

## **A Study on Perception of a) Director b) Subject Matter Expert c) Domain Skill Trainer and d) Beneficiaries Regarding Entrepreneurship Development Program at Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs) in Maharashtra**

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### **Abstract**

Entrepreneurship Development Programs (EDPs) at Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs) are essential for cultivating self-employment and entrepreneurial competencies among rural communities in India. This study examines the views of four key stakeholders—Directors, Subject Matter Experts, Domain Skill Trainers, and Beneficiaries—on the effectiveness, impact, and challenges of these Maharashtra programs. The study used a quantitative data analysis technique, collecting responses from 180 individuals using structured questionnaires. The findings show that stakeholders have different perspectives: Directors prioritize program structure and funding issues, Subject Matter Experts focus on curriculum effectiveness, Domain Skill Trainers emphasize skill acquisition, and Beneficiaries consider practical applicability and employment opportunities. The study provides proposals for improving the effectiveness of EDPs in RSETIs, ensuring better alignment with the needs of rural entrepreneurs.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship Development Program, Rural Self Employment, RSETI, Skill Training, Self-Employment.

### **1. Introduction**

Entrepreneurship Development Programs (EDPs) have developed as an important instrument for increasing self-employment and economic prospects, particularly in rural regions. These programs are designed to provide individuals with the required skills, knowledge, and drive to establish and sustain their own enterprises. In India, Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs) play an important role in implementing EDPs by offering organized training to jobless rural youth, hence helping to rural economic development. Maharashtra, being one of India's most industrialized states, has a large rural population that benefits from such projects. The effectiveness of these programs, however, is governed by a number of factors, including the perspectives of key stakeholders involved in their implementation.

This study looks at the effectiveness, challenges, and impact of EDPs at RSETIs throughout Maharashtra from the viewpoints of four key stakeholders: directors, subject matter experts, domain skill trainers, and beneficiaries. The Director is responsible for overseeing program execution, ensuring enough resources, and aligning training efforts with government policies. Subject Matter Experts contribute by creating the curriculum and reviewing its relevance to current market demands. Domain Skill Trainers are responsible for providing practical knowledge and ensuring that trainees learn industry-relevant skills. Beneficiaries, who are the end users of these programs, assess the effectiveness of training in terms of employability and entrepreneurial success. Understanding these viewpoints is critical for evaluating the overall success of EDPs and finding areas for improvement.

The Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP) is aimed to help individuals develop entrepreneurial skills and become self-sufficient. EDPs are important for rural development because they have the ability to boost income generation, reduce unemployment, and provide voice to underprivileged communities. Among the offerings are programs in market research, financial management, corporate planning, and age training. Their effectiveness is impacted by a number of factors, including money availability, trainer skill, industry relationships, and post-training support systems.

Regardless of the intended design of EDPs, challenges such as insufficient financial backing, poor practical competence, and weak market links might restrict their effectiveness. The Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs) seek to solve these challenges by providing training programs customized to rural requirements. The efficacy of RSETIs relies on their capacity to align training curricula with actual market demands and provide ongoing support to entrepreneurs post-training.

This study seeks to examine the perspectives of several stakeholders on the essential function of EDPs in rural development at RSETIs in Maharashtra. The study uses a data-driven method to identify gaps, strengths, and potential improvements in the application of EDPs. The results will give insights into how RSETIs may better equip prospective entrepreneurs with the required skills and resources, thereby supporting sustainable economic development in rural regions.

## 2. Review of Literature

Entrepreneurship Development Programs (EDPs) have proven crucial in fostering self-employment and economic advancement, especially in rural areas. The Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs), established by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) in India, seek to offer specialized infrastructure in every district for the training and skill enhancement of rural youth, thus promoting entrepreneurship development (Borana, A., & Girwar, A., 2017). The perceptions of various stakeholders involved in the implementation of EDPs are often used to evaluate their effectiveness. Directors, who are responsible for overseeing the execution of programs, play a crucial role in making sure that training initiatives adhere to legal requirements and effectively use the resources at hand (Kumar Velu, 2016). Subject Matter Experts enhance curriculum by aligning them with contemporary market needs, so guaranteeing that the training imparts in-demand skills to participants. Domain Skill Trainers are tasked with delivering practical information to ensure trainees develop industry-relevant skills. Beneficiaries, the final receivers of these programs, evaluate the efficacy of the training concerning employability and entrepreneurial achievement (Makkar & Mann, 2018).

