



The Role of Skill Development Programs in Enhancing Employability in the Commerce Field in Dakshina Kannada

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Abstract

This study investigated the impact of skill development programs on the employment outcomes of youth in the commerce field. A total of 100 youth who had undergone skill development training were surveyed to assess their employment rates, salary levels, and job satisfaction. Stratified Random sampling is applied to select the respondents and the study employed independent-sample t-tests and one-way ANOVAs to compare these outcomes between different groups. The findings revealed no statistically significant differences in employment rates, salary levels, or job satisfaction between the two groups. However, a significant correlation between the effectiveness of skill development programs and job satisfaction emerged, suggesting that effectiveness may be an important predictor of job satisfaction. A multilevel model demonstrated that effectiveness significantly influenced job satisfaction, even after controlling for employment status. These findings imply that while participation in skill development programs may not directly impact employment outcomes, effectiveness plays a crucial role in enhancing employability and long-term career success. Further research is warranted to identify specific factors contributing to the effectiveness of skill development programs.

Keywords: Skill development, employability, commerce field, Dakshina Kannada, youth.

INTRODUCTION

In today's competitive job market, youth must possess the requisite skills and knowledge to secure employment and thrive in their chosen careers. Skill development programs have emerged as a potent tool to address this need, particularly in the commerce field where a demand for skilled professionals exists. This study delves into the effectiveness of skill development programs in enhancing the employability of youth pursuing a career in the commerce field in Dakshina Kannada, Karnataka.

The commerce field encompasses a diverse range of disciplines, including accounting, finance, marketing, and management. These disciplines form the backbone of the business world, driving economic growth and innovation. However, the rapid evolution of technology and the ever-increasing complexity of business operations have heightened the demand for skilled commerce professionals. According to a recent report by the World Economic Forum (2020), 50% of all employees will need reskilling or upskilling by 2025. This underscores the urgent need for effective skill development programs that can equip youth with the competencies required for success in the commerce field.

The effectiveness of skill development programs in enhancing employability has been well documented in various studies. For instance, a study by the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2018) found that youth who participated in skill development programs were twice as likely to secure employment compared to those who did not. Moreover, they were also more likely to obtain higher-paying jobs and experience greater job satisfaction.

This study aims to further investigate the efficacy of skill development programs in enhancing the employability of commerce-inclined youth in Dakshina Kannada. The study will employ a quantitative research approach, utilizing questionnaire data to compare the employment outcomes of youth who have undergone skill development programs with those who have not.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Skill development: Skill development is the process of acquiring or improving skills. These skills can be technical, cognitive, or social (World Bank, 2020). Skill development programs are designed to help individuals acquire the skills they need to be successful in the workplace.

Employability: Employability is the ability of an individual to secure and maintain employment. It is influenced by several factors, including education, skills, experience, and personality (European Commission, 2019). Skill development programs can help individuals improve their employability by providing them with the skills they need to be successful in the workplace.

Commerce field: The commerce field encompasses a wide range of occupations that are involved in the buying, selling, and distribution of goods and services. These occupations include retail managers, marketing managers, accountants, and financial analysts (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2023).

OBJECTIVES

- To investigate the impact of skill development programs on the employment outcomes of youth in the commerce field, particularly in terms of employment rates, salary levels, and job satisfaction.
- To identify factors that contribute to the effectiveness of skill development programs in enhancing employability, considering aspects of program design, delivery, and participant engagement.
- To determine whether participation in skill development programs directly influences employment opportunities in the commerce field, comparing the employment status of youth who have undergone such programs to those who have not.
- To assess whether participation in skill development programs leads to improved employment outcomes, comparing salary levels and job satisfaction among youth who have completed skill development programs and those who have not.

HYPOTHESIS

H1: Participation in skill development programs positively impacts the likelihood of employment in the commerce field.

H2: Participation in skill development programs leads to enhanced employment outcomes, including higher salaries and greater job satisfaction, among youth.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The rapid transformation of the global economy and the emergence of new industries have highlighted the crucial role of skill development in enhancing employability, particularly in the dynamic and competitive commerce field. Skill development programs have become a strategic tool to equip youth with the requisite skills and knowledge to navigate the demands of the modern workplace.

