. Young people are feeling optimistic about their career growth in Indias labour market. However there are still challenges like a lack of skills, access to digital infrastructure and job insecurity.

The study concludes that the digital economy is important for creating jobs and promoting inclusion. But its benefits are not evenly distributed. To ensure that young people have jobs we need to strengthen infrastructure improve access to quality digital education and training and develop policies that protect gig and platform workers. The research highlights the need for skill development and inclusive digital policies.

The digital economy has an impact on youth employment in India. Digital skills, online professional networks and digital tools are essential for employability and career prospects. Challenges like skill gaps, access to digital infrastructure and job insecurity need to be addressed. The digital economy plays a role in creating employment opportunities and promoting inclusion. To maximize its impact, on Indias youth workforce we need to focus on skills, infrastructure and inclusive policies. The digital economy is transforming employment patterns. Creating new opportunities through digital platforms. Digital skills are crucial for young people to get and keep a job in todays economy.

Keywords: Digital Economy, Youth Employment, Digital Skills, Gig Economy, Entrepreneurship, India.

INTRODUCTION

The digital economy is one of the largest-impacting and most influential forces of contemporary society and the world economy. Given the growth and proliferation of the internet across the world—and at an extraordinary rate in India with the introduction of digital technology, internet connectivity, smart devices, and internet service-based communication—India has executed digital transformation which has redefined the way business and employment operate within the country. Technology is being integrated into how businesses interact with each other; how they communicate; how they provide products and services; how they provide financial services; how they deliver educational services; and how they employ their respective workforces.

In this context, the relationship between the digital economy and youth employment becomes an increasingly important area for research and policy development as India has one of the largest youth populations in the world. The youth of India, like large segments of youth around the world, previously have had limited access to jobs and access to job-searching methods in traditional employment sectors (agriculture, manufacturing, retail trade, and government).

Traditionally, job searches were done by offline methods such as looking for jobs in newspapers, going through employment exchanges, recruiters and personal contacts. The number of jobs available to youth was geographically constrained and determined by their level of education and their access to information. Youth in rural areas experienced significant difficulty in securing jobs because of inadequate infrastructure, limited communications and minimal or no industrial development in rural areas. There was very little or no technology involved in generating any employment in India until recently.

However, the introduction of information technology and web-based services to India (1990's and early 2000's) started to alter the traditional approach. The development of the IT sector (mobile communications, e-commerce, etc.) affected business practices and employee practices. The Indian government initiated programs like Digital India, which encouraged the use of information technology through adding services like internet infrastructure; e-governance; e-payments; and using new technology to deliver new types of services, which acted to further promote information technology use. The availability of inexpensive smartphones and low-cost internet services has provided young people with access to digital connectivity and opportunities to engage in the overall growing digital economy.

Today, a large portion of the workforce in the digital economy is comprised of young Indians, and the digital economy continues to generate a substantial number of jobs. This includes all types of digital businesses (i.e., e-commerce sites; job search sites; freelancing apps; social media) that have changed the way people work and are employed. Young people are able to find employment in a range of digital roles (software development; digital marketing; creating content; online tutoring; app development; graphic design; data analysis; working independently as a delivery service; as freelance). The gig economy is really taking off. It is giving millions of young people the freedom to choose when they want to work. They can do this by using apps that help them find jobs in areas like driving people delivering food selling things online or doing other kinds of work.

The internet and technology are helping people in India start their businesses. Young people are using the internet and social media to create their companies. Online shopping and digital payment systems are making it easy for small businesses to reach customers over India without having to spend a lot of money. The gig economy and online shopping are changing the way people work and shop, in India.

Many new entrepreneurs can start their own businesses due to the current availability of online marketplaces. Furthermore, the reduction of barriers to market entry has incentivized innovation across all sectors of the economy. Digitalization has also helped to develop self-employment and start-up environments.

There are many ways that the digital economy is positively affecting demand for digital skills and technology knowledge. In order to succeed in today's job market, employers require their employees to have computer skills, communication skills, coding skills, data analysis skills, and digital marketing skills. Because of this, many youth are engaged in online courses, virtual training programs, and/or digital educational platforms to increase their employability. Digital education and skill development are now more accessible and flexible than they were before the pandemic due to online learning systems. Additionally, many industries are continuing to see an increase in remote work and virtual collaboration as more companies embrace these types of jobs.

