

Analysis of Economic Outcomes of Skill Development Programs on Youth in Rural Jharkhand: A Comprehensive Research

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the effectiveness of skill development programs in enhancing job satisfaction, financial independence, and career diversification among rural youth in Jharkhand. Through an analysis of correlation matrices, the research identifies key factors influencing program outcomes, such as placement assistance, financial independence, training infrastructure, government-backed initiatives, and career opportunities. The findings reveal that placement assistance and high-quality training infrastructure are critical drivers of job satisfaction, while financial independence significantly contributes to economic stability. However, gaps exist in diversified career opportunities, highlighting the need for better alignment of skills with job roles. The study underscores the importance of strengthening placement services, investing in training infrastructure, enhancing career diversification efforts, and optimizing government policies to bridge these gaps. Future research should explore longitudinal impacts, emerging technologies, gender-specific outcomes, regional comparisons, and the role of entrepreneurship to further improve skill development programs.

Keywords: *Skill Development, Job Satisfaction, Financial Independence, Career Diversification, Placement Assistance, Training Infrastructure, Government Policies*

1. Introduction

Skill development programs play a crucial role in empowering individuals, particularly in rural areas, by enhancing their employability, financial stability, and overall quality of life. In regions like Jharkhand, where employment opportunities are often limited and socio-economic challenges are prevalent, these programs are seen as a means to address youth unemployment and foster sustainable livelihoods. The primary objective of skill development initiatives is to equip individuals with relevant knowledge, technical expertise, and practical skills that align with labour market demands. Such programs aim to reduce poverty, enhance economic productivity, and contribute to the overall development of rural communities.

In the context of Jharkhand, a state characterized by its predominantly rural population, skill development holds immense potential to improve socio-economic outcomes. However, despite the numerous programs implemented, the effectiveness of these initiatives in producing sustainable results has been variable. The success of skill development programs often depends on several factors, including the quality of training infrastructure, access to financial support, placement assistance, government-backed incentives, and the relevance of career diversification opportunities. Understanding these factors and their interrelations is vital to improving the efficiency and impact of skill development programs.

Job satisfaction is one of the key outcomes of skill development programs. Participants who successfully complete these programs are expected to gain employment that matches their skills and aspirations, thereby enhancing their job satisfaction. However, several studies suggest that the alignment of skills with employment opportunities remains a significant challenge. Additionally, financial independence is another critical factor influencing job satisfaction and overall well-being. Programs that improve participants' economic outcomes, through wage increases and stable employment, tend to have a more significant impact on their satisfaction levels.

Training infrastructure also plays a vital role in the success of skill development programs. High-quality training facilities, modern equipment, and well-structured curricula contribute to better skill acquisition, which in turn increases job readiness and satisfaction. Government-backed initiatives, such as financial aid, scholarships, or loan schemes, further support skill development by reducing financial barriers and enabling access to education and employment opportunities.

However, challenges remain, particularly in ensuring that participants have access to diversified career paths and not just limited to traditional job roles. Limited awareness of non-traditional career opportunities and a lack of tailored support for career diversification hinder the full potential of these programs. The alignment of government policies with skill development initiatives also appears to be insufficient, with gaps in communication and accessibility affecting overall program success.

This study seeks to address these issues by examining the relationships between key factors such as placement assistance, financial independence, training infrastructure, government initiatives, and career diversification. By understanding these dynamics, the research aims to provide insights into

how skill development programs can be improved to better meet the needs of rural youth in Jharkhand, ultimately contributing to more sustainable and impactful outcomes.

2. Background

The table summarizes research on skill development programs and their impact on youth, employment, and livelihoods. It highlights authors, areas of research, skill development initiatives, and outcomes. Programs like PMKVY, NYSP, and vocational training play a key role in improving employability, reducing unemployment, and enhancing income levels.

