

VIKSIT BHARAT 2047: EMPOWERING INDIA'S YOUTH THROUGH DIGITAL INITIATIVES - REVOLUTIONIZING EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

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Abstract

The "Viksit Bharat 2047" vision, themed around the 78th Independence Day, addresses India's socio-economic challenges through a comprehensive focus on infrastructure, education, healthcare, technology, and sustainable development. This vision emphasizes the transformative power of digital technologies in revolutionizing education and employment, fostering inclusivity, and driving socio-economic progress. By harnessing digital tools, platforms, and infrastructure, India aims to narrow the digital divide, provide quality education for all, and build a skilled workforce to meet modern economic demands. Key initiatives such as the Digital India campaign, PM e-VIDYA, the Skill India Program, and various ICT-driven employment schemes collectively work to ensure accessible, equitable, and high-quality education while promoting skill development and job creation. These digital efforts are vital in shaping a literate, skilled, and economically vibrant society, aligning with India's broader goals of sustainable development and national growth. This article delves into the Indian Government's digital initiatives in education and employment for empowering the nation's youth.

Keywords: Viksit Bharat 2047, e-VIDYA, Digital Initiatives

Introduction

India's ascent to becoming the world's fifth-largest economy, surpassing the United Kingdom, underscores its growing economic strength and resilience (World Bank, 2024). The country's technological journey in the public sector began in the 1980s and 1990s, with various isolated initiatives. This was followed by major infrastructure projects, such as state-wide area networks, Common Service Centres (CSCs), and State Data Centres (SDCs), in addition to Mission Mode Projects (MMPs), which laid the foundation for a robust digital infrastructure. Digital Public Infrastructure, comprising key technological building blocks, plays a central role in driving India's ambitions to reach a USD 1 trillion digital economy by 2030 (Economic Times, 2024).

The Digital India Campaign, launched in 2015, aims to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy. The initiative focuses on three core vision areas:

- Digital Infrastructure as a Core Utility for Every Citizen
- e-Governance and Services on Demand
- Digital Literacy and Empowerment of Citizens

1. PM SHRI [Prime Minister's Schools for Rising India] INITIATIVE



Figure 1: PM SHRI Statistics

The PM SHRI initiative, launched by the Government of India, is a transformative program aimed at elevating school education across the nation. Closely aligned with the New Education Policy (NEP) of 2020, it embodies a forward-thinking approach to digital education. The scheme plans to establish over 14,500 PM SHRI Schools, with 12,079 already operational as of now (Source: <https://pmsfri.education.gov.in/#gallery>). The project is slated to run from the 2022–2023 to 2026–2027 fiscal years. Rooted in the core principles of NEP 2020, PM SHRI promotes curricular flexibility, innovation, and critical thinking. It emphasizes experiential learning to foster a dynamic, learner-centric educational environment and seeks to reduce reliance on rote memorization. Through these efforts, the PM SHRI initiative aims to transform the educational landscape in India, ensuring holistic and future-ready learning for students.

