

Young India, tapping on its biggest asset – it's young professionals for a bright 21st Century

By

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India is a pluralistic, democratic, modernized society, which is playing a vital role in the global economy. India's biggest asset is its human capital – one billion of them. This article will focus on its youth and young professional – the domain of a vibrant, thriving, innovative future of a nation. The number of youth in the age group of 13-35 years, as per the 1991 Census, was estimated at about 340 million, and about 380 million in 1997, which is anticipated to increase to about 510 million by the year 2016. The percentage of youth in the total population, which, according to the 1996 Census projections, is estimated to be about 37% in 1997, is also likely to increase to about 40% by the year 2016.¹ The age group 10 to 19 years constitutes, 22.8% of the population (according to the Planning Commission's Population projections). This means that approximately 230 million Indians belong to this age group.

In a business world, a major corporation is made up of intangible assets: human capital, organization capital, information capital, culture capital, leadership capital, brand value and customer loyalty. The corporations that are most successful are the ones who focus on these assets. How do you think this is different from a nation's intangible assets? How would it look like if 450 million young professionals – its human capital in India, were leveraged for asset building and look at poverty eradication as an asset building process? For India to be a developed nation in its "*true sense*", it would be critical that it invests in the future of these young professionals.

With this in mind, we have launched Indian Young Professionals Network (www.iypn.net) that would assist India in achieving this goal – a network that has commitment towards India being a developed nation by 2015 and achieve the United Nations millennium goals (www.un.org/millenniumgoals). This network also has a registered foundation – Indian Young Professionals Foundation - based in Bombay for implementing this vision. Its primary niche will be use of Science & Technology through its Science & Technology for Development program. It will also be working towards women's empowerment and gender equality through its Women in Transition Program.

In a knowledge- and services-driven economy like that of India, it is this creative class at its core "the scientists, engineers, architects, designers, educators, artists, musicians, and entertainers whose economic function is to create new ideas, new technology, or new content" to drive India's economy to new heights.

¹ <http://yas.nic.in/>