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The Psychological Benefits Through Training Effectiveness of Skill Development Training Programmes among India's Aspirational Districts

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The goal of this paper is to review research on the training effectiveness of programmes for skill development in ADP in India. It also assesses the program's limitations and makes recommendations for future research.

Theoretical framework: The Government of India introduced the Aspirational Districts Program (ADP) in 2018 with the goal of improving the quality of life in the 117 districts with the lowest performance levels in the nation by focusing on the following 5 key zones: health & nutrition, education, agriculture & water resources, access to financial services & skill development, and basic infrastructure. Unemployment and poverty are two problems that can be addressed by encouraging the growth of entrepreneurial spirit and the instillation of practical knowledge in rural communities.

Design/Methodology/approach: The paper examines previous research on ADP in India. This study was conducted through the analysis of articles that specifically discuss training effectiveness for skill development programmes in ADP, India.

Findings: The study's findings show that few districts in India represented in skill development training programmes were literate. A number of researchers have also raised concerns about methodology and sampling. Based on these findings, the review suggests future research directions.

Research, Practical & Social implications: In aspirational districts, a number of training institutions conducted a range of skill trainings for farmers and agricultural labourers, which were found to be moderately effective. However, there were a few areas where development slowed down. The majority of the training was based on the topics covered in the training programme and not on a participatory need evaluation.

Originality/Value: The review, which examines a variety of journals, includes an organised bibliography of programme research in India. The review paper describes the current state of research on the training effectiveness of programmes for skill development under the ADP in India and identifies the major gaps.

Keywords: Skills; knowledge; training; development and aspirational.

INTRODUCTION

Currently the world's fifth-largest economy, India aims to hit a GDP of $5 trillion by 2024–2025. Many people's living conditions will improve as a result of this rapid expansion. India ranks 131 out of 189 countries according to the UNDP's Human Development Index, which demonstrates the country's low living standards and suggests that the country's current growth narrative may not be accurate for many of its citizens (Kumar, 2021). In agriculture, it is important to have the cognitive abilitiesto make sound decisions, the technical know-how to operate a wide range of tools, and the interpersonal communication skills to effectively disseminate vital farm information (Bhattacharyya, 2019, pp. 47-62).

In 2018, the GoI launched the Aspirational Districts Program under the NITI Aayog, the new think tank that replaced the Planning Commission. The program's overarching goal is to help India achieve its sustainable

development goals. Out of a total of 615 districts, the programme has identified the 117 that are the most lagging in terms of development. This is being done in an effort to decrease regional imbalances. According to the program's cooperative federalism strategy, the federal and state governments will cooperate to both lower and raise the baseline ranking of district development. The program's primary areas of concern are health & nutrition, education, infrastructure, financial inclusion, and skill development, and working with civil agencies and subject-matter experts is viewed as a significant and forward- looking step in the right direction (Puri, 2018). A training activity is said to be effective if it leads to the preferred shifts in knowledge, skill, and attitude among its trainees. The human and material resources invested in training are wasted because most training programmes are run randomly without first evaluating the training requirements.

At its core, the ADP is concerned with the monitoring and improvement of human development outcomes in the areas of health and nutrition, education, agriculture and water resources, economic participation and skill building, and basic infrastructure. One of the five overarching themes is skill development, which helps alleviate rural unemployment and poverty by teaching valuable trades and fostering an entrepreneurial spirit. The term "skill development" is used to describe the process through which an individual enhances his or her set of skills in order to become more effective and productive in their daily lives. The process of planning activities in which people might gain the knowledge and abilities needed to perform a task successfully is what we call "raining," and it will aid us in constructing the skill or competence at hand. In order to perform complex activities involving ideas (cognitive skills), things (technical skills), and people (social skills), one must develop these abilities through purposeful, methodical, and persistent effort (Lynton, 2011). Training will aid us in developing a skill (interpersonal skills). Agriculturists need cognitive abilities for problem solving and decision-making, technical expertise for operating a wide range of tools, and interpersonal communication skills for effectively disseminating knowledge about farming (Bhattacharyya, 2019). A training activity is said to be effective if it leads to the intended changes in knowledge, skill, and attitude among its trainees. Unfortunately, most training programmes are run blindly without first evaluating the training demands, rendering the time and money invested in such endeavours futile.

