

How can Skill India improve outcomes for female trainees?



In brief

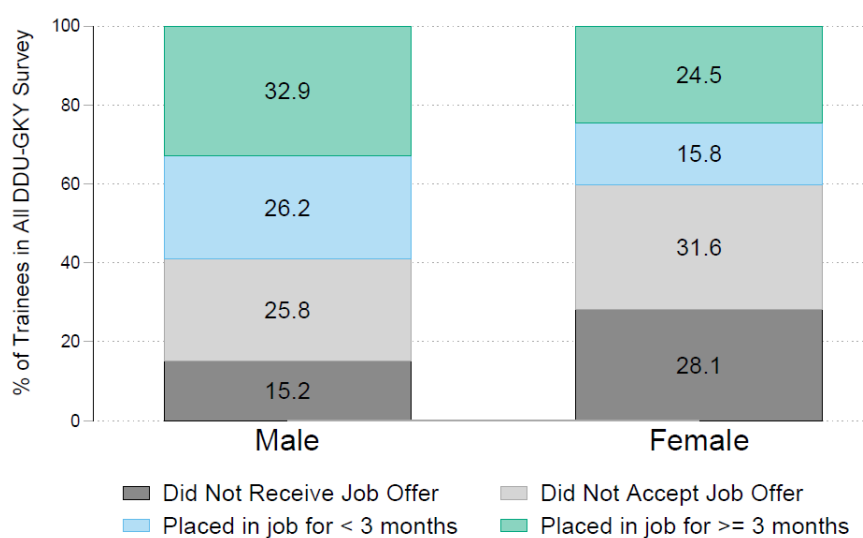
- Skill India is a government programme which includes an initiative aimed at training and linking young women to employment opportunities.
- Not only are female participants of the programme less likely to accept a job offer than a male counterpart, but they are even less likely to accept one that involves some form of migration.
- This brief uses existing data to begin to understand this issue, drawing on data from Odisha where females are more likely to accept job offers.
- It is found the reason for this success in Odisha is several-fold and correlates to better support for participants.
- The data from this project will be used as part of a randomised control trial aimed at understanding what interventions could make female participants more likely to accept roles that involve migration.

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Introduction

A core goal of Skill India programmes is to train and link young women to employment opportunities, but many programmes struggle to do this? How can Skill India programmes help entrants — particularly those facing strong constraints to their labour force participation, such as women from rural areas — obtain wage employment?

Figure 1: Training outcomes across 7 states, males v females



Source: DDU-GKY Survey, N = 699 for males; 1,907 for females

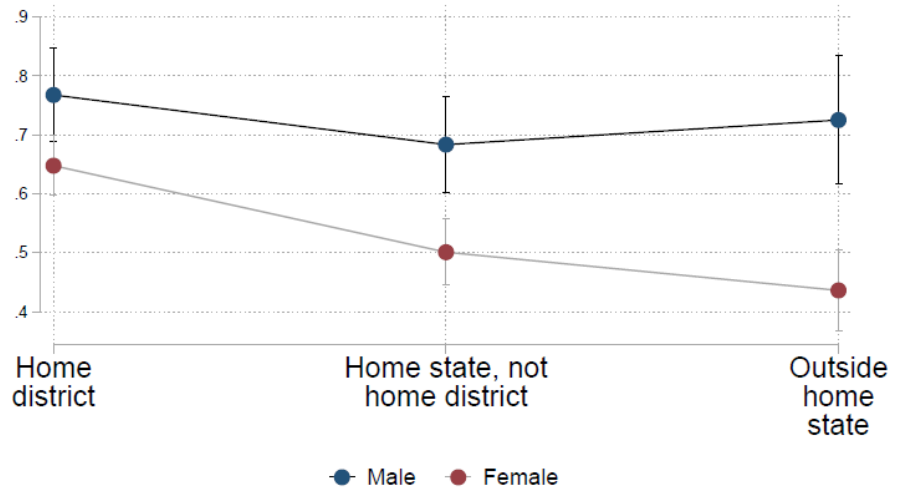
For the past four years, Evidence for Policy Design (EPoD) has collaborated with the Ministry of Rural Development’s Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) to identify how to improve skilling outcomes for rural women. In a 2016 phone survey of over 2,600 former DDU-GKY trainees from 7 states¹, we find that outcomes are strongly gendered in nature.

