

SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME AS A MECHANISM FOR ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF GIRLS: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO DDUGKY PROGRAMME OF ODISHA

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Abstract

The Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDUGKY) is a flagship placement-linked skill development programme of India's Ministry of Rural Development, launched on 25th September 2014. It seeks to transform rural poor youth into skilled, employable workers to enhance their income opportunities & support national development initiatives. The DDU-GKY in Odisha is implemented under the Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water Department through the Odisha Livelihoods Mission (OLM), with the objective of improving employability by giving placement opportunity & increase income levels of rural youths by providing demand-driven, placement -linked skill training. The programme has created opportunities for rural youths, especially young women, to acquire vocational skills, secure employment, and improve their standard of living. Most respondents experienced positive changes in their personal, social, and economic lives. Economically, the girls became financially independent and started contributing to their family income after getting training & placement under the DDUGKY programme. Socially, the training and work exposure enhanced girls' communication skills, confidence level, professional skills, decision-making ability, and social participation. However, the study also identified certain challenges faced by the respondents during training & after placement. Since many placements were outside Odisha, several girls experienced difficulties in adjusting to a new environment. Even though these challenges existed, the findings of the study clearly indicate that the benefits of skill training and employment outweighed the hardships faced by the respondents. The majority of girls expressed satisfaction in becoming independent, skilled, and employed rather than remaining unemployed in their villages.

Keywords – DDU-GKY, Make in India, Vocational Education, Demand-driven Training.

1. Introduction

Skill India is an initiative of the Government of India which has been launched to empower the youth of the country specially from remote area with skill sets which make them more employable and more productive in their work environment. National Skill Mission is chaired by the Honourable Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi himself to enhance the skill of India youth. India is a country today with 65% of its youth in the working age group or ready to earn their livelihood. If ever there is a way to improve this demographic advantage, it has to be through skill development so that the youth add not only to their personal growth, but to the country's economic growth as well. Skill India offers variety courses across 40 sectors in the country which are aligned to the standards recognized by the industry as well as the government. The courses offers more focus on practical work and help them to enhance their technical expertise. So that they are ready for their job from the beginning and companies don't have to invest much into training for them. The Skill Mission launched by the Prime Minister on 15 July 2015, has gathered tremendous steam under the guidance of Shri Rajiv Pratap Rudy, Union Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, during the last one year. The target to train more than one crore fresh trainee into the Indian workforce has been substantially achieved for the first time. 1.04 Crore Indians were trained through Central Government Programs and NSDC associated training partners in the private sector. For the first time in 68 years of India's independence, a Ministry for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has been formed to focus on enhancing employability & empowerment of the youth through skill development. The skill ecosystem in India, is seeing some great reforms and policy interventions which is re-energizing the country's workforce today; and is preparing the youth for job and growth opportunities in the international market. The Hon'ble Prime Minister's flagship scheme, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) alone, has till date seen close to 20 lakh people get skilled and prepared for a new successful India. Skill India cherish responsibility for ensuring implementation of Common norms across all skill development programs in India so that they are all standardized and aligned to one object. The ITI along with the management ecosystem has also been brought under Skill India for garnering better results in vocational education and training.

The present study was conducted in Khordha district of Odisha with the objective to study the socio-economic empowerment of the respondents after getting placement through DDUGKY Training programme. Across the state, a total of 226 DDUGKY skill development training

centers is operational, out of which 95 centers are located in Bhubaneswar of Khordha district, indicating a high concentration of training facilities in this region. Bhubaneswar, the state capital is a major hub for training institutions, administrative coordination, and industry linkages. The city offers better connectivity and communication facilities, which enhances access for trainees from nearby rural and interior areas. Moreover, being a Smart City, Bhubaneswar provides greater exposure to industry environments, employment opportunities, and urban workplace culture, which are relevant for placement-oriented skill development programmes. These factors make Khordha district a suitable and representative setting for examining the effectiveness of training, placement, and post-placement support mechanisms. As there are 95 training institutions in Khordha district, all most all are situated in Bhubaneswar city and its nearby areas, the present study selected six training centers from this cluster with 325 respondents for detailed investigation.

DDUGKY: An Instrument for Socio-Economic Empowerment of Girls of Odisha

In Odisha, many of these girls were unable to pursue higher education after completing their schooling due to various personal, social, and economic constraints. They are confined within the four walls of their house. However, skill development training provided them with an opportunity to enroll in vocational education, acquire market-oriented skills and think out of the box. As a result, they were successfully placed in different job roles, which enhanced their income-generating capacity and economical independence. Ultimately, this process contributed significantly to their socio-economic empowerment by improving their self-confidence, mobility, personality, decision-making ability, and social status. The study employs both multiple response and multivariate analysis techniques to examine the outcomes of DDUGKY training. Multiple response analysis is used for questions where respondents provided more than one answer, such as challenges faced during training or placement and areas of decision-making power. Multivariate analysis is applied to understand the influence of socio-economic and training-related factors on placement outcomes, adjustment levels, professional development and empowerment of beneficiaries.

2. Methodology

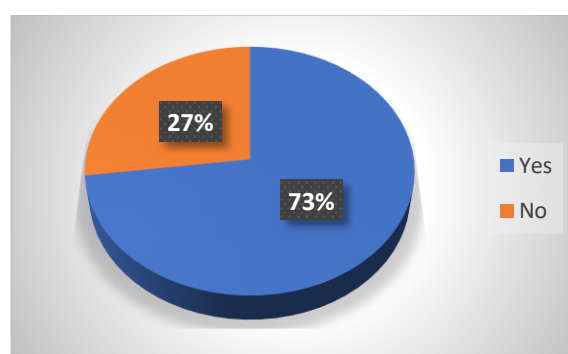
The researcher selected this topic because very limited studies have been conducted in Odisha focusing specifically on the empowerment of female trainees after receiving vocational training and placement through DDU-GKY. The study was conducted to study the socio-economic

empowerment of the respondents after getting placement through the DDUGKY Training program. The present study has adopted a mixed-method approach with an insightful blend of qualitative & quantitative approaches under a descriptive & exploratory research design. All data have been collected from both primary and secondary sources. The current research is based on a structured primary survey with questionnaires & semi structured interview schedule. The analysis of data has been conducted using a combination of descriptive statistics, multiple response analysis, and multivariate analysis techniques. Across the state, a total of 226 DDUGKY skill development training centres are operational, out of which 95 centres are located in Bhubaneswar of Khordha district, indicating a high concentration of training facilities in this region. The present study selected six training centres from this cluster for detailed investigation. These centres were chosen purposively to ensure adequate representation of different training trades and placement performance, as well as to maintain the feasibility of fieldwork within the study area. Almost 71% of the skilled girls have got their placement from the identified DDUGKY centre. A total sample of 325 has been covered under the study by applying the Yamane formula & sample has been covered on a lottery-method random basis.

