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THE IMPACT OF GOVERNMENT LED SKILL ENHANCEMENT INITIATIVES ON YOUTH EMPLOYABILITY: A CASE STUDY OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AGENCIES, A PUBLIC – PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP MODEL IN MUMBAI

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Abstract:

The accelerating integration of digital transformation, sustainability imperatives, and innovation- driven economic models has redefined the framework of youth employability and rural development in India. This study examines the impact of government-led skill enhancement initiatives, particularly those implemented under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model through Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs), on youth employability and entrepreneurial readiness in Maharashtra. Focusing on Edulight Learning Services Pvt. Ltd. under the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) framework, the study examines the impact of digitally integrated training ecosystems on rural youth. It evaluates how such initiatives enhance innovation orientation, sustainability awareness, and startup preparedness. The study adopts a descriptive and analytical mixed-method approach using questionnaires, field visits, and secondary data from published sources to evaluate digital competency, entrepreneurial inclination, sustainability awareness, employment outcomes, and training performance under DDUGKY in Maharashtra. The findings highlight the transformative potential of digital skill ecosystems in strengthening rural employability and entrepreneurial capacity. The study recommends expanding industry partnerships and advanced digital modules to further enhance innovation-driven outcomes and sustainable entrepreneurship among rural trainees.

Keywords: *Digital Synergy; Skill Development; Rural Youth Employability; Entrepreneurial Readiness; Public–Private Partnership (PPP)*

Introduction:

The 21st Century is characterized by the unprecedented convergence of digital transformation, sustainability imperatives, and innovation-driven economic models. Across the globe, economies are shifting from traditional resource-based growth toward knowledge-based and digitally enabled ecosystems. In this evolving landscape, digital synergy emerges as a transformative force representing the integrated interaction between digital technologies, human capital development, sustainable thinking, and entrepreneurial innovation.

As nations strive to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those related to decent work, industry innovation, reduced inequalities, and sustainable communities, the fusion of digital empowerment with entrepreneurial capacity building becomes critically important. Emerging economies like India present a compelling context for studying this transformation. With one of the world's fastest growing

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Original Research Article

startup ecosystems and a rapidly expanding digital infrastructure, India demonstrates how technology can catalyze socioeconomic mobility. However, the digital divide between urban and rural populations remains a structural challenge. Bridging this gap requires structured interventions that not only impart technical skills but also cultivate innovative mindsets and sustainable entrepreneurial capacities.

In India, the Maharashtra State Rural Livelihoods Mission (MSRLM), popularly known as 'Umed', serves as the state-level implementing agency for rural livelihood and skill development initiatives in Maharashtra. Operating under the broader framework of the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY), launched in 2014, it represents a strategic policy initiative aimed at empowering rural youth through structured, employment-linked skill development programs. While primarily designed as a livelihood enhancement program, its digital training components and industry alignment create potential pathways toward innovation led rural entrepreneurship. In Mumbai and the broader Maharashtra region, several Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs) operate under DDUGKY to deliver skill training, digital upskilling, and placement services. One such agency is Edulight Pvt. Ltd., which is a key PIA partner funded through the Maharashtra State Rural Livelihood Mission.

Other PIAs include Orion Edutech Pvt. Ltd., Empower Pragati Vocational and Staffing Pvt. Ltd., and Prolific Systems & Technologies Pvt. Ltd., all engaged in implementing targeted vocational training and employment linkage initiatives for rural youth in the state

These agencies work in coordination with the State Mission and MSRLM. Their coordinated functioning reflects how digital infrastructure, human capital formation, and market connectivity intersect to generate adaptive, sustainability-oriented workforce pathways, thereby embedding the principles of digital synergy within Maharashtra's skill development architecture.

Literature Review:

The rapid integration of digital technologies into skill development initiatives has emerged as a central theme in contemporary academic and policy discourse. Digital platforms have expanded access to vocational education, enabling participation from geographically dispersed and marginalized populations while enhancing flexibility, scalability, and monitoring efficiency (Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship [MSDE], 2021). The increasing digitization of training ecosystems reflects a broader shift toward technology-enabled employability frameworks.

Recent studies in Maharashtra highlight the growing convergence of vocational education, industry collaboration, and digital integration under major national and state-level initiatives such as the National Education Policy (NEP, 2020), National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC, 2008), Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY, 2015), and Maharashtra State Skill Development Society (MSSDS, 2011). The Draft Maharashtra Skill Policy 2026–2030 emphasizes that the state stands at an "inflection point," advocating mandatory skilling pathways and strengthened Public–Private Partnership (PPP) models to create globally competitive human resources (Directorate of Vocational Education and Training, Maharashtra, 2023).

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Educreator Research Journal

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Volume–XIII, Special Issues–I(b) Jan – Feb 2026

Original Research Article

Impact assessments of skill initiatives in Maharashtra, including employment-linked vocational programs, indicate that blended models combining digital learning with classroom-based instruction significantly enhance outcomes among youth from underprivileged backgrounds.

However, research also suggests that skill development programs are often not sufficiently integrated with employment opportunities, thereby affecting long-term placement sustainability (ResearchGate, 2022). Studies conducted in districts such as Ahmednagar emphasize that Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) serves as a catalyst for socioeconomic mobility, particularly among rural youth.