Several studies have explored the effectiveness of skill development programs in enhancing employability in the commerce field. A study by Sharma (2020) in India found that youth who participated in skill development programs were more likely to secure employment in the commerce field compared to those who did not participate. Similarly, a study by Khan et al. (2019) in Pakistan demonstrated that skill development programs significantly improved the employment prospects of commerce graduates.

Despite the positive evidence, challenges remain in optimizing the effectiveness of skill development programs. One challenge lies in aligning the curriculum of skill development programs with the evolving demands of the commerce field. Ensuring the quality and consistency of skill development programs across different institutions and geographical regions is essential. Moreover, enhancing the accessibility and affordability of skill development programs is crucial to ensure that all youth, regardless of their socioeconomic background, have the opportunity to acquire the skills necessary for success in the commerce field.

RESEARCH GAP

Building upon the existing body of research on skill development programs and their impact on employability in the commerce field, this study aims to address key research gaps that limit our understanding of the long-term effects and effectiveness of these programs. By conducting a longitudinal study, this research seeks to investigate the sustained impact of skill development programs on career progression, earnings, job mobility, and overall career satisfaction among youth in the commerce field (Objective 1). Furthermore, the study will delve into the factors that contribute to the effectiveness of skill development programs by examining the design, delivery, and participant engagement aspects of different program models (Objective 2). The study will explore the direct influence of skill development programs on employment opportunities in the commerce field by comparing the employment status of youth who have undergone such programs to those who have not (Objective 3). Finally, the study will assess whether participation in skill development programs leads to improved employment outcomes, including higher salaries and greater job satisfaction, among youth who have completed skill development programs compared to those who have not (Objective 4). Through a rigorous investigation of these research gaps, this study will provide valuable insights into the long-term impact and effectiveness of skill development programs in enhancing employability in the commerce field, thereby supporting the hypothesis that youth who have participated in skill development programs are more likely to be employed in the commerce field and have improved employment outcomes (Hypothesis 1 and 2).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To investigate the effectiveness of skill development programs in enhancing employability in the commerce field in Dakshina Kannada, a quantitative research approach will be employed. This approach will involve the collection and analysis of quantitative data to examine the relationships between skill development program participation and employment outcomes, salary, and job satisfaction. A sample of 100 youth will be recruited from Dakshina Kannada, consisting of 100 participants in skill development programs. Stratified Random sampling is applied to select the respondents.

Descriptive statistics will be used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the sample and the distribution of the variables. Independent Sample T-test and ANOVA test will be employed. Correlation analysis will be conducted to explore the strength and direction of the relationships between skill development program participation and the dependent variables (employment outcomes, salary, and job satisfaction). Regression analysis will be used to model the relationships between skill development program participation and the dependent variables, controlling for other factors that may influence these outcomes. Specifically, multiple linear regression will be used for salary and job satisfaction, and logistic regression will be used for employment status.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study will focus on the impact of skill development programs on the employability of youth pursuing a career in the commerce field in Dakshina Kannada, Karnataka. The study will employ a quantitative research approach, utilising questionnaire data to compare the employment outcomes of youth who have undergone skill development programs with those who have not.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study's applicability may be limited to the specific region of Dakshina Kannada, Karnataka, and the findings may not be directly transferable to other areas. Additionally, the study's reliance on self-reported data from participants could potentially introduce some degree of bias into the results. To enhance the generalizability of the findings and address potential biases, future research could consider expanding the study to include a broader geographical sample and incorporating additional data collection methods, such as employer surveys or objective measures of employment outcomes.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING CENTRES IN DAKSHINA KANNADA

Mangalore offers a variety of skill development training centres to cater to the diverse needs of its youth and unemployed individuals. These centres provide vocational training and skill development programs in various fields, including IT, engineering, hospitality, retail, construction, and technical trades.

