

From skills to work and aspirations

An examination of Barefoot College and Prime Minister's Skill Development Programmes in India

**Avneet Kaur
Jesus College
University of Cambridge**

April 2020

This thesis is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Declaration

This thesis is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. It is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for a degree or diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. I further state that no substantial part of my thesis has already been submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. It does not exceed the prescribed word limit for the relevant Degree Committee.

Avneet Kaur
April 2020

From skills to work and aspirations: An examination of Barefoot College and Prime Minister's Skill Development Programmes in India

Avneet Kaur

Abstract

Skill development has been recognised as being crucial for economic and human development. However, having gained greater mobility in the recent past, there is an overall paucity of research, particularly in the global south. Moreover, the need for empirical research is more prominent in the case of India since it is committed to an ambitious national skill plan, including becoming the global skills capital. The Government of India (GoI) envisions to skill at least 300 million people by 2022 to harness the demographic dividend and bridge the current skills deficit. The skill policy aims to make skills training aspirational for all and promote lifelong learning. However, it is argued that the extant policy and practice is too narrow and technicist in approach.

Moving beyond the predominant productivist paradigm, this thesis aims to examine the value of skills training for participants from the lens of human development. It locates skills development in the context of enabling people to fulfil their aspirations and achieve their capabilities. It does so by examining the case of Barefoot College (BFC), a renowned NGO that primarily trains women in the solar energy sector and Prime Minister's Skill Development Programme (PMKVY), a flagship programme of GoI that aims to train youth across key industry sectors. The examination consisted of extensive data collection across four districts in the states of Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh. It included administering an innovative three-part questionnaire on a large sample of BFC and PMKVY trainees.

Drawing upon the Capability Approach, an integrated *Skills to Capabilities* (S2C) framework is conceptualised. A detailed examination is undertaken to understand why people value skills training and what attributes of the programme are particularly valued. Further unpacking people's aspirations for work specifically and life more generally, a view of their capabilities is derived. Next, the impact of the external environment, including the particular issue of gender inequality on people's ability to pursue skills training and fulfil their goals is examined. Finally, people's responses during training are compared with their actual position after training to ascertain the extent of achievements and thus determine the actual value of the training.

Through this process, the concepts and causality in the S2C linkage are established. The thesis thus provides empirical evidence on the potential of skills training to co-create more equitable futures by nurturing people's aspirations and expanding their freedom to achieve. It argues for a meaningfully inclusive conceptualisation of skills development, one that makes it truly aspirational for all. It provides an expanded view of the skills discourse, one that is not individualistic and considers lifelong processes and wider questions of preparation for the good life. It also shows the significance of introducing specific reforms in the skills development ecosystem, including improving training delivery and promoting a nurturing training environment.

Table of Contents

LIST OF FIGURES, TABLES, GRAPHS, ILLUSTRATIONS AND PICTURES.....	VI
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS.....	VIII
DEDICATION.....	XI
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND POSITIONING	3
1.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH	6
1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS	6
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	9
INTRODUCTION	9
2.1 THE SKILLS DISCOURSE.....	9
2.1.1 <i>The concept of skills development</i>	9
2.1.2 <i>Systems of skills development</i>	14
2.1.3 <i>Productivist approach to skills development</i>	16
2.1.4 <i>Under-theorised nature of the skills discourse</i>	18
2.1.5 <i>Humanistic approach to skills development</i>	19
2.1.6 <i>Skills development: The case of South Asia</i>	20
2.2 THE CAPABILITY APPROACH.....	29
2.2.1 <i>Capability Approach: an analytical description</i>	29
2.2.2 <i>Capability Approach: a conceptual framework</i>	30
2.2.3 <i>Critiques and strengths of the capability approach</i>	33
2.2.4 <i>Applications of the capability approach</i>	36
2.3 ASPIRATIONS	39
2.3.1 <i>Aspirations: an interdisciplinary conceptualisation</i>	40
2.3.2 <i>Aspirations and Capabilities</i>	42
2.4 EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT AND GENDER INEQUALITY	47
2.4.1 <i>External environment</i>	47
2.4.2 <i>Gender inequality</i>	49
CONCLUSION	53
CHAPTER 3 ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	55
INTRODUCTION	55
3.1 THE ‘SKILLS TO CAPABILITIES’ FRAMEWORK	55
3.2 CASE STUDIES: BFC AND PMKVY	59
3.2.1 <i>Selection of cases</i>	59
3.2.2 <i>Institutional features</i>	61
3.2.3 <i>Training features</i>	66
3.2.4 <i>Post training support</i>	71
3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	72
3.3.1 <i>Mixed methods research design</i>	73
3.3.2 <i>Sampling strategy</i>	75
3.3.3 <i>Instrument design</i>	79
3.3.4 <i>Administration</i>	83
3.3.5 <i>Positionality and reflexivity</i>	86
3.3.6 <i>Ethical considerations</i>	88
3.3.7 <i>Data coding and analysis</i>	89
CONCLUSION	91
CHAPTER 4 ASPIRATIONS AND CAPABILITIES	92
INTRODUCTION	92

4.1 ANALYSING ASPIRATIONS FOR LIFE	94
4.1.1. <i>Analysing valued life-goals and attributes</i>	94
4.2 ANALYSING WORK RELATED ASPIRATIONS	100
4.2.1 <i>Analysing valued work-goals</i>	100
4.2.2 <i>Analysing valued work attributes</i>	103
4.3 DERIVING CAPABILITIES IN THE S2C FRAMEWORK	106
4.4 ASPIRATIONS AND CAPABILITIES: EXAMINING IMPLICATIONS	107
CONCLUSION	111
CHAPTER 5 VALUED ATTRIBUTES OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT TRAINING	113
INTRODUCTION	113
5.1 ANALYSING PEOPLE’S REASONS TO VALUE SKILLS TRAINING	115
5.2 ANALYSING VALUED ATTRIBUTES OF TRAINING PROGRAMME.....	119
5.2.1 <i>Access to information</i>	119
5.2.2 <i>Valued attributes of training programme</i>	121
5.3 DERIVING SDT INTERVENTION’S RESOURCES IN THE S2C FRAMEWORK.....	125
5.4 VALUE OF SKILLS TRAINING AND TRAINING RESOURCES: EXAMINING IMPLICATIONS	126
CONCLUSION	128
CHAPTER 6 EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT AND GENDER INEQUALITY	130
INTRODUCTION	130
6.1 ANALYSING SUPPORT NEEDED TO PURSUE SKILLS TRAINING	132
6.2 ANALYSING SUPPORT NEEDED TO FULFIL ASPIRATIONS	133
6.2.1 <i>Support to fulfil life goals</i>	133
6.2.2 <i>Support to fulfil work goals</i>	134
6.3 ANALYSING GENDER INEQUALITY	136
6.3.1 <i>Disparate freedoms for women</i>	136
6.3.2 <i>Gender inequality in capabilities</i>	139
6.4 DERIVING EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT AND GENDER INEQUALITY FACTORS IN THE S2C FRAMEWORK	143
6.5 EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT AND GENDER INEQUALITY: EXAMINING IMPLICATIONS	145
CONCLUSION	148
CHAPTER 7 REFLECTIONS AFTER TRAINING	150
INTRODUCTION	150
7.1 ANALYSING PEOPLE’S POSITION AFTER TRAINING	152
7.2 WHY ARE PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE?	154
7.2.1 <i>Dominant issues in PMKVY</i>	155
7.2.2 <i>Dominant issues in BFC</i>	158
7.3 ANALYSING REFLECTIONS ON VALUE OF TRAINING	160
7.3.1 <i>Value of training – the case of BFC</i>	160
7.3.2 <i>Value of training – the case of PMKVY</i>	161
7.4 DERIVING (FAILURE OF) FUNCTIONINGS IN THE S2C FRAMEWORK.....	162
7.5 ACHIEVEMENTS AND FAILURES: EXAMINING IMPLICATIONS	163
CONCLUSION	166
CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION	168
8.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND FINDINGS	168
8.1.1 <i>Thematic findings: Consolidated view</i>	168
8.1.2 <i>Institution-level findings</i>	170
8.2 RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION.....	171
8.2.1 <i>Expanding the research frontiers of the skills discourse</i>	171
8.2.2 <i>Expanding the application frontiers of the Capability Approach</i>	172
8.2.3 <i>Policy implications</i>	173
8.3 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS AND WAY FORWARD	175

CONCLUSION	176
APPENDICES.....	179
BIBLIOGRAPHY	191

LIST OF FIGURES, TABLES, GRAPHS, ILLUSTRATIONS AND PICTURES¹

FIGURE 2.1: STYLISED NON-DYNAMIC REPRESENTATION OF THE CA	31
FIGURE 3.1: S2C FRAMEWORK	56
FIGURE 3.2: METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK	73
FIGURE 3.3: MAP SHOWING LOCATION OF BFC AND PMKVY DISTRICTS	76
FIGURE 3.4: DATA CODING PROCESS.....	89
FIGURE 4.1: ASPIRATIONS AND CAPABILITIES IN THE S2C FRAMEWORK.....	92
FIGURE 5.1: SKILLS DEVELOPMENT TRAINING INTERVENTION IN THE S2C FRAMEWORK	113
FIGURE 6.1: EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT AND GENDER INEQUALITY IN THE S2C FRAMEWORK	130
FIGURE 7.1: (FAILURE OF) FUNCTIONINGS IN THE S2C FRAMEWORK	150
TABLE 3.1: COMPARING HD AND ECONOMIC INDICATORS - INDIA, RAJASTHAN AND HP.....	77
TABLE 3.2: TRAINING SECTOR-WISE SAMPLE DETAILS OF BFC AND PMKVY CENTRES	78
TABLE 3.3: SAMPLE OVERVIEW FOR BFC AND PMKVY.....	79
TABLE 3.4: PHASE-WISE FIELDWORK SCHEDULE.....	84
TABLE 4.1: THEMATIC MAPPING- ASPIRATIONS RELATED QUESTIONS.....	93
TABLE 4.2: ASPIRATIONS AND CAPABILITIES IN THE S2C FRAMEWORK.....	107
TABLE 5.1: THEMATIC MAPPING- SDT INTERVENTION RELATED QUESTIONS.....	114
TABLE 5.2: INTERVENTION RESOURCES IN THE S2C FRAMEWORK	125
TABLE 6.1: THEMATIC MAPPING- EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT AND GENDER INEQUALITY RELATED QUESTIONS.....	131
TABLE 6.2: EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT AND GENDER INEQUALITY.....	144
TABLE 7.1: THEMATIC MAPPING- QUESTIONS RELATED TO AFTER TRAINING POSITION	151
TABLE 7.2: (FAILURE OF) FUNCTIONINGS IN THE S2C FRAMEWORK.....	162
GRAPH 4.1: INSTITUTION-LEVEL COMPARISON OF VALUED LIFE GOALS.....	94
GRAPH 4.2: INSTITUTION-LEVEL COMPARISON OF FUTURE WORK GOALS.....	101
GRAPH 4.3: BFC: VALUED WORK ATTRIBUTES.....	113
GRAPH 4.4: PMKVY: VALUED WORK ATTRIBUTES	105
GRAPH 5.1: INSTITUTION-LEVEL COMPARISON OF VALUE OF SKILLS	115
GRAPH 5.2: BFC MEASURE OF LIFE SKILLS LEARNING	118
GRAPH 5.3: PMKVY MEASURE OF LIFE SKILLS LEARNING.....	118
GRAPH 5.4: INSTITUTION-LEVEL COMPARISON OF INFORMATION SOURCE	120
GRAPH 5.5: PMKVY COMPARING DIMENSIONS OF PARTICIPATION	123
GRAPH 5.6: BFC COMPARING DIMENSIONS OF PARTICIPATION.....	124
GRAPH 6.1: INSTITUTION-LEVEL COMPARISON OF SUPPORT TO PURSUE TRAINING	132
GRAPH 6.2: INSTITUTION-LEVEL COMPARISON OF SUPPORT NEEDED TO FULFIL LIFE GOALS.....	134
GRAPH 6.3: INSTITUTION-LEVEL COMPARISON OF SUPPORT TO FULFIL WORK GOALS.....	135
GRAPH 6.4: BFC WOMEN-MEASURE OF INEQUALITY	140
GRAPH 6.5: PMKVY WOMEN-MEASURE OF INEQUALITY.....	140
GRAPH 6.6: BFC MEN - MEASURE OF INEQUALITY	142
GRAPH 6.7: PMKVY MEN - MEASURE OF INEQUALITY	142
GRAPH 7.1: INSTITUTION-LEVEL COMPARISON OF OCCUPATION SINCE TRAINING	153

¹ 'Figure' refers to the diagrammatic representation of a concept; 'table' refers to data shown in a tabular format; 'graph' refers to (primary) data summarised in the form of a bar diagram or a pie-chart; illustrations and pictures are drawings done by the trainees and photos taken by the author respectively.

ILLUSTRATION 4.1: ASPIRATION MAP BY FIJI MAMA	96
ILLUSTRATION 4.2: ASPIRATION MAP BY UGANDA MAMA.....	96
ILLUSTRATION 4.3: ASPIRATION MAP BY TURKEY MAMA.....	97
ILLUSTRATION 4.4: ASPIRATION MAP BY TANZANIA MAMA	97
ILLUSTRATION 4.5: ASPIRATION MAP BY INDIA MAMA	98
ILLUSTRATION 4.6: ASPIRATION MAP BY ARGENTINA MAMA	98
PICTURE 3.1: THE BFC CAMPUS IN RAJASTHAN AND BFC LOGO	62
PICTURE 3.2: PMKVY CENTRES IN HIMACHAL PRADESH AND PMKVY LOGO.....	63
PICTURE 3.3: BFC SOLAR CLASS.....	68
PICTURE 3.4: BFC TEACHING METHOD	68
PICTURE 3.5: BFC <i>ENRICHE</i> CLASS.....	69
PICTURE 3.6: PMKVY SEWING AND SOLAR CLASSES.....	70
PICTURE 3.7: PMKVY MODEL CURRICULUM	70
PICTURE 3.8: PMKVY BOOKS FOR SOFT SKILLS TRAINING	71

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AT	Appropriate Technology
ATS	Apprenticeship Training Scheme
BCI	Barefoot College International
BFC	Barefoot College
BHPS	British Household Panel Survey
CA	Capability Approach
CAQDA	Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis
CSR	Corporate social responsibility
CTS	Craftsman Training Scheme
DGT	Directorate General of Training
EFA	Education for All
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoI	Government of India
HDI	Human Development Index
HDCA	Human Development and Capabilities Approach
HDR	Human Development Report
HD	Human Development
HRA	Human Rights Approach
HP	Himachal Pradesh
ICF	Integrated Capabilities Framework
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IHDA	Integrated Human Development Approach
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ITC	Industrial Training Centre
ITEC	Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation
ITI	Industrial Training Institute
IIE	Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
MoRD	Ministry of Rural Development
MoLE	Ministry of Labour and Employment
MSDE	Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
NSDA	National Skills Development Agency
NAPS	National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme
NEET	Not in Employment Education or Training
NGO	Non-government organisation
NMC	New Middle Class
NOS	National Occupational Standards
NIESBUD	National Institute of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development

NSDC	National Skill Development Corporation
NSDF	National Skill Development Fund
NSQF	National Skills Qualification Level
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OJT	On the Job Training
PMKK	Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendra
PMKVY	Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojna
PM-YUVA	Pradhan Mantri Yuva Yojana
QP	Qualification Pack
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RfDI	Results for Development Institute
SDT	Skills Development Training
S2C	Skills to Capabilities
SDI	Slum Dwellers International
SSC	Sector Skills Council
SWRC	Social Works Research Centre
TC	Training centre
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
ToT	Training of Trainer
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VE	Vocational Education

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My foremost gratitude to the research participants for sharing their stories. I learnt much from them and I hope that I have been able to justly reproduce the knowledge. I am also grateful to Bunker ji, Meagan Fallone and the entire Barefoot College community for being supportive and including me as their own. My sincere thanks to NSDC and the PMKVY Training Partners in Rajasthan² and Himachal Pradesh³ for supporting the research and entrusting me with unconstrained access.

My gratitude to the Cambridge Commonwealth Trust without whose financial generosity through the years, I could not have imagined pursuing the research. I am indebted to Dr Shailaja Fennell, my supervisor who believed in me and made this endeavour possible. Shailaja, your guidance and support in matters of research and beyond have shaped my work and life in Cambridge. Thank you. I am also grateful to Dr Richard Sidebottom and Dr David Clark for their very useful comments. Any shortcomings are mine and I hope to continue to work towards making it better.

Thanks to the Centre of Development Studies and the Bennett Institute of Public Policy for providing an enriching learning environment and for the institutional support. I was also fortunate to be a member of the fabulous Jesus College and thrive in the wholesome environment. I look forward to being an engaged alumna.

Cheer to all my Cambridge friends with whom I have shared the most memorable journey. Rekha, Paola, Umme and all other dear Fennellians, Dev Studies socialists and the stars of MPP 2016. Our laughs and tears forever remain. Thanks also to all friends and mentors back home for their constant support. Special thanks to Juthika Patankar for her thoughtful guidance and encouragement. A deep bow for my most beloved aunty Nirmal who I know is cheering from up there. Much love to Raman for bearing with me through the (long!) last mile; thank you and I don't envy you!

A loud shout to my brother Samrat with whom I have shared all the wonder years. The boy who charms his way with that superior intellect, notorious wit and Buddha presence! What luck. Gratitude to our parents who make our lives so nourished and cherished. Mama and Papa, you give me the strength to love and live fearlessly and ethically. *Chardi Kala* – onwards and upwards.

² Mr Jitedra Yadav (VRJ Skills), Mr Sarveshwar Dadhich (IL&FS), Mr Kshitig Jain (MG Techno Savvy), Mr Anil Kumawat (Commands International).

³ Mr Sumit (Cyberstar), Mr Shezad and Mr Ankit Jain (Calance), Mr Manuj Agarwal (De Unique).

DEDICATION

*To the loving memory of the benevolent Shamnad Basheer
who continues to inspire many a mornings inside us.
Goodbye then, my friend; see you on the other side...*



14 May 1976 – 8 August 2019

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

A woman from a small town in Himachal Pradesh, wants to see her daughter become 'Miss Universe'; an uneducated old lady hopes to light every home in her village in Rajasthan with solar power; a young man from rural Rajasthan dreams of earning a big salary and improving the well-being of his family. These are the aspirations of people enrolled in skill development programmes. They want to live well, take care of their families and work towards development of the community. They hope that the skill development training will enable them to achieve their goals.

Perhaps that is a large mandate for a skills training intervention, the objective of which broadly speaking is to provide skills for work. To meet this objective, the Government of India (GoI) has envisaged to provide skills training to at least 300 million⁴ people by 2022. The ambitious skilling numbers are drawn from data that projects a skills gap of 110 million workers by 2022 across 24 key sectors of the economy⁵. However, only 4.69%⁶ of the workforce in India is formally skilled, compared to 68% in the UK, 75% in Germany, 52% in USA, 80% in Japan and 96% in South Korea.

This situation can be traced to two structural paradigmatic shifts since the 1980's. First, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate has been on an upward trend since the 1980s, witnessing substantial increases every decade. This increasing growth rate led to a high demand for both skilled and unskilled workers. The second structural shift was the beginning of the demographic dividend⁷, with the share of the working-age population in total population increasing since the early 1980s. However, skills training did not grow; it remained inadequate in terms of quantity, quality and relevance. This problem was further compounded by a tight labour market that reduced employability for people without requisite skills (Mehrotra and Saxena, 2014). Today, India is one of the youngest nations in the world – 62%⁸ of the people are in the working age-group (15-59 years) and this demographic dividend is expected to last for over two decades.

Therefore, the question of skills development remains highly topical. However, a critical examination of the skills development discourse in India shows that crucial questions remain. These include the extent of linkage between the government's skilling agenda and people's aspirations from skilling. Moreover, there is a general paucity of long-term research on the skills development sector. The issue of skills development is under theorised and dominated

⁴ <https://www.msde.gov.in/assets/images/Mission%20booklet.pdf>

⁵ National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship 2015, MSDE

⁶ Based on formal skilling data for working age population from NSSO (68th round) 2011-12, source: National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship 2015, MSDE

⁷ Defined by United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) as the economic growth potential that can result from shifts in a population's age structure, mainly when the share of the working-age population (15 to 64) is larger than the non-working-age share of the population (14 and younger, and 65 and older).

⁸ <https://www.msde.gov.in/assets/images/Skill%20India/National%20Policy%20on%20Skill%20Development%20and%20Entrepreneurship%20Final.pdf>

by a productivist paradigm. As per this account the purpose of skills development is to promote productivity and economic growth by providing skills for work. However, as people's testaments indicate, if the reasons for them to pursue skills training are beyond simply being able to work, it is argued that there is merit in reviewing the dominant skills discourse.

Unpacking the concept and tracing the history of the approaches to skill development shows that skill development is known by varied terminologies. These include Vocational Education (VE) Vocational Education and Training (VET), Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). Likewise, varied meanings are assigned to the notion of skills development. Moodie (2002) reviews the many definitions of VET and classifies them into four types: epistemological, teleological, hierarchical and pragmatic. The epistemological position identifies VET as a distinctive way of knowing; way of learning; field of knowledge. The teleological position is based on those who find VET's identity in relation to the purpose it serves i.e. training for – extrinsic purpose / intrinsic worth; work / life; working for others / working for self. In the hierarchical classification, the distinction is based on three types of levels: occupational level, education level and cognitive level. The pragmatic classification is based on the varied nature of VE and draws upon those definitions that provide a criterion of VE as something that is not included elsewhere. For instance, not provided under general education.

Summarising, Moodie proposes a definition of VET as being “the development and application of knowledge and skills for middle level occupations needed by society from time to time” (Moodie, 2002: 260). Likewise, McGrath (2012:3) reviewing the various meanings of skills development concludes that “skills development encompasses myriad forms of learning that are primarily aimed at supporting participation in the world-of-work, whether in terms of (re)integration into work or increased effectiveness of those currently defined as being in work”.

Further, historically, two main systems of skills development have prevailed, both emerging from the global north. One is the German dual system and the second is the Anglo-Saxon model. In the former, SD is integrated into a comprehensive education system. It is designed to develop a person's ability to act autonomously and competently within an occupational field. Qualifications are obtained through successful completion of courses. These courses are developed through negotiation with social partners, integrating theoretical knowledge and workplace learning (Rauner, 2007). The second model focuses on employability. In this model, individuals can compose their own qualification profiles, according to what they think will improve their position in the labour market. A market of qualifications enables individuals to enhance their employability through continuing vocational education or certification of sets of competencies acquired either through work experience or modularized courses (Brockmann, 2011).

However, this account of skills development which is based on the ideological framework of neoliberalism is problematic for the following reasons: (1) It proposes a restricted and instrumental view of life where people are reduced to human resources for economic exploitation. (2) The narrow technicist view fails to recognise the value of skills development training beyond addressing skills shortages and providing employment. (3) It is too individualistic and short-term in its focus on immediate employability rather than lifelong processes. (4) It is not a true reflection of what it means to be human.

This approach provides neither the workers required by employers nor the capability for human flourishing. Therefore, it is argued that there is need to adopt an alternate lens and redefine the purpose of skills development. For this purpose, human-centred development approaches have been found to offer a progressive way forward. These were first popularised in the UN Human Development Reports (1990)⁹, credited to Mahbub-ul-Haq. The Human Development paradigm covers all aspects of development – economic, political and cultural. Significantly, it views all aspects of traditional growth models from the vantage point of people. In doing so, it rediscovers the purpose of economic growth as promoting human development by creating an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives (Haq, 1999).

This research therefore adopts a human development-oriented approach to skills development. More specifically, the human development orientation of Amartya Sen's Capability Approach (CA). The CA puts people at the centre of the development process and views the purpose of development as expanding people's freedoms *to be* and *to do*. This conceptualisation provides an opportunity to imagine the possibilities of skills development as a means of human development. By linking justice, agency and well-being, the CA allows for a wider and more person-centred theory and practice of learning-for-life. In addition, it offers the possibility of thinking globally, whilst remaining mindful of context.

It is therefore argued that adopting the theoretical lens of the CA would provide an opportunity to conceptualise an expanded view of the skills discourse. One that is focussed on lifelong processes that address wider questions of preparation for the good life. In this theorisation, the success of skills development is measured by the extent to which it prepares people for life and for work. It develops an integrated view of people's aspirations and capabilities to include those related to work, living a good life and working towards development of the community. It thus accounts for both, needs of employers for skilled workers and the capability for human flourishing. It also stresses the empowering nature of skills development alongside the technical aspect, with significant pedagogic implications.

1.1 Research objectives and positioning

Examining the causality and linkages between skills and capabilities, this thesis asks the research question – does skill development training facilitate opportunities for people to fulfil their aspirations and achieve their capabilities?

The research is situated in the context of Barefoot College (BFC) and Prime Minister's Skill Development Programme (PMKVY¹⁰) in India. BFC and PMKVY training centres provide free-of-cost short-term (up to 6 months) skills development training (SDT) to people from disadvantaged backgrounds. BFC is a non-government enterprise and PMKVY is the flagship scheme of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), GoI. The PMKVY

⁹ UNDP, 1990. Human Development Report, 1990. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

¹⁰ PMKVY: *Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojna* is the name of the programme in Hindi language. The abbreviation PMKVY used in the thesis refers to the same.

scheme is implemented by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) through PMKVY training centres.

Although there are several SDT programmes in India under the aegis of the government, NGOs and the private sector, it is argued that the selected case studies provide a suitable setting for this research. The objective of both BFC and PMKVY is to ensure that disadvantaged people are able to gain skills and employment / livelihood opportunities. The programmes thus also provide an opportunity for people to fulfil their aspirations and the potential to contribute towards development of the community and the country. These objectives resonate with the aims of this research which seeks to understand the extent to which skill development training facilitates opportunities for people to fulfil their aspirations and achieve their capabilities.

At the same time, both BFC and PMKVY have different origins and training ethos. BFC is based on a grassroots model that was established in 1972 by the social activist Bunker Roy as a response to the growing inequality and poverty in the country. On the other hand, PMKVY is a recent national flagship scheme of MSDE. It was launched as part of the Skill India Mission¹¹ by the Prime Minister, Mr Modi in 2015 with the objective of transforming the skills landscape in India. In terms of sectors of training, BFC primarily trains older women in the solar sector, whereas PMKVY is more youth-centric and provides training across over 30 identified sectors, including solar. In addition, the institutions differ in their training methodology and post training support systems. It is argued that these different traditions provide an opportunity to compare and contrast learnings. Moreover, the short duration of both the training programmes made it feasible to undertake the study within the timelines of the research.

The primary research question is unpacked via the following secondary research questions:

1. What are the aspirations and capabilities of people in BFC and PMKVY training programmes?
2. What attributes of the training programme are valued by people?
3. What constituents of the external environment, including gender inequality, impact people's ability to pursue skills training and fulfil their goals?
4. After training, what is people's position and what are their reflections on the value of the training?

The secondary research questions traverse across themes to gather information ranging from individual positionalities, to particularities of the skills intervention and environmental externalities. This journey is documented at two points in time, during training and after training. It thus provides a thick description to analyse the primary research question – does skill development training facilitate opportunities for people to fulfil their aspirations and achieve their capabilities?

To begin with, this thesis examines the aspirations of people in BFC and PMKVY programmes. This includes examining their work-goals specifically and more generally analysing what they want to achieve in life and their reasons to pursue the same. Next, the specificities of people's

¹¹ <https://www.msde.gov.in/nationalskillmission.html>

valued ways of being and doing, i.e., capabilities are derived by examining the nature of their aspirations. The analysis shows that despite their disadvantaged backgrounds, people are capable of imagining better futures for themselves, their family and the community.

It also reveals the universal nature of aspirations across boundaries of geographies, gender and age. At the same time, locating the varied meanings and reasons for those aspirations in local norms and ideas, highlights the particularities of culture. The derived capabilities reveal that contrary to economic assumptions, people in skill development programmes aspire for goals that are beyond work and money. The nature of capabilities that people value presents a non-individualistic, non-materialistic and development orientated view of capabilities. It thus points to re-positioning the value of skills training and the skills discourse.

Following up, the second research question aims to understand what attributes of the training programme are valued by people. In doing so the reasons for people to value skills training more generally are also unpacked. The analysis shows that people value skills training for the opportunity to – learn and work and become independent; develop personally and apply the acquired skills in daily life; work towards development of the community and the country. Thus, positioning people’s reasons to pursue skills training enables to establish the linkage between skills and aspirations. It reiterates an expanded notion of skills training as enabling learnings for life. In addition, the valued attributes provide useful bottom-up information on what works and what needs to be strengthened from a programme design perspective.

The third research question segues to analyse the impact of the external environment, including gender inequality, on people’s ability to pursue skills training and fulfil their goals. The analysis presents an integrated view accounting for the various factors that impact an intervention such as skills development. These factors operate at the level of the individual, the family and the community. They also include socio-cultural gender norms and institutional and policy level matters. The analysis highlights specific restricting conditions that reduce people’s opportunities such as discrimination, prohibiting social norms and lack of support services. It also shows the enabling role of social networks that provide varied forms of support in the absence of institutionalised systems. It thus leads to significant implications for the skills development ecosystem.

The final research question reflects on people’s accounts of their achievements and failures after training. A comparative assessment of people’s present occupation with their stated goals and aspirations indicates the actual value of the skills intervention. It shows that despite not being able to achieve their goals, people value the training for the experience and the opportunity for personal development. Significantly, as a result, they remain hopeful of achieving their aspirations and capabilities in the future. It thus highlights the need to promote conditions that nurture people’s aspirations and expand their opportunities. It further makes the case that in the absence of these conditions, the potential of the skills intervention remains untapped and achievements remain modest, at best.

The above examination is influenced by the positionality of the researcher. The researcher’s practitioner background is located in the disciplines of organisational psychology and public policy. Consequently, the conceptual framing is based on organisational theory in the context of human development. Therefore, while drawing upon the interdisciplinary scope of the CA,

the research is not located in economics. The research draws on operationalising the capabilities literature and uses the key concepts in a policy framework.

1.2 Significance of the research

This thesis contributes towards expanding the research frontiers of the skills discourse and the application frontiers of the Capability Approach. It also iterates the need for evidence-based policy making.

Expanding the research frontiers of the skills discourse

The present discourse based on economic assumptions limits the scope of skills training to facilitating employment and productivity. This thesis provides an alternate lens to view skills development. Adopting the human development orientation of the Capability Approach, it provides an expanded vision of skills development. One that examines the potential of skills training to impact learning for life and reflecting on what it is to be truly human. In addition, since the research is situated in India, it contributes towards creating a tradition of research in the global south more generally and India specifically.

Expanding the application frontiers of the Capability Approach

Drawing upon Amartya Sen's Capability Approach, the research reimagines the purpose and possibilities of skills development as a means of human development. Based on the CA, an integrated 'Skills to Capabilities' (S2C) framework is developed to conceptualise skills development. In addition, engaging with the concepts of – aspirations; external environment; gender inequality; and the notion of degrees of achievements, the research extends the respective theoretical debates. The conceptualised S2C framework is applied in the context of the selected case studies by developing an innovative grounded methodology. An empirical examination is conducted in the setting of current skill development programmes.

Iterating need for evidence-based policy making

Challenging current policy assumptions, the thesis iterates the need for evidence-based policy making. It calls for the need to alter the skills discourse and make it meaningfully aspirational for all. It also highlights the need to reform the skills development ecosystem and improve training delivery and environment, otherwise, the capability expanding function of skills training would remain unfulfilled.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

The preceding sections of chapter 1 outlined the research objectives and positioning and highlighted the significance of the research.

Chapter 2 reviews the extant literature on the nascent concept of skills in the development discourse. This includes a discussion on the various terminologies and systems of skills development. This is followed by examining the dominant economic approach to skills development and highlighting the under-theorised nature of the skills discourse. Alternate proposals to view skills development from the lens of human development are then reviewed. Finally, implications of the above for skills development in South Asia and specifically for India are reviewed.

Building on the argument for a humanistic conceptualisation of skills development, a description of the Capability Approach is presented. This includes examining the conceptual framework of the CA and its critiques and strengths. The application of the CA, specifically in the context of education, work and skills development is examined. The third section presents an interdisciplinary view of the concept of aspirations including from a psycho-social, anthropological, economic and human development perspective. Next, the linkages between aspirations and capabilities are unpacked. Studies that apply the concept of aspirations using the CA in the context of education, work and life are reviewed. The final section examines literature related to the concept of the external environment and gender inequality.

Taking the discussion forward, chapter 3 which consists of three sections, outlines the proposed analytical framework to examine the research questions. This is followed by an examination of the case studies- BFC and PMKVY where the research is situated. The final section presents a detailed discussion of the research methodology adopted to operationalise the research. This includes a discussion on the research design, sampling strategy and instrument design. The suitability of conducting a mixed methods research that included personal interviews and surveys is examined. This is followed by unpacking the sampling strategy and the data collection process. Reflections on the influence of the positionality of the author vis-à-vis the research environment are considered. Other ethical considerations of research are also acknowledged. Finally, the process of data coding and analysis, including challenges are examined.

The next four chapters – 4 to 7 comprise the data chapters. Each chapter draws upon relevant data to address the respective secondary research questions within the S2C framework. These include aspirations and capabilities, valued attributes of the SDT intervention, categories of external environment and gender inequality and reflections on achievements and failures after training.

The chapters are structured as follows: first, a detailed data analysis of the thematic category is presented. The analysis is undertaken at an aggregate level followed by inter-institution and intra-institution comparisons. As part of the data analysis results are also triangulated across related sections of the three-part questionnaire and with existing secondary data where applicable. Next, the data is positioned in the context of the respective research categories of the S2C framework. The chapter's end with a detailed examination of the implications of the data analysis in view of the reviewed literature and observed gaps.

Accordingly, chapter 4 reviews data on 'aspirations' and derives 'capabilities'. This includes analysing people's narratives on what they wanted to achieve in life and why. In addition, their views on the attributes of a good life are also ascertained. Likewise, people's valued work goals and their motivations to pursue the same are studied. Valued attributes of the work environment are also determined. The extent to which these attributes were fulfilled in previous work experiences and consequent expectations from future work are also considered.

Chapter 5 presents an analysis of valued attributes of training, including an examination of why people value skills training and their learning disposition. The analysis of attributes

includes examining the role of access to information and knowledge and awareness of training options and working conditions. Other valued attributes of the training environment are also examined. This analysis therefore locates the 'resources' within the S2C framework.

The next data chapter, chapter 6, analyses the impact of the external environment, including gender inequality on people's ability to fulfil their aspirations and capabilities. It does so by investigating the support that people need to pursue training and meet their goals. Particular attention is paid to the issue of gender inequality and its impact on women's agency to pursue training and fulfil their goals. The resultant analysis describes the constituent elements across identified dimensions of the external environment – individual, family and community, socio-cultural gender norms and institutional and policy level issues.

The final data chapter, chapter 7, provides a comparative assessment of people's position during and after training. This includes an examination of people's current occupation and a comparison with their work goals. In addition, people's actual challenges and the support they need after training are noted. Suggestions to increase training effectiveness are also presented. Finally, people's reflections on the appropriateness of their choice of training and the actual value of the training are analysed. People's actual achievements and failures are thus unpacked, completing the research process.

In the concluding chapter 8, the four research sub-themes are brought together to present an integrated view of the research findings. This is followed by examining the contributions of the research. The final section reviews the limitations of the present research and provides recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2 | Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter begins with a review of the extant literature on the nascent concept of skills in the development discourse. It includes a discussion on the various terminologies and systems of skills development. This is followed by examining the dominant economic approach to skills development and highlighting the under-theorised nature of the skills discourse. Alternate proposals to view skills development from the lens of human development are then reviewed. Finally, implications of above for skills development in South Asia and specifically for India are reviewed.

Next, building on the argument for a humanistic conceptualisation of skills development, a description of the Capability Approach is presented. This includes examining the conceptual framework and the critiques and strengths of the CA. The application of CA, specifically in the context of education, work and skills development is examined. The third section presents an interdisciplinary view of the concept of aspirations including from psycho-social, anthropological, economic and human development perspectives. Next, the linkages between aspirations and capabilities are unpacked. Studies that apply the concept of aspirations using the CA in the context of education, work and life are reviewed. The final section examines literature related to the concept of the external environment and gender inequality.

2.1 The skills discourse

2.1.1 The concept of skills development

The matter of defining skills has eluded authors for much of the past century. T.H. Huxley in 1895 lamented that “it passes the wit of man, so far as I know, to give a legal definition of technical education” (in Moodie, 2002: 249). Commenting on the lack of definition of skills, Tilly says, “as a historical concept, skill is a thundercloud: solid and clearly bounded when seen from a distance, vaporous and full of shocks close-up” (Tilly, 1988: 452).

Varied terminologies are used to refer to the concept of skills development including VE, VET, and TVET. Although intuitively straightforward, the concept is virtually impossible to define in an unambiguous manner (Stevenson, 2005). It is multidimensional and can be organized in different ways (Nilsson, 2010). Therefore, in terms of the meanings, different commentators attribute different, albeit related meanings to the same term. Moodie (2002) conducted a review of several definitions of VET classifying them into four types: epistemological, teleological, hierarchical and pragmatic as examined below.

Epistemological classification

The epistemological position identifies VET as a distinctive way of knowing; way of learning; field of knowledge. The ways of knowing distinction can be traced to Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* where he describes ‘five ways in which the soul arrives at truth’ – pure science (episteme), art or applied science (techne), prudence or practical wisdom (phronesis), intelligence or intuition (nous), and wisdom (sophia). Distinguishing between theoretical and

practical knowledge, Aristotle in *The Metaphysics* says that the former is more of the nature of wisdom, while the latter is about productive kinds of knowledge. A further distinction was noted by James (1995) based on Habermas' different knowledge-constitutive interests: technical reflection (know how and know what), practical reflection ('what ought I do?') and critical reflection (development of relational autonomy).

Moodie (2002) analyses that there are various partial applications of such epistemological distinctions. For instance, one of the earliest descriptions of 'technical instruction' was suggested by Magnus (1881) as the training of the hand, which is contrasted with the education of the mind. Other descriptions of vocational education also propound mind/body dualisms, such as the distinction between knowing and doing and between theory and practice (Gonzci, 1997). Further illustrating the VE versus academic education divide, H.S Williams (1961) argues that the former is applied compared to the latter which is more 'pure'. This distinction is also reflected in UNESCO's (1997) international standard classification of education that distinguishes between general education, which is mainly designed to lead participants to a deeper understanding of a subject or group of subjects. 'Vocational or technical education', is designed to lead participants to acquire the practical skills, know-how, and understanding necessary for employment in a particular occupation or trade or class of occupations or trades.

Based on this dualism vocational education is defined as being concerned with training to do repetitive tasks in contrast with higher level education, which is considered adaptive, generative and innovative. According to Stevenson (1997, 1998) the same can be reduced to a distinction between skill and knowledge. Blunden (1995) and Stevenson (1995) note the modern association of general education with conceptual understanding or declarative knowledge, and vocational education's association with demonstrated knowledge or procedural knowledge, which they trace to Ryle's (1951) distinction between knowing that and knowing how, between propositional knowledge and operational competence. A more recent distinguishing feature of VET is based on competence in which the emphasis is on what a person can do and not just what they know (Carnegie, 2000).

The second epistemological distinction of VET – as ways of learning, draws from its historical identification with apprenticeships. Elaborating this feature Moodie (2002) argues that in this case the learning-teaching method is said to be by observation, imitation and personal correction, rather than by application of general propositions delivered in classrooms and textbooks. This, in turn, is related to a distinction between general education's verbal knowledge and vocational education's non-verbal or tacit knowledge (Stevenson, 1998).

Finally, in some cases, Moodie (2002) says that VE is also described as a broad field of knowledge comparable to social sciences, physical sciences and the humanities. For instance, Cantor (1989) distinguishes between general vocational education programmes and occupational-specific programmes. The former includes pre-vocational courses designed to introduce students to broad vocational areas, such as business and office education, home economics, and industrial arts and general work and life skills.

Teleological classification

The second classification of VET definitions – teleological is based on those who find VET's identity on the purpose it serves i.e. training for – extrinsic purpose / intrinsic worth; work /

life; working for others / working for self. Tracing the historical idea of training for extrinsic purpose / self-worth, which has led to the more recent means-end distinction, Moodie (2002) draws upon Aristotle's *The Politics*. Here, Aristotle contrasted the training for extrinsic purposes suitable for artisans, slaves and women with the cultivation of the arts for their intrinsic worth appropriate for leisured, free men.

This distinction also informed modern conceptualisations such as those proposed by Williams (1970) where he argued that the 'inner logic' of university and advanced education provides a 'functional differentiation' between them, between university education's intrinsic value and vocational education's instrumental value (quoted in Hermann et al, 1976). Feinberg (1983) claims that the aim of vocational education is to transmit exploitable knowledge to participate in the market, whereas general education is to create a democratic society. Mitter (1988) recounts the establishment of secondary schools to draw a distinction between education as a preparation for work and education as a protection from work.

While the above means and ends distinction between training and education has an attractive neatness, it is not an adequate characterisation of vocational education. In both cases, there is a continuum between studies taught and learned for instrumental purposes, and those pursued for intrinsic interest. Furthermore, different learners might value either for serving instrumental or intrinsic purposes. Like Stevenson (1997) offers a more encompassing view as – academic valuing of the production of new knowledge, general education's valuing of the development of the whole person for life, vocational education's valuing of competences for work, and some parts of adult education's valuing of critical thinking leading to empowerment.

In the second distinction of training for work / education Moodie draws upon Newman's *Idea of a University* (1959) that posited an ideal of humanist, liberal, holistic education, which by implication was contrasted with instrumentalist, narrow education. A distinction similar to the idea of specialist or technical education and general education (Wilkinson, 1970, quoted in Hyland, 1999). However, it has been argued that such simple vocationalism is not sufficient to found technical education's distinctiveness (Kangan, 1974). Universities serve more than their supposed non-utilitarian virtues (Symes, 1999). Since the Middle Ages they were largely vocational schools training for the church, medicine and the law (Cobban, 1975) and have expanded the vocations for which they train until the present time, as Dearing (1997) observed.

The third feature of training for work/ self-employment draws on the distinction between VE for paid employment and higher education for the professions. However, Moodie notes that this distinction was fraught with uncomfortable anomalies. For instance, in modern times, most lawyers, engineers and doctors are employees, and cannot claim the autonomy of independent practice. Neither can they claim special status from their exercise of independent judgement – carpenters, personal care attendants and real estate agents, for example, all exercise considerable independent judgement in their work.

Hierarchical classification

Moodie identifies three types of hierarchical classifications by – occupational level, education level and cognitive level. The classification by occupational levels has been traced to Plato's view in *The Republic* (1974) that each person has different aptitudes, which should be

developed for the job to which they are best suited. Jobs, in turn, are commonly classified by level. Vocational education is commonly derived from the occupational level of its graduates (Moorhouse, 1960; Murray-Smith, 1965; Haslegrave, 1969; Hermann et al, 1976).

H. S. Williams (1961) provided the following graded classifications: trade, post-trade, technician (production-maintenance), technician (research design), professional and post-professional. However, the ascription of institutional roles to occupational levels has been criticised for being an over-simplification (Moorhouse 1960). Although, this was a widely practiced system in both the UK and Australia, Stevenson (1992) offered a broader classification of 48 skill-occupational types and levels. These included six different skill levels, from the routine proceduralised tasks to management responsibility over others, and eight occupational levels, from operative to senior professional.

The second classification of VE by education level is an apparent derivation, however, one that is hugely variable. To begin with, there is the question of whether vocational education is truly tertiary education (Jakupec & Roantree, 1993). Many vocational courses assume an educational level of 10 years of formal schooling, which suggests that at least many vocational courses are located at secondary level (Murray-Smith, 1965). Moodie says that this leads to the unsatisfactory argument that vocational education should be defined by students' achievement upon their exit, rather on their entry to the sector (Williams, 1965).

Moodie argues that though VE occupies a distinctive place amongst other educational sectors in some jurisdictions at sometimes, this is variable and contingent. It is different in different jurisdictions at any one time, and changes within many jurisdictions over time. For instance, taking the case of US community colleges, Medsker and Tillery (1971) noted attempts by leaders of US community colleges to establish a distinctive place between secondary and other post-secondary schools. However, most US states community colleges have two roles: vocational education, which is shared with a plethora of other secondary and post-secondary institutions; and offering the first 2 years of baccalaureates, which is shared with four-year colleges and universities. This dual role places community colleges at an ambiguous level in US education.

Finally, the cognitive level classification is based on Engestrom's (1994) hierarchy of learning as consisting of – first order learning (conditioning, imitation and rote learning), second order learning (trial and error or learning by doing and problem solving, or investigative learning) and third order learning (questioning and transforming the context or community of practice). This hierarchy is also mapped to educational levels, with vocational education said to involve first and second order learning and higher education, involving second and third order learning and the development of critically reflective practitioner.

Similarly, UNESCO's (1997) international standard classification of education makes a related distinction between programmes that give access to professions with high skills requirements (e.g. medicine, dentistry, architecture, etc.) and those programmes that are practically/technically/occupationally specific and that by implication have low skill requirements.

Pragmatic classification

This classification is based on the varied nature of VE and draws upon those definitions that

provide a criterion of VE as something that is not included elsewhere. For instance, Stevenson (1998) argues that a common definition of VE is the education that is not secondary or higher education. Others such as Parkes (1991) describing Britain's further education sector as filling the gaps not filled by alternative sectors. The highly influential Kangan committee mission for technical and further education in Australia from the mid-1970s to the mid-1990s, describes the role of VE as that left over from the other sectors (Kangan, 1974). The committee further acknowledged that it is beyond human capacity to devise a precise definition of TVET that would stand the test of time (Ibid., 1974). These views Moodie says followed Murray-Smith's authoritative observation that 'the 'received' definitions of technical education change radically from one era to another' (1965) and that the sector has a 'mutation gene' to adapt to new circumstances (1966, quoted in Rushbrook, 1997).

This pragmatism is considered to be a strength by some authors (Anderson, 1998), and a weakness by others (Gooze, 1993; Stevenson, 1998; Wheelahan, 2000). Drawing upon the above review, Moodie proposes a definition of VET based on occupational levels rather than educational levels. One that is subject to shifts in occupational hierarchy and economic structure. He therefore proposes a definition of VET as being "the development and application of knowledge and skills for middle level occupations needed by society from time to time" (Moodie, 2002: 260).

The skills agenda has also been actively pursued by international agencies, more visibly since the release of UNESCO reports on TVET in 2012. These agencies define skills from a policy and application perspective. For instance, UNESCO¹² defines pathways to skills, set in the following three categories:

1. Foundation skills including literacy and numeracy are the outcomes of formal basic education, and a prerequisite for continuing in education and training, and for acquiring transferable and technical and vocational skills.
2. Transferable skills such as communication and problem solving are needed to adapt to different life and employment contexts.
3. Technical and vocational skills encompass the specific technical know-how to do jobs, for example, using a sewing machine or computer, bricklaying or growing vegetables.

OECD¹³ defines skills as "the bundle of knowledge, attributes and capacities that can be learned and that enable individuals to successfully and consistently perform an activity or task and can be built upon and extended through learning" (pg 12). It underscores the fact that benefits of skills go beyond the labour market, and affect the individual's health, civic and social behaviour. It is also beneficial for democratic engagement and business relationships, tackling of inequality and unemployment. The emphasis is on adult skills, which include literacy, numeracy, problem-solving in technology-rich environments and skills used in workplaces.

Results for Development Institute (RfDI)¹⁴ identifies three main categories of skills: cognitive,

¹² Global Monitoring Report series and the World Report on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (2012)

¹³ OECD (2012) *Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Lives* report

¹⁴ Results for Development Institute <http://www.resultsfordevelopment.org/knowledge-center/global-education>

non-cognitive, and technical. Cognitive or analytical skills include numeracy and literacy and encompass thinking or problem-solving skills. Non-cognitive skills are variously called 'people skills', 'soft skills', or 'behavioural skills'. These skills are also known as '21st century skills' and are widely seen as crucial to securing employment in today's globalised economy. They include communication, teamwork, leadership and entrepreneurialism. Lastly, technical skills are those that are context-specific and are geared towards a particular occupation (for instance, electrical wiring or plumbing).

RfDI argues that non-cognitive skills are as important in the workplace as cognitive and technical skills. However, although employers want self-reliant workers with the right 'people-skills', and yet, these skills are often not included in the curricula. These skills are also particularly important for the informal sector. Since workers in this sector tend to be self-employed, they need to have skills to navigate along the entire value chain. This requires skills such as discipline, confidence, negotiation, communication and decision-making. It also requires entrepreneurial and business skills, such as financial management, market research, and marketing.

The above discussion shows that the notion of skills is yet under-developed. Any definition becomes more problematic with the increasing blurring of the general-vocational barrier (McGrath, 2012). However, at the same time, there is also a much contested dualism that delineates the two. Whereby, general and academic education is seen as providing analytic skills, knowledge and critical thinking while technical education is seen as providing narrow training required by a particular occupation. (Rose, 2004; Sennett, 2008). More significantly, this distinction, leads to a reproduction of social divides (Powell, 2012).

The discussion also points to an 'un-specificity' and 'broken-ness' as reflected in the various terminologies used and meanings assigned to skills development (Clarke and Winch, 2006). The various meanings also lead to a lack of coherence in academic contexts (Hanfling, 1998; McGrath, 2012). To some extent it can be said that these terms have distinct historical trajectories differing across geographic locales (Powell, 2012). The next section presents a review of the origin of the systems of VET.

2.1.2 Systems of skills development

Models of skills development emerging from the global north

Examining the literature on the origins of systems of vocational education shows the prevalence of two main systems, both emerging from the global north. One is the German dual system and the second is the Anglo-Saxon model (Brockman et al., 2011; Allais, 2012). The eponymous German dual system evolved in Germany and is followed in other countries such as France and Netherlands. It focusses on education for a well-regulated and protected occupation. Rauner (2007) explains that in this system VET is integrated into a comprehensive education system. It is designed to develop a person's ability to act autonomously and competently within an occupational field. Qualifications are obtained through successful completion of courses. These courses are developed through negotiation with social partners, integrating theoretical knowledge and workplace learning.

The second model, the Anglo-Saxon model, focuses on employability and is followed in the United Kingdom and the United States. In this model, individuals can compose their own qualification profiles, according to what they think will improve their position in the labour market (Brockmann, 2011). A market of qualifications enables individuals to enhance their employability through continuing vocational education or certification of sets of competencies acquired either through work experience or modularized courses (Ibid., 2011).

