IMPACT ASSESSMENT
FUTURE SKILLS PROGRAM, PUNE

Image Source: HDFC Parivartan Social Media Archive

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Full Form
AI	Artificial Intelligence
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
FGD	Focused Group Discussion
FUEL	Friends Union for Energising Lives
FY	Financial Year
IoT	Internet of Things
IT/ITES	Information Technology/ Information Technology Enabled Services
KII	Key Informant Interview
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NCR	National Capital Region
NGO	Non- Non-Government Organisation
NSDC	National Skill Development Corporation
OECD DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Development Assistance Committee (DAC)
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UWD	United Way Delhi

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

India possesses the world's largest youth population, with over 600 million individuals under the age of 25.[1] This demographic advantage—often referred to as the "demographic dividend"—presents a unique opportunity for accelerated growth and innovation. However, to fully harness this potential, the country must rapidly evolve its skilling ecosystem to meet the demands of a dynamic, technology-driven global economy. One notable private sector initiative addressing this need is the **HDFC Bank Parivartan Future Skills program**, implemented in partnership with FUEL NGO in Pune and alongside other NGO partners in other geographies.

The Future Skills Program aims to equip marginalized youth in Pune, Maharashtra, with future-ready skills in the IT/ITES sector, thereby enhancing their employability and income-generating potential.

An assessment was undertaken to evaluate the program's relevance, effectiveness, and impact. The study included a survey of 260 course participants, four focus group discussions (FGDs) with students, two FGDs with implementation teams, one in-depth interview (IDI) with a Centre Head, and three interviews with the employers. The assessment examined **indicators related to skill development, job readiness, placement support, and alignment with industry expectations.**

Key Findings

- **Inclusive Reach**: The Program catered to urban youth, with 45% from SC/ST/OBC communities and 94% holding graduate degrees. Women had higher postgraduate representation.
- **Strong Relevance and Continued Use**: Training aligned well with participant goals; many continued to access HDFC-supported skilling services post-completion.
- **High Satisfaction with Training**: 98% rated the program positively across modules. However, soft skills and placement components saw some delivery delays.
- **Enhanced Job Readiness**: 97% felt confident post-training; women more often reported moderate confidence, indicating a gendered confidence gap.
- **Unequal Post-Placement Retention:** While placement rates were high, fewer women (85%) remained employed versus men (93%), suggesting external barriers to retention.

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[1] https://wheebox.com/assets/pdf/ISR_Report_2025.pdf

- **Delayed Remuneration**: Less than half of the placed participants received timely pay, affecting financial stability post-training.
- **Entrepreneurial Aspirations**: 62% felt ready to start a business, though 34% were unsure, highlighting the need for targeted enterprise and financial literacy support.

Recommendations

- **Embed gender-transformative mentorship and career support** to promote equitable, long-term employment for women.
- **Build partnerships with recruiters** to address structural gender gaps, especially on pay equity.
- **Coordinate with placement agencies** for faster onboarding, reduced unpaid training, and formal contracts with immediate pay.
- **Provide financial stipends and job readiness support**, including targeted placement and career resources.
- **Integrate modules on entrepreneurship, financial literacy, and incubation** for youth interested in self-employment.
- **Strengthen financial skills training** by focusing on budgeting, saving, and income planning to help participants manage income volatility and retain formal jobs.

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

According to the Economic Survey 2024–25, the labour force participation rate (LFPR) has risen from 49.8% in 2017–18 to 60.1% in 2023–24, while unemployment has declined from 6% to 3.2%.

- **India's digital economy is poised to cross the $1 trillion mark by 2025,** catalysed by digital transformation across sectors.

- **However, the skills gap persists.** Only 8.25% of graduates are employed in jobs that align with their qualifications, highlighting a systemic disconnect between education and employability. [2]
- **The India Employment Report 2024, co-authored by the International Labour Organization and the Institute for Human Development, underscores the need for active labour market policies.** Equally vital is a robust national skilling ecosystem to equip youth with the capabilities required in a modern, tech-driven economy.
- **India has taken key structural steps, such as the establishment of the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) in 2009** to promote industry-led skilling, and the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) in 2015 to unify fragmented efforts under a cohesive framework. But public action alone is not enough.
- **A transformative skilling agenda must be complemented by the private sector.**

Under its flagship CSR platform, the *Parivartan* program by HDFC Bank is working to bridge this gap by empowering India's underserved youth with both hard and soft skills—ranging from digital literacy and technical certification to communication and problem-solving abilities.

Through strategic partnerships with non-profits such as Friends Union for Energizing Lives (FUEL) and United Way Delhi (UWD) implements targeted skill development initiatives.

- UWD provides vocational skilling to unemployed youth in the healthcare sector, addressing the growing demand for allied health professionals
- FUEL focuses on IT-enabled skilling, targeting marginalised youth in Pune, Maharashtra and Punjab.

The Pune FUEL Project, which was executed between the years 2020-21 and 2023-24 and is the focus of this report, offered support from training to placement to pave the way to formal and future-ready employment pathways.

