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Skill development programmes under HPKVN: A study of trainees

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Abstract

Skill development deals with the identification of skill gaps and the improvement of existing skills to enable people to achieve their goals. The youth need requisite competencies, and there is a huge gap between people's current expertise and the skills required by industry. The importance of vocational education, training, and skill development is expanding in today's fast-paced technological world. The present day demands a connection between youth skill-based education and meaningful employment. In this study we aim to understand the effectiveness of the skill development programmes in Himachal Pradesh from the perspective of trainees for which the opinion survey was conducted on 374 trainees. This study sheds light on all the facilities and equipment which are being provided to the trainees to provide them with the better opportunities of employment and growth. It was concluded from the study that trainees joined a skill development programme to improve job avenues and six-month training programme was noted to be the most popular amongst trainees. Instructors and syllabus were found to be the most important determinants of success. Most of the trainees believed that they will be placed after undergoing training. However, hostel and infrastructure facilities were pointed out as deterrents in skill development mission.

Keywords: Skill development, training, employment, jobs, labour force, HPKVN, Himachal Pradesh

Introduction

Skill development helps in bridging the gap between industrial needs and educational qualifications of the youth, thus economic progress is accelerated by increasing labour's employability and productivity, which benefits our country's economy. One of the greatest impediments to inclusive targeted growth is the poor employability of India's youth. More over half of India's 1.3 billion people are under the age of 25, and almost 65% are under the age of 35. Of India's working population of 431 million people aged 15 to 59, 29% are illiterate, while another 24% have only completed basic school. Only 17% of the labour force has a senior secondary (grades 11 and 12) or higher level of education (including diplomas, graduates, and above). The development of productive and meaningful employment on a wide scale to absorb India's rising labour force is regarded as vital for inclusive growth and poverty reduction under India's Twelfth Five-Year Plan, 2012-2017. The proposed project assisted the Government of Himachal Pradesh (GOHP) in increasing the employability and employment prospects of the state's youth by modernising the institutional framework for technical education and vocational training (TVET), aligning all training with the national competency standards outlined in the National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF), and initiating public-private partnerships (PPP) to improve overall effectiveness and efficiency. Since the inception of economic planning in Himachal Pradesh, lowering unemployment and creating jobs have been two of the primary objectives. Employment generation and economic development should be complementing objectives of the plan, not conflicting ones. State is also facing the problem of unemployment because of non-interlinked academic and industrial requirements despite having high literacy rate 89.05% as per census 2022 estimations. According to figures made public by the department of labour and employment, there were an astounding 8, 77,507 young people who had registered as unemployed in the state (figures as on March 31, 2022). This represents more than 12% of the state's whole population. There are more than 76,000 postgraduate students, 1.41 lakh graduates, 6.28 lakh undergraduate students, 30,000 students below the matriculation age, and 400 illiterates. Women make up over 44% of the officially recorded unemployed. According to estimates, every year after graduating from college, more than 60,000 young men and women enter the labour market.

Himachal Pradesh has the fourth-highest unemployment rate of all the states, according to statistics issued by the think tank Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE). In October 2022, the unemployment rate in Himachal was 9.2%. The major reasons for unemployment are understood to be lesser employment opportunities in the state due to lack of extensive industrialisation and the other major reason stands out to be lack of relevant skills to match job requirements. So, even increase in industrialisation in the state won't be able to provide enough jobs to the youth of the state, if they are consistently being under skilled. Youth's desire for government work is another factor contributing to rising unemployment. Young people with good qualifications ideally try to work in government services, but there aren't many opportunities. According to the NSDC, 12 crores of trained personnel were supposed to be required by 24 industries by 2022. Capital, staff, teamwork, regulatory frameworks, and scientific and technological expertise all contribute to a business's success. The MHRD has developed procedures and programmes for skill development. Courses in skills are increasingly included in secondary education. Instead of conventional academics, skill streams will produce expertise. Restricting employment for the youth of the state also won't help much as industries require skilled labour force to run efficiently.