A further distinction emerges from Hall and Soskice's (2001) varieties of capitalism literature as examined by Iverson and Stephens (2008). This consists of two models based on different production systems in advanced economies. The first model—liberal market economies, includes capitalist economies such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada. The second – coordinated market economies includes Western European countries. In the former, the emphasis is on labour market regulation (Brockmann et al., 2011). In this case the organization of occupations, labour processes and the organization of vocational training are mutually reinforcing. The second model broadly considers the labour market and social policy, and how these affect vocational training and skills development (Iverson and Stephens, 2008). Allias (2012) concludes that liberal market economies have inherently weaker vocational training. Lower levels of skills and general education at lower levels of the workforce are also weak, although they may have highly skilled workers at the top levels.

Likewise, Busemeyer and Trampusch (2011) examine the political economy of skill formation comparing varied levels of public commitment and involvement of firms in vocational training. They present four types of skill formation systems – statist, collective, liberal and segmentalist. The statist system practiced in countries such as Sweden and France is defined by high levels of public commitment and less involvement of firms. In the collective system, for example in Germany, there is high investment of both. On the other hand, the liberal system such as in the US and Ireland is low on commitment from both the state and private firms. The segmentalist system such as in Japan is low on public commitment and high on involvement of firms. Busemeyer further elaborates that each system is characterised by varied degrees of relationship between education and skills and questions of control, provision and funding.

To conclude, it is argued that two main themes emerge from the above review. One is the lack of research in the global south. The same has been pointed by King (2012) who says that there is a paucity of long-term research in the skills development sector, particularly in the context of developing countries. Likewise, McGrath (2012) argues that compared to the rich tradition of VET policy and academic research in OECD countries, there has been a paucity of research and theoretical exploration in the South. Second is the economic nature of the skills discourse which leads to an under-theorised conceptualisation. The former is discussed below and the latter in subsequent sections 2.1.4 and 2.1.5.

Lack of research in the Global South

McGrath (2012) provides two reasons for the lack of research and the dismissal of VET's potential contribution to education and development in the global south. First was the cementing of the view that basic education was the most important element of education for development. This was done by the World Conference on Education for All (EFA) at Jomtien in 1990. Second, the same was reinforced the following year by the World Bank's policy paper

on VET¹⁵ (1991). This paper drew upon a sceptical tradition regarding VET, building on the early insights of Foster (1965) and including a range of work, mostly from the World Bank (e.g., Psacharopoulos, 1981 and 1985; Psacharopoulos and Loxley, 1985; Heyneman, 1985; Lauglo and Lillis, 1988). This work appeared to show conclusively that public VET was inefficient and ineffective.

The dilemma of reconciling the lack of usefulness of VET based on the sceptical tradition and the need for governments to engage with VET, has been iterated by others such as Jain (1992). Jain argues that Foster's (1965) vocational school fallacy argument which shows that vocational graduates fail to undertake jobs for which they have been trained, is not the result of lack of usefulness of VET per se. Likewise, the low returns on VET that have been interpreted as an indicator of its inefficiency by many authors including Psacharopoulos (1987) based on their empirical studies covering a number of developing countries, is not a failure of VET. However, the voice of pro-VET advocates was weak, as seen from the title of Castro's 1987 paper: "Is Vocational Education really that bad?" (in Jain, 1992).

Concluding, McGrath (2012) says that over the following years it has been clear that there is little incentive for researchers to work on VET in developing countries. Furthermore, the millennium development goals (MDGs) have encouraged a continuation of the view that VET is unimportant. Finally, he also argues that the limited literature on VET and development (e.g., Bennell, 1996; Bennell and Segerstrom, 1998; King and Martin, 2002; King, McGrath, Rose, 2007; Palmer, 2007 and 2009; McGrath and Akoojee, 2007 and 2009; King, 2009; Lewis, 2009) has not sought to engage with either the rich literature in OECD countries or with new trends in development theory.

This brings us to the second point regarding the narrowly economic and productivist nature of the skills discourse as examined below. The policy implications of this scenario, particularly for South Asia and specifically for India, will be discussed in the concluding section 2.1.6.

2.1.3 Productivist approach to skills development

The above account shows that VET is understood as encompassing the myriad forms of learning that are primarily aimed at supporting participation in the world-of-work, whether in terms of (re)integration into work or increased effectiveness of those currently defined as being in work (McGrath, 2012). Therefore, the dominant discourse follows what Giddens (1994) has described as productivism. As per this account, since late modernity there has been a separation of paid employment from other aspects of life and the enshrining of economic development as the ultimate goal of society (McGrath, 2012).

Examining this paradigm further, Anderson (2009) notes that VET is built on two key productivist assumptions: first, that training leads to productivity, leads to economic growth (training for growth); and second, that skills lead to employability, lead to jobs (skills for work). Explaining further, he states:

¹⁵ *Vocational and Technical Education and Training*. World Bank, Washington.

Cast within the ethos of productivism and the ideological framework of neoliberalism, the institution of TVET is based on a restricted and instrumental view of life worlds which reduces people and the environment to the status of human and natural resources for economic exploitation. Such a perspective overlooks the complex and interdependent nature of human existence, the source and meanings of which are inextricably linked to the social relations, cultural practices and natural material conditions. TVET students are not only already, or aiming to become, workers. They are also human beings and citizens with a wide range of needs, relationships, duties, aspirations and interests beyond work; in the family, the local community, in civil society and the global environment. Over their life course, they give birth, raise and care for family members, consume goods and services, manage finances, fall ill, experience unemployment and hardship, elect governments, get involved in community affairs and ultimately rely for their survival on the fruits of nature. Yet in TVET they learn only to labour and produce commodities. (Anderson, 2009: 44-5)

A similar productivist view of skills can be found in Becker's (1964) human capital theory which defines skills as human capital. The human capital theory was pioneered by a group of University of Chicago economists, including Gary Becker and Theodore Schultz in the 1960s. This theory considers education relevant to the extent that it creates skills and helps to acquire knowledge that serves as an investment in the productivity of the human being as an economic production factor, that is, as a worker. Thus, education and by extension skills, are important because they allow workers to be more productive, thereby being able to earn a higher wage, i.e., improve their income generating abilities.

Reviewing the merits of the theory, Robeyns (2006) argues that although it has broadened the development discourse that previously only focused on technical progress and macro-economic development, to include people as central to economic development efforts. However, it has been identified as problematic on two accounts. The first being that the theory is narrowly economic – the only benefits from education/skills that are considered are an increased productivity and a higher wage. In doing so, it excludes other non-material dimensions of life and therefore also cannot satisfactorily deal with issues of culture, gender, identity, emotions, history, etc. (Davis, 2003; Fine, 2002; Folbre, 1994).

The second issue Robeyns points is that it is entirely instrumental, i.e. it values education, skills and knowledge only in so far as they contribute (directly or indirectly) to expected economic productivity. Problematically, it does not provide the space to include non-instrumental or intrinsic values. For instance, its assumption that the acquisition of knowledge, unless capitalised, has no value. Moreover, the theory does not account for the fact that certain groups, particularly those who are disadvantaged such as women might not be able to accrue the same rate of returns. This can be attributed to external conditions such as discrimination of women in the labour market. In addition, such a conceptualisation makes the case for comparing investment in education and skills with returns on other types of investments. As a result, non-material returns will be disregarded in decision-making with particularly poor outcomes for disadvantaged groups.

The above discussion points to the under-theorised nature of the skills discourse as examined in the next section.

2.1.4 Under-theorised nature of the skills discourse

It is argued, prominently by McGrath (2012), King (2012) and Powell (2012) that the present skills discourse is limited in theoretical power and practical efficacy. It is located within a view of development that is narrowly economic and productivist. In addition, the larger issue that remains under-theorised is the linking of education, skills and work together as part of a wider development vision.

McGrath says that the skills discourse is too individualistic and short-term in its focus on immediate employability rather than lifelong processes. It is not a true reflection of what it means to be human. The effectiveness of skills development cannot be based only on instrumental measures of institutional efficiency and employment rates. He also argued that the narrow focus on a particular model of work as paid employment ignores the structural and cultural contexts, including gender relations in which skills development occurs (McGrath, 2012). Moreover, the focus on delivery by public institutions ignores the complexity of varied forms of delivery. In addition, the acquisition of vocational learning remains too centred on formal learning in educational institutions, ignoring informal learning. Finally, wider questions of preparation for the good life, particularly the development of capabilities are not considered which also makes it non-conducive to sustainable growth.

Likewise, King (2012) argues that the skills debate should not be limited as an illustration of learning to do and of learning to know, but also of learning to be and to live. By this theorisation, the success of skills development would be measured by the extent to which it prepares people for life and for work. He thus points to the potential of skills development extending beyond employability and productivity. It encompasses the centrality of work (both paid and unpaid) in human well-being and in executing care responsibilities towards the family and the community. Thus, suggesting the conceptualisation of vocational capabilities.

Powell (2012) further argues that a narrow technician approach to TVET provides neither the workers required by employers nor the capability for human flourishing. Elaborating the point, Powell exclaims that

The trainees are far more than the unemployed youth and the future worker preparing to meet and address critical skills shortages. They are concerned with relationships with family members and with members of their community, their spiritual development, their personal dignity and with the social and economic challenges faced by their families and other members of their community (Powell, 2012: pg 650).

To conclude, McGrath (2012) argues that VET is located within a view of development that is narrowly economic and productivist. However, this is not a true reflection of what it means to be human. More recently, since the time of the first Human Development Report in 1990 (UNDP, 1990), there has been a shift in development theory that is more accepting of arguments that seek to place humans rather than GDP at the heart of development. McGrath (2012) suggesting a way forward examines the purposes, natures and possibilities of VET as a means of human development. Arguing that since VET is about humans learning, working and living, it is imperative to draw insights from alternative development theories. The same is examined below.

2.1.5 Humanistic approach to skills development

Human-centred development approaches such as the Human Rights Approach (HRA); Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA); Integrated Human Development Approach (IHDA); and the Human Development and Capabilities Approach (HDCA), offer an alternative and progressive way forward.

Historically, there have been various approaches to development and since the Second World War, those focussing on economic growth have been dominant. Based on mainstream economic theories, such as neoclassical economics or Keynesian economics, they measure the outcome of development by gross national product or per capita income. However, it is argued that though this model of development increases income, it comes at a cost. The cost of environmental degradation, poverty, crime and the erosion of traditional values and ways of life (Toye, 1993). Therefore, there has been a call for a broadened concept of development (Seers, 1969) and criticism of the inadequacy of the orthodoxy of neoclassical economics (Stiglitz, 2002).

This gap has been addressed by human development centred approaches that expand from the narrow focus of income and consumption and tackle various development challenges. For instance, in the case of skills, the human rights perspective (UN, 1948; Rawls, 1971; Tomasevski, 2001) that promotes education access can be expanded to include multiple forms and sites of vocational learning. This could potentially include the right to vocational learning for all. Likewise, the SLA (Brundtland Commission¹⁶, 1992; Chambers and Conway, 1992) brings diverse assets – human, financial, social, and physical/ecological – together to make a difference in the life of rural people. It thus holds particular significance for the case of skills for rural transformation. Extending the same, the IHDA (Winch 1998, 2006) that draws upon insights from Catholic social teaching enables the linking of VET to the vocation of becoming fully human. It also relates the possibility for progressive VET and decent work.

The HD paradigm, popularised in the UN Human Development Reports (1990), credited to Mahbub ul Haq, is a holistic concept that covers all aspects of development – economic, political and cultural. Haq argues that in doing so, HD embraces both –ends and means; productivity and equity; economic and social development; and material goods and human welfare. The significant point is to view all aspects of traditional growth models from the vantage point of people and ask – Do they participate and benefit from economic growth? Are their choices enlarged or narrowed by new technologies? Is economic expansion leading to job-led growth or jobless growth? Are budgets being balanced without unbalancing the lives of future generations? In asking these questions, the HD paradigm rediscovers the purpose of economic growth as promoting human development by creating an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives (Ibid., 1999).

The HD paradigm includes the following tenets:

- Development must put people at the centre of its concerns

¹⁶ World Commission on Environment and Development . 1987. Our Common Future (Brundtland Report), United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

- The purpose of development is to enlarge all human choices, not just income
- The human development paradigm is concerned both with building up human capabilities (through investment in people) and with using those human capabilities fully (through an enabling framework for growth and employment)
- Human development has four essential pillars: equity, sustainability, productivity and empowerment. It regards economic growth as essential but emphasizes the need to pay attention to its quality and distribution, analyses at length its link with human lives and questions its long-term sustainability.
- The human development paradigm defines the ends of development and analyses sensible options for achieving them.

(Haq, 1990: 21)

The HD approach has been inspired by Amartya Sen's pioneering works in welfare economics, social choice, poverty and famine, and development economics (Alkire, 2010). Sen's work on the Capability Approach has been widely recognised, including by the Nobel Committee for its contribution to the broader field of development. By linking justice, agency and well-being, the CA allows for a wider and more person-centred theory and practice of learnings-for-lives. The CA provides a useful "mode of thinking" (Robeyns, 2005: 96) by allowing for a paradigm shift from a focus on economic growth and national income to a focus on human well-being (Tikly and Barrett, 2011). In addition, the theoretical lens of the CA offers the possibility of thinking globally, whilst still remaining mindful of context.

In the context of skills development, it offers the possibility of considering questions of human flourishing and the good life. As Dreze and Sen (1995) argue, "the bettering of a human life does not have to be justified by showing that a person with a better life is also a better producer" (1995, p. 184). It also stresses the empowering nature of VET alongside the technical aspect, with significant curricular and pedagogic implications. Moreover, there is scope for conceptualisation of vocational capabilities and no significant work has been done linking skills and capabilities (Sorensen, 2012; McGrath, 2012; King, 2012; Powell, 2012).

Building on this literature, and in line with the research objectives of the thesis, the Capability Approach is further examined in section 2.2. Next, as discussed earlier in section 2.1.2, the policy implications of the underdeveloped and under-theorised nature of the skills discourse, particularly for South Asia and specifically for India are examined in the next section.

2.1.6 Skills development: The case of South Asia

King (2012) and Agrawal (2013) provide a review of the current skills development scenario and policy challenges faced by South Asian countries including India, Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan. In doing so, Agrawal (2013) draws upon a comparison with other Asian countries – Korea and Singapore. King (2012) provides a critical account of the case of India in his paper titled "geopolitics and meanings of India's massive skills development ambitions".

Agrawal (2013) argues that in recent years, the issue of skills development has been at the centre of the policy agenda of many national governments, particularly in South Asian countries. Two primary reasons have been attributed for the increasing interest in skills development. One is to meet the growing demand for skilled labour force on account of industrialisation and technological advancements. The second reason is to promote social

inclusion by removing barriers to education and training.

The VET policies pursued by governments in Asian countries have led to mixed experiences on the outcomes of VET. For example, Japan, Korea and Singapore have well established VET systems that have promoted economic development (ADB, 2004¹⁷; Cantor, 1985). Expanding on the case of the world-renowned system in Singapore, Agrawal attributes its success to a responsive policy environment. As the economy restructured and moved from labour intensive to capital intensive, and then to knowledge intensive, the VET system responded to ensure that the workforce had the relevant knowledge, skills and values. In addition, the educational and training systems were reviewed, upgraded, and re-modelled to stay responsive to the needs of school leavers, industry, and community (Seng, 2008).

Ul-Haq and Haq (1998) argue in the *Human Development Report in South Asia 1998*:

[v]ocational and technical education is a passport to better employment opportunities. This is the experience of Japan, the East Asian industrializing tigers where unemployment rates have remained consistently low, both because their populations possessed employable technical skills and because of the high economic growth rates that these skilled populations engineered. (p. 96)

Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Sri Lanka have fairly developed VET systems, whereas Bangladesh, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan have 'patchy' VET systems (Tilak, 2002). In most of the South Asian regions, the system has not been successful. As pointed by Ul-Haq and Haq (1998) more than a decade ago:

The vocational and technical education programmes in South Asia are often inadequate, irrelevant, and qualitatively poor. There is perhaps no other field in education that requires from South Asian policymakers more fundamental rethinking, sweeping reforms, and extensive change. (pg. 96)

Afghanistan

Beginning with the case of Afghanistan, Agrawal says that the TVET system is particularly important to rebuild the country. The conflict in the past decades has destroyed the country's training infrastructure. Due to an absence of a trained labour force, the growing demand for skilled labour is being met largely by neighbouring countries. The country's TVET programme enshrined in the National Strategic Education Plan (NSEP) 2010-2014, seeks to address this issue by providing relevant and quality TVET for all (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2007). The objectives include, increasing access by expanding TVET regional institutions from 16 to 32, increasing TVET provincial schools from 32 to 102 and establishing 364 TVET district schools by 2014. It also aims to increase the number of students to 150,000 with 30 % being female students. In addition, the Ministry seeks to promote the establishment of private TVET centres and support major industries to set up training units in close collaboration with chambers of commerce (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 2007).

¹⁷ Asian Development Bank. (2004). *Improving technical education and vocational training: Strategies for Asia*. Manila, Philippines: Asian Development Bank.

However, the training outcomes remain poor for reasons as identified in the 2008¹⁸ World Bank report. These include, a weak institutional and policy environment, poor outcomes and weak market linkages, disparities in access to educational facilities across gender, geography and population subgroups, and inadequate financing for training and infrastructure facilities.

Other issues such as weak linkage with market needs, under-utilization of online and international resources and low women's participation have been pointed out by USAID (2011). In addition, the same report also points to the large proportion of females in TVET in the informal sector. They participate in training in more traditional female occupations like sewing, handicrafts, carpet weaving and beautician services. The report also recommends for the need to identify new skill areas in which there is unmet demand in the country. More emphasis needs to be placed on training in emerging occupations and skills.

Bangladesh

The country faces scarcity of skilled labour and high underemployment. The Directorate of Technical Education was established in 1960 for the development of TVET. In 1969, the Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB) came into existence for organizing, supervising, regulating, controlling and developing TVET. As of 2008¹⁹, there were a total (public and private) of 3,116 TVET institutions with 20,703 teachers and 453,375 students (23.62% female enrolment).

However, the training institutions are not able to produce skills required to fulfil the market demand (CPD, 2001). In addition, the quality of graduates is not good. Moreover, 80% of employment is in the informal sector, primarily occupied by women. Therefore, there is need to focus on skilling for the informal sector. In addition, a World Bank report²⁰ states that the capacity utilization in the VET system is low with over half not being utilized (World Bank, 2007). In addition, studies have reported poor employment outcomes and low wages for VET graduates. Financing of VET is also a problem due to its high cost attributed to the low student-teacher ratio in addition to the large fixed and recurrent costs such as the cost of training equipment and trainer salaries.

The World Bank (2007) recommends that there is an urgent need for the development of a clear policy statement for the VET sector. It suggests that the government should invest more in VET and focus on improving the efficiency of the system rather expanding it.

Pakistan

Pakistan accounts for a small VET system – with 315,000 students enrolled across 1,522 institutions (National Vocational and Technical Education Commission [NAVTEC], 2009). The enrolment was planned to be raised to one million by 2010; a four-fold increase over 2005. Vocational institutions offer courses that vary from three months to two years in length, after grade 8. Vocational education is provided through polytechnic, vocational training centres,

¹⁸ *Skills development in Afghanistan*. Washington, DC: South Asia Human Development Sector, The World Bank.

¹⁹ Ministry of Education, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

²⁰ *Learning for job opportunities: An assessment of the vocational education and training in Bangladesh*. Bangladesh development series paper no. 19. Washington, DC: The World Bank.

apprenticeship schemes and other TVET institutions.

TEVT in Pakistan is structured on a bi-layered pattern, at the Federal level there is a National Vocational & Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) while at the provincial levels there are Technical Education & Vocational Training Authorities (TEVTAs). The programmes are administered by several federal, provincial and private agencies. The vocational institutions are managed by the Provincial Education Department while Technical Training Centres and Apprenticeship Training Centres are administered by the Provincial Labour Departments.

The country has experienced poor skills outcomes due to the following reasons – shortage of teachers and lack of experienced teachers; the nature of the course curriculum – most text books are imported and are in the English language; the curriculum followed in the institutions is out-dated and the examination system is mainly theory oriented. The teaching and learning materials are not of good quality and drop-out rates from the institutions are very high. Finally, there is a lack of linkage between schools and industry (Amjad, 2005; Shah, 2010).

Recently, NAVTEC developed a seminal policy document *Skilling Pakistan: National Skills Strategy 2009- 2013 (NSS)* (NAVTEC, 2009). The NSS has three main objectives: the provision of relevant skills for industrial and economic development; the improvement of access, equity and employability; and the assurance of quality through an integrated approach. The government is planning to set up additional technical and vocational institutions and increasing the enrolment in institutions.

The case of India

Policy measures and institutional mechanisms

VET programmes in India have gained greater attention in the past few years (King, 2012; Agrawal 2013). King in his review of the recent high priority accorded to skills training of the Indian workforce, traces its origins to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh who he says has played a key role in articulating the high priority for skills training of the Indian workforce. Back to at least 2004, King highlights speeches by Prime Minister Singh extolling the need for ‘all new entrants to the workforce’ to be ‘equipped with the requisite skills for high productivity and high-quality work’. Singh also set tone for the modernisation of the Industrial Training Institutions (ITIs) and apprenticeship training schemes, as well as the active involvement of industry in both the public and private sector in curriculum design and management (Singh reported in Planning Commission, 2007: 74).

This created a momentum for skills development and a strong sense of urgency, which led to the launch of the Skill Development Mission in the Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-12). The mission with an outlay of Rupees 228 billion (Gol, 2008, p. 91) aimed to increase the proportion of formally and informally skilled workers in the total workforce from the current

2% and 8% respectively ²¹ to 50% by 2022, thus creating 500 million²² skilled people (Gol, 2009). To deliver this number, significant policy and institutional measures were introduced.

In 2009, the first National Skills Development Policy (NSDP) was introduced and an institutional delivery framework involving close coordination among government, industry and training institutions to facilitate skills development efforts at the central level was established. This included incorporating new bodies such as the NSDC to collaborate with industry associations and industry representatives for upgrading training institutions and delivering vocational training. Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) were also established to define skills standards and assess training performance. In 2013, other standards and quality reforms²³ were introduced such as –the National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF) and National Occupational Standards (NOSs).

In 1950, the Directorate General of Employment and Training (MoLE) initiated the Craftsmen Training Scheme (CTS) and established 50 Industrial Training Institutions (ITI) to provide skills in various vocational trades. In addition, the Apprenticeship Training Scheme (ATS) was started in 1961 to provide on-the-job training. The oil boom in West-Asia during the 1980s increased the demand for skilled manpower in those regions resulting in the establishment of many new private training institutions called Industrial Training Centres (ITCs). Other institutions such as polytechnics (both public and private) also provided vocational training. In terms of administration, 17 ministries/departments including the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) and Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE) amongst others administered VET.

In 2011-12, there were around 9000 ITIs/ ITCs with a capacity of more than 1.2 million students under MoLE. There were 1244 polytechnics with a capacity of more than 295,000 students under the MHRD (Gol, 2008, p. 88).²⁴ In addition, a number of institutions were involved in providing training for the informal sector under various ministries. Some of these included Community Polytechnics, Jan Shikshan Sansthan and National Institute of Open Schooling. Agencies like Khadi and Village Industries Commission, Entrepreneurship Development Centres, Department of Women and Child Development and National Renewal Fund also implemented training programmes. In 2012, the capacity in the VET programmes was 3.1 million students per year.

In 2015, the Ministry of Skills Development and Entrepreneurship was established to coordinate all skill development efforts across the country. The mandate was to empower the youth of the country with skills that make them more employable and productive at work. In

²¹ to the employment and unemployment survey of 2004-05 conducted by the National Sample Survey Organization (Gol, 2006).

²² This number was subsequently reviewed and brought down to 400 M and then estimated to be 300M (Mehrotra. et.al, 2013)

²³ <https://www.msde.gov.in/nsqf.html>; <https://www.msde.gov.in/qp&nos.html>

²⁴ The number given for polytechnics is only for those who offer diploma courses in engineering. In addition, there are 415 institutions for diplomas in pharmacy, 63 for hotel management and 25 for architecture courses (Agrawal, 2013).

addition, the NSDP was updated in 2015 to include Entrepreneurship among other features²⁵. At the same time a comprehensive definition of skills development was articulated by GoI²⁶ as “any domain specific demand led skill training activity leading to employment, or any outcome oriented activity that enables a participant to acquire a skill, duly assessed and certified by an independent third party agency, and which enables him/her to get wage/self-employment leading to increased earnings, and/or improved working conditions, such as getting formal certification for hitherto informal skills, and/or moving from informal to formal sector jobs or pursue higher education/training” (The Gazette of India, 2015: 801).

MSDE includes organisations such as – Directorate general Training (DGT); NSDC; National Skills Development Agency (NSDA); National Skill Development Fund (NSDF); Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE); National Institute of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development (NIESBUD); and (SSCs). More recently, in 2015, the Prime Minister’s flagship skill development scheme – Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojna (PMKVY) was introduced for short-term training. Details regarding this programme are discussed in chapter 3 as part of the case study review. Other prominent schemes include Pradhan Mantri Yuva Yojana (PM-YUVA) launched in 2016 to support aspiring entrepreneurs.

The nature of the institutional and delivery mechanisms show that the state retains a very significant role in the provision of skills development. Borrowing from McGrath’s (2012a) toolkit it does so by introducing systemic and sectoral governance reforms; qualifications frameworks; quality assurance systems; new funding mechanisms; and managed autonomy for public providers.

Effectiveness of VET

Agrawal (2013) argues that VET programmes in India have not been very successful. An ILO efficiency/impact evaluation study of the ITIs and ITCs, in three states of the country (Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Orissa) showed that the labour market outcomes of the trained candidates were poor. Under 30% were able to find wage employment/self-employment. (International Labour Organization ILO, 2003, p. 31). Likewise, a World Bank report (2008)²⁷ points that more than 60% of all graduates remained unemployed even three years after completion of a course. Public training institutions face several challenges such as: quality and financing of the system, an ineffective funding model, mismatch between demand and supply side factors, and lack of match between labour market needs and vocational courses. The report suggests that major reforms in different areas are required before expanding the VET system and making the system more responsive to the need of the labour market.

Although in recent years the government has taken many initiatives such as encouraging public private partnership, upgrading ITIs into centres of excellence and introducing other schemes (Agrawal, 2012). However, King (2012) points that critical questions remain. These include – what policies have produced the proposals for skilling almost half of India? What are the assumptions about the existing traditions and character of India’s culture or cultures

²⁵ Refer policy document at <https://www.msde.gov.in/National-Policy-2015.html>

²⁶ <https://www.msde.gov.in/assets/images/Notification/Common%20Norms%20Notification.pdf>

²⁷ *Skill development in India: The vocational education and training system*. Washington, DC: South Asia Human Development Sector, The World Bank.

of skills development? Is the massive planned expansion of skilled people in India simply more of the same, or is there a new paradigm involved? For instance, how central will be the role of the private sector and of PPPs in the new skills training environment? How crucial has been the evidence that more than 90% of new jobs in India have been created in the informal sector? Finally, India, which is amongst the emerging donors, is promoting overseas aid to TVET at a much higher rate than any other donor, including Brazil and China (King and Palmer, 2011). But what model, if any, is it offering?

Unpacking these questions, King says that there is a paucity of long-term research on the skills development sector. There is need for a critical review of the current institutional architecture. This includes an analysis of the current systems of training in the informal sector, of vocational education in schools, and of the character of the ITIs. For instance, in terms of numbers, although the figure of skilling 500 million people by 2022 has become part of the stock in trade of politicians, public and private bodies concerned with skills development, and the media, its origins are contestable. It is also worth noting that the iconic numbers²⁸ could perhaps have been the target of the 'politics of performance' (Jansen, 2005), where the target actually becomes the policy.

Thus, reviewing the origins and traditions of skills training in India and the skills mission, King concludes that arguably, the thinking around the skills development mission falls neatly into what McGrath (2012), quoting Giddens, terms productivism, as described earlier in section 2.1.1. He further says that there have been other politics of skills in India's history, most notably, Gandhi's vision of skills-for-all in village India, as a crucial element of Indian self-reliance but also as an essential part of being human (Gandhi, 2006). A similar sentiment is expressed by J.P. Naik (1977) in his vision for educational reconstruction in India. Naik evoking Gandhi calls for the significance of inculcating values and the development of (social and productive) skills (Singh, 2013). Concluding, King asks a pertinent question, "now that TVET has the floor – what is the storyline?" King (2012:2)

VET and labour market conditions

The effectiveness of VET is also dependant on the labour market conditions. An examination of the demand side conditions shows that GDP in India has been on an upward trend since the 1980s, witnessing substantial increases every decade (Mehrotra and Saxena, 2014). This led to a high demand for both skilled and unskilled workers. However, the process of structural transformation that had gained momentum post 2004, in which the share of workers in agriculture was declining, with corresponding rise in employment in non-farm sectors, had stalled since 2012. This was due to decelerating employment growth in manufacturing and construction, with only the service sector driving growth of jobs in non-farm sector (Mehrotra et al., 2014).

Moreover, 90.7 percent of the total employment is informal with a dominant share of jobs being generated by micro and small units of the unorganized sectors. In addition, the number of contract jobs both in government and private sectors has been on the rise since 2012. Thus,

²⁸ 500 Million by 2022; only 2% of the workforce was formally skilled, and a further 8% skilled non-formally; 'demographic dividend' - a unique 25-year window of opportunity, with surplus of some 47 million trained workers to meet the global skills demand (Mehrotra, 2012; King 2012; NSDP 2015)

real wages have not increased in either rural or urban areas (Mehrotra and Parida, 2019).

On the supply-side, the demographic dividend made India one of the youngest nations in the world with 62 percent of the people in the working age-group (15-59 years). However, Mehrotra and Parida (2019)²⁹ argue that the educated and skilled youth are now disheartened due to lack of quality job opportunities and rising unemployment. This is leading to a decline in total employment and rise in Not in Employment Education or Training (NEET) youth. Data shows that the total employment growth has reduced from about 12 million per annum (pa) to about 2 million pa during 2000-2005 and 2005-2012. This was due to falling employment in agriculture (Mehrotra et al., 2014), and rising enrolment for both boys and girls at secondary and higher education (Rangarajan et al., 2011; Mehrotra and Parida, 2017). However, the non-farm sector could not generate the expected employment.

In addition, the lack of growth has adversely impacted female labour force participation rate (FLFPR) bringing it further down from 29 percent in 2005 to 18 percent in 2018. Also, there are considerable variations between urban and rural areas. While the FLFPR in urban areas declined marginally from 18 percent to 16 percent during 2005 and 2018, the rates in rural areas declined to historically low levels. In the case of men, while the overall LFPR remained constant at 56 percent, however, the LFPR of male youth population shows a consistent decline from 75 percent in 2005 to 59 percent in 2018. In rural areas, it declined from 77 percent to about 59 percent, while in urban areas it declined from 68 percent to about 59 percent. Overall, even though the declining LFPR is partly explained by rising enrolment in higher education, the massive rise in open unemployment among educated youth shows that the current job market is not capable of accommodating the youth (Mehrotra and Parida, 2019).²⁹

Similarly, others such as Verick (2018) argue that a disaggregated view of the labour market to ascertain the quality of employment in India shows that three dimensions are important. Firstly, low and declining female labour force participation which is the result of a complex set of demand and supply-side factors. These include social norms and the lack of appropriate locally available job opportunities. Unpacking these further shows the attribution of four factors – increased enrolment in secondary schooling; rising household incomes that pulled women out of the drudgery of agricultural labour; underreporting of women's home-based work; and the lack of employment opportunities for women in the non-farm sector. Therefore, there is a need to increase opportunities for women to work outside the home in decent and productive employment.

Secondly, majority of workers in India are in the informal sector due to the nature of the workplace and the employment conditions provided by employers. This number remains high due to the persistence of two countervailing trends– declining share of workers in the unorganized sector (enterprises with fewer than 10 workers, including own-account workers) from 86 percent in 2004-05 to 82 percent in 2011-12. At the same time, the share of informal

²⁹ Labour market indicators are based on authors' calculations using the National Sample Survey (NSS) survey data (2004-05 and 2011-12 employment and unemployment rounds) and the annual Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), 2017-18.

workers in the organized sector (i.e. workers without access to social security in larger enterprises) increased significantly through the greater utilization of contract and other forms of casual labour. Finally, the sectoral nature of employment trends shows that the manufacturing sector, accounting for only 12 percent of the jobs, has not been able to generate the expected jobs. Therefore, Verick concludes that the future of work will depend on how women work, the extent to which formal jobs are created and the sector in which jobs for youth are generated.

Further unpacking, the issue of low FLFPR for women in India, Raveendran (2016) points that it is largely on account of lack of support systems and not lack of employment and skills development opportunities per se. The real micro-level issues faced by women such as workplace safety, travel and lodging constraints and maternity benefits need to be accounted for to enable them to participate in the workforce. Likewise, the widespread prevalence of social norms that perpetuate gender inequality impact the quality of employment opportunities for women. Overall, this leads to women undertaking work that is informal, part-time, home-based and non-regular.

Research also shows that there is intersectionality of caste and class that further impacts the nature of work opportunities that women access (Gopal, 2013; Mawii, 2019). Women from poor and rural families are likely to engage in work that is not recognized and remain unpaid, while those from higher caste and class, exercise their choice to undertake work that meets their aspirations and standards of respectability (Gopal, 2013).

Further Raveendran (2016) reviewing the gender disaggregated data for age and its implications on wage level differentials shows that while the participation rate of men is maximum in the 25-34 age group, women of that age are mostly married and engaged in child birth and care. The gender gap in LFPRs is thus the highest in this age group. For women, peak employment comes later in life, so any possible gains in increased wages are also short lived. As Gosh (2013) argues, due to the gender-segmented nature of the labour market, women's wages on an average are two-thirds that of men. Moreover, the occupations where women work are usually paid less because women are willing to work for lower wages. The intersectionality of age, caste and gender is unpacked in more detail in section 2.4 –External environment and gender inequality.

To conclude, the above discussion on the skills discourse highlights the following:

1. The notion of skills remains under-developed. It is multidimensional and dynamic, occupying a nebulous space between education and work and life more generally.
2. Examining the literature on the origins of systems of vocational education shows the prevalence of two main systems – the German dual system and the Anglo-Saxon model. It also shows the paucity of research in the global south as compared to the rich tradition of VET research in the north.
3. The skills discourse is dominated by a productivist paradigm which only accounts for economic benefits and excludes all other non-material dimensions of life.
4. Therefore, it is argued that the skills discourse is under-theorised and does not present a wider vision of development. It is not a reflection of what it is to be human.

5. As a way forward, alternate humanistic approaches to evaluate the processes and outcomes of skills development are thus presented. These include the –HRA, IHDA, SLA and CA.
6. Finally, the current skills development policy scenario in South Asian countries – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan and India is presented. The discussion highlights the significance of skills development to meet the growing demand and the implementation challenges. It also reiterates the lack of imagination to conceptualise and deliver skills training that promotes lifelong learning. In addition, it highlights the changing demand and supply side conditions of the labour market that impact the effectiveness of VET. Particularly, the issue of lack of women’s participation in the workforce, including the reasons and impact on economic development are also highlighted.

In a continuation to the above discussion and building on the argument for a humanistic conceptualisation of skills development, the Capability Approach is examined in the next section.

2.2 The Capability Approach

2.2.1 Capability Approach: an analytical description

The capability approach developed by Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum is a broad normative framework for the evaluation and assessment of individual well-being and social arrangements and the design of development policies by governments and non-governmental organisations in developing countries. In academia, it is used in a wide range of fields, most prominently in development studies, welfare economics, social policy and political philosophy. It has provided the theoretical foundations of the human development paradigm (Fukuda-Parr and Kumar, 2003). The capability approach is not a theory that explains phenomena such as poverty, inequality or well-being. Instead, it provides a framework within which to conceptualize and evaluate phenomena. Therefore, applying the capability approach to issues of policy and social change necessitates the addition of explanatory theories.

The approach in its present form has been pioneered by the economist and philosopher Amartya Sen (1980, 1984, 1985a, 1985b, 1987, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1999) and has more recently been developed by the philosopher Martha Nussbaum (1988, 1992, 1995, 1998, 2000, 2003, 2004, 2007), and a growing number of other scholars. Amartya Sen developed the Capability Approach over three decades beginning with the *Tanner Lecture* ‘Equality of What?’ in 1979. The roots of CA can be traced to Aristotle’s (384-322 BC) analysis of *Eudaimonia* – “human flourishing”; Adam Smith’s (1776) Classical Political Economy where he shows concern for integrating the poor into the mainstream of the community; and Karl Marx’s (1844) concern with human freedom. More recent links can be seen with Rawl’s Theory of Justice (1971) and Streeten’s (1981) Basic Needs Approach.

Thus, engaging with various theories Sen concludes that neither opulence (income, commodity command) nor utility (happiness, desire fulfilment) constitute or adequately represent human well-being and deprivation. Instead what is required is a more direct

approach that focuses on human function(ing)s and the capability to achieve valuable function(ing)s (Clark, 2012). The word “capability” usually refers to trained potentials, including skills, abilities, and aptitudes. However, “capability” as used by Sen in this approach reflects the real opportunities (environmental opportunities and individual abilities) that a person has to lead a life that s/he values (Gasper, 2007).

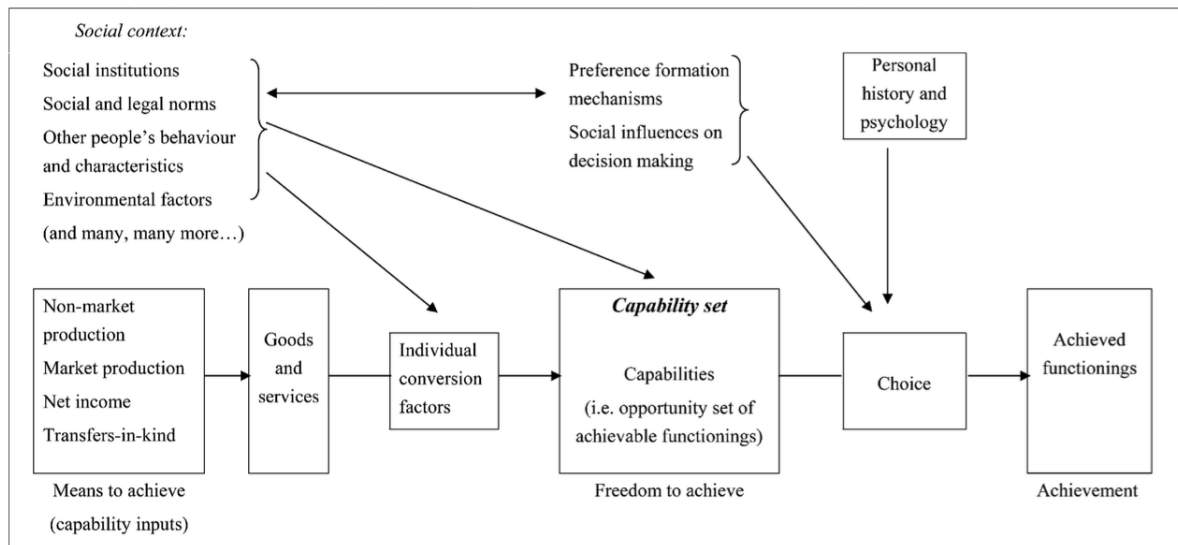
The major constituents of the CA are “functionings” and “capabilities.” The two concepts are interrelated but have distinct meanings. A functioning is an achievement, whereas a capability is the ability to achieve. Functionings are, in a sense, more directly related to living conditions, since they are different aspects of living conditions. Capabilities, in contrast, are notions of freedom, in the positive sense – what real opportunities you have regarding the life you may lead (Sen, 1987: 36). Therefore, functionings are considered constitutive of well-being. The term refers to realized achievements and fulfilled expectations, whereas the notion of capabilities “represents a person’s *freedom to achieve well-being* (Sen, 1987: 49, original italics)” and refers to effective possibilities of realizing achievements and fulfilling expectations. Thus, what the CA is concerned with is not only the functioning levels of people, but also their capabilities. It focuses on what people are effectively able to do and to be; that is, on their capabilities. It thus highlights the difference between means and ends, and between substantive freedoms (capabilities) and outcomes (achieved functionings) (Robeyns, 2005).

Further expanding the concept, Robeyns (2005) explains that for the CA, evaluations and policies should focus on what people are able to do and be, on the quality of their life and on removing obstacles in their lives so that they have more freedom to live the kind of life that, upon reflection, they have reason to value. Therefore, the CA asks for instance whether people have access to a high-quality educational system, to real political participation, to community activities that support them to cope with struggles in daily life and foster real friendships. For some of these capabilities, the main input will be financial resources and economic production, but for others it can also be political practices and institutions, such as the protection of freedom of thought, political participation and social norms.

2.2.2 Capability Approach: a conceptual framework

The conceptual elements of the approach have been synthesised by Robeyns’ (2005) for a multidisciplinary engagement with the theory. Robeyns untangling the mathematical complexities of Sen’s ideas, provides a simplified and stylised conceptualisation of the approach as illustrated in Figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1: Stylised non-dynamic representation of the CA



Source: Robeyns, 2005: 98

Robeyns' conceptualisation as shown in figure 2.1, highlights three main features of the CA – means versus functionings; achieved functionings versus capabilities; well-being versus agency.

Means versus functioning

Robeyns' argues that there is a crucial distinction between the means, such as goods and services, on the one hand, and functioning and capabilities on the other hand. Goods and services have certain characteristics that go beyond income, which makes them of interest to people. To explain the same, Robeyns' gives the following example: people are not interested in a bicycle because it is an object made from certain materials with a specific shape and colour, but because it can take them to places where they want to go, faster than if they were walking. Therefore, these characteristics of a good enable a functioning. In the bicycle example, it enables the functioning of mobility, to be able to move oneself freely and more rapidly than walking. Furthermore, in context of developing countries such as India, in addition to the functionality aspect, there are additional material constraints. In this case, the cost of the bi-cycle is also a constraining factor that would determine access and functionality.

Second, the relation between a good and the functioning to achieve certain beings and doings is influenced by three groups of conversion factors (figure 2.1, box titled individual conversion factors). These factors influence how a person can convert the characteristics of the commodity into a functioning, as follows:

1. Personal conversion factors (e.g. metabolism, physical condition, gender, reading skills, intelligence). If a person is disabled, or in a bad physical condition, or has never learned to cycle, then the bicycle will be of limited help to enable the functioning of mobility.
2. Social conversion factors (e.g. public policies, social norms, discriminating practises, gender roles, societal hierarchies, power relations). If the dominant societal culture imposes a social norm that women are not allowed to cycle without being accompanied by a male family member, then it becomes difficult to use the good to enable the

functioning.

3. Environmental conversion factors (e.g. climate, geographical location). If there are no paved roads, it again does not enable functioning.

Therefore, by including the impact of conversion factors to determine the effectiveness of resources available to people, the capability approach takes account of human diversity in two ways. One, by its focus on the plurality of functionings and capabilities as the evaluative space, and second by the explicit focus on personal and socio-environmental conversion factors. The significance of these factors, particularly the social norms and traditions that form women's preferences and influence their aspirations and choices have been highlighted by both Sen and Nussbaum (Sen, 1990; Nussbaum, 2000).

Robeyns' further clarifies that the concern with functionings and capabilities does not exclude other important dimensions. For instance, Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen in their evaluation of development in India, have stressed that:

It should be clear that we have tended to judge development by the expansion of substantive human freedoms — not just by economic growth (for example, of the gross national product), or technical progress, or social modernization. This is not to deny, in any way, that advances in the latter fields can be very important, depending on circumstances, as 'instruments' for the enhancement of human freedom. But they have to be appraised precisely in that light — in terms of their actual effectiveness in enriching the lives and liberties of people — rather than taking them to be valuable in themselves (Dreze and Sen, 2002: 3).

Therefore, to summarise, though the means of well-being are important in the capability approach, they are not the ultimate ends of well-being.

Achieved functionings versus capabilities

Robeyns advises the following considerations for the use of functionings versus capabilities (last box figure 2.1) in evaluative exercises and policy design:

1. Depending on the matter of consideration, either people's capabilities are evaluated, or their achieved functionings are investigated directly. To illustrate, Robeyns' uses the example of a boxer who deliberately gets beaten in a fight though he has the capability of not being attacked. However, in the case of domestic violence, it can be assumed that nobody wants to be beaten. Therefore, any violation suggests that the person did not have the capability of being safe from bodily harm in the first place. In another example, for instance to evaluate nourishment levels, it makes more sense to focus on the achieved levels of functionings directly instead of capabilities.
2. As a liberal philosophical framework, the CA is based on the principle that capability and not achieved functioning is the appropriate political goal. This is attributed to the different choices people make following their different ideas of the good life. However, people's choices are influenced by factors such as family, religion and community. Therefore, there are instances where choices are made for people, for example the case of being a Muslim in India. As a result, it can be said to be a constrained choice. However, it is also recognised that to qualify choice is very complex since it is a combination of

various factors of the individual and her/his environment. It is thus important to at least question the extent to which people have genuine access to all capabilities or it is a forced choice.

This is also referred to as the issue of adaptive preferences whereas Nussbaum (2000) explains our subjective preferences and choices are shaped and informed or deformed by society and public policy. Unequal social and political choices lead to unequal chances and unequal capacities to choose. These external (material as well as cultural) circumstances affect the inner lives of people: what they hope for, what they love, what they fear, as well as what they are able to do (Nussbaum, 2000).

Illustrating the issue of “adaptive preferences”, Sen argues that the fact that married women tend to value their own contribution to the household as lower than their breadwinner husband is based on general social perceptions of market evaluations of work, and hence gender contributions to social goods. Such a tendency is further compounded by their already low bargaining power in the family, thus resulting in their resignation to fate (Sen, 1990). Therefore, the capability approach has an implicit concern with power relationships, not dissimilar to Foucault’s (1977, 1980) argument that inequalities and power relationships operate not solely through direct forms of repression but often through less visible strategies of normalization³⁰.

Well-being and agency

Well-being is identified as a person’s standard of living, i.e., personal well-being related to one’s own life. If well-being is supplemented with commitments (i.e. an action that is not beneficial to the agent herself), then we are focusing on exercising of overall agency (Sen, 1987). The CA is concerned with an individual’s real opportunities to achieve his or her “well-being freedom” and “agency freedom” (Sen, 1992, p. 57). The former is one’s freedom to achieve things that are constitutive of one’s capability set, whereas the latter is one’s freedom to “bring about the achievements one values and which one attempts to produce” (Sen, 1992, p. 57). A person is thus viewed as an agent as opposed to a patient whose well-being or the absence of well-being is the only concern (Robeyns, 2005). Therefore, pursuing one’s own goals and interests, may also include furthering the well-being of others, respecting social and moral norms, or acting on personal commitments and the pursuit of a variety of values.

2.2.3 Critiques and strengths of the capability approach

A synthesis of the varied critiques of the CA drawing upon Robeyns’ (2002) and Clark’s (2012) evaluation is presented below.

Universally prescribed v/s democratically determined capabilities

Several commentators have criticised Sen for failing to supplement his framework with a

30

The question of power relations has not been addressed in this review. For more details see: Hill, 2003; Koggel, 2003; Robeyns, 2003b

coherent list of important capabilities (Williams, 1987; Nussbaum, 1988; Qizilbash, 1998). Unlike Nussbaum (2000) who provided a definite list of central human capabilities, Sen deliberately restrained from prescribing a list.

Examining these differences and locating reasons for the same, Robeyns (2005) points to the different intellectual histories of Sen and Nussbaum. Nussbaum aims to develop a partial theory of justice and thus identifies a general list of central human capabilities that she argues should be incorporated in all constitutions. This makes her work on the CA universalistic, as she argues all governments should endorse these capabilities. On the other hand, Sen was interested in the 'equality of what?' question and argued that there was reason to consider capabilities instead of utility (Sen, 1980). In addition, Sen's extensive work on social choice led to his views on the CA to be closer to economic reasoning and attuned to quantitative empirical applications and measurement. Nussbaum's work, on the other hand, is much closer to traditions in the humanities, such as narrative approaches. It engages more with the power of narratives to understand people's aspirations, motivations and decisions.

Thus, approaching the CA, Nussbaum proposes a concrete list of capabilities which is composed of the following 10 categories: (1) life (2) bodily health (3) bodily integrity (4) senses, imagination and thought (5) emotions (6) practical reason (7) affiliation (8) other species (9) play and (10) control over one's environment (Nussbaum, 2000, 2003).

However, Sen does not endorse one specific well-defined list of capabilities and argues that it is not the task of a theorist to endorse a pre-determined list of capabilities. Instead he says these should be the result of a democratic process determined by different purposes and conditions that influence the selection. However, Sen has not specified the procedure of this selection process. Likewise, Nussbaum says that local people can make the universal list more specific, however, that process is also contentious. At the same time, scholars such as Mozaffar Qizilbash (2002) and David Clark (2002) have shown that many of the existing lists of capabilities are reconcilable.

A related debate is on the use of the terms 'capability' or 'capabilities'. Examining the same Gasper (2007) makes the case that the 'capability approach' refers to Sen's work, and 'the capabilities approach' to Nussbaum's. Gasper (2007) further clarifies that:

'Capability' is the full set of attainable alternative lives that face a person; it is a counterpart to the conventional microeconomics notion of an opportunity set defined in commodities space but is instead defined in the space of functionings. 'Capabilities', in contrast, conveys a more concrete focus on specific attainable functionings in a life, and connects to ordinary language's reference to persons' skills and powers and the current business jargon of 'core capabilities' (Gasper, 2007: 336).

Examining the historical trajectory of this terminology, Robeyns (2005) argues that Sen in his earliest work, used 'capability' in a way where each capability referred to one person, and vice versa. In this terminology drawing on social choice theory, a capability is synonymous with a capability set, which consists of a combination of potential functionings. Functionings could therefore be either potential or achieved. However, Nussbaum labelled these potential functionings as 'capabilities'. In which case the capability set consists of a number of

capabilities, in the same way as a person's overall freedom is made up by a number of more specific freedoms.

Vagueness and incompleteness

The above issues have also led to the critique that the CA is vague and incomplete which makes it particularly difficult to operationalize in practice. It therefore requires additional social theories in supplement to perform specific evaluation and analysis. The choice of different theories could probably lead to different outcomes (Zheng, 2009; Sayer 2011).

At the same time, since the CA is also adaptable it can incorporate additional approaches. For instance, in a recent advancement, Clark and Hodgett (2019) developed the Integrated Capabilities Framework (ICF) consolidating insights from the capability, livelihoods and chronic poverty approaches to investigate human well-being. The authors also show how ICF can be made operational through fieldwork and argue its practical and policy relevance. Other instances of the application of CA are discussed in the next section.

Individualistic focus of the CA

The CA has also been critiqued for being too individualistic and paying insufficient attention to groups and social structures (Navarro, 2000; Devereux, 2001; Corbridge, 2002). Analysing this claim Robeyns draws upon Dreze and Sen's argument that the CA is "a 'people-centered' approach, which puts human agency (rather than organizations such as markets or governments) at the centre of the stage." (Dreze and Sen, 2002:6). Therefore, Robeyns concludes that the CA "does not rely on ontological individualism, while it does embrace ethical individualism" (Robeyns, 2005: 109). This is due to the fact that methodologically it includes collective units for evaluation such as the household.

