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ROLE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN EMPLOYABILITY OF STUDENTS THROUGH SKILL DEVELOPMENT – A CASE STUDY OF THE GANDHIGRAM RURAL INSTITUTE – DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

In this current era, education is one of the most important factors in the development of the nation. It improves the knowledge, skill, intelligence and perceptions among people. It also develops confidence among leaners. Through proper education, a nation can seek its progress and development. Hence it is very important for a nation to improve its educational landscape and structure. Understanding the importance of the same, the Indian Government has cautiously crafted the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Kaushal Kendra (DDUKK) scheme to develop the skills of students. This paper finds a discussion on the performance of Deen Dayal Upadhyay Kaushal Kendra (DDUKK) scheme in The Gandhigram Rural Institute – Deemed to be University (GRI-DU), based on the annual report of the Vocational Programmes in GRI. The objective of the study is to analyse the performance of the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Kaushal Kendra (DDUKK) scheme in providing employability skills to the students of B.Voc programmes. The study found that during the past 8 years, the programmes offered under the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Kaushal Kendra (DDUKK) scheme, provide 68 per cent of the students placed in various companies and the remaining 32 per cent have started their own entrepreneurial activities. So, this study concluded that the employability skills of the students have been well-developed through the programmes offered under Deen Dayal Upadhyay Kaushal Kendra (DDUKK) scheme in GRI. Therefore, Vocational education plays a crucial role in achieving the goals of NEP 2020, positioning India(Bharat) on the path to becoming a developed nation by 2047, in line with the Viksit Bharat 2047 vision.

KEYWORDS: *Education, Employability skills, Skill development, Vocational Programmes, Deen Dayal Upadhyay Kaushal Kendra (DDUKK).*

INTRODUCTION

Deen Dayal Upadhyay Kaushal Kendra (DDUKK) scheme, emerged as a pioneering institution to ensure education, skill development and employability through vocational programmes. Institution represents a transformative force, igniting the flames of knowledge and empowerment among countless aspirants across the nation. Education, the cornerstone of human progress and societal advancement, assumes a profound significance in the DDUKK scheme. The unwavering of the institutions commitment to academic excellence and innovation manifests through its extensive array of educational programmes, spanning a wide spectrum of disciplines and catering to diverse interests and aspirations(Navyug & Mahavidyalaya, 2018). DDUKKs education extends beyond conventional boundaries, intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities among its students. In a rapidly changing world, where skills are the currency of employability, the DDUKK scheme places a paramount emphasis on Skill development and seamlessly integrates practical skill-building into the curriculum. By offering access to labs, strong industry partnerships, and facilitating experiential learning opportunities, the DDUKK scheme ensures that its students acquire not only technical proficiency but also a versatile toolkit of soft skills such as communication, teamwork, and adaptability(Komariah, 2015). Thus, Curriculum that combines theoretical knowledge with practical, industry-relevant skills. This approach helps ensure that graduates are better prepared to meet the demands of the job market, thereby increasing their employability(Maheshkumar S & Soundarapandian M, 2025). The institutions proactive approach to bridging the gap between education and employment is possible through its industry connections, dedicated placement support and career guidance to ensure that students, thereby enhancing their prospects of securing promising career opportunities(Panchal, 2025).

The objective of the study is to analyse the performance of the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Kaushal Kendra (DDUKK) scheme in providing employability skills to the students of B.Voc and D.Voc programmes. The secondary data was collected from the office record of Deen Dayal Upadhyay Kaushal Kendra (DDUKK) scheme offered B.Voc and D.Voc courses in The Gandhigram Rural Institute – Deemed to be University(GRI-DU) Annual report from 2015-2018 to 2019-2022, journals and book.

