Deconstructing the Skilling Cascade: A Stage-by-Stage Evaluation of DDU-GKY in Haryana, India

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2026.1310000059

Received: 07 October 2026; Accepted: 12 October 2026; Published: 31 October 2026

ABSTRACT

Placement-linked skilling programmes are increasingly the instrument of choice for converting demographic pressure into labour-market participation across the developing world yet their evaluation almost invariably rests on a single headline placement statistic. Such a statistic conceals the stage at which candidates are lost and therefore cannot discriminate between failures of mobilisation, of instruction, of certification, of employer linkage, or of job retention. This paper addresses that limitation by reconstructing the full administrative cascade of India's Deen Dayal Upadhyaya–Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) for the state of Haryana and benchmarking it, stage by stage, against the pooled national record.

The study used the complete project dataset rather than a sample, which provides a comprehensive basis for assessing programme implementation and outcomes. For Haryana, the dataset covered 106 institutions, 209 resources, and 2,132 training groups, involving 61,486 participants. This was compared with national-level data from 30 States and Union Territories, covering 3,711 resources and 2,072,929 participants. The database contains participant-level information on training completion, educational qualifications, employment eligibility, placement status after three months, and employment outcomes. Therefore, the dataset allows both an overall assessment of the dropout process and a detailed analysis of the factors affecting programme outcomes.

The analysis yielded three key findings. First, the performance disparity in Haryana was confined to specific stages of program implementation rather than the program as a whole. Haryana's average target achievement rate stands at 83.5%, surpassing the national average of 74.4%. Performance regarding certification and assessment was also high; the certification rate was 93.96%, and 96.1% of trained participants completed the assessment process. However, there is a significant gap in the certification process: only 48.9% were certified by certification bodies, compared to 63.7% at the national level. Similarly, employment-related issues affected 42.0% of participants in Haryana, whereas the figure was 59.6% at the national level. These findings indicate that the major challenges facing Haryana are concentrated at specific stages rather than across the entire program. Haryana's achievement rate is 86.5%, compared to the national average of 86.8%. This marginal difference suggests that the primary obstacles to achieving program outcomes likely arise prior to the final stages specifically, during the certification issuance phase.

Third, there is a vast disparity in performance among the 15 distribution companies (DISCOMs) implementing the program; their performance ranged from 0% to 72.5%. Notably, none of the companies achieved 75% of the program target. These variations highlight the differences in implementation performance across agencies and

underscore the need for more targeted interventions to enhance the program's impact. Finally, an analysis of the participant and control groups for the 2022 and 2023 cohorts revealed a significant increase in the number of participants. This demonstrates a high level of adherence to the program process among participants in this group, as expected. It is generally acknowledged that Haryana has performed well across all phases of program implementation. The key area for improvement is certification.This article presents a hierarchical analysis applicable to other studies as well. It provides access to additional resources that facilitate the application's use, alongside an integrated usage index that can serve as a guide for public policy actions.

Keywords: placement-linked skilling; vocational training; programme evaluation; administrative data; attrition cascade; labour-market transitions; rural youth employment; India

INTRODUCTION

Skilling programmes occupy an ambiguous position in development policy. They are politically attractive because their outputs are countable, and they are analytically difficult for precisely the same reason: the number counted (candidates trained or candidates placed) is rarely the quantity of interest (Ray & Ali, 2021). What matters is whether a programme moves a young person from unemployment or underemployment into durable, remunerated work, and whether the programme's own machinery is the reason that transition occurs (Chakravorty et al., 2024). Most published evaluations of large public skilling schemes report a placement percentage and proceed to interpret it (Surendran & Panda, 2025). Yet a placement percentage is an equilibrium outcome of a sequence of distinct sub-processes, each with its own failure modes, and two programmes with identical placement rates may be failing in entirely different places and therefore require entirely different remedies.

India is a good place to establish this concept. The country's demographic situation makes employment a key policy issue: more than half the population is under thirty, the shrinking agricultural sector attracts additional rural labor as farms shrink, and non-farm workers are more selective in their job skills according to (M. J, 2022; Srinivas, 2021). In September 2014, the Ministry of Rural Development launched the Deen Dayal Upadhyay-Garmin Kaushalya Yojana, a program targeting rural youth aged 15-35 from poor households under the National Rural Livelihood Programme (*DDUGKY*, 2016).

DDU-GKY is analytically unique; it is not merely a scheme prone to misuse in substandard settings. Unlike existing systems that conclude with mandatory administrative training, DDU-GKY focuses on placement. Agencies are required to ensure a 70% placement rate for trained candidates, subject actual placement-related documentation to verification, and track the candidates' employment status(M. J, 2022; Singh & Singh, 2024; Vaibhav Verma & Dr. Pradeep Singh Chauhan, 2021; Varma & Tekwani, 2021). Consequently, as part of its compliance framework, the system incorporates processes such as candidate-level registration, exit procedures, registration signatures, certification, appointment, and verification of continuous employment for three months. Furthermore, it has developed mechanisms for hierarchy management, program incentives, and more (*DDUGKY*, 2016).

We exploit this structure. Rather than asking how many candidates a state placed, we ask where in the sequence its candidates were lost, and how that loss profile compares with the national pattern. The empirical setting is Haryana, chosen not because it is typical but because it is a hard case for demand-side explanations of poor placement. The state's dominant DDU-GKY trades are Retail Sales Associate, Retail Trainee Associate, Customer Care Executive, Food and Beverage Service, Sewing Machine Operator, and Field Sales Executive for telecom plans and services etc. map directly onto industries physically concentrated within its own boundaries: organised retail, hospitality and customer service in the Gurugram–Faridabad segment of the National Capital Region; textiles and garments at Panipat; automobiles and ancillaries at Manesar, Bawal and Dharuhera; warehousing and light manufacturing around Sonipat and Kundli. Where trained supply and employer demand are co-located in this way, weak placement cannot plausibly be attributed to the absence of employers, and attention is forced onto the intermediating machinery.

This paper makes three contributions. Analytically, it formalizes the training-to-employment sequence as a decomposable cascade and demonstrates that stage-wise conversion ratios identify failure loci that aggregate

placement rates obscure. Empirically, it establishes that Haryana's shortfall is confined to two transitions that is assessment to certification and appointment to documented placement while mobilization, instruction, assessment coverage and post-placement retention are at or above national benchmarks; the finding that conditional retention is unimpaired is particularly consequential since retention is the outcome most commonly identified in the literature as the binding constraint on rural skilling. Methodologically, it works with the complete programme population rather than a sample, and reports a full reconciliation across four independent administrative extracts, so that the descriptive quantities carry no sampling error and their internal consistency is demonstrable rather than assumed.