High information requirements

Kuklys (2005) based on a survey of literature argued that while theoretically attractive, Sen's approach is difficult to operationalise empirically. Likewise, Clark (2006) says that the CA poses extremely high information requirements for evaluating individual well-being and social states. Evaluating social states typically depends on acquiring data on multiple functionings. In some cases, however, the relevant social indicators simply are not available. Moving from functioning to capability further complicates the exercise as additional information is required on counterfactual choices (which cannot be observed) as well as actual choices.

It is also argued that the aspect of agency freedom, has not been very well developed, owing to difficulties in its operationalization (Gasper, 2007). Even in the Human Development Reports, which adopt the CA as a conceptual framework, the focus has been on the well-being aspect of human development and the agency aspect has been much less appreciated. Nevertheless, there are some good examples in feminist studies that operationalize the CA with an emphasis on agency (Zheng, 2009).

Drawing upon the above critique, Clark (2002) highlights the following key strengths of the CA. To begin with, Clark says that the CA provides flexibility to the researcher to determine capabilities depending on the nature of the evaluative exercise. Sen does not endorse a definitive list of capabilities for practical and strategic reasons. Instead he argues that the

selection of capabilities depends on personal value judgements which could be influenced by the nature and purpose of the evaluative exercise.

Secondly, the CA provides a framework to assess individual advantage in a range of different spaces such as poverty assessments, well-being and human development. It thus allows measurement of a wide range of capabilities. The focus of the CA can be broadened further to include agency which recognises that individuals often have values and goals (such as preserving the environment, purchasing free trade products or opposing injustice, tyranny and oppression) that transcend and sometimes even conflict with personal well-being (Sen 1985a; 1992, ch. 4). Thirdly, it is recognised that the CA is not sufficient for all evaluative purposes and therefore needs to be supplemented with other social theories.

Finally, the CA broadens the informational base of evaluation by refocussing on people as ends in themselves (rather than treating them merely as means to economic activity), recognising human heterogeneity and diversity (through differences in personal conversion functions), drawing attention to group disparities (such as those based on gender, race, class, caste or age), embracing human agency and participation (by emphasising the role of practical reason, deliberative democracy and public action in forging goals, making choices and influencing policy) and acknowledging that different people, cultures and societies may have different values and aspirations.

2.2.4 Applications of the capability approach

Despite these operational difficulties many credible innovative attempts have been made to measure well-being in the functioning and capability space (Clark, 2012). Over the years the CA has been applied empirically; it has also been used for the purpose of analytical reasoning; and as a critical lens (Zheng, 2009). Clark (2002) endorsing the case for using empirical philosophy has attempted to confront abstract concepts of human well-being and development with the values and experiences of the poor (Clark, 2000; 2002; 2003). Towards this end, he developed and applied a methodology for investigating perceptions of well-being among the urban and rural poor in South Africa (Clark, 2002). The most significant finding that emerged was that most people appear to share a common vision of the good, which Clark says is not fundamentally at odds with the capabilities advocated by scholars like Nussbaum and Sen (Ibid., 2002). Others such as Alkire (2002) have developed a methodology to apply Sen's approach at the micro-level by drawing upon participatory tools and techniques to identify valuable capabilities.

Clark (2012) lists the following three broad classifications of empirical work undertaken in the last decade to apply the CA. One classification is based on the measurement of poverty and well-being (Balestrino, 1996; Chiappero Martinetti, 1994; 1996; 2000; Clark and Qizilbash, 2002; 2005; Klasen, 1997; 2000; Majumdar and Subramanian, 2001; Qizilbash and Clark, 2005; Sen, 1992; 1999). The most prominent policy application in this regard has been the HDI of the UNDP. While most applications focus on functioning, some studies have tried to capture capabilities in terms of freedom to choose (e.g. Schokkaert and Ootegem, 1990) or mapping human talents and skills (Jasek-Rysdahl, 2001). Innovative application methods drawing upon the concepts of participatory action research to study empowerment have also been undertaken (Clark, Biggeri, Frediani (Eds.) 2019).

Second, several studies have investigated the links between income (or expenditure) and various capabilities (Sen, 1985b; 1999; Balestrino, 1996; Ruggeri-Laderchi, 1997; Klasen, 2000). Finally, a third strand of work highlights group disparities by pointing to gross inequalities in terms of life expectancy, nutrition and literacy, etc., along the lines of gender, race, class, caste and age (e.g. Sen, 1985a; 1999; Majumdar and Subramanian, 2001).

Specifically, research with regard to application of CA in the areas of education, work and VET is examined below.

Context of education

Education related capabilities have been identified prominently by Melanie Walker (2006) who drew a list of higher education and lifelong learning capabilities. These include capability indicators that measure – autonomy for choice of training, participating effectively in class and interacting with others and being safe in the learning environment. In addition, Burchardt, Tsang and Vizard (2009) developed children's education capabilities. In the context life skills learning, Marion Young (2009) developed a list that includes aspects such as personal, interpersonal, cognitive and functional life skills learning.

Context of work

The CA has been used to examine labour market activation as well as the equalities and human rights position of individuals and groups (Chiappero-Martinetti 2008; Anand *et al.* 2009; Alkire *et al.* 2009; Burchardt and Vizard 2011; Bussi and Dahmen 2012; Bonvin and Orton 2009). In terms of measurement, Anand *et al.* (2009) constructed a survey instrument to measure people's work-related capabilities. Drawing upon questions from the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) he added other questions related to work and skills. These questions were derived from Nussbaum's (2000) capability of 'Control Over One's Environment'. It includes the right to seek employment on an equal basis with others; in work, being able to work as a human being, exercising practical reason; and forming meaningful relationships of mutual recognition with other workers.

Context of VET

Application of CA to understand VET has been non-existent (Powell, 2012). Powell contributing to this field, conducted a qualitative study on 20 students located at one South African VET college. The aim was to determine the capabilities that student's value for their lives and the extent to which VET has either enabled the expansion or the contraction of these capabilities. She concludes that first, VET students are extremely positive about their programmes. This is in contradiction to the argument that young people avoid VET in favour of an academic education, since they regard VET as preparing them for unemployment or for work that is repetitive, boring and underpaid (Psacharopoulos, 1991; Oketch, 2007). Second, neither did students view VET as being terminal in nature, i.e., they did not perceive themselves as "the boy or girl whose . . . abilities justify . . . a vocational bias" (Malherbe, 1977, p. 173).

Thirdly, in terms of how the training would help them to pursue future goals, in addition to being able to work and pursue higher education, the students spoke of the empowerment role of the training in enabling respect, confidence and pride. Likewise, in the context of work,

the training is not simply an opportunity to access the labour market; it is an opportunity to gain satisfying work where they will be respected and they can make a contribution. Lastly, through this process they were able to imagine new futures beyond the reality of their immediate experiences.

The above study highlights the importance of the hidden curriculum alluded by Pieck in his reporting of the Mexican experience. He argues that while VET short courses might be poor in quality, efficiency and effectiveness, they are still beneficial. These benefits, he argues “go beyond the mere learning of a trade or skill” but also include “socialisation, empowerment, [and] the motivation to set up micro-businesses . . .” (Pieck, 2011: 27).

Finally, examining the usefulness of CA to study VET, Powell concludes that it leads to a paradigmatic shift which results in different questions being asked (questions related to human development rather than human resource development) and insists that students previously excluded are given a voice in the answering of these questions. Otherwise, as argued by Cook-Sather (2002: 3), there is “something fundamentally amiss about building and rebuilding an entire system without consulting at any point those it is ostensibly designed to serve”. This also questions the core assumptions of VET students as portrayed in literature. It also highlights their needs and the extent to which they are being met.

However, one also needs to be mindful of concerns raised about the ways in which the capability approach is applied in education and training. For instance, Tikly (2013: 14) argues that the capability approach “should be seen as a way of framing issues and as a starting point for evaluating policy choices”, not as “providing ready-made answers to challenges facing the TVET sector”. Likewise, the CA is not a labour market theory; it provides a framework to guide thought about how and what policies should seek to achieve (Lehwess-Litzmann 2012; Egdell *et al.* 2015; Bryson, 2015. Moreover, the approach is still in its infancy in being applied to education in general and vocational training (Tikly, 2013).

To conclude, the above review highlights the following:

1. The character of the CA is interdisciplinary with a focus on multidimensional aspects of well-being.
2. The CA by rightly placing the concepts of means to achieve, freedom to achieve and actual achievement, provides a normative framework to evaluate development processes and outcomes. By including both well-being freedom and agency freedom, it enables to account for people’s needs to pursue their own goals and desires to further the well-being of others. It also includes addressing the motivations and constraints of people’s ability to pursue their desired goals. It thus accommodates and critically evaluates the design of social arrangements and cultural values in relation to individual capabilities. One that enables analysis of exclusion at multiple levels. For instance, the case of gender inequality needs to be evaluated in terms of deprivation on women’s agency rather than only income disparity.
3. Sen’s CA is critiqued for being vague and incomplete; posing high information requirements; and being too individualistic. However, the same are also construed as strengths of the CA that make it adaptable, pluralistic, recognising the centrality of people as being ends in themselves.

4. From an application perspective, Sen's CA provides an empirical basis for deriving capabilities that are specific to the context and does not prescribe a definitive list of capabilities. The CA is also adaptable and lends itself to include additional social theories needed to perform specific evaluation and analysis. The application of CA to the study of VET is non-existent.

Expanding the above discussion in line with the research question, the next section examines theories of aspirations to derive linkages with capabilities.

2.3 Aspirations

The significance of aspirations in the context of education, work and life has been iterated in research and policy. For instance, policy documents on education and skills emphasise the significance of setting and meeting aspirations. For example, the National Policy of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (2015, GoI) mentions aspirations over a dozen times. This includes using the term in the stated objective of the Skill India Mission, i.e. to 'make quality vocational training aspirational for both youth and employers whereby youth sees it as a matter of choice and employer acknowledges the productivity linked to skilled workforce by paying the requisite premium'³¹ and 'promote entrepreneurship culture and make it aspirational'³². In addition, 'aspirations and advocacy' have been identified as one of the eleven paradigms and enablers to achieve the objectives of Skill India Mission.

This shows that aspirations matter. However, as Hart (2016) argues that although assumptions are made in government discourses about the possibility of ranking and raising aspirations, there is no engagement with a deeper understanding of the various constructs and contextual matters. Aspirations can relate to many aspects of life. It is therefore necessary to derive a multi-dimensional human development-oriented view to understand the combination of influences that precede and shape aspirations and their relationship to capabilities and functionings. Otherwise, as Unterhalter, Ladwig, and Jeffrey (2014: 140) argue that in policy arenas, "the rhetoric of aspiration ultimately serves as a diversion from the reality of increasing social exclusion and inequality".

The word 'aspiration' originates from the Latin word *aspiratio* that means breathing. It is commonly used to mean hopes or ambitions to achieve something. An aspiration is defined as the perceived importance or necessity of goals (Copestake and Camfield, 2010). It is simply a target one wishes to achieve (Bernard, Taffesse and Dercon, 2008). As a social construct, aspiration has been conceptualised variously across disciplines to understand the motivations of human behaviour, the impact of socio-cultural factors and issues of economic growth and development. In development studies, the concept of aspirations closely follows common-sense language (Conraide and Robeyns, 2013). The examined review presents an interdisciplinary overview drawing from psychology, anthropology, sociology, economics and development studies.

³¹ NSDP, 2015: Pg 15

³² NSDP, 2015: Pg 16

2.3.1 Aspirations: an interdisciplinary conceptualisation

Aspirations: a psycho-social view

Early experiments in psychology that measured the “level of aspiration” (Dembo, 1931; Hoppe, 1931) and achievement motivation (McClelland and Atkinson, 1949) attempted to explain human behaviour with regard to aspirations. The psychological determinants of the level of aspiration were identified as the desire of people to do well, not only for the sake of doing well, but to enhance their social status. The desire to avoid failure and the need to keep aspirations unrealistically high were found to be mediated by the ego-level (Frank, 1935). The influence of contextual factors i.e., culture and the social environment on individual behaviour was introduced in 1940s (Frank, 1941; Lewin et. al., 1944). The theory of achievement motivation found that human behaviour is essentially goal-directed and the most important information to know about a person is the direction and intensity of his or her aspirations (Collier, 1994). These were later complemented with social comparison theory (Collier, 1994) to explain individual differences in the level of aspiration, based on cultural particularities that create an inherent pressure towards uniformity (Festinger, 1989).

In more recent work Quaglia (1996: 130), based on his research on student aspirations brought these concepts together as an integrated schema to conceptualise aspirations. He defines aspirations as “a student's ability to identify and set goals for the future, while being inspired in the present to work towards those goals”. This construct of aspirations has two major underpinnings: inspiration (present-oriented) and ambitions (future oriented). In addition, he also emphasises the significance of context and culture in determining aspirations. He suggests that schools can foster aspirations by creating an environment that encourages diversity, excellence and risk-taking among students, thereby promoting higher achievement. Furthermore, reflecting on the agency of students, he says that they can co-create an environment along with the educators that promotes empowerment and belonging.

In addition, it has been stated that aspirations should be recognized not only with respect to educational attainments, but vocational and most importantly, quality of life issues as well (Ibid. 1996). This view has significant implications for the present research to justify and conceptualise aspirations and related categories.

Aspirations as a cultural capacity: an anthropological view

Traditionally, aspirations, Appadurai (2004) argues are understood as – wants, preferences, choices, and calculations, have been assigned to the discipline of economics. However, he says that “aspirations are never simply individual. They are always formed in interaction and in the thick of social life” (pg 67). Aspirations, like other social constructs, form parts of wider ethical and metaphysical ideas which derive from larger cultural norms. In addition, aspirations such as a good life, health and happiness exist in all societies.

Appadurai further argues that strengthening the capacity to aspire, which he conceives as a cultural capacity, has significant implications for development and poverty reduction. In this argument, he conceptualises culture as a pathway towards futurity rather than pastness. In doing so, he positions poor people as agents of change. He says that by looking at aspirations as cultural capacities, provides a better understanding of how people actually navigate their social spaces. Therefore, building the capacity of the poor to aspire, strengthens the

relationship between democracy and development.

People's views on the constituents of a good life may vary depending on their local ideas and beliefs. For instance, beliefs about life and death, the nature of worldly possessions, the significance of material assets over social relations, the relative illusion of social permanence for a society, the value of peace or warfare. These higher order normative beliefs further dissolve into more densely local ideas about marriage, work, leisure, convenience, respectability, friendship, health and virtue. Narrowing further, these intermediate norms often stay beneath the surface and emerge only as specific wants and choices. For instance, desire for a particular piece of land, for a certain marriage alliance, government job versus a job overseas.

Appadurai further argues that the capacity to aspire is a navigational capacity. The more privileged in any society have better opportunities to practice the use of this capacity compared to their poorer and weaker neighbours. Therefore, the horizons of the latter's aspirations are limited. For instance, the poor voice their choices in terms of specific material and proximate wants for their children, for a house, desires for work. These lists in turn are tied up with more general norms about the good life, and life more generally. Thus, this contextualisation is important to build their capacity to aspire.

Appadurai provides guidance for development practitioners working on poverty reduction projects, including job provision, as follows:

1. Observe the process of consensus production i.e., the rituals through which consensus is produced both among poor communities and between them and the more powerful. This process provides insights that can enable changing the terms of recognition in favour of the poor.
2. Encourage local teaching and learning which increases the ability of poor people to navigate the cultural map in which aspirations are located. This includes cultivating an understanding of the links between specific wants or goals and more inclusive scenarios, contexts and norms among the poor.
3. Cultivate voice among the poor so that the sinews of aspiration as a cultural capacity can be built and strengthened. Conversely, through exercising the capacity to aspire the exercise of voice by the poor can be extended.
4. Develop a set of tools such as surveys for identifying the cultural map of aspirations that surround the specific intervention. This requires a method of placing specific technologies or material inputs in the aspirational contexts for the people most affected by them. This includes recognition of aspirations that connect to culture i.e., the lifestyle, values, morals, habits and material life of any community.

Through his work with the Slum Dwellers International (SDI), a Mumbai-based coalition of housing activists, Appadurai shows how mobilization can expand and enrich the capacity to aspire within a specific social and cultural milieu. He concludes that, "no space is too grand or too humble for the spatial imagination of the poor and for the global portability of the capacity to aspire" (pg 80).

Aspirations: a socio-economic view

Inspired by Appadurai's conceptualisation of aspirations, Ray (2003), a micro-economist of development, presented a non-conventional view of individual behaviour. Ray argued that individual desires and standards of behaviour are defined by experience and observation of others in the cognitive neighbourhood. They don't exist in social isolation as consumer preferences that can be aggregated at an individual level. He refers to this social grounding of individual desires as aspirations. Although iterating that similar views have been presented by other economists such as Karandikar *et al.* 1998; Börgers and Sarin, 2001; Mookherjee and Ray 2001; Dixon (in Ray, 2003). However, extending the same, Ray presents an aspirations-based approach to individual behaviour and its implications for the persistence of poverty.

Ray's approach has three major components: first is the idea of an aspirations window. Like Appadurai, Ray says that individual aspirations are born in a social context; they do not exist in a vacuum. The lifestyles, social and political norms and economic well-being of other individuals determine the goals and aspirations of a person. Further limiting this context, Ray states that only people in the local society, i.e., those similar to a person or relevant to his/her experiences are considered. This forms an individual's aspirations window. He also says that aspirations are multi-dimensional, such as for better material standard of living, dignity, good health, recognition, political power, or the urge to dominate others on religious or ethnic grounds.

The second component is called the aspirations gap that explain the ways in which aspirations affect individual behaviour. Ray defines this gap as the distance between what an individual might aspire to and the conditions she currently finds herself in. Ray finds that both a large or a small aspirations gap may be inimical to investment effort to better one's own conditions. The final component is the impact of socio-economic conditions on aspirations. Ray finds that rapid development and increased mobility widen the aspirations window leading to possibilities of conflict. More significantly, cultures that enhance impressions of economic mobility, may lead to increased effort by individuals leading to a failure of aspirations.

Therefore, this approach shows that in order to deal with socio-economic issues, it is necessary to be cognisant of all the mechanisms that influence persistence of the particular condition. To bring change, the idea of socially determined aspirations and their two-way interaction with individual behaviour need to be examined.

2.3.2 Aspirations and Capabilities

Conceptualising aspirations and capabilities

Appadurai (2004) linking the capacity to aspire with capabilities, says they are two sides of the same coin. They nurture each other, the same way as recognition and redistribution recall and require one another. Elaborating on this concept, he argues that the capacity to aspire provides an ethical horizon within which more concrete capabilities can be given meaning, substance and sustainability. Conversely, the exercise and nurture of these capabilities verifies and authorizes the capacity to aspire and moves it away from 'wishful thinking to thoughtful wishing' (pg 82). Moreover, according to Appadurai, freedom, which is the anchoring good in Sen's CA, is essentially 'a collective, dense, and supple horizon of hopes

and wants' (pg 82). Absent such a horizon, freedom is simply a choice, either informed or not.

Conraide and Robeyns (2013) linking aspirations with the CA argue that although the normative concern of CA is with capabilities we have reason to value, however, it does not tell us which capabilities are valuable. This selection of capabilities can be done in a range of different ways (Alkire, 2008; Robeyns, 2005). They provide a method in which through a process of voicing and reflecting upon aspirations, agents indicate precisely which capabilities are valuable and most relevant for them. Expressed aspirations indicate which capabilities are not yet realized. Such a derivation therefore makes it an excellent tool to decide which dimensions of well-being to target in a human development intervention. This process of voicing of aspirations also leads to unlocking of agency that is needed to bring change. People are then particularly motivated to act.

Examining the significance of aspirations and its linkage with CA, Hart (2016) says that aspirations matter because they are a manifestation of the freedom to aspire which is valuable for human flourishing in its own right. She further argues that the CA enables us to articulate aspirations in a way that helps to counter the narrow policy discourse on aspirations, which is an over-simplification of the role of aspirations in human development.

Connecting aspirations to capabilities and functionings, Hart (2016) says that the functioning of aspiring arguably sits between the freedom to aspire and the capability to achieve the particular aspiration. Thus, aspirations are powerfully situated as the forerunners to many capabilities. She further draws upon Bourdieu's (1977) argument that our (pre)dispositions may be strongly influenced by what he termed, habitus, cultural and other forms of capital, our interactions with others and the configurations of power relations in different fields that we encounter. Thus, aspirations mean little without origins and location in existing power structures, legal entitlements, customs and social practices, institutional and national priorities.

Linking this with the CA, Hart says provides an understanding of the conversion factors that enable or restrict the development of aspirations and capabilities. The researcher argues that multiple conversion factors affect an individual's freedom to aspire and the development of aspirations. These conversion factors include: the interaction of an individual's characteristics, values and dispositions, their forms of capital and resources, their social context and cultural influences as well as the physical setting with its structures and institutions, environmental features and location relative to other places and spaces of social action. She further argues a distillation process occurs from aspiration to capability and capability to functioning, which is influenced by conversion factors.

Walker (2006) in her work on developing a list of education capabilities for South African schools argues that aspiration is a distinct capability. She says that it is not a resource for developing other capabilities, such as the case of career aspirations fostering the capability for paid work. Drawing on Appadurai's argument to strengthen the capability to aspire, Walker says that aspiring enables people, especially the poor and women, to alter their adapted preferences, by contesting the conditions of their own welfare through the capacity to aspire. Walker in her research observed that going to school enabled girls to imagine a better life for themselves. Through vocalisation of these positive aspirations, they refused to settle for less, fracturing cycles of adapted preferences. In addition, she shows that schooling

fosters the capacity to debate, contest, inquire and participate critically, i.e., voice, which also nurtures aspiration.

Application of aspirations in CA

A review of research that applies the concept of aspirations and capabilities shows that limited work has been done in the context of education, work and life as examined below. In the context of skills, Powell (2012) has highlighted the issue as discussed in section 2.2.3.

Context of life

Conraide and Robeyns (2013) conducted an action research in a township in Cape Town, South Africa, to understand the role of aspirations in small-scale human development interventions. This included a component of skills training and awareness-raising. In this intervention, a group of women went through a process of voicing, examining, and then realizing their aspirations. In the process, issues of adaptation were overcome through deliberation and awareness building. Therefore, their argument that aspirations may have a capabilities-selecting role and an agency-selecting role was substantiated through the research.

In this research, the aspirations articulated by women included to –be financially independent and personally autonomous; be in a position to make their own decisions, not having to conform to the cultural expectation that women should be respectful of men (Conradie, 2013). Another central aspiration was to assist others who are in need, and to help the community to achieve its social objectives. To fulfil this desire, they aspired to get the opportunity to do some kind of work, or to fulfil a dream such as providing for their children. In addition, they wanted work to be satisfying and in line with their own interests. The authors also found that following support was required to overcome obstacles: resources such as machines; skills and business training and an appropriate workspace; money; support from organizations in the community and from the government. The women also wanted a sense of personal independence and the self-confidence and ability to challenge established cultural norms.

In another significant study, Ibrahim (2011) analyses the aspirations of the poor in Egypt and finds that people's aspirations relate to: health, education, income, job, business, marriage, travel, playing a role in the community, good house and living environment. Furthermore, the author found that due to structural impediments people were not able to achieve their aspirations. This 'aspirations failure', further led to a downward spiral and intergenerational transmission. In case of the former one aspiration failure leads to another, while in the latter, the failure of parents in poor communities to fulfil the aspirations of their children, leads to transmitting failed aspirations to the next generation.

Ibrahim proposes a framework which links aspirations and capabilities by introducing the concept of aspired capabilities. She also extends the definition of capabilities from those that are achievable to those that are achievable and aspired. By doing so, the author accounts for capabilities that poor people might value and wish to achieve but cannot. She further argues that the CA is appropriate since it accounts for the importance of culture in the valuation and achievement of human capabilities. Secondly, aspirations are based on individuals' freedoms to achieve the lives that they aspire to and their ability to use their human agency to

effectively achieve these aspirations, and both concepts are central in the CA.

Identifying capabilities to which poor people aspire, but which are unfulfilled, through a grounded methodology, Ibrahim finds a 'capability deficit' in two main areas: job creation and education. She therefore recommends that if the government was to design a policy to help the poor fulfil their aspirations, it would need to provide employment opportunities and good education. In addition, emphasising the significance of people's aspirations she says that any people-centred policy should aim to help them expand their capabilities and achieve their aspirations. She further states that if policymakers fail to adopt such aspirations-enhancing policies unfortunately, poor people will remain afraid to aspire and unable to reach a better life.

Building on the literature on poverty and aspirations, Tiwari (2018) studies aspirations in context of the New Middle Class (NMC) in India. Based on Bourdieu's research in the French education system³³, she argues that the NMCs *doxa*, i.e., the macro-environment is characterised by networks, social capital, resource access, information availability and access. The *habitus*, i.e., micro-environment is defined by valued traditions such as to seek higher education, find a secure job, strive to improve material wellbeing and ownership of assets, invest in the next generation. Their linked aspirations³⁴ include the desire for a professional career, well-being of family, owning a house, children's higher education and career, owning a car, travel for leisure, be part of a group and participate in activism. The agency needed to realise the same is a combination of individual, relational³⁵ and collective agency. Finally, the capability and freedoms needed include – education and access to institutions, mobility; healthcare systems, resource networks; financial means and access to information; group acceptance.

Tiwari thus concludes that the key difference between the aspirations of the poor and the NMC can be located in their respective *habitus* and *doxa*. The poor do not have the opportunity structure, the networks or the safety that the NMC *habitus* and *doxa* create and reinforce. The *habitus* and the *doxa* of the NMC create a capability of capabilities terrain. This is the opportunity to create more opportunities and access choices that propel them to achieve their life goals.

Context of education

Hart (2016) conducted two studies with secondary school students in England in 2004 and 2008 to examine their views on aspiration and need. She also identified the factors that reduce or enhance an individual's well-being freedom and hence their capability in relation

³³ defines *habitus* as a "matrix of perceptions, appreciations and actions" which are learnt at school and in the home. Further, these structures can both allow and restrict practices and goals giving rise to *doxa* – a universe of the 'undiscussed' and self-evident (Bourdieu and Nice, 1977).

³⁴ derived from data on ownership of cars and other assets; small surveys conducted in Mumbai, Patna and Delhi and existing data from NCAER.

³⁵ Relational agency refers to the social and institutional context that shapes the opportunities and resources that can be accessed by individuals. For further details refer Cleaver (2007), Ibrahim and Alkire (2007) and Tiwari (2014).

to realising aspirations. These factors included perceived agency of the individual; perceived barriers and constraints; perceived needs; and the adaptation of preferences by young people. Her research found that aspirations could be held concurrently, are relational, dynamic and connected to aspirations held by others. They are also multi-dimensional and vary in importance and time- scale. Aspirations may relate to home, school, work, national or international life. The data also revealed the particular significance gender in relation to aspiration whereby, gender inequality was a key site of injustice.

Vos and Ballett (2018) exploring the relatively unexplored links between education and aspirations in the capability approach study the aspirations of youth in France. They say that the methodologies to identify and measure aspirations and their formation within the capability approach are scarce. In their study to determine the extent to which formal education contributes to the formation of aspirations they construct a 4-part questionnaire to identify capabilities. They find that there is a positive correlation between students who value their education and those who report high levels of well-being in school, and they are also the ones who aspire to the highest levels of return of their education. This is in line with extant literature (Sewell and Shah, 1968; Kao and Tienda, 1998; Marjoribanks, 1998; Schoon and Parsons, 2002; Heckman, 2011; Croll and Attwood, 2013; among others), that shows that sociohistorical context, the socio-economic status of the parents and the level of parental involvement in education are crucial determinants of children's aspirations.

Context of work

Egdal and McQuaid (2016) studying the aspirations and capabilities of young people entering the labour market argue that the external environment plays a crucial role. Both, a poverty of aspiration and lack of opportunity combine to make it difficult for youth in the labour market (Roberts and Atherton 2011). It is also problematic when young people have high expectations which leads to tensions if suitable opportunities are not available (McDonald *et al.* 2011). On the other hand, according to Yates *et al.* 2011, young people with uncertain occupational aspirations are less likely to be in employment or training. Therefore, it is important to identify and match the aspirations of young people with the labour market requirements.

To conclude, the above discussion on aspirations highlights the following:

1. Aspirations matter, particularly in the case of education and skills that seek to build and fulfil people's aspirations. The concept of aspirations has been studied across disciplines. This review unpacks the same from a psycho-social, anthropological, economic and human development view. However, it shows that there is lack of an integrated view to conceptualise and measure the same.
2. CA provides a useful framework to engage with the concept of aspirations. Few empirical studies have been reviewed that apply the concept of aspirations using the CA in the context of education, work and life. The conceptual linkage of aspirations and capabilities varies across studies. In some cases, aspirations are used as the space from where capabilities are identified. In others, the concept of capabilities is expanded to include the notion of 'aspired capabilities'. The significance of external environment in realising

capabilities has also been highlighted. However, there is no empirical work on skills and aspirations.

In line with the research questions, the next section presents a review of literature to understand aspects of the external environment and gender inequality.

2.4 External environment and gender inequality

Research that highlights gaps in the skills discourse³⁶ and the limitations of the CA³⁷ shows that there is need to account for the structural and cultural contexts, including unequal gender relations in which skills development occurs. In the terminology of the CA, conversion factors (personal, social and environmental) play an important role in enabling people to access opportunities and convert them into actual achievements. However, a simplistic account of conversion factors excludes the complexities of underlying structural issues that need to be tackled. In addition, research shows that the nature and impact of a restrictive external environment remains underspecified. Expanding on this critique, Clark (2012) says that Sen, unlike Nussbaum (2000), does not prominently distinguish internal capabilities from the external conditions required to achieve these capabilities.

2.4.1 External environment

Conversion factors- an expanded view

Conversion factors contribute to the realisation of aspirations by providing practical opportunities for individuals to reach what they want to achieve. (Trani and Biggeri, 2011). These conversion factors can be social (social norms, religious norms, sexism, racism, etc.), personal factors (disabilities, skills, gender, age, etc.) or environmental factors (living in a dangerous area, existence of a transportation system and a communication structure, schools or health services).

Trani and Biggeri provide an expanded view of conversion factors to show the application of CA to disability and its consequences in terms of public policy. The proposed framework was tested in a study to reform the welfare policy on disability in Italy (Biggeri et al., 2011). The framework includes material factors such as assets, infrastructures, commodities, income and services that can enable or restrict the benefit of a given capability. It also includes immaterial factors such as individual abilities or social norms, identities, beliefs, etc. These material and immaterial factors intervene at four levels: at the individual level (age, sex, talent, impairment), at the family level (income, shelter, food ration, support, costs and expenditure), at community level (social capital, traditional rules, solidarity, social participation) and at regional or national levels (public goods investment, legal framework, rights and obligations such as tax, military service).

The authors further argue that the conversion factors can be resources or constraints. For instance, in a family where parents are looking after their children's well-being by sending

³⁶ section 2.1.4

³⁷ section 2.1.3

them to school, constitutes a resource. However, family can constitute a constraint when several dependents rely on a single income of one member.

Enabling environment for skills development and work

Underlining the crucial role of an enabling environment in thinking about skills, King (2012: pg 7) clarifies the 'famously misquoted' axiom – 'four years of education makes a difference to farmer productivity'. He says the reality is that education makes no difference in a stagnant agricultural environment, but a huge difference when there is agricultural extension, market access etc. Likewise, in the case of skills, it is not just an economic investment environment that is vital. In addition, a 'nurturing environment' from the womb thru the early years, as well as a supportive social, institutional and political environment is crucial (Ibid., 2012).

Research shows that an intervention can enable a person to achieve what he/she values, contingent on access to resources available to a person and their personal, social and environmental circumstances. Examining the role of external conditions in the context of vocational education, Wheelahan and Moodie (2017) explain that while vocational education may provide education that helps students to develop capabilities, these capabilities may not be realised in workplaces that resist change, are discriminatory, or provide few opportunities for discretionary learning or for the development of autonomous practice. Therefore, unless external conditions for the realisation of capabilities are considered, the use of CA may result in the formal provision of opportunities, but not the substantive means to realise them, or it may result in paternalistic policies.

Egdel and McQuaid (2016) in their study of employment activation of disadvantaged young people in the UK found that both individual characteristics and the socio-economic context matters. Individual barriers faced by people include lack of qualifications, skills and experience, lack of aspirations, confidence and self-belief. Other barriers stem from personal circumstances such as lack of encouragement and careers advice from school, housing problems, literacy and numeracy support and being young parents. These individual conversion factors are central in enabling young people to live a life they have reason to value (Bonvin and Moachon 2008).

In addition, opportunities are limited due to external conversion factors including social conversion factors (social norms and practices) and local employment opportunities (Bonvin 2009). Thus, it is important to ensure that people have access to information regarding level of skills required to undertake opportunities. In addition, a legal and policy framework that combats discrimination and a labour market that offers valuable work opportunities is required. It is also necessary to provide a socially inclusive environment (Bonvin, 2009; Hollywood *et al.* 2012) to counter the effect of structural inequalities that constrain people's choices (Nussbaum, 2000; Zheng & Walsham, 2008). Also, local demand side approaches that match the needs of specific local labour markets and jobseekers (Bonvin and Orton 2009) are needed, although this may be difficult to achieve in practice (Egdel, 2016).

Furthermore, the importance of socially and culturally embedding people's experiences is also highlighted (Egdel and McQuaid, 2016). People's choices operate under many constraints, such as differing aspirations, uncertainty over future career, lack of information regarding alternatives that might be available and that they might value. Hence, high quality

careers advice and an emphasis on future progression are important (McQuaid and Fuentes 2014). Therefore, a 'broad' model including individual factors, personal circumstances and external factors needs to be considered, instead of a 'narrow' view that focuses on supply-side issues (McQuaid and Lindsay 2005).

Egdel and McQuaid (2016) conclude that the current welfare to work initiatives are limited due to lack of opportunities in the labour market. People's choices are dependent on the level and types of labour demand and which employers chose to employ them. The extent to which demand from employers could be addressed so that young people could make 'true' rather than 'constrained' choices is questionable. In addition, structural inequalities impact the trajectories of young people, despite the emphasis made on individual capacity.

Enabling institutional and policy environment

The merits of creating an enabling institutional environment and including the human dimension in development planning were promoted by Haq (1995). Haq argued that such a plan should begin with a human balance sheet and the plan targets should be clearly specified in terms of human needs. The strategy should be decentralized to involve community participation and self-reliance. Finally, it should contain a human framework for analysing performance.

Further building the case for an enabling external (policy) environment for the realisation of capabilities, Mehrotra (2019) argues that the complex functioning of participation needs to be contextualized not at an individual level but at the community level—collective voice and collective action—to have operational use. He elaborates the particular significance of decentralized governance in providing a good enabling environment for the enhancement of human capabilities. Mehrotra argues that decentralised governance when accompanied by community participation, has the potential to reduce poverty and increase levels of human development.

Proposing a model of decentralisation in the interest of basic service delivery and human development, Mehrotra argues that three conditions need to be met – effective state capacity both at central and local levels; empowered local authority to which functions, functionaries, and finance have even devolved; and 'voice' articulated on a collective basis by civil society through institutions enabled by the state. Examining the case of India, the author concludes that due to a strong federal system, the country is performing below par in human development terms.

Concluding, Allias (2012) argues that the environmental and institutional factors are not 'nice-to-haves', on top of a well-functioning vocational education system. They are part of what makes a vocational education system work.

2.4.2 Gender inequality

Gender inequality- contestations and complicities

Sen says that "the question of gender inequality can be understood much better by comparing those things that intrinsically matter (such as functionings and capabilities), rather than just the means [to achieve them] like resources. The issue of gender inequality is ultimately one of disparate freedoms" (Sen 1992: 125). Gender inequality is an issue that

needs to be addressed specifically since choices are constrained unequally. The constraints on choices are structured along gender lines (Folbre 1994; Robeyns 2001; Fakuda-Parr 2003). Gender inequality has been the concern of feminist scholars and activists who aimed to bring participatory social change, in which old relations of inequality and exclusion were to be challenged and reconfigured by forms of economic participation, consciousness raising, or collective action (Batliwala, 1994; Kabeer, 1994, 1999) – the process of empowerment.

However, Unterhalter (2019), engaging with the various meanings and contestations associated with this process (Batliwala, 1994, 2007; Kabeer, 1994, 1999), shows how the transformative and participative aspects have been compromised in practice. She further argues that the CA with its focus on agency and well-being (Sen, 1999; Nussbaum, 2000, 2005; Ibrahim and Alkire, 2007; Monkman, 2011; Walker 2015) provides the space to consider these aspects and thus a real opportunity to promote social justice. Sen (1995) shows particular sensitivity to the ways in which certain social formations may entail women's complicity with gender injustice that occurs on account of adaptive preference. Therefore, any intervention needs to take account of contestations and complicities predicated in unequal social relations.

Significance of institutional context

Unterhalter (2019) stresses on the significance of institutional context in which equality is to be achieved. The author argues that unpacking its processes and outcomes helps to determine what is being signalled for gender relations and what forms of participation it entails. Sen (1999: 202-3) highlights the same when he says that the factors involved in the process of development need to include “the nature of the employment arrangements, attitudes of the family and of the society at large towards women's economic activities, and the economic and social circumstances that encourage or resist change in these attitudes...”

The significance of context has also been highlighted by Sidebottom and Fennell (2019) in their survey of training programmes that facilitate gender inclusion. They find that VET frameworks globally struggle to reconcile interest of efficiency and equity and are replete with examples of implicit or explicit gender blindness, gaps and barriers. The authors argue that there needs to be an appreciation of structural generic barriers to learning and work most pertinent to women, such as modes of learning, personal security, flexible hours and childcare. Simply a gender focus does not suffice, what is needed is mainstreaming of gender equity. They also highlight the significance of adopting a collective approach to reconcile the demand and supply priorities of respective stakeholders.

Likewise, Sorensen (2012) argues for the need to adopt a gender lens in the conceptual and methodological framework for skills development. According to Sorensen, lack of gendered consideration risks increased inequalities in skills development and employment patterns for youth. In addition, the focus on employment skills ignores the broader skills and capabilities that people need for active participation in decision-making processes regarding their own lives and communities. Moreover, the acquisition of these skills and capabilities has a gendered dimension that needs to be visibilised and integrated, including the socio-cultural contexts of delivery.

CA for measurement of gender inequality

Robeyns (2003) argues that Sen's CA provides a general framework that is particularly

attractive for the study of gender inequality for three reasons. One, the ethically individualistic and ontologically non-individualistic nature of the CA is a desirable characteristic for well-being and inequality analysis (Robeyns 2001). This is attractive for feminist research because ethical individualism rejects the idea that women's well-being can be subsumed under wider entities such as the household or the community, while not denying the impact of care, social relations, and interdependence between family or community members.

At the same time, Fukuda-Parr (2003) notes that over the last decade, greater emphasis on the agency aspects of CA in human development has also promoted advocacy of gender equity. While women's movements showed the strength of collective agency, studies by feminist scholars further contributed to the expansion of the notion of equity. One that includes in addition to economic areas, education and political participation and rejects instrumentalist views to justify improving women's lives. For example, other approaches measure women's poverty by the income gaps between female-headed and male-headed households. The CA goes beyond the lack of income to deprivation in capabilities, such as lack of education, health, and the channels to participate in economic life and in decision-making (Fukuda-Parr, 1999).

The second advantage is that the CA is not limited to the market (income, earnings, and job-holdings). It also considers people's beings and doings in non-market (care labour, household work, freedom from domestic violence, or the availability of supportive social networks) settings. This has been the plea of feminist economists that the processes and outcomes in both the market and the non-market economy need to be included (Folbre 1994; Himmelweit, 2000). This allows one to capture hidden complexities and ambiguities in the distribution of well-being. For instance, it has been found that norms of restrictions on women's movements outside the home and gender subordination within the household as well as in the labour market continue to restrict women's productive opportunities (Mayounx, 1993). Furthermore, research shows that education and work options are highly gendered since people in the environment – parents, teachers and others, all support men (Warrington and Younger, 2000; Robeyns, 2003).

It has also been found that the allocation of time within and outside the household is generally unjust to women (Bubeck 1995; Agarwal 1997; Robeyns 2001). Neither are women recognised for the care and domestic work since culturally it is perceived as feminine (Robeyns, 2003). There is also an intersectionality between age and gender, for instance, the norms of gender subordination within the household as well as in the labour market that typically restrict women's access to resources for production and distribution are more relaxed for older women (Kandiyoti, 1988; Mayounx, 1993). Moreover, the notion of age also varies, for instance in rural areas, being over 30 is considered to be aged.

Finally, Robeyns concludes that the CA explicitly acknowledges human diversity, such as race, age, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, handicap, pregnancy and others. It does not assume that all people are influenced to the same extent by the same personal, social and environmental characteristics. Feminist scholars have argued that theories of justice in reality consider the lives of men as the standard. By doing so, gender inequalities and injustices are assumed away or remain hidden and are thereby indirectly justified. Such assumptions make it impossible to account for intra-household inequalities. Further, the use of gender-neutral language leads

to a notion of what Okin (1989) calls false gender-neutrality. This is in contrast to the experience of living in a gender-structured society.

However, since the CA is also underspecified it needs to be supported by other social theories in making normative assessments. Thus, depending on the theoretical lens, the analysis faces the risk of arriving at conclusions that do not account for the gendered nature of being and doing. Hence, they do not reveal any gender differences in capabilities. However, the CA provides tools to measure gender inequality in capabilities (Fakuda Parr, 2003) such as the list of capabilities for assessing gender inequality designed by Robeyns (2003). Robeyns endorses the following criteria in drawing such a list: (i) it should be explicit, discussed and defended (ii) the method should be clear (iii) the level of abstraction of the list should be appropriate (iv) the list comprises two stages, an ideal list and pragmatic or non-ideal list and (v) the listed capabilities should not be reducible to each other.

Robeyns list of gender inequality in capabilities consists of 14 indicators: life and physical health, mental well-being, bodily integrity and safety, social relations, political empowerment, education and knowledge, domestic work and non-market care, paid work and other projects, shelter and environment, mobility, leisure activities, time-autonomy, respect and religion. Robeyns conducts a survey of empirical literature on gender inequalities which shows that women are worse-off than men on some dimensions, better off on a few others, and similarly placed on yet others, while for some dimensions the evaluation was unclear.

For instance, in the case of bodily integrity and safety that are important states of being and doing, studies suggest that women bear a greater incidence of sexual violence than men (Bruynooghe, et.al. 2000, in Robeyns 2003). In the case of mental well-being, research shows that women are worse-off compared to men (Lahelma et al., 1999; Fuhrer et al., 1999). Expanding further, Fuhrer et al. (1999:84) argue that “[w]omen, as opposed to men, are socially and biologically channelled towards nurturing others, part of which includes giving social support. The difficulties implicit in fulfilling demands of support from others as well as the undervaluing of this role may contribute to the greater prevalence of psychological distress in women compared to men.” However, in terms of support networks, research shows that women tend to have better informal networks and social support (Munch, et al., 1997; Fuhrer et al. 1999).

Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a need to specifically tackle the issue of gender inequality. It is argued that the CA potentially provides the language to frame a vision, one that as Batliwala (2007) suggests, is needed to account for social transformation at the local, national or global level. This can be achieved by listening to poor women, their values, principles, articulations and actions and by trying to hear how they frame their search for justice (Ibid., 2007). A curated scholarship of feminists addressing this concern using the CA lens provides the evaluative space to undertake this task.

To conclude, the above discussion highlights the following:

1. The significance of structural and cultural contexts, including unequal gender relations in context of skills, education and work. In terms conceptualising the external environment, various authors highlight different aspects. For instance, some provide a framework that includes material and immaterial factors, others argue the significance of an enabling

institutional environment.

2. The case of gender inequality has been the concern of feminist scholars who seek to change the terms of participation to make it equitable and inclusive. However, it also a highly contested space, and therefore, particular concerns need to be addressed. Research shows that the institutional context in which the gendering of social relations occurs assumes significance. On the pertinent issue of measuring gender inequality, Robeyns provides a methodology to operationalise the same within the framework of the CA. However, the list of gender inequality in capabilities has not been applied empirically.

Conclusion

This chapter presented a literature review of the following concepts –skills development, Capability Approach, aspirations and the role of the external environment and gender inequality.

The review highlights the significance of skills in the development discourse as being crucial for economic and human development. However, the extant policy and practice has been criticised for being too narrow and productivist. Therefore, there is need to adopt a more humanistic approach, such as the capability approach. It is argued that the CA by rightly placing the concepts of “means to achieve”, “freedom to achieve” and “actual achievement”, provides a normative framework to evaluate development processes and outcomes. In context of skills training intervention, it provides an opportunity to engage with questions of how skills development enables people to achieve a valuable life. It also allows engagement with issues of effective opportunities available to people to use the training for what they consider valuable rather than just the outcome. It therefore provides a ‘thick’ form of thinking about equality and justice in and through VET practice and policy. Finally, since it is not prescriptive, it allows for an empirical basis to derive capabilities that are specific to the context.

The CA, by including both well-being freedom and agency freedom provides the evaluative space to study people’s aspirations and needs. Further examining the significance of the concept of aspirations shows that aspirations matter. Building and fulfilling people’s aspirations is a major policy agenda. An interdisciplinary engagement to unpack the construct of aspirations shows that the CA provides a useful framework to operationalise the same. For reasons including that they are two sides of the same coin and help to nurture and verify each other (Appadurai, 2004).

Finally, the CA while being individualistic, also takes into account impact of the social environment, societal structures, culture and the diversities in human conditions. Research shows that there is need to account for the structural and cultural contexts, including unequal gender relations in which skills development occurs. These factors could be individual or related to the family and community. They could also be at the institutional and national level. They impact the achievement of people’s goals including those related to skills, work and life. Moreover, gender inequality has been the concern of feminist scholars who seek to change the terms of participation to make it equitable and inclusive. It is also a highly contested space that needs to be addressed as a distinct category.

The review of literature also highlights significant gaps, some of which this research endeavours to meet. To begin with, it shows that the notion of skills is underdeveloped. It also highlights the paucity of research in this area in the global south compared to OECD countries. In addition, examining the nature of the skills discourse shows that it is dominated by a productivist paradigm. Therefore, it is under-theorised and does not present a wider vision of development. The discussion also highlights the significance of skills development in the context of countries in South Asia, including India. This is attributed to a huge skills gap in the workforce that is unable to meet the growing market demand. However, it is seen that the countries are unable to do so partly due to lack of imagination to conceptualise and deliver skills development training that promotes lifelong learning.

Therefore, expanding from the narrow focus of mainstream economic theories, a human development-oriented approach to skills development is proposed. The review shows that by adopting the overarching vision of the CA, some of these concerns could perhaps be addressed. However, the application of CA to the study of VET is non-existent. In addition, the CA is critiqued for being incomplete and underspecified and having high information requirements.

Therefore, in line with the research question, the concept of aspirations and aspects of the external environment including gender inequality have been specifically addressed. Further reviewing these concepts shows that, in the case of aspirations, there is lack of an integrated approach to conceptualise and measure the same. Moreover, despite the significance of engaging with aspirations in the context of skills development, there is no empirical work examining the linkages. Likewise, although the influence of the external environment and gender inequality in impacting achievements is acknowledged. However, an integrated view of how various factors, including the issue of gender inequality impact people's choices and agency is lacking.

The present research aims to meet these gaps. It does so by asking the question, does skill development training facilitate opportunities for people to fulfil their aspirations and achieve their capabilities? A comprehensive analytical framework – the 'Skills to Capabilities' framework is conceptualised to address the research question. The analytical framework and research methodology are examined in chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3 | Analytical Framework and Research Methodology

Introduction

This chapter consists of 3 sections. The first section, 3.1, outlines the proposed analytical framework to examine the research questions. The framework's categories link with the respective secondary research questions – aspirations and capabilities; the skills development training intervention; external environment and gender inequality; actual value of the skills intervention.

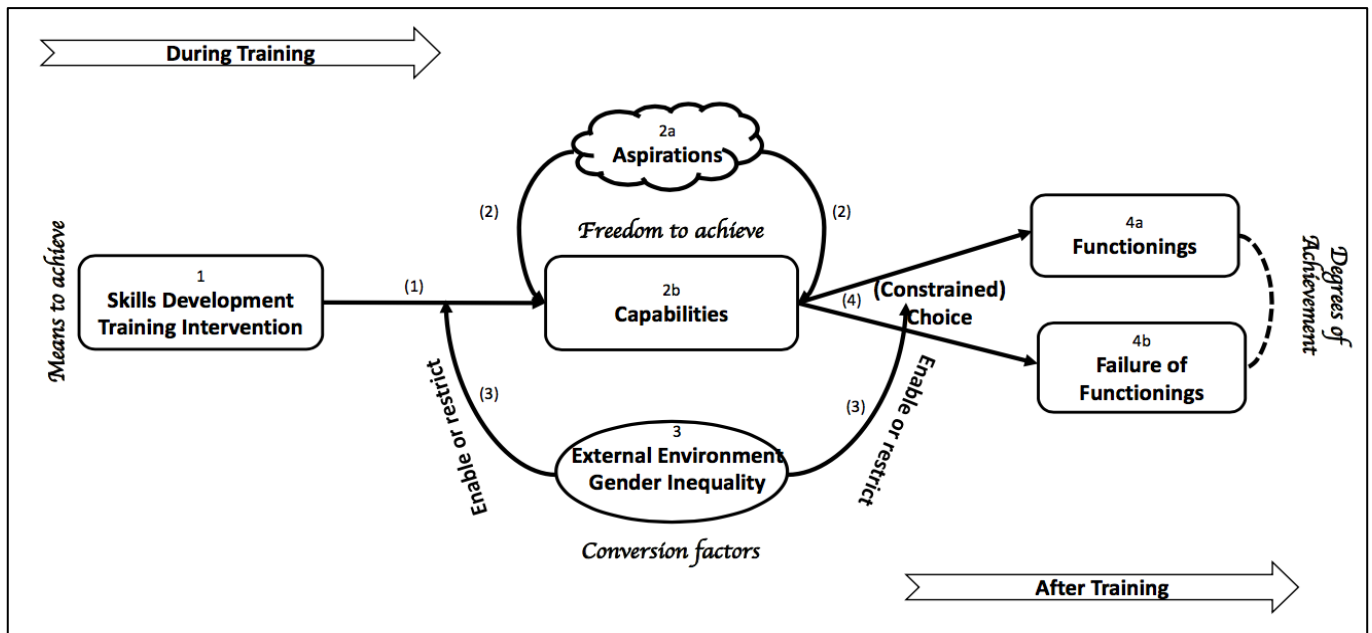
The next section, 3.2, examines the case studies- BFC and PMKVY where the research is situated. This includes an analysis of the reasons to select the two cases. Followed by a comparison of the institutional features, training features and post training support.

