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Dr. Shankar Chatterjee
Former Prof & Head (CPME),
NIRD & PR, Hyderabad,
Telangana, India

Unemployment a serious issue in developed Punjab: A study focusing on DDU-GKY

Dr. Shankar Chatterjee

Abstract

This research paper has analyzed the Ministry of Rural Development's (MoRD, Government of India) training cum placement of youths through wage employment under the banner of the *Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY)* which was launched on 25th September 2014. It is a part of the *Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM)*. The prime objective of DDU-GKY is to provide wage employment to the trained rural youths who mainly hail from Below Poverty Line (BPL) families and age may be in between 15 and 35 years. The training cum placements are run by different agencies known as Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs) who conduct training *vis-a-vis* placement; training fund is provided by DDU-GKY. To get an idea about the training programme conducted by DDU-GKY, a study was carried out in the first week of August 2017 in Amritsar district of Punjab. In the district *Safeduate Learning Private Limited* was one of the PIAs. This PIA was running a training Centre at *Majitha* block at *Sahid Captain Amar Singh Government Secondary School* from December 2016 which is discussed here.

Keywords: Amritsar, DDU-GKY, Punjab, Training cum placement and unemployment

Introduction

The unemployment is a serious issue in many countries of the world as population has been increasing but jobs are not being created proportionately. As per the Report of "World Employment and Social Outlook" of the United Nations International Labour Organization (ILO) which was released in January, 2017 "unemployment in India is projected to witness marginal increase between 2017 and 2018, signaling stagnation in job creation in the country". The Report further stated job creation in India was not expected to pick up pace in 2017 and 2018 as unemployment rises slightly, representing a near stagnation in percentage term. The Report further stated, "Unemployment in India is projected to increase from 17.7 million last year to 17.8 million in 2017 and 18 million next year. In percentage term, unemployment rate will remain at 3.4 percent in 2017-18". However, the Report has mentioned that "India had performed slightly better in terms of job creation in 2016, when a 'majority' of the 13.4 million new employments created in Southern Asia happened in the country", (The Times of India, January 13, 2017 epaper).

To address the unemployment issue, *Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY)* has been doing impressive work in the country.

High youth unemployment in Punjab

In Punjab, the unemployment rate among youth—the proportion of the labour force between 18 and 29 years that is unemployed – is 16.6% while the Indian average is 10.2%. Punjab also has India's eighth-highest rural youth unemployment rate. Increasing mechanization of agriculture and the lack of required skills to work in information technological firms have left Punjab's rural educated youth in the middle. They are perplexed what to do. Further according to the *Hindustan Times*, 3rd February 2014 as many as 18,770 factories have been closed between 2007 and 2014 which means adding more persons in the job market. To address the issue of unemployment particularly rural unemployment *Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY)* has been playing an important role in the country. To get practical idea, in this research paper role of *Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY)* in Amritsar district of Punjab has been discussed as many youths were trained and settled through wage employment after the training.

Correspondence
Dr. Shankar Chatterjee
Former Prof & Head (CPME),
NIRD & PR, Hyderabad,
Telangana, India

In the light of this, types of training, youths' participation etc., are discussed here based on field study carried out in August 2017.

About Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY)

The Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) has pronounced the *Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY)* on 25th September 2014. DDU-GKY is a part of the *Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana–National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM)*. The prime objective of DDU-GKY is to provide wage employment to the trained rural youths who mainly hail from Below Poverty Line (BPL) families and their age may be between 15 and 35 years. DDU-GKY is implemented through its partner known as Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs) which are authorized agencies and they arrange training and placement of youths and for these necessary funds are provided by the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India. DDU-GKY has been functioning in 21 States and Union Territories, across 568 districts, in 6,215 development blocks spread over to 690 Centers with little more than 300 partners (known as PIA), in more than 330 trades from 82 industrial sectors. The data reveal that little more than 2.7 lakh youths have been trained and more than 1.34 lakh persons have been placed in jobs. From 2012, DDU-GKY has invested more than Rs. 5,600 crore. Further, from the data of DDU-GKY it is observed that during 2017-18 up to 31st May altogether 23, 723 persons were trained in 655 centers across the country in 329 trades. Of which 13,891 youths were placed through wage-employment indicating around 59 percent achievement. It is pertinent to mention that data were only up to May 2017. During 2016-17, altogether 162,586 persons were trained in 654 centers of India in 329 trades. Of which 84,900 (52%) were settled through wage employment activities (ddugky.gov.in/18 August 2017).