At the national and global level, several institutional reports contextualize India's evolving skill ecosystem. The Future of Jobs Report 2023 highlights the growing demand for automation, digital literacy, and green skills, reinforcing the urgency of aligning training systems with emerging economic trends (World Economic Forum, 2023). Similarly, FICCI and NASSCOM (2022) stress the importance of digital tools and industry collaboration in bridging India's widening skill gap. The United Nations (2015), through the Sustainable Development Goals framework, further underscores the role of inclusive and equitable quality education in promoting sustainable economic growth.

National skill demand and alignment studies consistently identify sector-specific skill shortages and emphasize curriculum alignment with labour market requirements to reduce skill-job mismatch (MSDE, 2021). State-level diagnostic reports for Maharashtra further highlight district- wise disparities in technical and soft skills, advocating localized interventions and stronger industry linkages through Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs) under PPP frameworks (Directorate of Vocational Education and Training, Maharashtra, 2023).

Empirical assessments of Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) demonstrate measurable improvements in short-term skill acquisition and placement rates. However, these studies also identify inconsistencies in training quality across PIAs, variability in post-placement retention, and gaps in entrepreneurial orientation (ResearchGate, 2022). Reviews of PPP-based skill development models argue that partnerships enhance resource mobilization and industry responsiveness, yet effectiveness depends on performance-based monitoring, standardized metrics, and accountability mechanisms (Chenoy, 2016).

While existing literature extensively evaluates program performance and employability outcomes at macro levels, limited research examines whether digitally integrated training ecosystems foster entrepreneurial transformation and sustainability-oriented innovation among trainees. Furthermore, most studies rely on aggregated state-level data, potentially overlooking district-level disparities in digital access, innovation readiness, and entrepreneurial preparedness.

Therefore, this study attempts to bridge this gap by conducting a district-level assessment within Maharashtra and examining the PIA framework through a digital synergy lens, thereby contributing to a more nuanced understanding of youth employability and entrepreneurial readiness under government-led PPP skill enhancement initiatives.

ISSN: P-2455-0515
E- 2394-8450

Educreator Research Journal

OPEN ACCESS

Volume–XIII, Special Issues–I(b) Jan – Feb 2026

Original Research Article

Research Gaps:

Existing research on skill development programs reveals several important gaps that need further examination, especially in the context of Mumbai.

Longitudinal Stagnation: Current studies focus on immediate 3 – 6 months placement rates, overlooking long-term career progression and the high attrition rates unique to Mumbai's socio-economic landscape.

Behavioral Oversight: While technical training is well-documented, there is a lack of empirical evidence on the psychological shift from a "job-seeker" mindset to "risk-taking entrepreneurship."

Operational Friction: Research fails to address the tension within the PPP model between meeting rigid government enrolment targets and providing high-quality, individualized mentorship.

Thematic Voids: Despite the global shift toward a circular economy, Maharashtra's vocational literature largely ignores "Green Entrepreneurship," remaining tethered to traditional sectors like Retail and IT.

Demographic Homogeneity: Existing research treats Mumbai as a monolithic hub, failing to capture the socio-cultural integration challenges of rural-to-urban migrant youth within PIA frameworks.

Statement of Problem:

In the contemporary era of rapid digital transformation, skill development programs operating under PPP models, such as the PIA initiative, are increasingly integrating digital platforms, Artificial Intelligence (AI) enabled learning tools, and structured training frameworks to enhance employability among rural and semi-urban youth. While these initiatives have demonstrably improved access to education, income opportunities, and digital confidence, a critical gap remains in understanding whether such digital integration truly translates into long-term innovation ecosystems and sustainable startup creation. The current structure of many skill development programs emphasizes job placement outcomes, yet the potential of digital synergy to foster humancentric innovation, environmental sustainability, and entrepreneurial incubation remains insufficiently examined. This research seeks to examine the extent to which digital synergy converts trained individuals into future-ready startup creators

Governments and private institutions are increasingly investing in digital skill development initiatives, including Project Implementing Agency (PIA)-led programs under PPP frameworks.

The expectation of such programs extends beyond immediate job placement to long-term socioeconomic transformation.

Rural and semi-urban youth represent a vast and largely untapped reservoir of innovative and entrepreneurial potential.

However, if digital synergy does not effectively integrate human values, sustainability principles, and innovation orientation, these initiatives may produce a workforce confined to entry-level employment rather than future-ready entrepreneurs and startup creators. It is therefore essential to evaluate whether digital training programs effectively strengthen entrepreneurial capability, foster environmental consciousness, promote innovation orientation, and build adaptive resilience within an evolving digital economy.

ISSN: P-2455-0515
E- 2394-8450

Educreator Research Journal

OPEN ACCESS

Volume–XIII, Special Issues–I(b) Jan – Feb 2026

Original Research Article

Significance of the Study:

Policy Significance: The study provides evidence-based insights to help policymakers refine government-led skill initiatives and enhance the effectiveness of PPP and PIA frameworks.

