
Impact of Assam Skill Development Mission among the youth of Guwahati city

Subung Mochahari¹, Juri Barman²

¹Research Scholar, Department of Commerce, Gauhati University, Guwahati.

²Faculty of Department of Commerce, Karmashree Hiteswar Saikia College, Guwahati.

Abstract

Unemployment of youth has been a serious problem in the state of Assam over a long period of time. As per the data released by Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), the unemployment rate of Assam in January 2016 was 5.9 and 4.0 in November 2020. In December 2020 the rate started rising and touched the figure of 7.6. The lockdown of economic activities due to Covid-19 Pandemic has worsened the situation. To tackle this issue Assam Government has given priority to skill development and promotion of entrepreneurship in the state. Assam Skill Development Mission has been playing an important role in enhancing skill of youths to increase employability and promote entrepreneurship in Assam since 2017. ASDM is working with many training partners covering all the 33 districts of Assam and also encouraging industries to collaborate with the government for industry integrated training and placement. Although these initiatives are quite appreciative, still the youths of Assam are facing some challenges which cause hindrance in getting their employment. Therefore, it is very important to study the impact and outcome of various training programs under ASDM on youth in getting employment. Moreover the current crisis situation due to COVID-19 has taken away jobs of many and left them unemployed. This study will help to know about different initiatives taken by ASDM in providing employment through skill development and to understand its impact and identify the problems which require serious attention of policy maker for sustainable solution.

Keywords: Skill development mission, initiatives, impact, problems.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Employment plays a crucial role in the economic, political, and social growth of a country. It is a key pillar of development, as a secure job with fair remuneration and social benefits provide a way to get out of poverty. Moreover, an employed citizen can contribute to the society and the economy at large in terms of GDP and per capita income. On the other hand, unemployment may lead to unhealthy activities in the society. Therefore, reducing unemployment for a developing country like India, which is struggling with the unemployment problem since a long period of time, is a must for overall development of the country. The youth can make a significant contribution to the economic prosperity and

development of a nation. India, which has one of the youngest population profiles with over 65% of its population below the age of 35 years, with a correct and fruitful approach can turn into human resource powerhouse of the world in the near future. To contribute to the nation building, knowledge and skill element is essential for youth to stay competitive in the labour market. According to International Labour Organisation “education, vocational training and lifelong learning are central pillars of employability, employment of workers and sustainable enterprise development”. A country with higher level of skilled workforce can easily and effectively adjust to the challenges and opportunities of dynamic work environment. Therefore necessary skill enhancement of youth is very important. India still face issues like lack of skills, illiteracy, lack of quality education and awareness, demand and supply between require skilled and available employment opportunity or high skilled youth but lack of opportunity etc., calls for more focus on quality education and systematic skill development approach by resolving these issues. Moreover, in the current crisis situation caused by COVID-19 where many have lost their employment, skill development can play an important role in motivating for entrepreneurship.

The Indian government has recognized the importance of youth, and need for skill development and therefore is taking various initiatives in skill building of the youth of the nation from time to time. The Government of India has created a department of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in July, 2014 and subsequently upgraded to full-fledged ministry in November 2014. The Ministry is responsible for providing employment to the youth through skill enhancement and removal of gap between demand and supply. On July, 2015, Honorable Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi has launched ‘Skill India Mission’ and aims to train over 40 crores people in India in different skills by 2022. The mission aims at vocational training and certification of Indian youth for a better livelihood and respect in the society. Over the years, under the leadership of Honorable Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi, various schemes has been launched for developing skills focusing on the employability such as National Skill Development Mission (NSDM), Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), Skill Loan Scheme etc. under Skill India initiative.