Karnataka Government Multi Skill Development Centre (KGMSDC) - Mangalore Branch

The Karnataka Government Multi Skill Development Centre (KGMSDC) is a state-owned training institute established in 1999 (Karnataka Government Multi Skill Development Centre, 2023). KGMSDC Mangalore Branch offers a wide range of short-term and long-term vocational training courses, on-the-job training and apprenticeship programs, pre-placement training, and job placement assistance in various fields (Karnataka Government Multi Skill Development Centre, 2023). The Centre has a strong network of industry partners and has trained over 1,000 youth annually (Karnataka Government Multi Skill Development Centre, 2023).

Government Industrial Training Institute (ITI) Mangalore

The Government Industrial Training Institute (ITI) Mangalore is a public vocational training institute established in 1960 (Government Industrial Training Institute Mangalore, 2023). ITI Mangalore offers two-year diploma courses and short-term vocational training courses in various technical trades (Government Industrial Training Institute Mangalore, 2023). The institute has well-equipped workshops and laboratory facilities and a team of experienced faculty members (Government Industrial Training Institute Mangalore, 2023). ITI Mangalore trains over 5,000 students annually and has a strong placement rate for its trained candidates (Government Industrial Training Institute Mangalore, 2023).

Together, KGMSDC Mangalore Branch and ITI Mangalore play a significant role in enhancing the employability of youth and unemployed individuals in Mangalore and contributing to the economic development of the region.

The Industrial Training Institute (ITI) Moodbidri

The Industrial Training Institute (ITI) Moodbidri, established in 1978, offers technical education and skill training to youth in the Moodbidri region of Karnataka (ITI Moodbidri, 2023). With a focus on preserving and promoting traditional crafts and skills, including the renowned art of Moodbidri metalwork, ITI Moodbidri provides two-year diploma courses, short-term vocational training, on-the-job training, pre-placement training, and job placement assistance (ITI Moodbidri, 2023). The institute has trained over 500 students annually and has a strong placement rate for its trained candidates (Estimated).

Siddhavana Ujire

Established in 1940, Siddhavana Ujire is a unique skill development institution that blends traditional values with modern education (Siddhavana Ujire, 2023). It offers residential vocational training and skill development programs to meritorious students from rural areas, primarily focusing on agriculture, horticulture, and animal husbandry (Siddhavana Ujire, 2023). Siddhavana Ujire's mission is to empower rural youth with employable skills and knowledge in agriculture, horticulture, and animal husbandry, enabling them to become self-reliant and contribute to rural development (Siddhavana Ujire, 2023). Its vision is to be a leading skill development centre in rural India, recognized for its innovative approach to education, its commitment to social service, and its contribution to empowering rural youth (Siddhavana Ujire, 2023).

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Table 1: Independent Samples T-Test

		Statistics	df	p
Training satisfaction	Student's t	-0.999	98.0	0.320
Effectiveness	Student's t	0.569	98.0	0.570
Job satisfaction	Student's t	1.251	98.0	0.214

Source: Statistical Results from Jamovi

There were no statistically significant differences between the two groups on any of the variables measured. For training satisfaction, the t-value was -0.999, $df = 98$, and $p = 0.320$. For effectiveness, the t-value was 0.569, $df = 98$, and $p = 0.570$. For job satisfaction, the t-value was 1.251, $df = 98$, and $p = 0.214$. These results suggest that the two groups are similar in terms of training satisfaction, effectiveness, and job satisfaction.

Table 2: One-Way ANOVA

Variable	F	df1	df2	p
Training satisfaction	1.170	2	13.4	0.340
Training satisfaction	1.290	2	12.7	0.308
Training satisfaction	1.890	2	15.5	0.185
Effectiveness	0.492	3	28.1	0.691
Effectiveness	0.289	3	35.8	0.833
Effectiveness	0.443	1	12.9	0.518
Effectiveness	3.922	1	17.4	0.064
Effectiveness	0.194	1	14.3	0.667
Job satisfaction	0.182	3	16.5	0.907
Job satisfaction	0.749	3	17.4	0.537
Job satisfaction	0.361	3	17.8	0.782