The final section, 3.3 presents a detailed discussion of the research methodology adopted to operationalise the research. This includes a discussion on the research design, sampling strategy and instrument design. The suitability of conducting a mixed methods approach that included personal interviews and surveys is examined. This is followed by unpacking the sampling strategy, enumerating the reasons to adopt a multi-stage purposive sampling procedure. Next, the instrument design and the process of data collection is elaborated beginning with a pilot phase followed by three other phases. Reflections on the influence of the positionality of the author vis-à-vis the research environment are considered. Other ethical considerations of research are also acknowledged. Finally, the process of data coding and analysis, including challenges are examined.

3.1 The 'Skills to Capabilities' Framework

Research shows that the notion of skills development is under-theorised (McGrath 2012; King 2012; Powell 2012) and based on a narrow productivist paradigm (Anderson, 2009; McGrath, 2012). Conceptualising skills development within the framework of the CA provides an opportunity to create an expanded notion of skills. Thus, drawing upon the tenets of the CA an integrated 'Skills to Capabilities' (S2C) framework (figure 3.1) is conceptualised. The S2C framework imagines the purpose of skills development as a means to fulfil aspirations and capabilities. In line with McGrath's (2012) argument, it therefore provides the space to conceptualise skills as learning for life and not simply for work. By relating people's reasons to value skills training with their aspirations from work and life, it places people at the centre of discussions. Such that they are not only patients concerned with their own well-being, but also agents wanting to bring social change (Drèze & Sen, 1989).

Figure 3.1: S2C Framework



Source: author

Figure 3.1 presents a multi-level conceptualisation beginning with the skills development intervention (box 1) and culminating with actual achievements, i.e. functionings (box 4a and 4b) after training. This outcome is determined by and dependant on people’s opportunities and subsequent choice to achieve their valued ways of being and doing, i.e., capabilities (box 2b). The capabilities are in turn derived from people’s aspirations (box 2a), i.e., their hopes and dreams related to work specifically and life more generally. At the same time, factors in the external environment (box 3), including prevalent socio-cultural gender norms influence outcomes. They do so by either enabling or restricting the conversion of the intervention into opportunities to achieve valued ways of being and doing. They also influence people’s choices to convert their opportunities into actual achievements. This conceptualisation provides the evaluative space to address all aspects of the research questions. It includes an evaluation of the complete cycle from: means to achieve → freedom to achieve → actual achievement.

Means to achieve

Robeyns’ (2005) in her conceptualisation of the CA³⁸ argues that there is a crucial distinction between the means, such as goods and services, on the one hand and functionings and capabilities on the other hand. In the S2C framework, the SDT intervention (box 1) is conceptualised as the means. It is argued that the intervention’s resources have certain attributes that makes them of interest to people, i.e., they enable a functioning as depicted by arrow 1 through to 4. In addition, the resources assume significance beyond functionality by virtue of being free of cost. This factor, as discussed in chapter 2 increases access for people in developing countries.

³⁸ Figure 2.1: Stylised non-dynamic representation of the CA

The resources / attributes of the training intervention are derived by examining people's views on aspects of the programme that are valued by them and why. Conversely, the limitations are also analysed. This conceptualisation enables to unpack RQ 2: what attributes of the training programme are valued by people? From a programme and institution perspective it provides useful bottom-up information on what works and what needs to be strengthened. In addition, the reason for people to value skills training is also determined. This helps to position people's reasons to pursue skills training and thus establish the linkage between skills and aspirations.

Freedom to achieve

Capabilities, i.e., the freedom to achieve, constitute the core of the CA. They denote the real opportunities that people have, to lead the life they want (Sen, 1987). Thus, the CA is concerned with not only achievements of people, but also their capabilities. It focuses on what people are effectively able to do and to be; that is, on their capabilities. It thus highlights the difference between means and ends, and between substantive freedoms (capabilities) and outcomes (achieved functionings) (Robeyns, 2005).

This is shown in box 2 (b) of the S2C framework. Following Sen's approach, this research does not prescribe a pre-determined list of capabilities. The list is drawn by analysing the nature of people's aspirations, i.e. their desires, hopes and goals. Although research shows that aspirations matter in the context of skills; however, an integrated schema (Quaglia, 1996) and deeper engagement with the construct (Hart, 2016) is lacking. One that also accounts for the cultural (Appadurai, 2004) and social contexts (Ray, 2003) in which aspirations are formed.

Showing the link between aspirations and capabilities, Appadurai (2004) says that they are two sides of the same coin. Hart (2016) suggests that it is therefore necessary to understand the combination of influences that precede and shape aspirations and their relationship to capabilities and functionings. In the S2C framework, this relationship between aspirations (box 2a) and capabilities (box 2b) is shown by arrow 2. The process of deriving people's capabilities by analysing their aspirations is based on Conraide and Robeyns (2013) research. The authors show that research participants by voicing and reflecting upon their aspirations, indicate precisely which capabilities are valuable and most relevant for them.

It is further argued that both aspirations and capabilities have their distinct space. It would be reductionist to say that aspiration is a capability, as suggested by Walker (2006). Neither is it akin to Ibrahim's (2011) concept of 'aspired capabilities' wherein she extends the definition of capabilities to include those that are 'achievable and aspired'. Therefore, in the S2C framework, people's aspirations are placed at the inter-mediate level from where capabilities are derived. Thus, positioning aspirations as the forerunners to capabilities provides the space to conceptualise the two concepts fully. Furthermore, the inclusion of aspirations also addresses the critique of CA being underspecified and thus requiring to be supported by other social concepts (Clark, 2012). Through the above conceptualisation RQ 1 is unpacked: what are the aspirations and capabilities of people in BFC and PMKVY training programmes?

Conversion factors

Robeyns' (2005) argues that the relationship between a good and the functioning to achieve certain beings and doings is influenced by three groups of conversion factors. They include aspects of personal, social and environmental conditions³⁹. The conversion factors influence how a person can convert the characteristics of the commodity into a functioning. However, Clark (2012) argues that the nature and impact of a restrictive external environment remains underspecified. Moreover, King (2012) argues that in the case of skills, it is not just an economic investment environment that is vital. In addition, an overall nurturing environment including a supportive social, institutional and political environment is crucial. Various instances of the same have been highlighted across studies (Bonvin and Moachon 2008; Bonvin and Orton 2009; Zeng, 2009; Egdel and McQuaid, 2016; Wheelahan and Moodie 2017; Mehrotra 2019).

Research also shows that there is need to account for all structural and cultural contexts, including unequal gender relations in which skills development occurs (Sorensen, 2012; Sidebottom and Fennel, 2019). Particularly on the issue of gender inequality, scholarship shows that choices are constrained unequally along gender lines (Sen, 1992, 1995; Batliwala, 1994; Kabeer, 1994, 1999; Robeyns 2001; Fakuda-Parr 2003). Therefore, any intervention needs to take account of contestations and complicities predicated on unequal social relations (Unterhalter, 2019). Moreover, research shows that the CA is particularly attractive to undertake the study of gender inequality (Robeyns, 2003). Robeyns further elaborates these features as: the ethically individualistic and ontologically non-individualistic nature of the CA, inclusion of both market and non-market factors and the acknowledgement of human diversity.

Drawing upon the above features, the S2C framework tackles the concern by providing the space to account for an expanded view of the external environment as shown in box 3 – 'external environment and gender inequality'. Based on Powell's (2012) argument that these factors are not simply nice-to-haves, they are part of what makes a vocational education system work. These factors are accounted for within the context of the SDT intervention since they impact (restrict or enable) people's ability to convert their opportunities into actual achievements as shown by arrows 3.

Trani and Biggeri (2011) provide an expanded conceptualisation of the conversion factors that operate at the level of the individual, family, community and nation. Likewise, the S2C framework seeks to capture the various categories of the external environment and their constituents. The same will be determined by analysing the challenges faced and support required by trainees (in addition to the skills training intervention) to fulfil their desired goals. This conceptualisation unpacks RQ 3: what constituents of the external environment, including gender inequality, impact people's ability to pursue skills training and fulfil their goals?

Degrees of achievement

The actual achievements, i.e., functionings denote outcomes. The term refers to realized achievements and fulfilled expectations (Sen, 1987). It refers to the opportunities that people

³⁹ see section 2.2.2

are able to convert. In addition, accounting for the role of choice to convert the opportunity into actual achievement, Robeyns says that it depends on the different choices that people make following their different ideas of the good life. Moreover, these choices could be constrained due to various factors such as family, religion and community. In the S2C framework the path from capabilities to achievements, through (constrained) choice, is shown by arrow 4.

Expanding the notion of achievements, the S2C framework provides the space to capture both achievements and failures as shown in box 4a and 4b respectively. This is inspired from Ibrahim's (2013) research where she finds that due to structural impediments people are not able to achieve their aspirations. This aspirations failure leads to a downward spiral effect. Therefore, it is necessary to capture not only achievements but also capabilities that poor people might value and wish to achieve but cannot. Taking this argument further, the S2C framework introduces the idea of 'degrees of achievement'. It is argued that achievements or failures might not be absolute. There could be instances where within the context of the same capability, a person might be satisfied with the achievement of some part of the outcome and not all. For instance, getting an opportunity to work, however, not being satisfied with the work environment.

Although the primary focus of the CA is to determine people's capabilities however, given the context of evaluation, an assessment of functionings is necessitated. To determine the actual value of SDT, an assessment of functionings and failures is considered. This enables to complete the loop between perceived value as determined at the beginning of the programme and post facto analysis of the actual value of the intervention. Therefore, backward linkages from actual achievements to SDT intervention can be drawn. Through this conceptualisation, RQ 4: after training, what is people's position and what are their reflections on the value of the training? is unpacked.

The above analytical framework is operationalised in the case of BFC and PMKVY training programmes as examined in section 3.2. The research is undertaken at two stages – during training and after training. The research methodology including sampling, is examined in section 3.3.

3.2 Case Studies: BFC and PMKVY

3.2.1 Selection of cases

BFC and PMKVY training centres provide free-of-cost short-term⁴⁰ skills development training to people from disadvantaged backgrounds. BFC is a non-profit enterprise and PMKVY is the flagship scheme of MSDE which is implemented by NSDC through a network of private training centres.

Although there are several SDT programmes in India being run by the government, NGOs and the private sector, it is argued that the selected case studies provide a suitable setting for the study of skills development in India. Other non-government organisations include

⁴⁰ up to 6 months and 300 hours respectively

cooperatives such as Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) and government schemes such as MoRD's Deen Dayal Upadhyay Gram Kaushal Yojana (DDU-GKY) and Rural Self-Employment Training Institutions (RSETI). However, the cases of BFC and PMKVY were found to be best suited for this research.

The cases were selected according to the paradigmatic process of case selection which includes a systematic review of existing literature and the authors' intuition (Dreyfus and Dreyfus; 1986, Flybjerg, 2006). It is believed that this selection would facilitate the search for conceptual patterns and categories (Yin, 1994), and thereby help to understand the concerned phenomenon, as also potentially generalise from the findings. An examination of the two cases based on study of literatureⁱ and stakeholder interviewsⁱⁱ is presented below.

The common objective of the selected institutions is to ensure that disadvantaged people are able to gain skills and employment/livelihood opportunities. The programmes thus provide an opportunity to people to fulfil their aspirations and the potential to contribute towards development of the community and the country. These objectives resonate with the aims of this research which seeks to understand 'does skill development training facilitate opportunities for people to fulfil their aspirations and achieve their capabilities?'

Both BFC and PMKVY provide short-term skills development training as against long term training which could last up to 2 years. This was attractive for the research purpose since the shorter duration could be managed within the scope of study. Moreover, short-term training programmes such as PMKVY are being promoted actively by the MSDE. They are also considered to be lucrative by the trainees since with lesser investment of time, people are able to learn and work. Likewise, in the case of BFC, the objective of providing training and subsequent enterprise options is fulfilled within a six-month period. In terms of sectors of training, BFC primarily trains older women in the solar sector, whereas PMKVY is more youth-centric and provides training across over 30 identified sectors, including solar.

At the same time, both BFC and PMKVY have different origins and training ethos. BFC is based on a grassroots model that was established in 1972 by the social activist Bunker Roy as a response to the growing inequality and poverty in the country. On the other hand, PMKVY is a recent national flagship scheme of the MSDE. It was launched as part of India's Skill Mission by the Honourable Prime Minister in 2015 with the objective of transforming the skills landscape in India. In addition, the institutions differ in their training methodology and post training support systems. These different traditions provide an opportunity to examine differences in impact, if any, on the trainees and the overall skills outcomes.

A detailed examination of the respective institutional features, training features and post training support systems is presented below.

3.2.2 Institutional features

History: BFC

Roy describes the BFC journey as a “Forty-five-year love story with the poor, those making less than a dollar a day”⁴¹. BFC is a not-for-profit social enterprise that provides skills training, primarily in the solar sector to women from India and other countries of the global south. Roy after witnessing the Bihar famine of 1965 vowed to work for the poor and disadvantaged people. He then moved to Rajasthan which was India’s largest, driest and poorest state and established the Social Work and Research Centre (SWRC) in 1972 in Tiloniya village. The focus of SWRC was to site water pumps near villages and train the local population to maintain them. SWRC later expanded to include health and education and women’s advocacy as part of its mandate. The solar electrification programme gained momentum in the 1990s under the popularly known name of Barefoot College.

Most recently in 2015, Barefoot College International (BCI) was incorporated under section 20 of the Companies Act, 2013. BCI is responsible for implementation of the organisations’ solar initiative. This also includes promotion of the enterprise section under the B. Barefoot brand where products such as honey, coffee and others are developed. Megan Fallone joined Roy in 2011 and now leads BCI. Fallone says, “Barefoot College is a place where words like inclusion, social justice, equality are not just words. They are a way of life. We have been championing ideas of capacity and confidence building within rural poor communities through solutions like water, solar and livelihood development for our entire 42-year history.”⁴²

BFC’s imprints are today spread across 96 countries, having trained 2200 solar mamas and providing light to 1 million people. The programme is in alignment with 14 of the 17 SDGs. BFC has been the recipient of various national and international accolades including the Indira Gandhi Environment Award, 1998, Ashden Award (2003), Clinton Global Citizen Service award (2013). The BFC ethos is also reflected in the logo of the institution as illustrated in picture 3.1 below. The footprint in BFC logo represents the spread of its inclusive strategy, leaving a mark on vital issues of social progress. The name is an ode to poor all over the globe who walk barefoot.

⁴¹ Whitepaper: The Barefoot Model for Global Sustainability by Amplifier Strategies

⁴² www.barefootcollege.com

Picture 3.1: The BFC campus in Rajasthan and BFC logo



(Photo credit- A Kaur)

History: PMKVY

PMKVY was launched as part of India's Skill Mission by the Honourable Prime Minister in 2015. It is the flagship programme of MSDE. Historically, skills development initiatives have been implemented across over 20 ministries and departments. MSDE was incorporated in 2014 to consolidate all skill development activities, including the office of Directorate General of Training (DGT) that has been in-charge of vocational training through ITIs since the 1950s. The renewed focus on skills development can be attributed to the structural shift in the demographic dividend that witnessed an increasing share of the working-age population in total population since 1980s (Mehrotra, 2014). Emphasising the same, the Honourable Prime Minister Mr Modi extolled "the world and India need a skilled workforce...to promote the development of our country, our mission has to be 'skill development' and 'skilled India'"⁴³

The 2009 National Policy on Skill Development led to the creation of the NSDC which implements PMKVY. NSDC is a not-for-profit public limited company incorporated in 2008 under section 25 of the Companies Act, 1956. It operates as a PPP, with MSDE holding 49% of the share capital of NSDC, while the private sector owns 51%. NSDC is further supported in its efforts of building industry partnerships by Sector Skills Councils (SSC). NSDC through PMKVY has trained over approximately 3 million people of which over 1.2 million trainees have been placed which translates to a placement rate of over 54%. It collaborates with over 2250 training partners across all 29 states and 7 union territories that operate over 8000 training centres.

The aims of Skill India are seen in the logo (see picture 3.2 below) that depicts a clenched hand, in which a spanner and pencil are firmly held exemplifying empowerment of the individual through skilling. The spanner symbolises the unlocking of human potential and the pencil is representative of education. Together they indicate the empowering and aspirational

⁴³ The National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, 2015: pg 1

value of skills and education. The rising sun in the backdrop alludes to the role of skills in the rise of India. The logo is placed on a computer screen with upward arrows indicating mobility and use of technology. The tagline, ‘Kaushal Bharat, Kushal Bharat’ suggests that skilling Indians (‘Kaushal Bharat’) will result in a happy, healthy, prosperous and strong nation (‘Kushal Bharat’).

Picture 3.2: PMKVY centres in Himachal Pradesh and PMKVY logo



(Photo credit- A Kaur)

Mission and objective: BFC

The Barefoot Approach was founded on Gandhian ideology and work ethics. The guiding principles include creating village-led solutions with a combination of traditional skills and experiential learning. The institution believes in – harnessing the knowledge, skills, and wisdom found in villages for development; deploying Appropriate Technology (AT) that is controlled by the poor communities so that they are not dependent or exploited; creating dynamic education which is distinct from literacy. Finally, and most importantly, respecting the equality and outstanding capability of women.

The institution has articulated its vision as ‘Working to build a sustainable world through the transfer of life changing technology, access to information and the ability for communities in the developing world to share between themselves’⁴⁴. They believe that innovation designed and deployed with communities is the only acceptable solution to fighting poverty. In addition, they envision ‘to nurture a global community where women have the competence and confidence to fully participate in the development of their own communities and

⁴⁴ Three-year Strategic Plan (2015 to 2018): Align opportunity and existing resources with an ever-deepening awareness of the Barefoot Approach: www.barefootcollege.com

countries, irrespective of the barriers of literacy or formal education'. Believing in "the endless potential of the rural poor"⁴⁵, BFC seeks to establish a first of its kind women centred, global network dedicated to sustainable development in every community where poverty exists.

The organisation has listed 8 values that include, believing in the skills and knowledge of rural communities; co-creating education such that it is relevant for rural poor communities. Ensuring that women are an essential part of their solutions since they have the power to influence values, impact social customs and support sustainable practices. Creating sustainable grassroots innovation by harnessing the competence and confidence of rural communities in a partnership model. Finally, transforming environmental, social, financial, health and education outcomes by shifting values and regressive social norms.

The Barefoot Approach stresses respect for five "non-negotiable" values that include equality of all team members and a flat organisation structure that encourages collective decision making. Furthermore, planning and implementation is decentralised at the level of the grassroots, so that individual needs can be considered. It also believes in self-reliance and practicing austerity, both in thoughts and actions. This approach informs the Barefoot Solutions. The solutions seek to ensure access to energy and education, better health, and sustainable livelihoods that directly impact women. They also focus on reversing urban migration and protecting marginalised and vulnerable communities in least developed countries facing urgent challenges of climate change and disaster. They seek to employ a public, private and people's partnership model that affects lasting policy change for the inclusion of decentralised, community-driven, self-sufficient modes of renewable energy delivery.

Mission and objective: PMKVY

PMKVY is guided by the Skill India Mission⁴⁶ to "rapidly scale up skill development efforts in India, by creating an end-to-end, outcome-focused implementation framework, which aligns demands of the employers for a well-trained skilled workforce with aspirations of Indian citizens for sustainable livelihoods" (pg 7). The vision⁴⁷ is stated as "to create an ecosystem of empowerment by skilling on a large scale at speed with high standards and to promote a culture of innovation based entrepreneurship which can generate wealth and employment to ensure sustainable livelihoods for all citizens in the country" (pg 11).

The mission is operationalised via 13 major objectives including the overarching aim to empower individuals, enabling them to realise their full potential through a process of lifelong learning. As individuals grow, the society will also benefit from their productivity and growth. Few of the stated objectives are listed below:

1. Create an end-to-end implementation framework for skill development, which provides opportunities for life-long learning. This includes incorporation of skilling in the school curriculum, providing opportunities for quality long and short-term skill training, by

⁴⁵ www.barefootcollege.com

⁴⁶ <https://www.msde.gov.in/assets/images/Mission%20booklet.pdf>

⁴⁷ <https://www.msde.gov.in/assets/images/Skill%20India/policy%20booklet-%20Final.pdf>

providing gainful employment and ensuring career progression that meets the aspirations of trainees.

2. Align employer/industry demand and workforce productivity with trainees' aspirations for sustainable livelihoods by creating a framework for outcome focused training.
3. Build capacity for skill development in critical unorganised sectors, such as construction and provide pathways for re-skilling and up-skilling workers, to enable them to transition into formal sector employment.
4. Support weaker and disadvantaged sections of society through focused outreach programmes and targeted skill development activities.

The objective of the entrepreneurship framework is to strengthen factors essential for growth of entrepreneurship by making it aspirational. In addition, it seeks to promote mentorship networks, facilitate credit and market linkages and especially promote women.

The following enablers have been identified to achieve the objectives: aspiration and advocacy; capacity; quality; synergy; mobilisation and engagement; promotion of skilling among women; global partnerships; outreach; ICT enablement; trainers and assessors; inclusivity. Specifically, PMKVY aims to enable and mobilise youth to take industry designed quality skill training, become employable and earn livelihood. It seeks to increase productivity of the existing workforce and align skill training with the actual needs of the country. It also aims to create a standardised certification process and benefit 10 million youth in the period 2016-2020.

Organisation structure: BFC

The team at BFC comprises of formally and non-formally qualified professionals from the local communities and others from national and international regions. The institution is led by executives who aim to ensure that its programmes remain relevant in solving the world's biggest environmental and social concerns. The Solar Enterprise is managed by a team of people consisting of project managers, research & development specialists, Monitoring & Evaluation experts, administrators and Solar Master Trainers. They work towards demystifying and decentralizing solar technology to build sustainable energy at the village level. Likewise, there are teams that manage other interventions such as education, communications, water and sanitation. Roy who is the Founder and Director continues to guide BFC in the capacity of a Board Member. The other board members are persons from the industry and the government who provide consultation from their unique perspectives.

Organisation structure: PMKVY

A Union Minister guided by the Minister of State lead the charge for MSDE. Officials from the Indian Civil Service perform the administrative functions. The Secretary is the senior most official and leads a team of Joint Secretaries, Directors and Under-Secretaries. The Ministry is also supported by various private consultants to manage specific technical projects. NSDC is led by a Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer who is responsible for providing a strategic vision to ensure that the team moves cohesively towards achievement of Skill India Mission. He is assisted by a team of qualified leaders including a Chief Strategy Officer, Chief Programme Officer and Chief Financial Officer. The organisation now consists of a staff strength of over 300 and is located in New Delhi, India. The organisation is also guided by a board of Directors consisting of distinguished members appointed by the Central government

and the private sector shareholders. The board brings together diverse experience to drive change in the skill ecosystem.

Operating model and Funding: BFC

Since 2008, the BFC programme has been supported by the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) – a Division of the Ministry of External Affairs, GoI. The six-month programme conducted twice a year is a collaborative effort of BFC, ITEC and the respective Governments and NGOs of the participating countries. Grants from various national and international organisations, including Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds of these organisations, are the other primary source of funding. In addition, the institution also generates a modest internal revenue via its artisan enterprises.

Operating model and Funding: PMKVY

The PMKVY programme is implemented in partnership with private Training Partners (TP). The TPs are empanelled as per a defined Centre Accreditation and Affiliation process. The process includes certification of standards for infrastructure and staff. The TPs are expected to mobilise, train, assess and facilitate placement / self-employment as per defined norms. GoI funds the PMKVY programme that includes funding for capital expenditure and the recurring training cost. It also includes costs incurred on mobilisation, M&E, ToT, salaries, teaching aids, etc. Lodging and transport costs are also provided for women travelling beyond 80 km and others from special areas getting trained elsewhere. Funds to the TPs are released in 4 instalments: 30% on start of training, 30% on continuation for 70% of trainees, 20% completion of training and certification and 20% on placement rate of 50-69%. The base costs range from Rupees 27.5 to 38.5 per hour for each trainee.

3.2.3 Training features

This section compares the following training features across BFC and PMKVY: mobilisation strategy, course curriculum and pedagogy and training of trainers.

Mobilisation strategy: BFC

Trainees for the solar engineering training are mobilised by the institutions' network of ground partners or regional coordinators, i.e., the local NGOs. The process consists of the following steps: a village anywhere in the global south is selected based on the level of energy access. This is followed by a community sensitisation meeting to discuss the relevance of the training programmes and expected benefits for the community. This is followed by a selection process for training on campus in Tiloniya.

BFC believes in selecting older, rather than younger women for the solar training programme. The rationale is that older women tend to stay within a community whilst younger ones are more likely to leave. Therefore, the benefits would be lost to the community. Once the targeted women have been selected, they go through a process of medical examination and other administrative steps. In parallel, a village level committee is formed to manage the solar training work for the village with commitment from all members. A workshop building called the rural electrification workshop is also identified. A baseline survey is also conducted to assess the current level of development, including energy requirements and how they are being fulfilled.

Mobilisation strategy: PMKVY

Training targets are assigned to training centres across all states centrally by NSDC. These targets are determined on the basis of regional skill gap studies⁴⁸ and the rating of the training centre. Once a TC has been confirmed to train a specific number of trainees for identified sectors, mobilisation drives are initiated by respective TCs. TC conducts sensitisation sessions in local schools and community centres. They also conduct door-to-door visits informing people of the upcoming training. In addition, PMKVY TCs also entertain direct walk-ins and participate in employment fairs.

PMKVY targets younger people who are typically in the NEET category, with a view to increase their employability. PMKVY is guided by the Skill India Mission that seeks to harness the demographic dividend and bridge the skills gap. Once potential trainees have been selected, they undergo a counselling process where they are informed about the available training options and outcomes.

Course curriculum and pedagogy: BFC

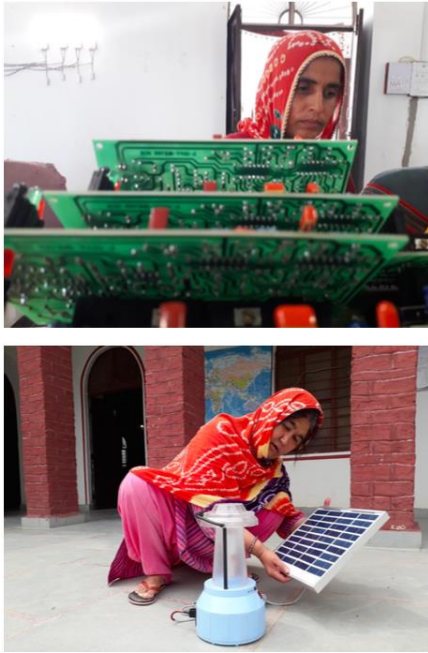
BFC has created its own unique teaching pedagogy that is based on the principles of learning-by-doing. Trainees are trained to fabricate, install and repair off-grid solar equipment including solar lighting systems, water heaters and de-salinators, as well as solar cookers. The problem of linguistic and literacy barriers requires reliance on visual teaching, practical learning and even learning by song, rather than class-based lecturing.

In addition to learning the technical skills, trainees participate in a unique personal development programme called *Enriche*. *Enriche* is a bespoke BFC programme tailored to support women's aspirations to transform themselves and their communities. It provides them with the opportunity to be empowered by acquiring the confidence, skills and knowledge they need to reach their full potential as agents of sustainable change. The programme consists of eight axes of impact: digital literacy, human rights and civil society, women's health, sustainable livelihoods, financial inclusion, micro-enterprise skills, environmental stewardship self-awareness and agency. The training programme is residential for a duration of 6 months.

The pictures below illustrate some of these features – Picture 3.3 shows a solar class in action. Picture 3.4 depicts the colour code methodology deployed to teach technical coding of solar circuits. Picture 3.5 is an *Enriche* session where the class is learning principles of gender equality.

⁴⁸ <https://nsdcindia.org/nsdcreports>

Picture 3.3: BFC solar class



(Photo credit- A Kaur)

Picture 3.4: BFC teaching method



(Photo credit- A Kaur)

Picture 3.5: BFC *Enriche* class



(Photo credit- A Kaur)

Course curriculum: PMKVY

PMKVY training is guided by defined National Occupational Standards (NOS) which have been set by MSDE. Qualification Packs (QP) have been designed for most job roles defining the required performance criteria, knowledge and skills. QPs for each job role are pegged at a NSQF⁴⁹ level that ranges in increasing complexity from levels 1 to 10.

Model curriculums are designed by respective SSCs. The content includes in addition to technical skills, entrepreneurship, financial and digital literacy modules. In addition, soft skills training, including English language and inter-personal skills are also provided. The teaching is done in the form of classroom learning and practical training. Most of the training centres are non-residential. Classes are conducted for up to 300 hours over a duration of 2 to 4 months.

The pictures below illustrate some of these features – Picture 3.6 shows a sewing machine operator and solar PV installer class in progress. Picture 3.7 depicts a model curriculum copy for solar PV installer. Picture 3.8 shows the content books for soft skills training.





⁴⁹ The National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF) ⁴⁹ is a quality assurance framework that organizes qualifications according to a series of levels of knowledge, skills and aptitude. These levels are defined in terms of learning outcomes which the learner must possess. These could be acquired through formal, non-formal or informal learning. It provides for multiple horizontal and vertical pathways between and within TVET and general education. It is mandatory for all job roles to align with NSQF
Source: <https://www.msde.gov.in/nsqf.html>

Picture 3.6: PMKVY sewing and solar classes



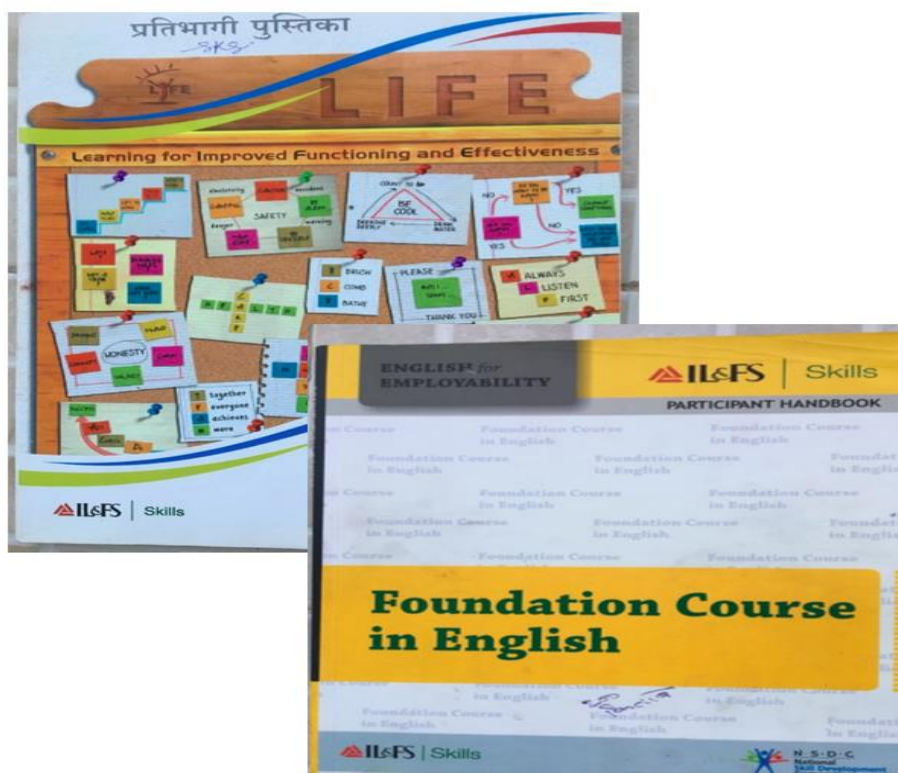
(Photo credit- A Kaur)

Picture 3.7: PMKVY model curriculum

 SKILL COUNCIL FOR GREEN JOBS		  	
This course encompasses 9 out of 9 National Occupational Standards (NOS) of "Solar PV Installer (Suryamitra)" Qualification Pack issued by "Skill Council for Green Jobs".			
Sr. No.	Module	Key Learning Outcomes	Equipment Required
1	Introduction to Solar PV Installer (Suryamitra) Course Theory Duration (hh:mm) 03:00 Practical Duration (hh:mm) 03:00 Corresponding NOS Code SGJ/No101	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate general Discipline in the class room and during the training program; Understand the role of Solar PV Installer and job opportunities; Understand the advantages of doing this course; Acquire basic skills of communication; Acquire basic reading capabilities to enable reading of signs, notices and/or cautions at site. 	
2	Basics of Solar energy and Electrical concepts. Theory Duration (hh:mm) 06:00 Practical Duration (hh:mm) 06:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand Ohm's Law; Understand the basics of electricity and electrical concepts; Perform simple calculations to derive power and energy Explain and understand DNI, GHI and Diffused Irradiance & Irradiation; Assess the movement of the sun and its effect on the performance of the plant; 	Pyranometer, Multimeter, Clamp meter,

(Source:www.ssgi.in)

Picture 3.8: PMKVY books for soft skills training



(Photo credit- A Kaur)

Training of trainers: BFC

In line with the training philosophy of BFC, trainers are selected from the local communities. Since they come from the same background, they understand the realities of the trainees. The Master Trainers (MT) are selected after an interview process. Once selected, they undergo the same training as the solar mamas. Their competence to train is assessed by experienced trainers and other staff members. Once qualified, they begin by shadowing classes along with senior trainers and eventually start training solo.

Training of trainers: PMKVY

PMKVY centres are required to hire suitably qualified trainers. Mostly people with relevant industry experience or teaching background are hired locally by the TC. All trainers are expected to undergo a Training of Trainers (ToT) certification conducted by the SSCs.

3.2.4 Post training support

Post training process: BFC

Upon completion of training, a graduation ceremony is held for the solar mamas where they are felicitated in the presence of dignitaries and other guests. The ceremony is marked by a festive and celebratory spirit. The institution does not give a certificate as proof of learning. Roy says that expertise is not designated by degrees and certificates. The skill is instead acknowledged by the community, which is the real proof of competence.

Once the solar mamas return to their home countries, they prepare for the work ahead. The institution arranges for the equipment to reach the respective work locations. The mamas begin the work of installing solar panels and later provide maintenance support. During this journey, they are supported by the institution with refresher training, mentoring, etc. They also have the full support of the family and the community to discharge their duties. In addition, they are able to apply the other skills they acquired in Tiloniya in their daily life.

Post training process: PMKVY

The trainees undergo an assessment and certification process after training. The assessment is undertaken by approved third party assessors that are governed by established norms. After successful completion of assessment, they receive a certificate of completion. The TC is responsible for linking with local industry and facilitating employment opportunities for the trained candidates. As per norms, the TC is required to ensure employment, including self-employment of at least 70% of certified trainees within three months of completion of training. Of them at least 50% need to be placed in wage employment earning minimum wages.

To conclude, the following aspects of BFC and PMKVY were examined – institutional features including history, mission and objective, organisation structure, operating model and funding. Training features including mobilisation strategy, course curriculum and pedagogy and training of trainers and the post training work and employment process. Based on the commonalties of purposes and differences in approaches between the two cases, it is argued that they are best-suited for situating the research which seeks to understand ‘does skill development training facilitate opportunities for people to fulfil their aspirations and achieve their capabilities?’

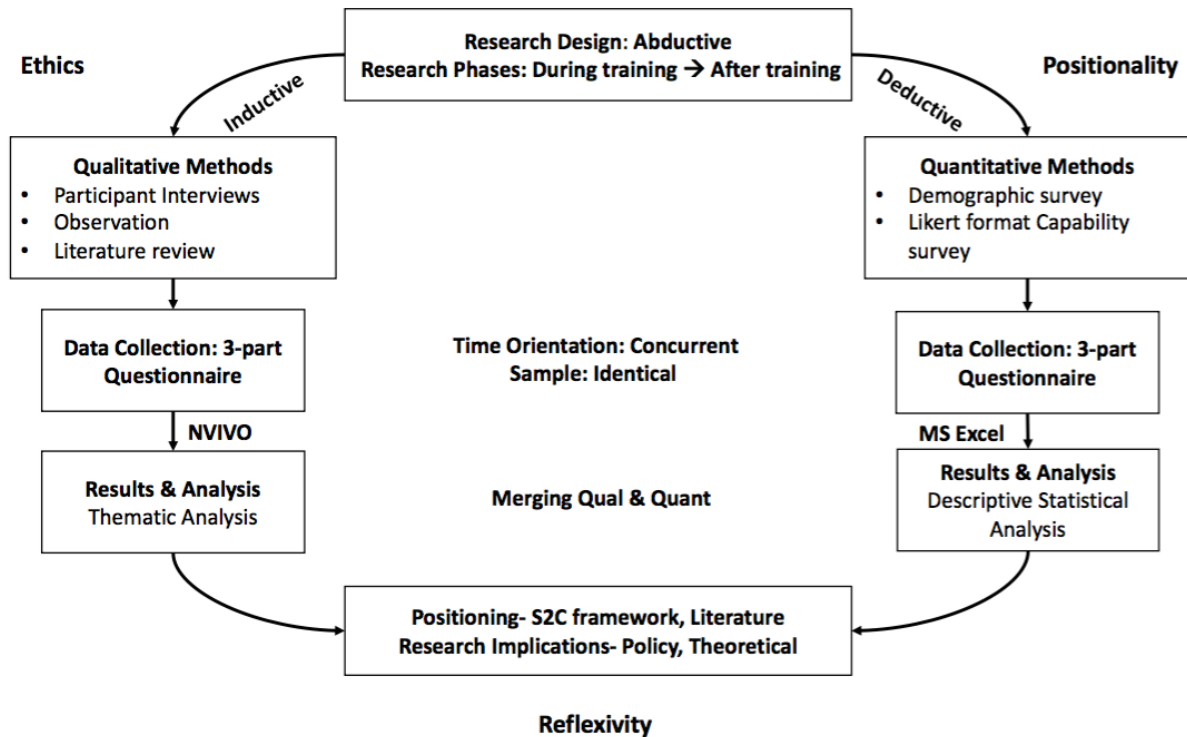
The next section provides an overview of the research methodology.

3.3 Research methodology

The methodology provides a context for the research process and a grounding for its logic and criteria (Punch, 2005). It also renders transparency and operationalises the process by linking the choice of methods with the outcomes (Silverman, 1985). Following these principles, this section details the methodology that was used to implement the research.

A typical research design moves from research questions to data and methods in order to understand the answers (Punch, 2005). Although research is an iterative process of data explaining the theory and vice versa, however, as noted by Brewer & Hunt (1989, in Punch 2005:26) “...once a study is published, it is irrelevant whether the research questions initiated the study or emerged from it...” A representation of the methodology that was deployed to undertake the research is depicted in figure 3.2 below.

Figure 3.2: Methodological framework



Source: author

3.3.1 Mixed methods research design

Abductive approach

In terms of the research design, as shown in figure 3.2, an abductive approach was found to be suitable for the present research since it combines aspects of both inductive and deductive approaches. Wheeldon & Ahlberg (2012) define abductive reasoning as a process that values both approaches, relying principally on the expertise, experience, and intuition of researchers. Drawing upon learnings from the review of literature and the researcher’s own experience as a practitioner, a mixed-methods approach was found to be suitable for the present study. This allowed the researcher to test the intuitions and research questions both theoretically and empirically. Following an inductive reasoning, patterns were conceptualised using data collected through qualitative techniques. At the same time, pre-defined capability indicators were tested to confirm the extent of agreeableness using a survey questionnaire.

Epistemological position

In line with the researcher’s epistemological position, as shown in figure 3.2, using a mixed methods approach allowed the researcher to draw upon the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods. The ontological assumption of the present research leans towards constructionism, i.e., it is derived from the meanings of what people say. At the same time, there is an occasional engagement with objectivism. Therefore, with an interpretivist view, the research was more inclined towards qualitative aspects.

Concurrent administration

A concurrent method, as depicted in the middle section of figure 3.2, refers to the administration of both qualitative and quantitative techniques to gather data at the same point in time. The three-part instrument that consisted of open-ended interviews and closed-ended Likert-scale based survey was administered concurrently. This enabled the researcher to draw a holistic view of the studied phenomena. The researcher was able to triangulate the data and build complementarities that allowed the researcher to compare and contrast (Greene et al., 1989; Creswell.et.al, 2003; Onwuegbuzie and Collins, 2007). The sample therefore was identical, where exactly the same sample members participated in both the qualitative and quantitative component of the study (Onwuegbuzie and Collins, 2007). An identical sample was also used across the two phases of the study, not considering the drop-out ratio. More details on the sampling approach and how the questionnaire was administered are examined in the following sections.

The research was conducted in the respective institutions across two phases. In the first phase referred to as the 'during training' phase, the participants were undergoing training. The second phase was approximately three months after the participants had completed their training. This allowed the researcher to make comparisons, both between the two cases and intra-institution before and after training comparisons. The researcher was thus able to derive the extent to which the training intervention was successful in enabling participants to fulfil their aspirations and achieve their capabilities.

Research methods

The research questions were examined using mixed methods that included literature review, observation, personal interviews and surveys (see first box figure 3.2). Various documents and reports of BFC and PMKVY were studied to understand the two cases in terms of their historical underpinnings, mission and objectives, organisation structure and operating model. Substantial time over a period of two years was spent in the field, observing and understanding the phenomena as it unfolded. This involved frequent travel to the field sites in Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh and engaging with MSDE in Delhi. Detailed personal interviews and surveys, lasting for an average of 50 mins were administered on the selected sample of trainees.

In addition, interviews were also conducted with trainers and other stakeholders including administrators, training centre managers and others. This helped the researcher to gather data from all stakeholders to understand the nature of the skills development ecosystem and its challenges. The researcher was therefore able to form a holistic view of the phenomena that helped to draw meaningful conclusions.

Mixed methods: strengths and weaknesses

The typical strengths of quantitative research are described as generalisability, reliability, replicability and transferability. On the other hand, qualitative research provides richness, captures depth and complexity, provides deeper insights into causality and a holistic interpretation (Hulme, 2007). However, conducting a mixed methods research concurrently becomes challenging. For example, Johnson and Gray (2010) say that in quantitative methods the relationship between the researcher and subject is distant. In qualitative methods, the researcher and subject share a close relationship. However, the researcher cannot oscillate

between being close and distant at the same time depending on the section of the questionnaire. Therefore, researchers need to devise a manner in which data can be collected efficiently and effectively.

In addition, using a mixed methods approach also entails finding the means to overcome challenges of both methods. In quantitative methods, aggregation and categorisation sacrifices potentially useful information. In addition, intra-household processes, difficult issues and marginal groups are under-reported. It is also relatively expensive and prone to enumeration errors. In case of qualitative data, it is difficult to demonstrate the scientific rigour of data collection. Analytical methods are poorly specified and vary across researchers. Generalisability is weak since it is unclear whom the results represent and datasets are rarely made publicly available (Hulme, 2007). An effort was made to overcome these weaknesses through the selection of a large sample size (over 100 trainees), the design of the research instrument and the method of data analysis. Details are discussed in subsequent sections.

3.3.2 Sampling strategy

Sampling is the process of selecting “a portion, piece, or segment that is representative of a whole” (Bryman, 2008: 172). It is an important step in the research process since it helps to inform the quality of inferences such that they are rich in content and inclusive in scope (Kemper et al., 2003; Onwuegbuzie and Collins, 2007). The process entails selecting the sample size and the sampling scheme. A non-random sampling scheme was adopted to meet the objectives of the research. The same has been established as the most common combination of sampling schemes in mixed methods (Onwuegbuzie and Collins, 2007). In terms of the size, a total of 283 interviews were conducted across phases and stakeholders. This included a sample size of 136 trainees which would be considered large enough to achieve data saturation, theoretical saturation and informational redundancy. At the same time, it would not be so large that it was difficult to undertake a deep, case-oriented analysis (Sandelowski, 1995).

Sampling scheme: multi-stage purposive

The sampling scheme followed a multi-stage purposive sampling procedure. This involved selecting settings, groups, and/or individuals representing a sample in two or more stages (Onwuegbuzie and Collins, 2007). Such purposive selection of “information rich” units enabled the researcher to obtain maximum understanding of the underlying phenomenon (Patton, 1990, p. 169). The three stages are examined below.

1. The first stage involved selection of the location of study. The case of BFC was straightforward since training was delivered at one location in Tiloniya village of Ajmer district in the state of Rajasthan. The exercise was more complex in determining the location for PMKVY since it is a national programme and training centres were located across all 28 states and 8 Union Territories. The state of Rajasthan was selected for convenience of commonality with BFC. Training centres in Jaipur district were identified, which is also the capital city. This was done on the basis of a skills gap report (NSDC, 2016) in which Jaipur was one of the top 5 districts that was active on skilling initiatives in Rajasthan.

Table 3.1: Comparing HD and economic indicators - India, Rajasthan and HP

Indicator	India	Rajasthan	Himachal Pradesh
Human Development Index & Rank (2017) ⁵¹	0.64 130/189 countries	0.62 20/25 States	0.72 4/25 States
Education Index (2017) ³	0.56	0.65	0.50
Health Index (2017) ³	0.75	0.78	0.75
Income Index (2017) ³	0.63	0.63	0.73
Literacy rate (2011) ⁵²	74% (total) 81% (male) 65% (female)	66% 79% 52%	83% 90% 76%
LFPR (2011) ⁵³	52% (total)	43.6%	51.8%
Male	78.7% (male)	51.8%	58.7 %
Female	23.8% (female)	35%	44.8%
Skills Development Mission ⁵⁴	National Mission launched in 2015	Rajasthan Skills and Livelihoods Corporation (RSLDC) was launched in 2010 and SSDP and District committees were created.	Himachal Pradesh Kaushal Vikas Nigam (HPKVN) was established in 2015 as not for profit company and launched various schemes
Skills Sector demand ⁶	16 priority sectors identified	Electrical, Auto, Sales, Gems & Jewellery, Handicrafts and Handloom	Tourism, Handicrafts, Pharmaceuticals, Horticulture, Financial Services, Auto, Construction, Power, Apparel, Beauty, IT, Electricals, Hydel

Source: author

- The next stage involved ascertaining training batches for the research. In the case of BFC, two training programme cycles run annually, commencing in September and April each for a period of six months. In PMKVY, batches are allocated centrally by NSDC at the beginning of each quarter and the programmes typically run for three months. Data was sought from NSDC to shortlist training centres using the criteria of batch start date and the sector of training to ensure representativeness.
- The third stage consisted of selecting trainees for the study. In the case of BFC, a typical batch consists of approximately 40 International and 20 National solar mamas. However, for the selected cycle of April 2018, out of a total of 47 trainees, 45 were International and only 4 were Indian due to mobilisation issues. In addition, a new batch to train Master Trainers had also been initiated. The Master Trainer batch consisted of local people from the district and they completed the same training programme as the solar mamas. The

⁵¹ Source: SBI Research, UNDP, 2019

⁵² Source: Census 2011 data

⁵³ Source: Census 2011 data, Office of the Registrar General, India; World Bank 2017 database

⁵⁴ Source: Websites: MSDE, RSLDC, HPKVN

criterion used in the case of sample selection was language. Trainees, majority of whom were women, were selected on the basis of their ability to communicate in either English, Hindi, or Spanish. The researcher was well versed with the first two languages and an interpreter for Spanish to English was present in Tiloniya during the time of research.

In PMKVY, the selection was based on the criteria of ensuring a gender mix from the trainees of shortlisted batches that were present on the day of the interview. From a typical batch size of 30 trainees in each class, 8 trainees per sector were interviewed. Considering absenteeism and gender mix, the number per sector was appropriate since expanding beyond that led to data saturation which was confirmed in the pilot study and subsequent data analysis. This led to the following nature and size of the sample of trainees:

Table 3.2: Training sector-wise sample details of BFC and PMKVY centres

Institution	District	Village/ Town	Training Centre	Training Sector	Job Role	Sample Size	Male	Female
PMKVY Rajasthan	Jaipur	Paota	VRJ Skills	Green Jobs	Solar PV Installer	8	5	3
	Jaipur	Jaipur	IL&FS	Apparel	Sewing Machine Operator	8	1	7
	Jaipur	Jaipur	IL&FS	Beauty and Wellness	Assistant Beauty Therapist	8	0	8
	Jaipur	Jaipur	Commands	Banking	Accounts Executive	8	4	4
	Jaipur	VKI	MG Techno	Electronics	Field Technician	8	4	4
	Jaipur	VKI	MG Techno	Retail	Retail Associate	8	4	4
PMKVY Himachal	Shimla	Sanjauli	Jaa Maa Education	Media and Entertainment	Makeup Artist	8	0	8
	Shimla	Sanjauli	Jaa Maa Education	Logistics	Consignment Tracking Executive	8	3	5
	Shimla	Tiker-Jarol	Calance Software	Tourism and Hospitality	Customer Sales Executive	8	4	4
	Solan	Solan	Softdot Skill Development Centre	Handicraft and Carpets	Handloom Weaver- Carpet	8	0	8
	Solan	Parwanoo	OneUp Systems	IT-ITES	Domestic DE Operator	8	4	4
	Solan	Parwanoo	OneUp Systems	Electronics	Field Technician	8	4	4
BFC Rajasthan	Ajmer	Tiloniya	BFC	Solar	Solar Engineer	22	0	20
	Ajmer	Tiloniya	BFC	Solar	Master Trainer	18	8	10
Total						136	41	93

Source: author

In addition, 26 other stakeholders were also interviewed including Training Administrators, Trainers and other members of the respective organisations across all centres. The second phase of interviews were conducted on the same sample. A summary of the total sample details is presented in table 3.3 below.

Table 3.3: Sample overview for BFC and PMKVY

Sample	PMKVY	BFC	Total
Number of trainees interviewed during training	96	40	136
Gender ratio of trainees during training (F:M)	2:1	4:1	2:1
Number of trainees interviewed after training	84	37	121
Drop-out rate (during -after training)	12.5%	8%	11%
Other stakeholders interviewed	16	10	26
Total interviews	196	87	283
Country of origin of trainees	India	India, Botswana, Uganda, Argentina, Turkey, Fiji, Tanzania	7
Number of Training Centres	8	1	9
Number of Training Sectors	12	2	14
Number of Job Roles	12	2	14

Source: author

Sampling issues

By following the above strategy, the researcher was able to tackle the typical sampling issues identified by Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007) as explained below:

1. The crisis of representation, i.e. the difficulty in capturing the lived experience using text in general and words and numbers in particular. By undertaking a multi-stage purposive sampling and selecting a large sample (136 trainees), sufficient data was generated that enabled the researcher to provide a thick description of the phenomena (Curtis et al., 2000; Kemper et al., 2003; Miles & Huberman, 1994), thereby increasing descriptive validity and interpretive validity (Maxwell, 1996).
2. The crisis of integration i.e. being able to effectively combine the qualitative and quantitative approaches was overcome by using identical sample across the two.
3. The crisis of legitimation refers to the difficulty in obtaining findings or making inferences that are credible, transferable and confirmable. This was overcome by ensuring that inferences were drawn directly from the extracted sample of units.
4. Finally, the crisis of politics i.e. the tensions that arise by using different investigators for the two approaches was not applicable in the present research since the entire research was conducted by a single person i.e. the primary researcher.

