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| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Impacts of Apprenticeship Training Program on Current Registered Apprentices in Pakistan

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| ABSTRACT
This study demonstrates that inexperienced Christian individuals, boys & girls, working under the supervision of a mentor or an experienced team to learn trade skills. The purpose of the project was to develop useful job skills in the Christian individuals entering the workforce, increase future earning potential and enhance employability. This empirical study depicted that more than 32 trades have been selected by the 500 apprentices, and it gave a systematic investigation review and opportunity to test the validity of different assumptions, in the form of hypotheses, before arriving at any findings. This study illustrated that 20% of the apprentices had adopted the profession of tailoring/sewing, whereas 17% of apprentices like to join the trade of beauticians/beauty parlor. These two professions are mostly adopted by girls. 15.6% of apprentices like to work at barber shops or hair salon, which is mostly occupied by boys. 74.4% of apprentices say that they will have significantly more chances of finding work in future, whereas the rest of the apprentices confirm that there will be slightly more chances to find work of their own interest in the future. 51.2% of apprentices stopped their studies due to financial issues & 34.8 % are those who couldn't continue their studies because of a lack of interest in studies. There were different quantitative and qualitative methods of data gathering that were used during this empirical research study, which included surveys, experiments, and various observatory methods. Surveys are one of the most common methods that have been used in this study which were administered physically.

| KEYWORDS

Apprenticeship, empirical study, hypotheses, employability, assumptions

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

Barnabas Fund is not only implementing an Apprenticeship training program through their partners' organizations but also helping them with financial support for 500 young Christian boys and girls Apprentices in the big districts and cities of Pakistan. In Hyderabad, they have a group of 75 apprentices, Islamabad 50, Rawalpindi 75, Lahore 200, Faisalabad 50 and Multan has 50 apprentices.

This Apprenticeship program is opening doors to a better future for our Christian apprentices. There are two ways to acquire skills, one is through classroom learning, and the other is through work-based learning or on the job training (OJT) & here, we are mostly emphasizing on the job training.

The population of Pakistan is around 225.18 Million and is projected to be around 229.50 Million in 2022 and 233.10 Million in 2023. Pakistan currently has the largest percentage of young people ever recorded in its history, according to the new National Human Development Report launched on Wednesday by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Pakistan (UNDP, 2018).

The 2018 UNDP National Human Development Report (NHDR) shows that 64 per cent of Pakistan's population is below 30 years of age, which makes it the youngest population in South Asia, yet Pakistan is one of the worst performers in terms of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) (Fatima, 2020).

This research study was conducted to give an overview and analysis of the current research in the field of Apprenticeship training. The reason behind this research has developed well during the last two decades, but that further development is needed since the problems around and within Vocational Education and Training (VET) are pressing whilst this sector of education plays an essential role in socioeconomic development (Nägele & Stalder 2017).

Dating back to 1950, the concept of employability was originally conceived for vulnerable people to enable them to find employment (Forrier & Sels, 2003). Later on, the domain of employability has extended to include all groups of workers rather than just vulnerable people; the emphasis has also shifted more to securing a job instead of finding it (Williams, Dodd, Steele, & Randall, 2016).

So far, all the definitions of employability cover the aspects of a person's potential to find work and to make adjustments to the diversified work needs in the labor market (Hillage & Pollard, 1998). Employability is "the continuously fulfilling, acquiring, or creating work through the optimal use of competencies" (Heijde & Van Der Heijden, 2006). Enhancing workers' employability nurtures innovative work behaviors. (Stoffers, Heijden, & Jacobs, 2018).

Technical and Vocational Education and Training have long been recognized as a tool for attaining sustainable development goals (SDGs), especially in terms of greater employability (Paul, 2018). The developed countries had devised recognizable systems in vocational and technical training, enabling their people to learn skills, earn a livelihood, and play a pivotal role in socio-economic development both in the internal and external market (Forrier, Verbruggen & Cuyper, 2015). However, developing countries like Pakistan, despite their bulging youth, have been unable to establish a fairly distinguished Technical and Vocational Education and Training system causing many socio-economic problems, most awful of which are unemployment and poverty (Pakistan TVET reform support program, 2016).

The apprenticeship system is the rather less travelled route to gain a qualification and workplace experience. As per Pakistan Apprenticeship Ordinance 1962, apprenticeship is "any system by which an employer undertakes by contract to employ a young person and to train him or have him trained systematically for a trade for a period the duration of which has been fixed in advance and in the course of which the apprentice is bound to work in the employer's service". As this definition clarifies, the period of apprenticeship is fixed in advance, and the training is done under a signed contract. An apprenticeship is a program that trains a worker to become skilled in a particular trade. Apprenticeships are considered full-time employment. As the apprentice is learning, they are also applying the lessons through working (Apprenticeship Report, 2021).

There are only 3,798 TVET institutes in Pakistan. They have a limited capacity as they can accommodate only half a million trainees. The annual increase in youth unemployment is estimated at 1.5 million. TVET institutes have obsolete curricula. The youth prefer general higher education to vocational education (Mazhar, 2020).

Given that 64% of Pakistan's population is made up of youth, it is essential to utilize their talent and skills to ensure they become drivers of economic change. The Learning Generation Report published by the International Commission on Financing Global Education states that by the year 2030, half of the world's jobs – around 2 billion – are expected to disappear due to automation. About 40% of employers globally are already finding it difficult to recruit people with the skills they need. This skills gap will have a severe impact on social and economic growth globally. Formally, skills development in Pakistan is carried out through polytechnic and vocational institutions, apprenticeship schemes under several ministries and departments, and commercial training institutions (World economic forum, 2020).

Unfortunately, lack of job opportunities, lack of social engagement, unequal education and health facilities, coupled with social injustices, outdated traditions, and an exclusionary attitude of community and society towards the youth are all turning this dividend into a ticking bomb. Young people's dreams and aspirations to attain education and find respectable livelihoods turn into a nightmare. Therefore, the youth become frustrated when they do not find any hope for their future as the employment challenge is not limited to generating more jobs but also extends to ensuring 'gainful/productive' employment. (Sheikh, 2018).

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this empirical research study was to give an overview and analysis of the apprenticeship training program provided to young Christian Males & females, age range from 15 to 23, from underrepresented & most deserving groups with technical and

employability training needed to enter an apprenticeship. It helped young people who are interested in an apprenticeship but lack the education, skills and experience to gain employment as apprentices.