Since 1999, over 2000 Indian farmers have died each day (Sainath, 2013). Farmers earn, on average, less than a quarter of what other people do, and the active agricultural labour survives on barely a seventh of GDP (Gupta, 2015). More than half of the 263 million individuals who are currently employed in the world work in agriculture as labourers. By 2022, the number of people employed in agriculture is projected to drop to 190 million, a loss of 33% from 2017 (Mehrotra, 2013). Improved agricultural productivity, appeal, and enterprise could help reduce rural- urban migration and provide farmers a reason to feel proud of their work. This can only be accomplished by enhancing farmers' knowledge and abilities so that old, inefficient practises give way to cutting-edge, efficient, and fruitful ones. Therefore, skill development was considered one of the five developmental categories and assigned a 5% weight in ADP. Since ADP's inception, numerous agencies, NGOs, ICAR centres, and state agencies have tried to improve farmers' and farmworkers' access to education and training opportunities. Yet, it is important to evaluate the efficacy of these trainings in terms of meeting established training goals and imparting knowledge and abilities to participants. Based on the evaluation of the aspirational district programme, more effort should be put into skill development in the aspirational districts (Michael E. Porter, 2020). Therefore, the purpose of the current research is to review the previous studies on the efficacy of training programmes for agricultural sector skill development using the aspirational district programme.

Aspirational Agenda for Social Change

The Transformation of ADP, launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in January 2018, has become an integral part of the developmental framework set forth by the Government of India. The programme has been launched with a five- year target-driven approach, with the performance indicators to be achieved between 2018 and 2022. The year 2022 will see India commemorating its 75th year of independence. India was ranked 131st out of 188 countries in the UNDP's 2016 Human Development Index. A closer examination of the data reveals significant heterogeneity in India's standard of living. Significant distinctions exist between states and between districts. India can advance in the human development index by improving the districts that have made relatively less progress towards achieving important social outcomes.

Objectives

The aim of this paper is to review research that focuses on the training effectiveness of programmes for skill development in ADP in India. Given that the majority of the government's skill training programmes are focused on increasing the availability of formal training, the research will concentrate on the formal training component of vocational training. Reviewing the existing framework for skill development in order to depict its current structure, identifying challenges, and discussing feasible policy interventions are all part of the process of developing a successful skill development system that can turn the challenges of unskilled, unemployed, and underemployed individuals into an opportunity.

The objectives of research are:

- To examine skill development programme among aspirational districts of India; an overview of published journals; commonly used methodology, and theoretical perspectives utilised to assess the results.
- To highlight the self-reported limitations the skill development programme among aspirational districts of India
- To identify gaps in current evidence on skill development programme among aspirational districts of India

METHODOLOGY

The primary goal of this review paper is to analyse and evaluate the findings and limitations of previous studies as well as other related research sources in relation to the study's stated objectives. Publications for this review were picked from a variety of sources, including Research Gate and Google Scholar.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Singh, M., and S. Deshmukh (2022) focused on the psychological or attitudinal aspects of the rural poor related with SHGs, as well as the influence of microfinance on long-term rural livelihood stability. Rural women had a positive attitude because SHG helped them lessen their financial reliance on informal money lenders; they gained access to hassle-free banking services and began saving money after linking SHGs. According to this report, leveraging microfinance for "financial inclusion" and "livelihood diversification" will help South Asian low- and middle-income nations meet the SDGs.

Katekar, V. P., & Deshmukh, S. S. (2022) investigate the socioeconomic growth of the Washim district in order to define the parameters for district development. According to the findings of this study, the Washim district is located in a rural area with a low child sex ratio. It has no value in some villages. The child sex ratio is lower in some locations where the Scheduled Caste (SC) or Scheduled Tribe (ST) population is higher. The district has 692 electrified villages out of 698 inhabited villages, with 99.1% of towns having installed electricity supplies. In the Washim area, the use of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and piped natural gas (PNG) is negligible. The use of LPG and PNG is found to be smaller than its average value in regions where firewood availability is accessible and sufficient.