Between 2020 and 2024, the program offered training in Artificial Intelligence, Digital Marketing, Core Java, Cloud Computing, and the Internet of Things for youth in Pune. Participants also received career

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[2]

https://www.competitiveness.in/economic-survey-reveals-only-8-25-of-graduates-have-jobs-matching-their-qualifications/

counselling and placement assistance, with certifications aligned to National Skill Development Corporation standards.

Over the years, the project trained more than 9,000 youth, equipping them with industry-relevant skills and facilitating access to formal employment pathways. Beyond skilling, HDFC Bank's Parivartan initiative operates across six thematic areas: rural development, education, skill enhancement, healthcare, financial literacy, and environmental conservation. In FY 2023–24, Parivartan impacted over 10.19 crore lives, reaching more than 9,000 villages and 10 lakh households, including 85 Aspirational Districts. The initiative has supported over 2 crore students through education-focused interventions and trained more than 3 lakh youth. As of March 2024, it has also created over 9 lakh women entrepreneurs, strengthening its commitment to sustainable and inclusive community development.[3]

1.2. Assessment Objectives

The primary objective of the assessment was to evaluate the relevance, effectiveness, and impact of the program in Pune. Specifically, the study aimed to:

- **Understand** the demographic and socio-economic profile of participants to assess the program's reach among marginalized communities.
- **Assess** the alignment of the training curriculum with market-relevant skills in sectors such as Artificial Intelligence, Digital Marketing, Core Java, Cloud Computing, and the Internet of Things.
- **Evaluate** the extent to which the program improved participants' employability, skill levels, and access to formal employment opportunities.
- **Examine** the quality of program delivery and the support provided through career counselling and placement services.

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[3]

https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/banking/finance/banking/hdfc-bank-spends-rs-945-crore-o n-csr-impacts-10-19-crore-lives/articleshow/111869840.cms

METHODOLOGY

2.1. Study Design

The assessment employed a mixed-methods ex-post evaluation design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to systematically evaluate the Future Skills program under HDFC Bank's Parivartan initiative.

- **Quantitative data was collected through structured telephonic surveys** administered to a representative sample of program participants. The survey captured key indicators such as employment status, income levels, retention rates, and placement outcomes.
- **Qualitative data was gathered through focus group discussions (FGDs)** with students **and key informant interviews (KIIs)** with trainers, implementing partners, and employers. The qualitative component provided contextual insights into participant experiences, perceptions of training quality, curriculum relevance, and post-training career outcomes.

The assessment was guided by the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, focusing on **relevance**, **effectiveness**, **impact**, and **sustainability** of the interventions. Specific thematic areas explored included

- Perceptions of training relevance
- Sufficiency of support
- Timeliness of delivery
- Quality of services
- Utilization of acquired skills
- Changes in employability outcomes

Throughout the study, confidentiality of participant information was maintained, and informed consent was obtained prior to data collection.

2.2. Sampling Strategy

A **stratified sampling approach** was adopted to ensure representativeness and reliability in evaluating the program's outcomes, covering both the quantitative and qualitative components.

Quantitative Sampling: Quantitative sampling was determined using **Cochran's formula**, ensuring a **95% confidence level** and a **6% margin of error**. The sample size was proportionally distributed across training years based on the total number of students reached. For the Pune Future Skills project, the total student universe was 9,000, resulting in a calculated sample size of **260 respondents**. The sample was stratified across key variables to ensure balanced representation:

- **Gender**: Inclusion of male and female participants
- **Course Type**: Stratification based on courses completed (e.g., AI, Core Java, Digital Marketing)
- **Geographic Location**: Coverage across training centers and partner colleges
- **Employment Status**: Representation of both employed and non-employed participants

Table 1: Pune Survey Sample

Year	Target Students	Sample Size
FY 20-21	1,800	52
FY 21-22	1,800	52
FY 22-23	1,800	52
FY 23-24	3,600	104
Total	**9,000**	**260**

Qualitative Sampling: For the qualitative component, a purposive sampling strategy was applied. Data was collected through FGDs with students, as well as IDIs and KIIs with program staff and employers. These qualitative interactions captured insights on training delivery, challenges faced, and employment outcomes associated with the program.

Figure 1: Visual overview of the Key Stakeholders
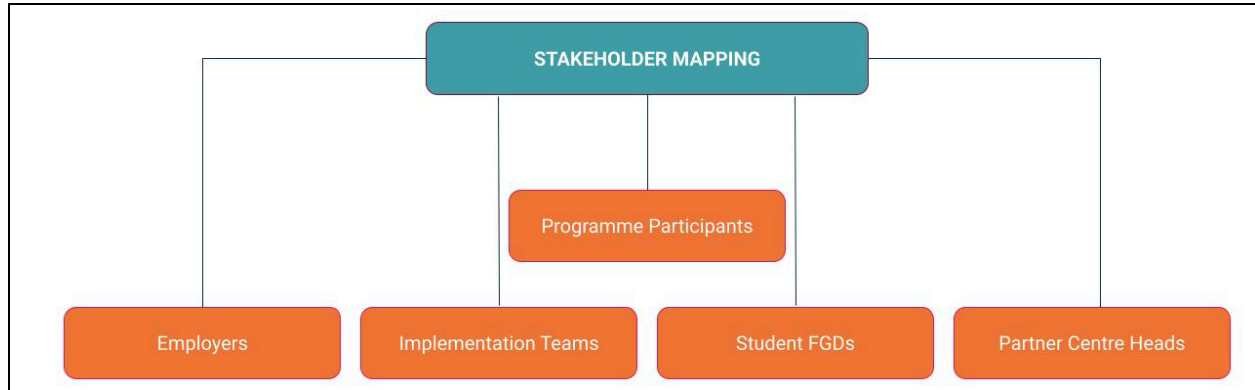
2.3. Research Methods and Tools