This study focused on Christian youth (including youth at risk, out of school, left schools, unemployed workers, girls, Indigenous peoples, and the person with disabilities or other groups traditionally under-represented in apprenticeship programs.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Unfortunately, lack of job opportunities, lack of social engagement, unequal education and health facilities, coupled with social injustices, outdated traditions, and an exclusionary attitude of community and society towards the youth are all turning this dividend into a ticking bomb. Young people's dreams and aspirations to attain education and find respectable livelihoods turn into a nightmare. Therefore, the youth become frustrated when they do not find any hope for their future.

2. Methodology

Empirical research was applied in this study because it is an important method of systematic investigation as it gives the researcher the opportunity to test the validity of different assumptions, in the form of hypotheses, before arriving at any findings.
There were different quantitative and qualitative methods of data gathering employed during an empirical research study based on the purpose of the research, which included surveys, experiments, and various observatory methods. Surveys are one of the most common methods that have been used in this study for empirical data collection, which has been administered physically.

2.1 Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment of an apprentice was done by the following set procedure:

- Vacancies/programs were announced in the different Churches through local pastors
- Prepared a list of the most deserving candidates by the supervisor & local pastor
- A formal interview date was decided with the candidate.
- Conducted a proper interview with the candidate either in his/her home or Church
- Asked him/her about his life, education, family background, family earnings etc.
- Asked his/her interest & willingness in any trade/profession
- Briefed him/her about a list of trades offered by us
- Final selected list of Apprentices has been prepared by Director, Supervisor & local Pastor
- Final selection was made, and selected candidates were informed accordingly
- Supervisor arranged a meeting of final Apprentices with his/her mentor

Trades selected by the Apprentices:

Sr. #.	District	Industry
1	Punjab	Barber, Beautician, Tailoring/Sewing, LHV/Midwifery, Bike Mechanic, Motor car Mechanic, Electrician, Plumber, AC/Fridge technician, Welder, Carpenter, Tractor mechanic, Rickshaw mechanic, Computer software and hardware, photography, Audio/Video making, Painter (home & car), cooking course, glass painting, shoe making, Plastic pot maker, Ceiling maker, Mobile repairing.
2	Sindh	Barber, Beautician, Tailoring/Sewing, Bike Mechanic, Motor car Mechanic, Electrician, Plumber, AC/Fridge technician, Carpenter, Computer software and hardware, Painter (home & car), cooking course, glass painting, shoe making, Lab technician, Plastic pot maker, Compounding/Paramedic, Ceiling maker, Filter plant operator, Mobile repairing, OT technician, Tire puncture,

2.2 Training Courses for Boys

Barber, Beautician, Tailoring/Sewing, LHV/Midwifery, Bike Mechanic, Motor car Mechanic, Electrician, Plumber, AC/Fridge technician, Welder, Carpenter, Tractor mechanic, Rickshaw mechanic, Computer software and hardware, photography, Audio/Video making, Painter (home & car), cooking course, glass painting, shoe making, Lab technician, Plastic pot maker, Compounding/Paramedic, Ceiling maker, Filter plant operator, Mobile repairing, OT technician, Tire puncture.

2.3 Training Courses for Girls

Sewing, Tailoring, Beautician, LHV and Midwifery, Lab technician, cooking courses.

3. Objectives

The intended objectives behind taking this area of study were many folds. One of the core reasons was the lack of research in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training sector in Pakistan, despite its generally accepted importance in socio-economic uplift, eradicating poverty, and raising employment. The objective was also to help policymakers focus on much-needed areas, such as the development of training systems that could result in a colossal benefit to society in terms of enhanced employability among workers. Furthermore, there were a few more objectives:

- To reduce unemployment & poverty in less developed areas.
- To promote and provide demand driven technical education & vocational training.
- To empower Christian youth belongings to less developed areas.
- To provide & support domestic industries by providing a skilled workforce in accordance with their requirements
- To provide practical training to youth in demand driven trades in traditional technologies/occupations enabling them to seek employment at home & abroad.
- To open new windows of opportunities for the youth to create their own business through entrepreneurship initiatives & self-employed.
- Assess the manpower training needs in the context of domestic and global markets.
- Prepare training plans, programs and projects keeping in view the local as well as foreign manpower training requirements.
- Establish Data Banks for Christian skilled workers and technicians.

3.1 Sample Size

- Face to face, In-depth interviews and FGDs were conducted with 500 apprentices who were already registered either they were currently on an Apprenticeship or had finished an Apprenticeship program between 1 April 2020 and 31 January 2022. The survey fieldwork took place between December 2021 and February 2022. The co-operation rate was 99%.
- In this study, a survey through a questionnaire is used as a common method of gathering data. In this method of data gathering, we used both quantitative and qualitative data collection.
- Our study consisted of questions that ranged from close-ended to open-ended questions, together with other question types that revolved around the research subject. The survey was administered physically. Along with this, the observation method was also employed based **o**n observed and measured phenomena and derives knowledge from actual experience rather than from theory or belief.