2. SAMAGRA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN

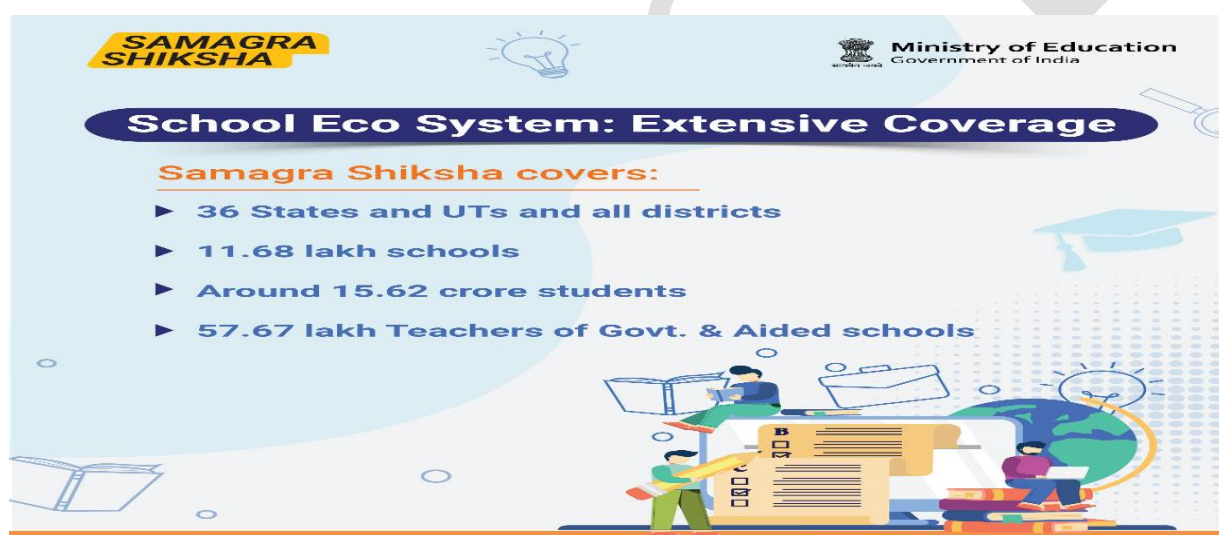


Figure 2: SAMAGRA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN

The Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan is a key initiative by the Indian government aimed at providing inclusive, high-quality education to all children, from preschool to upper secondary education. The primary objectives of the scheme include improving the quality of education and student learning outcomes, bridging social and gender gaps in school education, ensuring equity and inclusion across all levels of education, establishing minimum standards in school facilities, promoting vocational education, supporting states in implementing the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, and strengthening teacher training agencies such as SCERTs, State Institutes of Education, and DIETs.

The expected outcomes of the scheme focus on achieving Universal Access, Equity, and Quality in education, promoting the Vocationalisation of Education, and strengthening Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs). The government has approved the continuation of the revised Samagra Shiksha Scheme for a five-year period, from 2021-22 to 2025-26, with a total financial allocation of Rs. 2,94,283.04 crore, which includes a central share of Rs. 1,85,398.32 crore. The scheme is fully aligned with the recommendations of the National Education Policy 2020.

Achievements of Samagra Shiksha from 2018-19 to 2023-24:

- 3062 schools have been upgraded at the Elementary, Secondary and Higher Secondary level.
- 235 new residential schools and hostels have been opened
- 97364 schools have been strengthened including additional classrooms
- 122757 Schools covered under ICT & Digital initiatives including Smart Schools
- 8619 Schools have been covered under Vocational Education
- 351 Number of KGBVs have been upgraded from class VIII to X
- 2264 Number of KGBVs have been upgraded from class VIII to XII
- 28447 Separate girls' toilets have been constructed
- ICT & Smart Classrooms approval: Till November 2023 (since inception), ICT Labs have been approved in 135740 schools and Smart Classrooms in 103662 schools across the country. (Source: [Press Release: Press Information Bureau \(pib.gov.in\)](https://pib.gov.in))

3. NIPUN BHARAT



Figure 3: Nipun Bharat

NIPUN BHARAT, a key initiative under the 2020 National Education Policy (NEP), focuses on strengthening digital education and foundational skills among children. The mission prioritizes early childhood education, along with basic literacy and numeracy, targeting children aged three to nine, from preschool to third grade. For those lacking foundational skills, dedicated teacher-led support will be provided to bridge the gap.

In addition, the mission incorporates digital education as part of a comprehensive approach to nurture academic growth in young learners. Aligned closely with the NEP 2020 vision, which highlights the significance of foundational reading and numeracy, NIPUN BHARAT underscores early education as a crucial phase for cognitive development, setting the stage for a robust and learner-centric educational journey