Author	Area of Research	Skill Development Programs	Outcomes
Kluve et al. (2019)	Global youth employment	Youth employment programs	Multi-service programs, beneficiary profiling, provider incentives, long-term impacts
Chakravorty et al. (2019)	Rural Bihar, India	DDUGKY training program	Initial employment gains, fading effects due to socio-economic factors
Chakravarty et al. (2019)	Nepal	Vocational training programs	Increased non-farm employment, particularly for women
Olenik (2019)	International development	PYD frameworks by international donors	Greater youth participation in decision-making, evidence-based PYD strategies
Ganguly et al. (2019)	India agricultural sector	Skill development initiatives	Improved job stability, need for evaluation on income and productivity
Maïga et al. (2020)	Low- and middle-income countries	Agricultural skill-building programs	Limited evidence on youth engagement, need for stronger evaluations
Shahriar et al. (2020)	Bangladesh	Youth employment initiatives	Loan utilization, education level, and financial success
Booyens (2020)	South Africa tourism	Tourism sector skill development	Low-skill, insecure jobs, need for skill development aligned with industry
Agrawal et al. (2020)	India	Skill India initiative, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana	Improved employability, need for continuous assessment
Kumar et al. (2021)	India	Awareness of skill development programs	Knowledge gaps, improved employability, need for increased outreach
Adeyanju et al. (2021)	Nigeria	Fadama Graduate Unemployed Youths and Women Support (GUYS)	Improved agripreneurial performance, need for scaling initiatives
Chauke et al. (2021)	Youth development in South Africa	NYSP (National Youth Service Program)	Development of entrepreneurial skills, leadership, community engagement, poverty reduction, need for evaluation mechanisms.
District (2022)	Employability and livelihoods in India	PMKVY (Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana)	Improved employment opportunities, income enhancement, higher household income, improved quality of life in rural areas.

Srinivas et al. (2022)	Employability and competitiveness in India	Skill development initiatives	Workforce adaptability, addressing unemployment and poverty, inclusive participation (youth, women, people with disabilities).
Zamfir et al. (2022)	Wage disparities in Romania	Education and training programs	Significant effect of education on wages, factors like gender and urbanization impact outcomes, insights for educational policies.
Zaifata et al. (2023)	Youth income in Nigeria	ESDP (Entrepreneurial Skill Development Programs)	Positive impact on income levels, economic stability, poverty reduction, policy recommendations for ESDPs.
Nanda et al. (2023)	Youth unemployment in Maharashtra	Skill Development Programs	Reduced unemployment, skill development improves workforce contribution, growth of businesses.
Gupta et al. (2023)	Vulnerable youth in disadvantaged areas	Work-related technical skills training	Improved practical skills, resilience, self-esteem, employability enhancement, alignment with SDG targets.
Haleem et al. (2023)	Women's productivity in Pakistan	Skill development training	Increased productivity, revenue generation, addressing gender disparities, valuable policy insights.
Kumar et al. (2024)	SC/ST youth in rural Telangana	SBI RSETIs (Self Employment Training Institutes)	Increased employment rates, higher income levels, enhanced self-esteem, community involvement.
Devi et al. (2024)	Research trends in skill development	Bibliometric analysis of research	Growing trend in skill development research, insights for policy redesign, promoting sustainable economic growth.
Pareek (2024)	Global skill development initiatives	PMKVY, Germany's dual vocational training system	Bridging skills gap, improving industry-academia collaboration, strategic policymaking for economic growth.
Abay et al. (2024)	Youth employment in Kenya	Gender-sensitive soft-skills training	Enhanced labor market readiness, role of locus of control, differential returns based on gender.
Bhatt et al. (2024)	Labor market outcomes in India	Vocational training programs	Improved employability, increased income, higher job satisfaction, need for industry-aligned training and public-private partnerships.
Agrawal et al. (2024)	Financial progress in India	Educational programs addressing industry demands	Improved technical skills, socio-economic stability, addressing skill gaps, fostering economic and social development.

3. Research Methodology

This chapter outlines the research methodology used in the study, structured under the following sections: objectives, hypotheses, research design, study locale, methods, universe and population, sampling techniques, conduct and duration, variables, tools, and data analysis.

Research Design

A descriptive and analytical approach was employed to systematically explore the relationships between skill development programs and economic outcomes. This design allowed for both quantitative and qualitative data collection to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. Surveys, structured interviews, and secondary data analysis were used to gather insights and examine the impact of skill development programs.

Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in rural Jharkhand, India, chosen due to socio-economic challenges and high potential for skill development programs to improve livelihoods. The focus was on districts where government and non-government programs actively implemented skill development initiatives.

Methods

A mixed-methods approach was used, combining quantitative and qualitative methods. Surveys collected structured data on demographic and economic outcomes, while interviews offered deeper insights into participant experiences. Secondary data from government reports supplemented the primary data. Advanced statistical methods such as EFA, CFA, and SEM were used to validate models and explore relationships.