3.2 Instrumentation

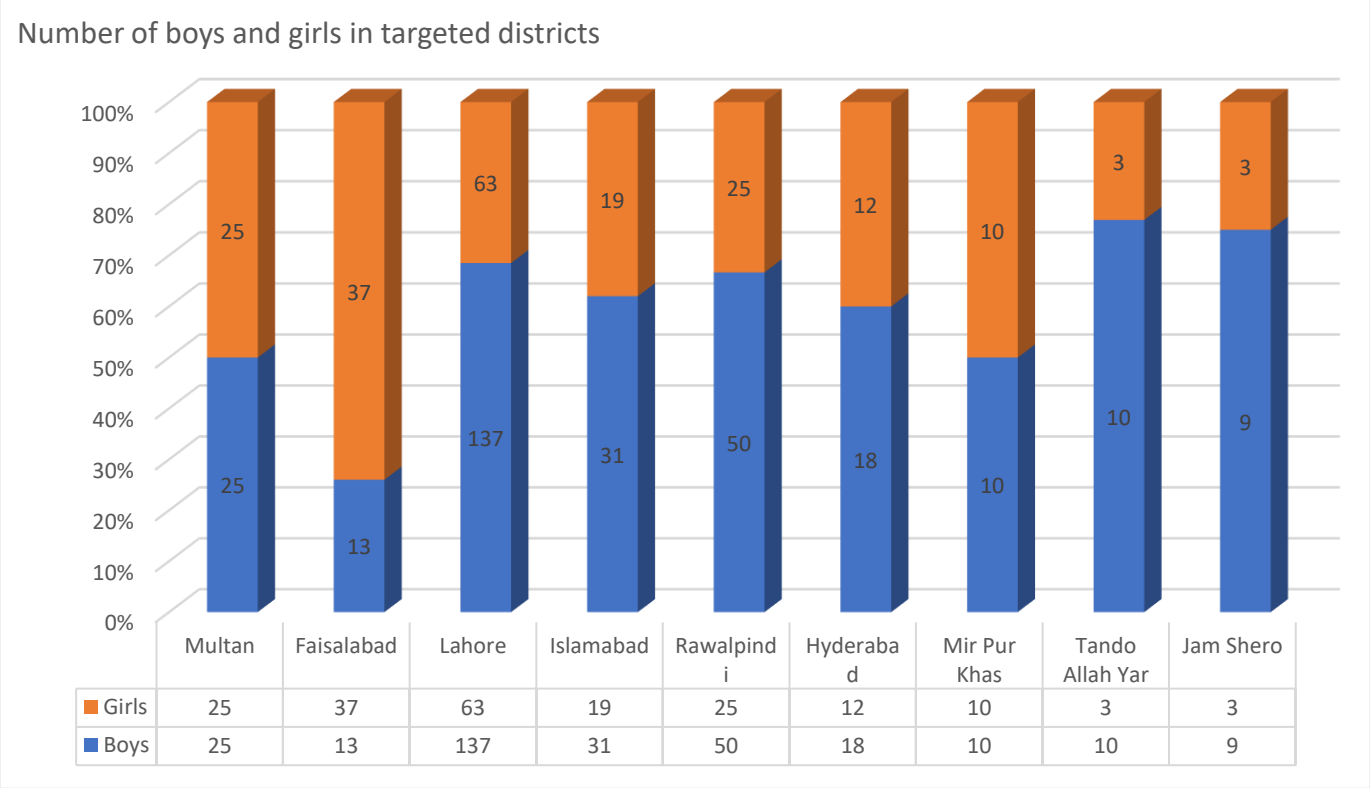
The questionnaire consisted of different variables regarding demographic details, the effectiveness of apprenticeship training and the future prospects of this training. The questionnaire was also translated into Urdu to make it more respondent friendly. According to the guidelines of experts, the instruments were modified where necessary, which indicated that the data set was consistent and reliable at an acceptable level to proceed further.

3.3 Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The statistical design for data analysis was prepared according to the research questions of the study. Descriptive analysis was made using IBM SPSS version 26.

4. Quantitative Results

Number of boys and girls in targeted districts/cities



Profession / Trade selected by the apprentices:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Barber	78	15.6	15.6	15.6
	Tailoring/Sewing	100	20.0	20.0	35.6
	Beautician	85	17.0	17.0	52.6
	Bike Mechanic	56	11.2	11.2	63.8
	Motor car Mechanic	20	4.0	4.0	67.8
	Electrician	19	3.8	3.8	71.6
	Plumber	8	1.6	1.6	73.2
	AC/Refrigerator	7	1.4	1.4	74.6
	Welder	21	4.2	4.2	78.8
	Carpenter	4	.8	.8	79.6
	Tractor Mechanic	2	.4	.4	80.0
	Rickshaw Mechanic	3	.6	.6	80.6
	LHV/Midwifery	10	2.0	2.0	82.6
	Computer software/Hardware	5	1.0	1.0	83.6
	Photography	3	.6	.6	84.2
	Music	18	3.6	3.6	87.8
	Audio/Video	12	2.4	2.4	90.2

	Painter home	4	.8	.8	91.0
	Car Painter	2	.4	.4	91.4
	Cooking	8	1.6	1.6	93.0
	Glass Painting	2	.4	.4	93.4
	Shoe Maker	2	.4	.4	93.8
	Auto Mechanic	6	1.2	1.2	95.0
	Lab Technician	3	.6	.6	95.6
	Sound system operator	1	.2	.2	95.8
	Plastic Pot Maker	3	.6	.6	96.4
	Compounding/Paramedic	4	.8	.8	97.2
	Ceiling Maker	4	.8	.8	98.0
	Filter Plant Operator	2	.4	.4	98.4
	Mobile Repairing	2	.4	.4	98.8
	O.T Technician	3	.6	.6	99.4
	Tire Puncture	3	.6	.6	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

Duration of learning skill

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Too long	5	1.0	1.0	1.0
	Too short	333	66.6	66.6	67.6
	About right	162	32.4	32.4	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

Further learning in the next 2 - 3 years

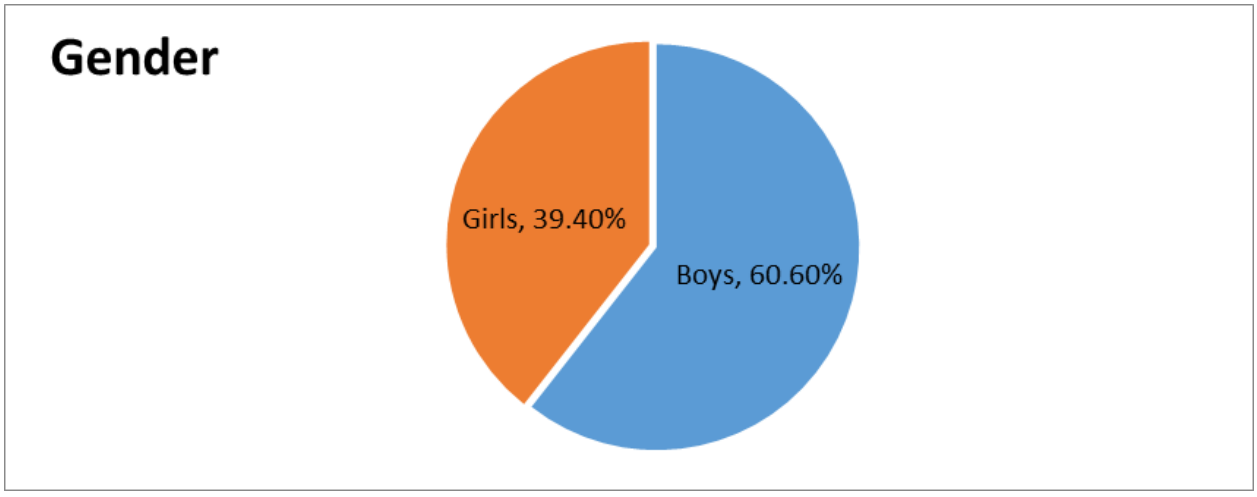
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very likely	373	74.6	74.6	74.6
	Quite likely	127	25.4	25.4	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