4. PM E-VIDYA

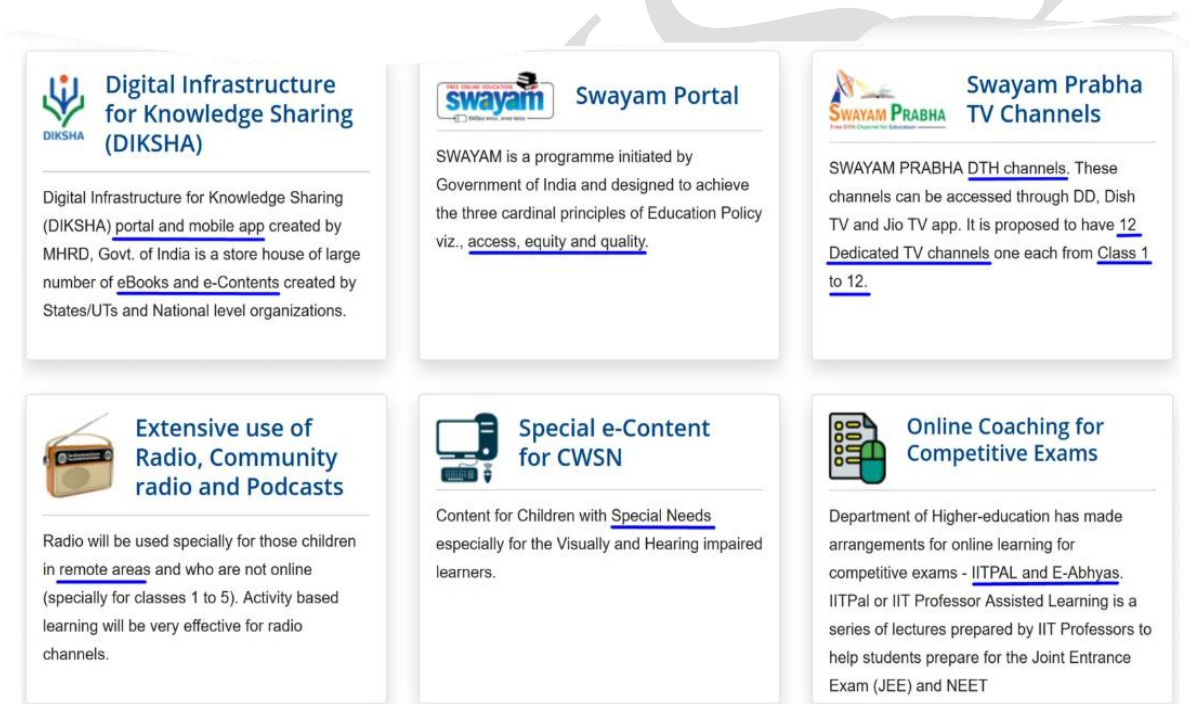


Figure 4: PM-E-Vidya

The **PM e-VIDYA** initiative is a comprehensive effort aimed at integrating various digital, online, and on-air educational resources to provide multi-mode access to learning. This initiative is set to benefit nearly **25 crore school-going children** across India. Launched by the government, PM e-VIDYA is a forward-thinking project designed to leverage technology to enhance digital

education in the country. It aligns seamlessly with the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**, which emphasizes the importance of technology in India's educational ecosystem.

With the goal of reaching over 25 crore school-age children, PM e-VIDYA aims to provide an inclusive, tech-driven education system that equips the youth with comprehensive and digitally enhanced learning experiences. The initiative aligns perfectly with the NEP's vision of a tech-savvy educational environment and recognizes the transformative potential of **digital technologies and platforms** in making education affordable, inclusive, and of high quality across India. The project has garnered recognition from **UNESCO** for its effective use of **Information and Communication Technology (ICT)** in education. The initiative, under the Ministry of Education's Department of School Education, reflects India's commitment to integrating technology into the learning process and ensuring educational accessibility for all.

5. CSC Common Service Centers

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India, launched Common Service Centres (CSCs) in 2006 to empower rural communities by providing essential government services at the grassroots level, specifically across Gram Panchayats. As of September 2024, there are 5,90,760 operational CSCs in India, with 4,69,409 located in rural areas and 1,21,351 in urban regions. These centres play a vital role in bridging the service delivery gap, ensuring access to government services for people in remote and rural parts of the country.

The main functions/ services of CSCs are:

Agriculture Services (Agriculture, Horticulture, Sericulture, Animal Husbandry,

Fisheries, Veterinary)

Education & Training Services (School, College, Vocational Education, Employment, etc.)

Health Services (Telemedicine, Health Check-ups, Medicines)

Rural Banking & Insurance Services (Micro-credit, Loans, Insurance)

Entertainment Services (Movies, Television)

Utility Services (Bill Payments, Online bookings)

Commercial Services (DTP, Printing, Internet Browsing, Village level BPO).

