

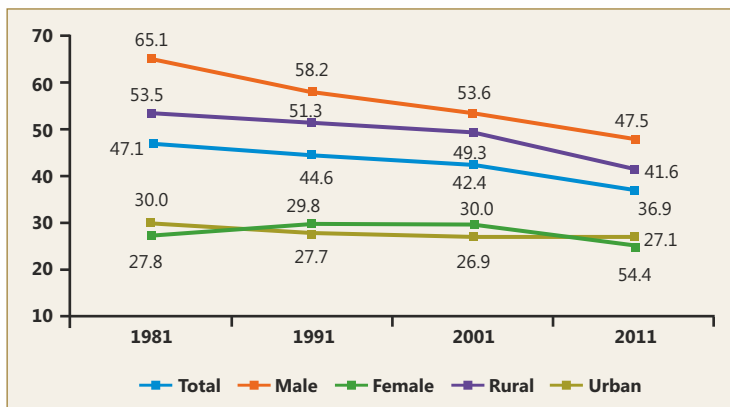
## Youth, Work and Skills: An Analysis of the 2011 Census

The young population of any country is one of the most discussed and debated groups of citizens that a country possesses. The youth is generally thought of as the most dynamic of age groups of people and the most critical to building a nation's future as they are the future citizens and it is at this stage of their lives that they form into the productive citizens that they must become in the future. That is why countries stress and strain over appropriate youth related policies; youth education, skilling and employment being key among them. India has the largest youth population in the world<sup>1</sup>. Thus, it is vitally important that policy is used to the best extent to harness the dynamic energies of the youth.

The table below shows a disaggregation of work rate participations of youth (Ages 15-24) by gender and urban and rural as per Census 2011 figures.

### Trends in Work Participation Rate (Youth)

As can be inferred from the graph, youth work rate participation trends show a downward trend from 1981 to 2011.



The reasons of declining work rate participation can be attributed to improving schooling and higher education rates (World Bank, 2009) and is borne about by evidence showing the same (Dev & Venkatanarayana, 2011). However, Dev & Venkatanarayana (2011) in an analysis of NSSO data from 2007-08 found that only 4.9 % of young workers had post-secondary education levels and an overwhelming majority had no vocational training, showing a poor quality of workforce. It is also noted that unemployment rate among young people is three times that of adults in the usual status of workers. And given that young workers are generally more vulnerable in terms of job security (Verick, 2009), a poorly skilled workforce does not bode well for young workers in the future.

**Source:** Chandramouli, C. (2014) "Adolescents and Youth in India - Highlights from Census 2011"

### Conclusion

A look at the Census data on youth work force participation shines a light on the extent of the challenge that faces the country in order to create a productive young population for the future. This an issue that has definitely not been ignored by successive governments with a special reference to Youth skilling and development in the 12th Five Year Plan released by the previous UPA regime and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's push towards the NDA government's "Make in India" and "Skill India" campaigns, both of which are geared towards engaging the youth in productive employment. It is clear this is an issue that needs to be addressed to ensure a more secure future for the country.

<sup>1</sup>Retrieved from: <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-in-school/india-has-worlds-largest-youth-population-un-report/article6612615.ece>

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