Women are less likely to receive and accept job offers than men (see figure 1). Job locations are particularly strong predictors of female outcomes: While female trainees are less likely both to receive job offers and accept those offers after skilling, they are even less likely to accept jobs that require migration.

Figure 2 plots predicted job placement rates for men and women conditional on job location. It highlights that women were less likely than men to accept jobs overall.

1. Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh

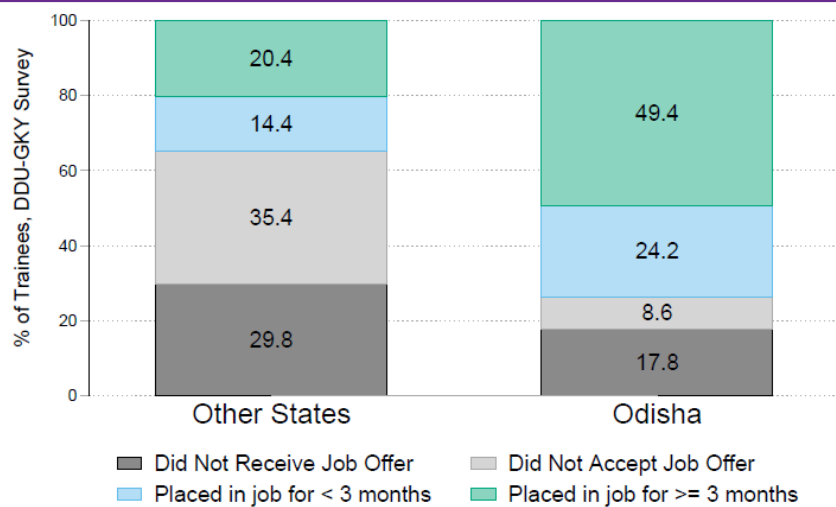
Figure 2: Predicted job offer acceptance rates by job location and gender



Source: DDU-GKY Survey, N = 699 for males; 1,907 for females

It also shows that women are less likely to accept jobs offered farther from their homes². What keeps women from faring better in skilling and jobs, and what might help improve their outcomes? Much can be learned from Odisha, a state that has achieved remarkably good outcomes for females. Figure 3 compares outcomes for women from Odisha compared to those for women from the other surveyed states. It highlights that women from Odisha fare twice as well in terms of 3 month or longer placements than women from other states. Administrative data from Odisha shows that its female placement rate is not only higher than the national average, but also higher than its own placement rate for men.

Figure 3: Training outcomes for females



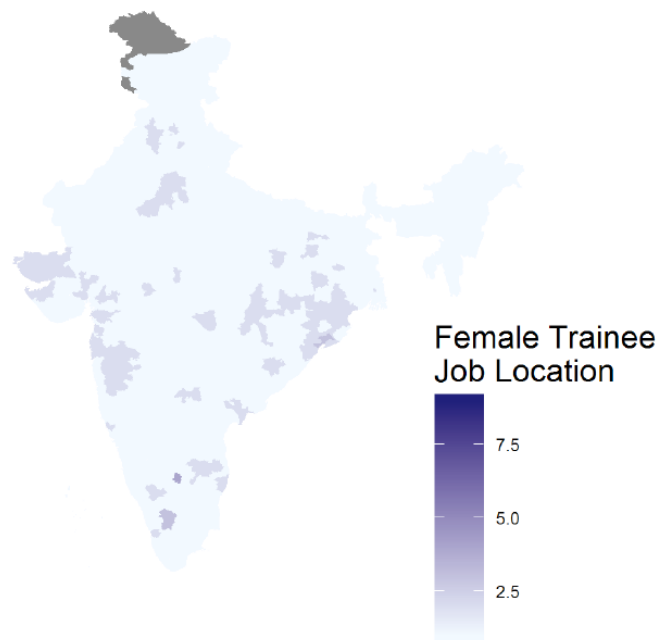
Source: DDU-GKY Survey, N = 269 females for Odisha, 1,638 for other states