Data collection utilized **structured and pre-tested tools** tailored to the study's objectives. For the quantitative component, a standardized questionnaire was administered through virtual calls, ensuring consistency in capturing employment-related indicators across a geographically dispersed sample.

The qualitative component employed **semi-structured discussion guides** to facilitate FGDs, IDIs, and KIIs with selected participants, trainers, and employers. Discussions were conducted either virtually or in-person, based on participant accessibility. Survey instruments were made available in English and Marathi to enhance accessibility for respondents from diverse linguistic backgrounds. All **tools were designed to ensure uniformity in data collection while allowing for detailed contextual insights.**

Table 2: Overview of Data Collection and Tools

Stakeholders	Tools	Sample
Students	Survey through calls scheduled virtually over Google Meet/Zoom	260
	Focused Group Discussions- In Person	4
Implementation Team (Managers, Trainers, and Placement Officers)	Focused Group Discussions- In Person	2

Partner Centre Heads	Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)- Virtual over Google meet/Zoom	2
Employers	Interviews- Virtual over Google meet/Zoom	3

2.4. Data Analysis

The analysis was structured around three primary areas of inquiry: **Employability Skills**, **Employment Outcomes**, and **Career Progression**. This framework was **guided by the study's objectives and aligned with the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria,** ensuring an examination of the program's relevance, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability.

Quantitative Analysis

Data was analyzed using a combination of **descriptive** and **inferential statistical techniques** to assess outcomes across the three areas of inquiry mentioned above.

- **Multivariate Linear Regression** was used to identify predictors of current monthly income
- **Logistic Regression** analyzed factors influencing employment status.
- **Paired Samples t-tests** assessed income progression from placement to the time of survey
- **Independent Samples t-tests** compared income variations across gender groups and training types.
- **Correlation analysis** was conducted to explore the relationship between time since training completion and current income levels.

Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative data gathered through FGDs, IDIs, and KIIs were **analyzed thematically**. Transcripts were coded manually to identify recurring themes aligned with the evaluation domains, while also allowing for emergent themes that reflected **participant experiences** beyond predefined categories. **Direct quotes** were incorporated to validate findings, provide narrative depth, and foreground participant voices within the analysis of training relevance, skill application, and employment trajectories.

2.5 Study Limitations

Absence of Baseline Data: The evaluation was conducted ex-post without baseline information on participants' skills, employment status, or income prior to their enrollment. As a result, the assessment relies on retrospective self-reporting, which may affect the ability to attribute observed changes solely to the intervention.

Self-Selection and Response Bias: Data collection depended on participants' voluntary responses through surveys and interviews. Self-reported information is subject to recall bias and social desirability bias, particularly regarding employment and income details.

Timing of Data Collection: The study captures outcomes at different stages post-training, depending on when participants completed the program. Variability in the time elapsed since completion may influence employment and income outcomes, affecting comparability across participant cohorts.

Sampling Constraints: Although a stratified sampling strategy was applied to ensure representativeness, certain subgroups (such as early dropouts or those unreachable by phone) may be underrepresented. This limits the ability to generalize findings to all program participants.

Limited Longitudinal Perspective: The study provides a snapshot of employment and career outcomes but does not track participants over an extended period. Thus, it cannot fully assess the long-term sustainability of employment, income growth, or career progression.

FINDINGS

3.1 Program Reach

The training was structured as a one-month course. **All participants were located in urban Pune** and attended sessions at designated training centres. The program catered to **51% females and 49% males.** The average distance between their residence and the centre was 3 kilometres. The sample indicates that **45% of participants belonged to OBC, SC, or ST communities**. In terms of educational qualifications,

94% of respondents reported having completed graduation, while 5% held postgraduate degrees. Among these, 7% of female participants and 3% of male participants had pursued postgraduate studies. 94% are graduates, with a higher percentage of females (7%) having post-graduate degrees compared to males (3%).

Among surveyed households, **agriculture (45%) and service sector jobs (33%) emerged as the primary sources of income**. A large proportion of households **(83%) reported having a secondary income source**, with **92% of these secondary incomes derived from the service sector**. The **average annual family income was recorded at ₹417,504**, **with a median income of ₹400,000,** indicating moderate income dispersion across the participant group.

Agriculture, while being the largest primary income source, is predominantly informal, lacking formal contracts and social security benefits. Service sector jobs, on the other hand, span both formal and informal arrangements, depending on the employer and nature of employment. This distribution thus reflects a community gradually diversifying its livelihood strategies, balancing between traditional, informal income sources and emerging opportunities within the formal sector.