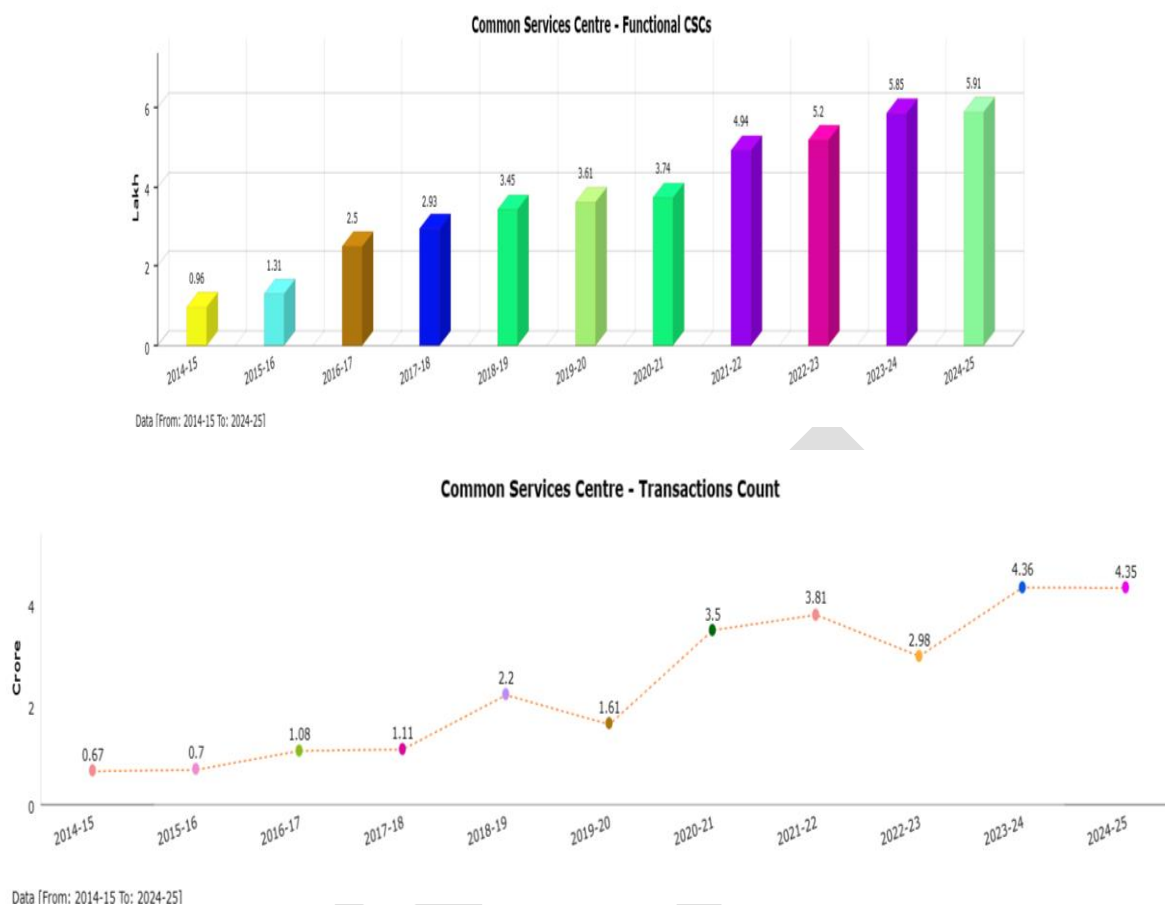


Figure 5 & 6: Functional CSCs and Transactions Count

6. Digi Locker

DigiLocker is a flagship initiative under the **Digital India** program, designed to provide a secure digital repository for storing and accessing important documents, including educational certificates.

Key Features:

- **Digital Storage:** Students can securely store their academic documents, such as certificates and mark sheets, in DigiLocker, ensuring they are protected and easily accessible.
- **Global Recognition:** The digital documents stored in DigiLocker are globally recognized and accepted, making them valid for use internationally.
- **Hassle-Free Sharing:** Students can share their digital certificates with employers, universities, or other institutions effortlessly, eliminating the need for physical copies.

- **Authenticity:** Documents stored in DigiLocker are legally valid and authentic, as per the **Information Technology Act, 2000**.
- **National Academic Depository (NAD):** DigiLocker is integrated with NAD, allowing academic institutions to store and publish their academic records online, ensuring secure and authentic access to students' academic awards.