3. Results and Discussion

Decision making is an important parameter to analyze the social empowerment of girls. It has been observed that girls were not actively taking part in the decision-making process in their house as well as their own career. After getting placement they became a helping hand for their family financially which enables for the active participation & share their opinion in every work of their house.

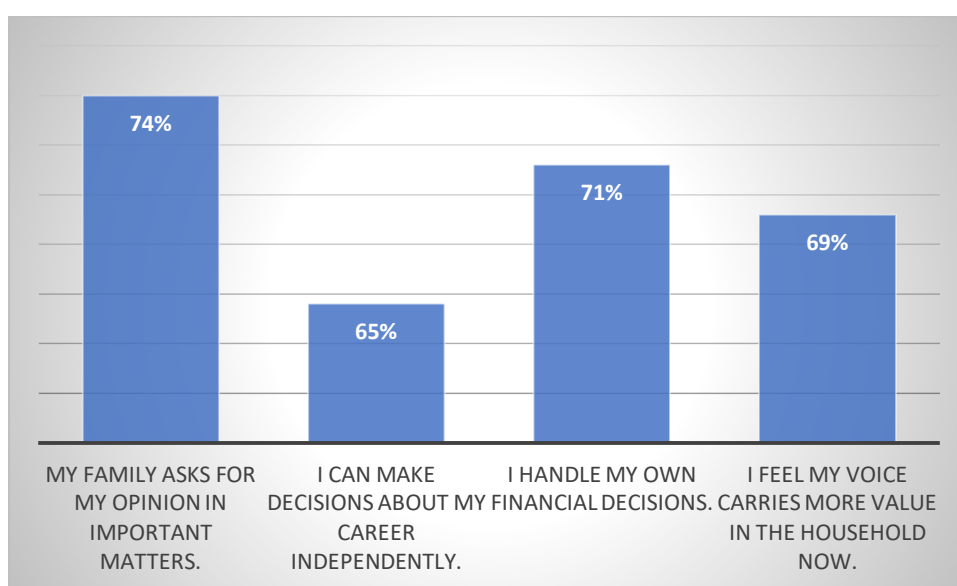
Figure No- 1.1 Distribution of the respondents on the basis of Taking part in decision-making



Source – Compiled from Primary data

Figure no 1.1 illustrates the participation of respondents in family decision-making processes after gaining placement. The data shows that 73% of the respondents were able to take part in decision-making, while the remaining 27% did not avail the opportunity. The findings indicate that a majority of the respondents assumed a more active role within the household & their friend circles, reflecting an increase in their autonomy and confidence level after employment. The small proportion of respondents not involved in participating, may be due to their lack of interest, preference for family members' decisions, or continue the on traditional family norms.

Figure No- 1.2 Distribution of respondents on the basis of Decision-Making Parameter



Source – Compiled from Primary data

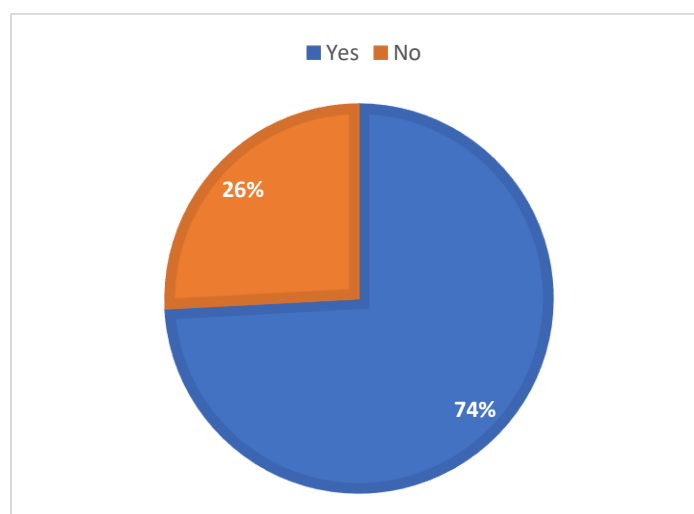
From the above figure 1.2, it is evident that 73% of the respondents are participating in family decision-making processes after getting employed. Among those who participate, 74% respondents reported that their families now ask for their opinion in important matters, which was never happened before. It is indicating an increase in their perceived value within the household. Similarly, 65% respondents stated that now they can make decisions regarding their own career independently. They also can suggest about different career opportunities to their younger brother & sister, which reflecting enhanced autonomy and self-determination. A total of 71% respondents mentioned that they are able to manage their own financial decisions like how & where to invest, which suggests improvement in their financial independence and control over personal income. Furthermore, 69% of the respondents expressed that they can raise their voice in household discussions, signifying a rise in their social status and confidence

within the family environment. We can say there is a positive shift in decision-making power and household involvement as an outcome of employment.

Mobility & Freedom

Traditionally, in our Indian society girls are often restricted in terms of mobility and are not encouraged to complete any personal or official tasks independently. For activities such as banking, ticket booking, marketing and other administrative or medical procedures, they usually relied on family members specially on male members for support. However, their mobility and confidence gradually improves, once they begin earning and participating in the workforce. In between, they learn to manage these responsibilities on their own as well as others and complete above tasks independently. This shift indicates a significant change in their mobility, autonomy, capability, and self-management skills.

