

A Study on Beneficiaries' Opinion Towards the Effectiveness of the 'Creating Futures' Women Empowerment Training Initiative

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Abstract—Background: Women's empowerment through skill development has become a central strategy for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) seeking to close the gap between policy intent and grassroots outcomes, largely through Self-Help Group models and vocational training aimed at improving employability. **Research Gap:** While NGO-led empowerment and Self-Help Group interventions have been widely studied, comparatively little attention has been paid to the specific synergy between “Education to Employability” (E2E) training models and urban female beneficiaries, with most existing literature concentrating on rural or agricultural training and broad socio-economic policy. **Objective:** This study evaluates beneficiaries' opinions of training quality, institutional support, and overall programme effectiveness within the ‘Creating Futures’ Women Empowerment Training Initiative, a Bengaluru-based NGO programme. **Methodology:** A descriptive research design was adopted, with primary data gathered from 200 female beneficiaries through a structured five-point Likert-scale questionnaire, supplemented by observation and focus group discussions. **Statistical Techniques:** Percentage analysis, Pearson correlation, and simple linear regression were applied, with hypotheses tested using SPSS and MS Excel. **Major Findings:** Trainer expertise ($M = 4.35$) and programme recommendation ($M = 4.39$) recorded the highest mean scores. Regression analysis confirmed that curriculum quality, trainer expertise, and teaching methodology jointly explain 86.2 per cent of the variance in perceived training effectiveness ($R^2 = .862$, $F = 409.563$, $p < .001$). The NGO's holistic support system was very strongly correlated with beneficiaries' employability readiness ($r = .913$, $p < .001$). **Contributions:** The study extends the NGO-led empowerment literature by isolating the construct-level effectiveness of an urban E2E vocational training model, an area under-represented relative to rural and agricultural training research. **Practical Implications:** NGOs delivering urban vocational training should invest in industry-specific modules, private-sector placement partnerships, and post-training mentorship to sustain the long-term career outcomes of women beneficiaries.

Keywords—women empowerment; vocational training; training effectiveness; NGO initiatives; education to employability (E2E); beneficiary perception.

I. INTRODUCTION

Women's empowerment is not a single, isolated outcome; it is a process that entails improving a woman's sense of self-worth, her right to make and act on her own decisions, and her capacity to participate in shaping social change. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) have become central to this process in the Indian context, striving to close the gap between policy intent and ground-level reality. Systematic social development and the upliftment of marginalised women are widely regarded as impossible without the sustained, targeted efforts of such organisations (Crasta & Dmello, 2024).

One of the principal channels of this change has been the integration of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) with vocational training. SHGs have been shown to play a substantial role in promoting socio-economic autonomy (Mahato et al., 2023), enabling rural and urban women alike to access financial resources and entrepreneurial opportunities (Yadav, 2021), and converting collective action into individual empowerment (Sivaram, 2024). Government-supported models such as the Stree Shakthi programme further demonstrate how rural schemes can complement local initiatives to enhance women's social status (Firdos et al., 2023). Even so, economic policy alone is insufficient without effective implementation; Aggarwal and Kumar (2025) note that considerable gaps remain in ensuring policy benefits reach the last mile. This is where skill development becomes critical, having been identified as a foundation for improving employment outcomes, particularly among tribal and rural populations (Baanupriya & Balamurugan, 2025). For training to be effective, however, it must translate into durable, quality education and practical employment outcomes (Sethi et al., 2024), a process increasingly supported through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funding mechanisms (Bhagyabhavanam et al., 2025).

The ultimate test of any such initiative lies in how beneficiaries themselves perceive and apply the knowledge gained (UNITAR, 2016).

Beneficiary attitude and perception feed directly into the refinement of training quality, and capturing the beneficiary's voice is considered essential to improving programme design (INTRAC, 2016). Sector-specific research, for instance in agriculture, similarly shows that a favourable attitude toward training is directly correlated with faster adoption of new skills (Nisha & Rani, 2022).