Universe and Population

The study's universe comprised rural youth aged 18-35 enrolled in skill development programs in Jharkhand. This age group was chosen as they are most active in the labor market, making them ideal for assessing economic impacts.

Sampling Technique

Stratified random sampling was applied to ensure representation across demographic segments, considering factors like age, gender, education, and socio-economic background. This method aimed to capture variations in outcomes across different strata, enhancing generalizability.

Conduct of the Study

The study was conducted in three phases: planning, data collection, and analysis. Tools were developed and pilot-tested during the planning phase. Data collection involved administering surveys and interviews, while the analysis phase integrated both quantitative and qualitative data to draw meaningful conclusions.

Duration of Study

The study was conducted over six months, with two months allocated to preparatory work, three months for data collection, and one month for analysis and reporting.

Variables and Measurement

Key variables included demographic characteristics, program components, job satisfaction, financial independence, and economic contributions. These were measured using questionnaires, Likert scales, and financial indicators. Secondary data from government reports was used for validation.

Tools Used

Structured questionnaires gathered quantitative data, while semi-structured interviews provided qualitative insights. Tools were validated through expert reviews and pilot testing. For quantitative data, EFA identified key constructs, CFA validated measurement models, and SEM analyzed causal relationships.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression modeling were used to explore relationships among variables. Advanced techniques (EFA, CFA, SEM) were applied to uncover latent structures and validate the theoretical model. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically to complement quantitative findings.

Delimitations

The study focused exclusively on rural Jharkhand, excluding urban areas. Participants aged 18-35 who completed training within the last two years were included. Programs unrelated to economic outcomes, such as those focusing on social skills only, were excluded.

4. Data Analysis and Result

The study includes participants from three age groups: 18–25, 26–35, and 36 and above. Of the 350 respondents, 37.7% belong to the 18–25 age group, 33.1% are in the 26–35 range, and 29.1% are 36 and above. The majority (70.8%) fall below 36, reflecting a focus on younger participants seeking career development or skill enhancement.

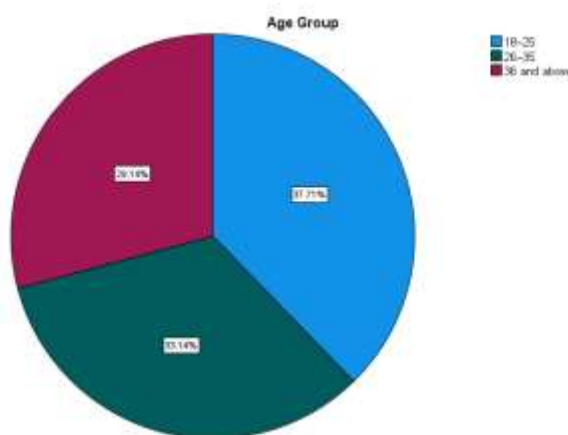


Figure 1: Age Group

Gender Distribution

The participants show relatively balanced gender representation, with a slight predominance of females (35.7%, 125 participants) over males (33.7%, 118 participants). Those identifying as "Other" make up 30.6% (107 participants). This diverse composition ensures equitable representation, contributing to a broader understanding of the study's phenomena.

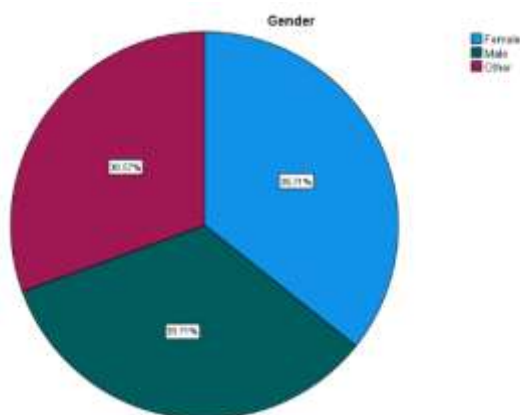


Figure 2: Gender

Educational Qualifications

350 respondents show a balanced distribution across educational levels. Post-Graduates represent 23.4%, followed by Graduates (19.1%) and Primary education holders (19.7%). Higher Secondary and Secondary education groups are equally represented at 18.9%. Cumulatively, over 61% have completed at least Post-Graduate or Graduate education, indicating relatively high educational attainment. The remaining 38.6% have lower educational qualifications, suggesting potential for targeted skill development to enhance employability and upward mobility.