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B.Voc in The Gandhigram Rural Institute – Deemed to be University(GRI-DU)

A programme centred on skill development as part of college and university education has been introduced by the University Grants Commission (UGC). Under the National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF), graduates can earn a Bachelor of Vocation (B.Voc.) degree (three years) with multiple exits, including a one-year or two-year diploma. The Gandhigram Rural Institute - Deemed to be University hosted the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Centre for Knowledge Acquisition and Upgradation of Skilled Human Abilities and Livelihood (KAUSHAL) in September 2015. Aside from offering broad general education, the B.Voc. Programme is targeted at universities and colleges and offers undergraduate courses that include specialized career responsibilities and associated National Occupational Standards (NOS). This will allow B.Voc graduates to contribute significantly to the acceleration of India's economy through suitable employment, entrepreneurship, and the creation of a qualified talent pool. The B.Voc comes level in GRI-DU one as follows:

i. B.Voc (**Renewable Energy**) installing and maintaining solar power-producing equipment for homes and businesses. GRI may become self-sufficient in its electricity production by implementing solar-powered power initiatives.
ii. B.Voc (**Food Processing**) The retail of packaged foods and other processed goods.
iii. B.Voc (**Food Testing and Quality Evaluation**) establishing a food testing facility with certification for quality, which will be used for food sample analysis.
iv. B.Voc (**Multi Media Production Technology**) involving students in media production for local TV stations, receiving a twenty per cent charge from the TV units for editing and other media activities.
v. B.Voc (**Dairy Production and Technology**) Value-added milk product preparation and milk processing charge collection from GRIs centralized milk processing plant.
vi. B.Voc (**Footwear and Accessories Design**) Selling leather goods such as purses, bags, belts, shoes, and so on to students as a means of training.
vii. B.Voc (**Farm equipment operation and maintenance**) Hire agricultural equipment on a custom basis based on what the farmer requires.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The course-wise performance in terms of course completed students, placed students and entrepreneurs through B.Voc courses are analysed in Tables 1,2 and 3.

Table 1
Year-wise list of course completed students in B.Voc programme.

Programme	2015 - 2018 Course Completed Students	2016 - 2019 Course Completed Students	2017 - 2020 Course Completed Students	2018 - 2021 Course Completed Students	2019 - 2022 Course Completed Students	Total
B.Voc (Farm equipment operation and maintenance)	42(30.88)	52 (23.00)	80 (27.58)	62(24.31)	70(31.53)	**306(137.3)**
B.Voc (Footwear and Accessories Design)	33 (24.26)	62 (27.43)	73 (25.17)	65(25.49)	75(33.78)	**308(136.13)**
B.Voc (Dairy Production and Technology)	25 (18.38)	28 (12.38)	43 (14.82)	30(11.76)	23(10.36)	**149(67.7)**
B.Voc (Renewable Energy)	13 (09.55)	18 (7.96)	35 (12.06)	40(15.68)	33(14.86)	**139(60.11)**
B.Voc (Food Processing)	7 (05.14)	16 (7.07)	22 (7.58)	12(4.70)	6(2.70)	**63(27.82)**
B.Voc (Food Testing and Quality Evaluation)	8 (05.88)	13 (5.75)	16 (5.51)	19(7.45)	4(1.80)	**60(26.39)**
B.Voc (Multi Media Production Technology)	5 (03.67)	19 (8.40)	8 (2.75)	10(3.92)	5(2.25)	**47(20.99)**
B.Voc (Organic Agriculture and Enterprises Development)	3 (02.20)	18 (7.96)	13 (4.48)	17(6.66)	6(2.70)	**57(24)**
Total	**136(100)**	**226(100)**	**290(100)**	**255(100)**	**222(100)**	**1129(500)**

Source: Annual report from Deen Dayal Upadhyay Kaushal Kendra (DDUKK) office, GRI.
Note: figures within parentheses denote per centage.

Table 1 reveals a comprehensive overview of the number of students who have successfully completed the B.Voc programme in various specializations over the years. Through the analysis, the total number of students 1129 have completed B.Voc programmes, has increased steadily from 136 in 2015–2018 to 222 in 2019–2022. The B.Voc programme in Farm Equipment Operation and Maintenance witnessed a steady increase in the number of completions over the years, reaching 80 students (27.58 per cent) in the 2017–2020 academic period. Also, the B.Voc programme in Organic Agriculture and Enterprises Development experienced a decline in the number of completions, with only 3 students (2.20 per cent) completing the course in 2015–2018. The percentage distribution across different programmes reflects variations in enrolment, with programmes consistently increasing each year.