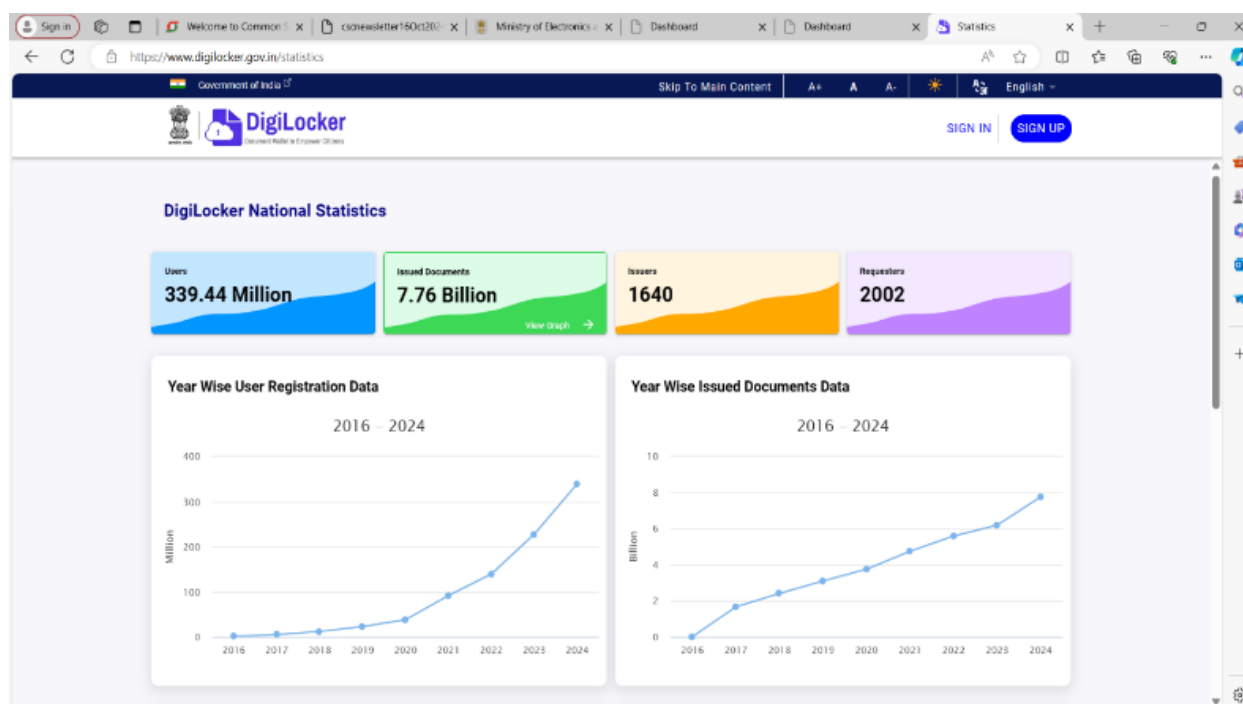


Figure 7: Digi Locker Statistics from 2016-2024

ICT BASED EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES

‘Digital India’ programme with the vision to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge-based economy by ensuring digital access, digital inclusion, digital empowerment and bridging the digital divide. The mission is to ensure that the digital technologies improve the life of every citizen; expand India’s digital economy, create investment & employment opportunities and global digital technological capabilities in the country.

Name of the Programme	Area of Implementation	Organization	Year	Focus Areas
Women Empowerment Through Technology	New Delhi	NASSCOM Foundation and American Express	2022	Cloud and Data Analytics, Blockchain, Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence.
CIRC	Bengaluru and Karnataka	Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) and Oracle and Charities Aid Foundation	2018	<p>-Improve digital literacy levels among underprivileged women</p> <p>Impact:</p> <p>Digital Literacy: Over 10 million women have been provided with digital literacy training.</p> <p>Employment: Training and support for women entrepreneurs, leading to the creation of over 70,000 women entrepreneurs.</p> <p>Community Development: Strengthening community institutions and fostering collective action for sustainable development.</p>
SBI and Oracle India	Bangalore and Hyderabad	D-Change programme	2016	Education and learning, women empowerment and rural skills development in India
Mahila e-haat	New Delhi	Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India	2016	<p>-Online marketing platform for women</p> <p>-Products and information of women are displayed online</p> <p>Impact:</p> <p>Empowerment: Over 10,000 SHGs and 1.25 lakh women beneficiaries have benefited from the platform since its launch.</p> <p>Market Access: Provides access to markets for thousands of women entrepreneurs across the country.</p> <p>Economic Growth: Helps women make financial and economic choices, contributing to the "Make in India" and "Stand Up India" initiatives.</p>