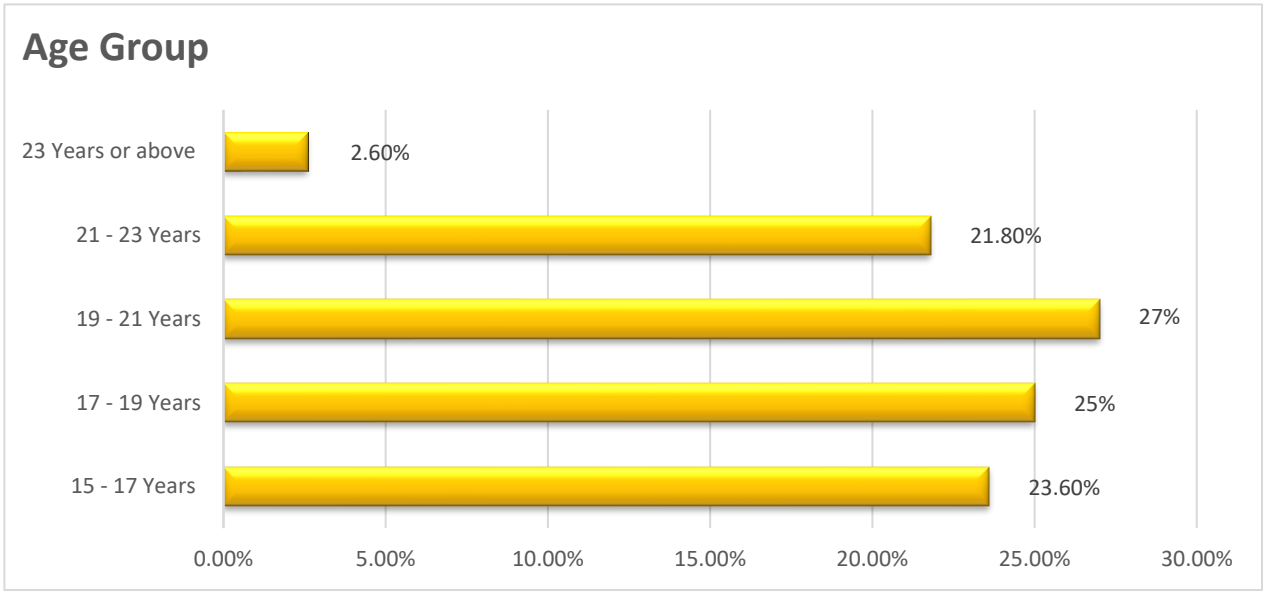
Chance of finding work in future

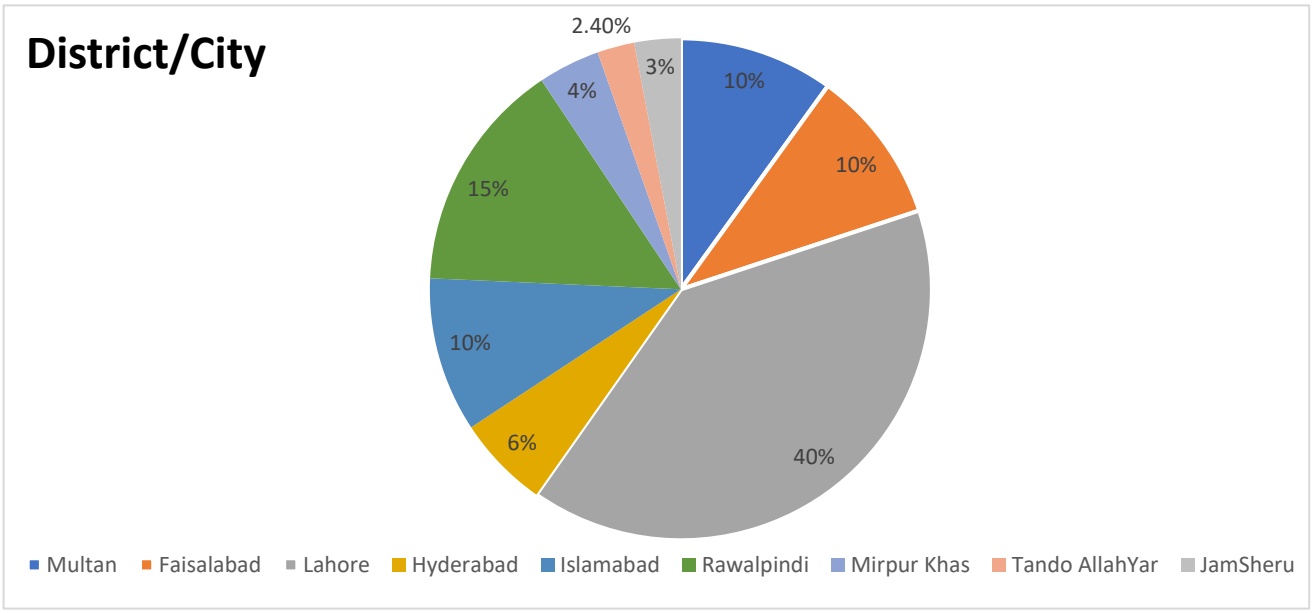
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Significantly more chances	372	74.4	74.4	74.4
	Slightly more chances	125	25.0	25.0	99.4
	No difference	1	.2	.2	99.6
	Don't Know	2	.4	.4	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