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Table 2
Year-wise list of Placed in the B.Voc programme

Programme	2015 - 2018 Placed	2016 - 2019 Placed	2017 - 2020 Placed	2018 - 2021 Placed	2019 - 2022 Placed	Total
B.Voc (Farm equipment operation and maintenance)	35(34.65)	44(26.66)	46(24.59)	40(22.85)	40(25.97)	**205(134.75)**
B.Voc (Footwear and Accessories Design)	18(17.82)	40(24.24)	58(31.01)	39(22.28)	51(33.11)	**206(128.48)**
B.Voc (Dairy Production and Technology)	21(20.79)	24(14.54)	25(13.36)	19(10.85)	21(13.63)	**110(73.20)**
B.Voc (Renewable Energy)	11(10.89)	14(8.48)	22(11.76)	32(18.28)	26(16.88)	**105(66.30)**
B.Voc (Food Processing)	4(3.96)	11(6.66)	12(6.41)	9(5.14)	6(3.89)	**42(26.08)**
B.Voc (Food Testing and Quality Evaluation)	6(5.94)	6(3.63)	7(3.74)	18(10.28)	4(2.59)	**41(26.20)**
B.Voc (Multi Media Production Technology)	4(3.96)	12(7.27)	5(2.67)	9(5.14)	3(1.94)	**33(20.99)**
B.Voc (Organic Agriculture and Enterprises Development)	2(1.98)	14(8.48)	12(6.41)	9(5.14)	3(1.94)	**40(29.97)**
Total	**101(100)**	**165(100)**	**187(100)**	**175(100)**	**154(100)**	**782(500)**

Source: Annual report from Deen Dayal Upadhyay Kaushal Kendra (DDUKK) office, GRI.
Note: figures within parentheses denote per centage.

Table 2 data reveals the B.Voc programme in Footwear and Accessories Design consistently exhibits high placement rates, with 58 students (31.01 per cent) placed in the 2017–2020 academic period, contributing to a total of 187 placements (100 per cent) over the entire period. Conversely, the B.Voc programme in Organic Agriculture and Enterprises Development witnessed a decline in placement rates, with only 2 students (1.98 per cent) placed in the 2015-2018 academic period, resulting in a total of 101 placements (100 per cent) over the entire period. A cumulative total of 782 course-completed students were placed across all B.Voc programmes during the specified period. This comprehensive presentation facilitates an in-depth understanding of the placement outcomes for each programme to assess the effectiveness of the vocational programmes in preparing students for the best jobs.

Table 3
Year-wise list of Entrepreneurs in B.Voc programme

Programme	2015 - 2018 Entrepreneurs	2016 - 2019 Entrepreneur	2017 - 2020 Entrepreneur	2018 - 2021 Entrepreneur	2019 - 2022 Entrepreneur	Total
B.Voc (Farm equipment operation and maintenance)	7(20)	8(13.11)	34(33.09)	22(27.5)	30(44.17)	**101(137.74)**
B.Voc (Footwear and Accessories Design)	15(42.85)	22(3.06)	15(14.56)	26(32.5)	24(35.29)	**102(161.27)**
B.Voc (Dairy Production and Technology)	4(11.42)	4(6.55)	18(17.47)	11(13.75)	2(2.94)	**39(52.15)**
B.Voc (Renewable Energy)	2(5.71)	4(6.55)	13(12.62)	8(10)	7(10.29)	**34(45.18)**
B.Voc (Food Processing)	3(8.57)	5(8.19)	10(9.70)	3(3.75)	0(0)	**21(30.22)**
B.Voc (Food Testing and Quality Evaluation)	2(5.71)	7(11.47)	9(8.73)	1(1.25)	0(0)	**19(27.17)**
B.Voc (Multi Media Production Technology)	1(2.85)	7(11.47)	3(3.91)	1(1.25)	2(2.94)	**14(21.43)**
B.Voc (Organic Agriculture and Enterprises Development)	1(2.85)	4(6.55)	1(0.97)	8(10)	3(4.41)	**17(24.79)**
Total	**35(100)**	**61(100)**	**103(100)**	**80(100)**	**68(100)**	**347(500)**

