A Study on Changing Skill Requirements Across Industries in the Modern Job Market: An Indian Context

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Abstract

The modern job market is undergoing rapid transformation driven by technological innovation, automation, and changing organizational models. These forces are reshaping the competencies employers seek across industries. This study investigates the evolving skill requirements in India, using a quantitative survey of 200 respondents drawn from information technology, finance, manufacturing, healthcare, and education sectors. Results indicate a clear shift from purely domain-specific knowledge toward hybrid skill sets that combine digital literacy, analytical reasoning, adaptability, and interpersonal competencies. The paper discusses the education–industry gap, the role of micro credentials and employer-led training, and policy implications for scaling inclusive reskilling initiatives. Recommendations focus on curricular reform, industry–academia collaboration, and targeted public interventions to ensure India's workforce remains competitive in a digital global economy.

Keywords

Job Skills, Industry, Transformation, Labor Market, Workforce

Extended Abstract

The 21st-century labor market is witnessing an unprecedented transformation driven by globalization, technological advancements, and the widespread integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and automation. These forces are reshaping job roles and redefining the competencies required for employability. In the Indian context, this transformation is particularly striking due to the country's diverse industrial structure, demographic advantage, and rapid adoption of digital technologies. As industries evolve, the demand for new skills-both technical and soft-has become a central concern for employers, employees, and policymakers alike (NASSCOM, 2023). Historically, employability in India relied heavily on domain-specific technical knowledge. However, modern workplaces now demand hybrid skills that integrate technical expertise with creativity, adaptability, and digital literacy (World Economic Forum, 2022). The COVID-19 pandemic further accelerated this transformation by compelling organizations to adopt remote work models, digital communication tools, and automation-driven processes. Consequently, industries have redefined job descriptions, creating an urgent need for workforce reskilling and upskilling (KPMG, 2022). The pace of these changes has exposed a widening gap between what employers seek and what job seekers possess, particularly among fresh graduates entering the labour force.

India's economic landscape, characterized by its expanding service sector and emerging manufacturing ecosystem under the "Make in India" initiative, underscores the importance of continuous skill adaptation. While sectors like information technology and e-commerce have embraced new-age digital competencies, traditional sectors such as manufacturing and education are slowly transitioning toward data-driven decision-making and digital collaboration (FICCI, 2023). This uneven pace of transformation poses challenges to labour market equilibrium and necessitates a comprehensive understanding of how skill requirements are evolving across sectors.

This research focuses on analysing the changing skill requirements across various industries in India's

NWISEd 2026: Workshop on Co-Creating New Ways, of Information Systems Education, July 1–3, 2026, Swansea, United Kingdom

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CEUR Workshop Proceedings ceur-ws.org ISSN 1613-0073

published 2026-11-19

CEUR-WS.org/Vol-4333/abstract3.pdf

modern job market. The study aims to identify the most in-demand skills, assess the factors driving these shifts, and explore how organizations and employees are responding to these evolving needs. By surveying 200 respondents from diverse professional backgrounds, the study attempts to capture a holistic picture of industry-wide skill transformations. Furthermore, it explores the implications of these trends for education systems, corporate training programs, and national skill development policies.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to guide both policymakers and educators in aligning curriculum design and skill training with real-world industrial needs. As India aspires to become a global talent hub, understanding and addressing the skill mismatch will be critical for sustaining economic growth and enhancing employability. The research findings are also intended to assist professionals in identifying emerging skill areas, thus enabling them to remain competitive in the ever-changing job market.

Declaration on Generative AI

During the preparation of this work, the authors used Grammarly for grammar, readability and spelling check. After using this tool, the authors reviewed and edited the content as needed and take full responsibility for the publication's content.