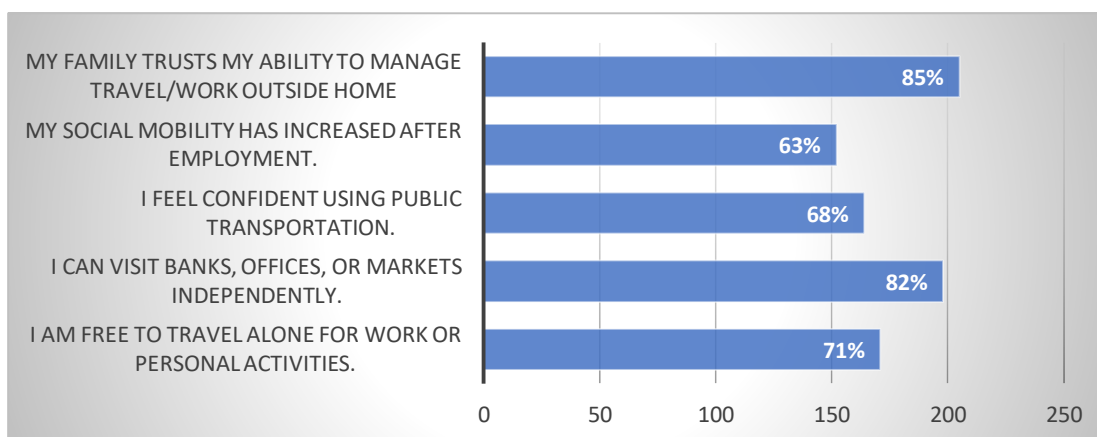
Figure no – 1.3 Freedom to travel alone (for work or personal reasons)



Source – Compiled from Primary data

The pie chart 1.3 illustrates the respondents' freedom to travel alone for work or personal purposes. The data reveals that 74% of the respondents reported that they are able to travel independently everywhere, indicating improved mobility and confidence level after becoming employed. However, 26% of the respondents stated that they are not yet comfortable traveling alone and still depends on others. The reasons identified for this include their status as freshers in the workplace and their transition from rural or interior areas to urban environments, which are new and unfamiliar to them, somehow they feel insecurity to move alone.

Figure No- 1.4 Distribution of respondents based on Mobility & Freedom



Source – Compiled from Primary data

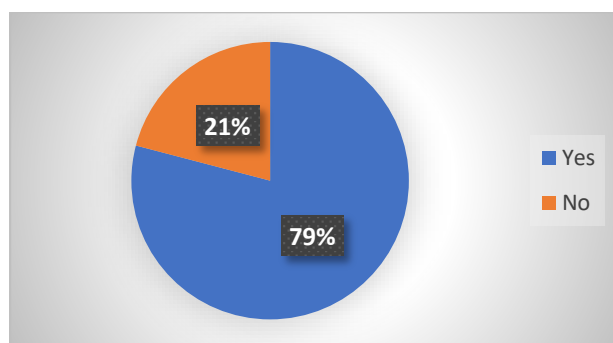
Figure No-1.4 indicates a significant improvement in the mobility and independence of respondents after gaining employment. A large majority 85% of the respondents mentioned that after getting financially stable their family now trusts their ability to manage travel and work outside the home alone. This suggests a positive change in family perceptions and gender norms, which previously limited the independent movement of girls outside of their household. Similarly, 82% of the respondents stated that they can independently visit banks, offices, medicals or markets. This demonstrates that employment not only increases their economic participation but also familiarizes them with public and administrative spaces that they may not have accessed earlier. Along with 71% of respondents reported that they are free to travel alone for professional or personal activities, reflecting enhanced autonomy and reduced dependency on family members. Furthermore, 68% of respondents expressed confidence in using public transportation, which shows an increase in their comfort level in traveling independently. A total of 63% respondents reported that their overall social mobility like visit to friends house, attend parties has increased after employment, indicating wider participation in community and social spaces beyond the household.

Confidence & Self-Esteem

Confidence and self-esteem among the girls increased significantly after gaining employment. Earlier, many of them were shy, introverted and confined within their rural and interior environments, with limited exposure to the outside activities. After their placement, they stepped beyond these constraints or barriers and began experiencing a new life with greater

freedom and confidence. This transition not only helped them interact more openly with others or become smart but also enabled them to develop confidence, self-worth and independence.

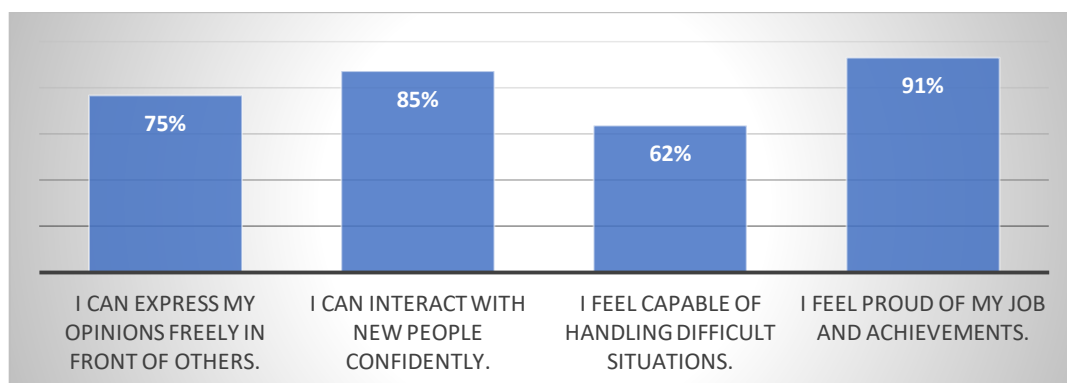
Figure No- 1.5 Distribution of respondents on the basis of self-confidence increased after getting a job



Source – Compiled from Primary data

The figure no 1.5 illustrates the change in self-confidence & self-esteem among respondents after gaining employment. The findings reveal that 79% of the respondents reported an increase in self-confidence following their employment. This suggests that placement has played a significant role in enhancing their self-esteem, communication skills, behavioural skills and overall sense of capability. Conversely, 21% of the respondents stated that their Confidence has not yet improved. As few of them are relatively new in their job roles and still in the process of adjusting to workplace environments. As freshers, they may require more time, experience, and exposure to develop confidence in handling any tasks and responsibilities.