Educational and Institutional Significance: It enables educational institutions and training agencies to integrate innovation, sustainability, and entrepreneurship more effectively into vocational curricula.

Economic and Developmental Significance: The study contributes to strengthening national innovation capacity, promoting sustainable economic development, and supporting the long- term growth of startup ecosystems.

Limitations of Study:

The geographic and institutional scope is limited to selected PIAs in Mumbai, which may not fully represent the diversity of skill development ecosystems across India.

The findings are based on self-reported trainee responses, reflecting perceived digital confidence and entrepreneurial intent rather than long-term measurable outcomes.

Due to time and structural constraints, the study focuses on conceptual readiness and aspirational transformation, excluding detailed analysis of external factors such as funding access, post-training mentorship, and long-term startup conversion rates.

Research Objectives:

- To examine the role of digital skill development in fostering innovation-driven entrepreneurial potential among rural youth.
- To analyse how digital training ecosystems under Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana contribute to sustainable livelihood transformation and to explore the integration of sustainability orientation within digitally enabled vocational training models
- To evaluate the effective implementation of Project Implementing Agencies such as Edulight Pvt Ltd in operationalizing digitally integrated skill frameworks.
- To assess the extent to which digital exposure enhances adaptability, employability, and startup readiness among trainees

Research Methodology:

The present study adopts a descriptive and analytical single-case study design using a mixed- method approach. It focuses on Edulight Pvt. Ltd., a Project Implementing Agency (PIA) under DDUGKY, to examine the impact of digitally integrated skill development initiatives.

Primary data was collected through structured questionnaires administered via Google Forms to trainees, capturing measurable indicators such as digital competency exposure, entrepreneurial inclination, sustainability awareness, and employment outcomes. Additionally, a physical field visit to the PIA enabled direct observation of training infrastructure and the integration of digital learning practices.

Secondary data obtained from Edulight Pvt. Ltd. provided a comprehensive understanding of its operational scale under the scheme. The organization has trained a substantial number of rural youth across sector-specific

ISSN: P-2455-0515
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Educreator Research Journal

OPEN ACCESS

Volume–XIII, Special Issues–I(b) Jan – Feb 2026

Original Research Article

domains, reflecting structured batch planning, target allocation, and adherence to national skill benchmarks. Enrollment data indicates consistent mobilization capacity, while batch-wise and course-wise performance metrics offer insights into training effectiveness, certification rates, completion ratios, and program outreach across Maharashtra. Together, these sources strengthen the institutional-level analysis and support the case study framework of the research.

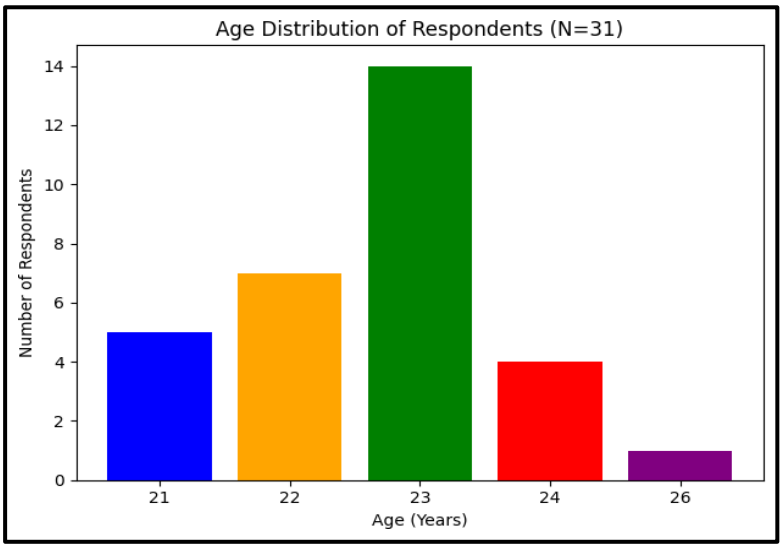
Findings:

The following section presents the key outcomes of the study. The findings provide meaningful insights into the effectiveness of the skill development program under study, and the conclusion summarizes its overall impact and implications within the broader development framework.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Table 1: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age (Years)	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
21	5	16.1%
22	7	22.6%
23	14	45.2%
24	4	12.9%
26	1	3.2%
Total	**31**	**100%**



Graph 1: Age Distribution of Respondents

Table 1 and Graph 1 show that the majority of respondents (45.2%) are aged 23 years, followed by 22 years (22.6%). This indicates that most trainees belong to the early youth category, suggesting that skill development initiatives are primarily attracting individuals in their early twenties, a crucial stage for career entry and employability enhancement.