Source: Annual report from Deen Dayal Upadhyay Kaushal Kendra (DDUKK) office, GRI.
Note: figures within parentheses denote per centage.

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Table 3 reveals the B.Voc programme in Farm Equipment Operation and Maintenance consistently shows a substantial number of entrepreneurs, with 34 graduates (33.09 per cent) starting their ventures in the 2017–2020 period, contributing to a cumulative total of 103 entrepreneurs (100 per cent) over the entire duration. In Footwear and Accessories Design, the entrepreneurial trend is notable, with 26 graduates (32.5 per cent) establishing their ventures in the 2018–2021 period, accumulating to a total of 80 entrepreneurs (100 per cent). Conversely, the B.Voc programme in Food Processing and Food Testing and Quality Evaluation experienced a decline in entrepreneurial activities, with no graduates reported as entrepreneurs in the 2019–2022 period, resulting in a total of 68 entrepreneurs (100 per cent). The cumulative totals indicate that a total of 347 graduates across all B.Voc programmes ventured into entrepreneurship during the specified period. This comprehensive presentation provides valuable insights into the entrepreneurial landscape of B.Voc graduates, allowing us to assess the success of these programmes in fostering entrepreneurial skills. The data will inform future programme enhancements, curriculum adjustments, and institutional support mechanisms to further encourage and support entrepreneurship among B.Voc graduates.

The course-wise performance in terms of course completed students, placed students and entrepreneurs through D.Voc courses are analysed in Table 4**.**

Table 4
List of course-completed students, placed, and Entrepreneurs in the D.Voc programme

Diploma in Two Wheeler Mechanism & Maintenance (D.Voc)			
Year	**Course Completed Students**	**Placed**	**Entrepreneur**
2015-2017	53(9.70)	30(8.40)	23(12.16)
2016-2018	82(15.01)	61(17.08)	21(11.11)
2017-2019	113(20.7)	54(15.12)	59(31.21)
2018-2020	91(16.66)	69(19.32)	22(11.64)
2019-2021	108(19.78)	70(19.60)	38(20.10)
2020-2022	99(18.13)	73(20.44)	26(13.75)
Total	**546(100)**	**357(100)**	**189(100)**

Source: Annual report from Deen Dayal Upadhyay Kaushal Kendra (DDUKK) office, GRI.
Note: figures within parentheses denote per centage.

Table 4 reveals the number of course-completed students has increased steadily over the years, reaching a total of 546. The placement outcomes exhibit a positive trajectory, with a significant proportion of graduates securing employment. In the academic year 2020–2022, 20.44 per cent of 73 course-completed students were successfully placed, contributing to a total of 357 placements (100 per cent) across all years. Entrepreneurship outcomes include a total of 189 graduates (100 per cent) starting their own ventures. The academic year 2017–2019 stands out, with 31.21 per cent of 59 course-completed students becoming entrepreneurs. These findings provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of the programme in preparing students for both employment and entrepreneurship.