Although there have been some positive developments in the digital economy, there are also a number of challenges related to youth employment in India that arise from the rapid growth of the digital sector. One of the most pressing issues is the "digital divide" between urban and rural populations, as many rural areas do not have sufficient access to quality technical education, reliable internet connections, or sufficient modern digital infrastructure. This lack of resources limits the opportunity of rural youth to take advantage of the digital economy's employment opportunities. In addition, people from economically disadvantaged backgrounds often do not have access to digital devices or to high-quality education or training that could prepare them for employment in the digital economy at all.

Job security also has a relationship to the digital economy. Gig jobs (temporary, flexible, and/or performance based) typically do not include a regular salary, health insurance, retirement benefits, and legal protections. Although some gig workers earn income through the platform, these workers do not have a guarantee of ongoing employment or long-term job security. Furthermore, rapid advances in technology and automation have created job displacement for some existing jobs, adding to the uncertainty of low-skilled workers in the future.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Digital Platforms' Influence on Employment & Job Search / Paul Novosad et al. (2024) (India) – concluded that access to digital platforms enhances job opportunities & job-search efficiency among young Indians through improved access to job opportunities. Nevertheless, due to unequal digital access & lack of technical training, the potential for young people in rural areas to benefit from employment is severely restricted. **World Employment and Social Outlook, ILO (2021)** – characterized the digital economy & gig platform economy as providing new types of work opportunity flexibility for youth in India, while at the same time identifying job insecurity, insufficient hours/wages & in availability of social protections for digitised workers are significant challenges for them. **"Coding, Digital Marketing, Data Analysis and AI skills have become essential in today's job market," as highlighted by Mahiboob Pasha (2023)** in his study on the significance of digital skilling to improve employability among our youth. He cites the synergistic effect between the Indian government's initiatives (Digital India and Skill India) by providing youth workers with a higher likelihood of finding, maintaining and advancing their employment status through the development of digital skill sets. Rural youth do not have access to digital education and they also lack the necessary infrastructure. This makes it tough for them to get jobs. Anushka Chaturvedi and Muzammil Hasan will be looking at this issue in 2025. They want to see how digital literacy affects the lives of people and their chances of getting a job. Digital skills are very important because they make young people more attractive to employers and help them do well in their careers. **Anushka Chaturvedi and Muzammil Hasan** also talk about the fact that not everyone has access to technology, especially young people who live in rural areas or are from low income families. Digital education is a. **Shampa Paul and Kaushalesh Lal (2020)** investigate the connection between technological advances and jobs. Their results show that while new opportunities are created for IT and service sector employment as a result of technological advancements, they also reduce demand for traditional manual work. They conclude that skilled workers have positive experiences with technological change. **Doumuanlal and Lalhriatpuii (2025)** investigate the digital divide and how it affects job-seeking behaviour of educated urban youth. The results indicate that digital literacy leads to greater access to job opportunities and makes searching for jobs online more efficient. In addition, digital literacy can help overcome some of the barriers faced by disadvantaged youth to find jobs; however, gaps in the availability of technology remain a barrier for them. A study conducted by **Doumuanlal and Lalhriatpuii (2025)** on the digital divide and job seeking behaviour among urban educated youth reveals that digital literacy enhances access to jobs and increases success in finding jobs online. However, the continuing disparity of access to technology remains a barrier for disadvantaged groups. In the work of **Orlando Ruthven (2026)**, the increase in platform-based entrepreneurship among unemployed youth in North India has been documented. The author indicates that there are flexible income opportunities through digital platforms (like e-commerce and resale apps). Nonetheless, inherent problems with unstable incomes and market competitiveness continue to be significant obstacles. In a recent editorial team commentary by **The Times of India (2025)**, the role of digital literacy is addressed as a key component of the future workforce in India. There will be increasing demand for sophisticated digital capabilities and continuous learning will be necessary to maintain currency in the workplace due to the evolving job market. In a study conducted by **R. Salas-Guerra (2021)**, it is noted that digital economic activity contributes to the economic growth of regions, primarily through productivity, innovation, and entrepreneurship. As digital infrastructure is improved, regions have experienced an increase in job creation and greater prosperity through economic development.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

PAST

In the youth employment in India was mainly dependent on traditional sectors such as Agriculture manufacturing and government jobs. limited access to technology, information, and skill development growth and career prospects for many young people.