Figure 2. Highest Education
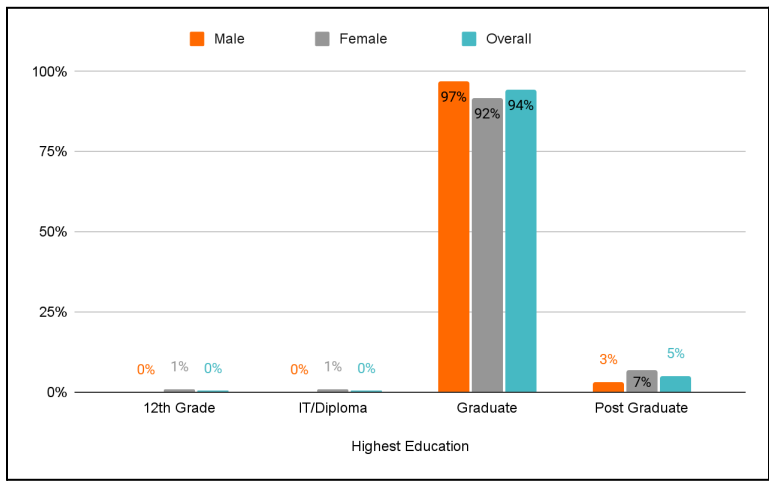
Figure 3. Primary Source of Income
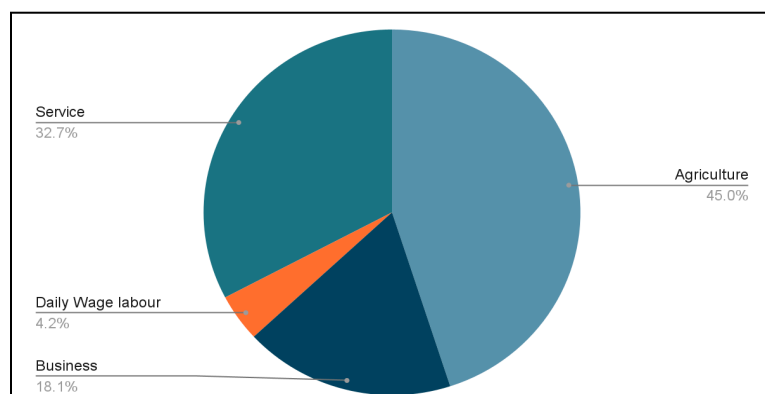
3.2. Relevance, Sufficiency, and Utlization

While household incomes vary and many families draw from traditional and service-based livelihoods, the need for structured skilling initiatives extends beyond economic vulnerability. As India moves towards a technology-driven economy, equipping youth with future-oriented competencies has become critical not only for marginalised groups but for sustaining the aspirations of an expanding middle class. In this context, the Future Skills program's design—to deliver market-aligned technical and digital skills—responds to a broader structural need, making its relevance evident across socio-economic segments. **This section draws on participant feedback to assess the relevance of the program to their needs, the sufficiency of training support provided, and the extent to which participants have continued engaging with HDFC-supported skilling services over time.** Survey findings indicate a strong alignment of the Future Skills program with participant needs across all assessed dimensions. **Participants across vocational training, soft skills, and placement support streams consistently rated the interventions as highly relevant to their skilling and employment goals.** Perceptions of sufficiency were equally positive, with the vast majority affirming that the training and support received were adequate to meet their professional development needs. Beyond initial training outcomes, the **program also demonstrated strong Utlization into participants' longer-term career pathways.** A sizable proportion of respondents reported frequent engagement with HDFC-supported services even two years post-training, suggesting that the interventions have remained relevant and valuable over time.

Figure 4. Relevance, Sufficiency, and Utilization
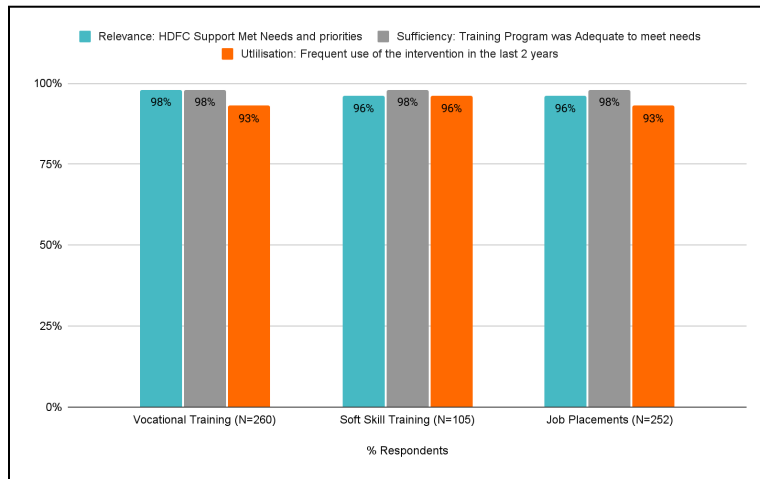
3.3 Effectiveness of Training Delivery

The assessment finds that the training program was marked by consistently high delivery quality across all modules. **Participants reported a uniformly positive experience with instructional content, trainer effectiveness, and facilitation standards,** with 98%   affirming satisfaction across vocational, soft skills, and placement support components. However, delivery timelines showed uneven performance. While vocational training sessions largely adhered to schedule, reported by 70% of respondents, **the soft skills and placement components demonstrated comparatively lower schedule compliance, at 57% and 64% respectively**.