3.3.3 Instrument design

A comprehensive instrument was designed to measure the categories of research. These included –people’s aspirations and capabilities; attributes of the skills training intervention;

factors of the external environment and gender inequality; the actual achievements and failures of trainees. Two versions of the questionnaire were designed to capture data across the two phases – during training and after training. In addition, relevant customisations for the respective institutions were also done for each version. In line with the research design, both qualitative and quantitative measures were included. Clark's (2002) three-part survey was found to be most suitable since it allowed the researcher to capture the required data in a single framework and administration. The three parts consist of standard questions that collect personal details and background information; open-ended questions based on the research categories; comparable closed-ended questions relating to a list of predefined capabilities.

In line with Clark's (2002) logic of the sequencing of questions from open to closed, led to the following benefits:

- By asking open-ended questions at the outset, initial responses were not influenced.
- By asking participants to consider predefined capabilities, it enabled the researcher to investigate 'missing' components of the categories of interest and look for consensus.
- Comparing the answers to open and closed questions which might reflect values or aspirations that are ill-informed or have adapted to personal circumstances, enabled to test for inconsistencies.

However, in a departure from Clark's sequencing, the researcher included background information in part 1 and not part 3. This helped the researcher to understand the person better and build rapport through the process. In addition, a concluding section was added after part three to capture the researcher's observations in terms of the body language and other aspects of the interviewee. The researcher was thus able to capture the various interlinkages, complexities and inherent vagueness in a measurable format.

The three parts of the questionnaire are examined below, and a sample questionnaire is in the appendix.

Part 1: Information was captured across 38 demographic data points that included personal details, education and work history and household information.

Part 2: 15 open-ended questions were designed to ascertain people's views on – valued attributes of the skills training intervention, their aspirations and capabilities, specifically their work goals and goals in life. Questions of valued work aspects and life needs inspired from Clark and Qizilbash's (2001) survey instrument were also included. The impact of factors in the external environment and the support that people needed to pursue training and fulfil aspirations was also captured. Particularly, views on the factor of gender inequality in life and work matters were captured. Finally, people's reflections on the actual value of skills training were ascertained.

Part 3: The 35 closed-ended questions were drawn from related capability lists and rated on a 5-point Likert scale. A Likert scale is typically used in household and social surveys (Anand, et.al. 2009). The scale owes to Likert, an American psychologist who argued that attitudes vary along a dimension from negative to positive and the key to successful measurement was to convey this underlying dimension to survey respondents, so that they could then choose the response option that best reflected their position on that dimension. In terms of the

number of scale points, five is most commonly used since it offers enough choice and is manageable. This also does not complicate labelling issues.

On the other hand, the drawbacks of Likert type questions include the acquiescence bias, i.e. the tendency for respondents to agree with statements irrespective of their content (Schuman and Presser, 1981). Another issue is that the neutral mid-point complies with both indifference and ambivalence and could be used to avoid reporting less socially acceptable answers (Johns, 2005).

Based on the strengths and drawbacks, key aspects that were considered in constructing the capability survey questions included keeping the stem statement short, simple and clear. In addition, double-barrelled questions, i.e. questions that potentially ask two different things, were avoided. Also, quantitative questions were avoided since the purpose was to capture the extent of agreement or disagreement and not to measure any indirect variable. Leading questions that are not neutral were avoided. Changing the direction of questions from positive to negative also helped to achieve balance to avoid distorting the results. Sequencing of questions was also considered to keep an overall logical flow. Finally, interpretation was based on the view that it is an ordinal scale rather than an interval scale, i.e., the distance between two responses is not the same however assumptions can be made about the order.

Deciding on which capabilities to include in the analysis of freedoms can be problematic (Robeyns, 2005), since individuals may value different capabilities under different circumstances (Hatakka, 2012). In line with Sen's approach, Robeyns argues that it is important that the stakeholders themselves decide on which capabilities to focus and not follow a pre-defined list. By understanding what people value and if the intervention fulfils that allows focus on the "actual ability to achieve (not merely on some formal 'opportunity' that may or may not be in itself enabling)" (Sen, 2002, p. 83).

It has been suggested that for policy-related issues and debates in the social sciences, and especially for the measurement of individual advantage and the design of socio-economic policy proposals, the criterion of context favours the use of Sen's conceptualization, compared to Nussbaum's (2000) universal list capabilities (Robeyns, 2003). Nussbaum's list is more appropriate in discussions concerning moral philosophical principles that might result in legal rights and political declarations, or in qualitative analyses of how people can cultivate their capabilities (Ibid., 2003).

Capability indicators were thus directly drawn from relevant extant lists where available. These lists have been methodologically created following the five criteria suggested by Robeyns (2003b, pp. 70–71) (i) that it should be explicit, discussed and defended; (ii) that the method should be clear; (iii) that the level of abstraction of the list should be appropriate; (iv) that the list comprises two stages, an ideal list and pragmatic or non-ideal list; and (v) the listed capabilities should not be reducible to each other.

Although, bringing together varied lists can be problematic, however, it enabled the researcher to create a complete view to inform the research. This approach is substantiated and draws upon similar works by Clark (2017) and Anand et.al. (2009). Clark offers a detailed methodology to conceptualise and measure education by exploring prominent lists of educational capabilities from disparate literatures. Following the convention of other

household and social surveys Anand suggests that “the questions developed illustrate the sorts of data that policy-makers and capability researchers alike could gather both in one-off and in regular surveys” (pg 148).

The objective of this section was to enable the researcher to triangulate and substantiate people’s views by asking questions in different ways. In the process, it also provided an opportunity to empirically test the capability indicators and comment on their resourcefulness in context of the present research. The aim was not to assess the empirical or theoretical grounding of the lists which have been designed for a variety of purposes. Details of the capability lists included in this section are presented below.

Skills related questions (nos. 1 to 7, 9, 16, 23, 25, 31 and 32): These have been drawn from Melanie Walker’s capability list of higher education and lifelong learning (2006). The questions provide a measure of indicators such as autonomy for choice of training, participating effectively in class and interacting with others, being safe in the learning environment. In addition, Burchardt, Tsang and Vizard’s (2009) children’s capabilities list was also used for the formulation of application of skills in daily life. Questions were also drawn from Marion Young’s (2009) work on life skills learning. They included attributes of personal, interpersonal, cognitive, and functional life skills learning.

Work related question (nos. 10 to 15): These were drawn from Anand et.al (2009) who constructed a 7-point Likert scale survey instrument to measure capabilities. They drew questions from the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) and added others. The work-related questions were directly related to the dimensions of study and hence could be imported readily. Questions were devised around the variables of –work discrimination, skills used at work, ability to relate to colleagues at work, to be respected by colleagues. At a universal level, they are linked with Nussbaum’s Control Over One’s Environment capability i.e., having the right to seek employment on an equal basis with others; in work, being able to work as a human being, exercising practical reason; and entering into meaningful relationships of mutual recognition with other workers.

Gender Inequality questions (nos. 8, 17 to 22, 24, 26 to 30, and 33): Ingrid Robeyns’ (2003) Gender Inequality capabilities that consists of a list of 14 capabilities conceptualised for Western societies was adapted for the present context. Robeyns says that some of these aspects would be common to developing countries as well. The questions were contextualised via pilot testing, discussing with stakeholders and reviewing relevant literature. The list was therefore found to be useful for the research which was situated in India and included women from other countries of the global south.

In doing so, the researcher found more similarities than differences. For instance, consider the dimension of time autonomy – Robeyns says that this is an important social issue in some Western societies where women spend disproportionately more time on non-market work. In addition, the allocation of time is a collective and not individual decision that is influenced by several individual, household, and community characteristics (Bubeck 1995; Robeyns 2001). The same has also been established in developing countries through several time-use studies (Reddy, 1980; Tinker 1987; Agarwal, 1997). Likewise, other indicators were found to be usable. However, the interpretation was guided by local context. In addition, considering

the qualitative dimension of the research further helped to give meaning and contextualise the responses.

The researcher also consulted academics during the HDCA conference in Cape Town in September 2017 to seek expert guidance. The final questionnaire benefited from views gathered from David Clark, Shailaja Fennell, Mario Biggeri and Solava Ibrahim. The instrument was constructed in English and translated to Hindi language with the help of an expert. Finally, the instrument was piloted on a sample of 50 trainees in Ajmer district across 2 PMKVY training centres and BFC. This provided a valuable opportunity to further fine-tune the questionnaire.

3.3.4 Administration

Fieldwork planning

The actual fieldwork is as good as the planning and preparation for the fieldwork. The planning process included seeking the required ethical approvals, risk assessments and reference letters from the Centre of Development Studies. At the same time contact was established with the respective CEOs of BFC and NSDC to seek permission for data collection. Details regarding the purpose of research and the nature of assistance that would be required were provided. Further introductions with other members of the teams who could provide information and help navigate the system were established. In the case of PMKVY, data on current training batches as per the sampling strategy was obtained. Contact was established with the leads of Training Centres. They were informed of the intent of the visit and a copy of letter from NSDC authorising the researcher to conduct the research was provided. Likewise, in the case of BFC, the data collection plan and other visit details were coordinated with other members of the local team in Tiloniya.

Through this process of establishing contact and networking with the organisations, the researcher's positionality mattered. Access was granted based on the researcher's academic and professional credentials. Although the process demanded persistent follow-up, the researcher did not face any obstacles that could not be overcome. The teams in Tiloniya, NSDC and the PMKVY training centres extended full support in providing required information. The team members also shared their own experiences and views that were valuable.

In BFC, Roy promotes an open and inclusive culture where everyone is welcome to experience and participate in the activities of the institution. In the case of PMKVY, at the level of the training centres that are managed by private training partners, there was some initial hesitation to allow access. To alleviate their concerns the academic nature of the work was established and that it was not an audit exercise was confirmed. The training partners were also requested not to inform the students and take any extra considerations since the researcher was required to capture their regular training day.

The other important aspect of planning was to ensure that a complete fieldwork kit was prepared. It consisted of an adequate number of copies of the questionnaire, stationery, recorder, camera and back-up devices. Other administrative issues such as travel arrangements, accommodation, etc. had to be organised in a manner that assured safety. The

process was structured as per the following plan and further details are examined in the next section:

Table 3.4: Phase-wise fieldwork schedule

Schedule	Pilot	Phase 1: During Training	Phase 2: After Training	Follow-up: After Return
Oct-17	PMKVY & BFC			
Nov-17		PMKVY Rajasthan		
Mar-18		PMKVY Himachal		
Apr-18		PMKVY Himachal	PMKVY Rajasthan	
May-18		BFC Rajasthan	PMKVY Rajasthan	
Sep-18			BFC Rajasthan	
Oct-18			PMKVY Himachal	
Nov-18			PMKVY Himachal	
Jan-19				BFC
Feb-19				BFC
Mar-19				BFC

Source: author

Considering the extent of fieldwork in terms of the large sample interviewed over multiple stages and across locations, managing timelines was critical. The fieldwork included a pilot stage followed by the main intervention. Trainees were first interviewed at the start of the training programme. This was followed by post training interviews, approximately three months after training. In the case of BFC, an additional follow-up was conducted with few trainees once they returned to their home countries.

Data collection

As shown in table 3.4, the data collection activity was phased over 3 stages that were preceded by a pilot phase as described below.

Pilot phase (Oct 2017): Interviews were conducted with a sample of 50 trainees. Two PMKVY training centres in Ajmer district were selected in addition to BFC in Tiloniya. Unstructured interviews were conducted with administrators to gain a general understanding of the training environment, including the challenges. The administration of the questionnaire provided relevant insights on aspects of the questionnaire that could be revised. It also helped to better plan the main intervention by providing a sense of the actual time of administration. The questions were asked in Hindi and written in English. This process of real-time translation and writing proved to be efficient. Expressions in Hindi that could not be easily translated were noted and analysed later. Information regarding the trainees that could be sought from the training centres before the interviews was included, thus making the process more organised. In addition, the researcher became familiar with the environment thereby making the process easier going forward.

Phase 1 (November 2017 to May 2018): Trainees were interviewed at the start of the training programme. The training batches to be included and trainees to be interviewed per batch were selected as per the sampling process. A total of 136 trainees were interviewed – 96 from PMKVY and 40 from BFC. In addition, 26 stakeholder interviews were also conducted in

parallel. All interviews were conducted by the researcher and the responses were handwritten. Before starting the interview, the following was discussed with the interviewees:

The researcher made introductions and explained the purpose of the interview. It was assured that the data would be confidential and will be used only for academic purposes. The consent of participants to be interviewed and for responses to be noted was sought. They were informed that another interview after completing the training will be conducted to compare positions. They were also told that in case they were not comfortable to answer any particular question, they should feel free to say so. In case they did not wish to proceed with the interview at any point in time, they could opt out and their responses would be erased.

During the interview process, a conversational style was adopted so that it did not appear to be a Q&A session. The first section – demographic questions, acted as an icebreaker to know the person. The researcher's demeanour was relaxed and non-threatening. Interviewees were made to feel comfortable and secure so that they could express without hesitation. In the second section, detailed responses on how they felt about the training, their future after training and about their life were noted. The narratives flowed in a sequential manner making a story. It was engaging and thought provoking for the interviewer and the interviewee. It was also an intense and demanding process.

For the last part of the interview, respondents were explained the response format and scale. Any additional comments to support their rating were also included. They were asked to think in context of their circumstances where required. In other places, they were asked to objectively scrutinise their sentiments by removing themselves from their own immediate circumstances and taking a typical view. This helped to address the problem of adaptive preferences by encouraging the participants to become impartial spectators by removing themselves from their own immediate circumstances in order to scrutinise their sentiments (Sen 1999, 2005; Clark, Biggeri, and Frediani, 2019). Again, the questions moved logically, changing directionality so that they were attentive and asking for comments to explain responses.

Finally, the participants were thanked for their time and for sharing their thoughts. They were reminded that they will be contacted again and in case they wanted to reach out to the researcher for any questions, they could do so. Before wrap-up, the researcher's observations regarding non-verbal behaviour of the respondent (eye-contact, body language, confidence), were recorded. In addition, the researcher's views on whether there was any difficulty in conveying the purpose of the interview and understanding the questions on the part of the respondents were also noted. In addition, pictures were taken with few trainees individually and in groups and the surroundings were also captured.

Phase 2 (April 2018 till November 2018): In line with the sampling approach, the same respondents were contacted three months after completion of the training in the case of PMKVY. The administration was staggered to match with the corresponding batch end-dates. In the case of BFC, the interviews were conducted before the trainees left for their home countries. With a 11% drop out rate, a total of 121 interviews were conducted in the second phase. The 84 PMKVY interviews were conducted over the telephone since the trainees had

moved to different locations since completion of the training. It was therefore not feasible to organise physical meetings. This did not appear to compromise the data quality; however, it was definitely not the same as face-to-face interviews. The same process and instructions were followed. In addition, it was more comparative, each time referring to their response during phase 1. Therefore, they seemed to be interested and engaged since it was about them and the changes they have experienced since training.

The BFC trainees were interviewed in person before they left for their home countries. Establishing contact after 3 months once they returned to their respective home countries was challenging and uncertain. The interviews were conducted during the time of the graduation ceremony which made the atmosphere festive and alive. In addition, the event acquired a larger significance since it also included a felicitation ceremony commemorating the CEO for an international award. Various international dignitaries were present on campus and several events were organised over a period of 2 days. This provided a unique opportunity to observe varied activities on campus and people's engagement.

Follow-up (January to March 2019): An additional touch point was included for BFC trainees 3 to 6 months after batch end date. Contact was established with them once they were back in their home countries. This was done over Facebook and Whats App chats. Six chats were conducted with mamas from Fiji, Turkey and Tanzania who easily understood English and were active via social media. The purpose was to get a sense of how they were positioned work-wise and otherwise since returning.

3.3.5 Positionality and reflexivity

The research process is influenced by the positionality of the author vis-à-vis the research environment. This assumes significance since research represents a shared space, shaped by both the researcher and the participants (England, 1994). Therefore, reflexivity to examine how positionality impacts the research process is a useful exercise. This awareness of the relationship between the researcher and the 'other' (Chiseri-Strater, 1996; Pillow, 2003) helps to contextualise the subjectivities involved in data interpretation. The researcher's social and cultural identities influence the meaning accorded to participant's voices. It also helps to reconcile the personal and academic motivations of conducting the research and accountability to the researched. Positionality is framed on a degree of relatedness of the researcher as an 'insider' or, an 'outsider' relative to the participants.

For example, Hockey (1993) defines an insider in the sense of the setting of the research, or in the sense of the peers or individuals being researched. Outsiders, defined in the opposite, are those who are said to be approaching the community of study from beyond its borders, to share no attributes with the community, or have no previous experience of it. It is also framed as an issue of access wherein an insider can claim to possess 'monopolistic access' (Merton, 1972), of exclusive knowledge about the community and its members. On the other hand, an outsider is a 'professional stranger' who is detached from the commitments of the group under study would be unable to access the hidden knowledge of the group (Agar, 1996).

My positionality shifted in complex ways throughout the research process. It was not one-dimensional but needed to be negotiated. The degree of being an insider versus outsider depended on how I was perceived by different stakeholders. It also shifted depending on the stage of research and objectives. Initially, interacting with senior members in the organisations (NSDC, BFC, MSDE), my positionality as an Indian academic in a reputed international university provided access. I was conscious of this privileged access that was afforded based on my academic and professional credentials. However, continued access was determined by reciprocity of knowledge and degree of trustworthiness.

Towards the end of phase 1 of data collection, I was also working part-time with MSDE on a World Bank funded skills project. Therefore, I was moving within the insider circles of MSDE and interacting with NSDC and BFC members in a professional capacity. However, I was conscious of not risking my research interests by maintaining two distinct positions and ensuring there was no overlap. At the same time, this unique positionality enabled me to form a holistic appreciation of the respective case studies and see beyond the stated ideals and objectives. I was therefore able to examine the popular narratives and question the various assumptions to generate rich insights. This allowed me to realistically compare and contrast the actual value and challenges inherent in the respective models and suggest a more integrated and inclusionary approach to skills development.

On the field, interacting with the trainees, who were the main research protagonists, my positionality interacted in varied ways. During the interviews, at the outset, once I presented myself and established the purpose of research, my outsider-ness was distinct. I was classified as an Indian woman doing some important work in a foreign university. As the interviews progressed, there was recognition that the outsider was actually interested in them and their life stories. This was followed by reposing trust by making me an insider to their world. They also expressed gratitude for listening to them and through the process, leaving them with something valuable. Finally, they continued the relationship and sought guidance and kept me updated on related happenings.

From my viewpoint, it was a deliberate attempt to fit-in – by ensuring that I dressed in a culturally appropriate way and interacted with sincerity. I thus tried to neutralise the present power differences of my class, education and experiences. Creating a rapport relatively free from tensions contributes to the legitimacy of the research in the eyes of the participants. This also facilitates a shared knowledge of the normative rules, values and belief systems. I made myself at home in their surroundings, sitting with them under a tree over a cup of tea. I expressed heartfelt gratitude to the participants for sharing their perspectives and enriching my work. At the same time, I needed to be objective and clear of the remit of my task and purpose of data collection. However, considering the nature of trust that was established, this was more complex than anticipated. For example, people started contacting me to help them get a job or complain about some aspect of the training. I had to then gently nudge them towards the respective people-in-charge in the organisation.

In the role of an objective listener, I was also constantly negotiating norms of reciprocity in human interactions. For instance, a person training in BFC requested help to fund a medical procedure for his skull injury. I contemplated crowd sourcing and spoke with few friends in Delhi. However, I did not proceed with the cause and instead informed the institution to

consider within their remit as appropriate. At the end of each interview, I was an insider to people's lives and felt compelled to leave them with words of encouragement. The young PMKVY trainees looked up to me as a mentor, they needed validation and encouragement.

Likewise, the relationship with the Training Partners evolved from initially being viewed with suspicion regarding actual intent. Once trust and confidentiality were established, they did not hesitate to share their views on how things actually worked. For instance, in Solan, a young trainer walked me home offering valuable socio-cultural nuances along the way. I also shared general insights with them based on my interactions. However, at times the TPs started expecting more, such as help with any industry contacts to enable placements. Some offered mementos at the end of the session such as a diary which I accepted graciously. However, all the time I was conscious of the meanings and expectations associated with these exchanges.

This reflexivity helps to establish clarity of purpose and contextualises interpretation of data. It also renders credibility and transparency to the research.

3.3.6 Ethical considerations

The study was approved by the University of Cambridge Research Ethics Committee. Informed consent from each participant was taken before the interview. They had the choice to withdraw at any point during the interview process. In addition, it was guaranteed that confidentiality of identity would be maintained, and information will be used for academic purposes only. Through the process of research planning, administration and reporting, I was mindful of cultural, religious, gender, and other significant differences within the research population. I was also mindful of the implications of criteria of inclusion and exclusion in sampling (Curtis et al., 2000).

The general criteria used to evaluate the rigour and quality of research in the social sciences –replicability, generalisability and internal validity (Boaz & Ashby 2003:7), though derived from quantitative traditions (Bryman 2008) can be applied to the present research. While my research is largely replicable, it is also influenced by aspects my positionality. In terms of generalisability, the research draws upon two specific skill intervention programmes. The selection of cases and the sample characteristics define the extent of applicability. However, representativeness in terms of the spread of sectors, trainees' countries of origin, gender and others makes the study applicable to other similar contexts. The internal validity of research pertains to the approximate truth about inferences regarding cause-effect or causal relationships. The epistemological position of the thesis is based on abductive reasoning and does not claim a causal inference. The focus is to determine the extent to which the skills training intervention enables people to achieve their goals.

The research was conducted following the principles of research integrity – honesty, rigour, transparency and open communication, care and respect for all participants of research. Finally, the process of knowledge production was based on reciprocity, wherein the research findings will be shared with the respective institutions and other experts.

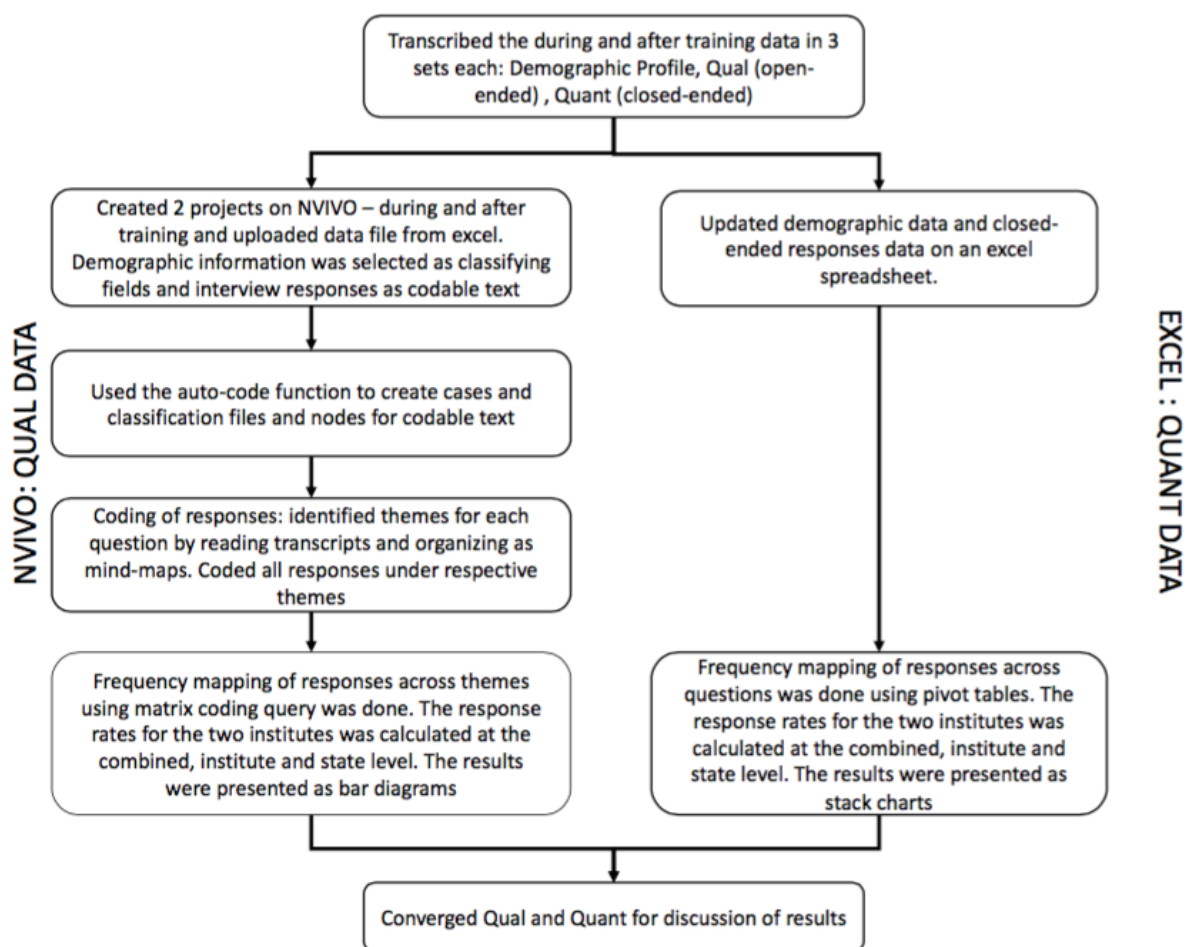
3.3.7 Data coding and analysis

Coding is a creative process of lending structure and meaning to the collected narratives. It also enables quantification and analysis of unstructured data. The general considerations for coding, as suggested by Lofland and Lofland (1995), included, thinking through several questions such as:

Of what general category is this item of data an instance? What does this item of data represent? What is this item of data about? Of what topic is this item of data an instance? What question about a topic does this item of data suggest? What sort of answer to a question about a topic does this item of data imply? What is happening here? What are people doing? What do people say they are doing? What kind of event is going on?

Figure 3.4 depicts the various steps of the process as described below:

Figure 3.4: Data coding process



Source: author

- 1. Data transcription:** The data was manually transcribed from the questionnaires to excel spreadsheets and word documents for the 283 interviews. This was done single-handedly to ensure that there was no data loss in translation. The transcription was done in multiple stages, immediately after each batch of administration. As a result, all nuances could be detailed appropriately. Since the entire process of data collection was managed solely by the researcher, there was no variance in the manner of administration, recording, recall

and interpretation. The data was then converted into formats that could be used for further coding and analysis.

To maintain anonymity of the participants, country / training centre and role identification was used. For example, 'Argentina mama' in the case of BFC and PMKVY Paota solar trainee in the case of PMKVY.

2. **Data upload:** NVIVO, a Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDA) software was used for coding qualitative data. Two projects- during training and after training were created and data was imported into the projects. In the case of quantitative data, the responses were captured on excel spreadsheets.
3. **Coding:** In the case of qualitative data, coding was an exhaustive process of reading through the transcripts several times and noting themes as they emerged. In the initial stage, a laundry list of code-like items was drawn. This is similar to Charmaz's (2004) recommendation that the first stage of coding should include a line by line coding where every data point has a code attached. This ensured that none of the points were lost. Through a process of comparison and consolidation, codes were put together. With careful reflection and consideration of the linkages, various codes were placed under respective categories. Cases where the same person's responses conveyed themes across codes, the dominant narrative was considered. The end result was a smaller number of themes with rich narratives explaining the different aspects. This process was repeated for both projects- during training and after training. Tools such as mind maps further helped to structure the codes.

In line with the research purpose, coding was done based on a thematic analysis rather than a narrative analysis. The latter is more prominent in case of life histories where the sequence of events assumes significance. The coding process is criticised for removing the context of the discussion and losing the narrative flow of what people say (Coffey and Atkinson 1996). However, in the present case, the data chapters are organised in the same order as the narrations. Although, in some instances there was a sense of loss of continuity and of force fitting. However, in the detailed analysis those threads are picked again, thereby eliciting the diversity and tensions within each coded category.

In the case of closed-ended questions, coding was not required since questions were pre-coded i.e., the respondent is asked to assign themselves to a category that has already had a number assigned to it (Bryman, 2008). In some instances, data was re-coded, for example, age data was combined into age bands.

4. **Frequency mapping:** In the case of qualitative data, mapping was done for all themes using matrix coding query. The response rates for the two institutions was calculated at an aggregate level and also disaggregated at the level of the institution and the state. The results were presented as bar diagrams and pie-charts. For quantitative data, a frequency mapping exercise using pivots was undertaken. Response rates were calculated and presented in the form of stack charts.

- 5. Data merging:** In the end, both quantitative and qualitative data was brought together and mapped according to the S2C framework categories. Furthermore, a qualitative comparison of people's positions during and after training allowed for reflections on the actual value afforded by the skills training intervention.

Challenges in using NVIVO

The coding process was made easier with NVIVO since it enabled to code text on the computer and retrieve the coded text using queries. However, decisions about the coding of text or the interpretation of findings are the work of the researcher. Other challenges were encountered with NVIVO such as the inability to deal with quantitative data which is saved as attributes that cannot be coded. Therefore, frequency mapping and quantitative-qualitative comparisons cannot be conducted. Also, in case of demographic information, the system did not identify Booleans, therefore data had to be selected mostly as text and integers in a few cases. There were issues with the size of file as well, the system was not able to handle over 200 cases across multiple fields. This issue was overcome with the help of an expert by trying various upload options. Finally, queries were generated across dimensions for intra and inter-institution comparisons. This was converted to percentages and presented in the form of bar diagrams for further analysis.

Conclusion

This chapter established the appropriateness of the S2C framework to examine the various research categories and unpack the secondary research questions. It outlined the research methodology and in line with the epistemological position, argued the case of adopting mixed methods. Sampling issues were tackled and the pros and cons of applying a multi-stage purposive sampling procedure were discussed. The worthiness of the three-part questionnaire design and content was justified. The fieldwork journey as it unfolded across phases was documented. This was followed by examining the process of data coding and analysis, including its challenges. Finally, the researcher's experiences and dilemmas of positionality were reflected upon to draw a complete view of the influences that impacted the research process.

It is argued that the adopted research methodology, though constrained by certain limitations, was appropriate to meet the research objectives. It fulfilled the criteria of sound and ethical research. It enabled the researcher to systematically examine the various dimensions of research. Drawing upon the methodology and analytical framework, the following data chapters (chapters 4 to 7) examine the respective secondary research questions.

The chapters are structured as follows: first, a detailed data analysis of the thematic category is presented. The analysis is undertaken at an aggregate level followed by inter-institution and intra-institution comparisons. As part of the data analysis results are also triangulated across related sections of the three-part questionnaire and with existing secondary data where applicable. Next, the data is positioned in the context of the respective research categories of the S2C framework. The chapter's end with a detailed examination of the implications of the data analysis in view of the reviewed literature and observed gaps.

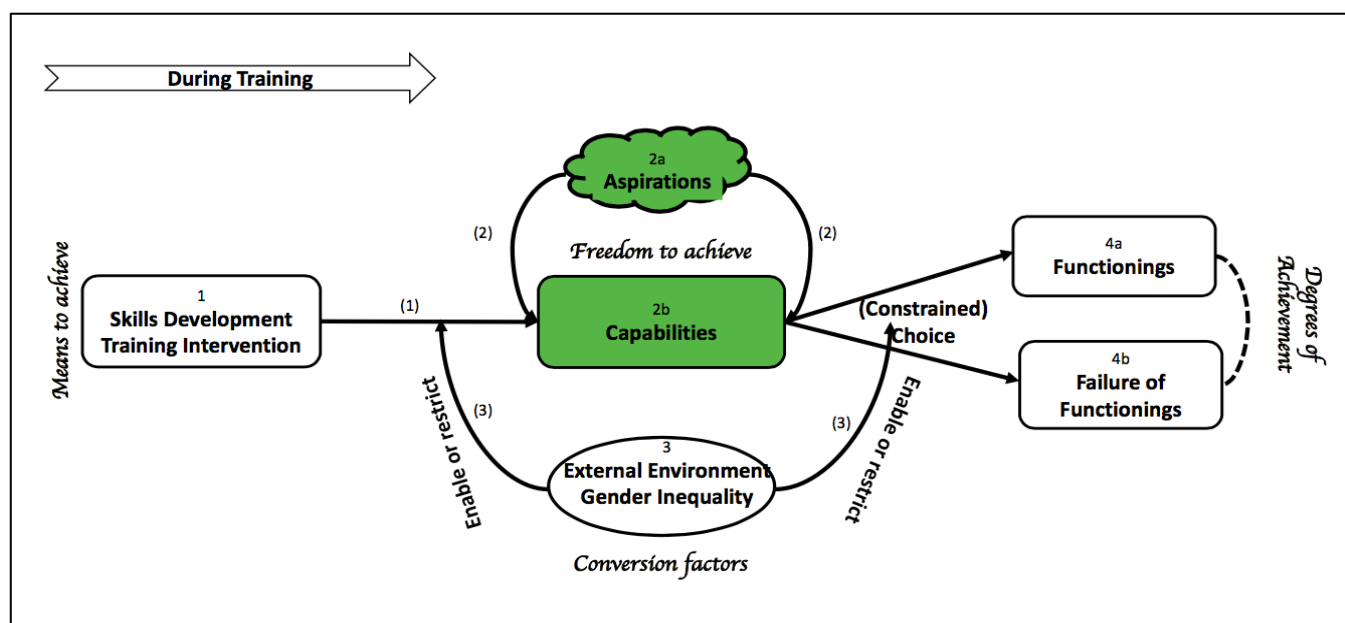
CHAPTER 4 | Aspirations and Capabilities

Introduction

This chapter examines RQ 1: *What are the aspirations and capabilities of people in BFC and PMKVY training programmes?*

In accordance with the S2C framework discussed in chapter 3, the first part of the analysis consisted of examining people’s aspirations and deriving their capabilities. This component has been highlighted in green colour in figure 4.1 (box 2a and 2b). Aspirations are people’s hopes and desires. Capabilities are valued ways of being and doing i.e., the space of ‘freedom to achieve’. Capabilities are derived by examining people’s aspirations from work and life as indicated by arrow 2.

Figure 4.1: Aspirations and capabilities in the S2C framework



Source: author

As per the process described in chapter 3, the ‘during training questionnaire’ was administered on the selected sample of 136 trainees across BFC and PMKVY. Thematic coding and frequency mapping of open and closed ended questions related to aspirations was done as shown in table 4.1. The questions included an investigation of what people wanted to achieve in life and why. In addition, people’s views on the attributes of a good life were also ascertained. Likewise, people’s valued work goals and their motivations to pursue the same were studied. In addition, their views on valued attributes of the work environment were determined. The extent to which these attributes were fulfilled in previous work experiences and expectations from future work were also considered.

Two themes were derived from this analysis– valued life goals and attributes; valued work goals and attributes. To further establish the validity of analysis, results were triangulated with relevant secondary data that consisted of aspiration mapping and surveys conducted by

BFC and PMKVY respectively. The analysis was undertaken at an aggregate level followed by inter-institution and intra-institution comparisons.

Table 4.1: Thematic mapping- aspirations related questions

Source data: During training questionnaire Sample size: 136 trainees interviewed	Thematic coding (for open-ended ques) / Frequency mapping (for close-ended ques)	Thematic analysis
Q15: What do you aspire for in life? [wish / desire] What about your life would you like to change? Why are these things important for you?	Valued life-goals	Valued life-goals and attributes
Q17.1: I am going to read you a list of items, tell me if you think these things are necessary for a person to live well or not?	Valued life attributes	
Secondary data: <i>Enriche</i> class work	BFC aspirations maps	
Q11: What do you want to do after completing the training?	Work-plans after training	Valued work-goals and attributes
Q12: What do you want to do later in the future?	Future work-goals	
Secondary data: ADB survey	PMKVY work aspirations survey	
Q14.1: Do you think the following job aspects are important?	Valued work attributes	
Q14.2: Which of these aspects did your previous job fulfil?	Valued work attributes-past experiences	
Questions 10 to 15		
Past earnings	Valued work attributes future expectations	
Salary expectation, preferred work location		

- Open ended questions
- Close-ended questions
- Background information

Source: author

Finally, in accordance with the S2C framework, people’s capabilities were derived by analysing the nature of their aspirations. The analysis presents an integrated conceptual view of aspirations and capabilities of trainees in BFC and PMKVY. One that includes both work and life related capabilities. It shows that beyond the materialistic goals of well-being, the trainees are also keen to pursue other dimensions of development. It also shows that the trainees who come from disadvantaged backgrounds have the capacity to aspire a better future for themselves and can be positioned as change agents. The commonality in narratives across BFC and PMKVY shows that although the two institutional models vary in character, the nature of aspirations and capabilities is universal. At the same time, differences in patterns across BFC and PMKVY and within PMKVY at the level of the State were also observed which can be attributed to local cultural norms, socio-economic contexts, demographic factors and other intuitional characteristics.

4.1 Analysing aspirations for life

In this section, people's valued life-goals and their ideas of a good life are discussed and compared. This is followed by analysing people's valued work-goals, both after training and in the future. In addition, desirable aspects of the work environment are listed. The extent to which they were fulfilled in previous work and future expectations is also analysed. The results are then triangulated with relevant secondary data from respective institutions.

4.1.1. Analysing valued life-goals and attributes

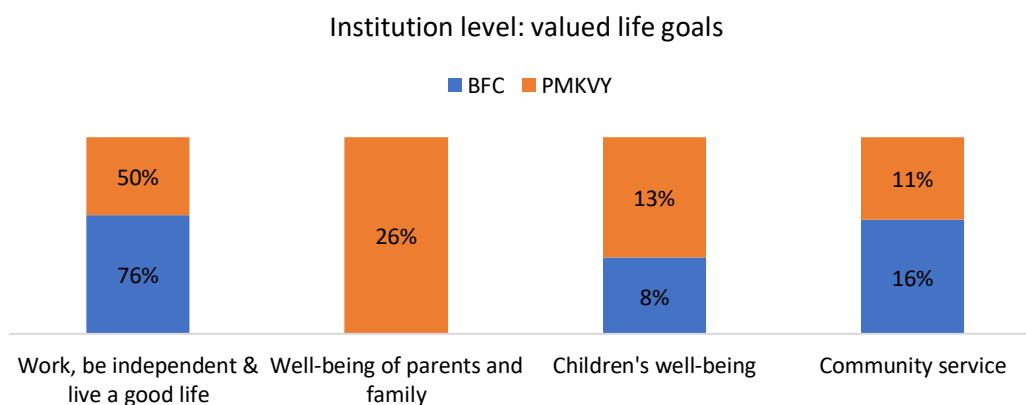
Consolidated analysis: valued life-goals and attributes

Majority (57%) of the people aspire to be able to work and be independent so that they are able to live a good life. This was followed by the desire to ensure the well-being of parents and family, as ascertained by 19% of the people. Another related goal expressed by 11% of the people was to be able to ensure children's well-being and bright future. Finally, 13% of the people said that they wanted to be able to work towards development of the community.

People's idea of a good life was defined as a life in which they were financially better-off. Few people also wished to live a life of luxury. In terms of material possessions, owning a house and a car was a commonly expressed desire. Few people also said that they wanted to be able to travel. In addition, living an enriched, purposive, values based life was also much desired. So was being able to live a life which contains happiness, success, fame, recognition and respect. Furthermore, people's response to a list of indicators for a good life (Clark and Qizilbash, 2001), showed that the following aspects were valued by all– health and nutrition; sanitation; safety; income; infrastructure and facilities (roads, power, health care centres); happy and tension-free state of mind; family and friendship, where family was valued more. The desire to take part in community life was also highly valued (95%) as was having leisure time (91%). Importance of access to productive assets like land and animals was valued by lesser percentage (88%). The significance of religion was least at 76%.

Institution-level analysis: valued life-goals

Graph 4.1: Institution-level comparison of valued life goals



Source: author

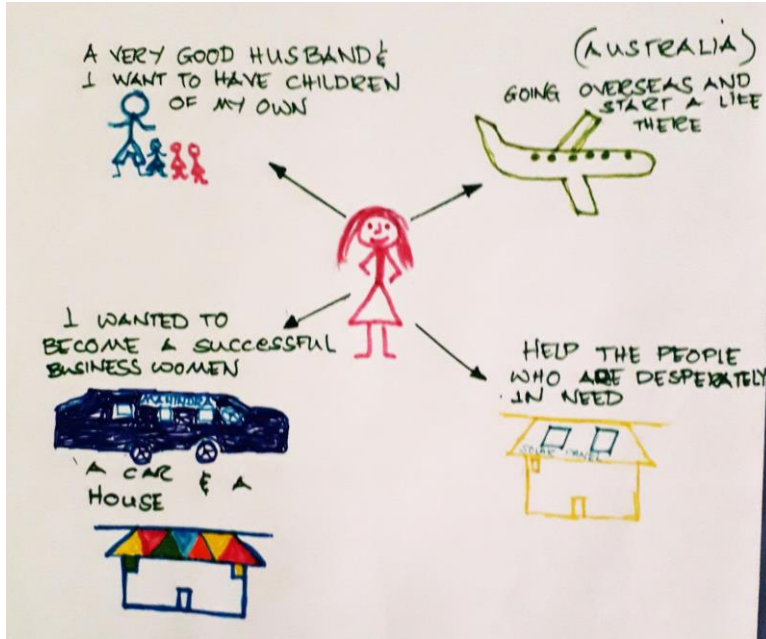
The case of BFC: valued life-goals

Graph 4.1 shows that majority (76%) of the BFC trainees aspire to work, be independent and live a good life. This is followed by the desire for community service (16%) and the want to ensure children's well-being (8%). Work-related aspirations are examined in detail in the next section. The other prominent dimension is the aspiration for community service. People are disturbed with inequality and seek to work towards upliftment of the poor. For example, people aspired to build orphanages, particularly those from Uganda and Tanzania which witness a high death rate on account of various diseases such as AIDS. People value the significance of training and wish to share their learnings with those who cannot access education and training opportunities. For example, solar mamas want to teach the skills to other men and women in the village.

Analysing secondary data: BFC aspirations maps

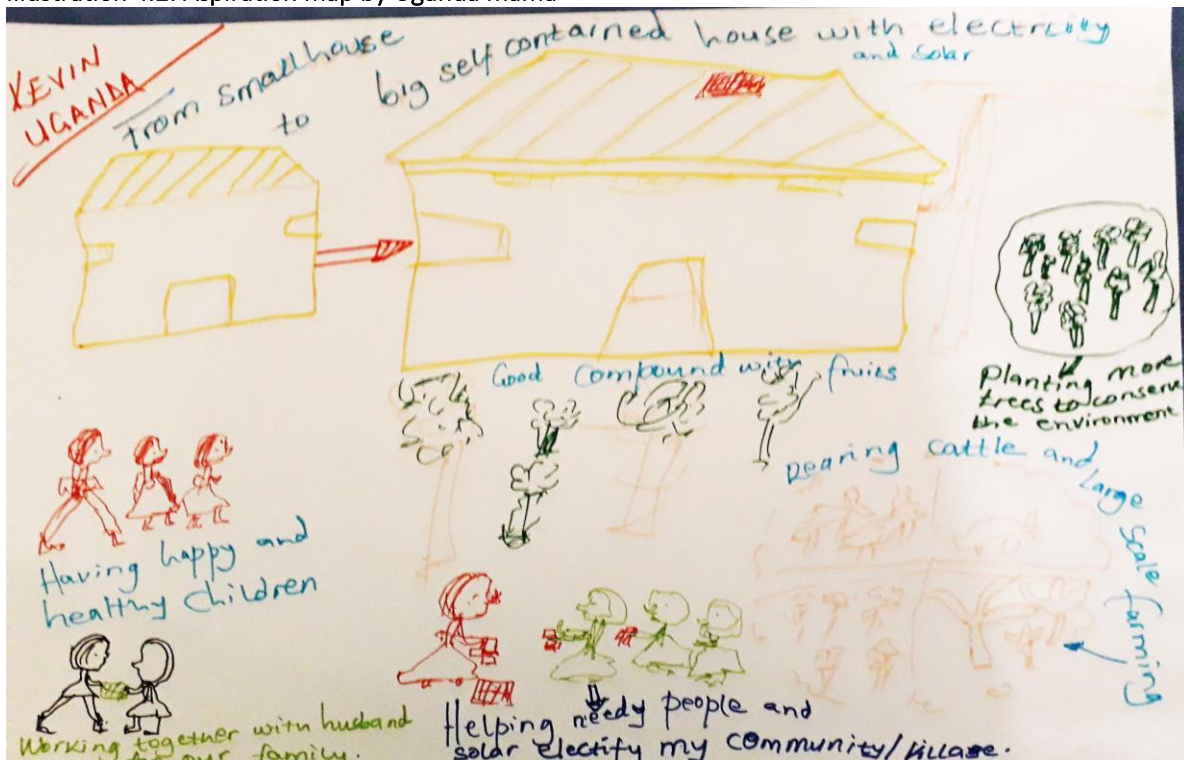
In the case of BFC, as part of the *Enriche* curriculum, trainees were asked to imagine what they want from life / what are their dreams and make a drawing depicting the same. For the purpose of this research, those drawings were examined and correlated with the respective responses on people's valued life goals. Connecting the two separate sets of data showed a similarity in the narratives. This further ascertains the validity of what has been documented, i.e., people want to improve their lives, work for welfare of their family and upliftment of the community. In addition, it also ascertains people's capacity to imagine a better future for themselves. Illustrative examples are shown below:

Illustration 4.1: Aspiration map by Fiji mama



Fiji mama says, "I want to relocate to Australia and start a new life. My children will then have a brighter future. We have a family friend in Australia who will help us to settle down. I also want to become a successful business woman and own a car and house. I feel bad when I see poor people and want to do something to help them".

Illustration 4.2: Aspiration map by Uganda mama



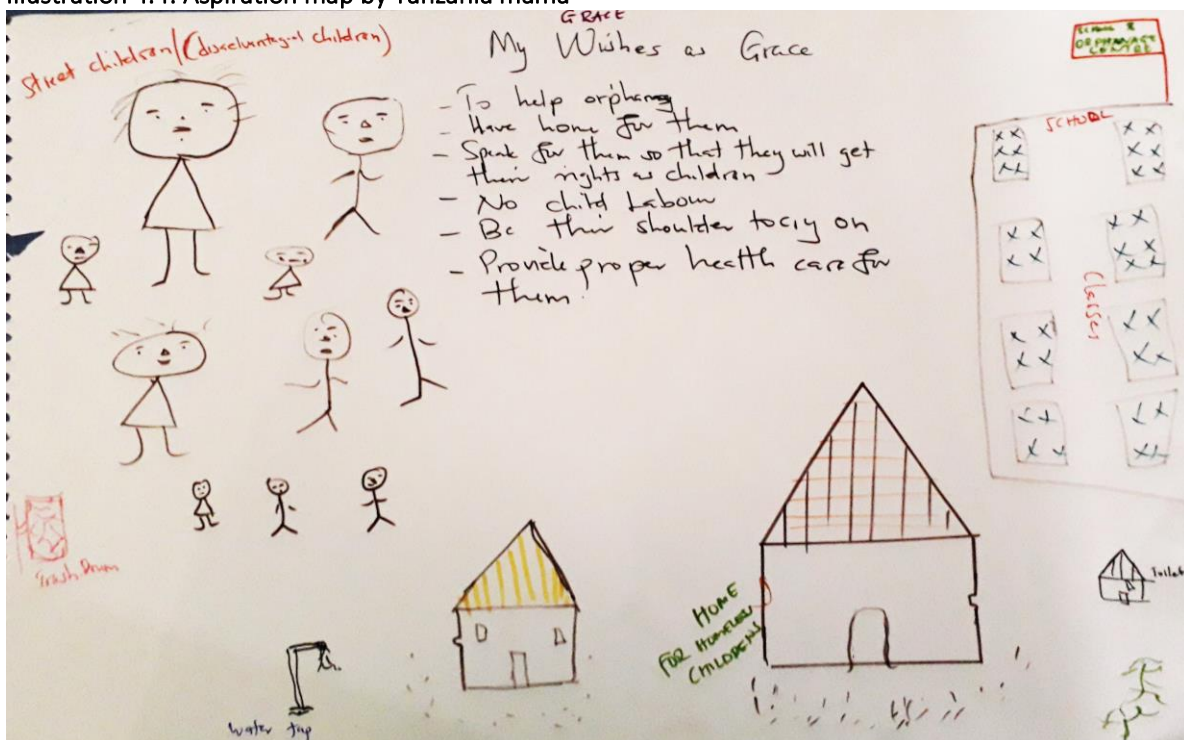
Uganda mama said "my dream is to move into a big house of my own. The house will have solar electricity. It will also have a big compound with fruit trees and other plantation. This will help in environmental conservation. I also want a farm of my own for rearing cattle. I want my children should be healthy and happy. I want to work together with my husband that we have a good family life. I also want to work for the community by providing solar electricity to the people and the village".

Illustration 4.3: Aspiration map by Turkey mama



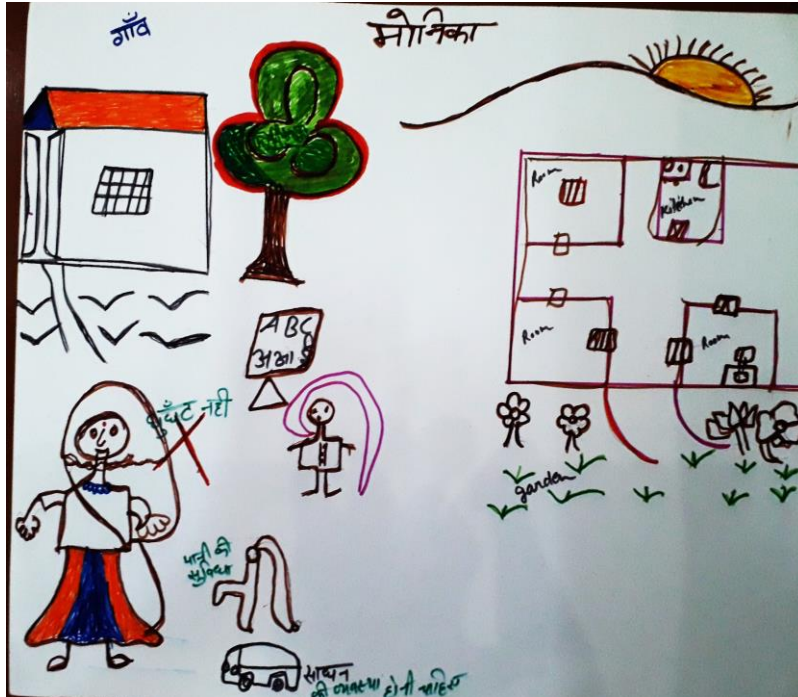
Turkey mama said, "I want to travel the world", which is reflected in her drawing.

Illustration 4.4: Aspiration map by Tanzania mama



Tanzania mama said, "I want to open an orphanage for children where they are sheltered and provided emotional support. I also want to work to ensure that the children are not forced to work as child labour and they can exercise their rights as children".