Review of Related Literature

A study on "Employability through Skill Development Programmes - an Overview of Significant of Employability skills" was conducted by Patil, S., Amaresh, B., & Charantimath. (2021) ^[14] with the goal of understanding the importance of employability skills and determining the gap between Expected Skills and Skills inculcated. According to the study's findings, effective stakeholder participation, including that of candidates, governments, educational institutions, and training partners, can improve the employability rate. The infrastructure facilities must be improved, and the curriculum must be updated with an industry-institution link. The public-private collaboration may make sure that skill development initiatives are properly funded, controlled, and evaluated. A study on "Review of the Skill Development Initiatives and its Effect on the Indian Economy" was undertaken by Srivathsani, S. & Vasantha, S. (2021) ^[17] to identify the necessity for skill gap analyses and comprehend the functions of the NSDC, NSDA, SSC, and DGT agencies. The study came to the conclusion that the shortage of skilled workers could be easily filled with the effective implementation of the "Skill India" mission by implementing organisations like the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, National Skill Development Corporation, Sector Skill Councils, etc. It is crucial to realise that formal education and skill development go hand in hand and are essential to the development of the country's economy. Arora & Chhadwani, M. (2019) ^[2] did a study titled "Analysing the Impact of Skill India as a Tool for Reshaping Indian Economy" in order to examine the purpose and effects of the skill India mission in changing the national economy. The analysis came to the conclusion that the Skill India Mission must be properly implemented in order to increase momentum. By 2022, the government has set the lofty goal of equipping 400 million people with the necessary skills, but it is clear that this goal is moving considerably more slowly than anticipated, and the ratio of training and skill

acquisition to job placement is falling short of expectations. 2.4 million People were supposed to have received training during the first phase, but only 1.97 million did. Only 2.3% of the workforce in India has formal skill training, compared to South Korea's 96%, Japan's 80%, Germany's 75%, the United Kingdom's 68%, and the United States of America's (52%). This emphasises the need for quick attention to improving people's skills and efficient execution of the full skill India Mission process. In their study, "Skill development for advancing the manufacturing sector: the role of "new-age" skills for "Make in India", Chenoy, Shukla, S. K. (2019) ^[5]," and came to the conclusion that there are numerous advantages to Industry including lower costs, improved efficiency, safety, quicker delivery, etc. These advantages can promote the manufacturing sector and boost competitiveness in the global market. The National Policy for Advanced Manufacturing and the "Make in India" initiatives are very helpful in putting Industry 4.0 into practise. However, the success of "Make in India" and "Skill India Mission" work hand in hand. Better programme execution of initiatives like apprenticeship and "Recognition of Prior Learning" can be ensured by convergence of all important ministries, including the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Ministry of Labour & Employment, etc. The Make in India initiative is extremely difficult to implement, hence cooperation between the government and industrial partners is essential.

Need of the Study

As per Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) report 2022, estimated unemployed youth in the state stands around 11.2%. Employment avenues are lesser due to lack of industrialization in most parts of the state. People have to either go out of state to find suitable employment or otherwise largely depend upon the agriculture and tourism sectors for their livelihood. Major problem of unemployment can only be tackled if industrialisation is promoted and youth is skilled parallelly to match the industry requirements. However, industrialisation in Himachal is also a challenge due to its terrain, lack of freight corridors, difficulty of procurement of raw materials, environmental restrictions etc. Mostly people depend upon government jobs in the state According to employee census 2018, nearly 2.17 lakh people are working in govt. sectors and 2.20 lakh were working in 2017. Government jobs in the state are also vanishing due to technological advancements. Which leaves youth of the state with little options but to enhance skills in major key areas of the state for employment like tourism, infrastructure development etc. Since, state is having an edge over other states due to its youthful population i.e.; 35.25 percent of the state's total population which is higher than the national level of 34.80 percent of total national population and this region has one of the highest rates of literacy in the nation 89.05 percent as per 2021 census estimations. According to the Census 2011, Himachal's youth population has increased by 129% in comparison to 85% national population growth rate of youth (15-35 years) in last 40 years as per report "Youth in Himachal Pradesh-2018", statistics made public by Economic and Statistics Department. Despite having young talent, most of it is underutilised due to insufficient employment opportunities for the youth and mismatch of skills acquired with employment opportunities available in