Nevertheless, **employers highlight that beyond technical competence, the program fosters a strong sense of self-belief and professionalism in students.** Exposure to real-world work environments, combined with structured soft skills and confidence-building sessions, enables students to overcome hesitation and engage meaningfully, making them not just job-ready, but workplace-ready.

Figure 5. Effectiveness of Training Delivery
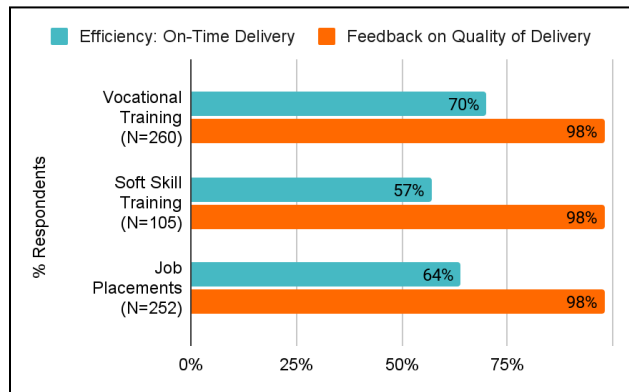
3.4 Impact

Following the assessment of training delivery quality, the evaluation examined how participants perceived the program's impact on their employability. **The analysis focused on self-reported improvements in confidence, exposure to industry practices, acquisition of job-relevant skills, and access to employment opportunities**.

Confidence in Performing Job Responsibilities: Over half of all respondents (54%) reported high confidence following the training, indicating that the program contributed meaningfully to enhancing participants' perceived work-readiness. This upward shift in confidence levels reflects positively on the training's ability to bridge gaps in knowledge, communication, and role preparedness. **However, the distribution of responses across gender reveals important nuances.** Among male participants, a majority (59%) reported high confidence, compared to 50% of female respondents. At the same time, a larger share of female respondents (48%) reported moderate confidence, relative to 38% of males. The low-confidence category remained minimal across both groups (2–3%), reinforcing that the training had a broadly positive effect. As self-confidence is itself a perception-based construct, these self-reported measures may reflect how participants view their own readiness rather than actual capability. **Research shows that women, even when equally capable, often express lower confidence, suggesting a persistent confidence gap shaped by internalised beliefs and social norms**. This distinction needs to be kept in mind while interpreting self-reported confidence levels, as they may indicate

perceived rather than actual readiness.[4]

Figure 6. Confidence in performing Job Responsibilities
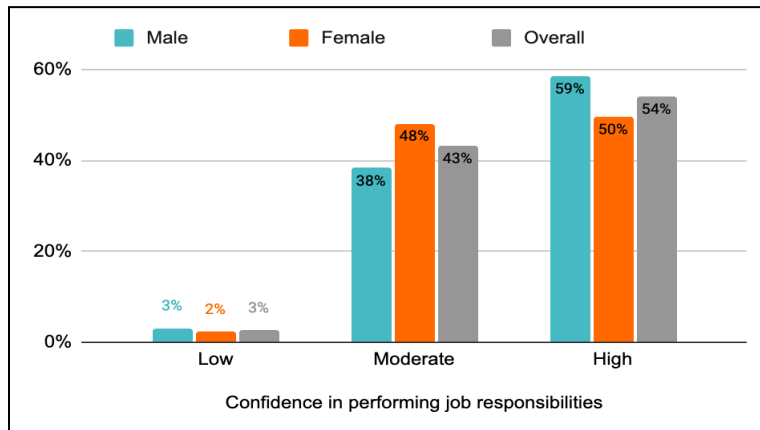
Exposure to Industry Practices: This emerged as a key differentiator in the training experience. A **greater share of female participants (52%) reported high exposure to components such as site visits, guest lectures, and hands-on assignments. In contrast, a majority of male participants (54%) rated their exposure as moderate**. This divergence may reflect different baselines in familiarity with formal work environments—women, particularly those with limited prior exposure, may have found these components more novel and transformative. These contrasting perceptions underscore the importance of contextual learning in building professional orientation, especially for participants entering the workforce for the first time.

