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## PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT EXECUTIVES OF ADDITIONAL SKILL ACQUISITION PROGRAMME (ASAP) IN KANNUR DISTRICT OF KERALA STATE, INDIA

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Additional Skill Acquisition Programme is a Skill acquisition programme started in 2013 in to equip the students with additional skills to cope with the needs of the job market. The initiative was taken by the Kerala Government. The individuals appointed to deliver, train and monitor classes under the programme is known by the name Skill Development Executives or simply SDE's. The present study aims to identify the prospects and problems faced by the trainers during the conduct of the course. There is specialized syllabus is created for the course and training pattern is pre scheduled. The main aim of ASAP is to reduce the unemployment in the state among educated persons. As the co-coordinators and mentors of the course, SDE's has a special role in smooth conduct of the programmes. The study is based on primary data collected from SDE's of Kannur District of Kerala State. 50 samples were selected and required information collected through questionnaire.*

*This study entitled Problems and prospects of Skill Development Executives of Additional Skill Acquisition programme (ASAP) in Kannur District of Kerala State, India tries find out the challenges facing by the trainers and make suggestions for overcoming the problems. It also throws light to the level of satisfaction of the mentors with that of the students and coordinators of the programme.*

**KEYWORDS:** Skill development, Skill Development Executives, Additional skill acquisition Programme.



## **INTRODUCTION**

Skill development means identifying the gaps of skills possessed by an individual and acquires new skills to fill the gaps to attain the goals of the individuals. It is necessary to identify the strengths and weaknesses of individuals to plan and design the career. Skill development programmes equips individuals to acquire necessary skills.

Additional skill Acquisition Programme (ASAP) is a joint initiative by General Education Department, Higher education Department and Labor & local self-governments departments of Kerala to impart skill training to students of higher secondary and graduate level. The components of the ASAP consists of foundation module, skill module and internship. The trainers or mentors under the programme are known by the name Skill Development Executives (SDE's). Trainers should understand the philosophy of the programme and impart training to the enrolled students as per the need. Skill Development Executives should be flexible enough to change as per the requirement of the students. He should be able to manage the students.

The work entitled Problems and prospects of ASAP Skill Development Executives in Kannur District of Kerala state is developed to analyze the benefits enjoyed by the trainers as well as the problems and challenges faced by them. It tries to find out the pos and cones of being an ASAP Skill development executive.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

By the year 2022, India will face the demand for 500 million skilled workers but only 2% of the total workforce is skill trained. As per education system, no skill training is given to students and the course pattern and curriculum is not as the requirements of the industry and market system. There is a need to make such changes (Sonali Kanchan & Sakshi Varshney)



The challenges faced by the skill development centre's in Amritsar are frequent leaves by the students because of minor reasons and lack of interest by the parents because of free cost cost classes. In addition, if the students who had undergone skill training is placed somewhere else they were not in a position to continue there. They are quitting their jobs. (Jasveen Kaur & Manu Dogra).

As per the study conducted by DEFT Advisory and Research New Delhi (June 2020) Advanced training is needed to the skill development trainers periodically. About 50% of the trainers joined in the field for getting earnings only and others for getting monetary as well as non-monetary benefits. Males are found to be less scored for the factors affecting satisfaction. The motivating factor of the trainers was the ability to equip the students especially girl students and students from backward & rural areas to acquire skills and thereby make them self sufficient to get income. Major barriers include maintain the students in the class keeping attendance; mobilize students, placement of them and non-availability of injury & medical insurance and lack of job security.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To identify the level of satisfaction of trainers of ASAP
2. To understand the benefits enjoyed by skill development executives.
3. To study the challenges faced by the trainers
4. To analyze the level of stress faced by the trainers.

## **SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

Present study 'Problems and prospects of ASAP Skill Development Executives in Kannur District of Kerala' covers 12 skill development centre's in Kannur district of Kerala state. The intension of the study is to analyze the problems and benefits of the work of skill development executives.



## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research studies sample of skill development executives from different parts of the Kannur District. Out of the 12-skill development centres in Kannur District 50 trainers were selected as samples. Primary data collected from the respondents using structured questionnaire and related information collected through journal, magazines and websites. Convenient sampling method is to be used for selecting samples. Percentage method and average is used for analyzing data. Chi square test is to be used for testing of hypothesis.

## **SKILL DEVELOPMENT EXECUTIVES**

The trainers of Additional skill acquisition programme are called as Skill Development Executives (SDE). The success of ASAP is linked to the quality and initiative of trainers SDE's form a critical link in the programme. Before imparting training to the students, an orientation will be given to the SDE's. The training aims not only equip the SDE's with the skill for effective training but also as dynamic individuals who can contribute to the sector. SDE's were selected from a pool of diverse population, academicians, industrialists, professionals, educated house makers, skilled graduate students etc. The main role of SDE's is to impart training to the enrolled students and thereby promote skill development and overall development of the students.