In Assam, the state government has also emphasized on creating employment and promoting entrepreneurship through skill development of youths. To integrate the goals of Skill India Mission with state initiative ‘Advantage Assam’ Assam Skill Development Mission (ASDM) is formed to create a pool of skilled manpower. Assam government has undertaken various skill enhancement programs under Assam Skill Development Mission (ASDM). Assam Skill Development Mission is registered in the year 2015 under the Societies Registration Act, 1860. The Mission is working under Skill, Employment & Entrepreneurship Department, and Government of Assam with the visions of capacity building of unemployed youth and to deliver quality skill training leading to meaningful employment to stimulate economy of the state. ASDM started its functioning from January, 2017 as an apex body of all skill initiatives in the state to achieve skilling target of 1.50 lakhs youths in a year. The mission also aims at providing quality skill training for gainful employment of educated unemployed youth, to encourage development of entrepreneurs in different sectors and to implement

central sponsored skilling schemes in the state. The prime objective of ASDM is to enhance the global competitiveness of Assam. To achieve its vision and objectives, ASDM has come up with various initiatives such as setting up of Placement Linked Skill Development Training Program (PLSDTP), implementing Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 2.0 in the state, key collaboration with the Institute of Technical Education – Education Services (ITEES), Singapore as the global knowledge partner to establish the North East Skill Centre (NESC) etc. For successful implementation and positive outcome of these initiatives, study should be carried out to understand its effect on generating employment and also to identify the issues and challenges faced by the trainees in getting employment after training so that effective measures can be taken for better performance.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

The researcher has come across the following literature:

Tahir Hussain Ansari et.al (2018) in their study “Role of Education and Skill Development to Promote Employment in India” states that skill development is an important tool for reducing poverty, enhancing competitiveness and employability and to promote entrepreneurship among youth of India. India suffers from a serious shortage of skilled workers, because of their limited access to education and skill training. So, to move further into a knowledge-based economy and to promote industrial development and achieve high economic growth, India must increase its investment in education and training for youth with a proper balance between them. Increasing expenditure on education and training and ensuring its quality will seriously be a great challenge to the government but with this new approach, Indian economy can surely achieve its targeted results.

Sonia Aggarwal (2016) has conducted a research study entitled “Central Pillar of Employability: Skill Development”. The study has found that there is a need for increasing capability of skill development programs in India. In this direction both the Government and its partner agencies have undertaken various measures/ initiatives for the effective implementation of the skill development system. But still India faces a number of unresolved issues and challenges like low educational attainment, mismatch between the education and skills that the youth attain and what the labor market demands, lack of awareness about industrial requirements and the availability of matching vocational courses etc. which need immediate attention of the policy makers. The study has also found that the skill development initiatives taken by the Government are unable to create avenues for casual workers and are not of the scale needed.

Sanjeeb Hazarika (2016) has conducted a research paper on “Skill Development for Rural Entrepreneurship: A study on State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD), Assam”. The study discusses about various infrastructural facilities provided by SIRD for rural development like Resource Centre on information, education and communication activities, development and management of Growth Centre, Common Facility Centre and Demonstration units to provide theoretical and practical training to the local youth, women and farmers to motivate them for taking up income generating activities in the most scientific manner

possible, Resource Centre in IT, The State Level Satellite Studio for satellite based training programs etc. The study is conducted on 40 rural entrepreneurs (men and women) who have started their enterprise after receiving training from State institute of Rural Development (SIRD), Amoni Growth Centre located in the Nagaon district of Assam. The study has found that the institute has given much importance in training to the rural people in that area which shows improvement in many areas among rural people like leadership skills, technical skill, standard of living, overall employment etc. But it has also revealed that there is a lack of awareness among rural people about different schemes and facilities provided for skill development and entrepreneurship by SIRD.

Objectives of the study:

The present study aims to fulfil the following objectives:

- To highlight different initiatives undertaken by Assam Skill Development Mission in skill enhancement of unemployed youth.
- To study the impact of skill development training programs under ASDM on getting employment by the trainees.
- To identify the problems faced by the trainees after training.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The study is based on descriptive research design. Both the primary and secondary data were used for the study, but due importance has been given to the primary data. The population of the study constitute all the beneficiaries (trainees) of Guwahati city, from 5 selected sectors viz, Beauty and Wellness, Hospitality-Food and Beverages, Hospitality- Housekeeping, Banking and Financial Services (GST), Sales and Marketing (Medical Representatives) of the skill development training program under Assam Skill Development Mission. Primary data has been collected from 50 respondents through questionnaires having close-ended and open-ended questions, using the convenient sampling technique. The secondary data has been collected from various Journals, articles, reports, websites, and news report. For the analysis of data, descriptive statistics has been used.