ISSN: P-2455-0515
E- 2394-8450

Educreator Research Journal

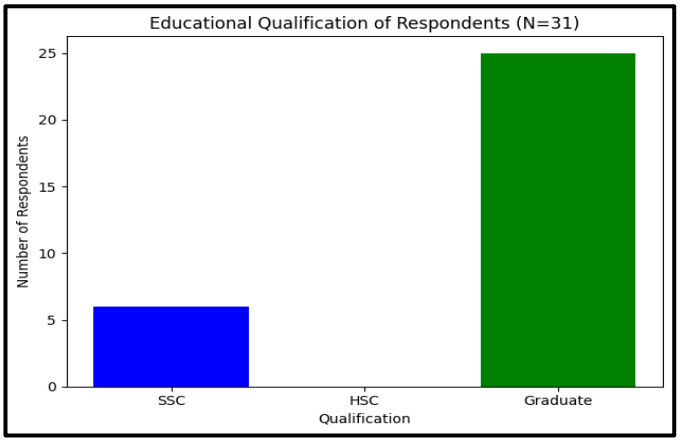
OPEN ACCESS

Volume–XIII, Special Issues–I(b) Jan – Feb 2026

Original Research Article

Table 2: Educational Qualifications of Respondents

Qualification	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
SSC	6	19.4%
HSC	0	0%
Graduate	25	80.6%
Total	**31**	**100%**



Graph 2: Educational Qualifications of Respondents

Table 2 and Graph 2 indicate that a significant majority of respondents (80.6%) are graduates, while 19.4% have completed SSC, and none fall exclusively under the HSC category. This suggests that the training program largely attracts graduate youth, indicating a demand for skill enhancement even among formally educated individuals to improve employability and entrepreneurial readiness.

Table 3: Inclusion of Basic Digital Tools in Training

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	31	100%
No	0	0%
Total	**31**	**100%**

ISSN: P-2455-0515
E- 2394-8450

Educreator Research Journal

OPEN ACCESS

Volume–XIII, Special Issues–I(b)

Jan – Feb 2026

Original Research Article

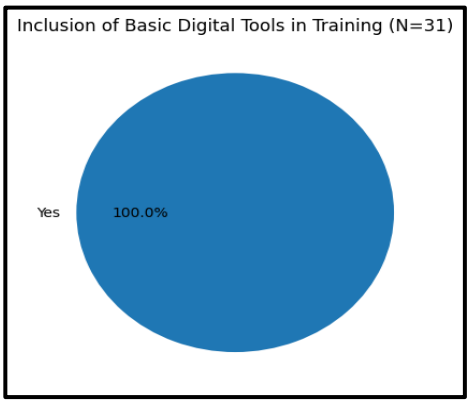
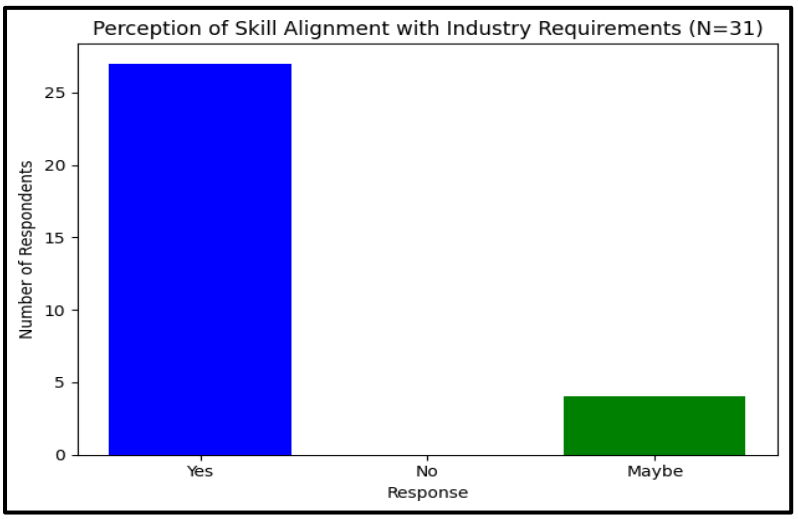


Table 3: Inclusion of Basic Digital Tools in Training

Table 3 and Graph 3 exhibit that all respondents (100%) stated that the training included basic digital tools. This indicates complete integration of digital components within the training program, reflecting strong alignment with digital skill development objectives and enhancing trainees' technological preparedness.

Table 4: Perception of Skill Alignment with Industry Requirements

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	27	87.1%
No	0	0%
Maybe	4	12.9%
Total	**31**	**100%**



Graph 4: Perception of Skill Alignment with Industry Requirements

Table 4 and Graph 4 indicate that a majority of respondents (87.1%) believe that the skills taught match current industry requirements, while 12.9% expressed uncertainty. This suggests a strong perceived relevance of the

ISSN: P-2455-0515
E- 2394-8450

Educreator Research Journal

OPEN ACCESS

Volume–XIII, Special Issues–I(b)

Jan – Feb 2026

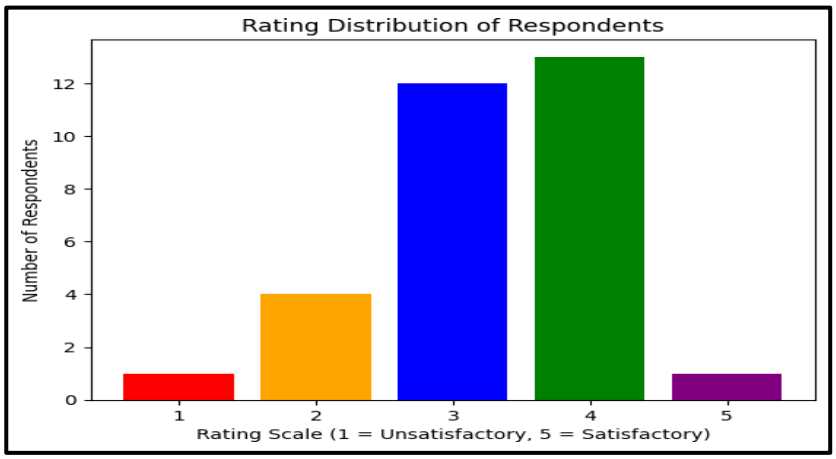
Original Research Article

training curriculum to industry needs, although there is scope to further strengthen industry alignment and confidence among trainees.