industries. To bridge this gap of underemployment state has been putting enormous efforts through various skilling programmes like TVET (technical and vocational education and training) via various platforms like ITIs, engineering colleges and polytechnics as well as through industrialisation of the state for creating job opportunities. Himachal Pradesh's school and college graduates are under-employed despite rising enrolment. Literacy rate of the state has increased from 82.8% in 2011 to estimated rate of 89.05% as per census 2021 estimates. Increasing number of educated unemployed, outdated curriculum and training equipment, inadequate training facilities, and weak industry relations hinder the state's TVET programmes. Under TVET and other initiatives, there are no universal training, certification, or placement standards. Thus, the need was felt for unified skill training ecosystem which will provide standardised training programmes aligned with India's National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF), due recognition of learned skills, certification and better employment opportunities for the youth. To overcome the limitations of the TVET programme, eventually Himachal Pradesh Kaushal Vikas Nigam, a State Government Corporation was established on September 14, 2015, as the State Skill Mission, in accordance with the Companies Act, 2013. Its goal statement is, "To strengthen the employable skills and livelihood potential of the State's young generation (15-35 years old) and equip them for continuous development and learning in a changing work and entrepreneurial environment in India and the World." The major facilitator of the Himachal Pradesh Skills Development Project (HPSDP), the state government of Himachal Pradesh's most important programme for creating jobs and sustaining livelihoods, is Himachal Pradesh Kaushal Vikas Nigam (HPKVN). Additionally, it collaborates with the state to administer the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY). In accordance with the National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, these programmes seek to improve the technical and vocational skills of youth in the state through education and training. The Organization's overarching goal is to prepare the state's youth population for rising labour markets in India and throughout the world. Himachal Pradesh Kaushal Vikas Nigam designs and facilitates vocational training programmes for Himachal Pradesh youth with the goal of increasing employability and providing better placements. Additionally, the trainings are meant to encourage small company start-ups and entrepreneurship. In order to restructure and scale up skill development activities in the state, the Himachal Pradesh Skills Development Policy (Him Kaushal), 2016 was enacted by the GOHP in June 2016. The project strengthened HPKVN's institutional capacity to implement this plan and meet the state's mandate for skill development. Duplicate TVET programmes were streamlined and integrated. The project was supposed to expand Himachal Pradesh's yearly TVET training capacity by 13,000 allowing the GOHP to reach out to neglected parts of the state with high-quality training and counselling services. It also helped GOHP provide NSQF-aligned vocational training and possibilities for livelihood development to 65,000 vulnerable youngsters between 2017

and 2022 as per HPKVN. Himachal Pradesh's youth gained critical TVET skills as well as the confidence to progress from the basic to secondary and tertiary sectors, where employment possibilities and salary are better. In rural ITIs, multipurpose training and marketing centres have been built in stages in a way that serves as a convergence point for various HPKVN schemes. These are managed using a hub-and-spoke organisational structure, with the District Skill Development Centre monitoring each training facility. The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of skill development and training on the employability of Himachal Pradesh's young and to determine how it has assisted them in finding better work prospects. This study also focuses on the most important areas for enhancement in order to increase the scheme's efficiency.

Objectives

1. To identify the reasons for joining skill development programme.
2. To know the interest areas of skill development in Himachal Pradesh.
3. To analyse the feedback and experience of trainees w.r.t training provided by HPKVN.

Research Methodology

Research Design: The study used both primary and secondary data and is exploratory as well as descriptive in nature.

Population: The primary data was collected from all the 12 districts of Himachal Pradesh. The list of training service providers was requested from HPKVN by the researcher, responding to which these training service providers provided the researcher with the list and details of training centres providing training as per HPKVN training programme.

Sample Size: 374 trainees who are presently undergoing skill development training at HPKVN recognised training centres in Himachal Pradesh.

Sampling Method: Purposive and Convenience random sampling method.

Research Instrument: A questionnaire was distributed among 400 trainees who are undergoing skill development training at skill centres under the skill development programme being run by the HPKVN in Himachal Pradesh. Purpose of the questionnaire was explained to the respondents in advance. Relevant data and information for secondary sources are extracted from newspaper articles, journals, magazines, different publications, and government websites or reports. However, the gathered opinions were analysed and have been provided in tabular format. Statistical tool: The percentage and weighted average mean methods were used to analyse the Collected data.

Results and Discussions

Trainees who are enrolled in the skill development programme were given a few questions through structured questionnaire. The findings of the opinion poll are as follows: -

Table 1: Reason-Wise Response Analysis of Candidates for Joining Skill Programmes

| Reasons | Percentage (N=374) |
|--|--------------------|
| To get entry into job market/entrepreneurship | 61% |
| To get your skills certified | 13% |
| Re-skilling/Up-skilling for better opportunities of work | 12% |
| Re-skilling/Up-skilling for better compensation/salary | 6% |
| Learning diversified skills | 8% |
| Total | 100% |

