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DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

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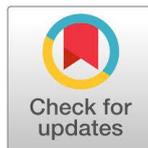
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Abstract: *Decent Work and Economic Growth, encapsulated in the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal 8 (SDG 8), emphasizes the creation of productive employment, fair income opportunities, and safe working conditions while ensuring sustained economic progress. Despite global economic expansion. Challenges such as informal employment, wage inequality, unemployment, and unsafe working environments persist across both developed and developing economies. inequality, education, and technology. This paper examines the concept of decent work, its interrelationships with economic growth, and the critical role of inclusive labor policies in achieving sustainable development. The study highlights global challenges, policy initiatives, and strategic interventions necessary to promote equitable growth and dignified employment.*

Keywords: *Decent work, Economic growth. Employment, Sustainable Development Goals 8 (SDGs 8), Sustainable development, Technology.*

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INTRODUCTION

Economic growth has long been considered a primary indicator of national development. However, growth without quality employment often leads to inequality and social exclusion technology and education. Recognizing this imbalance, the United Nations introduced SDG 8 to promote not only economic expansion but also decent and productive work for all. Decent work integrates employment generation, with rights at work, social protection, and social dialogue, making it a cornerstone of inclusive growth “Decent work and economic growth” are formally combined as a single, intertwined objective in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 8 (SDG8), rather than being separated, However, significant research highlight that inpractice , the two concept are often in tension, leading to outcomes where one may not automatically guarantee the other.

Combined in policy (SDG 8)

“Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”. The UN and the International Organization (ILO) view the two as mutually reinforcing, with decent work opportunities driving progress and improving living standards, and economic growth creating new jobs and opportunities for self-improvement.

Separated in practice (The Tension)

Despite the integrated goal, academic research and real-world results show a significant gap between achieving abstract economic growth (often measured by GDP) and ensuring “decent work” conditions (fair income, security, and social protection).

Growth vs. Decent Work: Critics note that a focus on pure GDP growth does not automatically lead to better working conditions. In some cases, the push for productivity in market economies results in precarious, low-wage jobs and the expansion of the informal sector, workers lack legal protection and benefits.

Inequality: Economic growth has not always translated into reduced inequality. Persistent issues like the gender pay gap and underrepresentation of women in leadership roles remain major challenges, hindering truly inclusive growth and decent work for all. In essence, while the global policy framework unites them, the practical implementation often reveals the “decent work” and “economic growth” are distinct challenges that require, targeted policies to ensure they advance together in sustainable and equitable manner.

Concept of Decent work

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), decent work involves opportunities for work that are productive and deliver a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their and equality of opportunity. Decent work encompasses four strategic pillars:

Employment Creation - no one should be barred from their desired work due to lack of employment opportunities

Rights at Work, including minimum wages - Workers rights include the right to just and favourable conditions, days off, 8-hour days, non-discrimination and living wages for them and their families, amongst other.

Social Protection - all workers should have safe working conditions, adequate free time and rest, access to benefits like healthcare, pension, and parental leave, among many others.

Social Dialogue - workers should be able to exercise work democracy through their unions and negotiate their workplace conditions as well as national and international labour and development policies

The global goal for decent work and economic growth is sustainable development goals (SDG 8), Part of the 17 sustainable development goal (SDGS) adopted by the UN, aiming to “Foster sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all” by 2030, focusing on job Creation equal pay safe environment, ending forced labour, and child labour and protecting labour rights.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Pereira et al. (2019) .According to this study it is significant that research find a deficiency in decent work and do not cover the entire idea of decent labour.

Fontana and Olde Kop (2020), said this is a necessary time to reflect on the SDGs. the SDGs and their implementation .Our research is a guiding light in the academic community, revealing critical aspects of decent employment under SDG 8 and, by extension.

Rai et al., 2019. The United Nations (UN) has adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to guide efforts toward achieving development that is sustainable by 2030. These goals, known as “transforming our world,” outline an ambitious agenda

Küfeoğlu, 2022. Among these goals, SDG 8 promotes sustainable growth, employment, and decent work for all individuals One of the targets of SDG 8 is to achieve “economic growth” through the concept of “Decent Work” across all member nations of the UN (Küfeoğlu, 2022). The notion of work emerged alongside discussions on sustainability in the 1990s and its relationship with economic growth (Frey, 2017).