PRESENT

At present the rapid growth of the digital economy has created new employment opportunities through online platforms e commerce, freelancing and gig work however challenges such as digital skills gaps unequal internet access job insecurity, and lack of social protection continue to affect youth employment in India

FUTURE

In the future, emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence automation and digital platforms are expected to Transform the labour market further. without adequate digital skills training and policy support many youth may face difficulties in adapting to changing employment requirement making it essential to study the impact of the digital economy on youth employment.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

- The digital economy is rapidly transforming employment opportunities for youth in India through digital platforms, online jobs, and entrepreneurship.
- It is important to understand how digital technologies influence youth employment, income generation, and career development.
- The study helps identify challenges such as digital skill gaps, job insecurity, and unequal access to digital resources.
- The findings can assist policymakers, educational institutions, and businesses in developing effective strategies for youth employment and skill development.
- The study contributes to understanding the role of the digital economy in promoting sustainable economic growth and employment generation in India.

OBJECTIVES

- To examine the impact of the digital economy on employment opportunities for youth in India.
- To analyze the role of digital skills in enhancing youth employability.
- To assess the influence of digital platforms on income generation and career development among youth.
- To identify the challenges and opportunities created by the digital economy for youth employment.

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study uses a Descriptive Research Design to look at how the digital economy affects jobs for people in India. The digital economy is a thing and we want to know how it affects young people who are looking for work. This design helps us understand how the digital economy is connected to the jobs that're available to young people. We can. Look at data about what young people think and feel about working in the digital economy.

Research Approach

We are using a Quantitative Research Approach for this study. We collect information from people by asking them questions on a form that uses a five-point scale to measure their answers. This approach helps us measure what people think and feel about the economy and jobs. We can use numbers and statistics to look at the information and come to some conclusions. We might use things like percentages and averages to understand the information. We can also look at how thingsre related to each other and use special tools like correlation and regression analysis to make sense of the information. The digital economy and youth employment in India is what we are really interested, in. This approach helps us learn more about it.

Sources of Data Collection

Primary Data

The primary data is the information that we get directly from the people we ask. For this study we will get the data by asking people questions using a special list with five points. We will ask people between 18 and 35 years old from different schools and jobs in India.

Secondary Data

We will also get information from places like research papers, books, government reports, newspapers, websites and papers from meetings. We will get this information from organizations, like the International Labour Organization, NITI Aayog, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and other groups that have information.

Sample Size

We will ask 50 people to be part of this study. These people will be Indians who have jobs work for themselves do freelance work are looking for jobs or are still studying.

Sampling Technique

We will use a method called Convenience Sampling Technique to choose the people we ask. This method is used when we cannot ask everyone so we ask people who're easy to reach and willing to help. We use this method because we do not have a lot of time and money and it helps us get the information we need from the people we want to talk to.

Limitations of the Study

1. Our study only includes 50 people so it may not show what all young people in India think and feel.
2. We collected information directly from people through questionnaires. The results are only as good, as the answers we got which depend on people being honest and understanding the questions.

Hypothesis Testing

I want to talk about Hypothesis Testing. Hypothesis Testing is a way to check if what we think is true really is. We use Hypothesis Testing to see if two things are connected. For example in this study we used Hypothesis Testing to look at how the digital economy affects people getting jobs in India. We asked people some questions. Got a lot of information from them. Then we looked at all the information we got. After that we decided if our idea, which is called the hypothesis is right or wrong. We do this by using Hypothesis Testing to figure out if we should say yes or no to our idea. In terms Hypothesis Testing helps us make a decision, about our research question.

Null Hypothesis

The digital economy does not have an impact on youth employment in India.

