

A Study of the Relationship between Skills and Employability in Tourism and Hospitality Sector in J&K: Examining the Special Industry Initiative (SII) for J&K-UDAAN

The sustainable growth models, government policy interventions and directives of any country globally cater towards advancing the skills set of its citizens. In this modern digital era, the economic success of any country will depend upon how easily trained skilled professionals and human resource well versed in interpersonal and scientifically technical skills are available. In light of this, Indian government had launched a special initiative for the youth in Jammu and Kashmir region under UDAAN to further the skills of graduates, post graduates and three-year engineering degree holders.

The proposed research seeks to assess how this initiative has proved effective in aligning the skill sets of youth in J&K with that of generating employment opportunities. This special initiative combines the forces of skill development government agencies like National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), the Ministry of Home Affairs, etc to mobilise both the youth and national/international corporate sector for properly managing their skills for employment purposes. The proposed research aims to determine how the implementation and the subsequent outcome of such an initiative has provided youth in J&K to better employment opportunities. The proposed research seeks to understand how skills development in the three districts of Jammu, Srinagar and Anantnag in J&K region has improved the employment opportunities within tourism and hospitality industry.

The proposed research examines how the mobilisation of youth via this the Special Industry Initiative (SII) for J&K- UDAAN has created more job opportunities in tourism and hospitality industry of J&K and has also largely improved this industry's perception and profits nationwide. Simultaneously, this study examines how class and gender stratification, urban-rural demographics have affected the successful implementation of this initiative. From conducting empirical surveys to analysing quantitative and qualitative primary and secondary data drawn from different government agencies, academic institutions and corporate institutions, this proposed research outlines both the success and gaps of such an initiative. In so doing, the research points towards the generation of more fruitful policy interventions in the future that takes into account both the challenges and positive outcomes encountered by key

stakeholders underlined by this scheme to advance a more fruitful juxtaposition of skill development and employment opportunities.

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