Khaliq et al., 2021. Scholars argue that SDG 8 encompasses workforce diversity opportunities for all individuals, including people with disabilities, gender equality, and fair wages for everyone involved It emphasizes creating a safe working environment that’s equally accessible to both men

and women in terms of employment opportunities (United Nations, 2015). The target for ensuring work for all entails providing opportunities and fair compensation that contribute to overall economic development. The findings emphasize the importance of fair, safe, and secure employment opportunities to support economic growth and uphold workers' rights. In the following article, Cho et al., introduce recent changes related to home-based telework that has changed rapidly due to the COVID-19 pandemic, necessitating adjustments in productivity, evaluations, and employment rules as per Labor Standards Act.

The team of Vélez-Rolón et al., in their research, focused on another example of the relationship between education and employment.

The authors argue that rapid technological advances and global challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic, underscore the need for educational models that enhance employability and economic growth. This research found that, among others, older workers expanded their computer skills during the pandemic. Ran and Zhao focus on another unexpected pandemic effect: the growing importance of occupational injury protection for gig workers in China.

Shabbir 2023. Emphasised development-oriented policies and employment service Supporting decent job creation and entrepreneurship

The searched from the Scopus database, from Google Scholar, and simple Google. In addition, we examined UN website publications to improve our dataset. To further our analyses and arguments, the search utilized terms and phrases such as “SDG 8 and decent work,” “SDG 8 and limitations,” and “economic growth and decent job.” The search was not restricted by publication date, enabling a full coverage of the field's current literature.

Economic Growth and Employment

Sustainable economic growth contributes to higher employment levels, increased productivity, and improved living standards. Conversely, a skilled and protected workforce enhances economic efficiency and innovation and growth usually boosting jobs, but the connection weakness as economies develops, leading to “joblessgrowth” where GDP rises but employment stagnates or shifts to low-quality, informal jobs, especially with capital-intensive or technology-driven sectors growing faster than labour-intensive ones like manufacturing. While historically positive (Okun's Law), the link is now complex, requiring focus on inclusive, productivity-boosting job creation (e.g. in manufacturing) rather than just GDP number of true development. Thus, decent work and economic growth are mutually reinforcing, creating a virtuous cycle of development.

Pro-cyclical relationship: Generally, economic growth (higher GDP) increases demand, spurring production and creating jobs, while downturn decrease hiring.

Okun's law: States an inverse link: higher GDP growth correlates with lower unemployment, and vice-versa.

Employment Elasticity: Measures how much employment grows per unit of GDP Growth; it has declined in many economies, meaning GDP growth creates fewer jobs than before.

Factor Affecting .

Type of growth: intensive (productivity-driven growth) vs, extensive (more labour/capital) growth.

Sectoral shifts: Growth in capital-intensive sectors (like some tech/service) creates fewer jobs than labour intensive ones (like manufacturing).

Technology: Automation can boost output without increasing headcount.

Informal economy: Growth might increase low-quality, informal jobs rather than formal, decent work.

The “Jobless Growth” phenomenon

When GDP rises significantly, but employment doesn’t keep pace or even falls

Causes: Structural changes, automation, global competition, focus on capital-intensive industries.

Impact: Despite higher national income, poverty reduction stalls, and shared prosperity is missed.

Policy Implications

Focus on Quality: Aim for “productive and remunerative employment” with higher productivity, not just any job.

Inclusive Growth: promote sectors with high employment potential (e.g. manufacturing, agri-business)

Skills: Address skill mismatches between available labour and job requirements.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**Global challenges to decent work**

Achieving decent work and sustained economic growth faces numerous global challenges that continue to hinder inclusive and sustainable development. The recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic remains uneven, with lasting disruptions to labour markets and economic activity. At the same time, rising inflation, economic volatility, and increasing public debt—particularly in developing countries—have constrained investment and slowed growth. Trade tensions and policy uncertainty further weaken global economic prospects.

A major barrier to decent work is the widespread prevalence of informal employment. More than half of the global workforce is engaged in informal jobs that lack social protection, legal rights, and safe working conditions. This issue is especially acute in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and sub-Saharan Africa, where informality dominates labour markets.

Labor market inequalities also persist across regions. Youth unemployment remains high, with many young people classified as not in education, employment, or training (NEET). Gender disparities continue to limit women’s access to decent work, fair wages, and leadership opportunities. In addition, migrant workers and individuals in precarious employment situations often face exploitation and insufficient labour protections.