DDU-GKY in Amritsar District

To get an idea about the training programmes conducted by DDU-GKY, a study was carried out in the first week of August 2017 in Amritsar district of Punjab. As is known to all Amritsar is a popular place in the world as famous 'Golden Temple' is located here, where lakhs of persons visit every day irrespective of caste, creed and religion as well as free food (among Sikhs/Punjabis known as *Langar*) and pure water are served. Many persons extend their service selflessly such as cutting of vegetables, making *roti*, cleaning utensils, serving food *etc* without taking a single paisa irrespective of the person's status. One can observe dedicated service as well as spiritual environment by visiting the temple.

In the district, *Safeducate Learning Private Limited* was one of the PIAs. This PIA was running a Centre from December 2016 at *Majitha* block at *Sahid Captain Amar Singh Government Secondary School* which is discussed here. During the course of study, it was observed that training programmes were being conducted on two trades *viz.*, Documentation Assistant and Warehouse packer. Further, in Amritsar district major training programmes conducted under DDU-GKY in different trades *inter alia* were Documentation Assistant, Warehouse Packer, Inventory Clerk, Customer Care Executive etc.

The school authorities have sacrificed a big hall for the purpose of training. This hall was made to three by partitioning where training cum office room was functioning.

For the benefit of readers the list of PIAs along with the training Centers in Amritsar district are presented below.

1. Government High School *Balarwal, Ajnala* (Operational) (PIA- *Safeducate*)
2. Government Senior Secondary School, *Ramdass, Ajnala* (Operational) (PIA- *Orion Edutech*)
3. Government High School, *Dauke Block Attari* (Not Operational) (PIA – *Safeducate*)
4. Govt. Sr. Secondary School *Bhakna Kalan Block Attari* (Not Operational) (PIA-*Team lease*)
5. Government High School *Preetmagar, Block, Chogawan* (Operational) (PIA-*Orion Edutech*)
6. Govt. Senior Secondary School *Tapiala, Block Chogawan* (Operational) (PIA-*Orion Edutech*)
7. Government High School *Gehri Mandi, Block Jandiala* (Operational) (PIA- *Teamlease*)
8. Govt. Senior Secondary School *Majitha, Block Majitha* (Operational) (PIA-*Safeducate*)
9. Government High School *Athwal, Block Majitha* (Not Operational) (PIA *Teamlease*)
10. Government Senior Secondary School *Jabbowal, Block Tarsikka* (DD not done) @
11. Government High School *Cheema Bath, Block Rayya,* (Operational) (PIA- *Orion Edutech*)
12. Govt. Sr. Secondary School *Jethuwal, Block Verka* (Not Operational) (PIA-*Teamlease*)
13. Govt. Sr. Secondary School, *Block Harsha Chhinna* (Operational) (PIA – *Orion Edutech*)
14. *Orion Educate Learning Pvt, Ltd.* Opposite New Court Complex, *Ajnala* (Hybrid Center)

It may be clarified that DD means Due-Diligence (A center is not fit to start as per the Standard Operating Procedures, SOP) of DDU-GKY guidelines. Non - operational means center is handover to PIA but PIA did not submit Monitoring & Regulation for Improved Governance of Skills Development (commonly known as MRIGS) portal for DD. It takes into account the entire process of Monitoring Agencies & PIAs as outlined in the SOP and Guidelines. MRIGS is an effective solution for Monitoring & Regulation for Improved Governance of Skills Development. Further, some centers were Not Operational during the time of study because PIAs want to withdraw and that is why PIA was not been uploaded on MRIGS portal. It may be mentioned here that if DD is not completed for any center, it is automatically not operational; they can do only mobilization and follow process for DD.