Illustration 4.5: Aspiration map by India mama



Indian mama was of the view that, “girls should be allowed to study, there should be no purdah (veil covering the face). We should have access to safe water and safe transport system. I also want a house with a separate kitchen and other rooms and also a garden”.

Illustration 4.6: Aspiration map by Argentina mama



Argentina mama dreamed of “I want to see women working as solar engineers. I want to build my own house and save the environment”.

The case of PMKVY: valued life-goals

Graph 4.1 shows that 50% of the PMKVY trainees want to work and live a good life, followed by the desire to ensure well-being of parents (26%) and children (13%). The desire for community service scored least with 11% of the responses. In addition to work, which is examined in the next section, PMKVY trainees want to be able to support their parents who they believe have invested a lot in them. They therefore want to ensure that their parents are financially secure and provided opportunities for rest and travel. They also want to ensure that they are comfortable, healthy, happy and all their desires are fulfilled. More generally, they aspired to improve the living standard of their family. They also wanted to support their siblings' education and help them settle. For example, a trainee in Shimla speaking about the condition of her family said that

...compared to my relatives, our family is worse-off and living in abject poverty. I want to improve that situation. I also want to help my brother to settle down.

(26-year-old woman: PMKVY Sanjauli-Makeup artist)

People with children wanted to ensure that their children receive good education, have opportunities for personality development and are well settled. They were keen that their children should be able to pursue their dreams. For instance, one PMKVY trainee said he could fulfil his dream of becoming a doctor since his family was very poor. He wants to ensure his children do not face the same predicament. Likewise, a mother who could not study wants to ensure that her daughter does well. A father who could not get through a government job wants his children to be able to do so. A PMKVY trainee captures this sentiment as follows

I want my son to become a pilot and fly in the sky. My husband is a bus driver; he is on the road. For myself, I want to be a successful woman and not just a housewife. I want to be respected, earn fame and reputation.

(32-year-old woman: PMKVY Sanjauli- Logistics)

In terms of desire for community service, people were keen to spread awareness regarding the free of cost government training so that others can also avail the opportunity. Women were particularly keen to support the cause of other women, including promoting education of girls. They believe that girls should be allowed to pursue their dreams and work. They want to lead by example.

State level trends for PMKVY: life-goals

Further analysing data at the level of the state for PMKVY shows a notable difference in the dimension of community service and children's well-being. The former was double in Rajasthan compared to HP. This could be attributed to the fact that HDI-wise (table 3.1) it is one of the lowest ranked states and HP is amongst the highest. Therefore, with better opportunities and growing awareness, the desire for community service is higher. For example, a young girl studying for Accounts in Jaipur, wants to do something for poor children. She believes that living only for one's own self is not worthwhile.

The latter was double in the case of HP compared to Rajasthan. More women trainees in HP were married and had children, thus for them children's well-being assumed significance. For example, a 32-year-old lady pursuing Logistics training in Shimla, wants to get a job and become successful so that she can provide a safe future for her daughter. She aspires that her 2-year-old daughter should become 'Miss Universe' and earn fame. Her husband also supports this aspiration. Another single lady who has struggled in life wants to ensure that her children are able to pursue professional degrees and have bright futures.

4.2 Analysing work-related aspirations

4.2.1 Analysing valued work-goals

To begin with, 84% of the people said that after completing training they would like to work in the same sector. They expected the institution to help them secure a job. 13%, all in PMKVY, wanted to study further before considering work options and the remaining 3% were keen to start their own business.

Significantly, people envisioned their future work goals to progress differently, they wanted to pursue other dreams. People aspired, for example to play professional cricket, become an actor, a dancer, or pursue other creative works. Less than half (45%) said that they would be keen to continue with the same job. Many desired to start their own business (31%) and become a successful businessperson. For instance, they wanted to open a tailoring shop, or a provisions store, or start a radio channel. Others (all 16% in PMKVY) were keen to work for government services such as State Services, or the Indian Army. Fewer (6%) people compared to earlier wanted to continue their studies in the future as well and then settle for work.

Analysing people's work-plans after training

BFC: pre-defined pathways

In the case of BFC, after training everyone wanted to work in the respective job roles for which they were getting trained. The solar mamas would work as solar engineers installing solar panels, making solar lamps and repairing them. In addition, they would also impart training to others. For example, the mamas from Turkey will train Syrian refugee women as part of their ongoing work with a local organisation for rehabilitation of refugees in Turkey. Mamas from Tanzania will be sent to Zanzibar to locally train the women. The master trainers are being prepared to train future batches of solar mamas in BFC.

PMKVY: varied opportunities

In the case of PMKVY the responses were more varied and included the desire to pursue education. Although majority of the people (81%) were keen to pursue work options in the sector in which they are getting trained. Few also wanted to continue their present jobs and apply the acquired skills in due course. A small percentage (4%) were keen to start their own business after training or continue their current business. For example, open a tailoring shop or a beauty parlour, either in the local market or at home. Some wanted to work from home on a contract basis so that they could manage their household duties at the same time. Many (15%) younger people were keen to continue their current education or pursue further education and not consider working in the near future.

Analysing people’s education endowment shows that over 70% of the trainees have a BA and above degree. This shows that people who chose to pursue short-term skills training have decent education backgrounds. Varied narratives emerge that highlight the significance of skills training and education. One is that people value skills training since they believe that it prepares them for the world of work. It was said that the education system was theoretical and did not teach practical skills that are required in the workplace. At the same time, a certain level of education was considered to be a prerequisite to be able to qualify for work. People were of the view that being a graduate is the minimum requirement to get a job. For instance, government jobs require certain minimum education conditions to be fulfilled and likewise for other jobs. It was also said that the job market was highly competitive. Therefore, higher education qualifications resulted in better prospects.

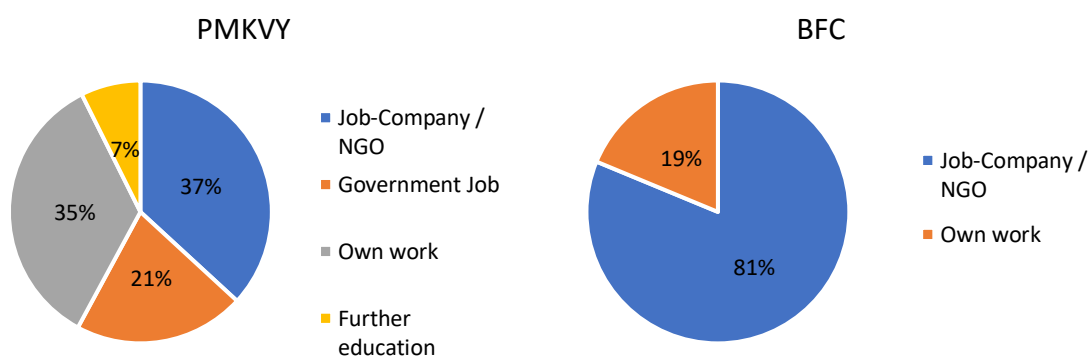
State level trends for PMKVY

The State-level differences show that most people in Rajasthan want to work with few stating that they need to first complete their education. However, in HP while majority want to work in a company, few are keen to start their own business after training. This is in contrast to the trend in Rajasthan where people want to first work in a company and then perhaps consider options to open their own business. In terms of pursuing further education, more people in HP compared to Rajasthan wanted to pursue further education. This can be attributed to the fact that more people in HP were still pursuing Sr. Secondary school and wanted to complete the same. At the same time, the percentage of people with a BA degree was less than half compared to Rajasthan and therefore the desire to pursue further education.

Analysing future work-goals

Graph 4.2 depicts an inter-institution examination of people’s future work goals

Graph 4.2: Institution-level comparison of future work goals



Source: author

BFC: applying acquired skills

Graph 4.2 (right-side) shows that in the case of BFC, most people (81%) were looking forward to working as solar engineers and master trainers after completing the training and continue the same going forward. It was also the case that there were no alternate work options in the village except farming and housework. Likewise, the master trainers expressed that they had no other work options and would be very happy if they were allowed to continue with the same job in the future as well. However, in due course, few people (19%) said they would also

like to pursue additional work opportunities. For example, they said that once the solar panels were installed, the work would be less demanding and they would have time to engage in other work such as start a food business; open an orphanage; open an old age home; or continue farming. Furthermore, they could apply the additional handicraft skills acquired during the course of training. This trend was in alignment with their past work patterns where people pursued multiple occupations at the same time.

PMKVY: pursuing varied opportunities

Graph 4.2 (left-side) shows that in the case of PMKVY, almost an equal number of people were keen to pursue jobs, including continuing to work in the same job that they anticipated to join after training (37%), or do their own work (35%). This was followed by the desire to pursue government jobs (21%). Few (7%) were keen to pursue further education and not work. The reasons to progress in the same job were linked with the reputation of being in a company job. For instance, it was prestigious to work in a company and it was also considered to be decent work. Few also aspired to go abroad to work since they had family there who could support them. They had heard stories from people of the good life in foreign countries and aspired to live the same.

Many were keen to join the government in different roles such as – Administration, Army, Police, Teacher, Bank, Agriculture. They were willing to persevere with the exams taking them as many times as permissible with the hope of getting a government job. Several norms interlink to make a government job aspirational including perceived reputation and security. Other benefits like traveling allowances and a decent salary increased its worth. For some, joining the government such as the Indian Army was a family tradition. Others wanted to join the government to be able to do something for the society. For example, help improve the condition of poor farmers by working in the agriculture department. Another girl wanted to become a teacher in the government school in the village, she said

It is so sad to see that students want to learn and there are no teachers to teach. One day I also want to become like sir and open a PMKVY training centre

(19-year-old woman: PMKVY Tiker-Jarol-Tourism & Hospitality)

Finally, people wanted to pursue studies so that it would enable them to secure better career prospects and pursue business opportunities. Therefore, they were keen to undertake specialised programmes like an MBA or join long term vocational programmes such as ITI. For example, a person trained in the solar sector was keen to join ITI for further training so that he could learn more and then open his own car repair garage.

State level trends for PMKVY

The aspiration to get a government job was almost three times higher in Rajasthan compared to HP. In HP people were more keen to pursue a company job. An almost equal percentage of people across the two states were keen to start their own work from home such as open a parlour, tailoring shop since it is convenient and profitable. Those who were already engaged in these activities wanted to continue the same. They were also keen to upgrade their equipment, for instance, buy an advanced sewing machine by taking a loan. However, given a chance, few said that they would like to work outside the house in a proper job. Others

wanted to open small business enterprises such as a clothing boutique or a cloth manufacturing unit. People believe that employment opportunities in company jobs are limited and therefore it is best to consider own work options. Few were also keen to pursue community work such as teach children in an NGO. One girl was so inspired by the Training Centre head that she wanted to open a PMKK centre and teach children. While others aspired to pursue more creative career options like acting, singing and sports.

Analysing secondary data: PMKVY aspirations survey

Skill gap reports were commissioned by NSDC (NSDC, 2013) that also reported on youth aspirations. Students from various VET institutions were interviewed to map their aspirations. They were asked questions regarding job preferences, expected wages, preferred sector of work and type of training. The findings show a high preference for government jobs over private jobs. In addition, few were keen to pursue self-employment, provided there was financial and mentoring support. In terms of salary, the average expectation after training was over rupees 7000. In terms of preferred sector of training, courses from existing options such as electricals and electronics, tailoring, beauty, horticulture (in case of HP due to a flourishing apple industry) were preferred. In terms of training content, there was desire to learn communication and computer skills so that people could find better job opportunities with higher salaries.

However, in the skill gap reports aspirations were interpreted narrowly in relation to certain work-related expectations. Comparing the two sets of responses shows significant similarity in certain areas. For instance, the preference for government jobs and the need for financial and mentoring support to pursue self-employment. In addition, the significance of soft skills training was also common. The difference was in the expected wage of 7000 which was less than half of what was stated by people in the present research. This can be attributed to the fact that the survey was conducted in 2012. The above comparative analysis shows a significant commonality in people's stated aspirations.

4.2.2 Analysing valued work attributes

Consolidated analysis: valued work attributes

Responding to a list of indicators for a good work environment (Clark and Qizilbash, 2001), most people agreed that the following aspects of work environment were important –good income, job security; safe working conditions; to be treated with respect; learn new things; good relationship with the employer; and opportunities for future growth. Almost everyone also agreed that good position; power and influence; and recognition were also important. A correlation between people's reasons to leave work with the indicators of a good work environment was also observed.

Previous work experiences: valued work attributes

Over 70% people in BFC and PMKVY believed that their previous work fulfilled the above stated valued work needs. Analysing the reasons people reported to leave their previous works shows that salary was a prominent concern. In addition, distance and timing issues prevented people from continuing work. Other reasons that were cited included lack of job satisfaction and opportunity to progress and abusive work environment. Personal reasons

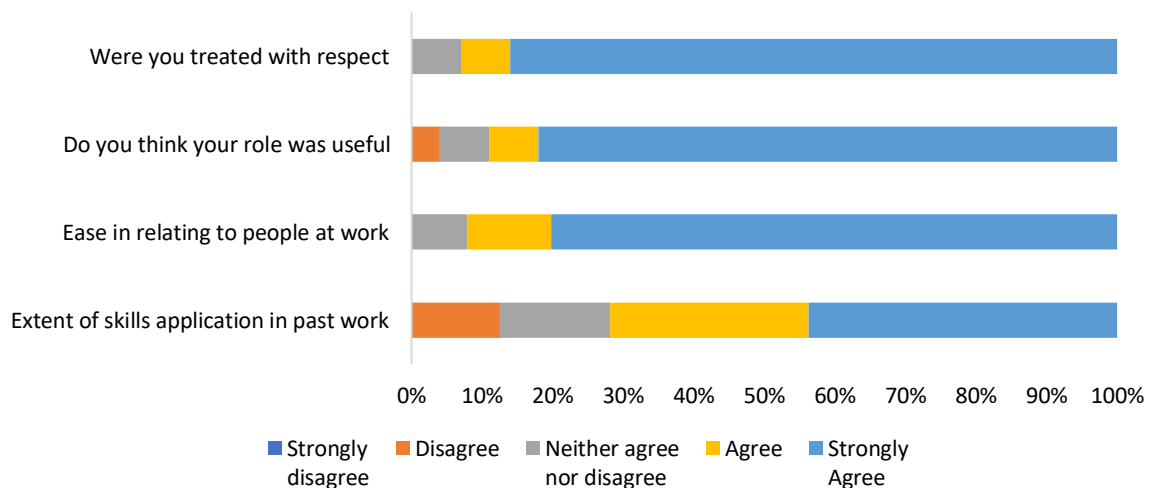
such as care duties, family responsibilities, health issues and marriage were also predominant. People also left work so that they could pursue further education or training.

In addition, 10% of the people in both institutions reported facing misconduct at work in the form of either verbal, physical, or sexual abuse. For instance, one person in PMKVY reported facing verbal abuse in the call centre where he worked which prompted him to leave. Another lady reported facing sustained verbal and physical abuse while working as an administrator in a government office which forced her to leave the job. In the case of BFC, again one lady reported facing verbal abuse when she worked as a contract labourer on construction sites. In terms of discrimination based on caste, age, gender when looking for work in the past, none in PMKVY reported any discrimination. However, two people in BFC in the age range of 45-54 years reported ageist discrimination at work in the past.

Further, graphs 4.3 and 4.4 shown below measure people’s past experience with regard to dimensions of the work environment. These indicators were drawn from Anand et.al’s (2009) list of work-related capabilities discussed in chapter 3. Results show that majority of the people in both cases said that they were treated with respect. This is indicated by the length of the ‘strongly agree’ (light blue) bar. In addition, it can be seen that people in PMKVY and BFC could also easily relate with others at work. However, the extent to which they could apply their skills at work was less in both cases. In terms of a sense of role worthiness, BFC trainees had a higher worth in their past work compared to PMKVY trainees. This is depicted by the varying lengths of the bars in the two cases on the dimension of ‘do you think your role was useful’.

Graph 4.3: BFC: valued work attributes

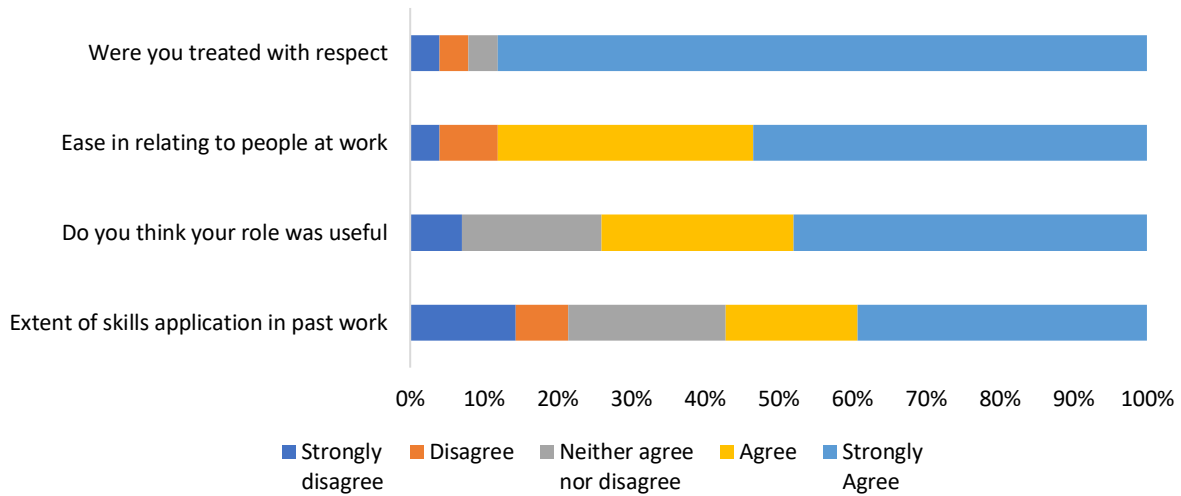
BFC: valued work attributes- past experience



Source: author

Graph 4.4: PMKVY: valued work attributes

PMKVY: valued work attributes- past experience



Source: author

Future work expectations: valued work attributes

People’s expectations after training were also examined to determine the extent to which they were fulfilled in the future. In terms of salary expectation, 60% of the PMKVY people expected to earn an average of rupees 15,000 per month. Others (9%) expected to earn in the range of under rupees 10,000, to over rupees 40,000 (14%) per month. For 15% it did not matter, or they did not know. Comparing this with people’s average past earnings of rupees 6000 per month, shows that there is a substantial increase in expectations from work after training. In the case of BFC, the wages for all who work in the institution are fixed at rupees 6000 per month. Those going back to their villages to work as solar engineers said that the money they earn would be decided by the village committee.

An analysis of people’s preferred work location shows that mostly people expected to work locally and not migrate for work. In addition, women typically were keen to work from home. A smaller percentage (10%) were flexible or interested to work outside the district and another 10% were happy to consider work options outside the state. Few even expressed keenness for an opportunity to work abroad. In the case of BFC, the work location was determined by their roles– Master Trainers would be based in Tiloniya and the solar mamas were expected to work in their villages. People also expected that they would get opportunities to work in the sector for which they were trained and have opportunities to progress.

The above section included an analysis of the various dimensions and constituents of people’s valued life and work goals. Drawing upon this examination, a consolidated view of capabilities is located in the S2C framework.

4.3 Deriving capabilities in the S2C Framework

Deriving capabilities: self, family and community development related

The following listed capabilities were derived by analysing people's narratives and responses to questions regarding aspirations related to their life goals and valued attributes of life (section 4.1.1). In addition, secondary data consisting of aspirations maps for BFC and aspirations survey of PMKVY (section 4.2.1) was also analysed to triangulate the results.

Analysing the above data shows that in terms of capabilities, i.e., valued ways of being and doing, people want to be able to:

- be independent and live a good life
- provide for life's needs and luxuries- such as own a car, house, travel
- live a purposeful and value-based life
- be happy and tension-free, be successful, gain fame, be recognised and respected
- enjoy good health and hygiene; access basic infrastructure and facilities
- enjoy family support and build networks of friendships
- take part in community life; enjoy leisure time
- ensure family well-being, including well-being of parents and bright future for children
- work for community development– support disadvantaged people such as the poor, women and children

Deriving capabilities: work, further education / skills training related

The following listed capabilities were derived by analysing people's narratives and responses to questions regarding aspirations related to work goals (section 4.2.2), including their immediate work plans after training and their future work goals. In addition, the work attributes (section 4.2.3) appreciated by people were also analysed to derive what they value from work. This also included analysing their past work experiences and future work expectations with regard to the same. Finally, secondary data consisting of aspirations maps for BFC and aspirations survey of PMKVY was also analysed to triangulate the results.

Analysing the above data shows that in terms of capabilities, i.e., valued ways of being and doing, people want to be able to:

- work in in a company; in government services; own business; or pursue other creative works
- earn well
- have work security, progress at work, learn new things; maintain good relationship with the employer; be recognised and respected
- work locally and follow decent work hours
- preserve bodily integrity and safety in the work environment
- manage household responsibilities and work
- be treated with respect; relate with people; play a useful role and be able to apply skills
- To be able to pursue further education and skills training, including long-term training and professional education

A consolidated view of the derived capabilities is presented in table 4.2 below:

Table 4.2: Aspirations and Capabilities in the S2C framework

Aspirations	Capabilities
Work related	To be able to work in a company; in government services; own business; or pursue other creative works
	To be able to earn well
	To have work security, progress at work, learn new things; maintain good relationship with the employer; be recognised and respected
	To be able to work locally and follow decent work hours
	To be able to preserve bodily integrity and safety in the work environment
	To be able to manage household responsibilities and work
	At work, be treated with respect; relate with people; play a useful role and be able to apply skills
Education and skills training related	To be able to pursue further education and skills training, including long-term training and professional education
Personal life and family related	To be independent and live a good life
	To be able to provide for life's needs and luxuries- such as own a car, house, travel
	To be able to live a purposeful and value-based life
	To be happy and tension-free, be successful, gain fame, be recognised and respected
	To be able to enjoy good health and hygiene; access basic infrastructure and facilities
	To be able to enjoy family support and build network of friendships
	To be able to take part in community life; enjoy leisure time
Community development related	To be able to ensure family well-being, including well-being of parents and bright future for children
	To be able to work for community development– support disadvantaged people such as the poor, women and children
	To be able to undertake community development initiatives
	To be able to share their learnings and give back to society

Source: author

The nature and implications of the aspirations and capabilities described above and its linkage with extant literature, including the institutional context is examined in the next section.

4.4 Aspirations and capabilities: examining implications

In this section, the results are further analysed to draw implications and show linkages with extant literature and the observed gaps as reviewed in chapter 2 (section 3). The analysis provides an integrated conceptual view of aspirations and capabilities. In addition, institution

level differences and inter-state differences in the case of PMKVY are also examined in detail below.

1. An integrated view: Conceptualising aspirations and capabilities

The research presented an integrated and comprehensive view of the aspirations of trainees in BFC and PMKVY that included aspects of both life and work-related aspirations. This enabled to derive a multi-dimensional conceptualisation of capabilities. As shown in table 4.2, this included capabilities related to pursuing work; further education / skills training; personal development; family well-being and community development. The need to develop such an integrated view has been highlighted in literature (Quaglia, 1996; Ray, 2003; Hart, 2016). While most of the derived aspirations and capabilities have been found in other studies as shown in the literature review (see for example Nussbaum, 2000; Clark and Qizilbash, 2001; Anand et.al 2009; Conraide 2013; Ibrahim, 2011; Tiwari, 2018), others are more particular. For instance, results show that with regard to work related capabilities, people want to be able to work in a company; in government services; own business; or pursue other creative works.

Further analysing the nature of aspirations and capabilities shows that people's aspirations and capabilities are not limited to valuing only work and money. Although significant, these aspirations are not the end. They are the means to reach other equally significant dreams and opportunities. These dreams and opportunities are related to their own well-being and desire for a good life; the well-being of their family; and development of the community. These aspirations reaffirm Sen's (2009) view that being able to do something not just for oneself but also for other members of society is one of the elementary freedoms people have reason to value. They provide evidence that supports a non-productivist view of skills that has been put forward in the literature (McGrath, 2012; Powell, 2012; King, 2012).

In addition, the range of aspirations shows that the horizons of people from disadvantaged backgrounds are not limited. They are capable of imagining better futures for themselves and can be positioned as agents of change. It shows that poor people clearly articulate and demand a better form of life. They want success, respect and fame. They also reject the idea of living the difficult lives that their parents have led and seek a better future for themselves. Therefore, it can be said that the trainees by virtue of attending a SDT intervention are perhaps mobilised in a manner that expands their horizons and capacity to aspire. These results are in line with existing research that provides evidence that poor people can aspire and be positioned as change agents (see Appaduari, 2004; Walker 2006; Ibrahim 2011).

However, the results also show instances of adaptation, particularly in the case of women. For example, as discussed in section 4.2.2, although women expressed a preference to work from home, when probed further, they indicated that given a chance, they would like to work outside the house in a proper job. Therefore, suppressing their desired preferences, they expressed a desire to work from home. In addition, it was found that certain capabilities are more significant for women such as bodily integrity. These

instances show that gender inequality is a key site of injustice in relation to aspirations which will be discussed further in chapter 6.

2. Institution-level view: Locating aspirations and capabilities in universal themes and local ideas

The commonality in narratives across BFC and PMKVY shows that although the two institutional models vary in character, the nature of aspirations and capabilities of the trainees is universal. To begin with, in terms of work related capabilities, trainees across the two institutions equally valued aspects such as work security, being able to progress at work, learn new things, maintain good relationship with the employer, be recognised and respected. They also valued being able to preserve bodily integrity and a safe work environment. Being able to manage household responsibilities, be treated with respect at work, relate with people, play a useful role and apply skills at work were also highly valued across BFC and PMKVY.

At the same time, differences in patterns across BFC and PMKVY and within PMKVY at the level of the State were also observed which can be attributed to local cultural norms, socio-economic contexts, demographic factors and intuitional characteristics. For instance, BFC trainees valued pursuing pre-defined work pathways combined with supplementary work activities. While PMKVY trainees valued pursuing more varied pathways, specifically including the desire for government jobs. This can be attributed to the nature of the two models, wherein in the case of BFC, the linkages between training and working in the solar sector are established before training. Whereas in the case of PMKVY, although people are trained across sectors where demand is high, the mobilisation and counselling of trainees to determine their interests and aspirations and post training linkages with the industry are weaker. This leads to trainees keeping their options open and pursuing varied pathways after training.

The particular aspiration of PMKVY trainees for a government job can be traced to densely local ideas about work. In India, a government job is held in high prestige by the society. Aspects such as the inherent job security and the other benefits increase the social and economic value of a government job. At the level of the state, this aspiration was higher in Rajasthan compared to HP. This can be attributed to the fact that HP is a much smaller state with a limited number of government jobs. In addition, other economic factors determine high-growth sectors and the corresponding employment opportunities.

Being able to earn well and work locally was equally valued across the two institutions, however, PMKVY trainees expected higher level of earnings and limited instances of PMKVY trainees keen to explore opportunities anywhere nationally or globally were also reported. This is partly due to the nature of post training work opportunities facilitated by BFC where the focus is on local community development and providing decent work opportunities to people from disadvantaged backgrounds. On the other hand, in the case of PMKVY employment opportunities and earning levels are driven by market conditions.

Secondly, the capability to be able to pursue further education and skills training to realise future work-goals was particularly valued by PMKVY trainees. This can be attributed to the qualification requirements of various aspirational jobs, including government services

that demand a certain level of general education. At the state-level, this dimension was more valued in HP compared to Rajasthan. This can be attributed to the fact that more people in HP were still pursuing secondary school and wanted to complete their education. At the same time, the percentage of people with a Bachelor's degree was less than half compared to Rajasthan and therefore the desire to pursue further education was higher.

Third, on the capability to ensure personal development and family well-being, all dimensions were equally valued by trainees across BFC and PMKVY. For instance, everyone wanted to be able to live a good life and fulfil their basic needs and enjoy luxuries. People wanted to live a purposeful and values-based life. They wanted to be happy, tension-free, successful, famous and recognised and respected. They wanted to be able to enjoy good health and hygiene and access basic infrastructure and facilities. To be able to enjoy family support and build network of friendships was hugely valued by all. To be able to take part in community life and enjoy leisure time was important.

In terms of ensuring the well-being of family, PMKVY trainees particularly valued ensuring the well-being of parents. This draws from the social norms of joint families and the significance of being together in the Indian context. At the state level, trainees in HP expressed more value for ensuring children's well-being compared to Rajasthan. This can be attributed to the fact that more women trainees in HP were married and had children, thus for them children's well-being assumed significance.

Finally, the capability for community development work was equally valued by trainees in BFC and PMKVY, with the former showing greater awareness compared to the latter. The trainees wanted to be able to support disadvantaged people, undertake various community development initiatives and share their learnings and give back to society. Within PMKVY, the desire and awareness for community service was higher in Rajasthan compared to HP. This could be attributed to the fact that on the HDI (see table 3.1) Rajasthan is one of the lowest ranked states and HP is amongst the highest. Therefore, with better opportunities and growing awareness, people were keen to contribute towards development.

The above analysis shows that although BFC is a grassroots institution that focuses on community development by harnessing the inherent knowledge of women and PMKVY is a market-driven programme that focuses on empowering youth to enable them to become employable; trainees in both institutes had the desire to work and also undertake community development initiatives. At the same time, differences in patterns and degrees across the two were observed which can be attributed to the institutional specificities and the local cultural norms and socio-economic contexts.

Conclusion

This chapter addressed RQ 1: *What are the aspirations and capabilities of people in BFC and PMKVY training programmes?*

The analysis shows that the aspirations of people enrolled in the SDT interventions include – to be able to work, be independent and live a good life. In addition, they want to be able to ensure the welfare of their family, including parents and children. Finally, they want to be able to work for betterment of the community. Specifically, in terms of work, people want to work in the government, undertake creative professions, join a company, or work as an entrepreneur. People mostly do not wish to migrate or relocate for work, though few want to work abroad. In addition, they want to be able to earn a good income, avail opportunities to progress at work, be respected at work, enjoy good working relationships and an overall healthy work environment.

In terms of the attributes of a good life, people wanted to be able to take care of necessities and afford luxuries. They want to fulfil material desires such as own a house and a car. They wish to be able to travel the world, be happy, successful and famous. People want to fulfil their parents' dreams and work towards ensuring that their children have a bright and prosperous future. Finally, they want to be able to give back and work towards development of the community. This includes working for the upliftment of poor, educating girls, opening an orphanage, etc.

Through this examination, the specificities of people's valued ways of being and doing, i.e., capabilities were derived. Thus, methodologically, the aspirations to capabilities relationship in the context of a SDT intervention is operationalised. These included capabilities related to – work; education and training; personal life and family; and community development. Further examining the implications of the above analysis presents an integrated conceptual view of aspirations and capabilities of trainees in BFC and PMKVY. One that includes both work and life related capabilities. It highlights that beyond the materialistic goals of well-being, the trainees are also keen to pursue other dimensions of development. It also shows that the trainees who come from disadvantaged backgrounds have the capacity to aspire a better future for themselves and can be positioned as change agents.

The commonality in narratives across BFC and PMKVY shows that although the two institutional models vary in character, the nature of aspirations and capabilities is universal. At the same time, differences in patterns and degrees across BFC and PMKVY and within PMKVY at the level of the State were also observed which can be attributed to local cultural norms, socio-economic contexts, demographic factors and intuitional characteristics.

In line with the S2C framework, this chapter illustrated the significance of deriving capabilities by analysing narratives of people's aspirations in the context of a SDT intervention. Moreover, the comprehensive nature of the listed capabilities ascertained the importance of capturing people's voices in line with Sen's approach and analysing them in accordance with the S2C framework to determine the same. In addition, determining capabilities by analysing people's aspirations also provided an opportunity to engage with the concept of aspirations and develop an integrated view of the same. The linkages between aspirations, capabilities and

achievements were thus established, the significance of which has been highlighted in research (Appadurai, 2004; Ibrahim, 2011; Conraide and Robeyns, 2013; Hart 2016). In addition, including the concept of aspirations also provided completeness to CA which is critiqued for being underspecified and thus requiring to be supported by other social concepts (Clark, 2012). Finally, it also demonstrated the application of extant skills and work-related capability indicators (Clark and Quizilbash, 2001; Anand et.al. 2009).

The next chapter furthers the S2C linkage by unpacking the reasons for people to value skills training and identifying valued resources of the training intervention.

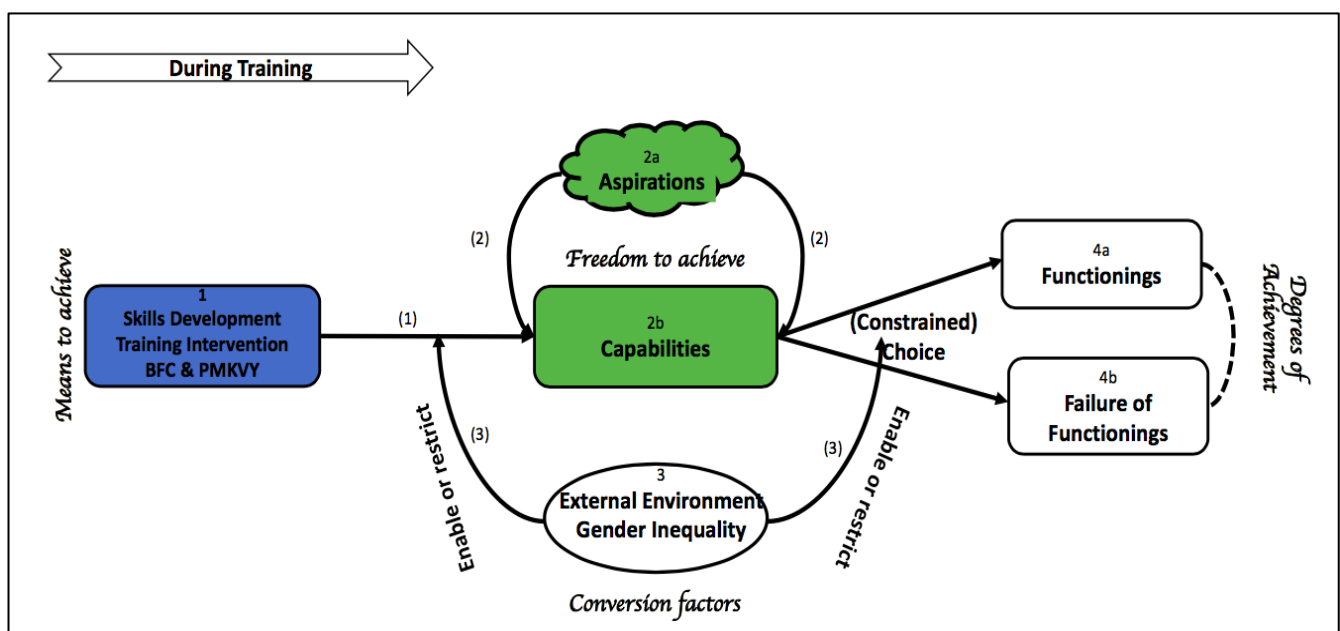
CHAPTER 5 | Valued Attributes of Skills Development Training

Introduction

This chapter examines RQ #2: *What attributes of the training programme are valued by people?*

In accordance with the S2C framework discussed in chapter 3, the second part of the analysis consisted of examining the attributes / constituent resources of the SDT intervention. This component has been highlighted in blue colour in figure 5.1 (box 1). The SDT intervention is the environment in which the research is situated, i.e., the case of BFC and PMKVY. In the language of the CA, for the trainees enrolled in these programmes, it is the ‘means to achieve’ their valued ways of being and doing. Furthermore, as shown by arrow 1, through the SDT intervention, the potential for people to fulfil their aspirations and achieve their capabilities is created.

Figure 5.1: Skills development training intervention in the S2C framework



Source: author

The attributes / constituent resources of the training intervention are derived by examining aspects of the programme that are valued by the trainees and reasons for the same. Conversely, the limitations are also analysed. As per the process described in chapter 3, the ‘during training questionnaire’ was administered on the selected sample of 136 trainees across BFC and PMKVY. As depicted in table 5.1, thematic coding and frequency mapping of open and closed ended questions related to the SDT intervention was done. The questions included an investigation of the reasons for people to value skills training. This was followed by measuring people’s disposition for life-skills learning, i.e., their ability to be able to apply the acquired skills which has implications for training effectiveness. Next, attributes of the training intervention that are valued by the trainees are unpacked. These include the role of

access to information and knowledge and awareness of training options and working conditions. Other valued attributes of the training environment were also examined. People's responses to extent of participation in class were also recorded. This led to the following two broad thematic classifications – value of skills training and valued attributes of training programme. The thematic analysis was undertaken at an aggregate level followed by inter-institution and intra-institution comparisons.

Table 5.1: Thematic mapping- SDT intervention related questions

Source data: During training questionnaire Sample size: 136 trainees interviewed	Thematic coding (for open-ended ques) / Frequency mapping (for close-ended ques)	Thematic analysis
Q2: Do you think skills training is important? Why? Q3: Do you think skills training could be useful for people of all age-groups? Why and how? Q4: Why did you enrol for <x> training?	Reasons to value skills training	Value of skills training
Q17.2: In terms of your ability / opportunity to fulfil these needs: do you think after this training you will be better off, worse-off or there would there be no change?		
Questions 16, 23, 25, and 32	Extent of life-skills learning disposition	
Q1: How did you get to know about this training programme?	Access to information	Valued attributes of training programme
Q5: In your view, what could be the problems / challenges in doing <x> work? Q7: Given a chance, would you have liked to do some other training? Or instead do something else? What other training / what else? And why?	Knowledge and awareness of sectors and training choice	
Q9: What do you like most about the training programme, the environment, the experience? Q10: What can be changed or improved?	Valued attributes of training programme	
Questions 2 to 4	Extent of class participation	

 Open ended questions
 Close-ended questions

Source: author

Lastly, through the above analysis, a consolidated list of the SDT intervention's resources was derived. The analysis presents a conceptualisation of the value of skills training as enabling learning for life. Skills training is valued by people for its potential to enable them to fulfil their aspirations and capabilities. Wherein trainees believed that after training they will be better-off to be able to fulfil their aspirations. Differences in patterns across BFC and PMKVY and within PMKVY at the level of the State were also observed that can be attributed to differences in the two institutional models. The analysis also revealed the empowering nature of training resources and a conducive social environment.

5.1 Analysing people’s reasons to value skills training

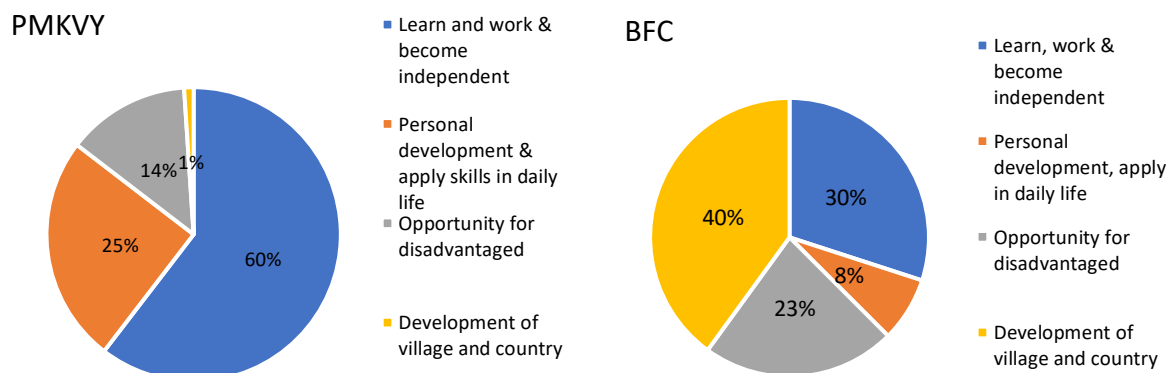
Data shows that majority (51%) of the people value skills training for the opportunity it provides to learn and work and become independent. In addition, 20% of the people appreciate the opportunity it provides for personal development and the chance to apply the acquired skills in daily life. 16% of the people also said that these training programmes are especially advantageous for people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Finally, through skills training there was potential for development of the community and the country as expressed by 13% of the people.

In terms of learning, in addition to the practical learning of the trade, there was opportunity to develop soft skills, including English language skills. Equipped with this learning, people could then pursue work opportunities. In addition, a decent training environment enabled people to interact with others, build social networks and develop their interpersonal skills; leading to overall personal development. In terms of development it was said through skills training, people could contribute towards progress of the country and development of the community. Moreover, since the training was free of cost, it could be accessed by poor people. Therefore, they had a chance to learn and improve their living conditions and secure their future.

Inter-institution comparison: value of skills training

Graph 5.1 provides a comparison of the reasons for people in BFC and PMKVY to value skills training:

Graph 5.1: Institution-level comparison of value of skills



Source: author

PMKVY: skills to work

Graph 5.1 (left-side) shows that majority (60%) of the PMKVY trainees valued the programme for the opportunity it provided to learn and work and become independent. The reason can be located in the advocacy and mobilisation strategy of the institution. The aim of PMKVY is to enable a large number of Indian youth to take up industry-relevant skill training that will

help them to secure better livelihood. The advocacy and awareness campaigns focus on the value of the certificate in securing employment which attracts people to join the programme.

25% of the people value the opportunity for personal development and application in daily life. This is attributed to the training curriculum that includes soft skills training in addition to technical training. It is especially relevant for trainees from disadvantaged backgrounds. Their opportunities for personality development such as communication and interpersonal skills are otherwise limited. Moreover, the education system in India is held wanting in this regard.

Since the training was free of cost it was said to be particularly significant for the disadvantaged as ascertained by 14% respondents. For example, a trainee undergoing beauty therapist training in Jaipur said that this was her only hope of getting a job and taking care of her daughter. Otherwise she could not have afforded the programme. In terms of development, it was said that a programme like PMKVY provides an opportunity to bridge the skills gap, leading to the country's progress.

Few comments from trainees endorsing the above described value are highlighted below:

Unemployed get employment through this certificate. (24-year-old man: PMKVY Paota-Solar)
Since it is a government training, it should be beneficial. I will be able to get a job after this training. (27-year-old man: PMKVY Parwanoo-Electronics)
...especially with a village background, it is an opportunity to learn how to interview and behave. We do not learn this in school. (18-year-old man: PMKVY Jaipur-Banking)
Such a training teaches you how to deal with people, improves English language and interpersonal skills. (26-year-old woman: PMKVY Jaipur-Banking)
No personality development happens in schools and colleges. This is very much required; it helps to develop thought process. One learns how to bring improvement in daily life and acquire knowledge through computers and internet. (24-year-old woman: PMKVY Sanjauli-Logistics)
I have no money and no other means to support any learning. Here I can learn for free and acquire skills and also get a government certificate which is valued. (32-year-old woman: PMKVY Jaipur-Apparel)
Due to this training I am more than just a housewife. (32-year-old woman: PMKVY Sanjauli-Makeup artist)

Further, analysing the state-level data for PMKVY shows that people across Rajasthan and HP equally value the identified dimensions. This indicates a level of standardisation of the programme across states. The communication strategy, advocacy and awareness drives seem to be based on the same principles. In addition, it can be said that people across regions seem to have the same reasons to enrol for a training programme.

BFC: skills for development

Graph 5.1 (right-side) shows that most people (40%) valued the training for the opportunity it provided to work towards community development. BFC links the goals of community development with an opportunity for women to learn a skill, work and earn. This is based on the philosophy that women typically are more invested in local problems. They are also more impacted since they do not migrate for work opportunities due to limited mobility. Furthermore, there is a high level of awareness of problematic areas since it is drawn from personal experiences.

Highlighting the benefits of electrification, solar mamas said that children could study at night; women could continue with household and other works such a sewing. It was also a matter of increased safety – there would be less crime, rapes and sexual activity. From an ease of use point of view, it was safer and incidents of burns and accidents (due to use of oil lamps) are reduced. In addition, from a financial point of view, solar is cheaper than other sources.

Furthermore, due to the remoteness of their villages, there are no competing options. This provides for decent work compared to the hardship of working in the house and in the fields. For example, a young mama from rural Karnataka said:

I can do any work as long as it is not working in the field, in the sun and rain. Learning solar will be of some help to the community: children can study at night; women can be safer.

(28-year-old woman: BFC -Master trainer)

People could also be driven by the desire to work for the community as a personal preference. For example, a solar mama who worked for rehabilitation of Syrian refugee women in Turkey said:

I like to help people, especially women and children, so this will help me to teach them.

(37-year-old: BFC-Turkey mama)

30% of the people valued training for the opportunity it would provide them to learn work and become independent. The particular significance of this training for the disadvantaged was ascertained by 23% of BFC respondents. BFC particularly targets poor women who are older and also provides opportunities to people with disability. Therefore, for them, it is an inherent value of the programme. For instance, a disabled person training for master trainer role said:

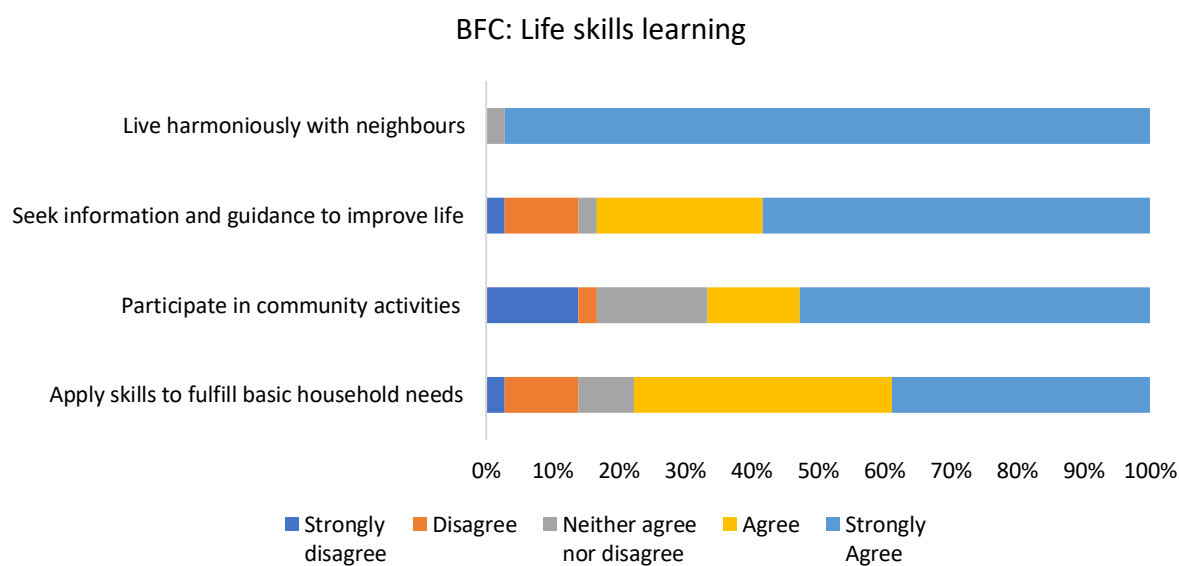
This training is my only chance to be able to provide for my children's education.

(48-year-old man: BFC-Master trainer)

Analysing people’s life-skills learning disposition

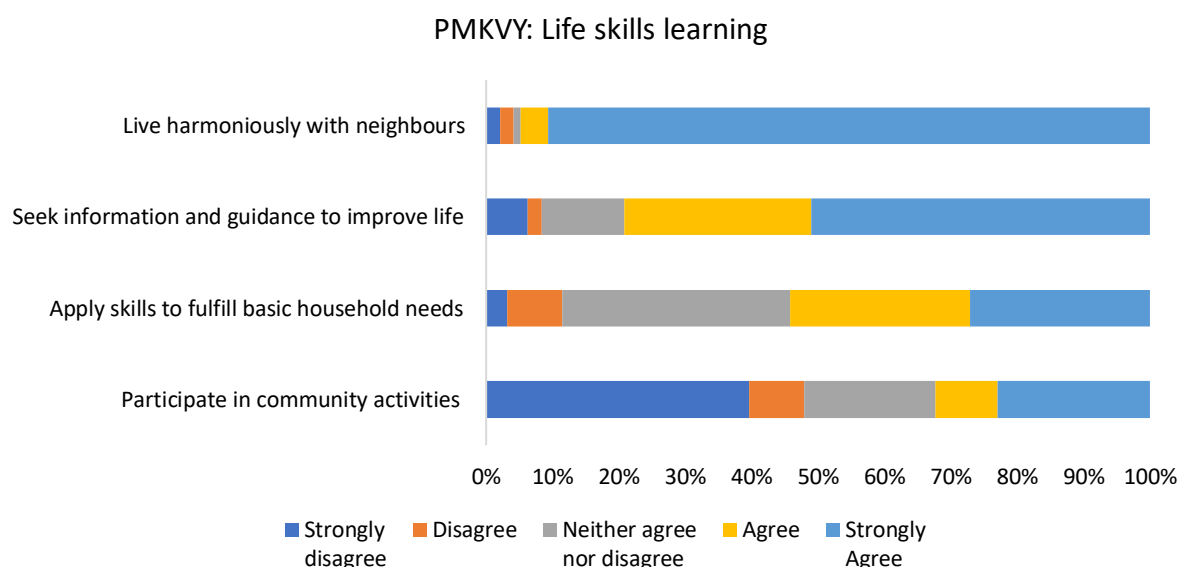
Graphs 5.2 and 5.3 show that overall people have a positive orientation across the two institutions on dimensions of life-skills learning. The indicators of life skills learning, as discussed in chapter 3, have been derived from Marion Young’s (2009) work and include attributes of personal, interpersonal, cognitive and functional life skills learning. These skills enable an individual to fulfil basic needs and ensure well-being, thus improving the quality of life (Young, 2009; Alkire, 2002). It shows that people have the learning disposition which is needed to be able to apply the acquired skills. Learning disposition, i.e., curiosity, a spirit of inquiry and a desire for learning, is an important capability and a positive learning outcome (Walker, 2006).

Graph 5.2: BFC measure of life skills learning



Source: author

Graph 5.3: PMKVY measure of life skills learning



Source: author

Comparing the two graphs shows that the life skills of BFC trainees are better developed as indicated by the positively skewed orientation of the responses. People across BFC and PMKVY are proficient in interpersonal life skills learning as shown from their ability to live harmoniously with neighbours. However, in terms of being able to participate in community development initiatives, PMKVY responses are more negatively skewed compared to BFC. People in both cases are also able to adequately seek information and guidance and use that to improve their lives. This shows that their cognitive life skills learning, including personal life skills learning as agency freedom is developed. Finally, in terms of functional life skills learning, i.e., the practical application of skills as positive learning outcomes; the proficiency of BFC trainees is higher compared to PMKVY. This shows that BFC people are better able to achieve for instance, financial security, remain healthy and put into practice basic parenting skills.