Within this landscape, 'Creating Futures' operates as an agent of change centred on skill development and an 'Education to Employability' (E2E) philosophy. The organisation aims to move beyond mere participation toward skill mastery, adopting a feminism-informed orientation to rural and urban development (Gothwal & Siwach, 2025). This research examines the effectiveness of the 'Creating Futures' programme by assessing how its beneficiaries rate the quality and effectiveness of the training designed to make them self-reliant (Pohtam & Rapthap, 2025).

A. Research Problem

Although skill development programmes are widely adopted by non-profit organisations, it remains unclear whether such programmes translate into real-life empowerment and self-reliance for participants. The 'Creating Futures' Women Empowerment Training Initiative seeks to equip underserved women with employable skills, but limited evidence exists on how beneficiaries themselves perceive the programme's actual impact on their lives. This study assesses the effectiveness of the training modules from the participants' perspective, examining whether the curriculum aligns with market requirements and offers long-term sustainability. The primary areas of interest are training quality, institutional support mechanisms, and beneficiary satisfaction. The findings are intended to provide 'Creating Futures' with practical evidence to strengthen its outreach and training design.

B. Research Objectives

1. To understand the training effectiveness of the beneficiaries under the 'Creating Futures' women empowerment training initiative.
2. To examine beneficiaries' opinions of the quality of training and support systems provided by the 'Creating Futures' women empowerment training programme.
3. To summarise and present the feedback and suggestions offered by beneficiaries of the 'Creating Futures' training programme.

C. Contributions of the Study

The study contributes empirical, construct-level evidence on the effectiveness of an urban E2E vocational training model, a segment of the NGO empowerment literature that remains comparatively under-examined relative to rural and agricultural training research.

By statistically isolating the relative contribution of curriculum, trainer expertise, and teaching methodology to perceived effectiveness, and by quantifying the relationship between institutional support and employability readiness, the study offers 'Creating Futures' and comparable urban NGOs an evidence base for refining programme design and resource allocation.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. NGOs and the Women Empowerment Landscape in India

Crasta and Dmello (2024) reviewed the roles and contributions of NGOs to women's empowerment in India and found that NGOs play a vital part in the social development and upliftment of marginalised women at the grassroots, underscoring the need to treat non-profits as a core component of empowerment interventions. Extending this discussion to policy, Aggarwal and Kumar (2025) reviewed recent developments in women's economic empowerment policy and found that although policy frameworks offer considerable opportunity, last-mile implementation remains a significant challenge, highlighting a disconnect between policy formulation and on-the-ground performance. Bhagyabhavanam et al. (2025) examined the contribution of CSR initiatives to women's empowerment and concluded that CSR funding is critical to developing sustainable institutional arrangements, linking corporate investment to long-term social empowerment planning.

B. Self-Help Groups as Vehicles of Socio-Economic Change

Sivaram (2024) examined the effects of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) on the empowerment of Indian women and found that SHGs serve as potent vehicles for transforming social action, at scale, into individual empowerment, affirming their position as key agents of socio-economic change. Mahato et al. (2023), through a systematic review and bibliometric analysis, found that SHG participation has a great deal to do with socio-economic independence and power in decision-making, offering a comparative, data-driven view of SHG effectiveness worldwide. Yadav (2021) examined SHG-based entrepreneurship and found that SHGs are capable of offering women access to finance and business mentorship, recognising SHGs as one of the most important entry points to female entrepreneurship in India. Firdos et al. (2023) reviewed the Stree Shakthi scheme and found that it has successfully enhanced the social status and financial literacy of rural women, authenticating government-supported schemes as a means of rural upliftment.



