



IMPACT OF SKILL TRAINING PROGRAMS IN BIHAR: A PATHWAY TO ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

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Abstract : Human resources are the biggest strength of the country, which can turn into weakness or strength based upon the utilization. If we have skill according to the requirements of the country, then surely we can mark a milestone in the way of economic development. As far as Bihar is concerned, skill training programs have been transforming the economy of the state of Bihar by strengthening its larger youth population and contributing toward workforce readiness. The collaborations between the state and central government have led to significant transformation in Bihar's skill development progress-the BSDM and Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana, to name a few. These programs have focused on filling the skill gaps that are present today, enhancing employability, and providing opportunities for entrepreneurship, especially among underrepresented and marginalized segments.

Keywords: Skill Training, PMKVY, PMKK, KYP, Kushal Yuva Program.

INTRODUCTION

Skill development in Bihar has emerged as a milestone for the state's socio-economic growth, overcoming its challenges of unemployment and poverty. The state had necessitated skill training programs to reap its potential demographic dividend, mainly due to the young and rural population. In addition to the central initiatives like "Skill India Mission," the state government has itself invested in various training centres besides "Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)" and promoted technical, vocational, and soft skills.

The BSDM has spearheaded this process by fostering sector-specific courses and outreach programs, in an effort to reach toward the diverging needs of the workforce. Programs like the "Kushal Yuva Program (KYP)" focus on filling this gap between education and employability, boosting the digital literacy and communication skills of youth. There has been extra special attention to marginal communities so that the skill development initiative is not exclusive. While there still are issues like resource constraints and linkages to industries, the jobs provided, entrepreneurship, and women and rural youth participation are

testimony to the increasingly positive impact of skill training programs in Bihar. The commitment by the state towards skill development is helping its workforce attain growth which is sustainable and economically resilient.

Skill Development in Bihar: The Landscape and Challenges

Bihar has largely an agrarian economy where a huge part of the population is situated primarily in rural areas. Therefore, skill development has become imperative for the growth of state economy as well as for poverty relief in Bihar. Bihar Economic Survey has estimated that 80% of the work force is working in the unorganized sector, which hardly provides any formal skill training to these workers. In the context of these issues, the government of Bihar-through BSDM and the like collaborative efforts-brought into place a program that upskilled the youth, women, and marginalized communities. These were more localized, accessible, and specific to the sector as required by the regional economy.

Key Skill Development Programs in Bihar:

Several notable programs have been implemented in Bihar, each targeting different aspects of skill development:

Bihar Skill Development Mission (BSDM): BSDM has been the foundation for all skill training programs operating in Bihar and now has set up over 1,000 training centres across the state. The skill training offered is health services, retail, construction, IT services, and more. BSDM claims that these programs have skilling more than 3 million youth in market-ready skills since the start of the programmes.

Kushal Yuva Program (KYP): Under BSDM, KYP will target the majority of India's population-young people between 15 and 25 years of age who have passed school but lack employable skills. It would provide foundational training in communication, soft skills, and digital literacy, all of which are essential for most modern job roles. Already, over 2 million young people have been so trained under KYP; many of them find jobs or begin small businesses.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL): To support employed workers in informal sectors, RPL will give recognition and certification of skills gathered outside the form systems. That helps enhance opportunities for employability, further opening up to formal employment. Visible in Bihar is an increase in the building and handicrafts industries, where workers now have a guarantee of higher wages and improved working conditions after receiving their certificates.

Programs for Women and Marginalized Communities: Considering the above challenges, Bihar constructed targeted skill programs that would make women and other marginalized groups economically independent and confident in non-traditional role-playing. BSDM reports indicate that women participation in skill training programs has increased to more than 25%, especially in a rural context in which traditional vocational skills such as tailoring and handicrafts are now complemented by technical skills.

Critical Appraisal of Success Indicators of Bihar's Skill Training Programs:

Critical analysis of the success indicators of Bihar's skill training programs shows that there is both good and evil which exist. Normally, there are measures of employment after the training taken, number of participants joining the program, the reach of the training centres, and proportion of the underrepresented sections. The "Bihar Skill Development Mission (BSDM)" and the "Kushal Yuva Program (KYP)" are examples of such programs, where not only significant numbers have been trained, but also placement rates are satisfactory, mostly in sectors like retail, healthcare, and IT. The quality and the long-term effect of training, however, need to be critically analysed. Many graduates are not placed within their field of training, and further success in skill

training programs depends on developing entrepreneurship, a reported case-study feature that requires stronger support mechanisms to scale. Outreach to marginalized communities and women has been effective, although sustaining participation and advancement

into senior positions is an area for growth. To better impact, the skill development strategy of Bihar should not only focus on providing post-training support, having strong industry partnerships, and continuous feedback mechanisms for the better retention and quality incorporation into jobs. Bihar's skill training has been able to show measurable success in various ways. The BSDM's job-oriented training has delivered a high placement rate; more than 60% of trained youths have found jobs after six months of programme completion. Such sectors as retail, healthcare, and construction are at all time-high employment rates.

Rise in Entrepreneurship: Many youth, having been trained through such initiatives, have gone on to take up entrepreneurial ventures and hence contributed to the development of local economies. Micro-enterprise has increased its prominence in Bihar and more so in the context of the new normal post COVID -19 due to emergence of trained enterprise in the form of business in the retail sector, small manufacturing, and services.