The remainder of the paper is organised as follows. Section 2 sets out the programme's design and incentive structure, reviews the prior evidence, develops the cascade framework and states the research questions. Section 3 describes the data, the construction of the cascade and the validation procedures. Section 4 presents the results. Section 5 discuss the policy impact, section 6 limitation and Section 7 discuss conclusion.

BACKGROUND, PRIOR EVIDENCE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Programme design and incentive structure

The 'Den Dayal Grameen Kaushalya Yojana' (DDU-GKY) framework has four main elements that guide this study.

First, formal employment: This program focuses on formal employment secured through employment contracts rather than informal employment arrangements. At least 75% of the projects must be approved by the Department of Rural Development. Second, proof of employment: An employer's verbal assurance of employment is insufficient; documents such as recommendation letters, income statements, and tax returns are required. Consequently, recruitment and actual employment are treated as two distinct phases. Third, post-employment monitoring: The program monitors employment status for up to three months after the job begins. It also provides post-training support, facilitates student mobility, and maintains contact with alumni. Fourth, cluster data: Data is stored in clusters to help track participants' progress. This system also supports operational and maintenance activities. Together, these four elements facilitate the evaluation of the entire DDU-GKY process—spanning from training and recruitment to actual employment and post-employment outcomes.(*Beneficiaries under Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana - DDU-GKY*, 2026).

The revised DDU-GKY 2.0 guidelines extend this logic into governance. They provide for social audit jointly with the National Rural Livelihoods Mission covering trainee selection, inclusiveness, training, placement, retention and beneficiary satisfaction; they require the publication of village-level training and placement details on Gram Panchayat information boards; and they establish an inspection regime against standards approved by the National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, under which a training centre carrying an uncomplied advisory in the non-negotiable category may be barred from commencing further batches (*SOP of DDU-GKY 2.0 Guidelines | Rural Development Department, Uttarakhand | India*, 2025).

Two implications follow for evaluation. The scheme is explicitly designed to be judged on employment outcomes rather than training throughput so certification, appointment, retention and verified placement are the appropriate performance metrics and because payment is milestone-linked the incentives facing implementing agencies are not uniform across the cascade (Solage & Kolekar, 2024).

Prior evidence

The empirical literature on DDU-GKY and comparable placement-linked schemes divides into three strands, each of which establishes part of the picture while leaving the decomposition problem unaddressed.

A first strand examines training quality and employability directly. An evaluation from Gujarat, applying the Kirkpatrick framework to the training-delivery phase, identifies gender, prior educational attainment and most consistently the identity of the implementing agency as the principal determinants of training outcomes and reports uneven training quality alongside low retention in employment (Srivastava et al., 2025). Its recommendations concern deeper employer partnerships, engagement with micro, small and medium

enterprises, and the integration of digital literacy. Trainee-satisfaction studies conducted at selected centres report high satisfaction with instructors and institutions and self-reported gains in confidence and conduct, tempered by dissatisfaction with course duration. The convergent finding across this strand is that the classroom is not where the programme underperforms.

A second strand analyses published aggregates over time. A national trend analysis covering 2014–15 to 2021–22 takes candidates trained and candidates placed as its two measures and reports that placement rates fluctuate substantially year on year while training targets are met more reliably, concluding that alignment with market requirements remains the weak link (H. Watane, 2024). Comparative studies of state pairs establish that performance dispersion across states is large and not explained by programme scale. This strand establishes that variation exists; because it stops at the trained–placed aggregate, it cannot say what the variation consists of (Surendran & Prof.M.Soundarapandian, 2023).

A third strand argues that initial placement is the wrong outcome variable and that retention is the meaningful one. Work drawing on extended experience of programme administration identifies sustained wage employment as the hardest outcome to secure and traces the mechanisms cost of living in destination towns, adjustment difficulty, family obligation and wage inadequacy relative to the expense of living away from home (Kumar et al., 2019). This literature motivates treating three-month continuity as a distinct outcome rather than folding it into placement and it generates a prior that we test directly below.

State-specific evidence for Haryana is thin. An assessment based on secondary data for 2015–2021 reports declining candidate interest and declining recruitment and situates the scheme against the state's youth unemployment rate (Vaibhav Verma & Dr. Pradeep Singh Chauhan, 2021). Administrative reviews conducted by the Ministry and by the Haryana State Rural Livelihoods Mission have addressed implementation progress, agency performance and preparation for DDU-GKY 2.0 and have emphasized the incorporation of digital literacy across courses (*Home | Haryana State Rural Livelihoods Mission, Government of Haryana, India*, 2026).

The cascade framework

The DDU-GKY program can be viewed as a step-by-step process where participants may conclude their journey at any stage. Initially, all participants are registered students. The number of participants gradually decreases as they complete training, pass exams, obtain necessary licenses, secure employment, finish a three-month internship, and acquire required qualifications.

Two points are crucial here. First, the placement rate is a general metric that aggregates diverse categories of beneficiaries; consequently, a single figure can mask distinct underlying issues. Two programs might share identical placement rates while failing for entirely different reasons.

Second, each stage is often evaluated based on a success rate. High success rates may be observed at certain stages, even if very few participants actually reach them. Therefore, this study presents data on both the number of participants reaching each stage and the number of those who remain in the program.

This step-by-step approach helps clarify responsibilities at each stage. Student admission and course completion fall primarily under the purview of the Ministry of Education. Accreditation hinges on training quality and external evaluations. Securing employment largely depends on the relationship between the employer and the training provider. Retention in the job for three months is influenced by factors such as working conditions, salary, and job continuity. Finally, formal employment documentation depends on the employer's legal status and the training provider's accuracy in preparing the necessary documents. Thus, a step-by-step analysis helps identify where the shortcomings lie and which stakeholders are responsible for addressing them.

Research questions

We are addressing four key questions.

Question 1: At what specific stage of the training program does Haryana perform better or worse than the national average?

Question 2: Does the highest turnover rate occur before or after student trainees begin their work, reflecting the common belief that retention is the most challenging aspect?

Question 3: To what extent do outcomes vary across different training institutions in the state, and is there any single institution that is meeting the program's objectives?

Question 4: Have these success rates changed over time for new cohorts of students, and if so, have they improved or deteriorated?