Kumar et al., (2021) focused on assessing out how well skill development training programs were working in 2 "aspirational" districts of Karnataka (Raichur & Yadgir). Rural unemployment and poverty can be solved by teaching people the skills they need and helping them learn how to be entrepreneurs. Twelve hundred trainees, thirty farmers, and thirty agricultural workers from each district, all trained at various institutions, provided the first- hand information. Training effectiveness was positively correlated with a number of independent variables, including interest in learning, creativity, eagerness to apply training, confidence in one's ability to do so, and the desire to achieve. Overall, training was found to be effective 51% of the time, which is a medium level of effectiveness.

Singh, et al., (2021) investigated the influence of skill development training on knowledge growth in Low Cost Mushroom Production Technology as an enterprise. 90 participants were selected from a pool of students at Panipat's Krishi Vigyan Kendra who had recently finished a five-day course in skill development. To measure how much trainees learned about different aspects of low-cost mushroom production technology during the

training, we gave them tests before and after the course. The pre-training knowledge score was found to be unsatisfactory for all components of the training programme. However, the respondents' knowledge score following training was higher in all respects. The analysis revealed that SC/ST Farm Women and Rural Youth understood Low-Cost Mushroom Production Technology after training. In the pre-evaluation test, participant knowledge ranged from 4.4% for Insect-Pest-Disease of Mushrooms and its Management to 46.6% for the nutritional significance of mushrooms.

Sarkar, A. (2021) discovered that vocational training programmes are still ineffective at closing the gender wage gap. In this case, you must exercise extreme caution and attention. Women's cooperatives and self-help groups can go a long way towards empowering women producers, and expanding these organisations through legislation is one crucial legislative option. All training programmes, then, need to incorporate strategies for empowering women in management, business, and sales. An alarming number of working women are unable to collect social security benefits. Employers need to be made aware of the laws protecting women in the workplace, and compliance can only be ensured through training and close oversight.

Rajni Jain et al., (2021) studied how well agricultural infrastructure is set up in "aspirational districts": An analysis of Bundelkhand. Infrastructure for agriculture has the ability to transform subsistence farming into a cutthroat and profitable industry. The costs of farming fall and the profits rise when infrastructure like markets, roads, irrigation, extension services, credit, and storage are all well-developed. The study, which was done at ICAR- NIAP from 2017 to 2020, shows how to measure the adequacy of rural infrastructure and how to put it into five categories with a case study of the Bundelkhand area.

Koodagi et al., (2021) discovered that trainees' socioeconomic level varied according to age, education, occupation, and landholding. 46 mushroom production units were developed among the 283 training participants. Regardless of the components selected to test, the trainees' knowledge level related to mushroom production technologies ranged from 2.12 to 34.62 percent in pretraining and 42.04 to 85.87 percent in posttraining. However, the percentage change in knowledge level ranged from 26.14 to 74.91%. According to an economic analysis of five units, selling 3.87 q per crop yielded an average income of Rs. 35,335/-. Proper training and guidance for farmers is required in order for interested producers to sustain and earn a living.

According to **UNDP (2021)**, the particular influence of ADP across the various districts was evaluated, particularly in regard to well-known development concerns in aspirational areas. The results of this review demonstrate that great progress has been made since the program's commencement. In order to help NITI Aayog and other stakeholders fill in any gaps that still need to be filled, engage in evidence-based planning, and make decisions based on that evidence, this assessment of the ADP aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the GoI flagship programme. Its secondary purpose is to direct district governments, development partners, knowledge partners, and other interested parties toward the ADP's goals.

Pradhan et al., (2021) examined The ADP in India, which strives to meet the SDGs, includes "Health and nutrition" as one of its five focus areas. The SDGs continue to place a strong emphasis on reducing undernutrition in children under the age of five, particularly between the ages of six and twenty-three months, due to its impact on children's development. This study analysed data from the 2015–16 National Family Health Survey to assess suitable feeding behaviours and their relationships with malnutrition among kids 6–23 months old in 124 promising aspirational districts in India.