Figure No- 1.6 Distribution of the respondents as per the Confidence & Self-esteem level



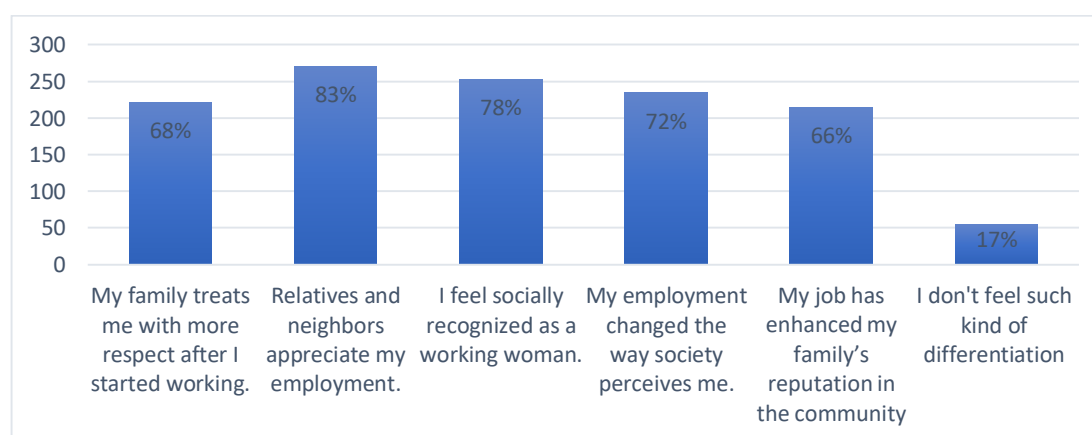
Source – Compiled from Primary data

The findings of Figure no-1.6 indicate significant improvement in confidence and self-esteem among the respondents after gaining employment. A majority 75% of respondents reported that they are now able to express their opinions freely in front of others. It is suggesting enhanced communication ability among the respondents and assertiveness. Similarly, 85% of the respondents stated that they can confidently interact with new people in their personal as well as professional sphere, which reflects greater social exposure. It helps to reduce their hesitation in public or professional settings. Another 62%, of respondents said that they feel capable of handling difficult situations which indicates gradual development of resilience and problem-solving skills. Some respondents still require more experience to manage workplace challenges independently. 91%, of the respondents expressed pride in their job and achievements. It shows a strong sense of accomplishment and positive self-identity associated with employment.

Social Status & Respect

When a girl from typical rural area gains employment and begins to support her family financially, her status within both the family and the outside community increases significantly. She gets recognized for breaking traditional barriers associated with gender and geographical limitations and became the role model. As a result, she with her family receives greater respect and social recognition in her society. Here, the researcher has presented various parameters to explain how girls achieve enhanced social respect and status after their placement.

Figure No- 1.7 Distribution of respondents on the basis of how they treated respectfully after getting placement.



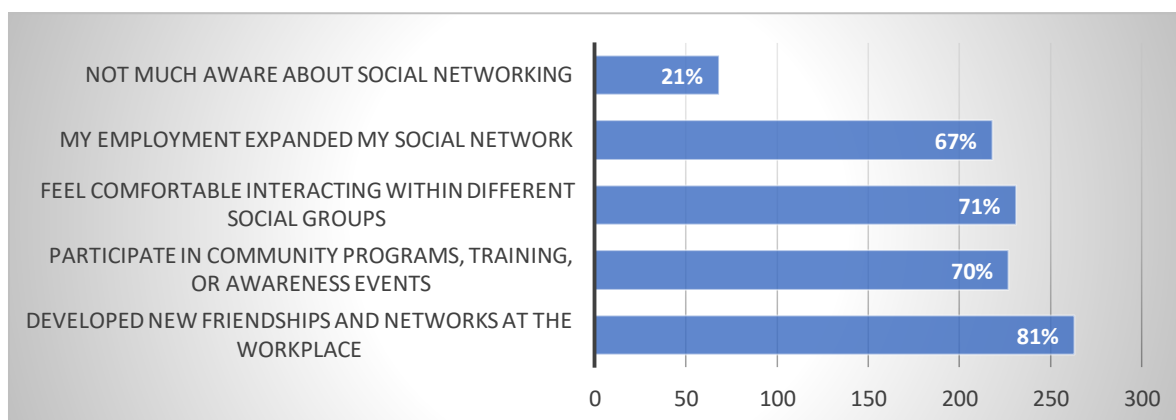
Source – Compiled from Primary data

Figure no 1.7 indicates a notable transformation in the social status and recognition of respondents after gaining employment. A considerable proportion 68% of respondents reported that their family treats them with greater respect since they started working. The employment has strengthened their position within the household, not only economically but also socially. Furthermore, 83% of respondents said that friends, relatives and neighbours appreciate their employment, sharing their thoughts & demonstrating wider community-level acknowledgment of their achievements. Similarly, 78% of the respondents expressed that they feel socially recognized as an ideal working women, reflecting an enhanced sense of identity and acceptance within society. In addition, 72% of respondents believed that their employment status has changed the way society perceives them and their presence. This points to a gradual shift in societal norms and attitudes regarding women's roles, particularly for those coming from rural or interior backgrounds. Finally, 66% of the respondents reported that their job has enhanced their family's reputation in the community which ultimately increase their status, indicating that the benefits of women's employment extend beyond the individual to positively influence the family's social standing. The majority reported positive changes. Only 17% of respondents indicated that their social status remained unchanged. Despite being gainfully employed, these individuals do not perceive or a sense of differentiation from their previous status after getting placed.

Networking & Social Participation

In the current era, social media and digital networking play a significant role in shaping social behaviour and interaction among youths. Therefore, social empowerment must encompass this dimension as it plays a pivotal role in today's digital society. In this context, the researcher seeks to analyze whether the participation of girls in social networking platforms has increased or not after gaining employment. The study aims to understand the extent to which employment influence their online engagement, communication, and social connectivity.