Environmental challenges further complicate economic growth and job creation. Unsustainable production and consumption patterns contribute to climate change and ecosystem degradation, undermining the natural resources on which economies depend. Addressing these challenges requires a transition toward green and sustainable growth models that generate employment while protecting the environment.

Income inequality remains another critical concern. In many economies, productivity gains have not translated into higher wages for workers, as a declining share of income goes to labour. As a result, poverty persists despite economic growth, with large segments of the population continuing to live on very low incomes.

Finally, geopolitical conflicts and political instability disrupt economic activity, displace workers, and damage infrastructure, reversing development gains. Developing economies face additional obstacles, including limited access to finance, weak financial systems, and inadequate infrastructure, all of which restrict economic growth and job creation.

Global challenges to decent work and economic growth include post-pandemic recovery issues, rising inflation, geopolitical conflicts, trade tensions, high informal employment (especially in developing nations), significant gender/youth disparities, environment crises, rising debt and a mismatch where productivity gains don't fully translate to worker wages, all hindering inclusive, sustainable growth and decent job creation for all.

Despite ongoing policy initiatives, achieving Sustainable Development Goal 8 (SDG 8) remains difficult due to several long-standing structural problems. These include the dominance of informal work, continued inequalities by gender and age, limited financial capacity for development, and the growing pressures caused by global crises and climate change.

Major challenges include:

- **Widespread Informal Work:**

More than half of the world's workers earn their living in informal jobs that provide little or no legal protection or social security. The slow transition toward formal employment exposes millions to unstable incomes, poor working conditions, and heightened vulnerability during economic downturns and global shocks.

- **Ongoing Labour Market Inequalities:**

Inequality remains deeply embedded in employment systems, particularly affecting women and young people. Youth unemployment rates are significantly higher than

those of adults, and young women are especially likely to be excluded from work, education, or training. In addition, women continue to face pay disparities, receiving lower wages than men for work of equal value.

- **Limited Financing and Investment Capacity:**

Many developing economies struggle to fund recovery and job creation due to high debt levels, weak revenue systems, and limited access to long-term investment.

Insufficient spending on infrastructure, education, skills development, and social protection slows progress toward sustainable and inclusive employment.

- **Weakening Labour Rights and Enforcement:**

Respect for labour standards has declined in many regions, with frequent violations of workers' rights to organize and bargain collectively. Weak institutions and a lack of political commitment often result in poor enforcement of existing labour laws.

- **Economic Shocks and Global Instability:**

The economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, combined with geopolitical tensions, inflationary pressures, and trade disruptions, continue to threaten growth and employment. These challenges tend to impact low-income and vulnerable groups most severely, undoing hard-won development gains.

- **Skills Gaps and Unequal Access to Technology:**

Rapid technological change and the transition toward digital and green economies have altered labour market demands. Many workers lack the skills required for emerging jobs, while limited access to training and technology—particularly in rural and marginalized areas—further deepens exclusion.

- **Insufficient Alignment with Environmental Sustainability:**

Economic growth strategies often prioritize output and productivity over environmental protection, leading to resource depletion and environmental harm.

Critics argue that SDG 8 does not adequately integrate ecological sustainability into its approach to economic development.

- **Governance and Data Limitations:**

Weak coordination between institutions, inconsistent policy implementation, and limited availability of detailed labour market data make it difficult to assess progress and design effective, context-specific solutions.

EXPANSION OF INFORMAL GIG ECONOMIES

India's informal gig economy is expanding rapidly, driven by digitalization, urbanization, and a demand for flexible work, growing from ~7.7 million workers in 2020-21 to an estimated 12

million by FY 2024-25, projected to hit 23.5 million by 2029-30, integrating millions from the informal sector into platform-based, tech-linked work, offering flexibility but posing challenges around low pay and lack of social security, prompting government efforts like the code on social security

Key Drivers of Growth:

- **Digital Penetration:** Affordable smartphones and internet access enable platform-based work.
- **Urbanization:** Cities drive demand for services like food delivery, transport, and e-commerce.
- **Flexibility:** Offers autonomy and new income streams outside traditional jobs.
- **Structural Shift:** Absorbs surplus labour and bridges informal work with digital structures.

Scale & Projections (NITI Aayog):

- **2020-21:** ~7.7 million gig workers.
- **2024-25:** ~12 million workers.
- **2029-30:** Projected to reach 23.5 million workers, forming a significant part of the non-agricultural workforce.