Table 5
Per centage analysis of B.Voc programme

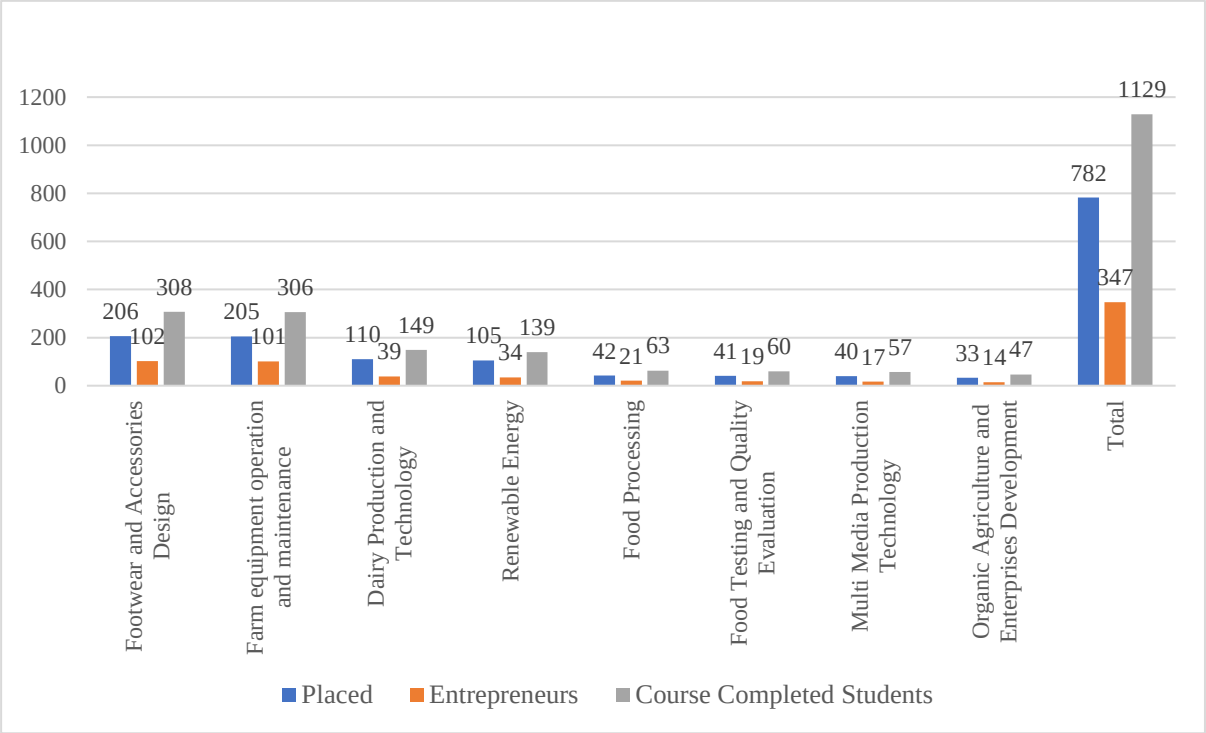
Programme	**Course Completed Students**	**Placed**	**Entrepreneurs**
B.Voc (Footwear and Accessories Design)	308(27.28)	206(26.34)	102(29.39)
B.Voc (Farm equipment operation and maintenance)	306(27.10)	205(26.21)	101(29.10)
B.Voc (Dairy Production and Technology)	149(13.19)	110(14.06)	39(11.23)
B.Voc (Renewable Energy)	139(12.31)	105(13.42)	34(9.79)
B.Voc (Food Processing)	63(5.58)	42(5.37)	21(6.05)
B.Voc (Food Testing and Quality Evaluation)	60(5.31)	41(5.24)	19(5.47)
B.Voc (Multi Media Production Technology)	57(5.04)	40(5.11)	17(4.89)
B.Voc (Organic Agriculture and Enterprises Development)	47(4.16)	33(4.21)	14(4.03)
Total	**1129(100)**	**782(100)**	**347(100)**

Source: Compiled by author from table 1,2 and 3.
Note: Figures within parentheses denote per centage.

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Table 5 reveals a detailed breakdown of placement, entrepreneurial ventures, and course completions for different Bachelor of Vocation (B.Voc) programmes from Highest to lowest. This data suggests variability in placement success across programmes. For instance, B.Voc programs in Footwear and Accessories Design and Farm Equipment Operation and Maintenance exhibit high placement rates, with 26.34 per cent and 26.21 per cent entrepreneurship, respectively. Notably, Dairy Production and Technology graduates show a lower placement rate but a higher entrepreneurial spirit at 29.10 per cent. This provides an overall perspective on the career choices made by students across all programmes. The programme-specific Patterns table allows for a comparison of success patterns between programmes.