Figure 7. Exposure to Industry Practices
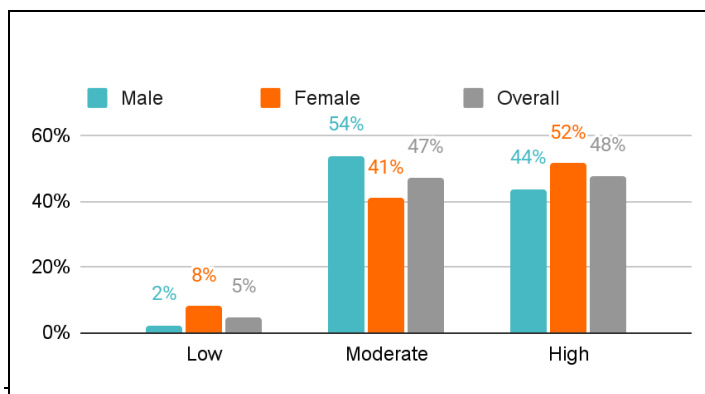
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https://www.hbs.edu/ris/Publication%20Files/ExleyNielsen_Gender_Oct2022_cb660658-9811-4f98-bf35-78ce37d95c93.pdf

Acquisition of Job-Relevant Skills: Participants reported strong perceived gains in job-relevant skills through the training program. Over half rated their skill development as high, and most of the remainder as moderate, indicating that nearly all respondents felt better equipped to meet the demands of formal employment. Rather than polarised responses, the distribution points to broad-based learning progress across the cohort. The consistently high ratings suggest that the curriculum delivered meaningful value not just to the most confident learners but across varying levels of prior exposure. These findings reinforce the program's effectiveness in building foundational and applied skills critical to workplace readiness.

Qualitative insights from employers complement these findings. They reveal strong thematic patterns around confidence, identity, and preparedness. Beyond improving technical competencies, the training facilitates a critical shift in how students, especially those from marginalised backgrounds, perceive themselves. Alongside this, they highlight how structured exposure to industry settings, combined with soft skills and confidence-building inputs, helped students begin to see themselves as capable professionals.

*Figure 8. Skills Gained for Formal Employment*
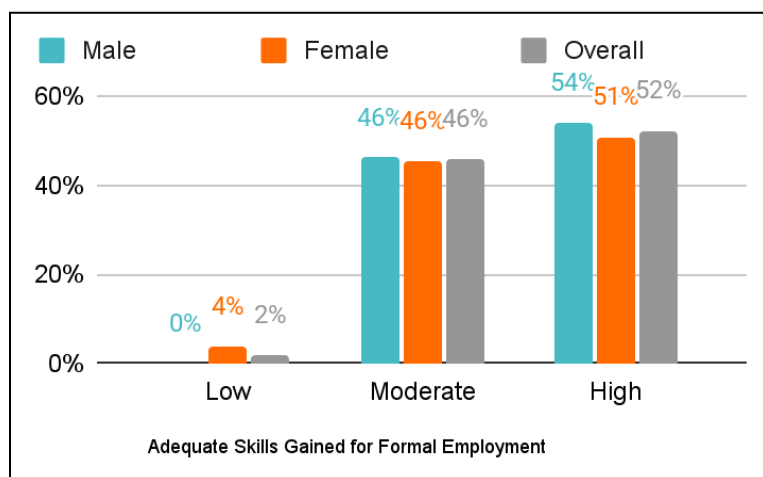
Access to Employment and Income Opportunities: **The majority of participants reported an improvement in their access to employment and income-generating opportunities following the training**. Overall, 47% reported a high increase, while 48% rated the gain as moderate, pointing to a broad perception that the program enhanced employability, though the scale of benefit

varied across the cohorts. Disaggregated data reveals important gendered nuances. **52% of male participants reported a high increase in opportunities, compared to 43% of female participants.**

This gender disparity in perceived access to opportunities may point to deeper structural dynamics shaping post-training outcomes. Constraints such as mobility limitations, caregiving responsibilities, or social expectations may continue to influence how training benefits are realised. This divergence underscores how **gendered realities outside the training environment can affect participants' ability to convert newly acquired skills into tangible workforce engagement.**

"The program actively connects students to industry markets by offering practical, subject-based training, enhancing employability and bridging the gap between classroom learning and real-world job demands."- From the Employers' Interview

Figure 9. Access to Employment and Income Opportunities Post-Training
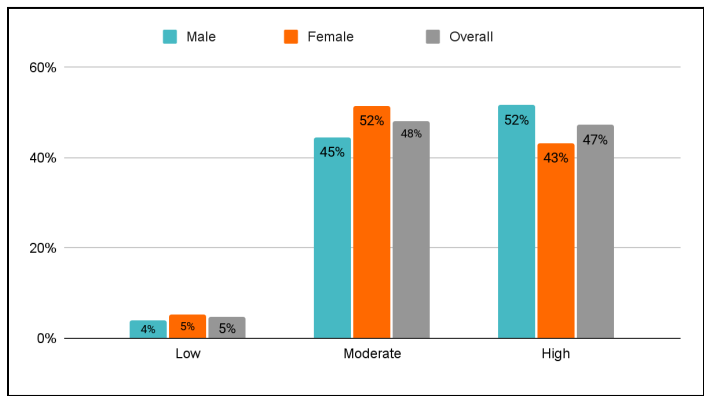
Employment Outcomes Post-Training: The program has delivered strong employment outcomes, with **100% of male and 94% of female participants securing placements upon completion of training.** These figures point to the program's success in bridging the gap between youth and employment, particularly for first-generation job seekers navigating formal labour markets for the first time.