Sectors with High Gig Work:

- Food/Grocery Delivery, E-commerce Logistics (last - mile), Transportation (cab drivers).
- Also growing in IT, finance, construction, and support services.

Challenges & Concerns:

- **Precariousness:** Income volatility, low wages, gruelling hours.
- **Lack of Security:** No formal social security, healthcare, or retirement benefits.
- **Formalization Gap:** Workers are classified as "independent contractors," outside traditional protections.

Government Initiatives:

- **Code on social security, 2020:** Aims to bring gig and platform workers under social security.
- **e-Shram Portal: National database for unorganized workers**
- **Healthcare:** Inclusion under schemes like PMJAY.

In essence, India's gig economy is booming, transforming labour markets by connecting millions to digital platforms, but requires better regulation and social protection to ensure fair work conditions.

Gender Wage Disparities

The gender pay gap is the average difference in earnings between women and men, showing women generally earn less, though this varies globally and by factors like race and parenthood; it's not just unequal pay for the exact same job, but reflects systemic issues like occupational segregation, career breaks for care giving (motherhood penalty), unconscious bias, and fewer opportunities in

senior roles, with global figures around 20% less for women, but higher in some nations like India and South Korea, necessitating policy changes for true equity.

- A measure of the disparity between men's and women's average or median earnings, expressed as a percentage or dollar amount.
- It's different from "equal pay for equal work," though related; the gap reflects broader economic and societal structures.

Key Statistics

- **Globally:** Women earn roughly 77- 80 cents for every dollar men earn, though this is an oversimplification.
- **India:** Women earn about 27-30% less than men, with the gap widening at senior levels.
- **US:** Around 83 cents for white women; much lower for Black (67 cents) and Hispanic (65 cents) women.
- **EU:** Average gap of about 12% in 2023, with high variation by country.

Main Causes:

- **Motherhood Penalty:** Women take time off for childcare, leading to lost experience and slower career progression (the "fatherhood bump" often happens for men).
- **Occupational Segregation:** Women are concentrated in lower-paying sectors or roles, notes WGEA with lower pay in traditionally female-dominated fields.
- **Unconscious Bias & Discrimination:** Biases affect hiring, promotion, and salary decisions, notes WGEA.
- **Career Breaks & Part-Time Work:** More women work part-time or take career breaks for caregiving, reducing overall experience and earning potential, notes McKinsey & Company.
- **Lack of Representation:** Fewer women in leadership and senior management roles.

Solutions:

- Pay transparency laws, stronger equal pay protections, and paid family leave policies, say Oxfam and WGEA.
- Disrupting occupational segregation and supporting women in male-dominated fields.
- Expanding rights for collective bargaining, which helps reduce gaps.

Gender pay gap

The difference between the average gross earnings of female and male employees is known as the 'gender pay gap'. It shows that gender pay gap is as a percentage of men's hourly earnings and, as it does not take into account all of the factors that contribute to the gap, such as differences in education, labour market experience, hours worked, type of job, etc., is referred to officially as the 'unadjusted gender pay gap'.

In 2007, the gender pay gap in Ireland was 17.3 per cent. According to the latest figures published by Eurostat, in 2017 the gender pay gap in Ireland was 14.4 per cent while the

gender pay gap across the EU overall was 14.9 per cent. For an explanation of how this is calculated, see Eurostat's guide to gender pay gap statistics.

Child Labor And Forced Labor

Article 24 Prohibition of employment of children in factories, etc. No child below the age of 14 years shall be employed in work in any factory or mine or engaged in any other hazardous employment.

Prevention: ➤ Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986 prohibits employment of children below the age of 14 years in 18 occupations and 65 processes. ➤ The onus of enforcement of the provisions of the Act lies with the State Governments as envisaged in Section 2 of the Act. The term “**child labour**” is often defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development.

Forced labour is defined as “all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily”.

Child labour and **forced labour** are severe human rights violations defined and prohibited under international law, primarily through conventions set by the International Labour Organization (ILO). They share root causes in poverty and discrimination and often occur in the same industries and geographical areas.

Key Differences and Linkages

Feature	Child Labour	Forced Labour
Primary focus	Age and the impact of work on a child's development and education.	Coercion, lack of consent, and threat of penalty, regardless of age.
Scope	Includes all work below the minimum age, hazardous work, and the "worst forms".	All work performed involuntarily under duress.
Overlap	Child forced labour is a specific, "unconditional" worst form of child labour.	Children can be victims of forced labour, often due to being trafficked or born into debt bondage situations.