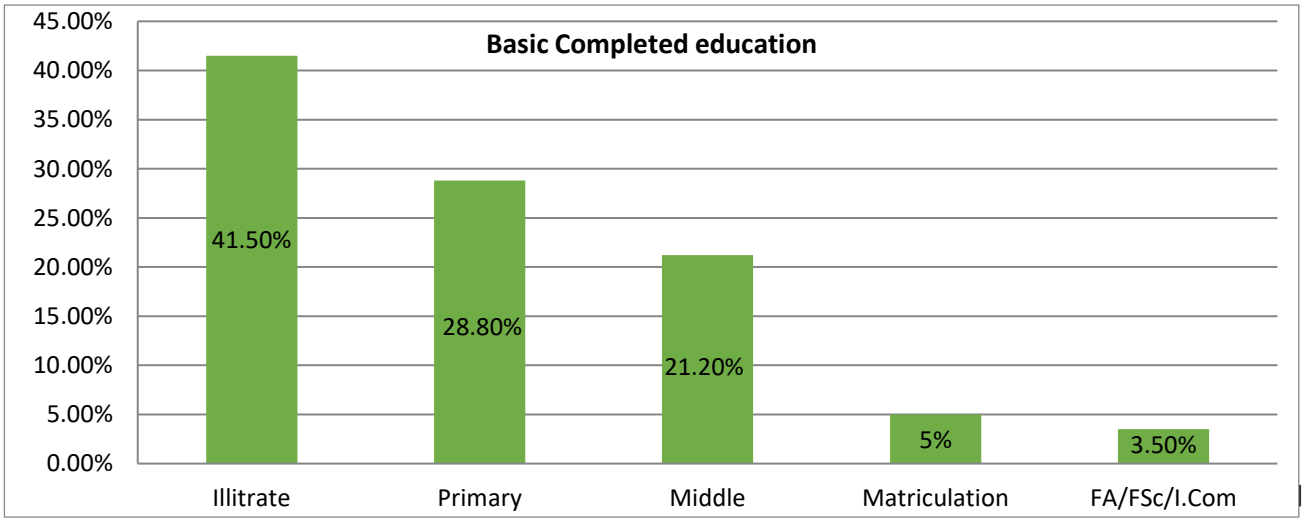
Benefits of apprenticeship

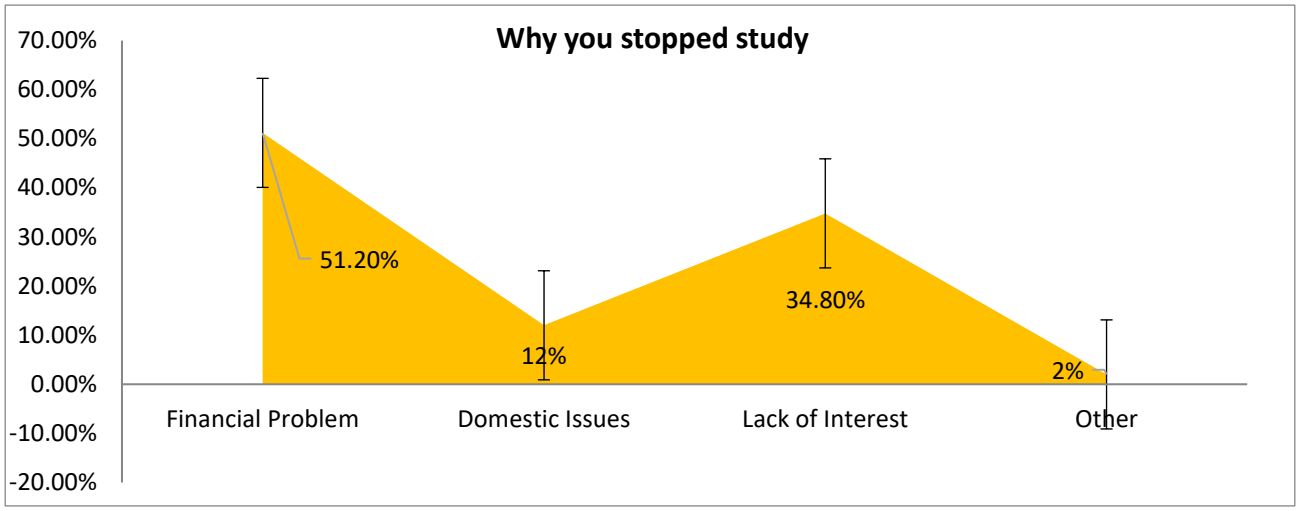
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Your ability to do your training is improving	149	29.8	29.8	29.8
	You are getting better skills and knowledge related to your current training	164	32.8	32.8	62.6
	The skills can be used across a range of jobs and industries	94	18.8	18.8	81.4
	Your career prospects are improved	93	18.6	18.6	100.0
	Total	500	100.0	100.0	