Data and Methods

Data

We use four extracts from the DDU-GKY management information system maintained by the Ministry of Rural Development, current to the reporting position of 2026: (i) a state-level performance report covering all 30 reporting states and union territories; (ii) a batch-wise national summary at state level, used for cross-validation; (iii) a project-level extract for Haryana covering all 106 sanctioned projects; and (iv) a batch-level extract for Haryana covering all training batches, of which 2,132 carry candidates. Batches commenced between 2014 and 2025, the last concluding in January 2026.

The analysis is a population census rather than a sample survey. All sanctioned projects, all training centres and all batches in the study state are included, as are all reporting states in the national benchmark. This has a direct methodological consequence, discussed in Section 3.4.

Variables and cascade construction

Table 1 defines the recorded stages and their operational content.

Table 1. Cascade stages and operational definitions

Stage variable	Operational definition
Sanctioned target	Candidates a project is contractually required to train
Enrolled	Candidates registered and frozen into a batch
Trained	Candidates completing prescribed course hours
Dropout	Enrolled candidates exiting before completion
Undergoing	Candidates in training at the reporting date
Assessed	Trained candidates presented for third-party assessment
Certified	Assessed candidates declared successful and issued certificates
Appointed	Candidates in receipt of an employment offer or appointment letter
Monthly continuity	Appointed candidates verified in employment for at least three months
Placed	Candidates whose employment is verified by documentary evidence

The distinction regarding structure is a crucial aspect of text analysis. A job advertisement refers to the information an employer presents in a document, whereas a business name relates to the business relationship established through that document. These categories referred to as functional translations are most clearly evident in public records.

Data validation

Since the data presented here pertains to administrative decisions, we present the citations as such.

ISSN No. 2321-2705 | DOI: 10.51244/IJRSI |Volume XIII Issue X October 2026

Across all 30 jurisdictions, the 10 data sources align with official figures. Data from these jurisdictions were aggregated, and separate analyses were conducted to present results for each. In Haryana, there are 106 occupational licenses and 2,132 departmental licenses across various levels of government: 61,486 official, 57,773 official, 3,610 graduate, 20,450 official, and 500 or 4,553 under-licensed. However, consistent information is obtained from three distinct data sources.

Six groups were excluded from the list due to a lack of contact and data unavailability, resulting in a final set of 2,132 entries; these discrepancies did not alter the overall picture. The remaining 2,132 samples were initialized; consequently, these terms do not appear in Section 4.6.

Note that there are differences between programs. For packages issued between 2014 and 2017, the "Certificate" and "Document Attachment" fields are largely blank, whereas the "Notes" fields are populated. The quality of these entries is known.

Analytical approach

We compute conditional conversion ratios and unconditional survivorship proportions at each stage, together with interstate ranks and provider-level and cohort-level disaggregations. We deliberately abstain from inferential testing. The reason is not expositional convenience but a property of the data: these are population parameters, not sample estimates. There is no sampling frame from which the observed quantities are drawn, hence no sampling distribution and no standard error to which a test statistic could be referred. Under a census, an observed difference of any magnitude is the actual difference; significance testing would import a super population assumption that the design does not support and would substitute an arbitrary threshold for the substantive question of whether a gap is large enough to matter. We therefore report magnitudes and let them carry the interpretation.

RESULTS

Country Status

Across 30 states and union territories, 3,711 projects have been approved against a target of 2,785,363 candidates. Of these, 2,072,929 have completed training, 1,935,386 have finished training, 1,797,842 have been inspected, 1,145,961 have been verified, 1,356,060 have secured employment, and 807,900 have been registered. Table 2 provides data at the national level, and Figure 1 offers an overview of the country's status.

Table 2. State-wise programme record

State / UT	Projects	Target	Enrolled	Trained	Certified	Appointed	Placed
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	9	2,765	1,089	1,037	878	723	498
Andhra Pradesh	171	1,78,340	1,64,238	1,59,706	1,20,578	1,31,940	1,04,396
Arunachal Pradesh	16	5,260	3,561	3,294	2,760	2,358	849
Assam	173	1,50,201	1,04,272	90,662	44,138	57,043	29,842
Bihar	139	1,50,357	71,759	62,605	45,816	44,119	26,416
Chhattisgarh	133	99,059	67,948	64,845	40,119	46,773	15,651
Gujarat	110	83,678	33,630	31,072	16,030	23,476	12,249
Haryana	**106**	**73,665**	**61,486**	**57,773**	**27,170**	**41,488**	**17,408**
Himachal Pradesh	52	23,191	22,026	20,946	16,337	16,380	12,787
Jammu & Kashmir	78	1,46,013	1,07,653	1,03,292	23,125	76,796	59,842

ISSN No. 2321-2705 | DOI: 10.51244/IJRSI |Volume XIII Issue X October 2026

Jharkhand	108	1,31,030	98,152	87,152	50,981	65,688	24,409
Karnataka	86	1,25,505	64,972	58,318	26,186	35,056	17,291
Kerala	243	1,15,821	87,466	79,677	37,565	45,142	18,310
Madhya Pradesh	152	1,77,891	1,10,423	1,04,465	57,407	75,555	35,147
Maharashtra	215	1,14,709	82,555	78,486	47,337	51,144	32,369
Manipur	23	11,107	9,204	8,866	7,360	6,579	4,613
Meghalaya	39	9,385	10,611	9,703	6,920	7,342	5,425
Mizoram	15	5,481	4,118	3,897	2,944	2,853	2,056
Nagaland	26	10,315	9,434	8,837	7,082	6,589	5,891
Odisha	214	2,48,811	2,22,789	2,09,877	1,64,070	1,36,415	70,025
Puducherry	18	5,674	3,797	3,609	2,951	2,697	2,347
Punjab	130	68,074	63,080	59,072	43,395	35,980	23,163
Rajasthan	214	1,35,278	1,00,071	94,165	56,833	55,123	43,455
Sikkim	32	8,568	3,378	3,175	1,921	2,326	1,561
Tamil Nadu	329	98,716	83,672	80,733	53,541	62,594	40,369
Telangana	109	1,10,608	99,160	93,488	37,725	64,088	48,039
Tripura	36	30,576	16,493	14,901	8,798	10,136	5,972
Uttar Pradesh	543	3,26,455	2,78,508	2,64,658	1,44,220	1,94,789	1,18,942
Uttarakhand	87	34,640	31,203	27,724	23,511	23,479	16,551
West Bengal	105	1,04,190	56,181	49,351	28,263	31,389	12,027
Total	**3,711**	**27,85,363**	**20,72,929**	**19,35,386**	**11,45,961**	**13,56,060**	**8,07,900**

Source: DDU-GKY Management Information System, Ministry of Rural Development.