Figure No- 1.8 Distribution of respondents on the basis of their social participation



Source – Compiled from Primary data

The findings of figure no 1.8 reveal that employment has positively influenced the social networking participation of the girls. A significant proportion 81% of respondents reported that they developed new friendships and professional networks at the workplace, indicating that employment expanded their social interactions beyond the household and familiar community settings. Additionally, 70% of the respondents stated that they participate in community programs, trainings, or awareness events, different developmental works which suggests an increased level of social engagement and public involvement. Furthermore, 71% of the respondents expressed that they feel comfortable interacting within different social groups, different people in social platform demonstrating improved communication skills and confidence in diverse social environments. A total of 67% of the respondents indicated that their employment expanded their social as well as professional network, highlighting that workplace exposure contributes to the formation of new social ties and access to wider networks. However, 21% of the respondents mentioned that they are not much aware of social networking and social platforms, which may be attributed to limited digital exposure, rural background, or restricted access to digital tools & technology.

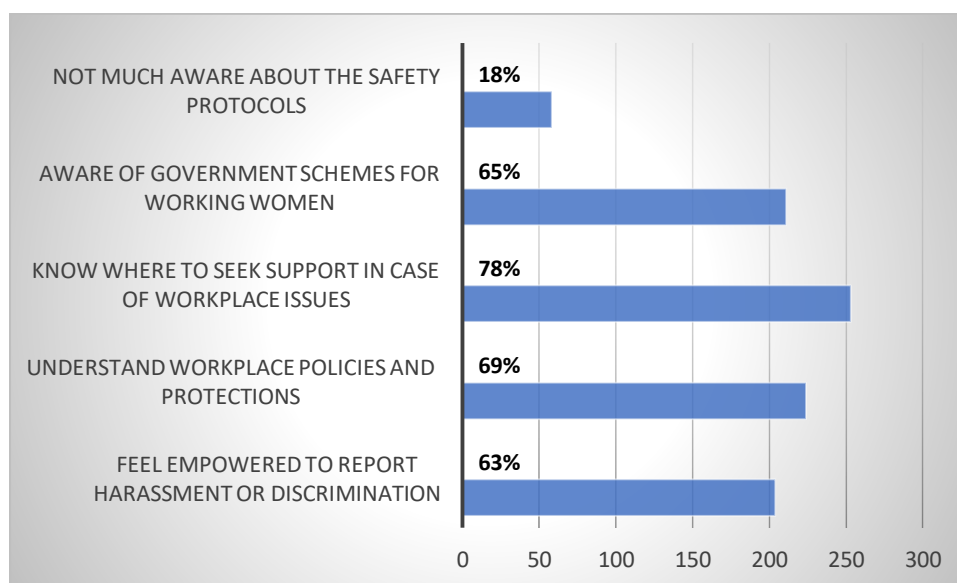
Personal Safety, awareness & Legal Empowerment

With the passage of time, the nature and pattern of crime along with their safety protocols have also undergone significant changes. In contemporary society, issues related to digital technology, cyber security, the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH), workplace safety, and other forms of gender-based risks have become increasingly prominent. Therefore,

alongside the socio-economic empowerment of girls, awareness regarding the legal literacy with personal and workplace safety has become essential.

As many of these girls come from rural and interior areas and most of them are very innocent not being aware about today's day to day crime are now employed in urban settings, cities, or metropolitan regions. It is crucial that they possess adequate knowledge and preparedness relating to these safety concerns. In this context, the researcher seeks to analyze the level of safety & legal literacy awareness among the respondents in order to understand how far empowerment has translated into informed and secure participation in the workforce.

Figure No- 1.9 Distribution of respondents on the basis of awareness of personal safety & legal awareness



Source – Compiled from Primary data

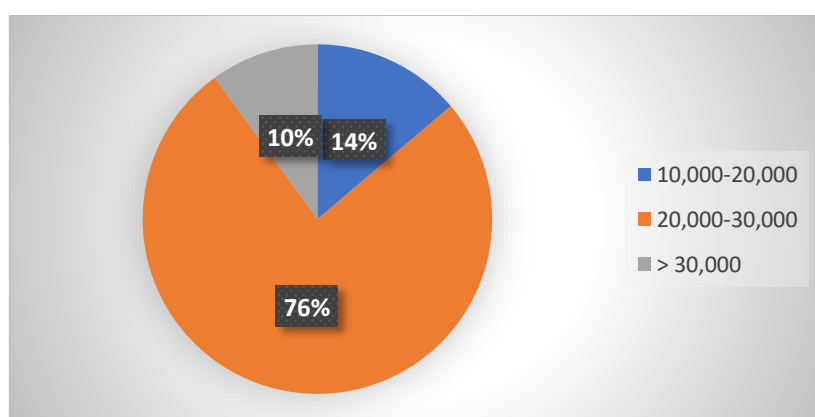
The analysis of Figure no 1.9 reveals that employment has contributed to an increased level of awareness among respondents regarding personal safety and legal rights. A total of 63% of the respondents reported that they feel empowered to report harassment or to complain against any kind of discrimination, indicating a growing sense of agency and willingness to seek redress in adverse situations. Additionally, 69% of the respondents expressed that they understand and well aware about workplace policies and protections, suggesting that exposure to formal work environments has enhanced their knowledge of organizational rules and safety mechanisms. Furthermore, 78% of the respondents stated that they know where to seek support in case of

workplace-related issues, and where to demonstrating improved access to support systems and grievance channels. Similarly, 65% of the respondents said that they are aware of government schemes designed for women specially for working women, reflecting increasing familiarity with institutional support and welfare measures. However, 18% of the respondents reported that they are not adequately aware of safety protocols and legal provisions made for women. They may have limited exposure, lack of formal training, awareness session or challenges in accessing digital or informational resources, especially among those from rural or interior backgrounds.