Figure 1
Per centage analysis of B.Voc Programme



Source: Compiled by author from table 5.

It is palpable from Figure 1 that Footwear and Accessories Design has a high placement percentage but a relatively lower entrepreneurship percentage, suggesting a higher inclination toward employment in this field. Valuable insights into the outcomes of B.Voc programmes, showcasing the diverse career paths chosen by students and the varying success rates in terms of placements and entrepreneurship across different fields of study.

Table 6
Per centage analysis of D.Voc programme

Year	Course Completed Students	Year	Placed	Year	Entrepreneur
2017-2019	113(20.69)	2020-2022	73(20.44)	2017-2019	59(31.21)
2019-2021	108(19.78)	2019-2021	70(19.60)	2019-2021	38(20.10)
2020-2022	99(18.13)	2018-2020	69(19.32)	2020-2022	26(13.75)
2018-2020	91(16.66)	2016-2018	61(17.08)	2015-2017	23(12.16)
2016-2018	82(15.01)	2017-2019	54(15.12)	2018-2020	22(11.64)
2015-2017	53(9.70)	2015-2017	30(8.40)	2016-2018	21(11.11)
Total	**546(100)**		**358(100)**		**188(100)**

Source: Compiled by author from table 4.

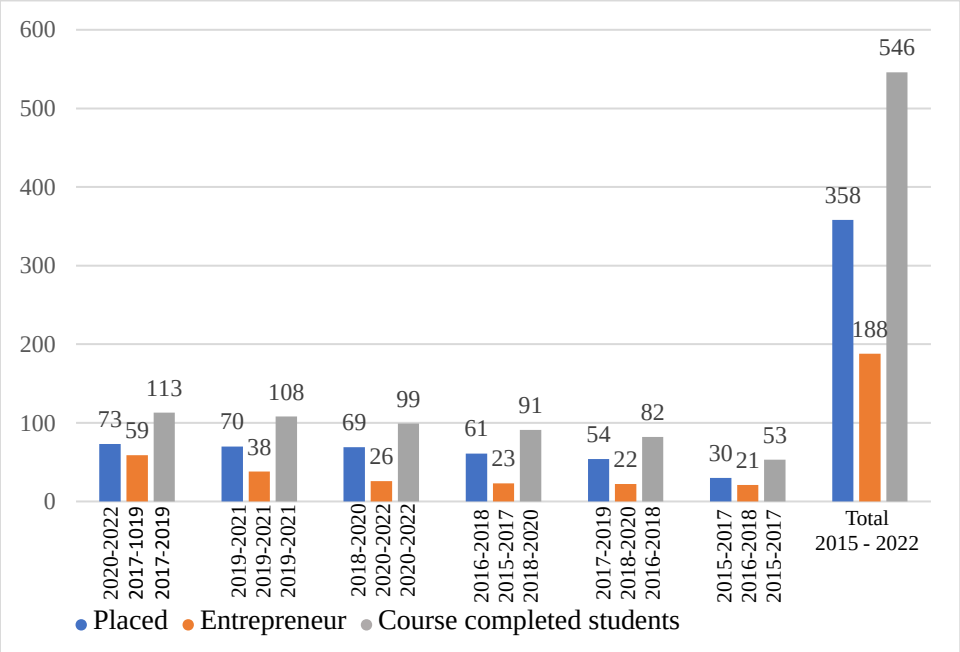
Note: Figures within parentheses denote per centage.

Table 6 reveals placement, entrepreneurial, and course completion data for a specific educational programme over multiple years. The placement per centages for each year indicates variations in the success of students in securing jobs after completing the programme. For instance, the year 2020-2022 shows a relatively high placement 73 (20.44 per centage), suggesting a strong employability rate during that period. The entrepreneurship per centages for each year highlights the varying preferences of students for entrepreneurship. The year 2017-2019 has a higher entrepreneurship 59 (31.21 per centage), indicating a notable inclination towards entrepreneurial ventures during that timeframe. The per centage distribution of course completions across the years provides insights into the popularity and enrollment trends for each period. The year 2020-2022 has the highest per centage of course completion students 113 showing a relatively high

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placement 20.69 per cent, suggesting a peak in programme completion during that specific timeframe.