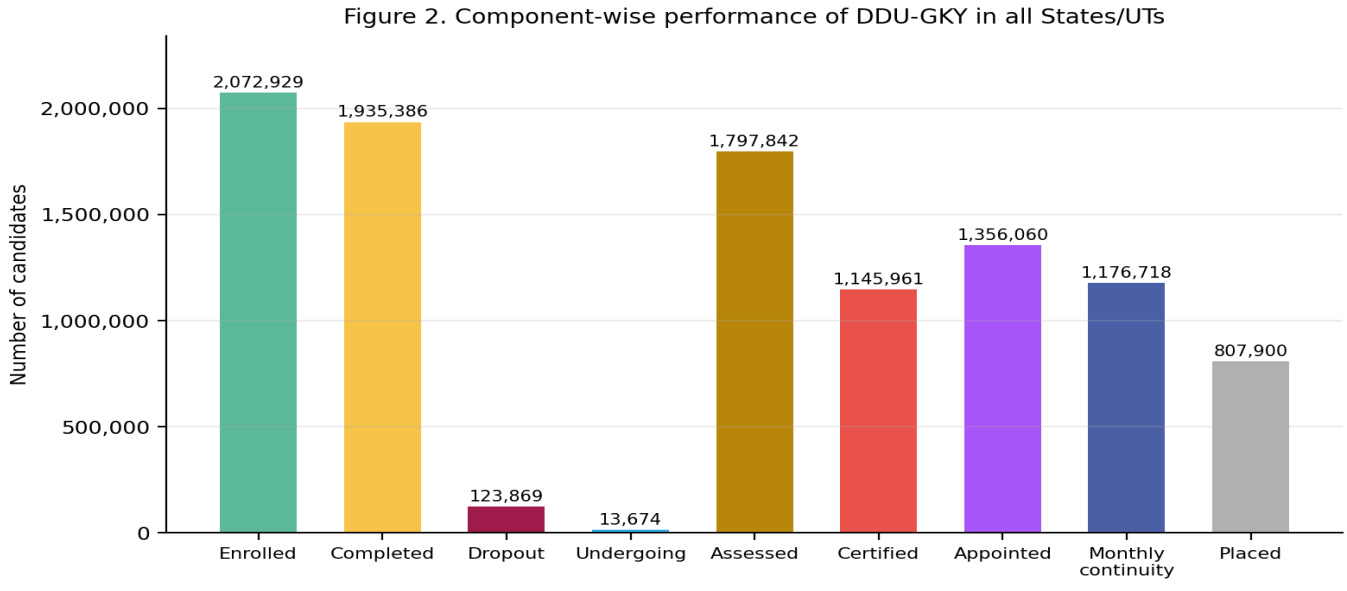


Figure 1

Haryana accounts for 106 projects and 61,486 enrolments, or 2.97 per cent of national enrolment, placing it in the middle of the distribution by scale.

ISSN No. 2321-2705 | DOI: 10.51244/IJRSI |Volume XIII Issue X October 2026

The Haryana cascade

Table 3 reports Haryana's stage-wise record in levels and as unconditional survivorship, and Figure 2 the corresponding profile.

Table 3. Cascade profile, Haryana

Stage	Candidates	Per cent of enrolled
Sanctioned target	73,665	—
Enrolled	61,486	100.00
Trained	57,773	93.96
Dropout	3,610	5.87
Undergoing	103	0.17
Assessed	55,530	90.31
Certified	27,170	44.19
Appointed	41,488	67.48
Continuity (≥ 3 months)	35,905	58.40
Placed (documented)	17,408	28.31

Figure 1. Component-wise performance of DDU-GKY in Haryana

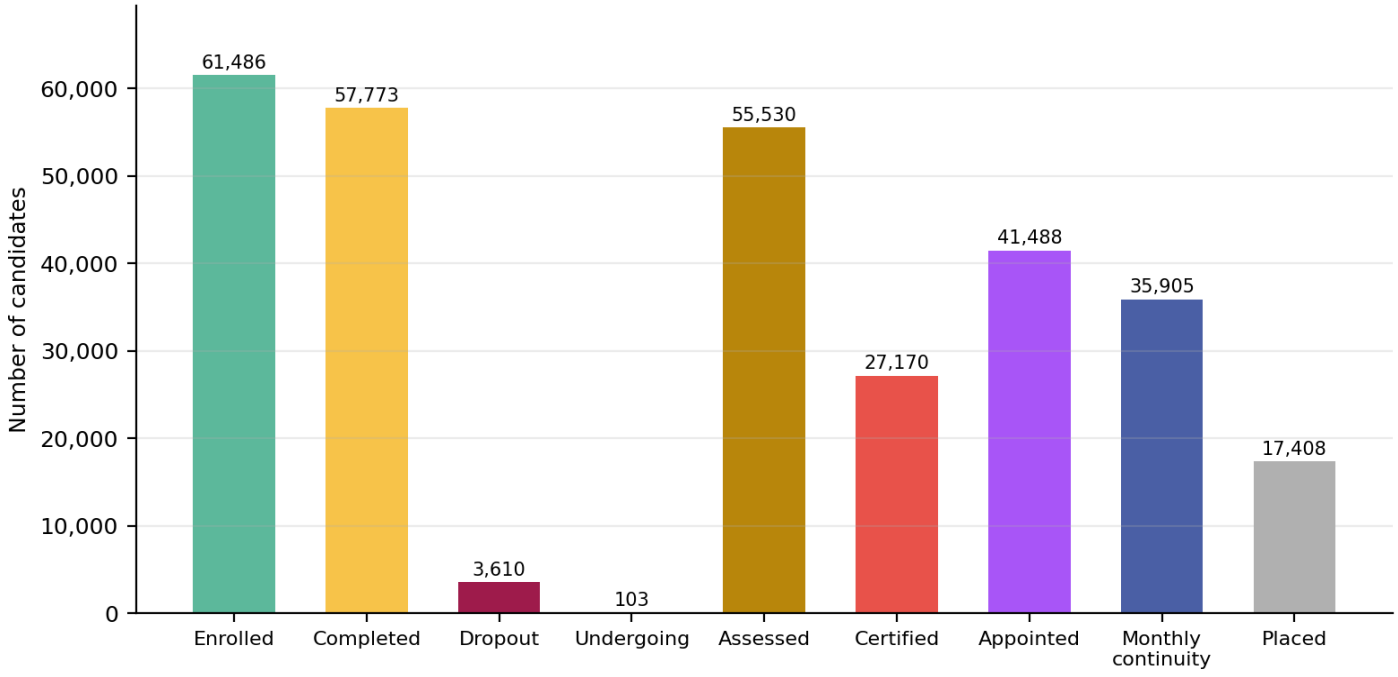


Figure 2

Survival rates exceeded 90% and then decreased: 44.19% of enrollees earned certificates and 28.31% were employed. The selection and performance classification resulted in 41,488 samples, which included 17,408 missing samples and 24,080 missing samples per event, the largest number of days considered.