C. Vocational Training and Skill Development

Baanupriya and Balamurugan (2025) studied the TADHCO scheme in Dharmapuri and found that vocational training is one of the pillars of sustainable employment generation in tribal areas, showing how skill-building is highly influential for marginalised communities. Sethi et al. (2024) dissected the employment outcomes associated with vocational training effectiveness and found that sustainable quality education is possible only through high-quality vocational training, directly linking effective training to long-term employability. Pohtam and Rapphap (2025), in a study of women SHGs in the West Jaintia Hills district, found that the ability to master training skills is directly associated with greater self-reliance and community influence, demonstrating a positive relationship between skill training and personal empowerment. Gothwal and Siwach (2025) examined rural development trends grounded in feminist perspectives and found that a shift toward feminist-grounded frameworks is required for inclusive and contemporary rural development, supporting a more gender-sensitive approach to development planning.

D. Beneficiary Perception and Training Effectiveness

Nisha and Rani (2022) studied beneficiary perceptions of training programmes run by Krishi Vigyan Kendras and found that adoption of new skills is preceded by a positive perception of training quality, emphasising that beneficiary buy-in is key to programme success. Kempis et al. (2019) captured trainee perception and attitude quantitatively and found that trainee attitudes and perceptions provide the best inputs for refining training curricula, suggesting that beneficiary feedback should be used as an instrument of iterative programme design. UNITAR (2016) assessed how beneficiaries apply knowledge and retain skills and concluded that the appropriateness of real-world application is the ultimate gauge of training effectiveness, treating the application stage as the true measure of success. INTRAC (2016), drawing on maternal and child health project feedback loops, found that systematic beneficiary feedback is critical to making programmes more responsive, positioning beneficiary feedback as a fundamental accountability requirement.

E. Identification of Research Gap

Although NGO-led empowerment and Self-Help Groups have been thoroughly researched, comparatively narrow attention has been paid to the specific synergy between the 'Education to Employability' (E2E) model and urban female beneficiaries; the majority of the literature reviewed above measures rural agricultural training or general socio-economic policy outcomes.

This study addresses that gap by evaluating the effects of a specific urban vocational training programme on the self-reliance of 'Creating Futures' beneficiaries.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A. The Education-to-Employability (E2E) Model

The study is grounded in the 'Education to Employability' (E2E) model that underlies the 'Creating Futures' curriculum, wherein vocational instruction, spoken-English proficiency, and life-skills coaching are treated as complementary inputs that convert theoretical classroom learning into applied professional confidence. Consistent with the feminism-grounded development perspective advanced by Gothwal and Siwach (2025), the framework treats empowerment as being jointly determined by the quality of instructional inputs and by the strength of the surrounding institutional support system, rather than by curriculum design alone.

B. Conceptual Model

Based on the study's objectives, two conceptual relationships are proposed for empirical testing: first, that the quality of training inputs — namely curriculum design, trainer expertise, and teaching methodology — exerts a direct effect on beneficiaries' perceived training effectiveness (operationalised as employability and job readiness); and second, that the NGO's holistic support system and institutional facilities shape beneficiaries' overall opinion of the initiative's quality. These relationships are tested in Section VI through regression and correlation analysis respectively.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive research design, as it does not manipulate variables but instead seeks to describe prevailing opinions and satisfaction levels among beneficiaries. This design provides a precise account of participants' experience based on the feedback of the women involved and the perceived effectiveness of the programme.

B. Data Collection

Primary data were obtained directly by the researcher through face-to-face interaction with 200 identified beneficiaries, using structured questionnaires and focus groups to capture first-hand, authentic information on the training experience.

Secondary data were drawn from published sources providing theoretical and contextual grounding, including the official 'Creating Futures' webpage, annual NGO reports, academic articles on women's empowerment, and prior literature on skill-building initiatives in India.

C. Sampling Plan

The unit of sampling comprised individual women enrolled as beneficiaries in 'Creating Futures' training programmes. A sample of 200 responses was collected to ensure statistical validity. Convenience sampling was employed, as the researcher approached beneficiaries who were readily accessible during ongoing training sessions or workshops at the NGO's centres.