Figure 2
per centage analysis of D.Voc programme



Source: Compiled by author from table 6.

It is a palpable from Figure 2 that a total of 546 students completed the programme, 358 secured placements, and 188 pursued entrepreneurial ventures. This provides an overall perspective on the career choices made by students across all years. Valuable insights into the placement, entrepreneurial, and course completion trends for a specific educational programme over multiple years, allowing for a nuanced analysis of the outcomes during each specified time frame.

Findings

Table 7
An overall analysis of the B.Voc and D.Voc programme

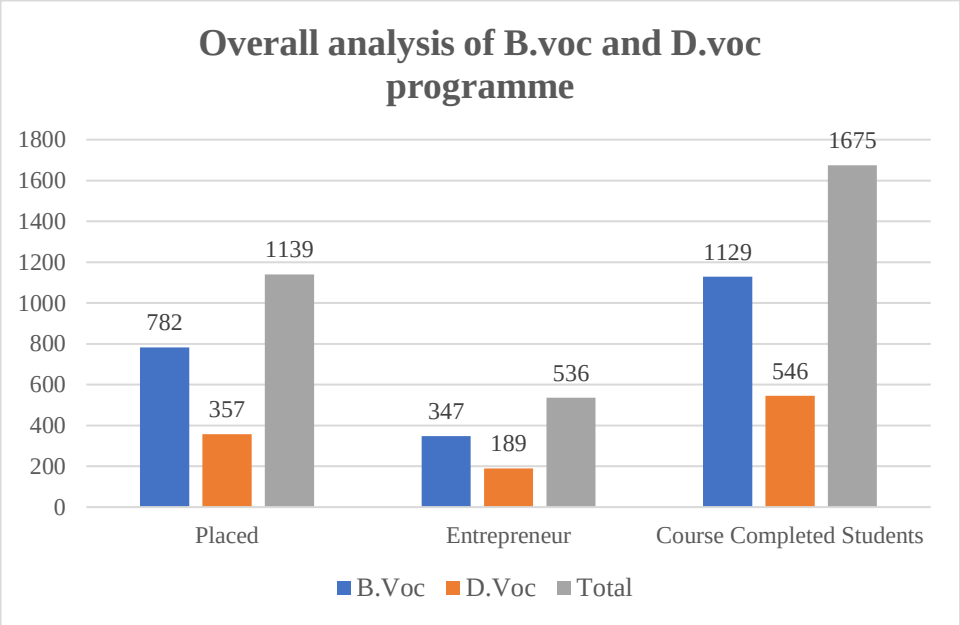
Programme	Placed	Entrepreneur	Course Completed Students
B.Voc	782(69.2)	347(30.8)	1129(100)
D.Voc	357(65.4)	189(34.6)	546(100)
Total	1139(68)	536(32)	**1675(100)**

Source: Compiled by author from table 5 and 6.
Note: Figures within parentheses denote per centage.

According to findings, Table 7 reveals the total number of graduates in B.Voc and D.Voc is 1675, who are graduating and have been well-developed through the programmes offered under the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Kaushal Kendra (DDUKK) scheme at The Gandhigram Rural Institute - Deemed to be a university (GRI-DU). Out of the 1675 students, the total number of graduates from B.Voc. was 1129, and the total number of D.voc. graduates was 546. Out of 1129 graduates from the B.Voc program, 782 students were placed in the placement program, and the remaining 347 students were engaged in entrepreneurial activities. Also Out of 546 graduates from the D.Voc program, 357 students were placed in the placement program, and the remaining 189 students were engaged in entrepreneurial activities.

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Figure 3



Source: Compiled by author from table 7.