Marital Status

Out of 350 individuals, 35.7% are married, 29.7% are single, and 34.6% are widowed, showing an almost even split between married and widowed groups. This reflects a diverse demographic, including both younger and older participants, which may influence economic and social challenges.

Caste Distribution

28.6% belong to the General category, 25.1% to OBC, 24.3% to SC, and 22% to ST. Over half (53.7%) belong to the General or OBC categories, while 78% include SCs, highlighting socio-economic diversity in the sample.

Household Income

26% of households earn ₹10,000–₹20,000, while 24.3% fall into the ₹5,000–₹10,000 and below ₹5,000 categories. Only 25.4% earn above ₹20,000, indicating income stratification with a significant proportion near or below lower income thresholds.



Employment Status

35.4% are self-employed, 35.4% are underemployed, and 29.1% are unemployed. The combined 64.5% underemployed/unemployed reflects significant job market gaps, emphasizing the need for skill development programs to improve employment outcomes.

Household Size

32.3% have 1-3 members, 32% have 4-6 members, and 35.7% have 7+ members, showing a majority of larger households, typical of rural settings.

Work (Skill Trained Worker)

Likert Scale Questionnaire: Economic Outcomes of Skill Development Programs

The following questionnaire uses a 5-point Likert scale for replies:

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

CFA Analysis

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) Interpretation

Degrees of Freedom and Model Fit

Degrees of Freedom: The degrees of freedom, calculated as 403, represent the difference between the total number of unique sample moments, which is 496, and the number of parameters that were estimated, totalling 93. A model with a reasonable number of degrees of liberty ensures identifiability and proper estimation.

Chi-Square Value: The chi-square statistic for the perfect is $\chi^2=592.706$ with 403 grades of liberty, and the p-value is 0.000. While a important chi-square designates a potential lack of perfect fit, it is common in large samples and complex models. Other fit indices (e.g., RMSEA, CFI, TLI) should be consulted for a holistic evaluation of fit.

Table 1: Correlations: (Group Number 1 - Default Model)

			Estimate
STJR	<-->	JSSW	.438
PASC	<-->	JSSW	.705
JSSW	<-->	GBIN	.436
JSSW	<-->	GDOP	.166
TQIS	<-->	JSSW	.502
JSSW	<-->	AFSS	.073
FIEC	<-->	JSSW	.666
STJR	<-->	PASC	.355
STJR	<-->	GBIN	.461
STJR	<-->	GDOP	.341
TQIS	<-->	STJR	.363

			Estimate
STJR	<-->	AFSS	.018
FIEC	<-->	STJR	.343
PASC	<-->	GBIN	.356
PASC	<-->	GDOP	.134
TQIS	<-->	PASC	.269
PASC	<-->	AFSS	-.003
FIEC	<-->	PASC	.558
GBIN	<-->	GDOP	.481
TQIS	<-->	GBIN	.190
AFSS	<-->	GBIN	-.107
FIEC	<-->	GBIN	.283
TQIS	<-->	GDOP	.160
AFSS	<-->	GDOP	-.025
FIEC	<-->	GDOP	.199
TQIS	<-->	AFSS	.183
TQIS	<-->	FIEC	.728
FIEC	<-->	AFSS	.128