Estimates and National Records:

Table 4 shows a comparison between Haryana and the rest of the country; Figure 3 displays the irregular survival curves.

ISSN No. 2321-2705 | DOI: 10.51244/IJRSI |Volume XIII Issue X October 2026

Table 4. Conditional conversion ratios, Haryana and national aggregate

Transition	Haryana (%)	All states (%)	Difference (pp)
Enrolment against sanctioned target	83.47	74.42	+9.05
Trained / enrolled	93.96	93.36	+0.60
Dropout / enrolled	5.87	5.98	−0.11
Assessed / trained	96.12	92.89	+3.23
Certified / assessed	48.93	63.74	−14.81
Appointed / trained	71.81	70.07	+1.74
Continuity / appointed	86.54	86.77	−0.23
Placed / trained	30.13	41.74	−11.61
Placed / appointed	41.96	59.58	−17.62

Figure 3. Percentage of enrolled candidates at each stage: Haryana and all States

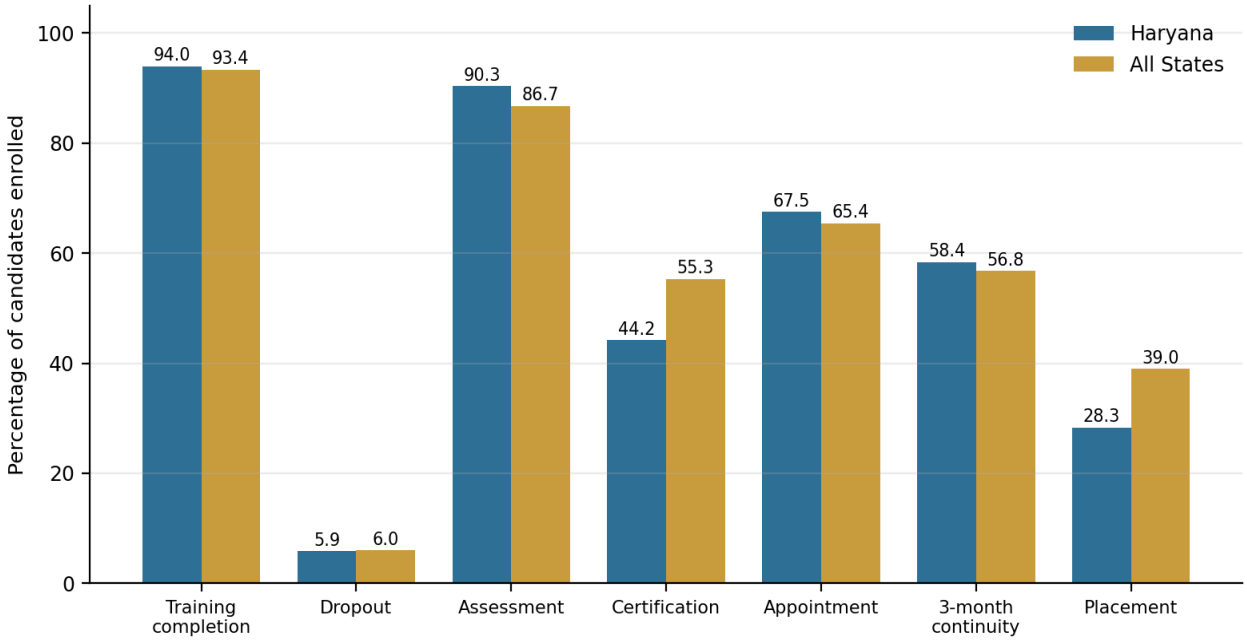


Figure 3

The answer to the first research question (RQ1) is evident from the reviewed studies. At every stage of the process from recruitment to promotion Haryana has met or surpassed national benchmarks regarding the highest enrollment rates, lowest dropout rates, lowest graduation rates, and the highest percentage of skilled trainees. However, the state's performance fell short of standards in two areas: post-certification outcomes (a 14.81% gap) and post-employment retention (a 17.62% gap).

The answer to the second research question (RQ2) is also derived from this data. After three months of employment, the job retention rate in Haryana was 86.54%, compared to a national average of 86.77% (a difference of 0.23 percentage points). In Haryana, the candidate retention rate is largely in line with the national average; therefore, the issues identified in previous studies are not significant here. The main challenges lie in translating initial education into formal qualifications and in the transition from training to actual employment.

Interstate position

In terms of the number of students enrolled, Haryana ranks 24th among the 30 states and territories with the highest number of students enrolled. The pass rate is 28.31%. The national average is 38.97%. Nagaland (62.4%)

ISSN No. 2321-2705 | DOI: 10.51244/IJRSI |Volume XIII Issue X October 2026

and Puducherry (61.8%) top the list in terms of admissions, while the number of students enrolled is the same. Kerala (20.9%); 21.4% in West Bengal. Figure 4 shows the complete parameters.