At the same time, retention data suggests a pattern worth noting. While 94% of men remained employed at the time of follow-up, this figure stood at 85% for women. Though the gap is relatively modest, it points to a dual challenge frequently observed in broader skilling-to-employment pathways

for women: first, fewer women tend to be placed in jobs relative to men, and second, among those who are placed, sustained employment often proves more difficult. **This "double hindrance" faced by women** reflects not necessarily program-level inefficacy but the broader societal and structural context in which such programs operate. However, with its unbiased reach and approach, the **program stands at a pivotal point in helping bridge critical gaps in India's skilling landscape.** In 2022–23, 36.1% of men and 18.6% of women aged 18 to 59 had received some form of vocational training at any point, reflecting a gender gap that has widened over time.[5]

Among those currently employed, job continuity and structure appear strong across both genders. 86% of women and 87% of men reported that they continued in the same job they were placed in showcasing strong supporting job retention. Similarly, 83% of women and 89% of men reported being in regular (non-contractual) employment. **These figures suggest that once participants entered the workforce and remained employed, the nature of employment was relatively stable and structured, with only marginal variation across gender lines.** In addition, 65% of respondents reported working all twelve months in the past year, indicating a consistent engagement with work. While this does not directly confirm job security, as it may include short-term contracts, informal roles, or sequential employment across multiple jobs, it does indicate the effectiveness and sustainability of the program's employment outcomes. This continuity of experience also strengthens the credibility of their reflections on post-training outcomes, as their feedback is informed by real and sustained exposure to workplace environments.

In respect to the proportion of respondents who reported receiving remuneration immediately after placement was lower for both groups — 45% of women and 48% of men, indicating that **more than half of the placed participants did not receive immediate pay.** Earnings outcomes are strong: those who remained employed throughout the last year reported an **average monthly salary of ₹25,288—well above the national average for regular employment, which stands at ₹20,039.[6]** Both males and females fare well, with monthly mean incomes of ₹25,748 and ₹23,512, respectively. However, the mean difference of ₹2,236 is statistically significant (p = .001) and warrants attention.

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[5] https://icrier.org/pdf/the_states_narrative_on_womens_work_in_india.pdf
[6] https://www.mospi.gov.in/sites/default/files/publication_reports/AR_PLFS_2022_23N.pdf?download=1

Figure 10. Employment Outcomes Post Training
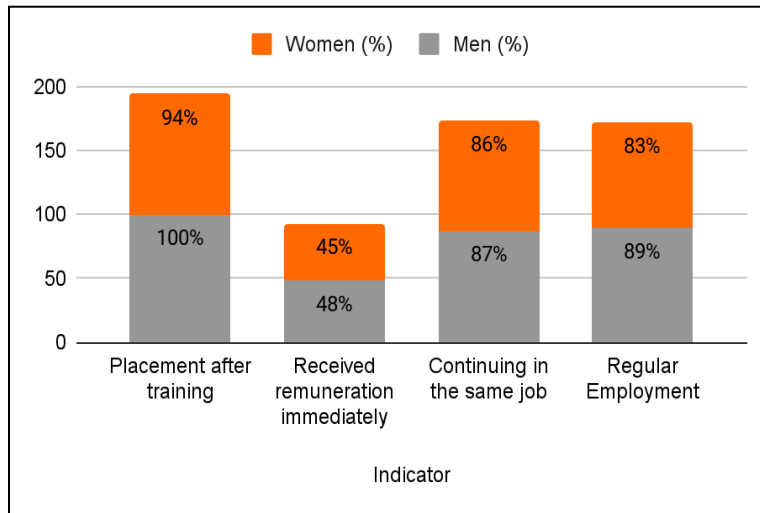
Implications for Household Financial Resilience: Participants in the program are key income earners within their families. The **average annual family income** is **₹4,17,504**, with a **median of ₹4,00,000**. Respondents report an **average annual salary of ₹3,00,000**, meaning that approximately **75% of household income** is contributed by the participant alone. This high level of financial dependence highlights the central role youth play in sustaining household livelihoods. It also reinforces the need to **equip them with 21st-century skills** to enhance their earning potential, ensure job retention, and support long-term economic resilience at the household level.

*Figure 11. Relationship Between Individual and Household Income Among Participants*
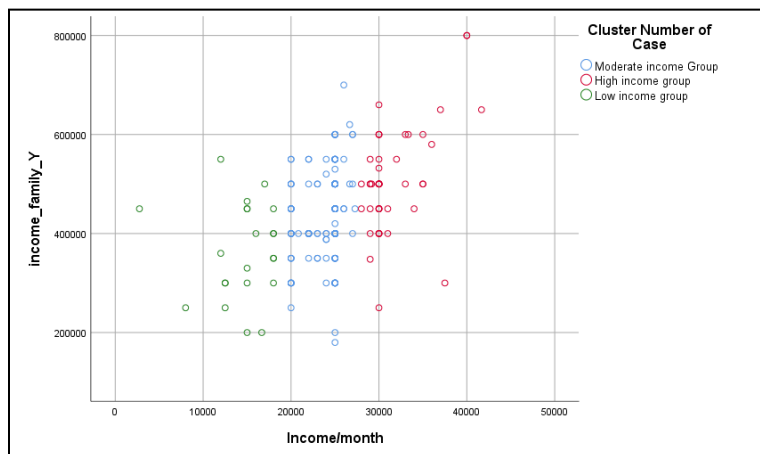
The data also reveals distinct income clusters, with most participants in the moderate-income group, but

a sizeable number in lower-income brackets.