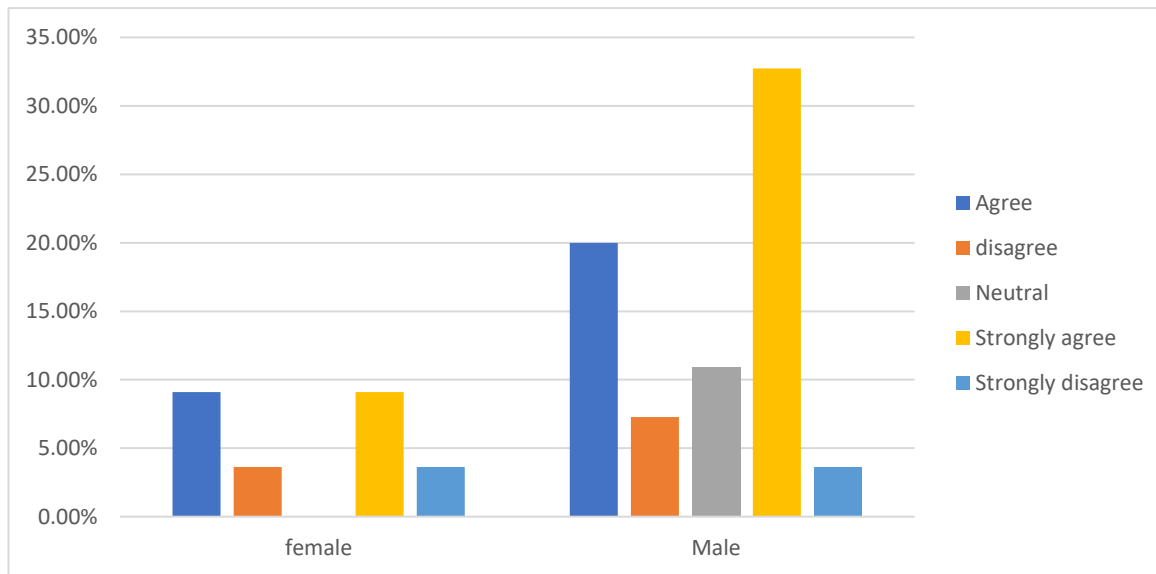
Alternative Hypothesis

The digital economy has an impact on youth employment, in India.

TABEL :- 01

1. Age Group	have reliable, high-speed internet access and the necessary digital devices required to work or look for jobs daily.			
Row Labels	Agree	Neutral	Strongly Agree	Grand Total
female	16.67%	8.33%	0.00%	25.00%
Male	33.33%	33.33%	8.33%	75.00%
Grand Total	50.00%	41.67%	8.33%	100.00%

Analysis - Most people (58.33%) said they have internet and devices to work or look for a job. Most of the people in the sample were men (75%). They agreed more than women that they have what they need. 42% Of people didn't have an opinion, which means most people have what they need to work or find a job, on the computer.



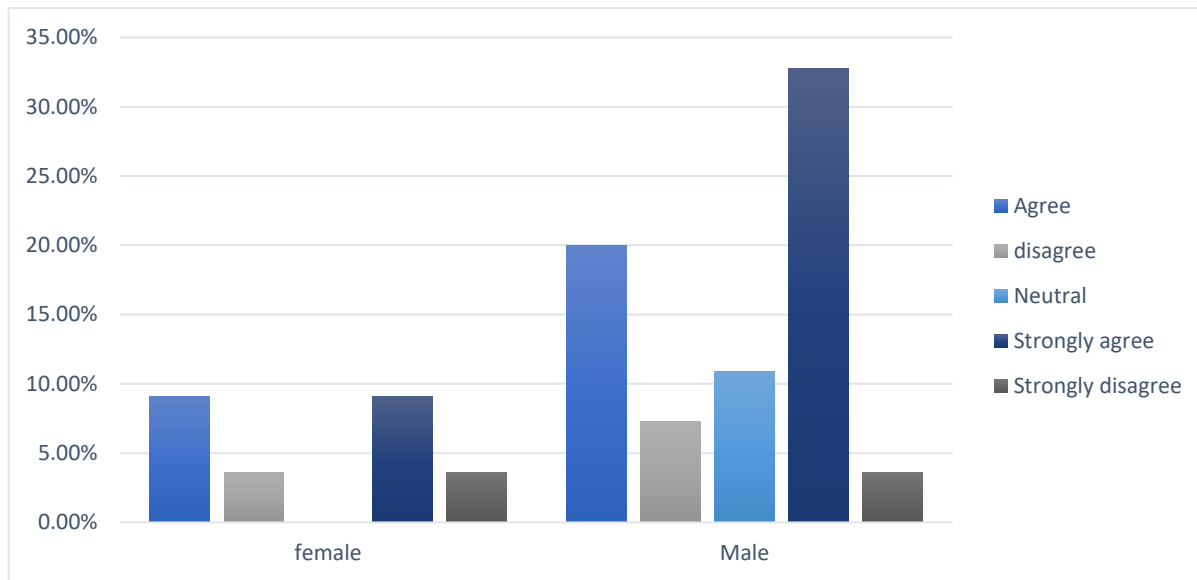
Interpretation: The chart tells us that most people think they have internet and the right devices to do their job or look for work. Men said this the most, with 33.33 percent saying they agree and 33.33 percent saying they are not sure and 8.33 percent saying they strongly agree. Women did not say this much with 16.67 percent saying they agree and 8.33 percent saying they are not sure. So digital accessibility is pretty good, for people.