Table 2: Interest Areas Wise Response Analysis

| Category | Sub-Category | Percentage (N=374) |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Undertaking training programme | Textile and Apparel | 19% |
| | Banking and Financial Services | 17% |
| | Electrical and Electronics | 11% |
| | Communication | 8% |
| | Fabricated Metal Products | 8% |
| | Trade, Retail | 8% |
| | Drugs and Pharmaceuticals | 6% |
| | Chemical and chemical products | 4% |
| | Agriculture and Allied Activities | 4% |
| | Rubber and Plastics | 4% |
| | Manufacturing of Engineering Goods | 3% |
| | Education and Training | 2% |
| | Transportation | 2% |
| | Construction Material Manufacturing | 1% |
| | Construction | 1% |
| | Mineral Processing and Fabrication | 1% |
| | Healthcare | 1% |
| Agro, Beverage and Food Processing | 0% | |
| Hospitality and Tourism | 0% | |
| Total | 100% | |

From table number 1, this is evident that a majority of trainees (61%) when asked about their motive to join training programme revealed that they intend to get trained in order to get entry into job market/entrepreneurship. From table number 2 we understand, when candidates were asked

about their area of training, the highest number of trainees were enrolled in these mentioned programmes: Textile and Apparel (19%), Banking and Financial Services (17%), Electrical and Electronics (11%).

Table 3: Motivation Factor Wise Response Analysis of Joining Certain Course.

| Category | Sub-Category | Percentage (N=374) |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Reason for opting above course | Job-employment | 69% |
| | Self-employment | 23% |
| | Higher Education | 4% |
| | Parental Pressure | 3% |
| | Liking for the Course | 1% |
| Total | 100% | |

Trainees upon being asked about their reasons for opting given courses, mentioned that major one to be seeking job

employment with 69% of the respondents' support has been confirmed as per table number 3.

Table 4: NSQF Courses Wise Response Analysis of Popularity

| 0 | Certification | Duration | Percentage (N=374) |
|---------------|------------------|---|--------------------|
| NSQF Level 3 | Certificate | 3 Months – 6 Months | 6.80% |
| NSQF Level 4 | Certificate | 6 Months | 75.10% |
| NSQF Level 5 | Diploma | 1 Year | 9.20% |
| NSQF Level 6 | Advanced Diploma | 2 Years | 8.90% |
| NSQF Level 7 | B. Voc. Degree | 3 Years | - |
| NSQF Level 8 | P.G. Diploma | 01 Years | - |
| NSQF Level 9 | M. Voc. Degree | 02 Years | - |
| NSQF Level 10 | Research Level | UGC Minimum Standards and Procedure for Award of M.Phil. Or PhD Degrees, Regulation 2016. | - |
| Total | | | 100.00% |

From table number 4, it is confirmed that majority of the respondents are enrolled in for NSQF level 4, which is a

short duration training programme of 6 months, when enquired about their skill development programme level.

Table 5: Response Analysis of respondents towards availability of infrastructure, curriculum, teaching, practical training etc. as per NOS and NSDC parameters. (As per Likert 5 point scale)

| Parameters | Index Value | Percentage |
|---|-------------|------------|
| Teachers/ Faculty of Course | 4.2723 | 85.45% |
| Syllabus framed for the course | 4.213 | 84.26% |
| Placement Support | 4.2041 | 84.08% |
| On the Job facility | 4.1479 | 82.96% |
| Library facility | 4.0906 | 81.81% |
| Practical training in the institution | 4.0894 | 81.79% |
| Latest tools and equipment | 4.085 | 81.70% |
| Labs | 4.0814 | 81.63% |
| Infrastructure | 4.0534 | 81.07% |
| Residential Support /Hostels | 4.0423 | 80.85% |
| Industry Interaction | 4.0295 | 80.59% |
| Workshop availability | 4.0119 | 80.24% |
| Curriculum of the course | 3.9122 | 78.24% |
| Theory teaching in the class | 3.9008 | 78.02% |
| Class rooms (Smart) | 3.8612 | 77.22% |
| Recognition of prior learning | 3.7249 | 74.49% |
| Teaching aids | 3.7247 | 74.49% |
| Instructors for internship/ training places | 3.4151 | 68.30% |

From table number 5, it is evident that maximum number of trainees confirm the availability of teachers & faculty (85.45%), suitability of Syllabus framed for the course (84.26%), Placement Support (84.08%) as per NOS and

NSDC standards. However, the areas which need improvement are quality of instructors for lab or workshops and their availability (68.30%).

Table 6: Awareness level wise analysis of tie ups with industry for training and placement.

| Training centre have any tie up or association with any industry for training and placement purpose | |
|---|------|
| Yes | 60% |
| No | 40% |
| Total | 100% |

From table number 6, it is clear that majority of the respondents (60%) are aware of their training institute

having collaboration with industry for placement or training purpose.