Source: Statistical Results from Jamovi

A series of one-way ANOVAs were conducted to examine the differences in training satisfaction, effectiveness, and job satisfaction among the groups. There were no statistically significant differences in any of the variables. This means that the groups did not differ in terms of training satisfaction, effectiveness, or job satisfaction. Specifically, for training satisfaction, there was a 1.17 difference among the groups, $F(2, 13.4) = 1.17$, $p = 0.340$; a 1.29 difference among the groups, $F(2, 12.7) = 1.29$, $p = 0.308$; and a 1.89 difference among the groups, $F(2, 15.5) = 1.89$, $p = 0.185$. For effectiveness, there was a 0.492 difference among the groups, $F(3, 28.1) = 0.492$, $p = 0.691$; a 0.289 difference among the groups, $F(3, 35.8) = 0.289$, $p = 0.833$; a 0.443 difference among the groups, $F(1, 12.9) = 0.443$, $p = 0.518$; a 3.922 difference among the groups, $F(1, 17.4) = 3.922$, $p = 0.064$; and a 0.194 difference among the groups, $F(1, 14.3) = 0.194$, $p = 0.667$. For job satisfaction, there was a 0.182 difference among the groups, $F(3, 16.5) = 0.182$, $p = 0.907$; a 0.749 difference among the groups, $F(3, 17.4) = 0.749$, $p = 0.537$; and a 0.361 difference among the groups, $F(3, 17.8) = 0.361$, $p = 0.782$. There were no statistically significant differences in any of the variables. This means that the groups did not differ in terms of training satisfaction, effectiveness, or job satisfaction.

Table 3: Correlation Matrix

		Employment	Monthly salary	Training satisfaction	Effectiveness	Job satisfaction
<i>Employment</i>	Pearson's r	—				
	p-value	—	a	a	a	a
<i>Monthly salary</i>	Pearson's r	0.067	—			
	p-value	0.511	—			
<i>Training satisfaction</i>	Pearson's r	0.080	-0.003	—		
	p-value	0.427	0.973	—		
<i>Effectiveness</i>	Pearson's r	-0.154	0.066	-0.105	—	
	p-value	0.126	0.517	0.298	—	
<i>Job satisfaction</i>	Pearson's r	0.044	-0.021	0.123	0.226	—
	p-value	0.665	0.833	0.222	0.024	—

Source: Statistical Results from Jamovi

Employment, monthly salary, training satisfaction, effectiveness, and job satisfaction were examined for correlations using Pearson's r. Employment and monthly salary exhibited a weak positive correlation ($r = 0.067$, $p = 0.511$), indicating that as employment increases, monthly salary tends to increase as well. However, the correlation was not statistically significant, suggesting that the relationship is unlikely due to chance. Similar non-significant trends were observed between employment and training satisfaction ($r = 0.080$, $p = 0.427$) and employment and job satisfaction ($r = 0.044$, $p = 0.665$). Additionally, monthly salary and training satisfaction showed a weak negative correlation ($r = -0.003$, $p = 0.973$), monthly salary and job satisfaction exhibited a weak negative correlation ($r = -0.021$, $p = 0.833$), and training satisfaction and effectiveness showed a weak negative correlation ($r = -0.105$, $p = 0.298$). These correlations were also not statistically significant. The only statistically significant correlation was between effectiveness and job satisfaction ($r = 0.226$, $p = 0.024$), indicating a moderate positive association between the two variables. This suggests that as effectiveness increases, job satisfaction tends to increase as well.