TABEL :- 02

1. Age Group	Digital platform jobs offer sustainable financial income compared to traditional jobs					
Row Labels	Agree	Disagree	Neutral	Strongly agree	strongly disagree	Grand Total
female	9.09%	5.45%	3.64%	5.45%	1.82%	25.45%
Male	30.91%	0.00%	16.36%	16.36%	10.91%	74.55%
Grand Total	40.00%	5.45%	20.00%	21.82%	12.73%	100.00%

Analysis

Most people think that jobs on platforms can give them a steady income. Sixty one point eight two percent of the people asked said they agree or strongly agree that these jobs are better than jobs when it comes to making money. Some people were not sure twenty percent of them did not have an opinion. Eighteen point one eight percent of the people asked did not think that jobs on platforms are good for making money. Men were more likely to think that jobs on platforms are a good thing. Thirty point nine one percent of the men. Sixteen point three six percent of the men really agreed that these jobs are good. This means that men think digital platform jobs are an idea more than women do. Digital platform jobs are seen in a positive way, by men.



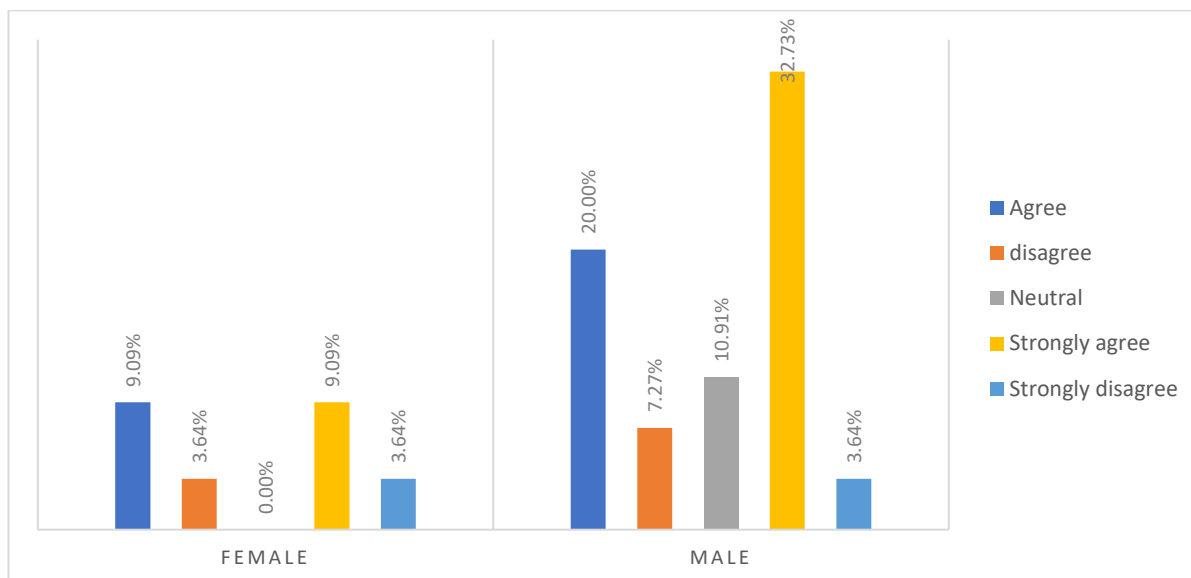
Interpretation

People think that digital platform jobs are a way to make money that will last. More people had things to say about digital platform jobs than bad things. This shows that people believe they can make an income from these jobs.. Some people are not so sure about digital platform jobs. They are not certain if these jobs will provide an income in the long term. Digital platform jobs are still a question mark, for these people.