Initiatives taken under ASDM

Assam Skill Development Mission has undertaken various initiatives to develop competent manpower to cater to the needs of industries and organizations and to reduce skill gap and unemployment issues in the state of Assam. The Different schemes and training programs undertaken by ASDM for the purpose of skill enhancement of youth in the state can be summed up as follows:

ASDM Placement Linked Skill Development Training Program: A state funded program to provide short term training to the youth and linking the trainees to the employer. As many as 155 numbers of training partners are empanelled with 358 training centres at present for imparting training across 31 sectors.

Pradhan MantriKaushalVikasYojana 2.0 (PMKVY 2.0): It is centrally sponsored state managed scheme. Its main objective is to enable youths for taking various industries relevant skills training and to secure their sustainable livelihood.

Recruit-Train-Deploy: Scheme under ASDM where the industries will be given opportunity to train and develop the skills of the youth as per their requirements and thereafter to engage them in the industry.

DAKSHA: Stands for Digital Access to Knowledge and Skilled Human Resource of Assam, a multi-dimensional utility mobile application created by ASDM. The main purpose of this app includes connecting youth to training centers and linking them with employers and providing a market place for self-employed youth and budding micro enterprises. Aspiring students can register for training programs using the mobile app and like a service calling app it is designed to offer services at doorstep like electricians, beauticians etc.

Skill City: The projects under ASDM, envisaged as multi skill training centre which will focus on offering technical and vocational education & training on sectors like agriculture & allied, automotive engineering, beauty & wellness, construction, electronics, healthcare, hospitality & tourism, petrochemicals, power, retail, textile & apparel, transport & logistic, graphic design & technology and international language & culture.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL): A scheme under ASDM which focuses on certifying the skills of youth who are already in employment but lack any formal certification. It focus on industries like tea, healthcare, agriculture, construction, automotive etc. This initiative will help to recognize the skill of the employed youth by providing them with a formal certificate.

Advance Skill Training Institute:It is envisaged as sector specific centres of skill training, set up in collaboration with industry partners or associations, to drive skill development, apprenticeship, incubation centres, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), setting up of skill training institutes & entrepreneurship enablement. The target is skill upgradation of workforce to make them ready for absorption in the industry. It focuses on international level training with quality assurance and benchmarking.

North East Skill Centre: Its objective is to offer high quality skill trainings of international standard to the youth of Assam. It focuses on the sectors likeBeauty and Wellness, Retail Services, Hospitality - Food and Beverage Service and Hospitality – Housekeeping. The course curriculum has been designed by ITEES, being aligned with National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF), to meet the prevalent international standards and industry specific requirement. Training under these courses will help in skill development in the respective field as well as will help to develop knowledge on understanding foreign language, communication skill, entrepreneurship quality, customer handling, maintaining software application etc.

IT-MIS System: it help to map the number of candidates trained and placed in the state and provide a consolidated picture of the state's accomplishment. As per data, currently the total number of training centers across the state is 1145, out of which 117 training centers are from Kamrup (M) District. Till now, the total numbers of candidate registered under ASDM is 152722, out of which 67415 candidates are certified and 20166 candidates are placed.

SWABALAMBAN: A major projects launched by Assam government where ASDM is one of the enablers. The scheme aims to motivate and encourage the surrendered militants to take up self-employment where financial help will be provided by government and other financial institutions at a reduced interest rate.

Karagar se Karigar: A uniqueproject of Assam government, to impart trainings to the prisoners imprisoned in jails of Assam, in various vocational skill development training facilities. It will provide opportunities to engage the prisoners in fruitful pursuits during the term of their sentence in jails. The scheme aims at developing an employability linkage to enable inmates reintegrate with community and earn a livelihood upon release.