DIGITAL SYNERGY RESPONSE FROM TRAINEES

Table 5: Rating of Soft Skills Taught During the Program

Rating (Scale 1–5)	Number of Respondents	Percentage %)
1	1	3.2%
2	4	12.9%
3	12	38.7%
4	13	41.9%
5	1	3.2%
Total	**31**	**100%**



Graph 5: Rating Soft Skills Taught During the Program Interpretation

Table 5 and Graph 5 describe that many respondents rated the soft skills training positively, with 41.9% giving a rating of 4 and 38.7% giving a rating of 3. Only a small proportion rated it very low (3.2%) or excellent (3.2%). This indicates that the soft skills component is generally perceived as effective, though there remains scope for enhancement to achieve higher satisfaction levels among trainees.

PLACEMENT STATUS

Table 6: Source of Information about the Programme

Source of Information	Percentage (%)	Approx. Number of Respondents
Government Outreach	29%	9
Social Media	19.4%	6
Word of Mouth	29%	9
Gram Panchayat	16.1%	5
Others	6.5%	2
Total	**100%**	**31**

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Educreator Research Journal

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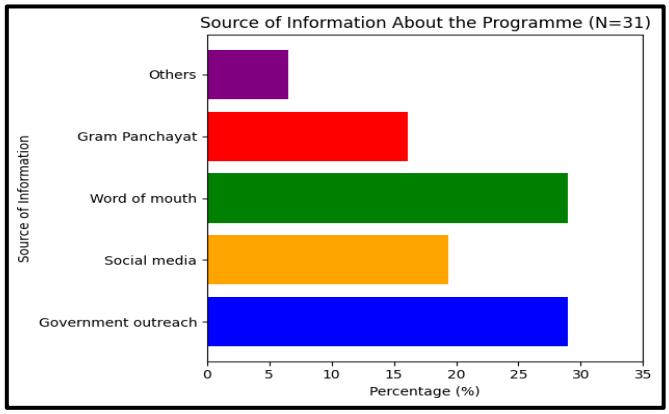
Volume–XIII, Special Issues–I(b)

Jan – Feb 2026

Original Research Article

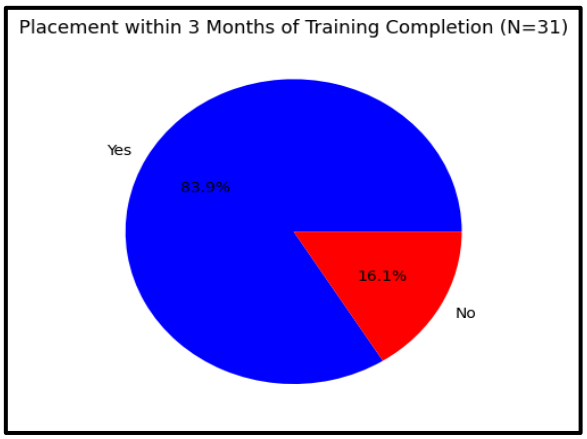


Graph 6: Source of Information about the Programme

From Table 6 and Graph 6, it can be noted that Government outreach and word of mouth (29% each) are the primary sources through which respondents learned about the programme, followed by social media (19.4%) and Gram Panchayat channels (16.1%). This indicates that both institutional mechanisms and community networks play a crucial role in mobilizing trainees, highlighting the importance of local governance and social influence in programme awareness

Table 7: Placement within 3 Months of Training Completion

Placed	**Number of Respondents**	**Percentage (%)**
Yes	26	83.9%
No	5	16.1%
Total	**31**	**100%**



Graph 7: Placement within 3 Months of Training Completion

Table 7 and Graph 7 exhibit that a substantial majority (83.9%) of respondents reported being placed within

ISSN: P-2455-0515
E- 2394-8450

Educreator Research Journal

OPEN ACCESS

Volume–XIII, Special Issues–I(b)

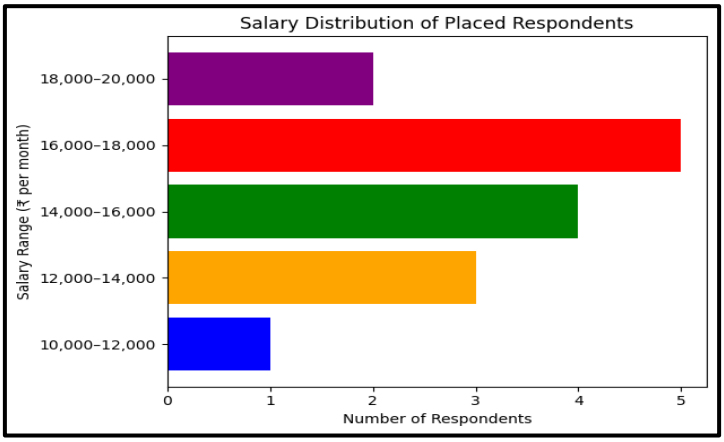
Jan – Feb 2026

Original Research Article

three months of completing the training, while 16.1% were not placed within this period. This reflects a strong placement performance of the training programme, indicating its effectiveness in facilitating employment-linked outcomes.

