

Impact of CSR Initiative of Tech Mahindra Foundation to Create Women Livelihood Opportunities in Lieu With Contribution to the PM's Vision of Skill Development

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Abstract

The National Mission for the Development of Skills has been approved by the Union Cabinet on 01.07.2015 and officially launched by Honor Prime Minister on 15th July 2015 at World Youth Qualification Day. The mission was developed to create convergence in all sectors and the state in terms of skills training activities. The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship takes a multidimensional view of the term 'skill'. 'We recognize the fact that 'skill' has both intrinsic and instrumental value. Possessing a skill can be an end in itself – giving individuals greater self-confidence, self-esteem and dignity, which results from the knowledge that they can stand on their own feet. Availability of such skilled workforce is closely associated with the kind of vocational education and training system existing in the country. Thus this article states how Tech Mahindra foundation delved into the creation of livelihood for women by providing skills and training them to be the future bread earners of their families thereby imparting 4 months training program at SMART skill centers.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows:

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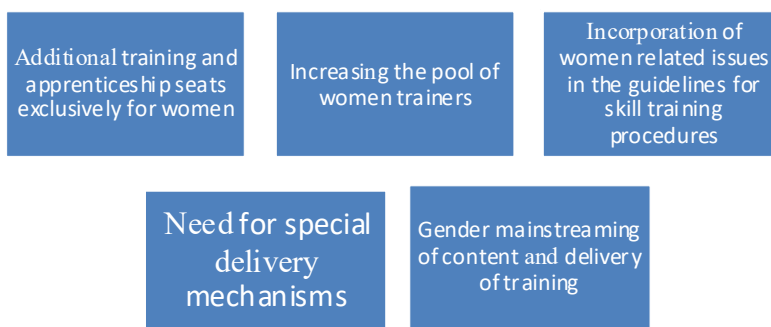
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Journal Global Values,
Vol. IX, No.1,
Article No. 3, pp.15-22

http://anubooks.com/?page_id=285

Introduction

Prime Minister's The National Policy on Skills Development, 2009 has set a target of skilling 500 million people by 2022. This includes 15 million people estimated to join the workforce every year. The current size of India's formally skilled workforce is very small. India will have a large working age population between 15-59 yrs and requirement for labor force in the industrialized world will increase by 32% (NSDC). In short, despite the significant progress made in terms of literacy, the high incidence of illiteracy still takes Indian employees. India's demographic dividend can quickly be transformed into a demographic nightmare if new and existing employees are not provided skills. Thus, the skills and capabilities of skill development programs need to be enhanced. Youth population will reach its heights in the year 2035. To make the Indian workforce globally competitive, there is a need to empower the workforce with the necessary skills and education. According to the Mckinsey Global Institute study, India by 2025 could increase GDP by \$ 2.9 trillion; if female labor force participation rate improves by 10 percentage. This would amount to 68 million more women into non-economic workforce. The National Skills Development Policy emphasizes that in order to improve the productivity of the economy; the participation of women in the labor force needs to be improved. The major takeaways from the policy are:



According to Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation Labor:

Force Participation Rate (LFPR): The LFPR of females (rural: 25.3%, urban: 15.5%) is lower than that of males (rural: 55.3%, urban: 56.3%) in both rural and urban areas (NSS 2011-12).

Unemployment Rate: Unemployment Rate (UR) is more for females than males 15 years and above in both rural and urban areas.

Thus, Tech Mahindra foundation, CSR arm of Tech Mahindra Limited has laid down the overarching goal of Prime Minister's vision and had immensely contributed to the successful transformation in obtaining market oriented skills of the

Women in particular by increasing livelihood opportunities for them. They have been working tirelessly to train them with an insight of educated and employed India. Thus, beauty & wellness centre was established with the motive of providing vocational & technical training and creating livelihood opportunities for the underprivileged women/girls through focus on advancement of skills required to meet the dual challenge of highly trained workforce & non employability; thus by contributing in shaping the PM's skill development vision. This research focuses upon how the young women from the underprivileged section of the society seeking for job opportunities are unable to achieve their goals due to lack of education, soft skills and market related skills.

Literature Review

Skill Development and Entrepreneurship development efforts across the country have been highly fragmented so far. Though India enjoys the demographic advantage of having the youngest workforce with an average age of 29 years in comparison with the advanced economies, as opposed to the developed countries, where the percentage of skilled workforce is between 60% and 90% of the total workforce, India records a low 5% of workforce (20-24 years) with formal employability skills (NSDC). Manufacturing firms to withstand the global competition, and to ensure their long term sustainability, have to invest in huge quantity in setting up and developing its infrastructure, raw material, skill development of its human resource, and R&D (Goyal, Kaur, & Singh, 2015). If India will be transformed in a Manufacturing destination attracting investment from global and domestic Industrialist, it will generate many employment opportunities for the Indian labour force (Goyal, Kaur, & Singh, 2015).