4. DISCUSSIONS AND FINDINGS

Table 1: Gender classification.

Gender	Number of respondents	Percentage
Male	26	52
Female	24	48
Total	50	100

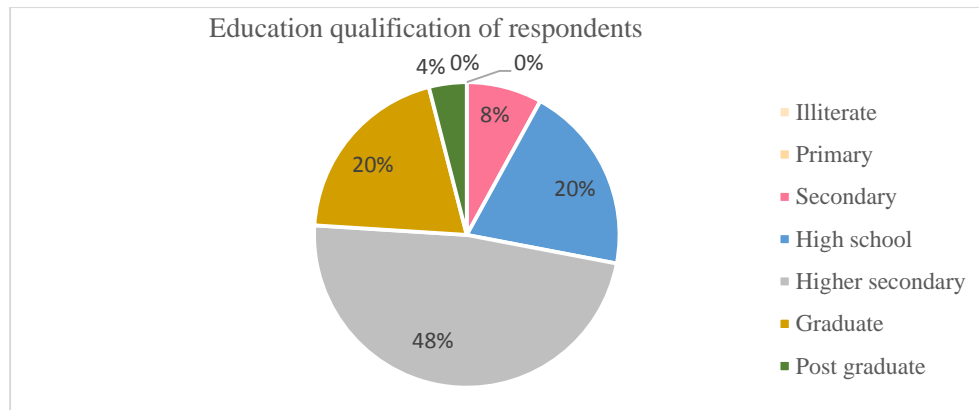
The table shows almost evenly distribution of male and female respondents. This can be concluded that both male and female are almost equally interested in training under ASDM.

Table 2: Age group classification.

Age group	Number of respondents	Percentage
Below 20 years	11	22
21-30 years	33	66
Above 31 years	6	12
Total	50	100

The table depicts that the respondents belonging to the age group of 21-30 years constitute the highest (66%), in the total number of respondents selected. Followed by the respondents belonging to the age group of below 20 years (22%). Therefore, it can be stated that the youth belonging to the age group of 21-30 years are more interested in the training programme.

Chart 1: Showing education qualification of respondents.



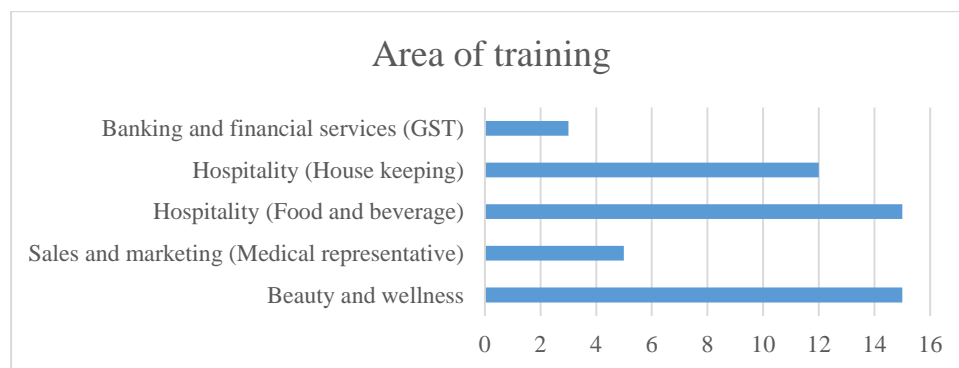
The table shows that 48% of the respondents have education qualification of higher secondary, followed by the respondents having education of graduate and high school (20%). It can be concluded that, the training programme is most popular among the youths having education qualification of higher secondary.

Table 3: Showing unemployment problem faced by the youth.

Unemployment problem	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	47	94
No	3	6
total	50	100

The table depicts that 94% of the respondents have faced unemployment problems. Therefore, they have joined the training programme with a hope of getting employment opportunities.

Chart 2: Sector/ area of training covered.