D. Tools for Data Collection

A questionnaire-based survey using a five-point Likert scale (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree) was administered to capture beneficiaries' opinions on training quality and support. This was supplemented by direct observation of live training sessions to gauge engagement and interaction between trainers and trainees, and by focus group discussions involving 8–10 beneficiaries at a time to capture qualitative nuances, personal experiences, and specific suggestions not identifiable through the standard survey.

E. Data Analysis Technique

Data were compiled, classified, and tabulated systematically. Percentage analysis was used, principally through MS Excel, to establish trends in beneficiary feedback. Hypotheses were tested through regression analysis, Pearson correlation, and descriptive statistics in SPSS to identify the relationship between training quality and overall effectiveness, enabling precise, data-based recommendations.

V. RESULTS

A. Demographic and Programme-Related Profile of Respondents

Table I summarises the profile of the 200 beneficiaries surveyed, covering age group, education level, current employment status, the specific training module enrolled, the channel through which respondents first learned of the programme, their primary motivation for joining, and their rating of the accessibility of the training centre or online sessions.

Table I: Demographic And Programme-Related Profile Of Respondents (N = 200)

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age Group	1	4	2.01	1.000
Education	1	4	2.70	.840
Current Employment Status	1	4	2.04	1.004
Specific Training Module Enrolled	1	4	2.32	1.138
Channel of First Learning About the Programme	1	4	2.18	.986
Primary Motivation for Joining Training	1	4	1.94	1.042
Accessibility of Training Centre/Online Sessions	1	4	1.63	.779

Note. Variables are coded categorical responses; N = 200 for all items.

B. Item-Level Descriptive Statistics for Training Effectiveness Constructs

Table II presents the descriptive statistics for the eight Likert-scale items measuring beneficiaries' perceptions of curriculum quality, trainer expertise, teaching methodology, institutional support, employability outcomes, learning material quality, spoken-English confidence, and overall programme advocacy.

Table II: Item-Level Descriptive Statistics For Training Effectiveness Constructs (N = 200)

Item	Min	Max	Mean	SD
The training curriculum was easy to understand and well-structured.	1	5	4.11	.912
The trainers demonstrated high expertise and were supportive of my learning needs.	1	5	4.35	.818
The teaching methods (activities, role-plays, etc.) were effective for skill mastery.	1	5	4.07	.911
The 'Creating Futures' support system helped me overcome personal or professional barriers.	1	5	3.91	1.035
The training has significantly improved my employability and job readiness.	1	5	4.03	.977
The learning materials provided during the programme were of high quality.	1	5	4.03	.902
I feel more confident expressing myself professionally after the Spoken English sessions.	1	5	4.18	.925
I would highly recommend the 'Creating Futures' programme to other women in my community.	1	5	4.39	.795

The results indicate that the 'Creating Futures' initiative is highly successful in empowering young, educated women through accessible training. Trainer expertise ($M=4.35$) and programme recommendation ($M = 4.39$) recorded the strongest scores among the 200 beneficiaries. The curriculum and teaching methodology were both positively rated, feeding directly into growth in professional confidence and employability. The NGO's holistic support system was likewise effective in helping beneficiaries overcome personal barriers. Overall, the high satisfaction levels indicate that the programme succeeds in bridging vocational preparation with practical readiness for participants.

VI. HYPOTHESIS TESTING

A. Hypotheses

Objective 1: To learn the impact of training quality on the perceived training effectiveness of beneficiaries under the 'Creating Futures' women empowerment training programme.

H1 (Alternate Hypothesis): The quality of training inputs (curriculum, trainers, and methods) has a significant positive effect on perceived training effectiveness among beneficiaries.

H0 (Null Hypothesis): Quality of training inputs and perceived training effectiveness show no significant relationship among beneficiaries.

Objective 2: To examine beneficiaries' opinions of the quality of training and the support system offered by 'Creating Futures'.

H1 (Alternate Hypothesis): Beneficiaries' opinion of the quality of the initiative is significantly affected by the available support systems and institutional facilities.

H0 (Null Hypothesis): The quality of the initiative has no significant effect on beneficiaries' opinion and is not affected by support systems and institutional facilities.