Ebrahim, S. N., & Girija, V. (2020) looked at how women trainees at a Krishi Vigyan Kendra felt about the effectiveness of their home science vocational training (KVK). Training efficacy was assessed on five dimensions: training coverage, training utility, training quality, training knowledge, and training skill. Many participants rated their training as "moderately effective," but this was far from universal. The effectiveness of the programmes did not vary greatly between the four different groups that received training. There was a significant correlation between training efficacy & factors like mass media exposure, information seeking behaviour, attitude towards training, and entrepreneurial behaviour.

Sharma, S., and Sharma, V. (2020) evaluated that 84% of AD in the EAG states is operating at sub-optimal levels, with 42 of them receiving efficiency ratings of 80% or worse. This research demonstrates that

underperforming municipalities can benefit considerably from improved resource management and redistribution. According to the results, the Gaya area has the most room to increase production over the present level. In addition, the analysis provided a numerical representation of similar districts that had performed poorly. There is little doubt that Sirohi and Bokaro, as the most recognisably successful peers, have provided substantial learning opportunities for other aspirational districts in the form of creating maternity healthcare models.

Anil Kumar et al (2020) examined the GoI Aspirational District Programme, which aimed to quickly develop the 117 backward districts of the nation. Socioeconomic factors were a crucial factor in determining how backward a district was. Except for Dhenkanal, the majority of Odisha's aspirational districts are situated in the state's southernregion. Compared to the state average of 83.3 percent, 89.3 percent of people in the aspirational districts reside in rural areas. The study found that the aspirational districts' socio economic indicators were inadequate and required targeted attention to improve.

Kobba et al., (2020) used a variety of approaches to assess the success of entrepreneurship training programmes at Krishi Vigyan Kendra. The training's effectiveness was determined by participant observation of the training in action. A knowledge test was used to assess the trainees' increased knowledge, and feedback on different aspects of the training was obtained. SPSS and descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data. Training's overall effectiveness index for KVK was 83%. Students' understanding rose by 45 percent after taking the course. Most participants gave the training an "effectiveness" rating of between 81% and 100%. It is suggested that appropriate time management and training materials be made available to trainees in order to encourage practise and mastery of skills.

Borah et al. (2020) highlighted the ADP's impact on health & nutrition outcomes in the Baksa district of Assam. The district's ranking has improved since the ADP was implementedin 2018, rising from 107 out of 112 districts to 26 out of 112 ADPs for health and nutrition as of July 2020. This major shift in ranking could be attributed to the district's current major health and nutrition programmes.

Kumar et al., (2020) examined the ADP, which was launched via the GoI in 2018 to improve citizens' living conditions in 115 underdeveloped districts by focusing on five critical areas, including nutrition & health. The socioeconomic status and nutritional status of children in Odisha's ten aspirational districts were investigated. Aspirational districts in Odisha are predominately tribal, with lower literacy levels and a significantly larger gender gap in literacy, so there is an urgent need for a targeted approach to reduce the incidence of child malnourishment by implementing the ICDS programme, the midday meal scheme, and so on.

Sinha (2019) investigated that the most significant difference between the two programmes is their monitoring and evaluation procedures. Unlike the BRGF, the ADP's results are published on the CoC portal in the form of composite scores and ranks, with constant review and follow-up reports supplied to emphasise the progress. The BRGF relied on annual or five-year evaluations of its results.

Jaiswal, M., Singh, A., Singh, K., and Singh, B. (2019) conducted research in five adopted villages of Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Burhanpur. A sample of 500 adult members actively participated in over 100 different training programmes organised by KVK, Burhanpur, over the last five years on various topics such as pre-sowing methods, crop management practises, post-harvest management, goatery production, and livestock management practices. Findings show that the majority of farmers preferred on-campus training over off-campus training. Farmers rated one to three days of training organised during a lean period as the most preferred training programme.

Puri (2018) focused at the recently started ADP by the GoI. The goal of the program is to help India reach its sustainable development goals. Out of 615 districts, the programme has focused on the 115 that are the most backward in order to even out the differences between the regions. Based on the principle of cooperative federalism, the programme encourages collaboration between the federal and state governments in an effort to reduce and improve district development's starting point. It is widely regarded as a significant and positive move forward to collaborate with civil agencies and subject-matter experts.