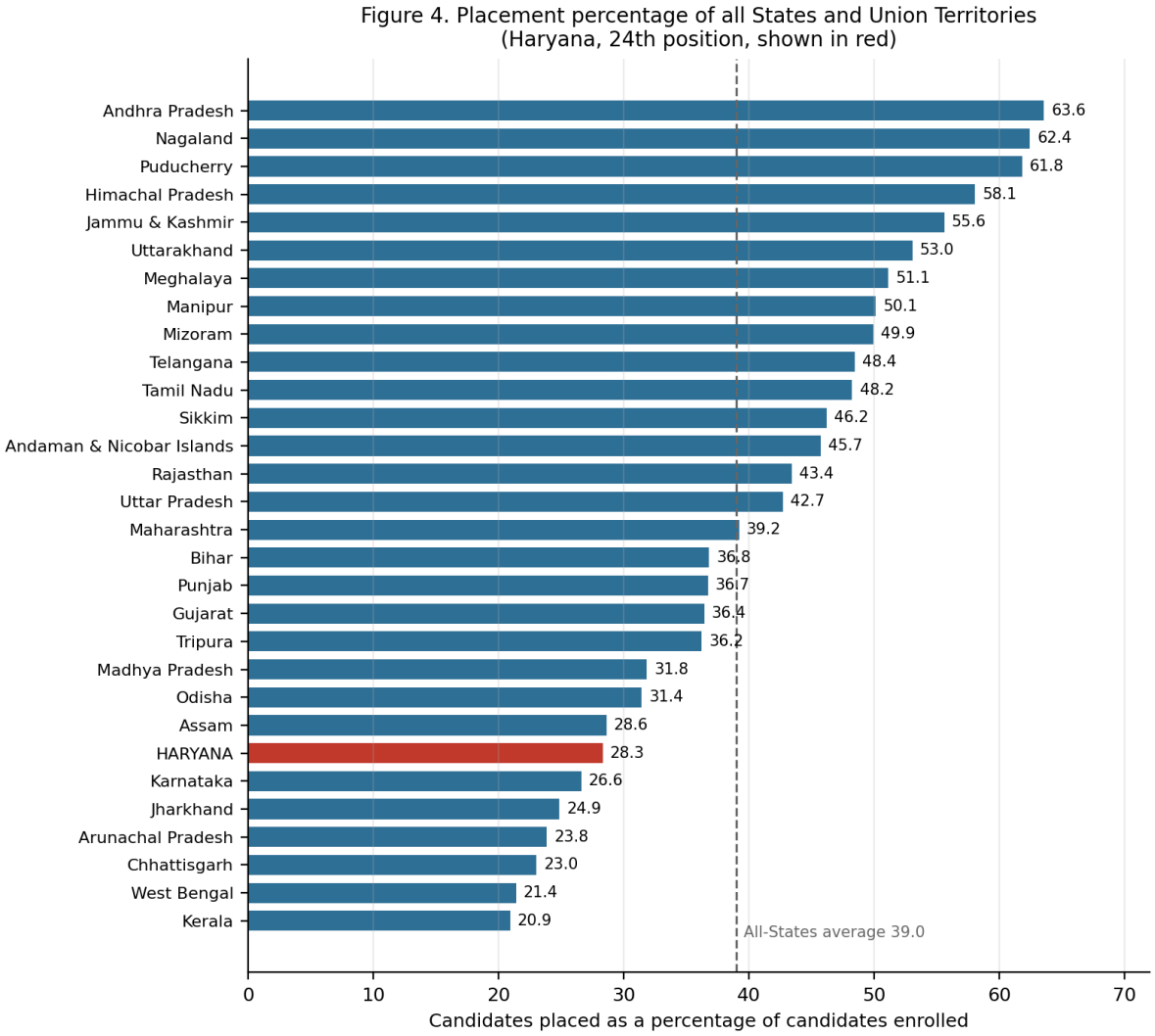


Figure 4

Table 5 situates Haryana against neighboring and structurally comparable states, and isolates the mechanism.

Table 5. Haryana and comparator states

State	Enrolled	Certified / assessed (%)	Appointed / trained (%)	Placed / trained (%)	Placed / appointed (%)
Haryana	61,486	48.93	71.81	30.13	41.96
Punjab	63,080	81.13	60.91	39.21	64.38
Himachal Pradesh	22,026	81.24	78.20	61.05	78.06
Rajasthan	1,00,071	61.15	58.54	46.15	78.83
Uttar Pradesh	2,78,508	57.57	73.60	44.94	61.06
All states	**5,25,171**	**60.93**	**69.22**	**43.45**	**62.76**

The comparison with Punjab is instructive. Given that the scale is largely comparable, Punjab recorded 63,080 appointments, compared to 61,486 in Haryana. Although the appointment rate was lower (60.91% versus 71.81%), hiring activity was lower. Rajasthan illustrates this pattern in an extreme form: the state had the lowest

appointment rate (58.54%) but the highest rate of employment termination (78.83%). In these states, the inverse relationship between appointment rates and employee turnover suggests a trade-off.

Provider heterogeneity

Ninety-two implementing agencies operate the 106 sanctioned projects in Haryana through 209 training centres. Table 6 reports the fifteen agencies with the largest enrolment, which together account for the substantial majority of state throughput.

Table 6. Implementing agencies with largest enrolment, Haryana

Implementing agency	Proj.	Target	Enrolled	Trained	Certified	Appointed	Placed	Placed %
Centum Workskills India Ltd	1	7,243	8,797	8,797	184	4,230	0	0.0
Indiacan Education Pvt Ltd	1	7,670	7,864	7,679	41	5,795	0	0.0
Quess Corp Ltd	2	4,840	5,423	5,252	3,521	3,723	3,414	65.0
ICA Edu Skills Pvt Ltd	2	5,950	3,963	3,949	1,023	2,911	0	0.0
Safeducate Learning Pvt Ltd	1	1,853	2,164	1,872	1,402	1,607	1,120	59.8
TeamLease Services Ltd	1	1,824	1,614	1,353	789	1,020	961	71.0
Shri Shamjibhai H. Talaviya Charitable Trust	1	1,275	1,428	1,254	1,004	1,254	490	39.1
Techno India	1	1,502	1,298	1,164	1,011	998	844	72.5
Eagle Hunter Solutions Ltd	1	1,228	1,276	1,276	0	880	0	0.0
CPIT Edutech Pvt Ltd	2	890	930	888	792	833	476	53.6
Apollo Medskills Ltd	1	1,225	897	763	474	551	0	0.0
Indovision Services Pvt Ltd	2	805	851	814	681	716	463	56.9
Lala Kundan Lal Memorial Society	2	645	801	676	558	610	452	66.9
Cantabil Retail India Ltd	1	700	800	708	634	624	500	70.6
Rao Lal Singh Siksha Samiti	1	698	751	700	541	469	319	45.6

Three observations were relevant to RQ3. First, the dispersion is extreme: among firms reporting nonzero hiring, the range is from 39.1 to 72.5 percent, with a dispersion of thirty-three percent within a state, within a state, a regulatory regime, and the labor market. Second, seventy-five per cent of an enterprise operating in Haryana did not reach the hiring schedule level, whether measured within this set or across all enterprises in the state. Third, the firms reporting zero hiring consist of projects approved in the years preceding the program when hiring was not yet a reporting domain at the time of the documentation; its zero is a reporting artifact and is treated as such throughout the process.