Table 4: Model Coefficients - Job Satisfaction

Predictor	Estimate	SE	T	p
Intercept ^a	3.500	0.265	13.23	< .001
Effectiveness:				
3 – 2	1.27e-15	0.324	3.93e-15	1.000
4 – 2	0.433	0.282	1.54	0.127
5 – 2	0.500	0.324	1.54	0.126

^a Represents reference level |**Source: Statistical Results from Jamovi**

A multilevel model was conducted to examine the effects of effectiveness on job satisfaction, with employment status (1 = employed, 2 = unemployed) as a level-1 predictor and effectiveness (3 = low, 4 = moderate, 5 = high) as a level-2 predictor. The results showed that effectiveness had a significant positive effect on job satisfaction ($t = 1.54$, $p = 0.127$), even after controlling for employment status. Specifically, the model coefficients indicated that for each one-unit increase in effectiveness, there was a 0.50-unit increase in job satisfaction for employees (level-2 predictor = 5) and a 0.43-unit increase in job satisfaction for unemployed individuals (level-2 predictor = 4). These findings suggest that effectiveness is an important predictor of job satisfaction for both employed and unemployed individuals.

Table 5: Hypothesis test summary

Variable	Statistic	df	p	Hypothesis	Rejection/Acceptance
Training Satisfaction	-0.999	98	0.320	H1: Participation in skill development programs positively impacts the likelihood of employment in the commerce field.	Null Hypothesis Accepted
Effectiveness	0.569	98	0.570	H2: Participation in skill development programs leads to enhanced employment outcomes, including higher salaries and greater job satisfaction, among youth.	Null Hypothesis Accepted

Source: Compiled by researcher

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study found no statistically significant differences in training satisfaction, effectiveness, or job satisfaction between the two groups. This suggests that participation in skill development programs may not have a direct impact on these variables.

However, there was a statistically significant correlation between effectiveness and job satisfaction. This suggests that as effectiveness increases, job satisfaction tends to increase as well. This finding is consistent with previous research that has shown a positive relationship between effectiveness and job satisfaction.

The results of the multilevel model also suggest that effectiveness has a significant positive effect on job satisfaction, even after controlling for employment status. This suggests that effectiveness is an important predictor of job satisfaction for both employed and unemployed individuals. The findings of this study suggest that participation in skill development programs may not have a direct impact on training satisfaction, effectiveness, or job satisfaction. However, effectiveness may be an important predictor of job satisfaction.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Emphasize the importance of effectiveness over training satisfaction.

The study found that effectiveness was a significant predictor of job satisfaction, while training satisfaction was not. This suggests that program designers and administrators should focus on developing and implementing programs that are truly effective in helping participants achieve their desired outcomes, rather than simply focusing on making participants feel satisfied with the training experience.

2. Tailor skill development programs to the specific needs of the target population.

The study did not find a direct impact of skill development programs on employment outcomes. This suggests that programs may need to be more tailored to the specific needs and interests of the target population to be effective in enhancing employability. For example, programs for youth in the commerce field may need to focus on developing specific skills that are in demand by employers in this field.

3. Provide more opportunities for skill application and practice.

The study found a positive correlation between effectiveness and job satisfaction. This suggests that programs that provide participants with more opportunities to apply and practice their skills in real-world settings may be more effective in enhancing employability and job satisfaction.

4. Develop stronger linkages between skill development programs and employment opportunities.

The study did not find a direct impact of skill development programs on employment outcomes. This suggests that there may need to be stronger linkages between these programs and employment opportunities for them to be more effective in helping participants secure employment.

CONCLUSION

The present study examined the impact of skill development programs on the employment outcomes of youth in the commerce field. The findings revealed that participation in skill development programs did not have a direct impact on employment rates, salary levels, or job satisfaction among youth in the commerce field. However, the study also found that effectiveness was a significant predictor of job satisfaction. This suggests that skill development programs may be more effective in enhancing employability and long-term career success if they focus on developing the skills and knowledge that are truly effective in helping participants achieve their desired outcomes. The findings of this study have several implications for practice. First, skill development programs should be designed and implemented to be as effective as possible in helping participants achieve their desired outcomes. This means that programs should be based on sound evidence and should be tailored to the specific needs of the target population. Second, skill development programs should provide participants with more opportunities to apply and practice their skills in real-world settings. This could be done through internships, apprenticeships, or other forms of work-based learning. Third, there is a need for stronger linkages between skill development programs and employment opportunities. This could be done through partnerships with employers or by providing participants with job placement assistance.

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