Abhinav Vats et al., (2018) developed real-world proof for a effective model of competitive federalism by

using "The SUPER (S-smart, U-unique, P-perfect, E-enterprising, R-role model) Village Challenge" in Palwal district, Haryana. In order to implement policies and govern efficiently, an increasing number of people are looking to competitive federalism models. The NITI AAYOG has recently advocated for more advanced forms of competitive cooperative federalism. In addition, in March 2018, NITI AAYOG released its Aspirational Districts Program baseline ranking of 115 districts. The plan is to use objective metrics to evaluate the performance of individual districts and their collectors.

Porter et al., (2018) studied An Assessment of the Aspirational Districts Program provides a timely and methodical examination of the ADP and its accomplishments to date. The research also investigates the role of the stakeholder-oriented paradigm, which uses public awareness, public-private partnerships, and multilevel government cooperation to increase the success of particular initiatives. This research builds on that collection of data and gives an interactive visualisation tool that various stakeholders can use to make well-informed ADP strategy decisions in accordance with their own priorities and available resources.

Kant (2018) evaluated the development and results of programmes undertaken by the Federal Government in cooperation with the States. As of May 2018, the dashboard will rank

districts based on the delta, an indicator of incremental development that will be tracked in real time. Transparently and promptly reforming 115 districts in 28 states is crucial to the success of the initiative. Convergence, collaboration, and competition among districts are the three pillars of the program's framework. Together with the States, NITI Aayog and the other affiliated ministries work to make India more open, inclusive, and accountable to its citizens.

Vikas Bhatia et al., (2018) examined a public health perspective on developing the underdeveloped: Aspirational districts initiative. After determining the district's fundamental strengths and shortcomings, the state will take the lead in upgrading the district so that it can rank among the finest in the country. Aspirational districts are thus defined as low- performing districts that want to become the finest districts in the country. The lowest- performing 117 districts were originally chosen for this programme based on their performance in a number of national polls and other accessible district-level data for several programmes.

A study of **Dash, D., and Kumar, B. (2018)** determined the needs of rural adolescents for vocational training in fields connected to agriculture. Using an analytical study approach, a qualitative and quantitative inquiry was conducted in the Uttarakhand district of Udham Singh Nagar. The amount of training required for major vocations' subfields was also determined. The village was the best location for training for around two months in the morning during the Rabi season. Regular trainings, fortnightly demonstrations, and scientists and demonstrators were the most popular options. While accomplishment motivation exhibited a substantial positive link with rural youth's demands for vocational training in fields related to agriculture, innovativeness, leadership ability, risk preference, and occupational aspiration did not.

Singh, V., Yadav, K. S., and Pachauri, V. (2017) carried out a study in the Chitora and Baroda villages of Sagar district, recruiting 62 women between the ages of 18 and 40. The goal was to determine the effect of KVK training on their awareness of suitable child care procedures. A pre-structured interview schedule was employed to obtain data. The study's findings revealed that after the training programme, women's knowledge levels dramatically increased. The mean knowledge score before training was 2.701.45, and it climbed to

4.421.01 after training. It was also discovered that women's understanding of child care was substantially connected with family type, income, education, and exposure to mass media.

According to **Sonkar, et al., (2015)**, the majority of the respondents were between the ages of 36 and 54, had an intermediate level of education, belonged to another backward caste, were from joint families, had large families, owned a lot of land, worked in agriculture as their primary occupation, were from the middle income bracket, and had between 21 and 32 years of farming experience. Pumpkin farming was respondents' top choice for training, followed by bottle gourd culture (ranked second), and radish growing (ranked third). Themost popular vegetables to train with were bottle gourds and pumpkins. While the preferences for training in the primary & secondary sectors of vegetable cultivation vary depending on the vegetable.

Chamundeswari (2013) emphases on the aspect of effective teacher management to find out what makes students want to learn and be interested in class and what makes them not want to. Based on this research goal, the researcher decided to look into how teachers at the secondary school level run their classes. If the teacher doesn't manage the classroom well, students don't care about learning and aren't disciplined. The 47 factors that affect how teachers manage their classrooms will have a big effect on how well their students do. But the outcomes for students will be different depending on how teachers run their classrooms.