Another dimension concerns the low performance of project movement. Of the 106 approved projects, 23–21.7 percent never began training, leaving 13,210 approved positions unfilled. Since the sanction target achievement among active projects in Haryana exceeds the national average, this is not a deterrent in mobilization but rather a deterrent to project movement.

Temporal dynamics

Table 7 disaggregates the 2,132 batches by commencement year; Figure 5 reports the position from 2018 onward.

ISSN No. 2321-2705 | DOI: 10.51244/IJRSI |Volume XIII Issue X October 2026

Table 7. Cohort-wise record by year of batch commencement, Haryana

Year	Batches	Enrolled	Trained	Dropout	Certified	Appointed	Continuity	Placed
2014	46	1,272	1,263	9	5	1,133	1,103	0
2015	485	12,519	12,469	50	1,505	8,509	8,202	969
2016	413	10,723	10,545	178	1,079	5,496	5,216	890
2017	103	3,090	3,078	12	822	1,451	1,385	757
2018	87	2,528	2,182	346	1,299	1,605	1,424	1,012
2019	62	1,858	1,576	282	951	1,083	963	132
2020	40	1,179	942	237	733	748	519	422
2021	129	3,672	3,321	351	2,452	2,813	2,309	2,045
2022	212	6,778	6,255	523	5,422	5,535	4,423	3,945
2023	267	8,553	7,613	940	6,142	6,582	5,171	4,328
2024	142	4,509	4,049	460	3,321	3,309	2,818	2,099
2025	146	4,805	4,480	222	3,439	3,224	2,372	809
	2,132	**61,486**	**57,773**	**3,610**	**27,170**	**41,488**	**35,905**	**17,408**

Figure 5. Year-wise enrolment, appointment and placement in Haryana (2018 onwards)

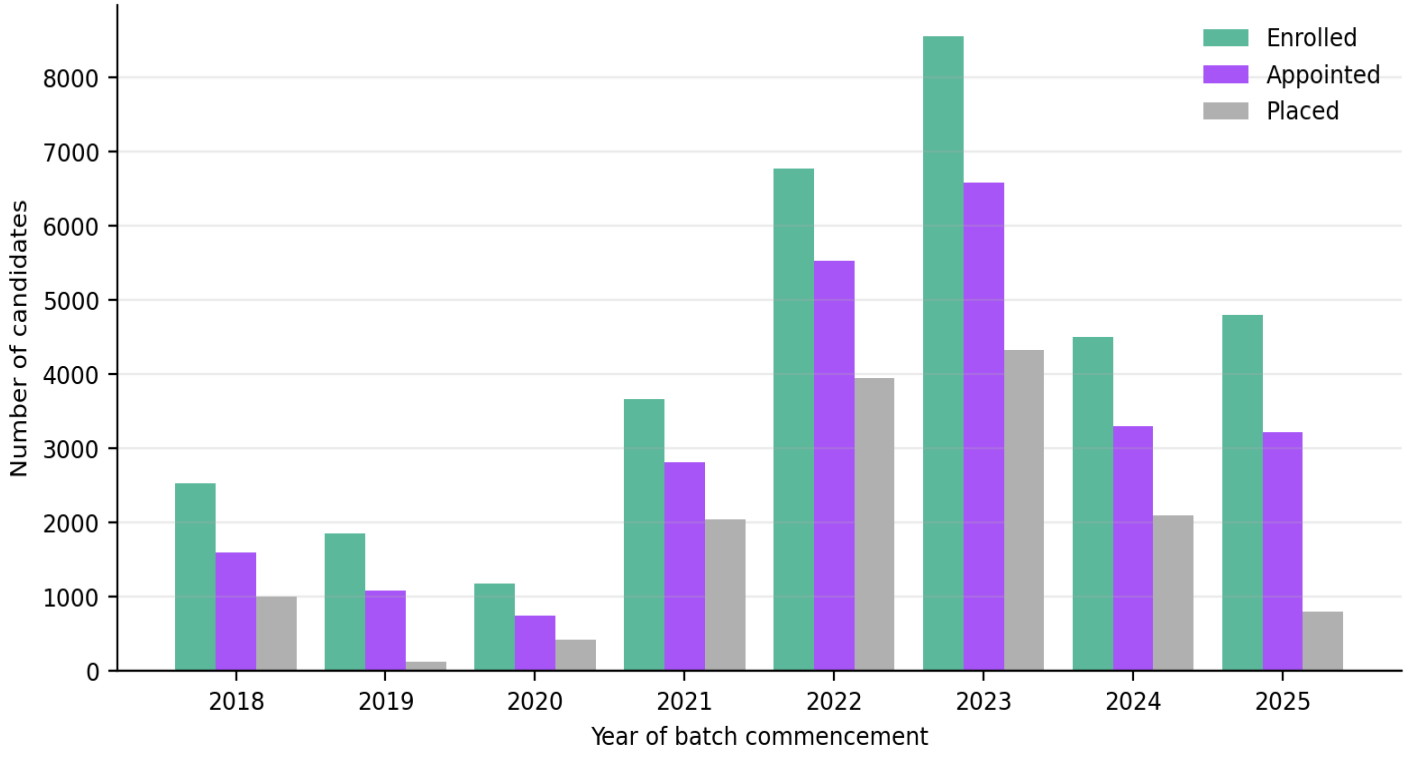


Figure 5

The cohort profile answers RQ4 and materially qualifies the aggregate assessment. Certification, negligible in the 2014–2017 cohorts for the reporting reason already stated, rises to 5,422 of 6,255 trained candidates in the 2022 cohort and 6,142 of 7,613 in the 2023 cohort. Documented placement rises correspondingly. The state's poor aggregate standing is therefore substantially a legacy of a large, weakly converting early portfolio: the 2015 and 2016 cohorts alone account for 898 of 2,132 batches and 23,242 of 61,486 enrolments, and contribute 1,859

documented placements between them. Contemporary delivery performs considerably better than the pooled figure implies.

Two qualifications apply. The low 2025 placement figure reflects right-censoring batches concluding in late 2025 and early 2026 had not completed placement verification and the three-month observation window at the reporting date and should not be read as deterioration. Conversely, dropout rises from under two per cent in the 2015 and 2016 cohorts to around eleven per cent in 2023, a movement consistent with stricter attendance and completion recording in the later regime but which cannot be distinguished from a genuine increase using these data alone.