Table 8: Salary Range of Placed Respondents

Salary Range (₹ per month)	Approx. Number of Respondents
10,000 – 12,000	1
12,000 – 14,000	3
14,000 – 16,000	4
16,000 – 18,000	5
18,000 – 20,000	2



Graph 8: Salary Range of Placed Respondents

Table 8 and Graph 8 state that the majority of respondents fall within the ₹14,000–₹18,000 salary range, indicating moderate entry-level earnings after program completion. The distribution suggests that the training program enables access to stable employment with competitive starting salaries for rural youth.

Table 9: Confidence in Navigating the Digital Economy After the Program

Level of Confidence	Percentage (%)	Approx. Number of Respondents
Slightly Confident	19.4%	6
Moderately Confident	48.4%	15
Highly Confident	32.3%	10
Total	**100%**	**31**

ISSN: P-2455-0515
E- 2394-8450

Educreator Research Journal

OPEN ACCESS

Volume–XIII, Special Issues–I(b)

Jan – Feb 2026

Original Research Article

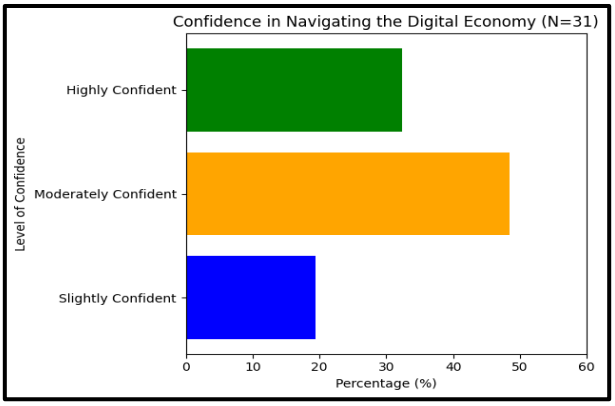
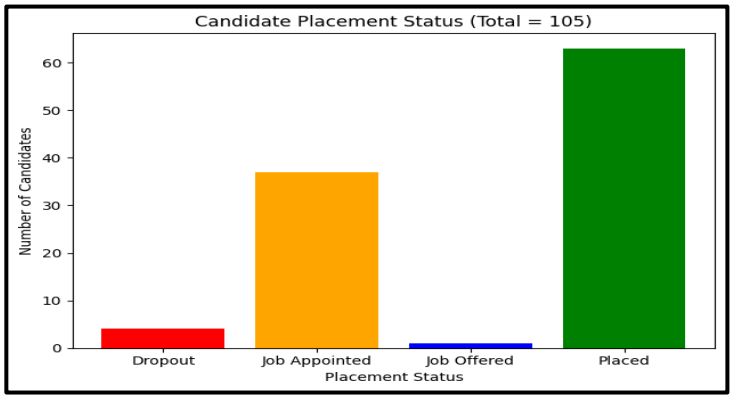


Table 9: Confidence in Navigating the Digital Economy After the Program

From Table 9 and Graph 9, it can be noted that nearly half of the respondents (48.4%) reported being moderately confident in navigating the digital economy, while 32.3% felt highly confident. Only 19.4% expressed slight confidence. This indicates that the program significantly enhances digital self-efficacy, although continued advanced digital training could further strengthen confidence levels among trainees.

Table 10: Candidate Placement Status (Overall Count)

Placement Status	Number of Candidates
Dropout	4
Job Appointed	37
Job Offered	1
Placed	63
Total	**105**



Graph 10: Candidate Placement Status (Overall Count)

The data in Table 10 and Graph 10 indicate that the majority of candidates (63 out of 105) were successfully placed, reflecting the strong placement performance of the program. Additionally, 37 candidates were job-appointed, while only 1 candidate received a job offer pending placement. The dropout rate remains relatively

ISSN: P-2455-0515
E- 2394-8450

Educreator Research Journal

OPEN ACCESS

Volume–XIII, Special Issues–I(b) Jan – Feb 2026

Original Research Article

low (4 candidates), suggesting effective retention and training completion mechanisms within the institution. Overall, the figures demonstrate a positive employment outcome and operational efficiency of the placement system.