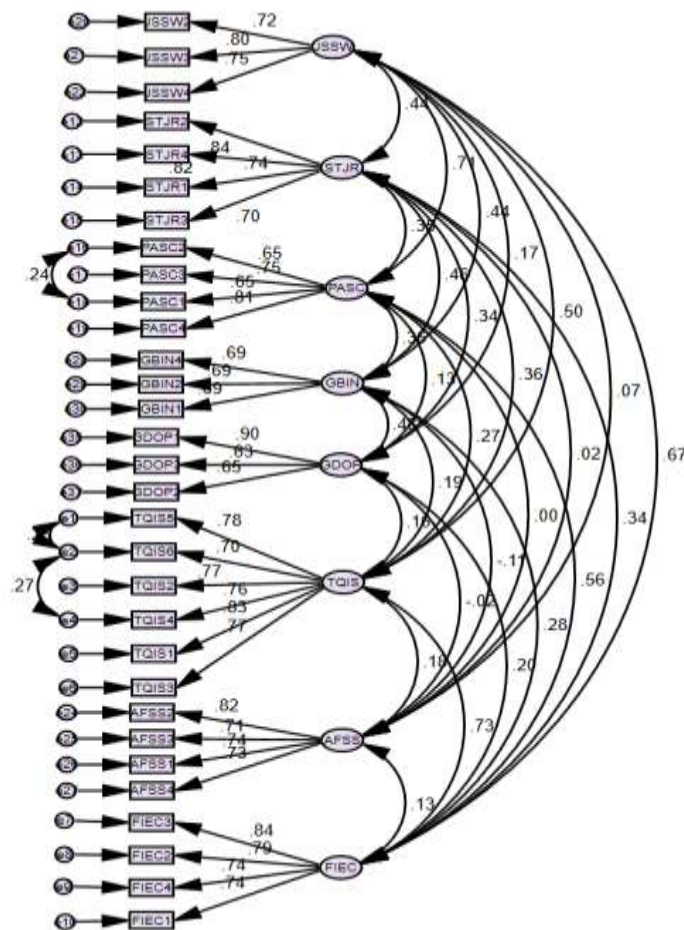


Figure 3: CFA Analysis of Underlying Factors of Skill Development

Correlation Analysis Summary

The analysis of the correlation matrix highlights key relationships among latent constructs affecting skill development program outcomes. Below is a summary of the relationships categorized by their strength:

Strong Relationships ($r > 0.5$)

- **PASC ↔ JSSW (0.705)**: Placement Assistance strongly impacts Job Satisfaction, emphasizing the importance of structured placement support.
- **FIEC ↔ JSSW (0.666)**: Financial Independence significantly contributes to Job Satisfaction, linking economic stability with perceived employment outcomes.
- **TQIS ↔ FIEC (0.728)**: High-quality training infrastructure is strongly correlated with Financial Independence, showing the foundational role of infrastructure in achieving economic outcomes.
- **Moderate Relationships ($0.3 \leq r \leq 0.5$)**
- **TQIS ↔ JSSW (0.502)**: Training infrastructure quality contributes to Job Satisfaction, though other factors are also important.
- **STJR ↔ GBIN (0.461)**: Skill-Oriented Training and Government-Backed Initiatives complement each other in enhancing program effectiveness.
- **GBIN ↔ GDOP (0.481)**: Government policies broaden career prospects, though more alignment is needed for further impact.
- **Weak Relationships ($0.1 \leq r < 0.3$)**
- **JSSW ↔ GDOP (0.166)**: Job Satisfaction and Diversified Opportunities show limited alignment, suggesting the need for better career guidance.
- **TQIS ↔ GBIN (0.190)**: Weak integration between infrastructure investments and government-backed initiatives suggests potential synergies.
- **FIEC ↔ GDOP (0.199)**: Financial Independence has limited influence on career diversification, indicating a gap in career mobility support.

Minimal or Negative Relationships ($r < 0.1$)

- **AFSS ↔ PASC (-0.003)**: Financial support during training has negligible impact on placement outcomes, suggesting the need for more integrated support systems.
- **AFSS ↔ GBIN (-0.107)**: Financial support and government-backed initiatives show a weak or negative relationship, indicating potential inefficiencies.
- **AFSS ↔ GDOP (-0.025)**: Financial support has limited influence on exploring diversified career paths, suggesting the need for complementary career guidance.