DISCUSSION

Aggregate placement rates are uninformative about failure loci

The central methodological claim of the paper is borne out by the Haryana case. On the aggregate metric most commonly reported, Haryana is a poor performer: 28.31 per cent of enrolled candidates placed, 24th of 30 jurisdictions. That statistic would ordinarily prompt recommendations concerning mobilisation quality, candidate selection or training delivery. The cascade decomposition shows all three inferences to be wrong. Haryana exceeds the national benchmark on target attainment by nine percentage points, on assessment coverage by more than three, and matches it on dropout and training completion. A remedial programme addressed to the front of the cascade would be addressed to the part that works.

This generalizes because aggregate placement is the product of conditional conversion ratios, it is a many-to-one mapping from failure profiles to headline rates, and the inverse mapping is not identified. Evaluations that report only the aggregate cannot in principle direct remediation. The cascade decomposition requires no data beyond what a compliance-oriented programme already generates and is therefore available wherever such programmes operate.

The appointment–placement gap: two competing interpretations

The largest discrepancy between registered job seekers and those reported as employed was observed in Haryana. Although both groups appear in administrative data, they cannot be treated as identical.

In Haryana, it was indeed possible to register for work, but it often happens that people do not actually start working either because the offer was rejected or the candidate did not accept it and, due to a lack of official documentation, those who are actually working fail to get registered as employees.

These discrepancies have a significant impact on policy formulation and the effective implementation of programs. In cases where job seekers do not actually secure employment, the focus should be on connecting them with employers, matching candidates to vacancies, and providing further training. However, if a lack of documentation is the primary issue, greater emphasis should be placed on improving data collection and reporting methods.

Therefore, it is essential to track a selected sample of registered applicants who have not reported employment and to verify their actual employment status. This information cannot be obtained solely from administrative data. We consider this a crucial area for future research.

Provider heterogeneity and the milestone-payment structure

The thirty-three-point spread in placement performance across agencies operating in a common labor market under a common regulatory regime is difficult to reconcile with explanations resting on candidate characteristics or local demand conditions, and points instead to organizational capability specifically, to the depth of an agency's standing relationships with employers. This is consistent with the Gujarat evidence identifying the implementing agency as the dominant determinant of training outcomes, and it has a direct implication for empanelment policy: selection criteria weighted towards demonstrated employer linkage should dominate

criteria weighted towards training infrastructure, since the latter governs the part of the cascade that is already performing.

The interstate pattern in Table 5 suggests a further mechanism. Haryana generates the highest appointment rate in its comparison set and the lowest placement conversion; Rajasthan generates the lowest appointment rate and the highest conversion. Under a milestone-linked payment structure, an agency facing a binding appointment milestone has an incentive to maximize appointment volume, and volume pursued at the margin will draw in matches of progressively lower quality and lower verifiability. The negative association between appointment rate and conversion across jurisdictions is what such an incentive would produce. We advance this as a hypothesis the data are consistent with, not as an identified effect; testing it requires within-agency variation in milestone structure that these data do not contain.

Policy implications

Four points follow directly from these results. First, reforms in Haryana should focus on recognition and evidence, not social integration or education; the official documents themselves determine the final action. Second, the ranking and continuation of participating companies should be based on the success of the transformation rather than on the ability to train, on the number of suppliers and on the fact that no company meets this six percent threshold. Third, the certification program should be revised to meet the standard of practicing professionals; a high percentage of users actually would be dissatisfied it would be labeled as defective software regardless of the functionality of the software. Fourth, 13,210 authorized positions are in pre-commencement projects, which represents a loss of value and should be replaced by companies with specifications specified in the tender.

Limitations and Research Agenda

Four limitations associated with this hypothesis are outlined here. First, the data is administrative in nature: it comprises evaluations conducted by implementing agencies and national organizations rather than independent performance metrics. The reporting process cannot be overlooked, and the distinction between reward and credit detailed in Section 5.2 is an integral part of the measurement itself. Second, the records do not differentiate based on income, gender, social class, education, salary, or region; therefore, this article focuses on the restriction itself rather than the specific nature of the restriction or welfare condition. Third, excluding records prior to 2018 means that certification renewal and retention rates cannot be directly compared with those of subsequent cohorts, and the data on certified applicants must be interpreted accordingly. Fourth, the subsequent figures are conservative estimates; consequently, the results for 2024 and 2025 cannot be considered final.

These limitations define a research agenda with three components. A tracer study of appointed-but-unplaced candidates would adjudicate between the substantive and documentary interpretations of the largest attrition in the cascade. Trade-level disaggregation, obtainable from state mission sanction schedules though absent from the public extract, would permit the entire analysis to be replicated by occupation and would establish whether the certification deficit is concentrated in particular qualification packs. A long-term study can reveal the program's impact on salary and the family's financial situation after three months.

CONCLUSION

This study indicates that measuring the success of a training program solely by the employment rate is insufficient. In Haryana, the employment rate for the DDU-GKY program is lower than that of 30 other states and union territories.

There are three key findings. First, a major challenge in Haryana is that the process of linking exam results with the qualifications and certifications required for formal employment is inadequate. However, the state has demonstrated positive results regarding enrolment numbers, training completion rates, and overall performance.

Second, post-hiring retention rates are high, suggesting that the core issue lies within the pre-employment phase. Therefore, it is crucial to focus on aspects such as certification, job postings, and other government-issued documentation related to employment.

Third, the program utilized various surveys, many of which were aligned with its objectives. Recent student feedback indicates that the program's impact extends beyond what the initial data suggests.

This step-by-step evaluation methodology can be applied to other programs as well. It enables the tracking of participant progress from enrolment to final outcomes, while also facilitating the identification of challenges and key areas of responsibility.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT / FUNDING DISCLAIMER:

"This research paper is a part of the Longitudinal Research Project titled 'Effectiveness of Deen-Dayal-Upadhyay-Grameen-Kaushalya-Yojana (DDU-GKY) in respect of Quality of Training employment components and its socio-economic impact - Longitudinal study' financially supported by the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), New Delhi. The responsibility for the facts stated, opinions expressed, and conclusions drawn is entirely that of the author(s) and not of the ICSSR."

• ICSSR Sanction/File Number: File.No-1/2nd LSS/2025-603-EDU/SCD-2025

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