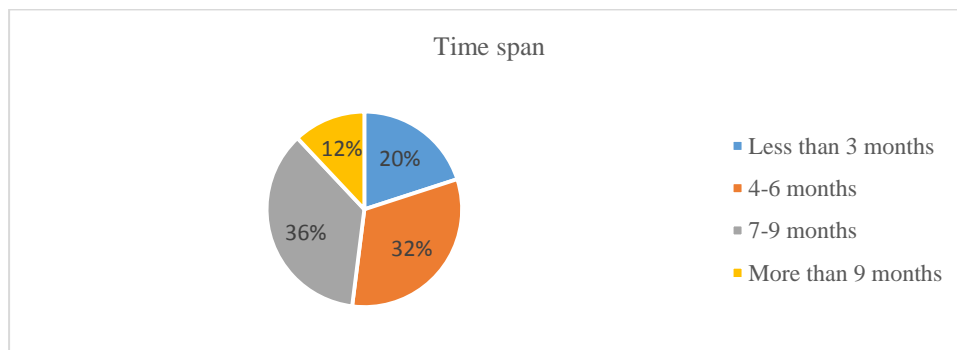
From the above chart it can be said that, the most popular sector taken by trainees for skill development training under ASDM are Beauty and wellness and Hospitality (Food and beverage) with equal percentage of 30%, followed by Hospitality (House-keeping) with 28%. 10% trainees have undergone training for Sales & Marketing (Medical Representative) course. The least taken course for training is Banking and Financial Services (GST) which may be due to lack of awareness about its opportunities.

Table 4: Different employment benefits as availed by trainees after training.

Benefits	Number of respondents	Percentage
Self-employment as professional	12	24
Started business	2	4
Employed through training centre	26	52
Job (self-search)	10	20
Total	50	100

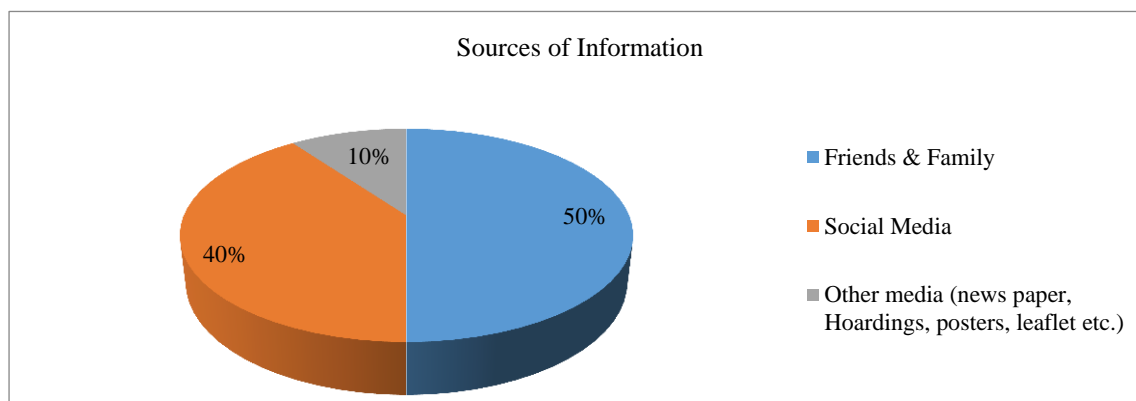
The table shows that, 52% of the respondents have got employment through training centre under ASDM after obtaining training, while 24% are self-employed as professional in their field. 20% are engaged with self-searched job and 4% of the respondents have started business on their own. It can be concluded that, the government of Assam is more or less successful as we can see that 52% of the trainees have obtained the employment through their training institute.

Chart 3: showing the time span of getting employment after training.



The above chart shows that only 20% of the respondents got the employment within less than 3 months while maximum respondents i.e. 36% had to wait for more 7-9 months for the same. Therefore, it can be said that, there is a delay in providing placement facility as well as in providing assistance in various aspects in regard to employment of the trainees after obtaining training by the training provider institute.

Chart 4: Showing different sources from where trainees got the information about skill development training under ASDM.