Poverty, lack of education, weak law enforcement, and discrimination are common factors contributing to both issues. International efforts, guided by the ILO conventions, aim to eliminate child labour and forced labour to protect fundamental human rights and well-being.

Workplace Safety Regulations and Employer Responsibilities

The primary goal of safety regulations is proactive hazard prevention. Key employer responsibilities include:

Providing a safe workplace: Employers must ensure the workplace is free from recognized hazards that could cause injury or disease. This includes physical, chemical, biological, and ergonomic hazards

- **Hazard assessment and control:** Conducting regular assessments to identify potential risks and implementing control measures, such as engineering controls, administrative controls, or providing personal protective equipment (PPE), at no cost to the worker.
- **Training and information:** Providing safety training in a language and vocabulary workers can understand about potential hazards and safe work practices.
- **Recordkeeping and reporting:** Maintaining accurate records of work-related injuries and illnesses and reporting severe incidents (fatalities, hospitalizations, amputations, eye loss) to the relevant authorities within a specified timeframe.
- **Providing medical examinations:** Conducting free annual health check-ups or other medical tests when required by specific standards, particularly in hazardous industries.
- **Non-retaliation:** Protecting employees who exercise their safety rights, such as reporting a hazard or requesting an inspection, from discrimination or retaliation.

Common Workplace Health Risks

Workplace health risks are diverse and depend heavily on the industry:

- **Physical Hazards:** Excessive noise, extreme temperatures, radiation, and inadequate lighting.
- **Chemical Hazards:** Exposure to toxic chemicals, fumes, and substances, requiring proper handling, storage, and ventilation.
- **Biological Hazards:** Exposure to infectious agents, bloodborne pathogens, bacteria, and viruses, especially in healthcare and laboratory settings.
- **Ergonomic Hazards:** Improper lifting techniques, repetitive motions, and poor workstation design leading to musculoskeletal disorders.
- **Psychosocial Hazards:** Work-related stress, long hours, and workplace violence.

Social Security and Workplace Illness/Injury

Social security systems provide a safety net when safety regulations fail and work-related incidents occur. Key provisions often include:

- **Medical Benefits:** Access to healthcare, hospitalization, and medical treatment for work-related injuries and diseases. The employee's State Insurance (ESI Act, 1948 in India is one such example.
- **Cash Benefits/Compensation:** Periodical cash payments (sickness benefit) during certified sickness or disablement benefits if the injury leads to temporary or permanent disability.
- **Dependents' Benefits:** Financial support (pensions or lump-sum compensation) for the family or dependents of a worker who dies due to a work-related incident.

- **Maternity Benefits:** Social security laws often include provisions for paid maternity leave and crèche facilities, promoting the health and well-being of women employees.

In essence, safety regulations aim to prevent harm, while social security ensures that workers and their families are protected from the financial and health-related consequences if harm occurs. These challenges are particularly pronouncing in developing country, where informal employment dominates labor markets.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

International Efforts & Policy Initiatives

policy initiatives and international efforts address a wide range of global challenges, most notably **climate change, sustainable development, and the governance of emerging technologies**

Climate Change

Global efforts to combat climate change are primarily coordinated through the United Nations framework convention on climate change (UNFCCC).

- **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs):** Under the agreement, each country submits its own climate action plan (NDC) and is required to update it with increasing ambition every five years.
- **Global Stocktake:** A process that occurs every five years to assess the collective progress towards the long-term climate goals, with the first one concluding at COP28 in Dubai.
- **Kyoto Protocol:** Adopted in 1997, this was an earlier agreement that set legally binding emission reduction targets for developed countries, which was a precursor to the more inclusive Paris Agreement.
- **UN Climate Change Conferences (COPs):** Annual conferences that serve as the formal meeting of the Parties to the UNFCCC to review progress and negotiate further steps.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The international community has adopted the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, which includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- **Key Global Programs:** Initiatives such as the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, the Green Climate Fund, and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) all contribute to achieving the SDGs.
- **National Initiatives (Example: India):** Many countries integrate the SDGs into national policy. India, for instance, has several flagship programs that align with the SDGs, including the Swachh Bharat Mission (Clean India Mission), National Solar Mission, and the National Clean Air Programme.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Governance

As AI technologies advance rapidly, international efforts are focusing on ethical guardrails and governance frameworks.