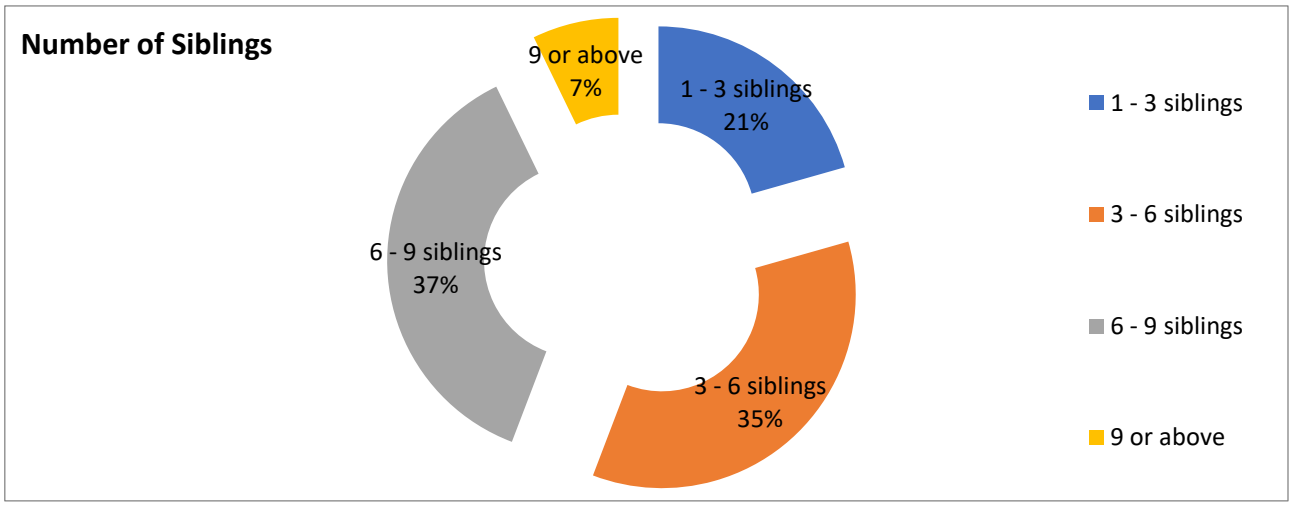


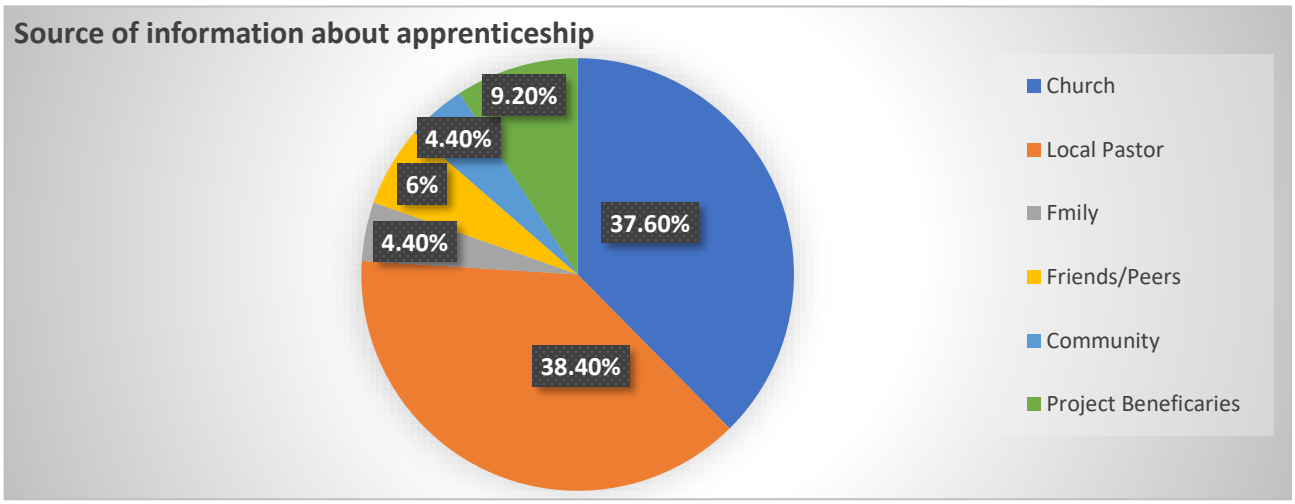

Age Group
23 Years or above
2.60%
21 - 23 Years
21.80%
19 - 21 Years
27%
17 - 19 Years
25%
15 - 17 Years
23.60%
0.00%
5.00%
10.00%
15.00%
20.00%
25.00%
30.00%

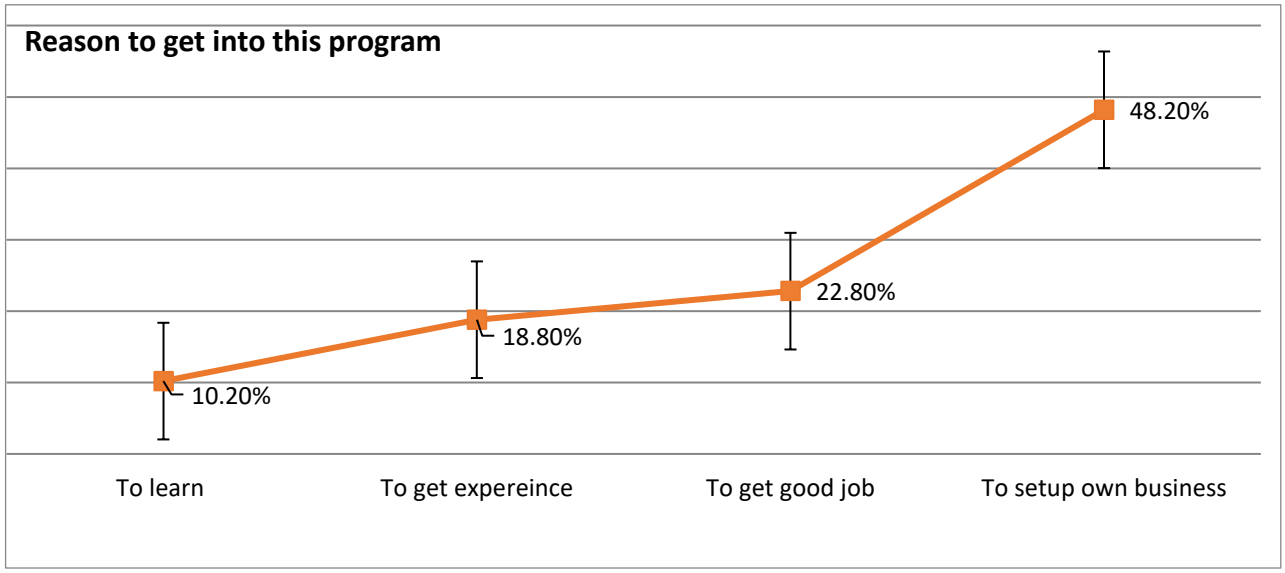

District/City
2.40%
3%
4%
10%
10%
15%
10%
6%
40%
Multan
Faisalabad
Lahore
Hyderabad
Islamabad
Rawalpindi
Mirpur Khas
Tando AllahYar
JamSheru