Economic Empowerment

To assess the empowerment of girls, both social & economic parameters play a crucial role in shaping their overall empowerment. Therefore, along with social factors, the researcher emphasizes the economic aspects of empowerment. For this purpose, the researcher has focused on parameters such as monthly income and Financial Capacity, Financial Autonomy, dependents and Spending, Savings and Asset Creation, Financial Stability and Security, Upward Mobility and Career Advancement, and Reduced Dependency and Social Effects. These parameters collectively help in understanding how employment contributes to the economic empowerment of girls after joining the workforce.

Figure No- 1.10 Distribution of respondents as per their monthly income

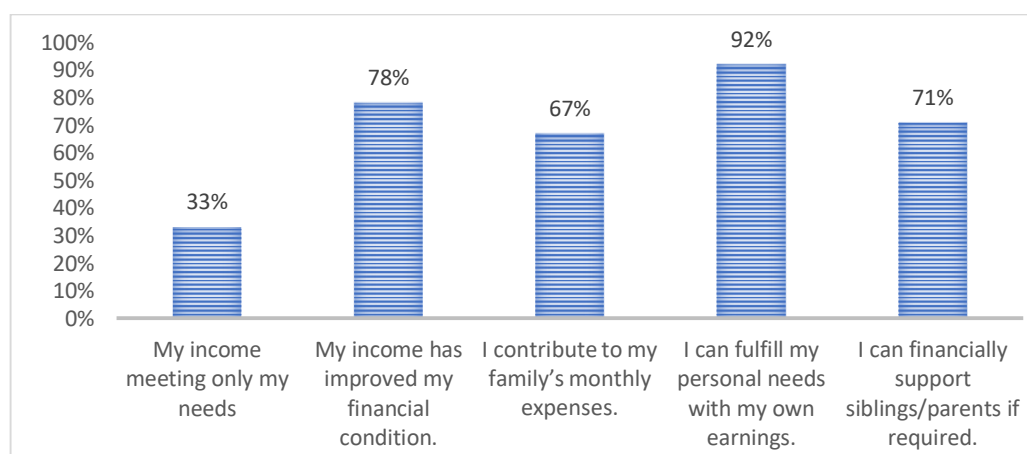


Source – Compiled from Primary data

Figure no -1.10 the distribution of respondents based on their monthly income indicates that a majority of them belongs from middle class category. A total of 76% of the respondents reported a monthly income ranging between ₹20,000 and ₹30,000, Additionally, 14% of the

respondents earn between ₹10,000 and ₹20,000 per month. It is indicating a relatively lower earning segment within the group. Meanwhile, only 10% of the respondents reported earning more than ₹30,000 per month which represents the higher-income category.

Figure No- 1.11 Distribution of respondents as per their income & financial capacity



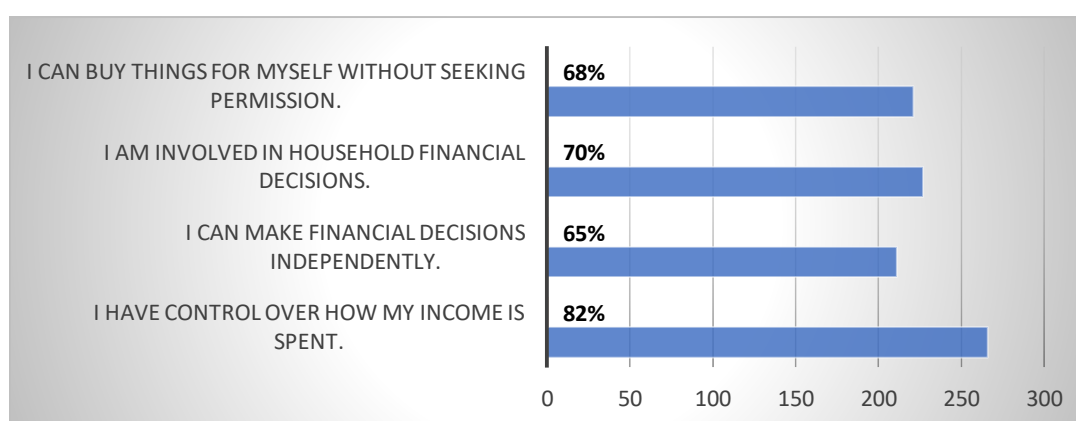
Source – Compiled from Primary data

Figure no 1.12 focused on the income generation and financial capacity of the respondents after undergoing skill training and got placed. The findings indicate significant improvements in their financial status and their ability to manage personal and family-related financial responsibilities. A majority of the respondents 92% reported that they are able to fulfil their personal needs from their own earnings and not depends upon their family. These highlights growing financial autonomy, self-dignity, and reduced dependancy on family members. Moreover, 33% of the respondents reported that they now receive a regular monthly income & it is sufficient only meeting their day-to-day needs. This shows that the training has provided them with stable employment opportunities. Further, 78% of the respondents agreed that their income has contributed to improving their overall financial condition as well as financial status. This reflects better household financial management. The analysis also focused on changes in financial responsibility patterns within families. About 67% of respondents stated that they contribute actively to their family's monthly expenses. It clearly indicates a positive shift from dependency to financial participation. Additionally, 71% of the respondents expressed that they can provide financial support to their parents or family members, friends whenever required. This demonstrates improved financial capability of the beneficiaries which indirectly benefit their family.

Financial Autonomy

A stable monthly income alone does not ensure financial empowerment. We must have the autonomy to spend it. In the context of a patriarchal society, women often have limited opportunities to exercise financial autonomy and spend as per their choice, even when they generate income. Therefore, financial independence must be understood not only in terms of earning capacity but also in terms of control over income and decision-making power to invest that. In this regard, the researcher intends to examine whether the respondents are able to spend their income according to their own preferences or whether their financial decisions are influenced or controlled by family members or male members. This analysis is essential for understanding the extent to which income translates into genuine financial autonomy for female respondents.