Positive Impact on Women's Empowerment: The trainings for the women skill development have really influenced the employment of women in Bihar. The digital and retail operators, along with health aides, are increasingly employing women. Such visible and successful participation has shifted much of the social norm about women's participation in the workforce.

Healthcare Training and Rural Outreach: Bihar's healthcare training and rural outreach have played a significant role in addressing the gaps in the state's health care systems. In Bihar, people are largely rural, and medical infrastructure is scarce; thus, one requires considerable numbers of trained health care workers. The implementation of "Bihar Skill Development Mission (BSDM)" and collaboration with "National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)" have laid much emphasis on training local health workers, thereby providing more access to primary healthcare services to the most remote places.

Key interventions include training of "Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANM)" and "Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA)" that are considered to be one of the essential providers of maternal and child health services. General health care and first aid training has further empowered individuals to respond to emergencies, and access to full medical facilities in rural Bihar is likely to be restricted. Such efforts have empowered women, created employment, and improved health care outreach toward better maternal and child health outcomes. However, bottlenecks persist in the form of resource constraints and retaining trained staff in these rural regions. The thrust for further building on success would then come from more digital platforms to expand training, coupled with a strong public-private partnership to ensure the sustainability and upgrading of health care services in rural Bihar. Under BSDM, health workers are now being trained to serve rural communities that lack proper healthcare infrastructure. According to the Skill India Mission annual report, this has equipped thousands with health skills, including basic nursing and first aid. The local women being prepared as auxiliary nurse midwives have opened up access to maternal and child health care in the interiors.

Digital Literacy and Rural Entrepreneurship:

Thus, digital literacy has been one of the major enablers for doing rural entrepreneurship in Bihar because it has enabled people to leverage technology for their economic growth and innovation. In a state like Bihar where a majority percentage of the state population resides in its rural places, efforts toward bridging the digital divide are considered keys to unlocking the potential for entrepreneurship. Of course, initiatives such as the "Digital India" campaign and skill development programs under the "Bihar Skill Development Mission (BSDM)" have also been well promoted by the government. These programs focus on equipping rural residents with basic digital skills like the operation of computers, accessing the internet, and understanding e-commerce platforms. Such knowledge has empowered local entrepreneurs by opening up wider markets for business, allowing a smooth

flow of operations, and adopting new business models. The entry of digital payment and online platforms has benefited small-scale business people, farmers, and artisans a lot in selling their products to consumers. This is because it has allowed them to cut out the intermediaries and sell directly to the consumers, thus boosting profitability. It also threw open sources of information, training material, and schemes initiated by the government in support of such entrepreneurship. Challenges still exist: very few areas have

less internet connectivity and poor structures for rural coverage, but investments in digital infrastructure and more focused training programs would contribute to a stronger base for rural entrepreneurship toward economic self-sufficiency and growth throughout the villages of Bihar. The digital-literacy program of the KYP has been a big success. Youth trained in digital skills have used the same to establish local entrepreneurs, who operate e-service centres and offer services ranging from assisting rural citizens in conducting online banking to preparing documents for them. That not only creates enterprise but also extended invaluable service to the rural people.

Challenges and Areas for Improvement:

Bihar has done excellent work in skill training, but still, there are weaknesses and reasons to be concerned about its skill training system:

Resource Constraints and Infrastructure Gaps: While many districts now have training centres, some rural areas still lack resources or trained instructors. This disparity affects the quality and accessibility of training in remote regions.

Need for Stronger Industry Linkages: Better collaboration with private-sector employers may bring training more relevant to employer needs and raise effective job placement.

Post-Training Retention and Follow-Up: An important challenge is to ensure that the trained individuals stay in the workforce or pursue entrepreneurial opportunities. More effective tracking mechanisms would enable the assessment of long-term program impacts.

Future Directions for Skill Training in Bihar:

Bihar is well placed to continue building on its skill development success by focusing on the few key areas identified for future growth:

Investment in Emerging Skills: Program expansion in IT, data analytics, artificial intelligence, and other advanced skills would better prepare Bihar's youth for jobs in a tech-driven future.

Scale up Digital Training and Infrastructure: Since digital literacy is fast gaining pace, further investment in online skill training will expand access among even remote populations.

Program Evaluation and Feedback Mechanisms Improved: Strengthened monitoring and evaluation systems will facilitate refining and strengthening current schemes to be better responsive to manpower needs.

Conclusion:

Bihar's Skill Development Progress best represents the transformative capabilities of targeted training programs to redefine the economic and social package of a region. BSDM and KYP initiatives could successfully involve Bihar's youth population, boost employment rates, and encourage entrepreneurial activities as well. Continued efforts to beat back the obstacles and scale up

innovative training models by Bihar's skill development mission would ensure to continue empowering its citizens and contribute to the growth of the state. Bihar will well be on course to become a model for India in terms of skill development with emphasis on inclusiveness and relevance. Health training and outreach in rural Bihar have greatly contributed to improving public health, in this regard, equipping and expanding general access to healthcare. Such initiatives focused on the skill building of rural populations and the empowering of these populations have resolved immediate health issues while offering a springboard for economic as well as

social empowerment. Continued investment will be required to scale such programs and drive sustainability over the long term. This will require even more innovative training solutions and partnerships.

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