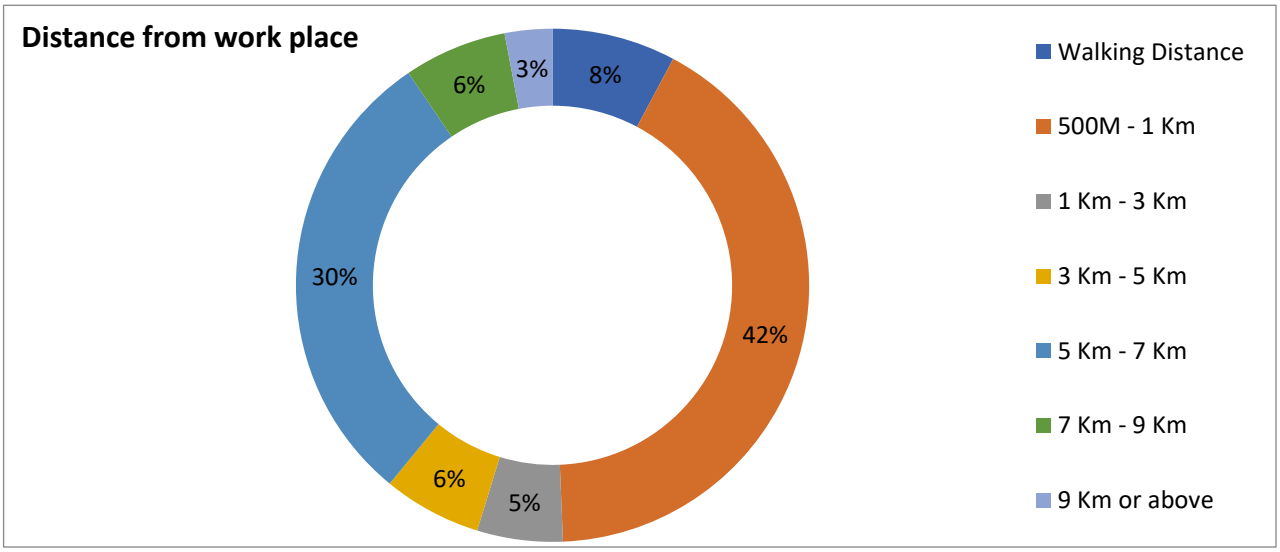

Basic Completed education
45.00%
40.00%
35.00%
30.00%
25.00%
20.00%
15.00%
10.00%
5.00%
0.00%
41.50%
28.80%
21.20%
5%
3.50%
Illitrate
Primary
Middle
Matriculation
FA/FSc/I.Com

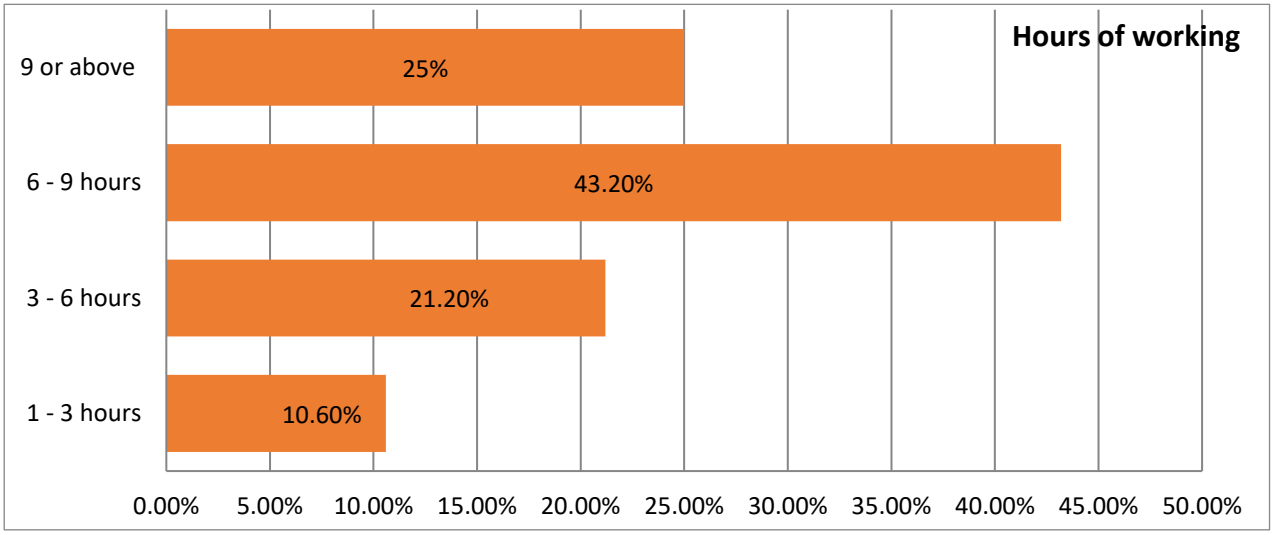

Why you stopped study
70.00%
60.00%
50.00%
40.00%
30.00%
20.00%
10.00%
0.00%
-10.00%
-20.00%
51.20%
12%
34.80%
2%
Financial Problem
Domestic Issues
Lack of Interest
Other

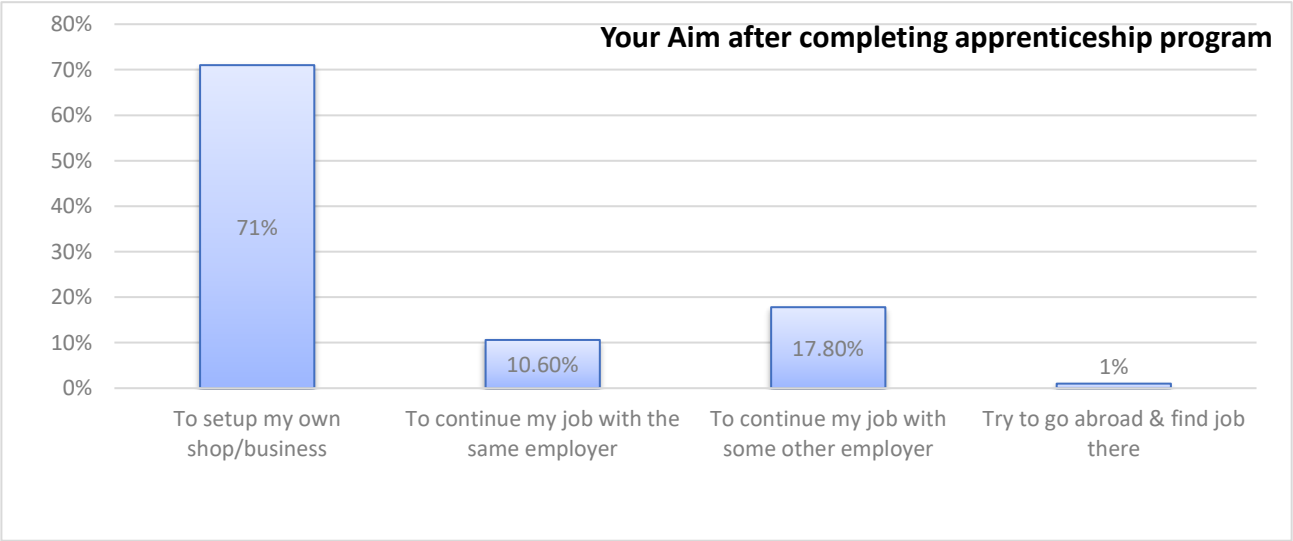

Number of Siblings
9 or above
7%
1 - 3 siblings
21%
6 - 9 siblings
37%
3 - 6 siblings
35%
1 - 3 siblings
3 - 6 siblings
6 - 9 siblings
9 or above