## **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**



**1. Experience as SDE's**

**Table No.1**

**Year of experience**

Year of experience	Number of ASAP SDEs	Percentage
Below 1 year	7	14
1-3 years	17	34
3-5 years	19	38
Above 5 years	7	14

Source: Primary data

It is clear from the table that 38% of the SDE's have an experience between 3-5 years. In addition, 3% has experience between 1-3 years. 14% of SDE's are acting as mentors for more than 5 years.

**2. MAJOR DRIVING FORCE TO WORK**

**Table No.2**

**Major driving force to work**

Driving Force	Number of ASAP SDEs	Percentage
Passion	35	70
Salary	4	8
Friends and relatives	3	6
Others	8	16
	50	100

Source: Primary Data



The major driving force to join as a trainer in ASAP is the passion towards the work. 70% of the SDE's are joined as trainer due to the emotional attachment to this work. Only 8% were joined to get monetary benefits from the job.

### 3. SHORTAGE OF TIME

Table No.3

Shortage of time

Faces Shortage of Time	Number of ASAP SDEs	Percentage
Strongly Agree	4	8
Agree	25	50
Neither agree nor disagree	9	18
Disagree	11	22
Strongly disagree	1	2
	50	100

Source: Primary data

It shows that 50% of the trainers agree that there is shortage of time to deliver the syllabus to the students. 12 SDS's of the opinion that the given time of 300 hours is enough for delivering the contents.

### 4. INCENTIVES AND ALLOWANCES

Table No.4

Timely issue of incentives and allowances

Getting allowances	No. of SDE's	Percentage
Yes	6	12
No	44	88

Source: Primary Data



88% of the trainers saying that they are not getting the incentives and allowances on time. Only 12% getting timely benefits. They are getting benefits in the form of increments and other benefits.

## **5. CHANGES IN CURRICULUM**

There is a structured curriculum to be followed by the trainers while acting as the Skill development executives. It includes the theory as well as practical sessions of the programme. In the study, opinion about the necessity of changing curriculum is asked to the trainers.

Table No. 5

Preference of changes in curriculum

Change in curriculum	No of Respondents	Percentage
Preferred	33	66
Not preferred	17	34

Source: Primary Data

33 Trainers replied that they prefer to change the existing curriculum of Additional skill acquisition programme in accordance with change in the environment and education system. They think that it helps the students to equip with the competitive job market.

## **6. ADDITIONAL FACILITIES EXPECTING**

The trainers are not satisfied with the facilities provided by the educational institutions to handle the sessions. The changes in the facilities expected by the SDE's are given below.

Table No. 6

Additional Facilities to be required

Facilities	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Technical	13	26
Infrastructure	7	14
Laptop, Audio system	23	46



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Others	7	14
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Source : Primary Data

All the SDE's are expected of getting additional physical and infrastructure facilities for the smooth conduct of classes. It shows that all the educational institutions are of facing some limitations to provide for the ASAP classes. Majority of the respondents prefer to get audio system while contacting with students.

## 7. JOB SECURITY OF ASAP SDE

Table no 7

Job Security

Provides job security	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	16	32
No	34	68

Source: Primary Data

68% believes that they doesn't have any job security as SDE. It gives an element of dissatisfaction in them. Still they are continuing in their work because of the passion towards it.

## 8. PERSONAL BENEFITS OF ASAP SDE

Table No. 8

Personal Benefits of ASAP SDE's

Personal Benefits	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Monetary benefits	12	24
Career development	18	36
Skill development	4	8
Others	16	32

Source : Primary Data

Majority of the respondents are enjoying career development through acting as mentors in Additional Skill Acquisition Programme.





## 9. PROMPT REMUNERATION

Table No. 9

Timely Remuneration

Getting prompt remuneration	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	17	34
No	33	66

Source: Primary Data

66% of respondents opined that they are not getting remuneration on time.