1. Age Group	The expansion of the digital economy has significantly increased the number of job opportunities available to me.					
Row Labels	Agree	Disagree	Neutral	strongly disagree	(blank)	Grand Total
female	5.45%	3.64%	12.73%	3.64%	0.00%	25.45%
Male	14.55%	7.27%	36.36%	14.55%	1.82%	74.55%
Grand Total	20.00%	10.91%	49.09%	18.18%	1.82%	100.00%

Analysis

Most people, forty nine percent did not have an opinion about whether the digital economy has created jobs for them. Twenty percent of people thought that the digital economy has increased job opportunities for them. Twenty nine percent of people did not think so. This shows that people have ideas about how the digital economy affects jobs. The digital economy is still a topic of discussion. Men made up a part of the people who responded and most of them thirty six percent were neutral about the digital economy. The digital economy is something that affects everyone and people have thoughts, about the digital economy and jobs..

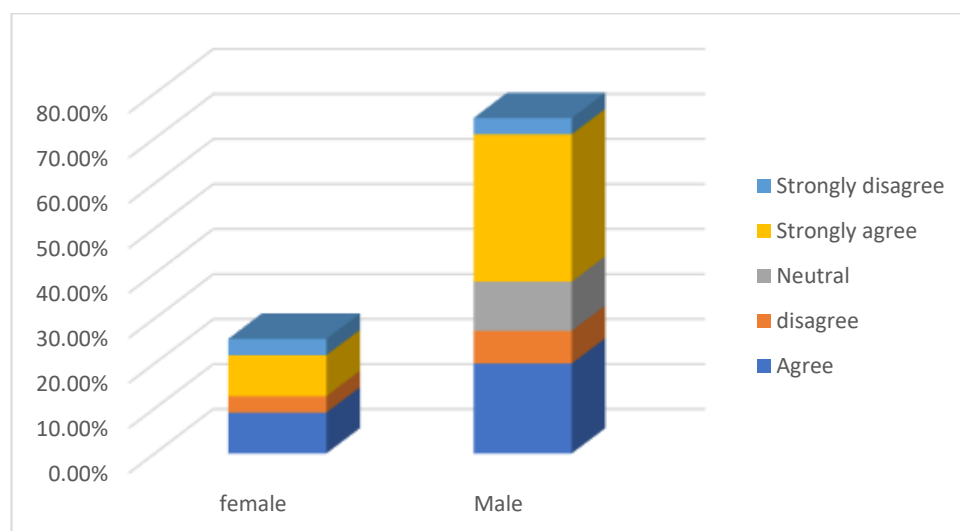


Interpretation

The digital economy is supposed to create job opportunities but people are not really sure if it has helped them. A lot of people are in the middle they do not think the digital economy has really helped them get a job or find work. Some people think the digital economy has given them opportunities but a lot of people are still not convinced. The digital economy and its job opportunities need to be made known and available, to people. The digital economy should be more accessible so people can really benefit from it.

1. Age Group	I feel optimistic about my long term career growth and upward mobility within india,s current digital labour market.					
Row Labels	Agree	disagree	Neutral	Strongly agree	Strongly disagree	Grand Total
female	9.09%	3.64%	0.00%	9.09%	3.64%	25.45%
Male	20.00%	7.27%	10.91%	32.73%	3.64%	74.55%
Grand Total	29.09%	10.91%	10.91%	41.82%	7.27%	100.00%

Analysis:- The study found that most people think their careers will grow well in Indias job market. 70.91% Of people said they agree or strongly agree with this. Most people who responded strongly agreed (41.82%) showing they are very confident about their careers. Men were more optimistic making up the share of positive responses especially those who strongly agreed (32.73%). Women also had views with 18.18% agreeing or strongly agreeing but they were fewer in the sample. Not many people (18.18%) had views, which suggests that most people think the digital job market offers good career growth and opportunities to move up. The digital labour market seems to offer promising career growth and upward mobility to respondents. The findings indicate a positive perception of long-term career growth, in Indias digital labour market.