Name of the Programme	Area of Implementation	Organization	Year	Focus Areas
SoochnaPreneur	Rural areas	Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) and QUALCOMM	2016	<p>Trains women entrepreneurs to address the needs of digital Services</p> <p>Impact:</p> <p>Digital Literacy: Over 25,000 women trained as SoochnaPreneurs.</p> <p>Community Development: Benefited over 8 million rural women.</p> <p>Empowerment: Strengthened community institutions and fostered collective action for sustainable development.</p>
Women on Wheels	Delhi	Azad Foundation	2015	<p>Women of Basti's from Delhi are trained as professional drivers and required ICT skills</p> <p>Impact:</p> <p>Economic Independence: Women gain meaningful employment in the transportation sector, breaking stereotypes and promoting women's empowerment.</p> <p>Community Development: The initiative fosters community support and encourages women to take control of their lives</p>
Skill India Program	Different states of India	Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship	2015	<p>Implementation:</p> <p>Skill India Digital Hub (SIDH): An online platform offering a wide range of skill courses, certification, jobs, and apprenticeships across sectors and locations.</p> <p>Partnerships: Collaborations with various industry partners to ensure the training is relevant and up-to-date.</p> <p>Multilingual Support: Courses available in multiple Indian languages to cater to a diverse population.</p>

Name of the Programme	Area of Implementation	Organization	Year	Focus Areas
Digital Cluster Development Programme (DCDP)	Madhya Pradesh	Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) in partnership with Government bodies and CSR groups	2009	<p>-Technological enablement of artisans to bridge the digital divide.</p> <p>Implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DigiKargha: An initiative under DCDP that supports various clusters through inclusive and decentralized use of ICT. • Partnerships: Collaborations with organizations like Media Lab Asia, Ericsson, Mphasis, Nokia, UNDP, and Microsoft to support specific projects within the clusters. <p>Projects: Initiatives such as Chanderiyaan, Baank-e-Loom, Musiri, KanchiLoom, Warli, DigiKala, Kaulava, and Pochampally</p>
Datamation Foundation	Seelampur area, Delhi	Information Technology Enabled Services (ITES) and International Organizations	2003	<p>-Helped link resource- poor women to the information and tools for knowledge management</p> <p>- Establish buyer-seller linkages</p> <p>Key Initiatives:</p> <p>Gender Resource Centers (GRCs): Providing vocational training and skill development to marginalized women.</p> <p>Multi-Media Centers: Offering digital literacy and IT training to enhance employability.</p> <p>Community Mobilization: Engaging with local communities to raise awareness about government schemes and entitlements.</p>

Name of the Programme	Area of Implementation	Organization	Year	Focus Areas
Aamagaon Soochna Kendra (My Village's Information Centre)	12 Districts of Orissa	Government of Orissa in partnership with Mission Shakti	-	<p>Set up ICT kiosks in rural areas - Women trained in computer fundamentals and internet basics</p> <p>Key Features:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ICT Kiosks: Establishing 73 ICT kiosks to provide access to digital tools and resources. 2. Training Programs: Women are trained in computer fundamentals and internet basics, enabling them to use digital tools effectively. 3. Empowerment: Enhancing digital literacy and providing women with the skills needed to access information and services online.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the digital initiatives undertaken in education and employment by the Indian Government are paving the way for a more inclusive, efficient, and progressive society. These programs effectively bridge the gap between traditional education systems and modern technological advancements, ensuring quality education and equitable access to employment opportunities for all citizens.

Initiatives like the Digital India campaign, PM e-VIDYA, and Skill India Program have brought technology to the forefront of the educational and professional landscape, fostering inclusivity by addressing the digital divide. Programs such as NIPUN Bharat emphasize foundational literacy and numeracy, targeting early cognitive development and academic growth. At the same time, projects like PM SHRI aim to elevate the quality of school education by integrating experiential learning and curricular flexibility.

The role of Common Service Centres (CSCs) in rural empowerment has also been pivotal, delivering essential government services across Gram Panchayats and making digital resources accessible to underserved communities. With more than 5.9 lakh CSCs operational nationwide, this initiative highlights the transformative impact of digital infrastructure in bridging service delivery gaps.

By leveraging digital tools, platforms, and infrastructures, India's education systems are enhancing learning experiences, improving accessibility, and fostering the development of critical skills essential for thriving in the digital age. These initiatives empower students to excel academically while preparing them for the evolving demands of the modern economy. They also align seamlessly with the goals of sustainable development, building a skilled and economically vibrant workforce.

Together, these efforts represent a comprehensive approach to addressing socio-economic challenges, particularly for the youth of the nation. As India strides towards a digitally empowered future, these initiatives are crucial in shaping an empowered, skilled, and inclusive society that drives national progress and sustainability.

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