- **UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of AI:** Adopted in 2021, this first global set of ethical standards for AI development and deployment is applicable to all 194 member states, focusing on human dignity, transparency, and non-discrimination.
- **Global Digital Compact:** Adopted by the UN in September 2024, this framework aims to foster global cooperation in governing digital technology and AI, ensuring that the digital space is safe, secure, and inclusive.

International organization and government have initiated multiple strategies to promote decent work.

PROMOTION OF MSME ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Promoting MSME entrepreneurship involves comprehensive government support through schemes for credit, skill development, innovation, and marketing focusing on job creation, rural growth, and empowering women/SC-ST groups, with programs like **ASPIRE, PMEGP, and Skill Development Programs** fostering incubation, providing training, and offering financial/technical handholding to build a vibrant enterprise ecosystem.

Key Government Initiatives & Schemes:

- **ASPIRE (A Scheme for Promotion of Innovation, Rural Industry, & Entrepreneurship):** Supports Livelihood Business Incubators (LBIs) to foster startups, create jobs in agro-rural sectors, and promote innovation.
- **PMEGP: (Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme):** A flagship scheme for self-employment through micro-enterprise establishment.
- **Skill Development & Entrepreneurship Programs (ESDP):** Offers training to youth (including women, SC/ST) to encourage entrepreneurship as a career, with fee exemptions for many categories.
- **Credit Guarantee Scheme (CGTMSE):** Provides collateral-free credit to Micro & Small Enterprises.
- **International Cooperation (IC) Scheme:** Supports MSMEs in exports through participation in global events, certification, and premium reimbursements.

Focus Areas for Promotion:

- **Enabling Ecosystem:** Creating incubators, providing skill training, and supporting startups.
- **Financial Support:** Offering loans, credit guarantees, and incentives.
- **Innovation & technology** Encouraging new solutions and technology adoption.
- **Market Access:** Assisting with marketing, branding, and international trade.
- **Inclusive Growth:** Special focus on women, SC/ST, and rural entrepreneurs.

Role of developing economics

Developing countries play a crucial role in achieving SDG 8 due to their large labor force. Investments in education, vocational training, digital skills and inclusive industrialization are essential to convert demographic Potential into economic advantages.

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To strengthen the nexus between decent work and economic growth, the following measures are recommended

Encouraging green and digital jobs involves strategic initiatives focused on **education, policy, industry collaboration, and financial support** to equip the workforce with the necessary skills for a sustainable, low-carbon, and technologically advanced economy.

Key Strategies for Encouragement

- **Develop National Strategies:** Governments can create system-wide plans that guide educational institutions and businesses to align with green and digital labor market needs, providing a clear policy framework.
- **Invest in Specialized Education and Training:** Implement targeted upskilling and reskilling programs, including certifications and online courses, that build both "core green" skills (e.g., renewable energy engineering) and "green-aware" digital skills (e.g., sustainability data analysis).
- **Strengthen Industry and Employer Engagement:** Foster strong partnerships between academic institutions, vocational training centers, and the private sector to ensure that training curricula are relevant to real-world job requirements and technological developments.
- **Provide Financial Incentives and Support:** Offer government incentives, tax benefits, and financial assistance programs to green enterprises and businesses that adopt eco-friendly and digital practices. This encourages investment and job creation in these sectors.
- **Ensure Inclusive Transition:** Implement policies that ensure a "just transition," providing support and new opportunities for workers in traditional industries who may be affected by the shift to a greener economy.

Measures are Recommended

Green and Digital Jobs

The transition is creating demand across many sectors, requiring a blend of traditional expertise and new sustainable/digital skills.

- **Renewable Energy:** Solar energy consultants, wind turbine technicians, and renewable energy engineers.
- **Technology & IT:** Green software developers, AI specialists for sustainability optimization, and cloud computing experts.
- **Construction & Planning:** Green building architects, urban sustainability planners, and retrofitting specialists.
- **Management & Consulting:** Corporate sustainability managers, ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) analysts, and sustainable supply chain managers.

- **Science & Law:** Climate change analysts, environmental lawyers, and conservation scientists.