From the chart it is clear that the most of the respondents came to know about the skill development training program under ASDM from their friends and family (50%) while 40% trainees got to know from different social media. 10% trainees is aware of it from other medias like newspaper, posters, hoardings, leaflet etc.

Table 5: Showing the problems faced by the respondents regarding raising of funds in setting up new business after training.

Problem faced in raising funds	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	30	60
No	20	40
Total	50	100

It is clear from the table that, most of the trainees have faced the problem of raising funds for setting up new business even after training.

Table 6: Showing mean score of the following statements.

Sl. No	Statements	Mean score
1	Skill development Training under ASDM is a great initiative of Assam Government for employment generation.	4.04
2	Satisfaction level of trainees after getting training.	3.9

It can be said that, the respondents accepts that Skill development Training under ASDM is a great initiative of Assam Government for employment generation with a mean score of 4.0, in a scale of 5 from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The satisfaction level of the respondents after the training is found with a mean score of 3.9 in a scale of 5 from very unsatisfied to very satisfied. Therefore from the above table it can be concluded that ASDM is more or less successful with their aims.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Assam Skill Development Mission is an admiring step of Assam Government towards skill enhancement of youth and providing them with employment opportunities. The study reveals

that 94% of the trainees have faced the unemployment problem, and therefore have joined the training programme with a hope of getting the employment. The training programmes by ASDM has gained importance in both male and female youths. The youths belonging to the age group of 21-30 years have come forward to acquire skill and knowledge to meet the requirements of the employer. Moreover, it has also been seen that, after the training, trainees have also started a business and became a job giver. Therefore, we can state that the mission is in a good track in achieving its goals. However the study also came across some issues, after the training most of the trainees had to wait for a period ranging from 7-9 months, which demotivates the trainees. Lack of timely financial assistance and other support by the mission is pulling back the trainees from establishment of new business. There for the study suggests that, more effort has to be taken from the part of the mission in linking the trainees with the employer, also with financial institutions for availing funds to the young and new entrepreneurs. The government may also take up more promotional measures about the mission by putting hoardings, seminars, advertisement etc. Assam being the state rich in natural resources, has a lot of potential for employment. Also being the gateway of North eastern region, different sectors specially tourism are blooming in the state which requires well developed hospitality sector. ASDM Skill development training programs can definitely fill up these needs by making skilled worker. Only skilled worker can contribute well to the development of different sector which in turn will provide an impactful consideration to the economy of the state

6. REFERENCES:

- [1] Ansari, T. H., & Khan, M. A. (2018) Role of Education and Skill Development to Promote Employment in India. *Skill India Opportunities and Challenges*, 208-214.
- [2] Aggarwal, S. (2016). Central pillar of employability: Skill development. *Imperial Journal of Interdisciplinary Research*, 2(3), 386-389.
- [3] Gupta, D. and Agarwal, S. (2018). Skill Development Initiative- Literature Review. *Inspira-Journal of Modern Management and Entrepreneurship (JMME)*, 8(2), 319-322.
- [4] Hazarika, S. (2016) Skill Development for Rural Entrepreneurship: A study on State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD), Assam. *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews*, 3(3), 61-66.
- [5] Maqbool, M. and Khan, M.A. (2019). Skill Development Programmes in India – A Literature Review. *Research Review International Journal of Multidisciplinary*, 4(3), 459-467.
- [6] Pandey, A. and Nema, DK. (2017). Impact of skill India training programme among the youth. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development*, 4(7), 294-299.
- [7] Ekta, (2020) Analysis on Pradhan MantriKaushalYojana: With Special Reference to Jhansi. *International Journal of Advanced Science and Technology*, 29(5s), 1787 – 1797.
- [8] Punjani, K. (2019). A Study on the Requirement of Skills Development for the success of “Make in India” project. *Tactful Management Research Journal*, 65-69.

Websites:

1. <https://asdm.assam.gov.in/>
2. <https://assam.mygov.in/en/group/assam-skill-development-mission-asdm/>
3. <https://www.skillmissionassam.org/>
4. <https://www.nationalskillsnetwork.in/>
5. <https://www.skillreporter.com>