About Tech Mahindra's Smart Initiative

The Tech Mahindra foundation trains them in foundation skills like Basic English, IT and imparts domain related trainings in customer relationship services, automobile, tally, banking, general duty assistants for healthcare, hospitality, refrigeration & air conditioning etc. Today the foundation is supporting 100 SMART centers across 11 cities in India & training 17000 youth annually out of which 50% of beneficiaries are women and 10% are persons with disabilities. The motivation for taking this project was to provide equal opportunities to women & people with disabilities and create sustainable livelihood opportunities for the emerging youth of our nation.

Objective of the Study

Women's participation and empowerment are fundamental women's rights

that enable women to take control of their lives. Women are often faced with discrimination and gender inequality, with some women being discriminated and marginalized on grounds of factors such as origin, caste, income earners or being head of the family. Thus the main objective of my research was to know how Tech Mahindra foundation delved into the creation of livelihood for women by providing skills and training them to be the future bread earners of their families thereby imparting 4 months training program for being the future beauticians and developing inner confidence to open their parlor by oneself thus leading to the successful contribution to the National Skill Development Scheme.

Research Methodology

For analyzing the impact of the initiative, Primary data was collected. Questionnaire was developed for conducting this statistical study. The sample size taken was 8.

Area of the Study

Khoda is a slum in Ghaziabad with a population of more than 10 L. Majority of the population constitutes Muslims and are migrants from Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand etc. Tech Mahindra foundation's SMART beauty & wellness centre at Ghaziabad slum, Khoda was initiated 1 year ago with 4 batches, each constituting of 20-25 girls/women of age group 18-35.

Reason for Selecting the Particular Population:

The main agenda for targeting the women population for the study was:

1. Khoda slum had a majority of women population.
2. There were less livelihood opportunities for women however many were interested in learning the beautician course.
3. Women were not allowed to come out of their shelves because of their ridden customs and gender biasness.

Thus, after so many difficulties, the women population in large numbers managed to come out and register themselves for this course. This step in itself was an encouraging move by the center and the team itself. Henceforth, the researcher felt the need to study how these women are earning their livelihood after so many hurdles and how the foundation thus making an effort to accomplish PM's vision for the same

Henceforth, the questionnaire was developed for this purpose and the girls/women of the passed out batch who were currently working in some or the other beauty parlor or the ones who have started their own ventures were asked the following questions:

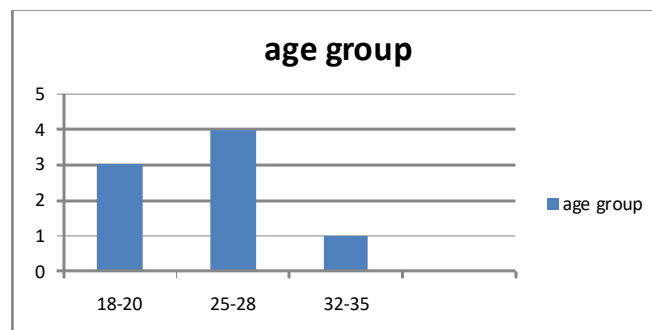
1. What is your name?
2. What is your age?
3. What is your occupation?
4. Drop –out (YES/NO)
5. Was the course helpful in gaining proper knowledge of parlor techniques?
6. Did the course helped in creating the opportunity for livelihood and how?
7. After the course, did you open your own parlor or got a job?
8. Was it beneficial to provide sufficient earnings?
9. After the course were you able to acquire beautician skills properly?
10. Were you able to earn enough to help yourself and your family?

They were asked the following questions to acquire whether they were able to gain skills after completing the course or not. It was done to know whether this course was able to give them the opportunity for livelihood and self employment confidence or not.

Analysis And Findings:

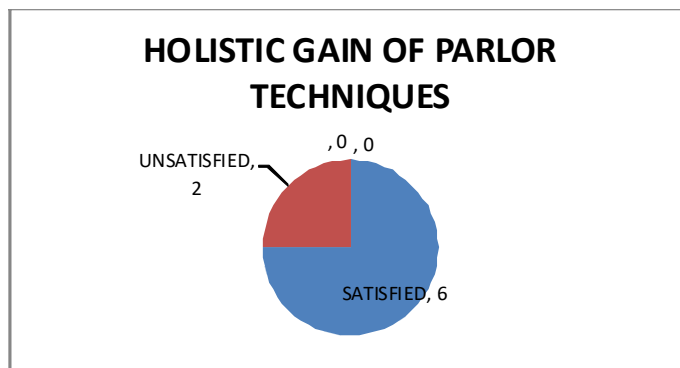
Following were the observations and findings:

Out of 8, 3 were of age group 18-20, 4 were from 25-28 and 1 was of age 35.