Source of information about apprenticeship
9.20%
4.40%
6%
4.40%
37.60%
38.40%
Church
Local Pastor
Fmily
Friends/Peers
Community
Project Beneficaries


Reason to get into this program
48.20%
22.80%
18.80%
10.20%
To learn
To get expereince
To get good job
To setup own business


Distance from work place
8%
42%
5%
6%
30%
6%
3%
Walking Distance
500M - 1 Km
1 Km - 3 Km
3 Km - 5 Km
5 Km - 7 Km
7 Km - 9 Km
9 Km or above


Hours of working
9 or above
25%
6 - 9 hours
43.20%
3 - 6 hours
21.20%
1 - 3 hours
10.60%
0.00%
5.00%
10.00%
15.00%
20.00%
25.00%
30.00%
35.00%
40.00%
45.00%
50.00%



5. Qualitative Results

The study participants of (Impacts of Apprenticeship Training Program on current registered Apprentices in Pakistan) were asked certain questions about their current training experiences regarding Socio-economic and other variables. The questions were reported along with the responses of the participants below.

Question 1: How do you know about this Apprenticeship program?

- "I didn't know about it, but our local pastor told me about this program and wanted me to get admission in this program." (Apprentices-FGDs)
- "I had come to know about this program during Sunday service of my Church and advised to take part in this training." (Apprentices-FGDs)
- "My friend told me about this program as his younger brother was also ready to be a part of this program as soon as it started" (Apprentices-FGDs)

Question 2: What is your profession/trade?

- "I chose to be an electrician because my uncle motivated me about this program as my uncle has already been doing the same work for many years." (Apprentices-FGDs)
- "I had the interest to learn the profession about motor cycle mechanic because it is all seasoned work and obviously it is worth learning." (Apprentices-FGDs)
- "I had selected the profession of Barber and wanted to setup my own shop after learning and completing my training." (Apprentices-FGDs)
- "Not specifically in my family, but yes, my best friend used to sew female and kids clothes, and that made me join this program and promised to support me in this regard." (Apprentices-FGDs)

Question 3: How important is this Apprenticeship training to you?

- "No doubt at all, this training would be a changing life for me." (Apprentices -FGDs)
- **"**It was a wonder to be a part of this Apprenticeship program because this is the platform where I could see my dreams come true**."** (Apprentices -FGDs)

Question 4: How far do you live from your work place?

- "I have to travel almost 15 KM to reach my work place, although it was not easy sometimes, but I'm enjoying my training time." (Apprentices- FGDs)
- "My home is too close to my work place; it is just a few meters away. I'm so happy and lucky at the same time" (Apprentices-FGDs)

Question 5: How many hours you spend working at your work place?

- "I'm working at a Barber shop, so I have to spend at least 12 hours a day, started from 8 am to 8 pm and sometimes even more hours." (Apprentices- FGDs)
- "I'm working as a motor cycle mechanic, so stay at my work place from 9 am to 8 pm." (Apprentices-FGDs)

Question 6: Is this length of time too long, too short or about right for you to learn and use the skills needed for your job?

- "Well, it totally depends on the different trades and professions, as I'm learning about the profession of Car mechanic, and I think it needs at least 2-3 years to complete training time" (Apprentices-FGDs)
- "My LHV / Midwifery course will be completed within one year, and after that, I'm pretty sure to get a job in my city." (Apprentices-FGDs)

Question 7: Why you stopped your study?

- "I was out of school when I was studying in grade 3 and permanently stopped studying due to the death of my father as he was the only bread winner of our family." (Apprentices-FGDs)
- "I never went to school because my parents didn't want me to get admission in school; however, they wanted me to do some work and get income." (RAU- FGDs)

7. Conclusion

The study concluded that an illiterate workforce without any formal knowledge and training could not land a proper job that could support them and their families. Our study has clearly shown that the people participating in apprenticeship training such as plumbing, barber, beautician, auto mechanic training etc., has not only saved the youth from entering into drugs and addiction but also provided them respectable earning opportunities which not only gave them daily sustenance but also allowed the families of such people to come out of poverty. The study has also shown that many apprentices had to cover a long distance to reach their workplace. It is observed that most pupils that have joined this apprenticeship training are those who had past experience of extreme financial troubles or other domestic issues. The study depicted that after completing this apprenticeship training program, most of the participants were of the view that they would start their own businesses with the help of newly learned skills.

8. Recommendation

Here are some recommendations that should be taken in light of this program in order to accelerate the performance of Apprenticeship training programs in Pakistan. The government or the donor organizations should increase funds for employers, companies or intuitions that are providing apprenticeship training and skill development programs at the district and city levels. It should enact appropriate legislation to enable large, medium and small industries and organizations to engage in the development of technical education.

The industry, companies or organizations should play a pivotal role as a key stakeholder in order to strengthen its relationship with apprenticeship training and skill development institutes. The participation of women in technical education should also be encouraged. In order to enhance the scope of higher education for apprenticeship training graduates, at least one technical education university should be established in each city of the districts.

For technical certificates and diplomas, the Higher Education Commission (HEC) should introduce degree equivalence so that Apprenticeship graduates can get easier access to job opportunities in government and private organizations.

Post-pandemic skill gaps need filling, and formal learning alone won't do the trick. Scaling the lost art of one-on-one learning can make a difference.

Vocational and Technical training graduates can be direct beneficiaries of industries that are being established as part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Such companies should enlist Vocational and technical graduates for training, internships and jobs.

Vocational and Technical curricula should be reviewed and revised periodically in accordance with rapid technological advancements to meet the requirements of the labour market. The National Vocational and Technical Training Commission, which is the country's apex regulatory body for technical education and vocational training, should initiate a school vocational training program to ensure practical skills training at the high-school level.

The above-mentioned reforms in TVET will not only improve the vocational training system but also increase the earning capacity of our youth while decreasing unemployment and contributing to poverty reduction.

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