5.2 Analysing valued attributes of training programme

To begin with, people need access to information to become aware of skills development opportunities. They also need knowledge and awareness of the various training options to be able to make the right choice. Finally, they need to have knowledge and awareness of the working conditions in the particular sector for which they would train so that they can take an informed decision. People's sources of information and their level of knowledge and awareness will be unpacked in the subsequent sections.

Data aggregated for both cases on valued attributes of the programme shows that most people (53%) appreciated the teaching. This included aspects such as attitude of the teachers, the pedagogy, guidance and content. Hygiene factors such as infrastructure, basic facilities and safety were also considered to be important by 36% of the respondents. 11% valued the opportunity for social interaction with their colleagues and friends.

5.2.1 Access to information

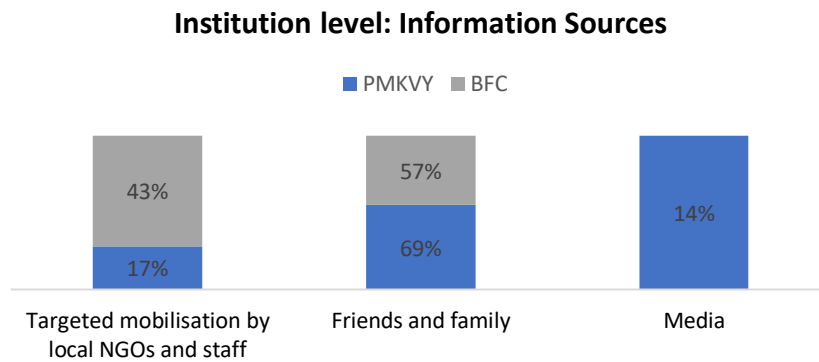
1. Information sources

Data shows that 66% of the people rely on their social networks for information on skills training. This included family, friends and neighbourhood acquaintances. This also included the people they interact with in connection with work or education like colleagues and teachers. 24% of the people were made aware of the training programme through local NGOs and mobilisation officers from respective training centres. These agents conduct awareness camps and door to door campaigning to enrol people. Finally, media is another source of information as ascertained by 10% of the people. This includes advertisements in the newspaper, hoardings and posters, pamphlets and other social media platforms.

Institution-level analysis: information sources

Graph 5.4 shows a comparison of the sources of information that people access across BFC and PMKVY.

Graph 5.4: Institution-level comparison of information source



Source: author

BFC: the significance of social networks

Graph 5.4 shows that the primary source of information for BFC trainees was social networks. This was particularly in the case of master trainers who heard of the job opening from someone who worked in the institution. The solar mamas were mobilised by the institutions network of ground partners or regional coordinators, i.e., the local NGOs operating in that area. The process involves a baseline survey of the village to determine energy access. In case conditions in the village are found to be suitable, the village head convenes a meeting. This was followed by a selection process that includes a medical examination and other administrative processes. The institution did not use media as a form of spreading awareness in the last mile as part of their mobilisation strategy which appears to be targeted towards a specific number and nature of people.

PMKVY: the significance of social networks

Likewise, as shown in graph 5.4, in the case of PMKVY, the social network of family and friends was the largest (69%) information source. Few people (17%) were informed through mobilisation officers of respective training centres. They conducted home visits and awareness drives in nearby locations. PMKVY also runs extensive media and communication drives to create awareness. Therefore, people also got information through advertisements in newspapers, hoardings / posters, pamphlets and social media. However, the least percentage of people (14%) reported accessing information through this channel.

State level trends for PMKVY

Further, comparing responses across the two states shows that friends and family is a much more significant source of information in HP (81%) than in Rajasthan (58%). In case of the latter, targeted mobilisation by the training centre has a greater reach. The reason could be that HP is a mountainous region with contained pockets of habitation that are scattered through the mountains. This makes it difficult to access another region and at the same time the same area is saturated quickly. While a mostly urban district like Jaipur in Rajasthan is highly populated and people are not as organised at the community level. Therefore, special campaigns to spread information by mobilisation officers are more effective.

2. Knowledge and awareness of sectors and training choice

Once people become aware of skills development training, they need to have knowledge and awareness of the various training options to be able to make the right choice. Over 90% of

the people in PMKVY and none in BFC had awareness regarding other skills training programmes. In addition, there was lack of mentoring and guidance to be able to take an informed decision. Choices were also limited by what was offered at the particular training centre. For some, it was a matter of pursuing any training as long as it provided an opportunity to learn and undertake decent work. For others, training was a means to acquire further skills that might be useful in the future, therefore they were not particular about the sector of training. In one instance, a PMKVY trainee said that she has seen her parents struggle to meet ends by doing sewing from home, and therefore she did not want to pursue tailoring. To conclude, it can be said that the choice of training sector was determined by lack of awareness and options.

However, instances of greater awareness and agency in choice of training were also reported. For instance, people said that they were pursuing the particular training since the job prospects in the sector were more promising and the sector was futuristic. Some people had background knowledge and experience in the sector and were therefore keen to build on the same. To others it afforded conveniences such as being able to work from home and also gain knowledge that they could apply in daily life. For others, it allowed them to add to their skill set while pursuing other activities.

People also expressed interest in acquiring additional training. For instance, training in handicrafts was useful since it would enable them to apply in their daily life and also supplement their income. People also expressed interest in additional specialised training in the field. This would enable them to pursue better job prospects and meet particular job aspirations. For few, given a choice, they would have preferred to pursue education instead of skills training for reasons discussed in chapter 4.

Finally, with regard to knowledge and awareness of working in the sector, data shows that the respondents were getting trained across 11 sectors for 13 different job roles. They seemed to have basic understanding of what the job could entail based on either past experience or practical learning. People were aware of technical aspects such as the physical demands of the job, or the need for technology upgrades, customer management issues, etc. Some people alluded to social aspects of the work environment such as issues of working with the other gender. In addition, safety concerns were also expressed, for example people being trained in the hospitality sector were unsure of the social environment in hotels. Travelling to work or having to relocate for work since jobs in that sector were in other areas was another concern.

5.2.2 Valued attributes of training programme

Most people (53%) appreciated the teaching and learning. This included aspects such as the attitude of the teachers, pedagogy and content. Hygiene factors such as infrastructure, basic facilities and safety were also considered to be important by 36% of the respondents. 11% of the people valued the social interactions with their colleagues and friends. These valued aspects of the training programme are analysed below.

Teaching and learning

The teaching and learning component was equally appreciated across both institutions. It was reported that the teachers were highly invested in the teaching process and were hardworking. The trainees particularly liked the fact they were treated with respect, as a PMKVY trainee said:

The teachers talk to us politely and answer all our queries. They are not dismissive, so we are comfortable and can ask questions without hesitation.

(28-year-old man: PMKVY Jaipur-Banking)

It was also said that the teachers planned everything in advance and offered valuable guidance. They were friendly and connected with the circumstances of the trainees. The teaching methods such as audio-visual aids, practical training and story-telling were also appreciated. Such methods combined with simplified explanations, made it easy for everyone to understand the subject matter. For example, as a solar mama said:

It is amazing that the teachers are themselves not educated and yet they manage to teach people from all over the world.

(37-year-old: BFC-Fiji mama)

In terms of the content, in addition to technical skills, the opportunity to acquire other soft skills including English language and computer skills was appreciated. People said that it helped with personality development including confidence, interpersonal skills, communication skills, etc.

Hygiene factors

Basic hygiene such as the training centres being clean; spacious and not crowded; peaceful and not noisy, were appreciated. Facilities such as the library, number of computers, supply of water, electricity, mess food, etc. were also appreciated. Proper orientation to the programme and local norms was also important. It included tackling issues such as food, language, diversity in backgrounds and ways of conduct. Although this was more prominent in the case of BFC where trainees came from diverse backgrounds. However, few PMKVY trainees also found it difficult to interact with their peers. This was due to differences in cultural background, language and religious practices.

It was important that the training centre was located in a safe area that was easy to access. For instance, one of the PMKVY institutions in a remote industrial area was not easy and safe to access, leading to discontent. Another important consideration was appropriate training duration. Instances where it was reduced to under three months was found to be inadequate to learn. In case of BFC, few trainees were of the view that beyond four months was a stretch and could be structured better. In terms of timing as well, long hours impacted people's ability to manage other household tasks.

Social interactions

The opportunity for social interactions was highly valued as a life changing experience. People reported sharing their joys and worries and helping each other. Importantly, people said that

it was a safe space for them to interact with each other. Others appreciated the training environment. For example, a PMKVY trainee said:

It was inspiring to see the hardships that people overcome for the cause of learning

(24-year-old woman: PMKVY Jaipur-Beauty)

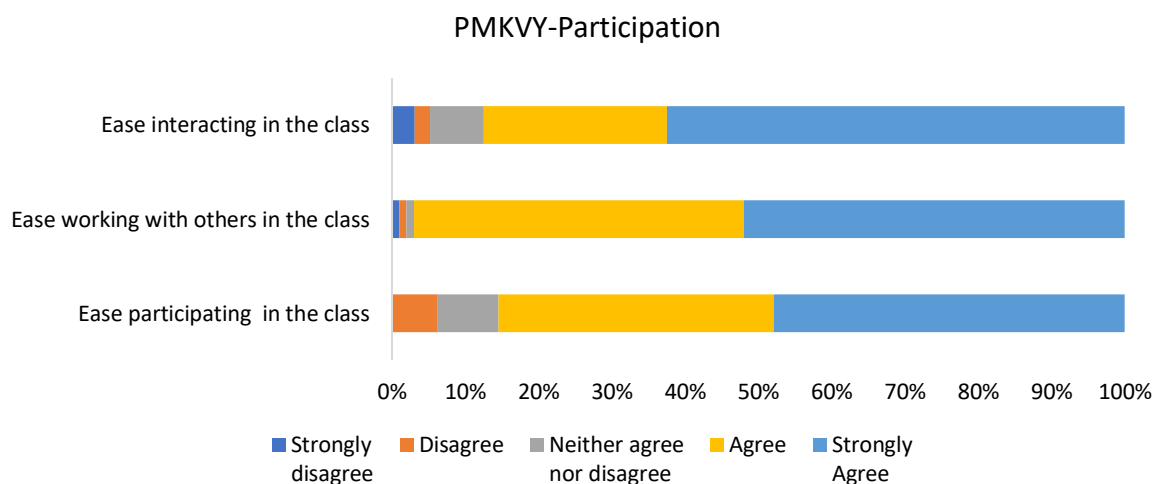
They also appreciated the fact that people are respectful, they behave and dress decently which contributes to a positive social environment. For instance, a PMKVY trainee said:

It was very refreshing to be in the training centre; home was all about work.

(28-year-old woman: PMKVY Solan-Handicrafts)

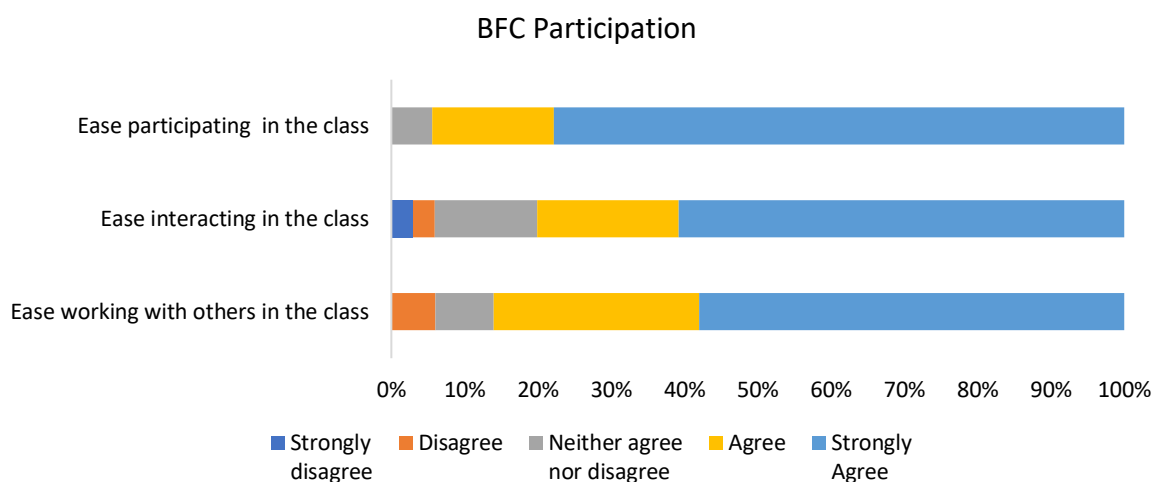
Furthermore, as shown in graphs 5.5 and 5.6, majority of the people said that they were comfortable interacting and participating in the class and working together with their colleagues. In addition, none reported experiencing any form of misconduct in the class. Being able to form networks of friendship and belonging, participating in a group for learning and working with others to solve tasks have been found to aid learning (Walker, 2006). In addition, significance of bodily integrity, i.e., safety and freedom from all forms of physical and verbal harassment in the learning environment has been highlighted across the capability literature. Moreover, being devalued because of one’s gender, social class, religion, race, language, is an impediment in effective learning. Therefore, being able to act inclusively and being competent in intercultural communication is important (Ibid., 2006).

Graph 5.5: PMKVY Comparing dimensions of participation



Source: author

Graph 5.6: BFC Comparing dimensions of participation



Source: author

PMKVY state-level comparison: valued attributes of training programme

PMKVY state-level comparisons show that 75% of Rajasthan trainees expressed concern with the training programme, while only 25% of those in HP did the same. Three areas emerge as prominent concerns in the case of Rajasthan – training location and access, training duration and socio-cultural issues. The first was specific to the case of the Jaipur centre located in an industrial area. Given the seriousness of the concern, the importance of ensuring that the centre is located at a safe and accessible location cannot be underestimated. Lack of adequate training duration was expressed as a concern by those in the centre in Jaipur which completed the 3 month programme in half the time. This was done by increasing the daily hours which impacted people’s ability to manage other work. Finally, socio-cultural issues as expressed by a small minority, were related to the mixing of people from diverse urban-rural backgrounds.

Teaching issues, i.e., lack of practical and other required theoretical training, were expressed more strongly by trainees in HP. For example, trainees said that skills related to agriculture should also be added. Few customisations keeping in view the demand of the region were offered, as explained by one of the TC administrator’s:

We have added an apple processing machine since repairs for that have greater demand based on the high volume of apple cultivation in the State.

(TC admin: PMKVY Tiker-Jarol)

Likewise, a trainer in HP explained:

I also provide additional training for a basic beauty therapist. Although make-up artist is a more glamorous role, however jobs are not easy, therefore by learning other related skills, people can start their own business from home.

(Trainer: PMKVY Solan, Make-up artist)

The above section included discussing and comparing reasons for people to value skills training and its constituent attributes. Drawing upon this examination, the next section positions skill training in context of people’s aspirations and locates the intervention’s resources.

5.3 Deriving SDT intervention’s resources in the S2C framework

The following listed resources were derived by analysing people’s narratives and responses to questions regarding the value of skills training generally (section 5.1) and the valued attributes of the training programme more specifically (section 5.2). A consolidated view of derived resources is presented in table 5.2 below:

Table 5.2: Intervention resources in the S2C framework

Counselling services	Information and counselling regarding training options & prospects
Safety	Safe location of institution
Training duration & timings	Short-term training and convenient timing
Hygiene factors	Peaceful, clean, spacious Provision of basic amenities such as food and water
Facilities	Provision of library, recreation room
Training orientation	Institution’s do’s and don’ts Social norms and diversities
Trainer competencies	Hardworking, empathetic, respectful, friendly, organised, provided guidance
Training content	Technical skills Soft skills English language and computer skills
Training pedagogy	Audio-visual, story-telling, practical demonstration
Social environment	Promotes sharing; colleagues are helpful; is inspiring

Source: author

The above listed resources (table 5.2) of the SDT intervention show the significance of factors such as provision of information and counselling services so that people become aware of training options and working prospects. This would then enable to take an informed decision regarding choice of training. It also highlights the importance of ensuring that the training institute is located in a safe place and other hygiene factors such as cleanliness, lack of noise, availability of space and other basic amenities like clean water and food are provided. The duration of the short-term training and the convenient training timings were also valued by the trainees. At the same time, basic orientation to the training environment is also important so that trainees are settled and comfortable.

In terms of trainers, certain competencies have been highlighted as being significant. These include being hardworking and organised; being empathetic, respectful and friendly towards the trainees and being able to mentor the trainees. From the view of training content, in addition to the technical aspects, other additional training including soft skills training and English language and computer training was considered to be useful. Innovative training methodology that made the content easy to understand for everyone was appreciated. This

includes methods based on AV techniques, story-telling and practical demonstration. Finally, a training environment that promotes a culture of openness and provides a safe space to share joys and anxieties was appreciated.

The implications of these attributes and valued resources of the SDT intervention are examined below.

5.4 Value of skills training and training resources: examining implications

In this section, the above results are further analysed to draw implications and show linkages with extant literature and the observed gaps as reviewed in chapter 2. The above analysis provides evidence on the potential of skills training to enable learning for life and the differences in patterns across the two cases of BFC and PMKVY. In addition, it also shows the significance of training resources and a conducive social environment. These features are examined in detail below.

1. Conceptualising the value of skills training as enabling learning for life

The above analysis shows that people consider the training to be highly valuable for its potential to enable them to fulfil their aspirations and capabilities. Majority of the trainees believed that after training they will be better-off to be able to fulfil their aspirations.

The trainees valued skills training for its potential to enable them to learn and work and become independent. As part of this learning, the opportunity to develop soft skills and English language skills was considered to be particularly significant since it enabled better work outcomes. In addition, a decent training environment enabled people to interact with others, build social networks and develop their interpersonal skills, leading to overall personal development. In terms of development, people believed that through skills training they could contribute towards development of the community and progress of the country. Moreover, since the training was free of cost, it could be accessed by poor people. Therefore, they had a chance to learn and improve their living conditions and secure their future.

This research also shows that the trainees in BFC and PMKVY displayed a positive orientation on dimensions of life-skills learning. This included attributes of personal, interpersonal, cognitive and functional life skills learning. It thus shows that they have the learning disposition which is needed to be able to apply the acquired across situations.

Therefore, it can be said that this view of learning is far from the one that concludes that people consider VET as preparing them for unemployment or for work that is repetitive, boring and underpaid (Psacharopoulos, 1991; Oketch, 2007). On the other hand, the trainees were extremely positive about the post- training potential. They could imagine new futures beyond the reality of their immediate experiences. This view of the value of SDT is in line with the views expressed by Pieck (2011) and Powell (2012).

2. Locating linkages: the value of skills training and the models of skills development

The trainees in BFC and PMKVY valued skills training for its potential to enable lifelong learning and also displayed the disposition to be able to apply the acquired skills. However, differences in patterns across BFC and PMKVY were also observed. For instance, although the capability for community development as examined in chapter 4, was equally desired by trainees in BFC and PMKVY. However, the potential of SDT to enable community development was valued much higher by BFC trainees compared to PMKVY trainees. This can be attributed to BFC's grassroots institutional model that promotes strong linkages between enabling women to learn a skill and work towards development of the community. This is based on the philosophy that typically women are more invested in local problems. Moreover, since they do not migrate for work opportunities due to limited mobility, they are also more impacted. Their levels of awareness of problematic areas is also higher since it is drawn from personal experiences.

On the other hand, PMKVY trainees most valued the programme for the opportunity it provided to learn and work and become independent. The reason can be located in the advocacy and mobilisation strategy of the institution. The aim of PMKVY is to enable youth to undertake industry-relevant skills training that helps them to secure better livelihoods. The advocacy and awareness campaigns focus on the value of the certificate in securing employment which attracts people to join the programme. PMKVY trainees also valued the opportunity of skills training to enable personal development and application in daily life. This can be attributed to the training curriculum of PMKVY that includes soft skills training in addition to technical training. Moreover, trainees across Rajasthan and HP equally valued the identified dimensions. This indicates a level of standardisation of the programme across states. The communication strategy, advocacy and awareness drives are based on the same principles. In addition, it can be said that people across regions seem to have the same reasons to enrol for a training programme.

3. The significance of training resources and a conducive social environment

As shown in table 5.2, trainees in BFC and PMKVY valued the provision of enabling services such as counselling and environmental aspects including safety and opportunity for social networking and building relationships. Attributes of the training programme such as the training hours, training content including non-technical training, innovative training pedagogy were appreciated. The competency of trainers also mattered. Other hygiene factors like provision of basic amenities and a clean and peaceful space were valued. Access to facilities such as a library, recreation room and others was also appreciated.

In addition, the results show that these resources are not only the *means to achieve*; access to them is also empowering. For instance, being treated with respect by the teachers and not being dismissed builds people's confidence. Moreover, features of the training design such as the short duration of the programme is enabling by itself. It allows people to pursue other paid works and unpaid household and care duties. Other basic features of the training environment such as provision of a safe, hygienic and peaceful space held special significance for the trainees. Since their home and community environment did not offer the same experience. Likewise, the opportunity for social interactions was highly valued as a life

changing experience. People reported that they were able to form networks of friendship and belonging and participate in a group for learning and working with others. These attributes have been found to aid learning for life and be empowering.

At the same time, trainees voiced concerns when the training attributes / resources were lacking. For instance, lack of proper orientation sessions led to adjustment issues. Although more prominent in the case of BFC where mamas from diverse geographies trained and lived together, instances of lack of fitment due to differences in cultural background, language and religious practices in the case of PMKVY were also observed. It was also important to ensure that the training centre was located in a safe and accessible area. For instance, one of the PMKVY institutions in Rajasthan was located in a remote industrial area and was not safe to access, particularly for women trainees, leading to discontent. Another important consideration was that the training duration should be appropriate. Instances of a PMKVY centre in Rajasthan where the training duration was reduced to under two months and the daily hours were increased, led to various difficulties for the trainees. In case of BFC, few trainees were of the view that the training could be efficiently completed within four months, instead of six months.

To conclude, the above analysis provides an expanded conceptualisation of the value of skills training as enabling learning for life. It also shows that the training resources and the training environment are beyond being the *means to achieve*, they are empowering by themselves. This positioning of the skills discourse addresses few of the identified gaps in the present discourse i.e. that it is too individualistic and short-term in its focus on immediate employability rather than lifelong processes; ignores wider questions of preparation for the good life (McGrath, 2012; Powell, 2012; King, 2012). It also highlights how the two institutions differently enable this value due to their different institutional characteristics combined with other local nuances.

Conclusion

This chapter addressed RQ #2: *What attributes of the training programme are valued by people?*

This chapter found that trainees value skills training for the opportunity to learn, work and become independent; develop personally and apply the acquired skills in daily life; work towards development of the community and the country. It was also found that in addition to the capacity to aspire, people also show the learning disposition to be able to apply the acquired skills. Therefore, they have the capability to be able to work towards fulfilment of their aspirations.

Drawing upon this analysis, the valued resources of the respective interventions were derived. These formed the *means to achieve* the desired capabilities. The valued attributes of the training programme included – counselling services, safety, appropriate duration and timings, hygiene factors, facilities, training orientation, trainer competencies, training content and social environment. It was then argued that the value of skills training and its resources shows that people consider the training to be highly valuable for its potential to enable learning for life. In addition, the resources and training environment are also considered to

be empowering. The trainees therefore hope that after training they will be better-off to fulfil their aspirations and capabilities.

The articulated value of training has significant implications in the positioning of the skills discourse. The actual value of the training and the extent to which it enabled people to fulfil their aspirations and capabilities will be examined in chapter 7. It also holds learnings for the two institutions in terms of the design of the programme and ensuring provision of training resources and a conducive training environment.

In line with the S2C framework, this chapter illustrated the significance of deriving valued attributes / resources of the training intervention by analysing people's narratives regarding the same. Moreover, the discussion showed that the intervention's resources assumed significance beyond functionality by virtue of being free of cost. This particularly increases access for people from disadvantaged backgrounds. In addition, the reason for people to value skills training helped to position people's reasons to pursue skills training and thus established the linkage between skills and aspirations. From a programme and institution perspective it provided useful bottom-up information on what works and what needs to be strengthened.

The next chapter examines the role of the external environment, including gender inequality in enabling people to convert the training opportunity into valued ways of being and doing.

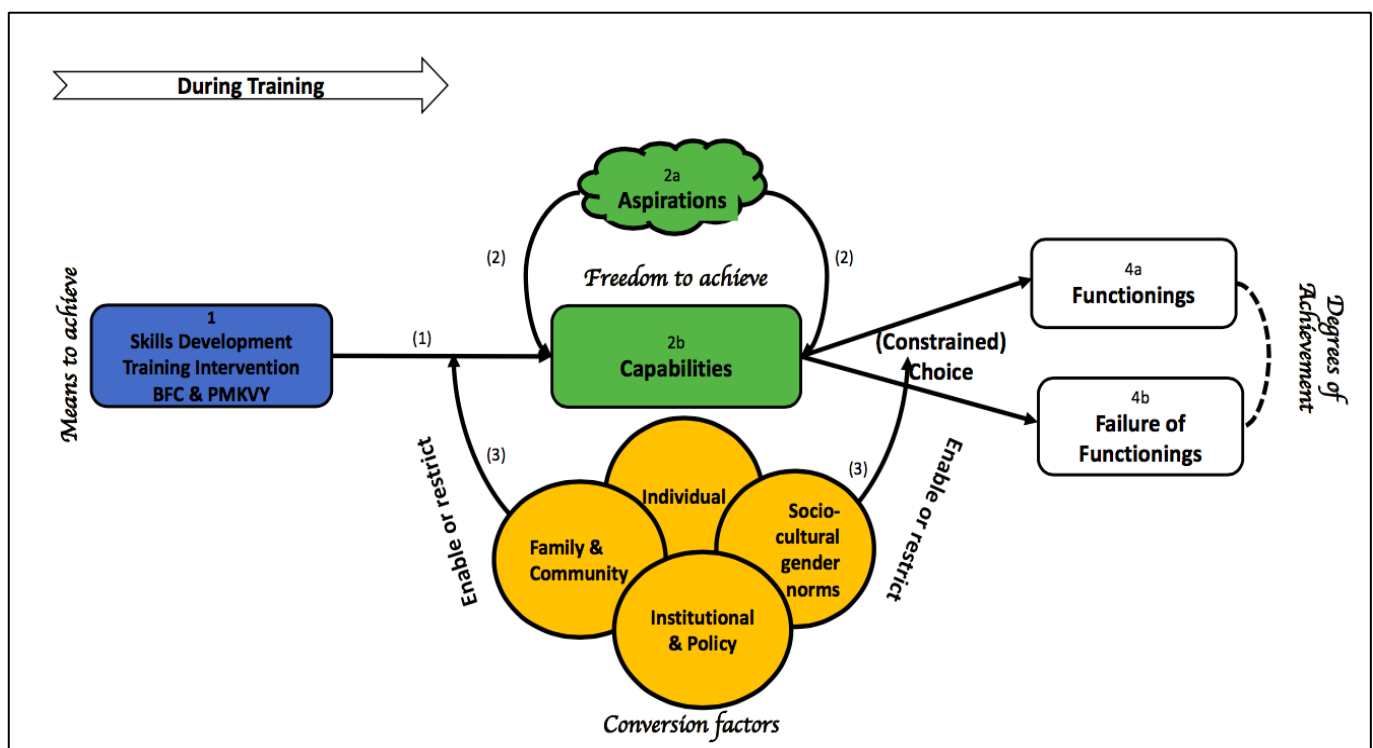
CHAPTER 6 | External Environment and Gender Inequality

Introduction

This chapter examines RQ #3: *What constituents of the external environment, including gender inequality, impact people's ability to pursue skills training and fulfil their goals?*

In accordance with the S2C framework discussed in chapter 3, the third part of the analysis consisted of identifying the categories under external environment and gender inequality. This component has been highlighted in amber colour in figure 6.1 (box 3). Data analysis shows that the following categories are included under the overarching conceptualisation of external environment: individual; family and community; socio-cultural gender norms; institutional and policy. Furthermore, as shown by arrow 3, it is necessary to account for these factors within the context of the SDT intervention as they impact (restrict or enable) people's ability to convert their opportunities into actual achievements.

Figure 6.1: External environment and gender inequality in the S2C framework





Source: author

The constituent factors of the identified categories are derived by analysing people's need for support to pursue skills training and fulfil their aspirations and capabilities. In addition, the extent of gender inequality in capabilities is examined. As per the process described in chapter 3, the 'during training questionnaire' was administered on the selected sample of 136 trainees across BFC and PMKVY. As depicted in table 6.1, thematic coding and frequency mapping of open and closed ended questions related to the external environment and gender inequality was done. The questions included an investigation of the nature of support that people

needed to – pursue skills training, fulfil their life-goals and achieve their immediate and future work goals. Finally, to ascertain the particular impact of gender inequality, an assessment of disparate freedoms for women to pursue training and fulfil their goals is assessed. In addition, the extent of gender inequality in capabilities is measured based on Robeyns’ (2003) list. This led to the following three broad thematic classifications –support needed to pursue skills training; support needed to fulfil aspirations; and gender inequality. The thematic analysis was undertaken at an aggregate level followed by inter-institution and intra-institution comparisons.

Table 6.1: Thematic mapping- external environment and gender inequality related questions

Source data: During training questionnaire Sample size: 136 trainees interviewed	Thematic coding (for open-ended ques) / Frequency mapping (for closed-ended ques)	Thematic analysis
Q8: Do you face any difficulties/problems in attending this training? What? How do you manage?	Support needed to pursue skills training	Support needed to pursue skills training
Q16: What do you need to be able to fulfil your aspirations? (resources, guidance, support etc.)	Support to fulfil life goals	Support needed to fulfil aspirations
Q13: In addition to this training, what else do you need to be able to fulfil your work-related goals?	Support to fulfil work goals	
Q6: Practically and culturally speaking, do you think <x>work is better suited for women, or for men or it is equally suitable for both? Why do you think so? Q14.3: In your view, are these job aspects equally available to women doing the same job, or are they more, or less for women? Q17.3: To what extent do you think women have equal, more, or less opportunity to fulfil these needs?	Reasons for disparate freedoms for women	Gender Inequality
Questions 8, 17 to 22, 24, 26 to 30, and 33	Gender inequality in capabilities	

 Open ended questions
 Closed-ended questions

Source: author

Lastly, through the above analysis, a consolidated list of external environment factors that operate at the following four levels was derived: individual; family and community; socio-cultural gender norms; and institutional and policy. Therefore, the analysis revealed an expanded view of the external environment accounting for the various factors that impact an intervention such as SDT. It highlighted the significance of labour market factors such as access to local jobs at decent wages across sectors of choice, in a safe and progressive work environment. Access to support services such as career and mental health counselling, mentoring, expert guidance, further training and access to finance. Finally, the prevalence of gender inequality and the significance of being able to navigate socio-cultural gender and age norms is highlighted.

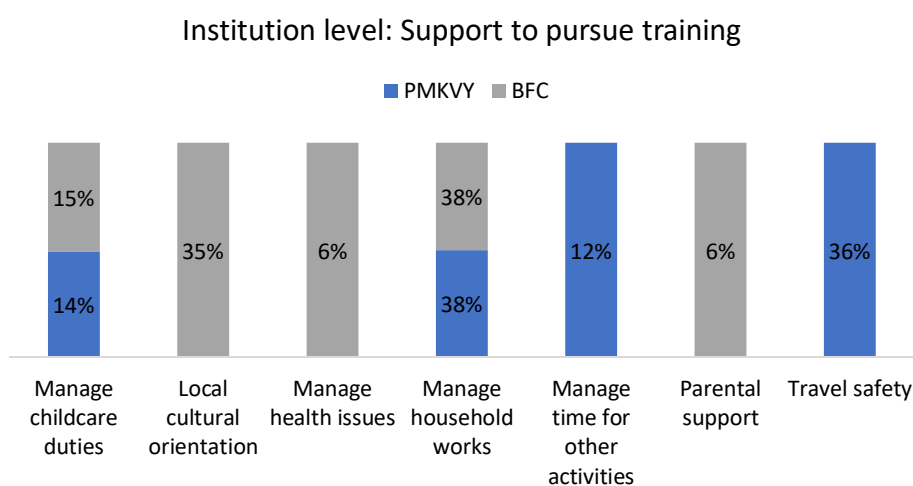
6.1 Analysing support needed to pursue skills training

Overall, majority (61%) of the people say that they face barriers in being able to pursue training. The most commonly expressed barrier (36%) is need for support with the responsibility of household works –cooking, cleaning, etc. This is followed by safety issues (19%) i.e. to be able to travel safely to the training centre. Furthermore, for 15% of the people who travel to another region to get trained, managing local cultural issues such as language, behaviour, weather, etc. is problematic. An equally significant barrier is childcare responsibilities which was mentioned as a specific issue by 14% of the respondents. Another form of inconvenience that 6% of the people reported was the lack of time as a result of which they could not pursue other activities they valued such as sports, or the need to study and work. 5% of the people had issues with lack of parental support and 4% had health issues that they needed to tackle in order to be able to attend training.

Institution-level analysis: support to pursue training

In Graph 6.1, responses across BFC and PMKVY are compared on the dimension of support needed to pursue skills training.

Graph 6.1: Institution-level comparison of support to pursue training



Source: author

BFC: manage household work and adjust to local culture

In the case of BFC, as shown in graph 6.2, the two predominant concerns are - support to manage household work (38%), followed by orientation to local cultural issues (35%). Latter assumes significance since people live at the institution and need to adjust to various things like food, weather, local language and ways of behaving. This was followed by the need for support to manage household work and childcare responsibilities (15%), without which women reported that they cannot pursue training. In addition, parental concern was an issue (6%) since women travel far for a long duration, therefore, they need support and consent from the parents. Another issue was managing health (6%) since people are more aged and few also suffer from disability.

PMKVY: manage household work and negotiate safe travels

Graph 6.2 shows that in the case of PMKVY, support to manage household work emerged as the predominant issue (38%). The issue of travel safety was significant (36%) due to the fact that trainees needed to travel to the training centre which could be located in an area that is not safe. In addition, for those training in evening shifts, safe travel by public transport was a concern. Time management for other activities such as being able to study, work, play sports was another concern (12%). This can be attributed to the fact that PMKVY trainees are locally based and need to pursue other activities that would allow them to fulfil their future study or work-related plans.

State level trends for PMKVY

Further disaggregating the results at the level of the State for PMKVY shows that a significantly higher percentage of people in Rajasthan expressed safety concerns (52%) compared to Himachal Pradesh (12%). Support for household work and childcare duties were the predominant concerns for those in HP and considerably higher than Rajasthan. However, this difference cannot be ascertained to differences in age, marital status, or rural-urban background of trainees in the two states. Data shows that almost an equal percentage of trainees in both cases are below and over 30 years of age, although the percentage of over 30 is slightly higher in the case of HP. In terms of marital status, an almost equal percentage of people are married or single in both states, although the percentage of married is slightly higher in HP. In terms of rural / urban backgrounds, no differences are observed. Therefore, the reasons could perhaps be in the hardship of life in hilly geographies.

The preceding section analysed the support that people need to be able to effectively initiate and pursue the training programme. The next section analyses the support that people need, in addition to skills training, to be able to fulfil their aspirations.

6.2 Analysing support needed to fulfil aspirations

In addition to training, people need other support to be able to fulfil their stated life and work goals. It is important to determine and enable these additional support factors, so people are actually better-off after training. The sections below examine these additional support factors.

6.2.1 Support to fulfil life goals

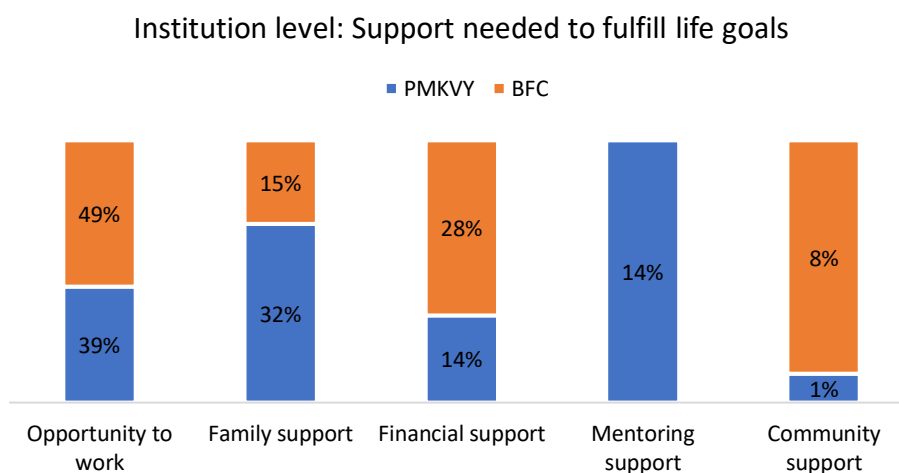
Consolidated analysis: support to fulfil life-goals

Data shows that in addition to training, most people (42%) needed to secure work to be able to fulfil their aspirations. They expected the institution to help them provide the same. People also depended on their social network of friends to become aware of work opportunities. 27% of the people said that they needed emotional and moral support from the family to be able to pursue their dreams. 18% of the people expressed need for financial support so that they could start their own business. For this, they expected the government to provide a loan. People also relied on social networks and personal savings to secure the same. 10% of the people also said that they needed support with mentoring and guidance. Lastly, 3% alluded to the need for support of the community to be able to fulfil their aspirations.

Institution-level analysis: support to fulfil life-goals

In Graph 6.2, responses across BFC and PMKVY are compared on the dimension of support needed to fulfil life goals.

Graph 6.2: Institution-level comparison of support needed to fulfil life goals



Source: author

BFC: work opportunity and access to finance

Graph 6.2 shows that in the case of BFC, majority (49%) of the trainees needed an opportunity to work. Their predominant concern was regarding provision of solar equipment and materials to begin their work once they returned to their home countries. They also said that they needed financial support (28%) and support from their community (8%). For example, a Fiji mama expected the local government to support purchase of equipment for her business enterprise. Mamas from Uganda needed financial and community support to fulfil their aspiration to construct an orphanage.

PMKVY: work opportunity and family support

Graph 6.2 shows that in the case of PMKVY, besides the opportunity to work (39%), people needed family support (32%) including support of the spouse, parents and children. For example, a lady who was training in the hospitality sector said that she was working hard to be able to fulfil her children's needs and they were supportive. This was followed by need to secure financial assistance (14%) and mentoring support (14%). For instance, people said they needed expert guidance to be able to pursue alternate careers such as acting and sports or government services. In addition to seeking guidance from the institution, people said that they engaged with their social network of teachers, family, friends and other experts for guidance.

6.2.2 Support to fulfil work goals

Consolidated analysis: support to fulfil work-goals

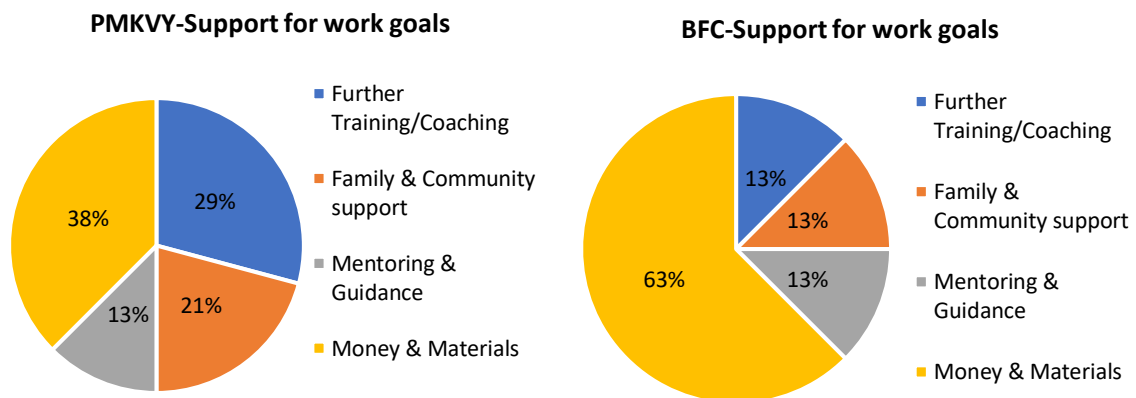
Majority (41%) needed support with money and materials to be able to start or upgrade their business and undertake other ventures. Some people (27%) needed further training and coaching to be able to undertake a particular type of work or join government service. The

support of the family and the community, as expressed by 20% of the people, was also essential to be able to move forward and so was the need for mentoring and guidance (13%).

Institution-level analysis: support to fulfil work-goals

In Graph 6.3, responses across BFC and PMKVY are compared on the dimension of support needed to fulfil work goals.

Graph 6.3: Institution-level comparison of support to fulfil work goals



Source: author

BFC: money and material support

Graph 6.3 (right-side) shows that majority (63%) of the people in BFC need support with money and materials. This can be attributed to the fact that solar mamas depended on external stakeholders to be able to initiate their work. For instance, they needed support from the village committee with space for warehouse. They depended on the institution to provide solar equipment to be able to start their work. Those who wanted to pursue goals besides solar work, also needed support with money and materials. For example, land for orphanage, material to construct school, etc. They also needed financial assistance such as loans from the government to buy equipment. Other material support included infrastructure such roads in the villages to be able to affectively conduct their business.

PMKVY: money and material support

Graph 6.3 (left-side) shows that people in PMKVY who were interested to work from home or open a small business needed financial assistance (38%) which they expected could be sought from parents. They also sought support of the government in the form of loans and subsidies to be able to buy equipment such as machines or computers. Women mentioned that there should be a specific government scheme that provides them with financial assistance. One person said that he heard that the Prime Minister was giving money to people to start solar work and he was keen to get more details regarding that scheme. Others said they will work hard to save enough money and then invest. Overall, people expect the government to support them, followed by seeking help from parents and relying on personal savings.

A higher percentage of people in PMKVY (29%), and equally across the two states, needed help with further training and coaching. This could be technical training such as learning computers or learning sign-language. Others needed communication skills and English

language speaking training. Besides training, those who were preparing for government exams, needed guidance regarding suitable coaching centres and needed to ensure that required money for the fees is arranged. Others who were pursuing education, needed to ensure that they are able to successfully complete the degree. Few also said that On-The-Job-Training (OJT) would enable them to practice the skills they had acquired. PMKVY people also needed family support in the form of encouragement and permission to work (21%). It was also important to get support from members of the community and the village.

Finally, in terms of career counselling and guidance (13%) of the people needed guidance on matters such as how to start a business, what is the supply chain, where to hire people, etc. Others such as those preparing for the Army or for a career in sports needed expert advice on matters of physical and mental strength. Those who expressed interest in going abroad for work needed counselling on the visa process and opportunities. Majority of the people agreed that their families were supportive of their future work-related plans. However, they did not have adequate information and guidance on how to achieve their goals.

An examination of the support that people need also revealed issues of gender inequality that particularly restrict women's capabilities. Women comprise more than half the training cohorts. In the present case, 69% of the respondents were women; 78% in BFC and 66% in PMKVY. Therefore, there is a need to examine the particularities of these gender inequalities.

6.3 Analysing gender inequality

The extent of gender inequality in opportunities was examined to determine its impact on women's ability to pursue skills training and fulfil their goals. This examination consisted of two parts. First, people's views on the gendered nature of opportunities were examined through a series of open-ended questions. This analysis is presented in section 6.3.1. Second, the extent of gender inequality in capabilities was ascertained through closed-ended questions based on Robeyns' (2003) list. In drawing the list, as discussed in chapter 3, Robeyns followed the criteria of explicit formulation, methodological justification, sensitivity to context, different levels of generality and exhaustion and non-reduction. Using the same capabilities, contextualisation for the present study was reflected in the framing of the questions. This analysis is presented in section 6.3.2.

6.3.1 Disparate freedoms for women

As discussed in chapter 4, people said that their aspiration was to work and be independent so that they are able to live a good life. People also wanted to ensure the well-being of their family, including parents and children. Finally, there was a desire to work towards development of the community. In terms of valued attributes, health and nutrition; sanitation; safety; income; infrastructure and facilities; happy and tension-free state of mind; family and friendship, were valued. This was followed by desire to take part in community life and having time for leisure. Importance of access to productive assets like land and animals was significant for few and the significance of religion was least.

In terms of work, people aspired to work in a company, or NGO, or government. They were also keen to pursue their own work, while other wanted to continue further education and

not work. In terms of valued aspects of the work environment –good income, job security; safe working conditions; to be treated with respect; to be able to learn new things; good relationship with the employer; and opportunities for future growth were important. This was followed by having a good position; power and influence; and recognition.

Women reported that an unsupportive external environment limited their opportunities to fully participate and fulfil their aspirations. This included lack of support from the family and regressive social norms. The work environments and political administration were also discriminatory and non-supportive. The particularities of these reasons and instances are examined below.

Marriage, care and household responsibilities

A recurring reason reported by women that constricted their opportunities was early marriage, unequally shared burden of household work and care responsibilities. This not only restricted their mobility within the household but also reduced the amount of time to undertake other productive works outside the house. Women said that they did not receive adequate help from other family members to be able to balance their household and work responsibilities. Others were simply not allowed to work after marriage, and this was internalised in various ways. For instance, one lady said:

After marriage, the responsibility to fulfil life's needs shifts to the husband, so there is no need for me to be bothered with work...

(32-year-old women: PMKVY Sanjauli: Makeup Artist)

Women also reported that neither did workplaces provide adequate facilities in the form of travel arrangements, flexible work timings, crèche for children, etc. In addition, those who chose to work faced hostile social attitudes as summed by a woman trainee who said:

Any woman who goes out and works is considered to be of bad character...

(32-year-old women: PMKVY Sanjauli: Logistics)

Regressive socio-religious norms

Women reported experiencing menstruation related taboos that periodically restricted their freedom to work and fulfil needs. During this time, they are not allowed to work, cook, or undertake any other activities. They are almost quarantined for the duration. On the other hand, this also provided them an opportunity to be relieved from the pressures of their strenuous lives.

Women also reported that due to religious restrictions they could not dress freely or be mobile. Orthodox Christian women reported that abortion was not allowed by the Church. In addition, parents imposed similar restrictions on dress-code, timings and moving unaccompanied by male presence. In India, intersectionality of caste and gender further restricted opportunities for women from lower castes. It determined marriage prospects, friendships and social norms. For example, people from upper caste do not share a meal with friends from other castes. The captured voices below highlight the nature of these

restrictions:

It is said that if a menstruating woman plants watermelon, they will not be red at the time of harvest. According to the Botswana Traditional Religion (BTR) church, if you tend to plants during periods, they will dry. We are also told that taking care of animals while menstruating will make them aggressive.

(32-year-old BFC Botswana solar mama)

It (menstruation) is a welcome break from all the work!

(32-year-old women: PMKVY Solan-Handicrafts)

...strict restrictions are imposed on women by followers of the Arabic tradition of Islam.

(36-year-old BFC Turkey solar mama)

Bodily integrity and work-place safety

Women reported that persistent issues of sexual misconduct restricted their mobility and safety, thereby compromising their freedoms. Sexual harassment and sexual crimes were said to be common. It was reported that sexual misconduct including rape, occurs within the household and in workplaces. In addition, workplace safety was also compromised wherein there was no consideration for women undertaking physically labour intensive and hazardous works. For instance, a young woman who worked at a construction site in Rajasthan said:

The contractor does not care about gender when it comes to work. There is no sympathy, we do the same work as men.

(32-year-old woman: Mater trainer, BFC)

Thus, work environment which is a valued aspect was compromised in many ways particularly for women. The women also said that given these constraints, they would rather not work, however due to constrained financial circumstances they do not have the choice. Women also reported that in such scenarios men allowed women to work. However, this was not a reflection of equality, but to reduce the financial burden.

Power and decision-making

Women reported that they have lesser power compared to men since they do not have the opportunity to work and earn. This reduces their ability to negotiate and take decisions. Explaining this a BFC mama said:

I do not earn money, so I am dependant on my husband. This gives him a sense of power over me. He takes all decisions regarding the family.

(35-year-old BFC Fiji solar mama)

This is corroborated by data collected on decision-making which shows that household decisions were mostly singly made by male members (father, father-in-law, brother, brother-in-law, grandfather, husband). However, this was more prominent in the case of was PMKVY (60%), compared to BFC (30%). On the other hand, only 10% of the decisions were singly made by female members. Men were therefore able to exercise control over women and assert a sense of importance and responsibility.

Gendering of work

Women reported that they are considered to be less capable, are paid less and given lower positions compared to men. Women’s capability and worthiness to undertake certain roles was questioned. However, these issues also get mitigated depending on the value ascribed to the job. Likewise, in the case of certain works that can be undertaken from home such as tailoring, women believed that those were more suitable for them since they could balance care and household work responsibilities. At the same time, more men work as tailors in commercial places, indicating the spatial constraints faced by women. Women also reported that since men migrate for better work opportunities, all locally required works become the responsibility of women. Explaining the nature of migration, Assam mamas said that women stay in the village and work in the nearby tea estate or do farming whereas men migrate to other states such as Goa, Kerala, Karnataka to work in the factories.

Few voices captured below highlight the varied ways in which gendering of work is reproduced:

Although it is good for everyone to gain knowledge, but when it comes to work, women cannot go out and service hardware, it is better suited for men. Like it is not safe for women to go out late evenings when called for service.

(27-year-old man: PMKVY Parwanoo-Electronics)

My family will allow me to work anywhere if it is a government job. Otherwise they will not let me work for safety concerns.

(22-year-old women: PMKVY VKI-Electronics)

Men in Himachal Pradesh do not work as tailors. They think it is a woman’s job. So, men from another state – Uttar Pradesh, have migrated to the area to fill the gap.

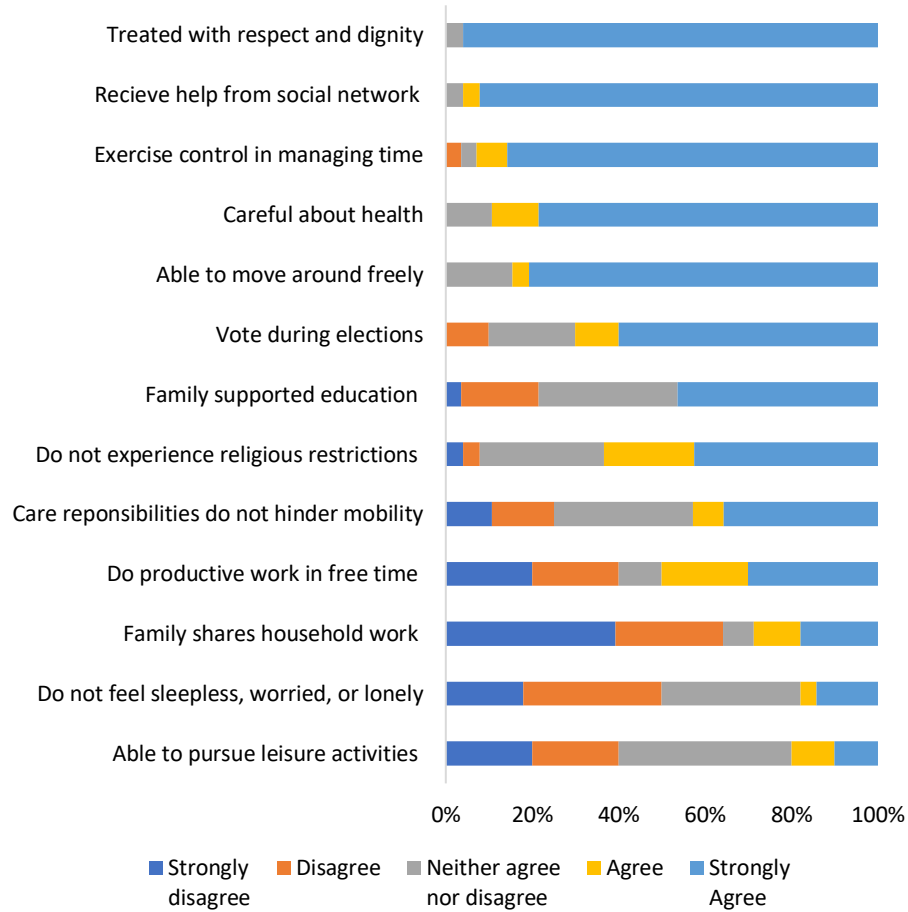
(38-year-old women: PMKVY Solan-Handicrafts)

Men would rather prefer that women do everything from riding a donkey to providing security, so fixing solar panels is no different.