Figure No- 1.12 Distribution of respondents on the basis of their financial autonomy



Source – Compiled from Primary data

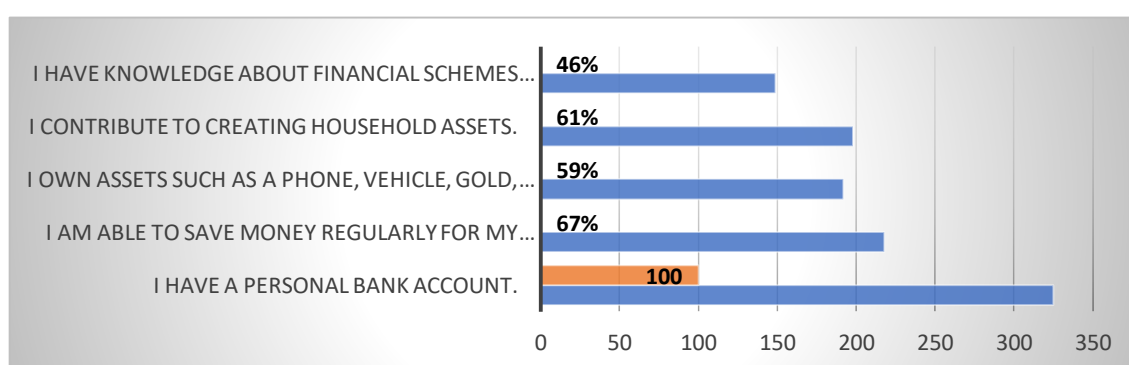
Figure no 1.12 reveals that financial autonomy reflects an individual's ability to make independent decisions regarding income usage, spending, investing and household financial participation. In this study, respondents were asked few questions on key dimensions of financial autonomy after getting placement. The findings reveal that a significant proportion total of 82% of respondents reported that they have control over how their income is spent. It is indicating that a majority are able to manage their finances according to their personal needs and priorities. Further, 65% of the respondents stated that they can make financial decisions independently without the interference of other family members, demonstrating improvement

in personal financial agency. Household-level participation also showed positive outcomes, with 70% of respondents reporting involvement in household financial decisions, suggesting an active role in participation family economic matters. Additionally, 68% of the respondents expressed that they are able to purchase items for themselves and spent for their needs without seeking prior permission, which highlights increased confidence and reduced dependency in financial transactions.

Savings & Asset Creation

Income alone does not ensure long-term economic empowerment; it needs savings for financial crises. Real economic security emerges when we are able to save, invest, and accumulate assets. In the context of women's empowerment, saving for future and asset creation for household are particularly significant because they provide financial stability, future security, and bargaining power within the household. In current sicario earning a regular income may not be sufficient for future if women lack opportunities or mechanisms to convert earnings into savings or tangible assets. Asset ownership such as land, gold, bank deposits, insurance, policies, medical insurance or housing has long-term implications for women's independence and economic resilience. In many patriarchal families, major household assets are traditionally registered in the name of male members rather than female members, limiting women's control and decision-making power. Therefore, the analysis of saving behaviour and asset creation of female respondents becomes an essential component in understanding women's economic empowerment. In this study, the researcher tries to examines whether respondents are not only earning but also engaging in savings and investment. This helps determine the degree to which employment of girls translates into economic empowerment rather than short-term income benefits.

Figure No- 1.13 Distribution of respondents on the basis of saving & asset creation

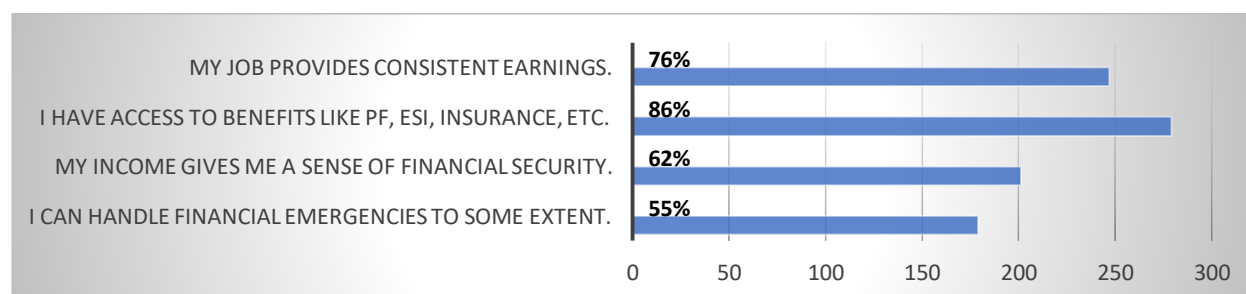


Source – Compiled from Primary data

Figure no 1.13 reveals that savings and asset generation represent critical indicators of long-term economic empowerment. The survey findings reveal that all respondents 100% reported having a personal bank account which is an essential prerequisite for savings. Financial access and economic participation, especially for women from rural and interior areas is necessary for their empowerment. Further analysis shows that 67% of respondents stated that they are able to save money for their future needs. This indicates that employment not only increases monthly income or financial status but also encourages them for financial planning and future-oriented economic behaviour. Regarding asset ownership, 59% of the respondents reported owning personal assets such as mobile phones, vehicles, or gold for themselves or for their family members, demonstrating an improvement in their personal economic security and bargaining capacity. Additionally, 61% of respondents shared that they contribute actively to the creation of household assets like smart Television, washing machine & other household assets, suggesting that their income plays an instrumental role in strengthening overall family wealth. However, despite improvements in financial participation, awareness of formal financial schemes like insurances, policies remain comparatively lower. Only 46% of respondents stated that they are aware about financial schemes or bank facilities, indicating a gap in financial literacy. This highlights the need for further interventions in financial education or financial literacy particularly for newly employed rural women.