2. These models hold education, caste, age, trade of training, natal district and training agency constant, and use robust

Figure 4 maps locations where female trainees from Odisha have been placed in jobs; it underscores that women from Odisha are placed in districts all across the country - so Odisha's success is not due to a tendency to place women locally.

Figure 4: Job placement locations

Odisha Female Trainee Job Location



Why do women from Odisha have better training outcomes than those elsewhere? Our analysis of administrative data of all 101,965 DDU-GKY trainees who were trained in Odisha from February 2014 through November 2017, as captured in the state's administrative data, points to several insights relevant to programme design and implementation:

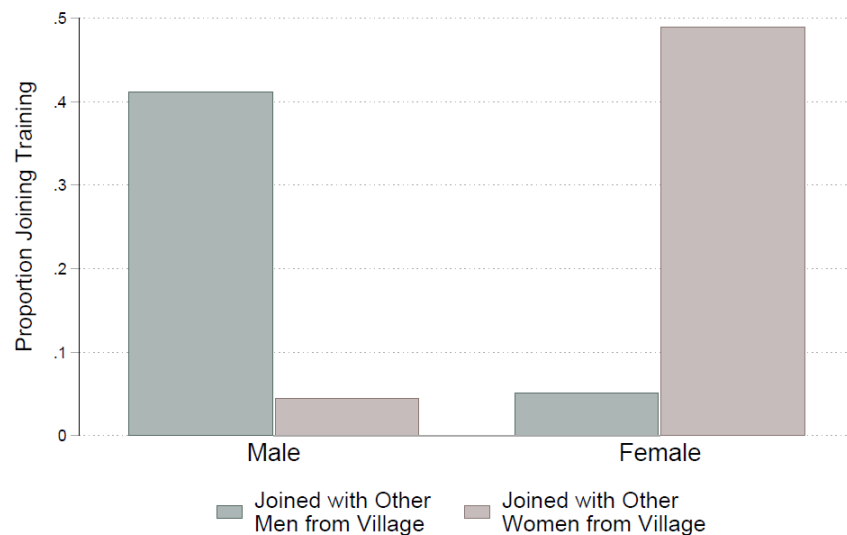
1. Our analysis suggests that women's success in Odisha is partly explained by the fact that agencies training in Odisha's most popular trade for women, tailoring³, are also relatively good at supporting female trainees. Understanding the steps these centres take to ensure training and placement is female-friendly is a high-potential area for future investigation⁴.
2. Enrollment and placement in Odisha often happens in groups from villages with more than one candidate of the same gender. Only 15% of youth in the DDU-GKY multi-state survey reported knowing anyone in their locality of migration prior to moving there. While a comparable statistic is not available from the Odisha DDU-GKY administrative data,

3. 48% of female trainees in Odisha are trained to work as tailors in the garment industry. Male trainees, on the other hand, are more evenly dispersed across a wide range of trades.

4. In contrast, we do not find strong evidence that characteristics of women's home localities (blocks) explain much variation in women's outcomes. This suggests that women's relatively positive outcomes are not driven by a subset of localities that are more conducive to women's employment or migration.

candidates from Odisha do attend trainings with others from their home communities relatively frequently, increasing their chance of being placed with someone from their home village. Figure 5 shows that nearly 50% of women enrol in training at the same time as other women from their village, and just over 40% of men enrol in training at the same time as other men from their village.