Table 7: Response analysis on Practical Training/ Internship/On the Job training received during course period

| Received "Practical Training/ Internship/On the Job training" during your course period. | |
|--|------|
| Yes | 77% |
| No | 23% |
| Total | 100% |

When the same group of respondents was questioned if they had ever participated in any kind of practical training or internship, the vast majority of respondents confirmed that

they have in fact received training (77 percent) as per table number 7.

Table 8: Response Analysis on sufficiency of training and the courses to get the desired employment (as per Likert 5-point scale).

| Parameters | Index Value | Percentage |
|--|-------------|------------|
| Confidence of getting job after completion of course. | 4.7 | 94% |
| Course is worth enough to get the job. | 3.85 | 77% |
| Institutional training hours are sufficient to Acquire enough knowledge and skill. | 3.85 | 77% |
| Practical Training provided by the institution is Sufficient. | 3.7 | 74% |
| Hours of internship provided during th course. | 2.65 | 53% |
| Adequate provision of internship | 1.15 | 23% |

From the above given table number 8, a conclusion can be drawn in which trainees were sure that they will get a good job after training (94%), Course helps in getting suitable job (77%), training hours provided are sufficient to acquire

skills and knowledge (77%). However, trainees suggest a concern area of non- availability of adequate provision of internship (23%), which needs to be addressed.

Table 9: Challenges wise response analysis of trainees at training institutes.

| Challenges | Percentage (N=374) |
|---|--------------------|
| Lack of hostels or residential accommodation (women / distant trainees) | 23.30% |
| Lack of standardization | 18.60% |
| Inadequate infrastructure | 12.30% |
| Direct admission without assessment | 11.30% |
| Incompetent Trainers | 10.60% |
| Low student mobilization | 8.60% |
| Lack of industry interface | 7.10% |
| Career counselling | 4.90% |
| High cost of Training | 3.20% |
| Total | 100% |

Table number 9 suggests that in response to a question about the most significant obstacles that the trainees had to overcome, the majority of the respondents (23.30 percent) mentioned that a lack of hostels or residential accommodation was the most significant obstacle. The second most significant obstacle was a lack of standardisation, which was mentioned by 18.60 percent of respondents. The most significant obstacle was inadequate infrastructure, which was mentioned by 12.30 percent of respondents.

Conclusion and Suggestions

This study investigated the training components from the trainees' perspective and evaluated all relevant criteria, such as their ambitions, training interests, infrastructure availability, and other amenities. Trainees were questioned about their confidence in getting a suitable employment based on their trainings, any placement and training assistance through an industry-led interface, motivations for enrolling in a training programme etc. The majority of respondents (61%) said that they did so in order to improve their chances of entering the labour market or starting their own business. Other motivations for participating have included the desire to get skills certification (13%), to acquire different type of skills (8%), to up skill in order to increase one's earning potential (6%) and to improve one's employment possibilities (12%). Trainees reported that the textile and garment industry (19%), banking and financial services (17%), and electrical and electronics (11%) are the most appealing fields in which to get training. However, the most significant obstacles indicated were lack of hostels or other forms of residential accommodation (23.30%), particularly for female trainees and trainees coming from remote locations, emerges as the most significant obstacle among all of the others. Lack of consistency in training in accordance with both the NOS (National Occupational Standards) and the NSDC (National Skill Development Corporation) (18.60%). Inadequate infrastructure (12.30%) was found to be the other major obstacle that the trainees were confronted with. This obstacle includes a lack of washrooms, lab facilities, and extra classrooms for the additional courses to be run in the training centres. These need to be given more attention in view to make HPKVN more effective. However, as per this study's findings, skill development training in Himachal Pradesh helps trainees obtain gainful employment (77%). On the basis of the above findings, it has been felt that emphasis should be more on grassroots level changes through training centres like offering more courses to choose from. Creating awareness amongst trainees for these courses and putting an emphasis on courses which have high employment opportunities in

the state like agriculture, tourism, construction, and healthcare sectors. So, it can help trainees in securing a decent employment. Trainees can also be motivated to go for higher diploma in certain skills for better remuneration. However, short term trainings are more in demand than long term training programmes, so the focus should be on inculcating maximum value in short term trainings. Training centres must have tie ups with industry for training/internship/on the job training opportunities and placement purpose so as to place trainees after completion of training programmes. Residential accommodation must be provided to the trainees as well as trainers who belong to far off places so that they can choose their choice of trade anywhere in the state. We may infer from this study that HPKVN has been playing a vital role in training the youth of the state and offering better career prospects. Through these suggestions, the study aims to assist HPKVN in reaching out to a greater number of untrained candidates awaiting better future.

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