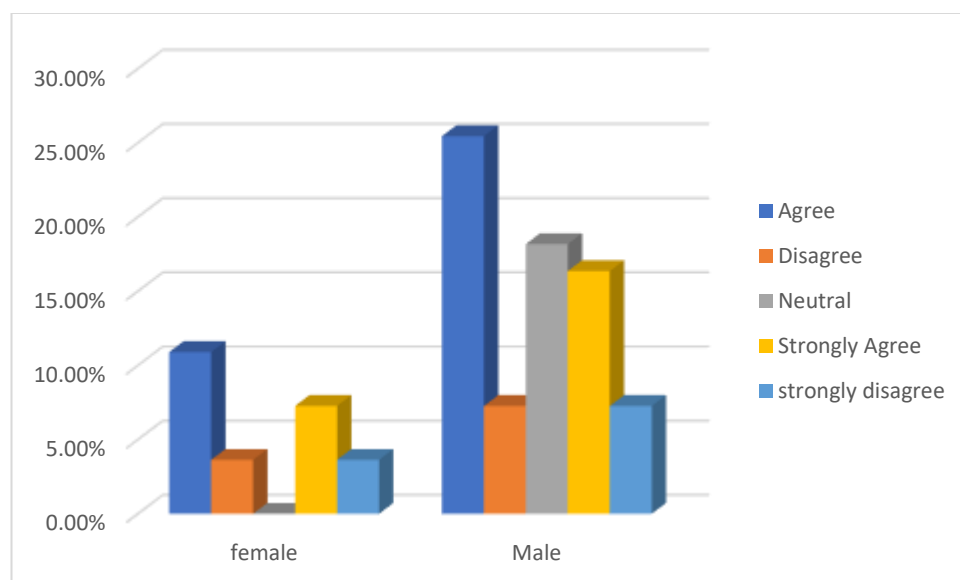


Interpretation:

he chart shows that people are pretty hopeful about their careers and getting ahead in Indias job market. This is because more people said they Agree or Strongly Agree than said anything. Most of the people asked are men. They are really positive about their futures. A lot of men said they Strongly Agree or Agree that they will have career opportunities. Women also think things are going to be okay and most of them said they Agree or Strongly Agree. Not many women were asked as men though. It is interesting that only men said they were Neutral. Women either said they Agree or Strongly Agree they did not say they were not sure. The digital labour market in India is where people are looking at their career growth and upward mobility and the chart tells us what people think about this. People, men think they will do well in their careers, in Indias digital labour marke

1. Age Group	.I actively use digital tools, AI applications, or online professional networks (like LinkedIn) to enhance my career prospects.					
Row Labels	Agree	Disagree	Neutral	Strongly Agree	strongly disagree	Grand Total
female	10.91%	3.64%	0.00%	7.27%	3.64%	25.45%
Male	25.45%	7.27%	18.18%	16.36%	7.27%	74.55%
Grand Total	36.36%	10.91%	18.18%	23.64%	10.91%	100.00%

Analysis :- The findings show that sixty percent of people who answered the survey use tools, artificial intelligence applications or professional networks to help them get ahead in their careers. This means that a lot of people are using tools to improve their career prospects. Men who answered the survey said they use these tools more than women who answered the survey. Most people had things to say about using digital tools for their careers. People think that digital technologies and networking platforms are really helpful for growing their careers. Digital tools and networking platforms are very important for career growth and people are using them to get ahead. The use of tools is a big part of how people are developing their careers and digital technologies are playing a big role, in this.



Interpretation:

People seem to have opinions. When we look at all the categories we see that men have a sentiment than women. For women the thing they agree with the most is the "Agree" category. Then they "Strongly Agree". For men the thing they agree with the most is also the "Agree" category. Then they are "Neutral" and "Strongly Agree". The thing that people disagree with the most is the "Strongly Disagree" category. This is true for both men and women though more men "Strongly Disagree" than women. Men and women have sentiments that're different and men have a higher sentiment than women.