It is palpable from Figure 3 i.e., B.Voc and D.Voc programmes, spanning from 2015-2018 to 2019-2022, exhibit several positive trends. Across B.Voc programmes, there is a consistent increase in placements, underscoring the efficacy of these programmes in enhancing employability. Notably, a substantial number of B.Voc graduates engage in entrepreneurial activities, indicating a cultivated entrepreneurial spirit. Programme-specific insights highlight successful placements and entrepreneurship in sectors such as Farm Equipment Operation, Footwear and Accessories Design, and Renewable Energy. The growing total number of B.Voc graduates suggests an increasing interest in vocational education. Similarly, the D.Voc programme consistently demonstrates substantial success in both placements and entrepreneurial outcomes. The increasing enrolment in D.Voc signifies its popularity and relevance. The overall implications are positive, emphasizing the effectiveness of both B.Voc and D.Voc programmes in preparing students for employment and entrepreneurship. The sustained growth in placement and entrepreneurial outcomes across batches suggests the sustainability and adaptability of the programmes. These findings have potential policy implications, showcasing the success of vocational education in the skilled and entrepreneurial workforce, and contributing significantly to the nation's socio-economic development.

Issues and Strategies

i. The study relies on the lack of qualitative data insights into the experiences and perspectives of the students, which could enrich the analysis. i.e., the findings incorporate qualitative research methods, such as interviews or surveys, to gather in-depth information on students experiences, challenges, and perceptions regarding vocational programmes.

ii. The findings might be institution-specific and might not be directly applicable to other educational institutions. i.e., Might acknowledge the institution-specific nature of the study and encourage further research in different contexts to validate and generalize the findings.

iii. The placement and entrepreneurial outcomes vary significantly across different B.Voc. and D.Voc programmes, suggesting potential disparities in programme effectiveness. Conduct a program-specific analysis to identify strengths and weaknesses in each program, enabling targeted improvements and enhancements based on the unique requirements of each course.

iv. External factors such as economic conditions, industry trends, or policy changes may impact the employability of students, and these are not thoroughly addressed. Incorporates an analysis of external factors and their influence on the outcomes, providing a more holistic understanding of the vocational programmes effectively.

v. The vocational programme does not explicitly mention industry feedback and collaboration, which is crucial for assessing the relevance of the programmes in the current job market. Integrates industry feedback and collaboration as a key component of the study, ensuring the vocational programmes align with industry needs and expectations.

vi. The Sustainability of Entrepreneurial Ventures indicates the number of students engaged in entrepreneurial activities but does not explore the sustainability and success rate of these ventures. i.e., the Sustainability of Entrepreneurial Ventures conducts a follow-up study to track the long-term success and challenges faced by students who pursued entrepreneurial ventures after completing the programmes.

The consistent growth in course completions reflects the popularity of the programme among students. DDUKK scheme programmes give high placement rates, indicating the alignment of the programme with industry demands, resulting in graduates securing employment shortly after completing the

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programme. Education programmes focus on equipping students with practical skills, enabling them to translate theoretical concepts into real-world applications, which is essential for sustainability(Maheshkumar S & Soundarapandian M, 2024) in this way this programmes in fostering entrepreneurship are evident, offering graduates the confidence and skills to establish their ventures.

CONCLUSION

This study probes into the performance of the DDUKK scheme at GRI-DU, the study objective was to scrutinize the efficacy of the DDUKK scheme in imparting employability skills to B.Voc and D.Voc programme students. Over the past 8 years, the findings reveal that 68 per cent of students participating in the DDUKK scheme programmes secured positions in various companies by the placement program, while the remaining 32 per cent embarked on entrepreneurial ventures. In light of these outcomes, it is evident that the DDUKK scheme at GRI-DU has significantly contributed to the well-rounded development of employability skills among students. Therefore, Vocational education plays a crucial role in achieving the goals of NEP 2020, positioning India(Bharat) on the path to becoming a developed nation by 2047, in line with the Viksit Bharat 2047 vision.

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