B. Regression Analysis: Objective 1

Table III: Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.929	.862	.860	.365

Predictors: (Constant), Teaching Methods, Trainer Expertise, Training Curriculum. Dependent Variable: The training has significantly improved my employability and job readiness.

Table IV: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	163.706	3	54.569	409.563	.000
Residual	26.114	196	.133		
Total	189.820	199			

Table V: Regression Coefficients

Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-.367	.140	—	-2.617	.010
Training curriculum was well-structured	.376	.073	.351	5.179	.000
Trainers demonstrated high expertise	.247	.071	.207	3.482	.001
Teaching methods were effective for mastery	.437	.069	.407	6.306	.000

The model summary shows a high correlation ($R = .929$) and an R^2 of .862, indicating that 86.2 per cent of the variance in perceived training effectiveness (employability and job readiness) is explained jointly by training curriculum, trainer expertise, and teaching methods. The ANOVA table confirms that the overall model is highly significant ($F = 409.563$, $p < .001$). The coefficients table further shows that all three predictors exert a statistically significant, positive effect on the dependent variable ($p < .001$ in each case). As the p-values fall well below the 0.05 threshold, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternate hypothesis (H_1) is accepted, confirming a strong positive relationship between the quality of training inputs and beneficiaries' perceived training effectiveness.

C. Correlation Analysis: Objective 2

Table VI: Inter-Construct Correlation Matrix

Construct	Curriculum	Trainer Exp.	Teaching Methods	Support System	Employability
Training Curriculum	1	.878**	.898**	.905**	.899**
Trainer Expertise	.878**	1	.865**	.870**	.867**
Teaching Methods	.898**	.865**	1	.903**	.902**
Support System	.905**	.870**	.903**	1	.913**
Employability Readiness	.899**	.867**	.902**	.913**	1

**** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); $N = 200$ for all pairs.**

The correlation between the 'Creating Futures' support system and perceived training effectiveness (employability and job readiness) is very large and positive ($r = .913$), significant at the 0.01 level ($p < .001$). Substantial correlations were likewise observed between institutional facilities and curriculum structure ($r = .905$) and between institutional facilities and teaching methods ($r = .903$). As the correlation coefficients are high and the associated p-values fall below the 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected in favour of the alternate hypothesis (H1), confirming that support systems and institutional facilities play a significant role in shaping beneficiaries' opinion of the initiative's quality.

D. Summary of Hypothesis Test Results

Table VII: Summary Of Hypothesis Test Results

Objective	Statistical Test	Result	Decision
Objective 1: Training inputs → Perceived effectiveness	Multiple Linear Regression	$R^2 = .862$, $F = 409.563$, $p < .001$	H0 rejected; H1 accepted
Objective 2: Support system → Beneficiary opinion	Pearson Correlation	$r = .913$, $p < .001$	H0 rejected; H1 accepted

VII. DISCUSSION

A. Demographic Profile and Programme Reach

The majority of the 200 beneficiaries are young women aged between 18 and 35 with graduate qualifications, indicating that the programme is successful in attracting educated young women seeking entry into the career market. The high ratings given to the accessibility of training centres and online sessions further suggest that the NGO's delivery model is effective in reducing geographic and logistical barriers to participation.

B. The Role of Trainer Expertise and Teaching Methodology

Trainer expertise received the highest individual rating ($M = 4.35$), pointing to the strong influence of supportive, competent trainers on the overall learning experience. This is corroborated by the regression analysis, which found that curriculum, trainer quality, and teaching methodology together explain 86.2 per cent of the variance in training effectiveness; the underlying null hypothesis was rejected at $p < .001$, confirming that high-quality training inputs are directly linked to skill mastery.

The instructional emphasis on experiential techniques such as role-plays and activities, rated at 4.07, indicates that experiential learning is fundamental to effective vocational training.