Table 11: Data of Edulight Learning Services Pvt. Ltd. (2022 - 2023)

Sr. No.	Particular	Details			
A	Name of the PIA	Edulight Learning Services Pvt Ltd			
B	State	Maharashtra			
C	Total sanctioned number of trainees (Target)	595			
D	The actual number of trainees benefited from the percentage	69			
E	Placement Target	1st batch	2nd batch	3rd batch	4th batch
F	Actual Placed no. of candidates	50			
	Category % candidate	**SC**	**ST**	**Minority**	**Women**
G	Required Number	184	149	119	196
H	5% Relaxation	175	141	113	187
I	Actual	43	4	25	78
J	Difference	-141	-145	-94	-118
K	Total In Percentage	62	5.797101449	36.23188406	113.0434783

Table 12: Post COVID - Data of Edulight Learning Services Pvt. Ltd. (2023 - 2024)

Sr. No.	Particular	Details			
A	Name of the PIA	Edulight Learning Services Pvt Ltd			
B	State	Maharashtra			
C	Total sanctioned number of trainees (Target)	420			
D	The actual number of trainees benefited from the percentage	386 (96.5%)			
E	Placement Target - 270 (70%) out of 386	1st batch	2nd batch	3rd batch	4th batch
F	Actual Placed no. of candidates	270	88	111	71
	Category % candidate	**SC**	**ST**	**Minority**	**Women**
G	Required Number	120	96	77	127
H	5% Relaxation	114	92	73	121
I	Actual	121	96	74	192
J	Difference	1	0	-3	65
K	Total In Percentage	31	25	19	50

Table 13: Comparative District Analysis Based on Social Category (2023 – 2024)

ISSN: P-2455-0515
E- 2394-8450

Educreator Research Journal

OPEN ACCESS

Volume–XIII, Special Issues–I(b) Jan – Feb 2026

Original Research Article

Sr. No	District Name	Others	SC	ST	Grand Total
1	Osmanabad	41	41	3	
2	Palghar	4	1	78	
3	Raigad	35	18	5	
4	Ratnagiri	48	13	4	
5	Sindhudurg	35	8	2	
6	Solapur	34	34	1	
7	Thane	3	6	3	
	Grand Total	**200**	**121**	**96**	

During the COVID-19 period, trainee enrolment and placement rates declined due to economic slowdown and limited industry hiring. However, in the post-pandemic period, the accelerated adoption of digital platforms, virtual training modules, and remote placement mechanisms enhanced digital integration within the PPP skill framework through digital synergy, resulting in increased participation and improved placement outcomes.

Table 14: Comparative District Analysis Based on Social Category (2024 – 2025)

Sr. No.	District	Others	SC	ST	Total
1	Palghar	7	0	94	101
2	Pune	15	4	1	20
3	Raigad	12	19	29	60
4	Ratnagiri	57	41	0	98
5	Sindhudurg	26	41	0	67
6	Thane	47	14	30	91
	Grand Total	**164**	**119**	**154**	**437**

Table 15: Data of Edulight Learning Services Pvt. Ltd. (2024 - 2025)

Sr. No.	Particular	Details			
A	Name of the PIA	Edulight Learning Services Pvt. Ltd.			
B	State	Maharashtra			
C	Total sanctioned number of trainees (Target)	433			
D	The actual number of trainees benefited from the percentage	363 (84%)			
E	Placement Target - 254 (70%) out of 363	1st batch	2nd batch	3rd batch	4th batch
F	Actual no. of candidates placed (with percentage)	257 (71)	31 (8)	173 (48)	53 (15)

ISSN: P-2455-0515
E- 2394-8450

Educreator Research Journal

OPEN ACCESS

Volume–XIII, Special Issues–I(b) Jan – Feb 2026

Original Research Article

Category % candidate		SC	ST	Minority	Women
G	Required Number	113	91	73	120
H	5% Relaxation	107	86	69	114
I	Actual	115	144	91	228
J	Difference	2	53	18	108
K	**Total Percentage**	**32**	**40**	**25**	**63**

Other Institutions Studied

- Orion Edutech Pvt. Ltd.
- Prolific System & Technologies Pvt. Ltd.
- ManpowerGroup Services India Pvt. Ltd.
- Krystal Integrated Services Ltd.

Table 16: Comparative Analysis of Training Partners on Key Development Parameters

Sr. No.	Parameter	Orion Edutech	Prolific Systems	Manpower Group	Krystal Integrated
1	Digital Infrastructure Integration	LMS platforms, AI-based mock interviews	Advanced IT & networking labs, simulation software, hybrid teaching	Corporate-style classrooms, virtual interviews, AI-based assessments	Simulated workplace environments, digital monitoring systems
2	Innovation Orientation	Blended learning & industry-reviewed curriculum	Cybersecurity & cloud fundamentals with hands-on labs	Real-time labor analytics & corporate employability modules	Facility management & security services with practical on-site demonstrations
3	Human Empowerment Impact	Confidence building & structured career pathways	Transition from informal jobs to IT roles; improved technical skills	Shift from unemployment to organized sector; enhanced workplace adaptability	Improved dignity, community respect & structured employment pathways
4	Sustainability Contribution	Paperless LMS & digital assessments	Green IT practices & eco-conscious IT training	Corporate etiquette & digital professionalism	Eco-friendly cleaning, waste management & sustainable workplace practices

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Volume–XIII, Special Issues–I(b) Jan – Feb 2026