SEM Analysis

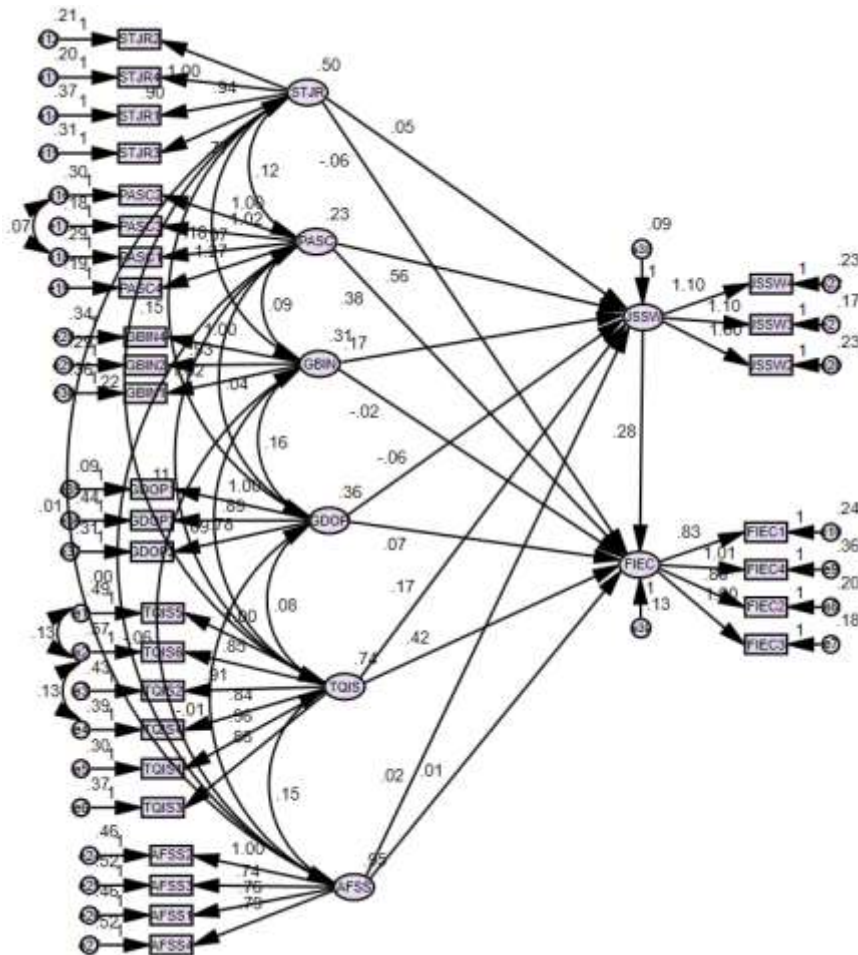


Figure 4: SEM Analysis of Underlying Factors of Skill Development

Key Relationships and Findings

Placement Assistance (PASC → JSSW)

Placement assistance has a strong, positive relationship with job satisfaction. Effective job-matching, interview preparation, and employer connections enhance job satisfaction by ensuring roles align with participants’ skills and aspirations.

Training Infrastructure and Quality (TQIS → JSSW)

High-quality training infrastructure significantly contributes to job satisfaction. Modern, industry-aligned facilities boost confidence and competence, leading to higher satisfaction.

Government-Backed Initiatives (GBIN → JSSW)

Government support (financial aid, subsidies) has a moderate positive impact on job satisfaction, though better alignment with participants’ needs could enhance its effectiveness.

Skill-Oriented Training for Job Readiness (STJR → JSSW)

The relationship is weak and insignificant, indicating that foundational skills alone don't directly influence job satisfaction. Training content needs better alignment with participants' career aspirations.

Diversified Opportunities Post-Study (GDOP → JSSW)

A weak, negative relationship suggests that broader career opportunities do not directly impact job satisfaction. Career guidance and better alignment with realistic job roles are needed.

Access to Financial Support During Study (AFSS → JSSW)

The negligible relationship indicates that financial aid alone doesn't directly influence job satisfaction. Integrating financial support with other elements like placement assistance or career guidance may improve outcomes. Placement assistance and training infrastructure have the strongest impacts on job satisfaction. Government initiatives also play a role, though their effectiveness could improve with better alignment. In contrast, skill-oriented training, diversified opportunities, and financial support show limited direct influence on job satisfaction. Enhancing these factors through better integration and alignment with participants' goals can contribute to more meaningful outcomes.

5. Conclusion and Future Scope

Placement assistance emerged as a significant predictor of job satisfaction, with effective systems ensuring better alignment between participants' skills and job roles. Financial independence had a strong influence on satisfaction and economic stability, highlighting the importance of skill programs that boost household income. High-quality training infrastructure, including state-of-the-art tools and facilities, was strongly linked to better skill acquisition and job readiness. However, a gap was observed in diversified career opportunities, with many participants struggling to access non-traditional roles. Government-backed initiatives showed positive results, particularly in retention and support mechanisms like financial stipends. The study reveals that placement assistance and high-quality training infrastructure are crucial for ensuring job satisfaction in rural Jharkhand. Financial independence remains a key outcome, emphasizing the importance of economic stability. While government initiatives contributed positively, there were gaps in aligning diversified career opportunities with participants' job roles, requiring targeted interventions. Bridging these gaps can enhance rural economic development and empower youth for sustainable livelihoods.

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