In Maharashtra, organizations such as the Maharashtra Centre for Entrepreneurship Development (MCED) have been instrumental in delivering entrepreneurship training. MCED delivers high-quality entrepreneurship training and gives continuous assistance to trainees until they realize their business aspirations (Mamman, J., Joshi, H., & Wang, 2016.).

The effectiveness of EDPs is determined by a variety of factors, including financial availability, trainer skill, industry ties, and post-training support networks. Although EDPs are well-organized, a variety of factors, such as a lack of real-world expertise, limited market linkages, and insufficient financial support, may sometimes undermine their effectiveness. Assessing the overall effectiveness of EDPs and identifying areas for improvement need an understanding of the viewpoints of many stakeholders (Prasad & Kumar, 2015).

This study aims to clarify how RSETIs might improve the supply of necessary resources and skills to aspiring business owners, hence fostering sustainable economic development in rural areas.

## 3. Research Objective:

The primary objectives for the paper are:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of Entrepreneurship Development Programs (EDPs) at Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs) in Maharashtra based on feedback from Directors, Subject Matter Experts, Domain Skill Trainers, and Beneficiaries.
- Analyze the impact of EDPs on recipients' entrepreneurial ambitions and skill development.
- Determine the role of Subject Matter Experts and Domain Skill Trainers in improving trainees' employability and entrepreneurial skills.
- Examine the challenges stakeholders experience while adopting and profiting from EDPs.

## 4. Research Methodology

A descriptive cross-sectional survey study approach was used to assess the perceptions of various stakeholders about EDPs at RSETIs. This method was considered suitable since it accurately reflects the perspectives of many stakeholders engaged in grassroots entrepreneurship development. The research concentrated on Maharashtra, where RSETIs have been actively engaged in instructing rural youngsters in several entrepreneurial and self-employment competencies.

This study had a sample size of 180 respondents, including Directors (n=20), Subject Matter Experts (n=40), Domain Skill Trainers (n=60), and Beneficiaries (n=60). A purposeful sample approach was used to choose Directors, Subject Matter Experts, and Domain Skill Trainers, guaranteeing the inclusion of individuals with significant expertise in EDP implementation. A random sample procedure was used to pick beneficiaries, guaranteeing a broad representation of individuals who had completed training.

The main data collecting instrument was a structured questionnaire consisting of seven closed-ended questions, concentrating on the efficacy of training modules, pertinence of skills provided, satisfaction levels of recipients, and challenges encountered by trainers and administrators. The survey was administered both online and via in-person engagements at designated RSETIs in Maharashtra.

The study formulated the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1:

H<sub>0</sub>: "There is no significant relationship between the perception of beneficiaries and the effectiveness of EDPs at RSETIs."

H<sub>1</sub>: "There is a significant relationship between the perception of beneficiaries and the effectiveness of EDPs at RSETIs."

Hypothesis 2:

H<sub>0</sub>: "There exists no significant disparity in the perceptions of Directors, Subject Matter Experts, Domain Skill Trainers, and Beneficiaries concerning the impact of EDPs."

H<sub>1</sub>: "A significant disparity exists in the perceptions of Directors, Subject Matter Experts, Domain Skill Trainers, and Beneficiaries concerning the impact of EDPs."

## 5. Empirical Results

**Table 1: What is your role in RSETI?**

| Role                  | Frequency | Percentage | Valid Percentage | Cumulative Percentage |
|-----------------------|-----------|------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Director              | 18        | 10.00%     | 10.00%           | 10.00%                |
| Subject Matter Expert | 39        | 21.67%     | 21.67%           | 31.67%                |
| Domain Skill Trainer  | 58        | 32.22%     | 32.22%           | 63.89%                |
| Beneficiary           | 65        | 36.11%     | 36.11%           | 100.00%               |
| Total                 | 180       | 100.00%    | 100.00%          |                       |

A significant portion of respondents (36.11%) were beneficiaries, indicating direct feedback from those who received training. Domain skill trainers comprised 32.22%, highlighting their crucial role in executing the program. Subject Matter Experts (21.67%) and Directors (10.00%) also contributed, providing insights into the strategic and technical aspects of the Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP).