Public-private partnerships

Public-private partnerships for sustainable development have been in operation for several decades from the local to the international level. On the one hand they are a result of a changing nature of public policymaking. This is changed from government to governance signalling that governments are no longer the only providers of public policy but increasingly engage private actors. In public-private partnerships private actors are involved in one or more of the different steps or parts of policymaking: agenda-setting, negotiation, resource provision implementation, monitoring, and/or enforcement. this type of public-private partnerships a key policy function is delegated to private actors. With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) public-private partnerships have become even more prominent. The UN agenda is a plan of action for 'people, planet, and prosperity'. The 17 Goals cover all crucial policy areas to secure a sustainable future including education, health, economic development, social protection, environmental protection, and natural resources governance. The 17 goals are operationalized in 169 targets which need to be reached by 2030 or earlier. The SDGs build on the Millennium Development Goals and aim to complete what these Millennium Development Goals did not achieve. A crucial difference between the Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals is that the former were mainly targeted to governments while the latter target many different stakeholders including the private sector. Effectiveness can refer to impact on the ground of certain projects and initiatives to reach specific policy goals (goal-attainment effectiveness, i.e. contributions by Yang; Zheng et al.; Franssen et al., and Ingram et al.), lead to increased adoption of private governance mechanisms scaling up their potential impact (process-effectiveness, Marx this volume) or contribute to an increase in recognition of certain public-private initiatives as the most appropriate governance approach to address certain policy issues (constitutive effectiveness, i.e., Tellbro et al., Martens et al.; Moraitis; Schouten, and Hospers.)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are crucial for India's economy, acting as a blueprint for balancing rapid growth with inclusivity and environmental protection, driving investment in green energy/infra, creating jobs (SDG 8), boosting financial inclusion (Jan Dhan), reducing poverty (MPI), and strengthening governance(NITI Aayog monitoring), positioning India for sustainable progress and global leadership by ensuring development reaches the most vulnerable.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

We must recognize the limits of our study. The research relied mainly on available literature, which may contain inherent biases or coverage limitations. In addition, despite our efforts to guarantee a thorough selection procedure, the ever-changing nature of study topics and terminology may have led to an overlook in our search method. Despite these limits, the study gives valuable insights into the difficulties and shortcomings of combining decent employment and economic growth, providing a solid platform for future research and policy development in this crucial field

CONCLUSION

Decent work and Economic growth are indispensable for achieving sustainable and inclusive development, Economic progress must be aligned must be aligned with human dignity, equality, and social justice. By prioritizing quality employment and fair labor practice, nations can ensure long-term prosperity and social stability.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (ILO) DECENT WORK AGENDA

The ILO Decent Work Agenda is the International Labour Organization's framework is to promote quality jobs, fair treatment, and security for all workers globally, built on four pillars: employment creation, rights at work, social protection, and social dialogue, with gender equality as a cross-cutting theme. It aims to ensure productive work with fair income, workplace security, social protection, better development prospects, and freedom, aligning closely with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth).

Four Strategic Pillars

- **Employment Creation:** Promoting opportunities for productive work that generates fair income.
- **Rights at work:** Guaranteeing fundamental principles and rights, like freedom from forced labour and discrimination, and ensuring safe conditions.
- **Social Protection:** Extending effective social security and safety nets for all.
- **Social Dialogue:** Strengthening participation of governments, employers, and workers (tripartism) in decision-making.

KEY ASPECTS & GOALS

- **Fairness & Dignity:** Work that is productive, secure, and offers dignity, equality, and personal development.
- **Poverty Reduction:** Putting money in pockets that fuels local economies and reduces poverty.
- **Sustainability:** Integral to the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs).
- **Implementation:** Carried out through national-level Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs).

In essence, the agenda seeks to create a global economy where everyone has the chance to find meaningful work, receive fair pay, work safely, and have a voice, fostering inclusive growth and social peace. According to press report. 14 July 2025: The Sustainable Development Goals 2025. Marks the tenth annual stocktaking of global progress toward the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. With the 2030 deadline only five years away, the report delivers a stark assessment: the Sustainable Development goals have improved millions of lives, but the current pace of change is insufficient to fully achieve all the Goals by 2030.

The report reveals real and substantial development gains during the past decade. Since 2015, the world has made notable strides in expanding access to education, improving maternal and child health, and bridging the digital divide.

The report calls for action in six priority areas: food systems, energy access, digital transformation, education, jobs and social protection, and climate and biodiversity. It also urges increased international cooperation and sustained investment to turn the ambition of 2030 Agenda into reality.

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