Hypothesis Test Summary

	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The categories of 1. Age Group occur with equal probabilities.	One-Sample Chi-Square Test	.000	Reject the null hypothesis.
2	The categories of 2. Gender occur with equal probabilities.	One-Sample Chi-Square Test	.000	Reject the null hypothesis.
3	The categories of 3. Highest Educational Qualification: occur with equal probabilities.	One-Sample Chi-Square Test	.023	Reject the null hypothesis.
4	The categories of Current Geographic Location (Region): occur with equal probabilities.	One-Sample Chi-Square Test	.001	Reject the null hypothesis.
5	The categories of 5.Current Employment Status occur with equal probabilities.	One-Sample Chi-Square Test	.000	Reject the null hypothesis.
6	The categories of 11.The expansion of the digital economy has significantly increased the number of job opportunities available to me occur with equal probabilities.	One-Sample Chi-Square Test	.000	Reject the null hypothesis.
7	The categories of 12.Digital platform jobs (gig work, freelancing, remote tech roles) offer sustainable financial income compared to traditional jobs. occur with equal probabilities.	One-Sample Chi-Square Test	.001	Reject the null hypothesis.
8	The categories of 13.Digital economy jobs in India provide adequate long-term job security and social security benefits (like health insurance, PF). occur with equal probabilities.	One-Sample Chi-Square Test	.026	Reject the null hypothesis.
9	The categories of 14.Remote work and digital freelancing have allowed me to bypass local geographic limitations to find high-quality employment. occur with equal probabilities.	One-Sample Chi-Square Test	.000	Reject the null hypothesis.
10	The categories of 15.I feel optimistic about my long-term career growth and upward mobility within India's current digital labor market. occur with equal probabilities.	One-Sample Chi-Square Test	.000	Reject the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
8. The rise of digital platforms (e-commerce, fintech, gig platforms) has fundamentally changed how young people look for work in India.	55	1	5	3.51	1.303
10.I actively use digital tools, AI applications, or online professional networks (like LinkedIn) to enhance my career prospects.	55	1	5	3.51	1.275
Valid N (listwise)	55				

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	18.558 ^a	16	.292
Likelihood Ratio	20.750	16	.188
Linear-by-Linear Association	9.920	1	.002
N of Valid Cases	55		
a. 22 cells (88.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .09.			

11.The expansion of the digital economy has significantly increased the number of job opportunities available to me. * 13.Digital economy jobs in India provide adequate long-term job security and social security benefits (like health insurance, PF). Crosstabulation							
Count							
		13.Digital economy jobs in India provide adequate long-term job security and social security benefits (like health insurance, PF).					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
11.The expansion of the digital economy has significantly increased the number of job opportunities available to me.	1	2	2	2	1	2	9
	2	2	1	2	1	0	6
	3	1	3	5	10	8	27
	4	0	0	2	4	6	12
	5	0	0	0	1	0	1
Total		5	6	11	17	16	55

FINDINGS

1. The study found that the digital economy is really good for people who want to work. It creates jobs through websites online stores, freelancing and short term work.
2. Most of the people who took part in the study said that having skills makes it easier to get a job and have more career options.
3. The study showed that looking for a job is easy for young people because of job websites and digital platforms.
4. Many people think that the digital economy helps young people start their businesses and work for themselves.
5. The research found some problems like people not having the digital skills not having secure jobs not having benefits and not everyone having access to the internet especially in rural areas.
6. Overall the study says that the digital economy is very good for people who want to work in India but we need to keep teaching them new skills and the government needs to help.

Discussion

The study says that the digital economy has changed the way young people in India find work. It gives them different career options and helps them start their own businesses.. To make the most of this we need to teach people more about digital things make the internet better make sure everyone has the same access to the internet and protect the people who work short term jobs or on platforms, like websites.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study shows that the digital economy is really good for youth employment in India. It has created jobs through digital platforms, online shopping, freelancing working from home and starting your own business. Digital technologies have also helped young people find job information and get better at what they do.. There are still problems like not having the right digital skills, not having a stable job not everyone having internet and limited benefits for people who work on their own. So it is very important to make digital infrastructure better teach people about things and make policies that help young people get jobs that will last.

Suggestions

- The government should make sure people in areas have good digital infrastructure.
- Schools and colleges should teach people about digital skills and how to do different jobs.
- Young people should be told to take courses to get certified and learn new skills.

- The government should make rules to help people who work on their own and give them benefits.
- We should help people start their businesses by giving them money teaching them about digital things and helping them get started.

Future Scope of the Study

- We can do research to see how artificial intelligence and automation will affect youth employment in India.
- We can compare how young people in cities and rural areas use things to get jobs.
- This study can be done in parts of India to get a better understanding.
- People who do research can look at how digital skills can help young people have careers.
- More studies can be done to see if the government is doing a job of creating jobs, for young people using digital things.

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