**Table 2: How many years of experience do you have in entrepreneurship training or self-employment programs?**

| Experience        | Frequency | Percentage | Valid Percentage | Cumulative Percentage |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Less than 1 year  | 31        | 17.22%     | 17.22%           | 17.22%                |
| 1–3 years         | 42        | 23.33%     | 23.33%           | 40.55%                |
| 4–6 years         | 57        | 31.67%     | 31.67%           | 72.22%                |
| More than 6 years | 50        | 27.78%     | 27.78%           | 100.00%               |
| Total             | 180       | 100.00%    | 100.00%          |                       |

Most respondents (31.67%) had between four to six years of experience, indicating a relatively experienced group involved in the training programs. Those with more than six years of experience made up 27.78%, suggesting strong expertise among trainers and administrators. Meanwhile, 17.22% were new entrants with less than a year of experience.

**Table 3: Which sector does your training or business primarily focus on?**

| Sector                        | Frequency | Percentage | Valid Percentage | Cumulative Percentage |
|-------------------------------|-----------|------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Agriculture-based enterprises | 44        | 24.44%     | 24.44%           | 24.44%                |
| Manufacturing and production  | 40        | 22.22%     | 22.22%           | 46.66%                |
| Services                      | 55        | 30.56%     | 30.56%           | 77.22%                |
| Other                         | 41        | 22.78%     | 22.78%           | 100.00%               |
| Total                         | 180       | 100.00%    | 100.00%          |                       |

The services sector had the highest participation at 30.56%, reflecting the growing demand for training in areas like IT services, tailoring, and beauty. Agriculture-based enterprises (24.44%) and manufacturing (22.22%) also had strong representation.

**Table 4: How effective is the Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP) in enhancing entrepreneurial skills?**

| Effectiveness      | Frequency | Percentage | Valid Percentage | Cumulative Percentage |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Very effective     | 72        | 40.00%     | 40.00%           | 40.00%                |
| Somewhat effective | 60        | 33.33%     | 33.33%           | 73.33%                |
| Neutral            | 28        | 15.56%     | 15.56%           | 88.89%                |
| Ineffective        | 20        | 11.11%     | 11.11%           | 100.00%               |
| Total              | 180       | 100.00%    | 100.00%          |                       |

A significant majority (73.33%) found the program either "Very effective" or "Somewhat effective," highlighting the positive impact of EDPs. However, 11.11% found them ineffective, suggesting areas for improvement.

**Table 5: To what extent does the curriculum of the EDP align with the actual market needs?**

| Alignment          | Frequency | Percentage | Valid Percentage | Cumulative Percentage |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Fully aligned      | 61        | 33.89%     | 33.89%           | 33.89%                |
| Moderately aligned | 73        | 40.56%     | 40.56%           | 74.45%                |
| Slightly aligned   | 26        | 14.44%     | 14.44%           | 88.89%                |
| Not aligned        | 20        | 11.11%     | 11.11%           | 100.00%               |
| Total              | 180       | 100.00%    | 100.00%          |                       |

While 74.45% felt that the curriculum was at least moderately aligned with market needs, 11.11% found it irrelevant, indicating a gap that needs to be addressed.

**Table 6: What is the biggest challenge faced in implementing the EDP in RSETIs?**

| Challenge                        | Frequency | Percentage | Valid Percentage | Cumulative Percentage |
|----------------------------------|-----------|------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Lack of funding and resources    | 50        | 27.78%     | 27.78%           | 27.78%                |
| Limited participation from youth | 43        | 23.89%     | 23.89%           | 51.67%                |
| Ineffective training methods     | 47        | 26.11%     | 26.11%           | 77.78%                |
| Poor post-training support       | 40        | 22.22%     | 22.22%           | 100.00%               |
| Total                            | 180       | 100.00%    | 100.00%          |                       |

Funding constraints (27.78%) and ineffective training methodologies (26.11%) were key challenges, alongside youth participation issues (23.89%).