Study Area

As mentioned already the study was conducted at *Sahid Captain Amar Singh Government Secondary School, Majitha* block, *Majitha*. During the course of study, it was reported by the officials of the Centre mainly by *Sri Manohar Randhawa* that 93 days training consisting of 756 hours would be covered in two types of training *viz.*, Documentation Assistant and Warehouse packer. The training programmes were started on 22nd May 2017 and will complete on 19th September 2017. In each batch 35 youths were undergoing training totaling to 70, out of which 25 were females and 45 males. The timing of the training

was 8.15 AM to 5 PM with half an hour lunch break. Two trainers - one specialized in Information Technology (IT) and other one on English and Soft skills - were imparting training to all the trainees' *inter-alia* master trainers were also giving training. The in-charge of the Centre Sri *Randhawa* further informed that all would be absorbed in the *Safeducate* Learning Private Limited or would be provided employment by *Safeducate* as it is the PIA. It is pertinent to mention that Sri Ravinder Singh, Additional Deputy Commissioner (Development) and Ex Officio Chief Executive Officer of *Zilla Parishad*, Amritsar who belongs to Punjab Civil Service is one of the key persons to carry forward development programmes in the district.

To get an idea about the youths undergoing training, a few (both male and female) were contacted. Among them one was person with disability (PwD) and another female trainee had family issue as father and mother had separation so different types of youths were covered in this study. The cases are presented here.

1. Ms. *Puja* (20 years, unmarried) Higher Secondary School Leaving Certificate examination (HSSLC) passed was undergoing training on Documentation Assistant as she could not continue her further study because of financial problem as father was earning through wage labour. In view of this, she felt that after completion of training and subsequently earning of wage would help the family.
2. Ms. *Ameen Preet Kaur* (23years) could not complete her graduation because of financial issue (father was tailor). She was also one of the trainees on Documentation Assistant and expressed her happiness about the training. She informed that since employment was guaranteed so she fully devoted in the training with the hope of getting assured employment.
3. Like them, *Sandeep Kaur* (18 years, female) HSSLC pass and her training was on Warehouse packer and *Lovepreet Kaur* (22 years) commerce graduate was undergoing training in Documentation Assistant in the same Centre. In addition, one female participant's case may be presented here. Ms *Laxmi* (26 years) hailing from below poverty line (BPL) family every day after completion of the training on Documentation Assistant teaches seven girls at free of cost in her village.
4. Among the male persons who were undergoing training, one was *Willian Mattu* (30 years) persons with disability, married. He worked as compounder (medical assistant) in his village but his income was not sufficient, so he expected that after completion of training as Warehouse packer, he would earn substantial income for sustenance of the family.
5. *Manjinder Singh* (20 years) HSSLC pass also completed his diploma in Electrical Engineering from local polytechnic was one of the participants as job is assured. The other persons who were interviewed were *Gurpreet Singh* (24 years) HSSLC pass; *Arun* (19 years) father was brick-kiln worker and *Vikash Sharma* (22 years), Diploma in Civil Engineering.

In addition to above, all the participants who were present on 9th August 2017 in the training centre in unison informed that training was useful and they could learn many practical things.

Conclusion

The author, after visiting Amritsar's rural areas and also across rural India in different times, feels that if rural youths are provided with wage-employment (those seeking for it) then many issues including law and order may be tackled. In this context DDU-GKY's role has to be appreciated as it has been doing wonderful work. Therefore, it is suggested that the Government of Punjab should design more such wage employment programme *vis-à-vis* self-employment programme (as done by RSETIs for self-employment) for the rural youths. It may be mentioned that RSETIs are Rural Self Employment Training Institutes, an initiative of Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) having dedicated infrastructure in each district of the country to impart training and skill up gradation of rural youths for earning through self-employment. RSETIs are managed by the banks with active co-operation from the Government of India and respective State Government.

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