C. The Support System–Employability Nexus

The NGO's support system was very strongly correlated with beneficiaries' employment and job-seeking readiness ($r = .913$), reinforcing that holistic support is a key contributor to helping women overcome personal and professional barriers, consistent with the organisation's broader social empowerment objectives. The elevated mean scores for professional confidence and employability further demonstrate that the programme delivers tangible benefits beyond theoretical instruction alone.

D. Beneficiary Satisfaction and Programme Advocacy

With the highest satisfaction mean recorded in the study ($M = 4.39$), a large majority of participants indicated they would recommend 'Creating Futures' to other women in their community, affirming the overall quality of the programme and the strength of its community engagement.

VIII. THEORETICAL AND ORGANISATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Theoretically, the study extends the NGO-led empowerment literature, much of which concentrates on rural SHG or agricultural training contexts, by isolating the construct-level effectiveness of an urban Education-to-Employability model. In doing so it provides quantitative support for the feminism-grounded development perspective advanced by Gothwal and Siwach (2025), linking instructional quality and institutional support directly to employability outcomes rather than treating empowerment as a single undifferentiated construct.

Organisationally, the findings offer 'Creating Futures' clear evidence that trainer quality and the holistic support system are the two strongest levers of perceived effectiveness, providing a basis for prioritising trainer recruitment, mentoring capacity, and support infrastructure over curriculum expansion alone when allocating limited NGO resources.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

- The NGO should launch more sophisticated, industry-specific vocational courses to accommodate the varied graduate backgrounds of its beneficiaries.
- 'Creating Futures' should build more direct relationships with private-sector companies to expand on-the-job placement opportunities for graduates of the E2E programme.

- More advanced digital literacy tools should be integrated into the curriculum to further strengthen employability outcomes.
- The support system should be extended into a post-training mentorship period to help women navigate early difficulties in new professional roles.
- Given the programme's high satisfaction and accessibility ratings, the organisation should consider extending its training model to other underserved urban areas.

X. LIMITATIONS

This study is subject to several limitations that qualify its findings. First, the use of convenience sampling, while practical for reaching active beneficiaries, limits the generalisability of the results beyond the sampled population. Second, the descriptive, cross-sectional design captures beneficiaries' perceptions at a single point in time and cannot establish long-term or causal employment outcomes. Third, all data were self-reported through a Likert-scale survey, which may be subject to social desirability bias, particularly given the researcher's direct, face-to-face involvement in data collection. Finally, the study is confined to a single NGO programme operating in Bengaluru, which may limit the extent to which findings can be generalised to other cities or organisations.

XI. FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA

- Longitudinal studies tracking beneficiaries' actual employment and career progression over time would strengthen causal claims about the E2E model's long-term impact.
- Comparative, multi-city studies across different NGOs and urban contexts would help establish whether the trainer- and support-driven effects observed here generalise beyond 'Creating Futures'.
- Future work could apply structural equation modelling to test the full conceptual model simultaneously, rather than through separate regression and correlation analyses.
- Research examining the effectiveness of industry-specific modules and post-training mentorship, once implemented, would help validate the recommendations arising from this study.

XII. CONCLUSION

This research finds that the 'Creating Futures' Women Empowerment Training Initiative is highly effective in meeting its aim of preparing women for the professional world. The findings indicate that the organisation's Education-to-Employability model is not merely well-constructed but demonstrably effective in building beneficiaries' confidence and their ability to secure employment. Regression analysis provides statistical evidence that curriculum quality, teaching methodology, and trainer expertise are central to this success, while the very strong positive correlation between the support system and employment outcomes highlights that empowerment is most effective when it addresses both skill gaps and personal obstacles simultaneously. The programme's strong accessibility and the high quality of its trainers have together created a learning environment in which beneficiaries gain the confidence to succeed, as reflected in the overwhelming willingness of respondents to recommend the initiative. This confirms that 'Creating Futures' is an important driver of socio-economic transformation in the urban environment it serves, and that intensive vocational training paired with a well-developed institutional support system can substantially increase women's self-reliance and employability — the organisation's core objective.

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