Figure 5: Youth from Odisha frequently join training with peers from their village

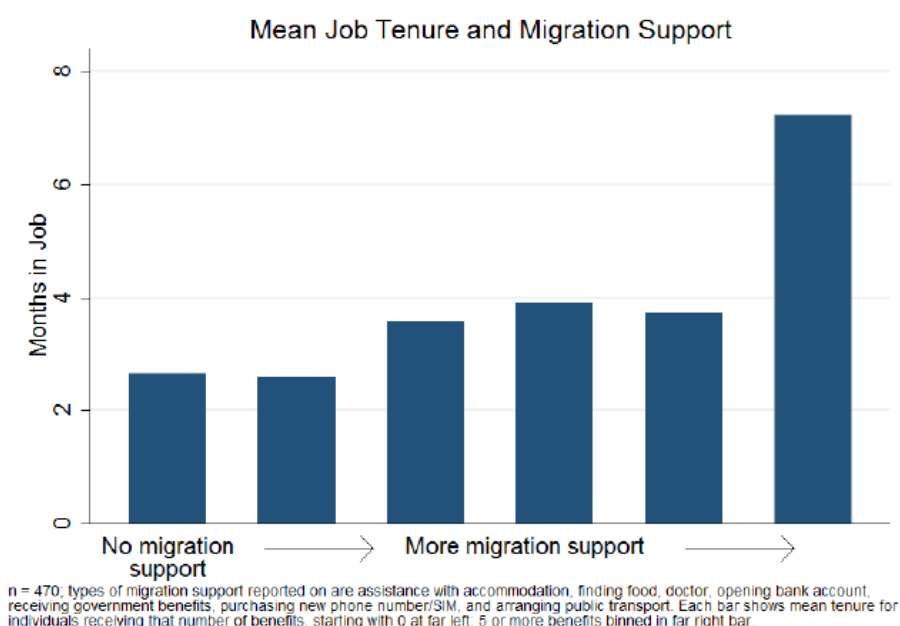


Women who joined training with other women from their village were significantly more likely to complete classroom and on-the-job training, but no more likely to be placed in a job for 3 months. Further, the more women who have been trained from a particular village, the more likely that women from that village are to complete training and be placed. This relationship is purely a correlation, and it points to the value of testing the impact of recruiting youth in groups to improve outcomes, especially for women.

Importantly, once women are placed in jobs, they remain in them as long as, or longer than, men. The multi-state survey highlighted that women reported dropping out of skilling and the labor force due to family constraints and pressures, while men attributed their short job tenures to low pay and working conditions. There is also evidence that access to migration support was associated with higher labor force participation and longer job tenure (see figure 6)⁵.

5. Respondents in the multi-state survey who migrated for work and left their jobs were asked whether they received any of 7 different types of migration support: assistance finding accommodation, opening a bank account, setting up an account to receive government benefits, getting a phone number or SIM, finding food, finding medical help, and using public transportation. The far left bar of figure 6 shows mean job duration for individuals who received no migration support, and each bar to the right shows mean duration for those who received one additional form of support, irrespective of type.

Figure 6: More migration support associated with longer tenure



The positive relationship between receipt of migration support and job duration is, again, purely correlational, since being on the job longer may increase exposure to potential support, but the relationship merits additional investigation.

Building on these findings, EPoD is working with the state of Odisha to conduct a randomised field evaluation of its flagship Mission20 scheme to ask:

1. Can local women (self-help group leaders) more effectively recruit and support high-potential candidates for training, particularly women?
2. Can providing targeted information on the economic costs and returns of migration to local self-help group recruiters improve take up of willing candidates?
3. Does incentivising youth to join training with their peers improve training take-up, willingness to migrate, and labour force outcomes?

The Mission20 study began in July 2017 and will conclude later this year. Results will provide important insights relevant to improving skilling outcomes in Odisha and other states.