Entrepreneurial Readiness: **Overall, 62% of respondents reported feeling ready to pursue an entrepreneurial path.** This readiness was consistent across genders, with 64% of men and 61% of women indicating agreement, **suggesting emerging confidence in enterprise-related skills**. It also reflects growing interest in alternative livelihood pathways, in alignment with national initiatives like the Entrepreneurship and Skill Development program (ESDP), which aims to foster entrepreneurial motivation among youth, including SC/ST communities, women, persons with disabilities, and those below the poverty line. These efforts complement the broader national push to create an inclusive entrepreneurial culture and strengthen the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector across the country.[7]

At the same time, 34% of respondents were unsure about their readiness. This hesitation, reported across both male and female participants, may indicate a lack of familiarity with entrepreneurial ecosystems, limited access to capital, or the need for additional exposure and guidance.

Figure 12. Entrepreneurial Readiness Among Participants

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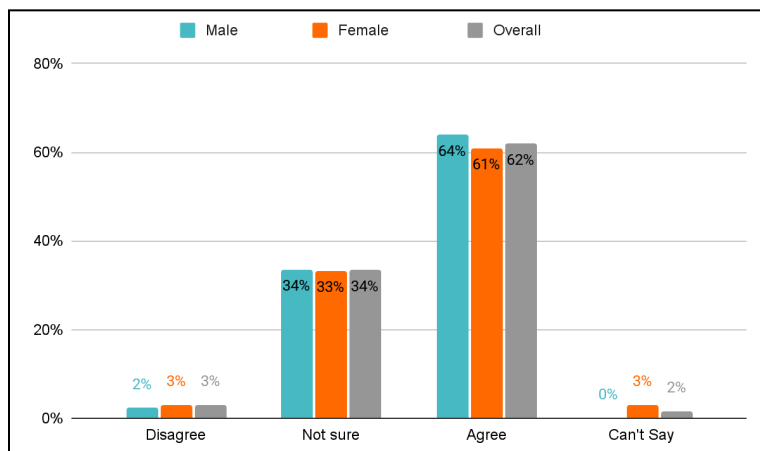
[7] https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2042547

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

4.1. Recommendations

The following recommendations draw on both quantitative and qualitative evidence and are intended to address observed gaps in employment access, income equity, and post-placement support. Key focus areas include gender linked disparities, financial resilience, and readiness for sustained workforce engagement.

Table 3: List of Recommendations and Proposed Actions

Recommendation Area	Key Findings	Proposed Actions
Strengthen Post Placement Support (Especially for Women)	Females face higher unemployment and confidence issues post-placement.	**Design and implement mentorship, workplace orientation, and long-term career support** programmes that actively challenge gender norms and structural barriers, drawing from gender-transformative practices within the **Gender Equality Continuum** framework to promote sustained, equitable employment for women.
Implement Targeted Interventions to Address Income Disparities	Gender is a significant predictor of income. Women tend to earn less.	Strengthen strategic **partnerships with recruitment teams** of hiring companies to systematically address structural gender gaps, particularly those related to pay.
Enhance Immediate Remuneration Readiness for Placed Candidates	Only 46% of placed participants received immediate pay.	**Collaborate with placement partners** to ensure faster onboarding, minimize unpaid training periods, and **promote formal contracts** offering immediate remuneration.
Expand Entrepreneurship and Financial Literacy Training	62% of respondents felt ready for entrepreneurship, while 34% were unsure.	Add **modules on entrepreneurship, financial literacy, and business incubation** to support youth pursuing self-employment pathways.
Prioritise Sustaining Livelihoods and Formal Employment	Participants contribute up to 75% of household income and often come from families reliant on informal work	**Equip participants with budgeting, saving, and income planning skills** to help them navigate variable income cycles and financial shocks — strengthening their financial capability is key to sustaining formal employment.

4.2 Conclusion

The **Future Skills program**, implemented by **FUEL** under **HDFC Bank's Parivartan initiative**, has delivered measurable value in equipping **underserved youth** in Pune with **job-oriented training** and **industry exposure**. The program has been successful in supporting participants' **transition into formal employment**, with **high levels of satisfaction** and improved **workplace confidence** across cohorts. Importantly, the initiative has enabled **greater inclusion**, particularly for **women**, through access to **structured skilling** and **professional networks**.

However, the assessment also highlights areas requiring further attention: **post-placement retention**, **delayed salary disbursement**, and **limited entrepreneurial readiness**. As the **skilling ecosystem evolves**, the program stands at an **inflection point**. **Deepening post-training engagement**, ensuring **income continuity**, and strengthening **livelihood diversification**, through both **employment** and **enterprise**, will be critical to enhancing **long-term outcomes**. With targeted improvements, the model offers **strong potential for replication and scale** in other **urban and semi-urban contexts**.