Rachna, R. G., and Sodhi, G. P. S. (2013) evaluated the participants' knowledge gain, the enterprise's adoption level, and ideas from mushroom ex-trainees to improve mushroom farming entrepreneurship. During the fiscal year 2008–09, a maximum adoption rate of 40.9 percent was reported. Among the various mushroom production strategies, compost preparation yielded the highest knowledge gain (52.2%). Participants had the least understanding of disease and pest control (23.4%), followed by diverse cultivation techniques (37.3%). It was decided that these procedures should receive additional attention in upcoming training sessions. The characteristics of the participants, such as educational attainment, prior exposure to agriculture, and extensive media interaction, had a positive impact on the knowledge gained by the respondents. According to 100 mushroom producers, the availability of quality spawn (62.0%), crop insurance (53.9%), and lowering input costs (45.0%) were the 3 main ideas for the effective development of the mushroom business in Punjab.

Nain, M. S., & Bhagat, G. R. (2005) looked at how trainings on area-specific technology that makes vegetables available all year round affected the area. The study's results showed that the technology had been used in a moderate way, and that trained farm women knew a lot more than those who hadn't been trained.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

After analyzing previous studies on ADP in India, some significant challenges appear that require immediate action. These challenges include: The vast majority of those who participated in the trainings felt they contributed to an increase in their levels of knowledge and ability. However, only a small percentage of trainees are capable of turning their newly learned talents into successful businesses. As a result, it is necessary to inspire, train, and support trainees in order for them to put the skills they have learned in the process of farm diversification and the establishment of new businesses into practice. Following the completion of the course, training institutes also had to perform some sort of follow-up action. The government could also provide support in the form of laws and actions to promote trained individuals by connecting them with financial institutions.

The ADP has played an important role in fostering development and innovation across major focus areas. The UNDP assessment brilliantly captures the relevance of these indicators as well as the vivid success stories and best practises that are reverberating across the country. First, under health and nutrition, model anganwadi centres for women and children have been established in each district. The number of institutional births has increased, and the rate of severe acute malnutrition among babies has decreased. Currently, new-born height and weight measurements have been standardised. Second, school outcomes have vastly improved throughout these districts. Innovation and digitization have been the cornerstones of the education sector's change. Numerous districts have pushed towards the development ofspecialised educational alternatives. As seen by the Chandauli black rice experiment, the Aspirational Districts Programme has provided a significant boost to the agriculture and water resources sectors. District administrations have placed a significant emphasis on enhancing irrigation infrastructure and production as well as farmer education. Fourth, to improve connectivity in these districts, many of which are geographically disadvantaged, basic infrastructure is a priority. This parameter is used by districts afflicted by left-wing extremism to maintain internal security. Fifth, under the financial inclusion and skill development pillar, the city of Gadchiroli in Maharashtra has offered an excellent example. The district has launched micro-ATMs to provide financial aid to members of women's self- help groups, who receive commission-based revenue after each transaction. These ATMs may also function with a weak internet connection and permit cash withdrawals, deposits, mobile phone recharging, and bill payments.

In India, the idea of skill development has been widely acknowledged, and numerous programmes and policies are currently being established to promote this notion not just among those living in metropolitan regions but also among those living in rural areas. This recognition has occurred across the country. The establishment of

various programmes, educational institutions, and training facilities has made the development of skills far more accessible. There are many different kinds of skills, and within an organisational structure, it is important for the management to build leadership skills amongst themselves. Some examples of leadership skills include inspiring others, making decisions, and communicating with others. There have been efforts to educate and empower India's rural populace in the hopes that they may one day be able to support themselves economically, socially, and politically. Opportunities for growth and development can be found in various skillsets, including literacy, computer use, manual handicrafts, manufacturing, trading, and so on. The growth of one's skills invariably results in the individual's advancement, and while the kinds of skills and information that an individual gains might not be immediately useful, they invariably show to be advantageous in the long run. The study's findings show that the districts are closest to their goals in the areas of health and education. When it comes to health, 30% is the absolute furthest that districts may go from their goals. However, only a few Indian districts represented in skill development training programmes were literate. A number of researchers have also raised concerns about methodology and sampling. Based on these findings, the review suggests future research directions. The analysis can be used to draw attention to the challenges and problems faced in this programme. Further empirical research can be done by choosing particular aspirational districts of India to test the training's effectiveness using statistical tests.

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