Original Research Article

5	Startup Readiness Potential	BFSI & IT exposure building entrepreneurial mindset	IT networking & digital exposure fostering innovation	Corporate skill alignment enabling entrepreneurial thinking	Domain expertise supporting service-sector entrepreneurial ideas
6	Salary Transformation Impact	₹0–₹8,000 → ₹12,000–₹18,000	₹0–₹8,000 → ₹15,000–₹22,000	₹0–₹10,000 → ₹14,000–₹20,000	₹0–₹9,000 → ₹13,000–₹18,000
7	Digital Synergy Strength (Overall)	8/10	7.5/10	8.5/10	7/10

Observations:

Many of these institutions were originally involved in distance university education and certification support services; however, with the expansion of national skill missions, they strategically repositioned themselves as Project Implementing Agencies aligning academic outreach experience with digitally integrated employability programs and strengthening the broader digital synergy model.

1. **Digitalization Replacing Physical Outreach**

   The earlier model included training partners who physically visited remote villages to mobilize students. The Current Model, including Digital awareness campaigns, social media outreach, online registration systems, and digital tracking mechanisms, has replaced traditional outreach methods. This transition reflects a significant structural shift toward scalable and inclusive development. Digital platforms reduce operational costs, improve speed and efficiency, and enable wider rural penetration. By minimizing geographical dependency, digital synergy enhances access to opportunities. Moreover, digital standardization ensures scalability, transparency, and quality control, transforming localized skill initiatives into replicable national innovation ecosystems.

2. **Sustainability Impact**

   The transition to digital systems substantially reduces travel expenses, carbon emissions, and administrative overheads. This shift aligns skill development initiatives with environmentally sustainable practices and promotes resource-efficient governance.

3. **AI Bridging Language and Dialect Barriers**

   Linguistic diversity and regional dialect variations remain significant challenges among trainees. AI-powered translation tools, voice recognition systems, and multilingual digital interfaces can address these barriers effectively. Such technological integration enables inclusive learning environments and ensures equitable access to knowledge across diverse communities.

4. **Innovation that Humanizes Technology**

   This model demonstrates that innovation does not replace human potential; rather, it humanizes technology. Digital tools empower marginalized linguistic and social groups by enhancing accessibility, confidence, and participation in the digital economy.

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OPEN ACCESS

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Original Research Article

5. **From Job Seekers to Potential Startup Creators**

   While the program successfully enhances employability, trainees have expressed interest in AI, analytics, entrepreneurship, and advanced technical skills. This indicates aspirational readiness forinnovation-driven careers. With structured advanced modules and mentorship support, trainees can transition from job seekers to local startup creators, contributing to grassroots innovation ecosystems.

6. **Income Growth as Economic Sustainability**

   Monthly income growth signifies more than employment generation—it reflects improved financial resilience. Economic upliftment strengthens household stability, increases access to education, and fosters long-term community development. Thus, income enhancement becomes a foundational pillar of sustainable human development.

7. **Sustainability Gap as an Innovation Opportunity**

   The relatively limited emphasis on green entrepreneurship presents a strategic opportunity. Integrating sustainable startup models—such as renewable energy services, digital agriculture solutions, and eco-enterprises—can align skill development initiatives with global sustainability goals and emerging green economies.

8. **Government + Digital + Private: The Digital Synergy Model**

   Collaboration between local governance institutions, digital platforms, and private training partners exemplifies a "Digital Synergy Model." In this framework, public institutions and technology co-create inclusive development pathways, enhancing transparency, scalability, and long-term sustainability.

9. **Futuristic Skill Demand Reflecting an Innovation Mindset**

   The growing demand for advanced technological and entrepreneurial skills indicates a shift from survival-oriented employment to innovation-oriented career aspirations. This signals the emergence of rural innovation consciousness and forward-looking workforce ambitions.

10. **Rural Digital Transformation**

    The findings suggest that rural youth are no longer digitally excluded; instead, they are increasingly active participants in the digital economy. Skill development programs function as bridges between traditional rural socio-economic structures and emerging digital startup ecosystems, reinforcing the integration of humanity and innovation.

11. **Human-Centric Technology Model**

    The program exemplifies a human-centric digital transformation framework in which technology functions as an enabler rather than a disruptor. Instead of displacing labor, digital tools enhance human capability, adaptability, and income potential. Trainees demonstrate awareness of economic volatility and express a desire for adaptive, future-ready skills. This underscores the importance of resilience-oriented training frameworks to support sustainable startup ecosystems and long-term socio-economic stability.

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Conclusion:

The study shows that learning skills is very important for young people in rural areas to get jobs and to adapt to new things. Digital skills also help them start their businesses. When young people learn technical and digital skills, they can get jobs that pay a wage or start their own businesses.

The study also found that digital training programs that are effectively and efficiently organized can help people improve their lives and their communities. The PIA model is an example of this; it helps young people in Mumbai by teaching them digital skills and making them feel more confident. The study says that we should not just focus on helping people find jobs, but help them start their own businesses with the help of mentors and programs that support new ideas and care about the environment, so that we can have growth that is good for everyone and lasts a long time. Digital skill development and digital skills are key to making this happen for skill development and the youth.

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