## 10. OVERALL SATISFACTION

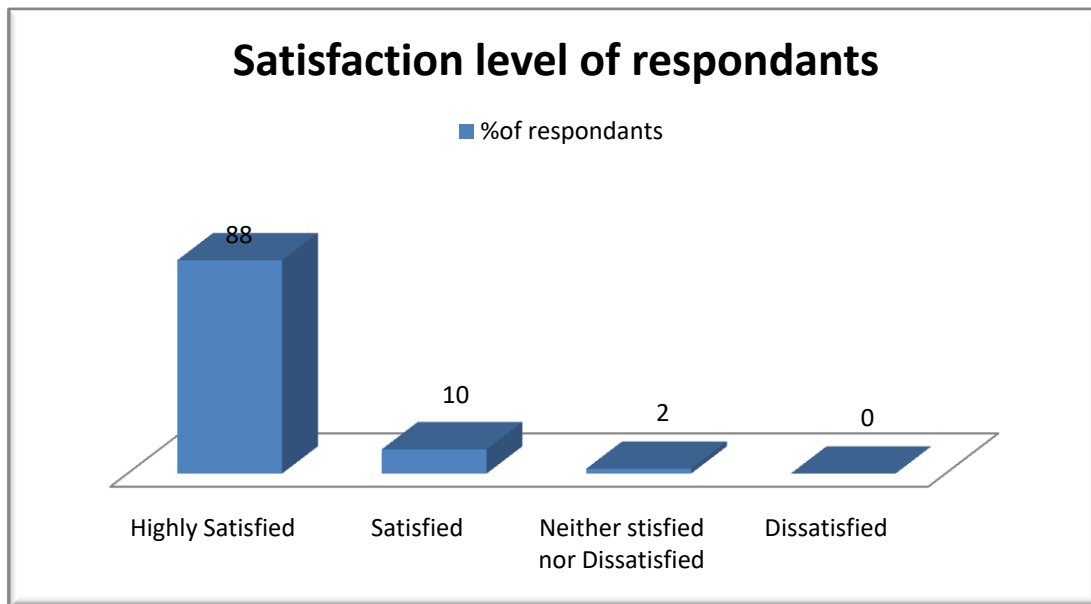
Table No.10

Overall satisfaction of SDE's

Level of satisfaction	No. Of Respondents	Percentage
Highly Satisfied	44	88
Satisfied	5	10
Neither satisfied nor Dissatisfied	1	2
Dissatisfied	0	0

Source :Primary Data

88% of the SDE's are highly satisfied with the work as mentors. No one is dissatisfied with the work. Eventhough there are certain limitations to work, majority of the respondents are satisfied in the work as Skill Development Executives.



## TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS

Chi square test is used to test the association between experience of SDE's and overall satisfaction on the work

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no association between experience and satisfaction of Skill Development Executives

At 5% level of significance the table value of  $\chi^2$  at 6 Degrees of freedom is 12.59. The computed value of  $\chi^2$  is 1.455. Since the computed value of  $\chi^2$  greater than table value at 5%, level of significance it is concluded that there is no association between Years of experience and satisfaction on job as skill development executives of ASAP.

## DISCUSSION

Individuals have the freedom to become as ASAP Skill Development Executives. It is through systematic selection process, one becomes a mentor in ASAP. Majority of the respondents became SDE's because of the passion towards the work. Most of them satisfied with the job. They are not getting timely remuneration. In addition, there is no freedom to manage the classes as per the wish of the trainers. They have strictly adhered to the



methods and techniques noted in the curriculum. Majority of them opined that there is a need to reconstruct the syllabus of the ASAP Course in connection with change in the job market. One of the major challenge faced by the SDE's are lack of job security. Since the work is not conducted regularly, there is delay in payment of wages and other incentives. Most of the SDE's are professional trainers and 40 % of the SDE' are teachers. Besides the teaching work they prefer to work as trainers of ASAP. Majority of the SDE had experience of more than 1 year as trainer in the field. Respondents are always interested to get regular training to impart the skills of them. It helps to polish the abilities and skills of the trainers. Trainers are also feeling the difficulty of shortage of time to complete the syllabus.

## **SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

ASAP is a skill development programme and number of individuals are working as Skill Development Executives all over Kerala. Most of the trainers were joined as trainers because of the passion towards the opportunity to deal with energetic students and youth. The concerned departments should be in a position to provide necessary arrangements and benefits for the smooth functioning of the programme as well for the satisfaction of the mentors. Enrichment of the job should be provided to the trainers and it enables them to perform their duties as per the ideas and strategies of them. It helps the trainers to manage the sessions as per the requirements of the students and also in an interesting manner. Proper arrangements should be made to get timely salary and other monetary benefits. An agreement should be formulated to avoid the fear of lack of job security in the field. Since the requirements of the job market is changing, as the trainers demands, there is a need to reconstruct the curriculum in particular intervals. Along with the change in curriculum time duration of the course should also be increased.

Skill Development Executives are the backbone of the Additional Skill Acquisition Programme, which is a skill development programme offered by the Government of Kerala to the students of higher secondary graduate students for skill development. Therefore due



care should be given to SDE's to make the programme successful and achieve the overall development of the students.

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