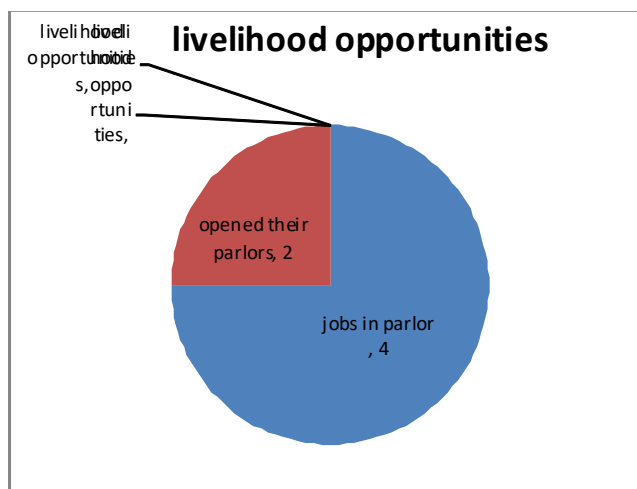


Out of which 6 completed their secondary education and 2 were BA pass. But due to financial crises and low wage earnings in the family they were forced to drop out their education. The women of age 35 completed her graduation but after her marriage she wasn't allowed to study further.

Out of 8, 6 were satisfied with the holistic approach of the course. They told me that during the course they were able to gain sufficient knowledge about beautician course including threading, waxing, manicure, pedicure, and make up, hair styling and saree making. Due to the additional course of basic computer and soft skills enhancement with English proficiency they were able to get good amount of salaries.



They all were earning 5-6 thousand and were pretty satisfied. 2 of them opened their own parlors and 4 were working with other parlors. This course not only gave them the confidence which were not there earlier as they were not able to come out of their shelves due to the gender biasness or patriarchal approach in their families. But the foundation members were enough able to influence their families to manage to join this course.



The main achievement after the completion of the course was that they were able to earn livelihood for themselves as well as for their families. Their family's income was not above 8-9 thousand per month and after the program they helped in improving the financial condition of their families. 2 of them who opened their own parlor were able to gain confidence and encouragement to earn livelihood and fetch their households. 4 out of them were working with the local parlors and were able to

earn efficiently. The course was able to provide them employment and sustainability. They were enough fortunate to explore new world and understand the true meaning of women empowerment. It gave new aspirations to the in vision of PM Skill Development Mission. When asked about the contribution of Tech Mahindra towards PM's skill mission, Vijendrakumar, the project manager, told that the Beauty and Wellness centre was established with the vision of contribution to the PM's mission skilling the youth. It was authorize by National Skill Development Corporation. The main contribution of program was:

1. After the skill mission was launched, it boosted the confidence of tech Mahindra to give their contribution towards giving skills to the youth.
2. The main task was to provide proper skills to the girls/women so that they can earn their livelihood and be self-reliant.
3. Through their CSR allocation of funds, they were able to open the centre with a vision of skilling the unemployed which henceforth turned into playing a role for PM'S vision.
4. Employment was provided to the girls/women and proper assistance for their future was given to them. Thus after training, there was a placement drive which was a main objective of Skill India mission.

.Conclusion and Suggestions

Women are often stuck in a cycle of poverty due to lack of diversified education and competence. Girls are often pulled out from school to take on home responsibilities and many do not have the opportunity to even complete their primary education. Even in cases where they complete their education, they do not get the opportunity to work. Thus, Skills and knowledge are the driving force of the economic growth and social development of each country. They have become even more important due to the growing pace of globalization and technological change, which offer both the challenges that are taking place in the world. As India moves gradually towards a knowledge economy, it becomes increasingly important that every Five Year Plan should focus on advancing skills and these skills should be important to emerging economic development. The major challenges shown here are few in number but represent the complicated issues involved. The deficiency occurs when women looking for jobs spell consequences. When economically speaking of lower or rural background people, these problems are endless. For these women, manual labor is still the most easily available task. These significantly, big workforce needs to be well-trained so that they can become a major part of the economy through desk-based jobs. Additionally, it is admitted that empowerment practice should be

more of a concern for women in gender. A focus on gender implies an emphasis on strategic needs such as leadership and advocacy, rather than a mere focus on key priorities. Women's economic rights, sustainable development and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is a prerequisite for growth. Thus, the beauty and wellness center encourages understanding and examining inner self and implements the idea of developing capabilities rather than just skills. Therefore, the skill development process is needed to be more flexible for women to enroll. It should create basic skills in training like problem solving, skills such as team work and other skills such as self-respect, communication, self-organizational and interaction for employment. One way of encouraging participation in skill development is the identification of those skills which are already known. In the case of women, this kind of approach will increase the acceptability of training. Providing training after identifying the changing norms and aspirations of women is equally important.

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