Financial Stability & Security

Figure No- 1.14 Distribution of respondents as per their financial stability & security



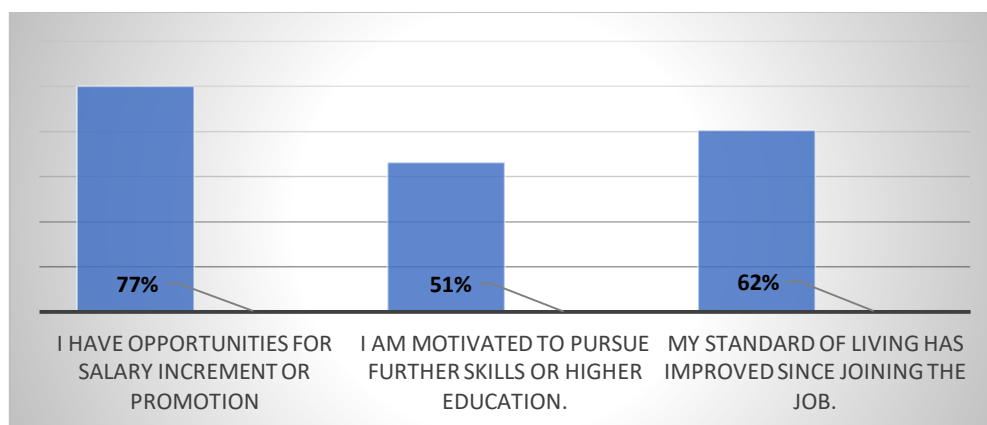
Source – Compiled from Primary data

Figure no 1.14 highlights financial stability and security of respondents which is an important element of economic empowerment. The analysis indicates that employment has contributed positively toward strengthening the financial status and stability of the respondents. The data reveals that 55% of the respondents reported being able to handle financial emergencies especially medical emergencies to some extent. Additionally, 62% of the respondents stated that their income provides a sense of financial security to their house, increased confidence and reduced dependency on family members for economic needs. Financial security is a crucial component for women empowerment, particularly for young women who are newly employed. A significant finding is that 86% of respondents have access to formal employment benefits like PF, ESI, or medical and other insurance. This indicates that the majority of the respondents are employed under structured and compliant work settings. Moreover, 76% reported that their job provides consistent earnings, which ensures predictable financial planning and enhances household stability. Regular and assured earnings also improve the capacity to save, invest, and participate confidently in broader financial activities.

Upward Mobility & Career Advancement

Career growth or advancement is necessary after getting a job or placement. We can encourage additional higher study & better performance for promotion & increment. Here the researcher tries to make an analysis on upward mobility& career advancement.

Figure No- 1.15 Distribution of respondents on the basis of upward mobility& career advancement



Source – Compiled from Primary data

Figure no 1.15 highlights upward mobility and career advancement which is a significant indicator of economic empowerment. It reflects on the long-term potential for financial growth, skill enhancement, and improvement in living standards. The responses from the study highlight a positive trend in these areas among the employed girls for their career growth. The analysis shows that 77% of the respondents reported having opportunities for promotion and increment. It indicates that their employment is not stable but carries opportunity for long-term professional growth. This career growth enhances motivation and fosters a positive workplace experience and encourages them to perform better. Additionally, 51% of respondents expressed motivation to pursue additional skills or higher education after entering the workforce. Furthermore, 62% of respondents reported an improvement in their standard of living since joining placement, which reflects the visible economic impact of their profession.

Reduced Dependency & Social Effects

Reduced financial dependency and related social effects constitute an important dimension of economic empowerment of girls. The responses received from the study show that employment of girls has significantly contributed to lowering dependence and enhancing social recognition for the respondents upon their family.

Table No- 1.a Distribution of respondents on the basis of Reduced Dependency & Social Effects

Reduced Dependency & Social Effects	Percentage
I have reduced dependency on my family for expenses.	82%
My earning capability helped me to take marriage decision	67%
My employment has improved my family's financial condition.	73%
My family values my contribution	71%

Source – Compiled from Primary data

Table no 1.a depicts that 82% of respondents reported a reduction in dependency on their family for their regular expenses. It is indicating a transition from economic dependency to self-sufficiency. It is very important for rural girls as they have to depend upon the house hold for

their day-to-day expenses. In addition, 67% of respondents stated that their earning capability enabled them to exercise agency in personal decisions such as marriage, higher studies etc. This reflects a critical form of empowerment where financial autonomy translates into greater control over life choices. The data further indicates that 73% of respondents contributed to improving their family's financial condition & social status, demonstrating both upward mobility and reverse support mechanisms within families. This not only strengthens the household financial condition but also increases the respondent's ability to participate in every decision-making process within the family. Moreover, 71% of respondents reported that their family values their contribution, which shows a positive social acknowledgment of their economic role. This transformation of perception within the family sphere often serves as the foundation for broader social empowerment. Overall, the findings suggest that employment has reduced financial dependency among the respondents and generated secondary social effects. These outcomes indicate that economic empowerment has both direct and indirect implications for social transformation and gender dynamics.

4. Conclusion

The overall analysis of the study reveals that the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDUGKY) training programme has played a significant role in the socio-economic empowerment of girls. The programme has created opportunities for rural interior young women to acquire vocational training, secure placement, and improve their standard of living. After receiving Skill training and placement, most respondents experienced positive changes in their personal, social, and economic lives. Economically, the girls became financially independent and empowered, started contributing to their family income and became a helping hand for their family. Many respondents reported improvement in their financial condition, increased social status and self-confidence, also the ability to support household expenses. Employment opportunities provided through the programme helped them move away from the traditional boundaries, thereby giving them a sense of dignity and self-reliance. Socially, the training and work exposure enhanced their behavioural skill, communication skills, confidence level, decision-making ability, critical thinking and social participation. Exposure to new environments enabled them to develop a broader outlook towards life and career. The programme also encouraged many girls to think out of the box and discover them from their comfort zone, dream beyond traditional village-based roles and aspire for a better future.

However, the study also identified certain challenges faced by the respondents after placement. Since many placements were outside Odisha, several girls belong from rural area experienced difficulties in adjusting to a new environment, language, culture, and lifestyle. Long distance from family and native place created emotional stress and mental pressure among some respondents. In addition, limited salary packages and high living expenses in urban areas like Bangalore, Hyderabad, Mumbai, sometimes led to financial difficulties despite being employed. Even though these challenges existed, the findings clearly indicate that the benefits of skill training and employment outweighed the hardships faced by the respondents. The majority of girls expressed satisfaction in becoming independent, skilled, and employed rather than remaining unemployed in their villages. Therefore, it can be concluded that the DDUGKY programme has made a meaningful contribution towards the socio-economic empowerment of rural girls by improving their livelihood opportunities, confidence, and overall quality of life.

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