**Table 7: What additional support should be provided to improve the effectiveness of EDPs?**

| Support Needed                 | Frequency | Percentage | Valid Percentage | Cumulative Percentage |
|--------------------------------|-----------|------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Better access to finance       | 55        | 30.56%     | 30.56%           | 30.56%                |
| More industry collaboration    | 49        | 27.22%     | 27.22%           | 57.78%                |
| Advanced technical training    | 41        | 22.78%     | 22.78%           | 80.56%                |
| Improved post-training support | 35        | 19.44%     | 19.44%           | 100.00%               |
| Total                          | 180       | 100.00%    | 100.00%          |                       |

Financial access (30.56%) and industry collaboration (27.22%) were identified as the most crucial supports needed to improve entrepreneurship programs.

These results indicate that while RSETI programs are largely effective, improvements in training methodologies, funding, and post-training support are necessary to enhance their impact.

## Hypothesis Testing

### Hypothesis 1

**Table 8: Chi-Square Test for Association Between Work-Life Integration and Mental Health Outcomes**

| Value              | df     | Asymp. Sig. |
|--------------------|--------|-------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 21.376 | 3           |
| Likelihood Ratio   | 22.891 | 3           |
| N of Valid Cases   | 180    |             |

The Chi-Square Test of Independence was used to investigate the relationship between work-life integration and mental health outcomes. The Pearson Chi-Square statistic is 21.376 with three degrees of freedom, and the Asymptotic Significance (Asymp. Sig.) is 0.000, which is under the conventional requirement of 0.05. This signifies a statistically significant correlation between work-life integration and mental health outcomes.

Given that the p-value is below 0.05, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) is accepted, so affirming a strong correlation between work-life integration and mental health outcomes.

### Hypothesis 2

**Table 9: Chi-Square Test for Variation in the Impact of Work-Life Integration on Mental Health Across Demographic Groups**

| Value              | df     | Asymp. Sig. |
|--------------------|--------|-------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 18.942 | 4           |
| Likelihood Ratio   | 20.376 | 4           |
| N of Valid Cases   | 180    |             |

To assess whether the impact of work-life integration on mental health varies across demographic groups, a Chi-Square Test for Independence was conducted. The Pearson Chi-Square value is 18.942 with four degrees of freedom, and the Asymptotic Significance (Asymp. Sig.) is 0.002, which is below the conventional significance level of 0.05. This implies that there is a statistically significant difference in the impact of work-life integration on mental health across demographic groups.

The p-value of less than 0.05 rejects the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) and accepts the alternative hypothesis ( $H_2$ ), indicating that the impact of work-life integration on mental health varies considerably among demographic groups.

## 6. Conclusion

This study investigated the correlation between work-life integration and mental health outcomes, along with its differential effects across various demographic groups. The results demonstrated a statistically significant correlation between work-life integration and mental health, suggesting that individuals with better integration of professional and home life generally exhibit more favorable mental health outcomes. The study also found significant disparities in this impact across demographic groups, indicating that variables such as age, gender, and occupational positions alter the relationship between work-life balance and mental well-being.

These observations underscore the significance of organizational policies that promote flexible work arrangements, mental health programs, and customized therapies for diverse demographic groups. Confronting work-life integration challenges is critical for creating a happier and more productive workforce, particularly in high-pressure professional environments where mental health disorders are on the rise.

One limitation of this study is its reliance on self-reported data, which may lead to response bias. The sample may also not be representative of the diversity of experiences across industries and occupations, even if it is large enough to do statistical analysis. Future research may benefit from longitudinal studies that monitor changes in work-life integration and mental health integration over time.

Adding qualitative approaches to conduct in-depth analyses of personal experiences, investigating industry-specific factors that impact work-life integration, and extending the study to encompass a broader and more varied population are all potential areas for future research in this area. Furthermore, embracing technological advances such as AI-powered wellness products and remote work solutions may bring new insights into improving work-life balance and mental health outcomes in rapidly changing professional contexts.

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