(32-year-old BFC Botswana solar mama)

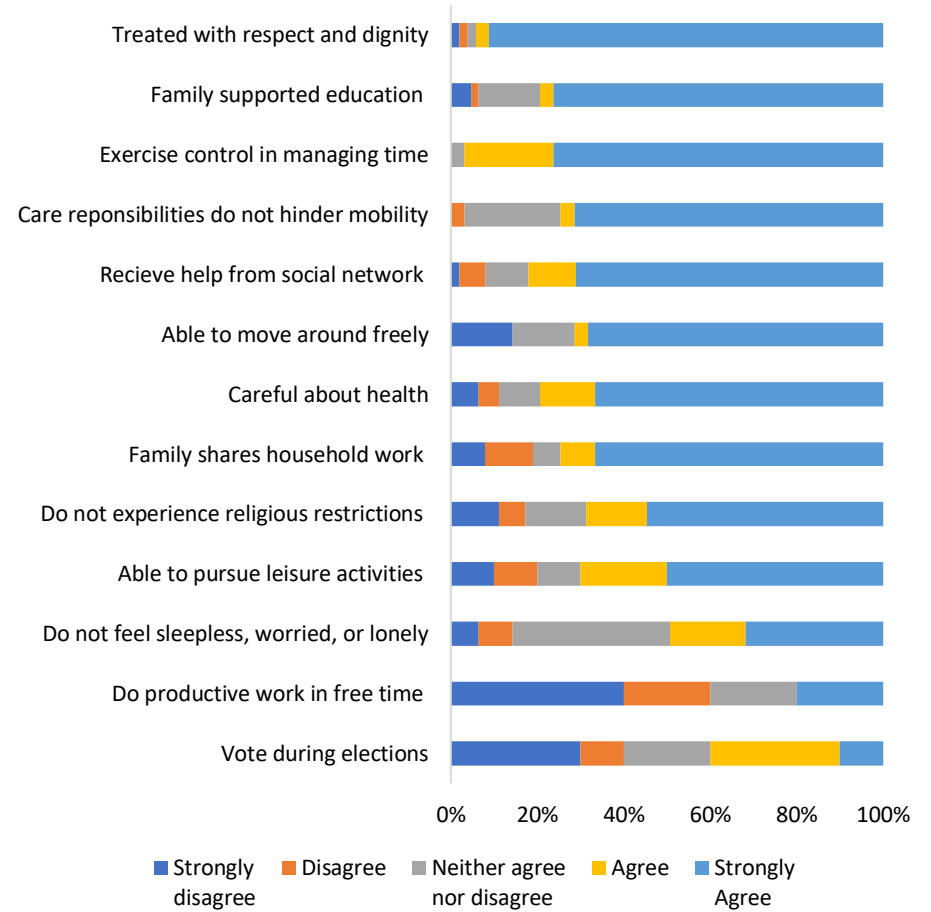
6.3.2 Gender inequality in capabilities

BFC women: Inequality



Graph 6.4: BFC women-measure of inequality
Source: author

PMKVY women: Inequality



Graph 6.5: PMKVY women-measure of inequality
Source: author

The case of women

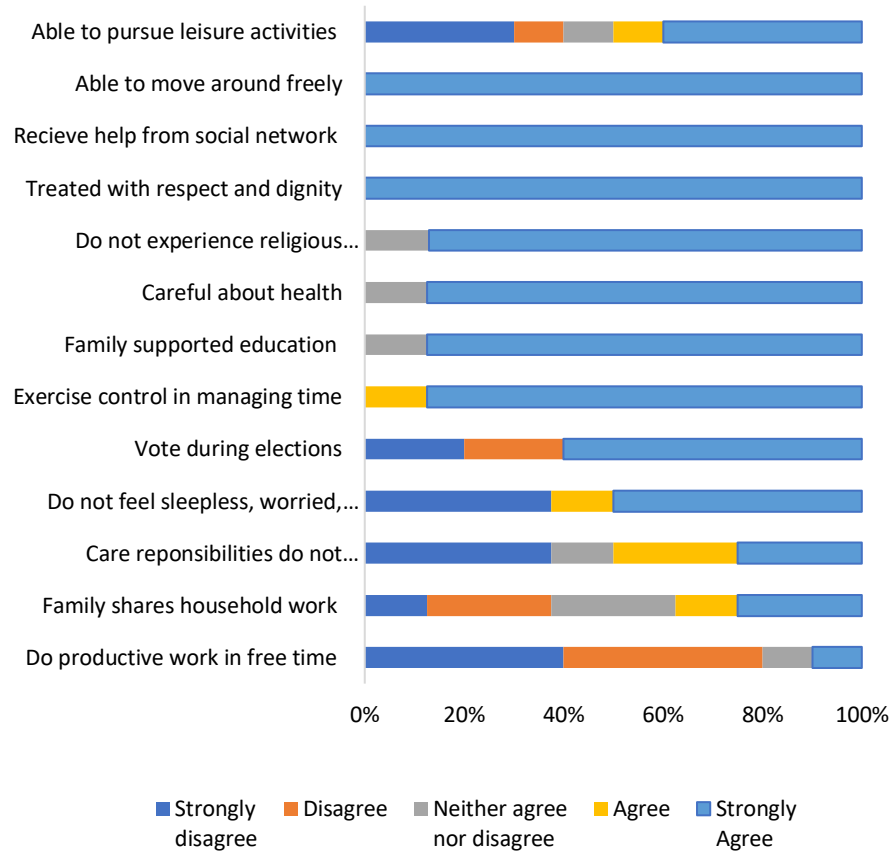
Graphs 6.4 and 6.5 depict the responses of women in BFC and PMKVY respectively to closed-ended questions to ascertain the extent of gender inequality in capabilities. The responses to the 13 selected indicators are stacked in terms of the degree of agreeableness. This leads to a downward sloping trend indicating reducing strength of agreeableness for the respective indicators.

Taking a 50% cut-off mark, it can be seen in graph 6.4 that BFC women experience lack of mental well-being, their time-autonomy and mobility is restricted due to household works and care responsibilities. They are not able to pursue leisure activities; neither are they able to undertake productive work. It also shows that in the past they did not receive support to pursue education. They also experience restrictions on account of religion. Instances of safety and bodily integrity being violated were also reported. Likewise, graph 6.5 shows that women in PMKVY reported lack of mental well-being. They are not able to pursue leisure activities and neither do they engage in any productive activities in free time. They experience greater religious restrictions and also reported instances of being mistreated.

Analysing the overall responses reveals similar trends as discussed in the above section. It validates the persistence of women's constraints including the following: women experience lack of mental well-being, they reported not being able to sleep, worrying and feeling depressed. They reported being overburdened with domestic work and nonmarket care. This capability involves raising children and taking care of other dependents, especially the elderly which is highly gendered in nature. This also reduces their mobility. In addition, lack of supportive family environment, infrastructure and workspaces did not allow them to manage their work and life responsibilities effectively.

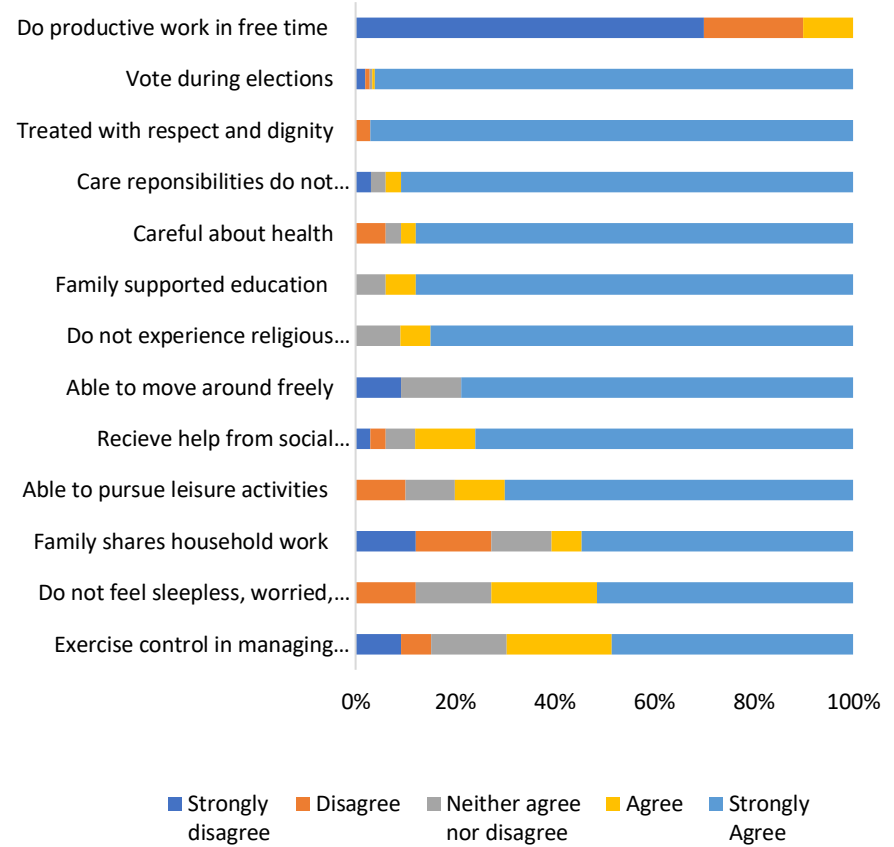
Women also reported lack of time to pursue leisure activities such as watching TV, reading, playing games, practicing the arts, etc. These activities are an important means of relaxation, creativity, and pleasure; hence, they are intrinsic aspects of well-being. They also reported lack of time-autonomy to be able to allocate time on market work, domestic work, nonmarket care and leisure activities. Women also reported lack of capability to undertake paid work. Religion emerged as another dimension of reduced capabilities for women by promoting women-unfriendly practices. They also reported lack of support to pursue education due to regressive social norms. Finally, persistent issues of bodily integrity being violated, and safety compromised were reported.

BFC men: Inequality



Graph 6.6: BFC men - measure of inequality
 Source: author

PMKVY men: Inequality



Graph 6.7: PMKVY men - measure of inequality
 Source: author

The case of men

The responses of men on the same dimensions of capabilities are depicted in graphs 6.6 and 6.7. Comparing the overall strength of agreeableness as shown by the length of the 'strongly agree' bar shows that men were overall distinctly better-off compared to women across variables. Taking a 50% cut-off mark, shows that lack of mental well-being was a common issue reported by men across BFC and PMKVY as well. In addition, men in BFC (Graph 6.7) reported that household work and care responsibilities restricted their freedoms. This was attributed to the fact they needed to take care of farming and their elderly parents. As a result, they could not engage in any additional productive works. In the case of PMKVY (graph 6.8) men reported lack of time-autonomy. This was attributed to the fact they needed to consult their parents and other elders in the family to allocate time across various activities.

To conclude, the above analysis shows that women in BFC reported the highest extent of gender inequality in capabilities, followed by women in PMKVY. Men's experiences of gender inequality were much lesser compared to women. Men in BFC reported lesser agreeableness across dimensions compared to PMKVY men. Additionally, lack of mental well-being emerged as the single most deprivation experienced by people across gender and institutions. On the other hand, people reported that they were able to take care of their physical health. In addition, being able to move around freely, being treated with respect and receiving help from social networks was common for all.

Triangulating the open-ended (section 6.3.1) and closed-ended (6.3.2) responses on dimensions of gender inequality shows that most of the responses correlate. However, on the issue of mental well-being, in the open-ended responses it was found that women were better-off than men in their coping mechanisms. However, the closed-ended responses show that both men and women are worse-off. Also, although women indicated in the closed-ended responses that they are treated with respect and dignity, however, they also narrated instances of lack of respect during interview discussions. Nevertheless, the overall conclusions remain the same.

6.4 Deriving external environment and gender inequality factors in the S2C framework

The following listed constituent factors under external environment and gender inequality were derived. This was done by analysing people's narratives and responses to questions regarding their need for support to – pursue skills training and fulfil their aspirations and capabilities (section 6.1 and 6.2) and the extent of gender inequality in capabilities (section 6.3). A consolidated view of derived factors is presented in table 6.2 below:

Table 6.2: External Environment and Gender Inequality

Individual	
Demographic	Gender
	Age
Personal	Marital status
	Physical health
	Mental well-being
	Time autonomy
Family and Community	
Social networks of family, friends and community	Personal support & guidance
	Professional support & mentoring
	Financial assistance
	Community development
Socio-cultural gender norms	
	Support to pursue education, training and work
	Household and care responsibilities
	Freedom, mobility and bodily integrity
	Socio-religious practices
	Pursue leisure
	Decision-making autonomy
Institutional and Policy	
Safety	Safe environment and spaces
Access	Counselling and mentoring services
	Employment services
	Childcare facilities
	Financial services
Legislation	Equal opportunity
	Decent work environment
Economic	Job creation across sectors
	Availability of local jobs
	Demand-supply mapping
	Wages
	Migration trends- rural-urban; inter-state

Source: author

The above listed components (table 6.2) of external environment and gender inequality show that constituent factors under the following categories enable or restrict achievements. At an individual level, demographic and personal variables such as age, gender and marital status; physical and mental well-being; and the agency to control one's time intersect with other factors, or in their own capacity impacting people's ability to convert opportunities into varied levels of achievements. It also shows that the network of family, friends and the community is harnessed by people to seek personal, professional and financial support.

It highlights the institutional and policy gaps that severely restrict achievements. These include lack of safety and provision of services such as– information centres, counselling and mentoring services, employment services, childcare facilities and financial access. In addition, the impact of market conditions, particularly the lack of local jobs, low wages and poor working conditions, impact people’s work outcomes. Significantly it shows that the prevalence of restrictive socio-cultural norms including regressive religious practices restrict women’s opportunities. These include norms related to pursuing education, training and work; the burden of household care and responsibilities. They also include women’s ability to pursue leisure activities and participate in decision making. Overall, this reduces women’s freedom, mobility and bodily integrity, thereby restricting their agency and limiting their achievements. The implications of these conditions are examined below.

6.5 External environment and gender inequality: examining implications

In this section, the above results are further analysed to draw implications and show linkages with extant literature and the observed gaps as reviewed in chapter 2. The above analysis presents an integrated conceptualisation of the categories and constituent factors of the external environment in the context of a SDT intervention. They include a range of factors from the individual to the macro-environment as described in table 6.2. As examined below, the analysis specifically highlights the significance of labour market factors such as access to local jobs at decent wages across sectors of choice in a safe and progressive work environment. Access to support services such as career and mental health counselling, mentoring, expert guidance, further training and access to finance. Finally, the prevalence of gender inequality and the significance of being able to navigate socio-cultural gender and age norms is highlighted.

1. Access to local jobs at decent wages across sectors of choice in a safe and progressive work environment.

Trainees across BFC and PMKVY expressed a desire to be able to work locally and earn decent wages in a safe and progressive work environment. However, as shown in table 6.2, the extent to which this aspiration could be fulfilled was a function of various factors of the external environment, particularly the labour market conditions and other industry and regulatory aspects. The impact of these factors is more prominent in the case of PMKVY which is a market-driven model and therefore needs to be more integrated with and responsive to the labour market. Issues such as mapping demand and supply and ensuring local employment or entrepreneurship opportunities become pertinent. Providing quality training in partnership with the industry becomes imperative. At the same time, ensuring proper counselling and orientation for the trainees so that their interests and expectations are better aligned with the market conditions also assumes significance.

In the case of BFC, the trainees are trained for specific jobs in the solar sector that are to be undertaken after training. However, there are dependencies on NGOs and other agencies for raising the required money. Therefore, there is need to ensure that these linkages are well established. In terms of wages, a standard amount is decided to be paid by the institute or the village committee. These amounts are on the lower side as a result of which people’s ability to be able to undertake other subsidiary works becomes important.

Therefore, it is argued that these factors of the external environment are not simply 'nice-to-haves' for a well-functioning SDT system; they need to be accounted for within the framework of the SDT intervention.

2. Access to support services: career and mental health counselling, mentoring, expert guidance, further training and finance

Another significant aspect of the external environment is access to support services as shown in table 6.2. For instance, trainees across BFC and PMKVY expressed the need for support in the form of counselling for mental health. Data shows that lack of mental well-being was the single most deprivation experienced by people across gender and culture. The results also show that women are better able to manage their mental health since their social support and coping mechanisms were better developed. On the other hand, men hold their tensions within which constricts their capability. This analysis is contrary to extant literature which shows that women have worse mental health than men (Lahelma et al., 1999; Fuhrer et al., 1999).

Likewise, the need for mentoring and guidance was felt by trainees across the two institutes. In the case of BFC, since the trainees were particularly interested in community development, they needed guidance with matters of engaging with the community to fulfil the same. PMKVY trainees also needed mentoring and guidance to be able to pursue their desired work opportunities that included alternate careers and joining government services.

The significance of access to finance and capital was double for BFC trainees compared to PMKVY. This can be attributed to the fact that the solar mamas came from disadvantaged backgrounds and depended on the government / NGOs/ community to provide financial assistance so that they could fulfil their goals. In the case of PMKVY, those who were interested to work from home or open a small business needed financial assistance which they expected could be sought the government or parents and they also relied on personal savings.

The need for further training and coaching was particularly significant in the case of PMKVY and equally across the two states. The nature of such training varied including, digital learning, communication skills, English language speaking training and training for government job exams. Few also said that On-The-Job-Training (OJT) would enable them to practice the skills they had acquired.

Finally, results showed that people sought assistance from their family, friends and members of the community to fulfil varied needs. These included seeking support to manage personal issues such as emotional support and guidance on life matters. They also sought help to manage care responsibilities. They sought help from professional networks for information regarding work opportunities, expert guidance and mentoring. People also depended on these networks to access financial help. Moreover, strong networks also promoted community participation and development initiatives.

This dependence on social networks was partly due to lack of access to formal services such as counselling, childcare, access to finance, etc. In addition, it can also be attributed to the existence of closely knit communities and neighbourhoods. Therefore, people's ability to build and nurture these networks is a significant enabling factor. Although the significance of social networks has been highlighted in the capability literature, it has not been empirically identified in the context of skills development.

3. Navigate socio-cultural gender and age norms

The assessment of gender inequality in capabilities showed that overall women reported larger capability deficits. Women reported that their worthiness to be able to undertake certain types of works is questioned. Restrictive socio-cultural norms dictate what is better suited for women and men and this is also internalised by them. However, these norms get mitigated if the job is highly valued, such as a government job. They also do not apply when men migrate for work and women are responsible for all local works including market and non-market.

Women reported that early marriage and childbirth, the burden of household work and care responsibilities restricted their mobility, time autonomy and opportunities. They also do not have the time to pursue any leisure activities. In free time, as leisure, they pursue other productive works that added to income or savings. In addition, religious restrictions and social taboos also promote women unfriendly practices.

Women also reported that they were not treated with respect and their bodily integrity was violated, at home and at work. This research also found that within this unequal structure, women who do well are labelled as having a questionable character. Overall, this reduces their sense of self-worth and power to negotiate and participate in decision-making. Men position themselves as the head of the household and exercise decision-making power. They make visible their control and assert their superiority.

At the level of the institution, women in BFC reported higher inequality compared to women in PMKVY. BFC women trainees reported lesser support from their family to pursue education and training, or to manage household work. It was less likely for them to pursue leisure activities. They were more likely to undertake productive work in free time and care responsibilities hindered their mobility to a greater extent. PMKVY women reported lesser awareness and ability to participate in a basic political activity such as voting during elections.

Therefore, the results show that there is need to specifically account for issues of gender inequality within the context of training delivery. As Sen (1999: 202-3) says, any development process needs to address "the nature of the employment arrangements, attitudes of the family and of the society at large towards women's economic activities, and the economic and social circumstances that encourage or resist change in these attitudes...".

The gender inequality literature also ascertains these findings such as – the gendering of education and work options (Warrington and Younger, 2000; Robeyns, 2003); the restrictions on women's movements that reduces their productive opportunities (Mayounx, 1993); the unjust allocation of time (Bubeck 1995; Agarwal 1997; Robeyns 2001) and lack of for the care

and domestic work; and the higher incidences of violation of bodily integrity and safety (Robeyns, 2003).

In terms of ageist discrimination, results show that age and gender intersect to produce restrictive results for younger women. For instance, older women reported confronting lesser issues of bodily integrity compared to younger women. This impacted opportunities for the latter to effectively pursue training and work. Research also shows that norms of gender subordination within the household as well as in the labour market that typically restrict women's access to resources for production and distribution are more relaxed for older women (Kandiyoti, 1988; Mayounx, 1993).

Results also show that the age-based narratives promoted by the respective institutions reproduce ageist discrimination. For instance, in the case of PMKVY, the narrative of harnessing the demographic dividend has a trickle-down effect. As a result, the trainees also believe that the training is more advantageous for younger people compared to older. This was attributed to the fact that younger people have better physical and mental capabilities and a longer future. It was also said that industry prefers to hire younger people. Significantly, in the case of PMKVY, older people with more work experience did not command any wage premium either.

In the case of BFC, the institution particularly promotes training for older women. However, an equal percentage of participants were over and under 35 years of age (15 to 34: 53%; 35 to 54: 47%). Older women asserted that they were more adaptable to new environments and less demanding which aided the learning process. They were also better prepared to learn from the learning-by-doing method as against younger people who prefer more modern methods. It was also said that the aged could learn and gain some degree of independence and thus hope for a better future.

Therefore, the above analysis shows that these factors of the external environment, including gender inequality, impact people's ability to be able to fulfil their aspirations. They are more than enabling conditions, they also enhance people's agency. The significance of incorporating an integrated view of these factors in the analysis of SDT has been articulated by Zeng (2009), Allias (2012) and King (2012). Various studies that apply CA in the context of education, or work, or life have identified some of these factors in varying combinations. However, this research stands out for presenting a comprehensive view accounting for the various factors that impact an intervention such as SDT intervention.

Conclusion

This chapter addressed RQ #3: *What constituents of the external environment, including gender inequality, impact people's ability to pursue skills training and fulfil their goals?*

It was found that in order to effectively pursue training, in addition to the training resources discussed in chapter 5, people need a supportive environment. This included support from the family, a conducive training environment and an overall safe physical environment. Similarly, to be able to work and fulfil their aspirations, in addition to skills training, people needed support to be able to find an appropriate work opportunity. They also needed the

support of their family and community. Mentoring and guidance; financial support; and additional training and coaching also assumed significance. Finally, on the issue of gender inequality, the analysis captured the lived realities of women's burdens of household work, care duties, lack of freedom and mobility, limited participation in polity, religious impositions, prevalent dangers of sexual misconduct and their lack of power. All of which reduces their agency to learn, earn and fulfil their aspirations for life. Therefore, reiterating the significance of ensuring supportive and safe environments for women so that they are able to pursue their goals.

The constituent factors of the external environment are located in the S2C framework under the following categories – individual; family and community; socio-cultural gender norms; institutional and policy levels. Therefore, methodologically, an expanded notion of the external environment, particularly addressing the issue of gender inequality as a separate category is operationalised in the context of a SDT intervention. One that enables specification of the underlying complexities of structural factors that impact people's agency to expand their opportunity set and convert into actual achievements. It also shows the application of the list of gender inequality in capabilities proposed by Robeyns (2003).

The analysis stands out for presenting an integrated view accounting for the various factors that impact an intervention such as skills development. The analysis specifically highlights the significance of labour market factors such as access to local jobs at decent wages across sectors of choice in a safe and progressive work environment. Access to support services such as career and mental health counselling, mentoring, expert guidance, further training and access to finance. Finally, the prevalence of gender inequality and the significance of being able to navigate socio-cultural gender and age norms is highlighted. It also shows how these factors vary across the studied institutional models.

In line with the S2C framework, this chapter illustrated the significance of considering factors of the external environment, including the particular impact of gender inequality as part of the larger skills delivery ecosystem. Moreover, the richness of the listed categories ascertained the significance of capturing people's voices and analysing them in accordance with the S2C framework to determine the same. Specifying the nature and impact of a restrictive external environment, extended the discussion beyond conversion factors that are limited to understanding how a person can convert the characteristics of the commodity into a functioning. It also showed that the intersectionality of gender and the external environment produces unequal outcomes for women. It therefore makes a case for incorporating these factors and gender differences in the design and delivery of the skills development ecosystem.

The final data chapter examines achievements after training to determine the actual value of the training programme.

CHAPTER 7 | Reflections After Training

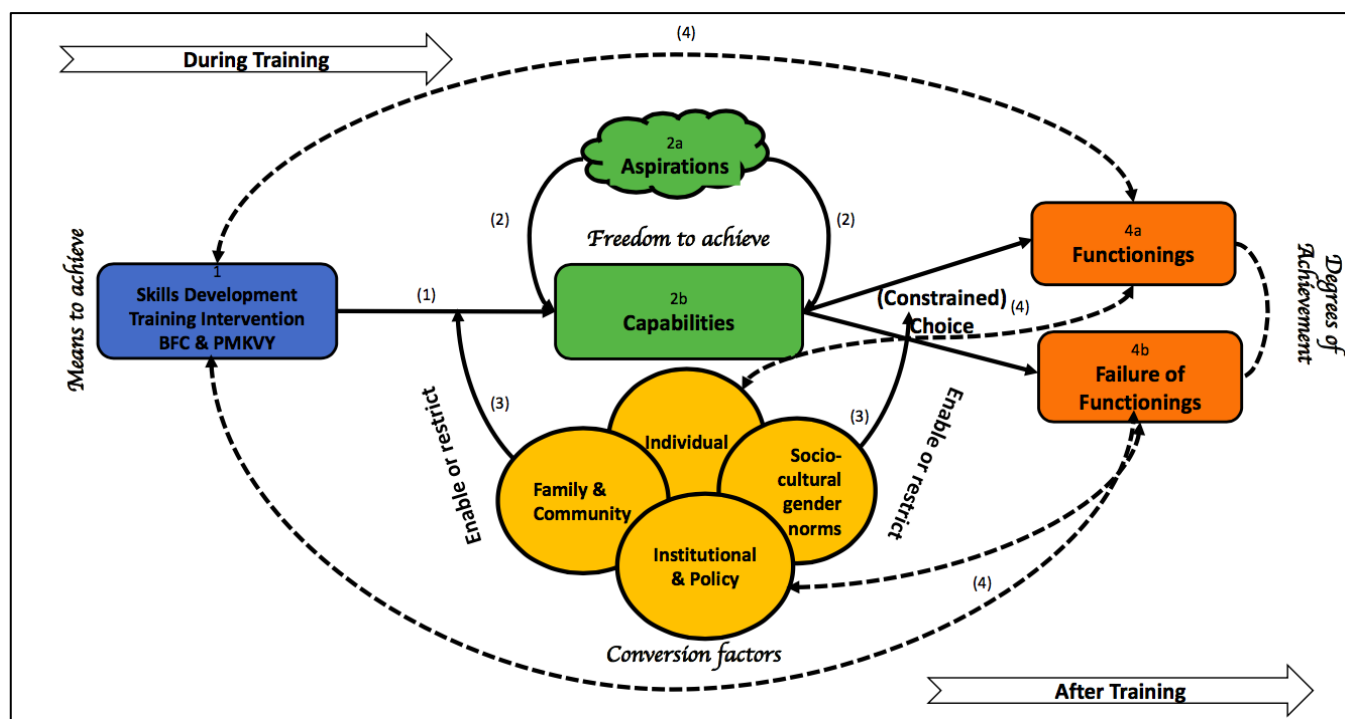
Introduction

This chapter examines RQ 4: *After training, what is people’s position and what are their reflections on the value of the training?*

In accordance with the S2C framework discussed in chapter 3, the last part of the analysis consisted of identifying functionings, i.e., people’s actual achievements and failures. This component has been highlighted in orange colour in figure 6.1 (box 4a and 4b). In addition, it is argued that the achievements or failures might not be absolute, rather there could be ‘degrees of achievement’. This is represented by the dotted line connecting 4a and 4b. For instance, within the context of the same capability, a person might be satisfied with the achievement of some part of the outcome and not all.

The ability to transform opportunities into achievements is dependent on people’s (constrained) choices. Right arrow 3 shows that these choices are in turn influenced by factors of the external environment. Furthermore, as indicated by the dotted arrows 4, data analysis shows backward linkages of functionings and failures with factors of the external environment and attributes of the training intervention.

Figure 7.1: (failure of) functioning in the S2C framework



Source: author

The functionings and failures are derived by examining people’s actual position after training and their reflections on various aspects of the training programme, including their views on

the actual value afforded by the training. This analysis enabled to complete the loop between perceived value as determined at the beginning of the programme and post facto analysis of the actual value of the programme. Therefore, backward linkages from actual achievements to SDT intervention were established.

As per the process described in chapter 3, the ‘after training questionnaire’ was administered to the same respondents. In the case of PMKVY, the respondents were contacted three months after completion of the training. In the case of BFC, interviews were conducted before the trainees left for their home countries. An additional touch point was included for BFC trainees around 3 months since return to their home countries. With a 11% drop out rate, a total of 121 interviews (84 PMKVY and 37 BFC) were conducted in the second phase.

As depicted in table 7.1, thematic coding and frequency mapping of open and closed ended questions related to the trainees position after training was done. The questions included an investigation of people’s occupation since training and reasons for the same. A comparison of present occupation vis-à-vis future work goals was done. The challenges experienced at work, including experiences of gender inequality were studied. The support that people needed to fulfil their aspirations, their views on choice of training and suggestions to increase training effectiveness were analysed. Finally, their thoughts on the actual value of the SDT intervention were captured. This led to the following three broad thematic classifications – people’s position since training, reflections on actual challenges and reflections on actual value of training. The thematic analysis was undertaken at an aggregate level followed by inter-institution and intra-institution comparisons.

Table 7.1: Thematic mapping- questions related to after training position

Source data: After training questionnaire Sample size: 121 trainees interviewed	Thematic coding (for open-ended ques) / Frequency mapping (for close-ended ques)	Thematic analysis
Q1: What have been doing since completion of the training programme?	Occupation since training	Position since training
Background questions 1, 2, 3	Reasons for post training situation	
Q7: Ref. Q 11, have your post training work related expectations been fulfilled? In what ways training was helpful in enabling you to fulfil? In what ways not? What support do you need to fulfil them?	Present occupation vis-à-vis future work goals	
Q8: Ref. ques 12, later in the future you wanted to < >? In what ways you think training has been helpful in enabling you to fulfil these goals? In what ways not? What other support do you need to fulfil them?	Challenges at work	Reflections on actual challenges
Q3: What challenges do you face in working in <x> field?		
Q5.1: Which of these aspects does your current job fulfil?	Experiences of gender inequality	
Q4: Do you think working in <x> field is better suited for women, or for men or it is equally suitable for both? Why do you think so?		
Q10.2: Do you think women have equal, more, or less opportunity to fulfil these needs? And why?		

Q5.2: In your view, are these job aspects equally available to women doing the same job, or are they more, or less for women? 5.3 And why?		
Q9: Ref ques 15, you said that you aspire for < > in life? In what ways you think training has be helpful towards enabling you to fulfil these aspirations? In what ways not? What other support do you need to fulfil them? (resources, guidance, etc.) Who do you think can help you most? (Self, family, friends, community, TC, govt.)	Lack of support to fulfil aspirations	Reflections on actual value of training
Q6: Given a choice, would you have liked to do some other training? Or instead do something else? What other training / what else? And why?	Choice of training	
What did you like most about the training programme, the environment, the experience? What can be changed?	Suggestions to increase training effectiveness	
Q2: Are you satisfied that you got trained to be a <job role>? In what ways has it been useful? In what ways not?	Value of skills development training	
Q10.1: I am going to read you a list of items, tell me if you think that after this training your ability / opportunity to fulfil these needs: is better off, worse-off or there is no change? And why?		

	Open ended questions
	Close-ended questions
	Background information

Source: author

Lastly, through the above analysis, a consolidated list of (failure of) functionings was derived and mapped with the list of capabilities derived in chapter 4. The analysis led to a comparison of the actual achievements after training with the work and life related aspirations expressed by the trainees at the beginning of the programme (chapter 4). The reasons for failure of aspirations and capabilities were also examined and linked with factors of the external environment and gender inequality (chapter 6) and attributes of the training programme (chapter 5). Finally, the actual value of skills development training was established and compared with the expected value ascertained at the beginning (chapter 5).

7.1 Analysing people's position after training

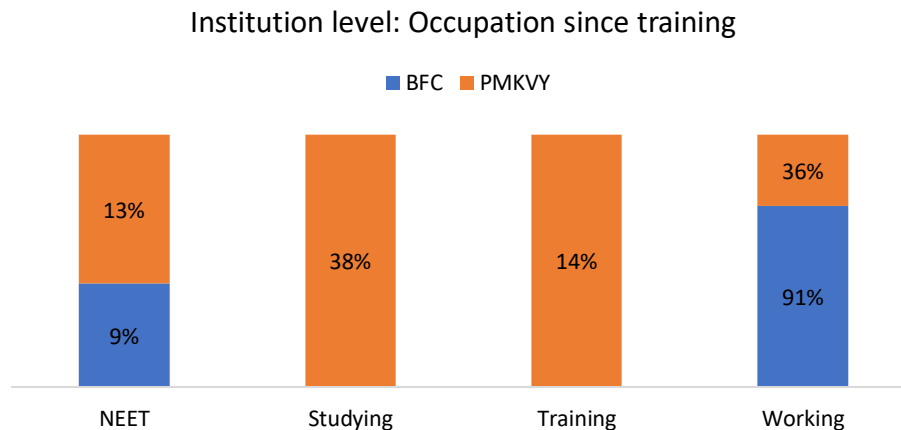
An overall review of people's position after completing training shows that almost 50% of them were working; 28% were studying; 11% were in further training; and the remaining 12% were NEET. The occupation trends disaggregated for gender show that a larger percentage (51%) of women were working compared to men (47%). However, many (16%) of the women worked from home. They earned an average of rupees 2000 a month, mostly through tailoring works. Those employed outside the home were earning the same average salary as men, i.e. rupees 7000.

Data collected during training on people's work background shows that 50% of them had worked before joining the training programme. In terms of years of experience, over 50% had worked for an average of 3 years, while others had been working for much longer, some even since childhood. Majority of them worked in the services sector, followed by agriculture and

manufacturing. 65% of the people were wage employed before training which increased to 80% after training. In terms of work location before training, 74% of the people worked locally in the same area; 20% worked from home and others worked within the same district. The location preference remained unchanged after training. 75% worked locally in the same area as they lived, 15% worked from home and 10% worked outside their local areas.

Institution-level analysis: occupation since training

Graph 7.1: Institution-level comparison of occupation since training



Source: author

The case of PMKVY

As discussed in chapter 4, people's future work goals included securing a job in the sector in which they were trained, getting a government job, starting their own work or expanding current business. In the immediate future, they were keen to secure work placement in the sector in which they were trained.

Reference graph 7.1, the actual status after training shows the following: 36% of the people reported that they were working; of which 65% had found work through their own social networks and 35% were placed through the Training Centre. 40% of the former continued to do tailoring from home, earning an average of rupees 2000 a month. All of them were women and they reported that they preferred to work from home so that they could manage their household and childcare duties. For others who were working in establishments, the average salary was rupees 8000 per month.

Furthermore, the data shows that the type of employment was dominated by manufacturing that employed 54% of the people, followed by services (42%). In terms of the sector, majority (35%) were in Apparel, mostly working from home. This was followed by 15% in Hospitality, Accounts, Electricals and Electronics respectively; and 8% in Retail and others. Comparing this trend with the case before training shows that over 70% of the people worked in services across varied job roles. In terms of earnings, the average salary was rupees 7000, ranging from 1500 to 15000 per month. There was a marginal increase in average income from rupees 6000 per month before training.

Reference graph 7.1, data also shows that 14% of the people were in further training. They were mostly preparing for government jobs such as medical, army, railways and other clerical jobs. 38% of the people were pursuing education and were keen to complete the degree and then consider job options. In the meantime, they were also keen to secure a job while they pursued further education / training. Significantly, 13% of the people were not engaged in any activity (NEET). They needed guidance to determine future course of action.

Further comparing the gender trends shows that only 38% of the women were working after training and 35% were pursuing further education and training. The percentage of women NEET was double (27%) compared to men. On the issue of gender equality at work, 48% of the PMKVY trainees who had started work said that the work environment was equally good for women and men. This was due to segregation of men and women in terms of different roles, separate working hours and even maintaining physical distance. In addition, it was also reported that since the company provided transport, safety was ensured.

The case of BFC

Graph 7.1 shows that 91% of the people, mostly the master trainers, were working. The status on solar mamas could not be ascertained since their return to their home countries. However, based on information from few (25%), and from the institution, it was evident that they had not yet started working as solar engineers. Few of them continued to work in the same occupation as they did before training. Comparing the data disaggregated for gender shows that 87% of the BFC women were working (not including the solar mamas). 9% of the trainees were in the NEET category, of which the percentage of women was almost double compared to men.

Furthermore, the data shows that the type of employment was dominated by service sector i.e., master trainers and other solar related works for which people were trained. Before training, almost an equal percentage of people worked across agriculture, manufacturing and services. In addition, it was noticed that BFC people engaged in more than one type of work at the same time. For example, they worked in the field and also volunteered for community works such as health and school related duties. Those in manufacturing mostly worked from home making handicraft products. Those in the service sector had varied job roles such as: teacher, government contract administrator, family planning advisor, AASHA school officers.

In terms of earnings, those employed in BFC were earning a fixed amount stipulated by BFC i.e., approximately rupees 6000 per month. Others who continued their previous work, earned the same money as they did earlier. A comparison for BFC earnings is not easy to establish since the earnings were seasonal in nature and the daily wage rates also varied. However, it can be said that for those employed in BFC, earning rupees 6000 per month was substantially more than what they earned before.

7.2 Why are people where they are?

Further to the discussions in chapter 6 regarding the support that trainees needed to be able to pursue work, the same issues were reiterated by the trainees. 55% needed support to find opportunity to work, 32% needed financial support and 15% required mentoring and further training. At an institution level, opportunity to work was most required by PMKVY trainees,

while BFC trainees mostly sought financial assistance. The other dominant issues that emerged are examined below.

7.2.1 Dominant issues in PMKVY

1. **Mobilisation and counselling to assessment and certification:** As examined in chapter 5, the TCs faced issues in mobilising the right candidates and providing quality training that could lead to decent work opportunities. There was a general lack of awareness regarding training, with 90% of the people not being aware of other skills training programmes. In addition, there was lack of mentoring and guidance to be able to take an informed decision. Training choices were limited by what was offered at the particular training centre and knowledge and awareness of working in the sector was also inadequate.

In terms of mobilisation strategies deployed for enrolment, results showed that only 17% of the trainees had been enrolled through direct mobilisation by the TCs. Others enrolled for the programme by accessing information from social media and network of family and friends. The mobilisation problem was further exacerbated by the lack of willingness of youth to undertake training, particularly in the case of HP. It was reported that youth in HP were not serious about training and also indulged in anti-social activities such as drug abuse. For example, as expressed by one of the TC administrator's:

The issue of drug addiction is common for youth in HP, it is a social menace and these young men are not interested in training or getting proper jobs.

(TC admin: PMKVY Tiker-Jarol-Hospitality)

Assessment and certification was also another prominent issue. Data revealed that more than 50% of the trainees did not receive their certificates after the assessment process that is conducted by third party agencies. This was on account of the trainees not being able to clear the assessment. In other cases, there were delays in the delivery and deliberate withholding of the certificate by the TC. The TC deliberately withheld the certificate along with the trainees' original education certificates. They resorted to such practices since the last tranche of their payment is linked with trainees getting employed. As one TC administrator explained:

This is a negative incentive for trainees to make efforts to get a job and submit employment proof for return of certificates.

(TC admin: PMKVY Paota-Solar)

The other issue that was discussed by centre administrators was regarding corruption in the assessment process. It was reported that unless the assessing agency was given the amount of money that was demanded to pass the trainees, they found ways to fail them. Like the Jaipur centre PMKVY administrator explained:

They failed the entire batch of SMO trainees since we refused to bribe them. Thanks to our contacts in the market, we are still able to get them jobs.

(TC admin: PMKVY Jaipur-SMO)

This also shows that the certificate is not always a pre-requisite for employment and the value of the certificate needs to be better established for potential employers.

2. **Placement:** As examined in chapter 6, trainees expressed a desire to be able to work locally and earn decent wages in a safe and progressive work environment. They were dependant on the training institute to facilitate such work opportunities. However, data shows that the TCs facilitated employment for only 12% of the people interviewed in the second phase. They were placed in locally based medium sized export houses, premium hotels or mid-sized resorts, SMEs in retail sector and large companies in electronics sector. The reason for low placement rates included lack of locally available jobs in the sector for which people were trained.

Sectors were allocated to training centres based on an assessment by NSDC of the local demand and supply conditions. In addition, data showed that TC's also requested for certain sectors since they are more lucrative from a business point of view. One of the TC manager's elaborated:

It makes business sense to seek training numbers for BFSI compared to retail since the expense incurred on the latter is more and the per trainee cost received is lesser. Although in Jaipur, retail demand is more due to the number of shops. However, people are not willing to spend money to hire an accounts person.

(TC admin: PMKVY Jaipur-BFSI)

The other prominent issue was the lack of industry connects. Stakeholder interviews showed that industry participation was wanting on account of lack of awareness of short-term training and lack of recognition of the level of skills. Other factors such as the type of industry and their appetite to absorb people at above minimum wages also mattered. As the founder of a successful PMKVY centre said:

The overall quality of training provided in PMKVY is low. In our centre, since we also publish training material (course books), we are able to supply them to all our training centres. I also have good connects with the industry. To match the training with the jobs available at the market level of wages is not easy.

(TC founder: PMKVY VKI)

The trainees also reported that they did not accept certain jobs since they were underpaid. For instance, those trained in the beauty sector were offered a stipend of rupees 3000 per month for a year with some more contractual obligations that were not well understood. The cost of travel and the time taken was more than what they earned. Those who were trained in the solar sector did not get jobs at decent wages.

Although everyone had expected to get decent work after completing training through the TC, however, since that did not materialise, the trainees had to rely on their own contacts and means. As a result, 50% of the trainees continued to pursue what they did before training. For instance, tailoring from home; agriculture work and other jobs and 24% found work

options through their own social networks. The trainees voiced their position and disappointments in varied ways as captured below:

I wanted to get a job in Jaipur so that I could take care of my daughter. In spite of working so hard and going through all the hardships, I did not get a job. I am back in the village working as farm labour. I also appeared for government job exam but did not clear.

(35-year-old woman: PMKVY Jaipur-Beauty)

I have 10 years of work experience and was offered a junior position with Fossils watches in Baddi. This training is only good for young people without any work experience since those with experience do not get any advantage. It is sad that middle aged people are not given any opportunities in India. I want to start my own work in the future. I will set-up a dealership for drip irrigation machinery. There is huge scope for that in Parwanoo. I will also continue to do farming in the village during season because if all become industrialists who will do agriculture - ours is an agrarian country. Path to country's development is through agriculture. We cannot escape the reality; we need rice and pulses; we cannot eat Maggie (instant noodles) every day. The government promotes industry and does not support farmers. That is why we are so backward.

(35-year-old man: PMKVY Parwanoo-Electronics)

I am pursuing an internship with a CA firm that I got through my own contacts and later I want to work in the banking sector. My future plan is to work for the government in the tax or excise departments and I am preparing for the same.

(28-year-old woman: PMKVY Jaipur-Banking)

I am working as an accounts officer in an iron casting company. I got this job since I had done accounts earlier. Although I want to work in electronics and that is why I took that training. I will continue to look for opportunities. Later in the future I want to open my own electronics shop to sell security surveillance gadgets. I will also be able to employ people in the shop and thus create employment.

(28-year-old man: PMKVY VKI, Electronics)

I wanted to work in a solar company. But there are no jobs so the TC head asked me to work in an electricals company called Havells in a nearby town. I am happy that I am working and not sitting at home. Later I want a government job in Railways.

(25-year-old woman: PMKVY Paota- Solar)

3. Work environment: The trainees reported lack of fulfilment of valued aspects of the work environment examined in chapter 4. For instance, in the case of those employed with a company in the apparel sector, it was reported that the salary was low and the work was very demanding. Elaborating on the work conditions, one of the employees said:

Targets are very difficult to achieve by those with less experience. Salary is paid according to targets achieved. Especially for people who work in night shifts, it is not easy to attain the same targets. When targets are not met, the employer harasses us.

(22-year-old woman: PMKVY Jaipur-Apparels)

Those working in the beauty sector reported that job security was an issue since they were hired on contract. In addition, due to late night and long hours of work, travel was also problematic. Likewise, those working in electricals said that the salary was less for the 12 hours of work that was expected. In addition, they had to live in a rented room and manage all expenses. As one of the trainees explained:

I work as a watch dial fitter in a factory in Baddi that makes watches for Fossil company. The job is ok; company bus comes to pick and drop. It takes one hour to reach the factory. Considering the work, the salary is less. I want a job that is closer home and timing is convenient.

(22-year-old woman: PMKVY Parwanoo, Electronics)

On the other hand, those working from home said they were happy and did not face any issues and were able to manage home and work. Overall, it shows that the valued attributes of work such as job security, safety, low wages, long working hours, working hardships remained unfulfilled.

7.2.2 Dominant issues in BFC

1. **Training delivery and felicitation:** As examined in chapter 5, the short duration of the training programme was a valued attribute. Few of the mamas suggested that the training could easily be completed within four months with proper planning and focussed delivery. Six months was said to be too long and wasteful, where the mamas were not learning anything new and being away from home for so long was very difficult. Some also complained that the practical sessions were too many and it was physically and mentally exhausting. It was also suggested that planning and scheduling of the various activities could be improved, as expressed by a mama:

The organisation should not take mamas for granted and underestimate their capacities. Although we are not educated and come from poor communities, we have nurtured families, our planning skills are good, and we have a lot of life experience. We should be respected and consulted and not rushed into activities.

(37-year-old BFC Botswana solar mama)

Regarding the trainers, it was said that communication would be easier if they were conversant with English. In addition, the trainers should be provided time-off for better motivation and performance. Few of the trainees were not happy with the fact that they did not get any certificate to show that they have formally acquired a skill, for instance a mama said:

BFC does not value certificate, my country does. Before we came here, we were given guidelines to follow. Here we see that some mamas don't even attend classes. How do these rules get applied?

(32-year-old BFC Tanzania solar mama)

2. **Delay in starting work:** BFC provided support in the form of money and materials, networks, mentoring, etc. so that the solar mamas could work effectively. However, the mamas were awaiting to receive the solar equipment and start work. They were not kept informed on the status and timelines which was discomfoting and disillusioning. This was expressed by the mamas in varied as captured below:

I do not know how the solar work plan will shape up, no one has provided any information. I now have some solar skills, that's all. My sister and I even approached the East Africa coordinator for BFC and the Indian ambassador in Tanzania. After much asking, we were told that things were on hold due to lack of funds. So, we were taken all the way to Tiloniya for training for 6 months without an implementation plan!

(32-year-old BFC Tanzania solar mama)

Solar work has not started and going back to work in the tea-estate would be an insult as people expect me to do more important work in life after Tiloniya.

(32-year-old BFC Assam solar mama)

We have no information; in fact, I have also heard from mamas who were trained in the earlier year that they did not receive equipment still and had no idea when things will move.

(37-year-old BFC Fiji solar mama)

Upon contacting BFC to understand the situation, it was found that there was lack of clarity even at the level of the support staff. As one of them explained:

It takes time for the mamas to settle back and in the meantime, we are also arranging for things. At times it take long, we also don't know...

(Support staff: BFC Tiloniya)

In the meantime, few of the mamas, continued to work in jobs they did before coming to Tiloniya. For instance, the Fiji mama had also started bee keeping in addition to coconut processing. Tanzania mamas had opened their own shop selling food related items to sustain.

On the other hand, the Master Trainers had started work and were happy that they could now support themselves and their family and children. They could also fulfil their desire for community service. However, those who did not qualify to become master trainers and were placed elsewhere within the institution were not happy with the outcome. For example, those placed in housekeeping were ashamed of the same. As one trainee exclaimed:

People expect me to teach foreign mamas which is a matter of pride and not to be sweeping the floors...

(32-year-old woman: BFC Master trainer)

7.3 Analysing reflections on value of training

As examined in chapter 5, skills training was considered to be highly valuable by the trainees for its potential to enable them to fulfil their aspirations and capabilities. Majority of the trainees believed that after training they will be better-off to be able to fulfil their aspirations. This included being able to learn and work and become independent. In addition, a decent training environment enabled people to interact with others and develop their interpersonal skills, leading to overall personal development was valued. In terms of development, people believed that through skills training they could contribute towards development of the community and progress of the country. Moreover, since the training was free of cost, it could be accessed by poor people. Therefore, they had a chance to learn and improve their living conditions and secure their future.

After training, majority of the trainees (74%) thought that the training was useful since it enabled work opportunities for few and the others valued the experience of training. The training was described as a positive life changing experience and the trainees particularly appreciated the soft skills and life skills training. They also valued the training environment and the opportunities provided for social interactions.

For the remaining 26% of the trainees, the training did not meet any of the stated expectations. This included the PMKVY trainees who were primarily disappointed for not being able to find a desired work opportunity. It also included the few BFC Master Trainers who were dissatisfied with the offered job role. These people reported feeling dejected, wasted and regressed; thus, questioning the capability promoting role of skills development.

7.3.1 Value of training – the case of BFC

Transformational learning experience: All trainees expressed that they highly valued the living and learning experience in Tiloniya. They particularly appreciated the life skills training through *Enriche* curriculum and other non-technical skills training. There were some profound testaments from the solar mamas as captured below:

It is a big learning to see the amazing things that people are able to do. In India resources are less and happiness is not about money and material things. Are they eating some happy spice!?

(Turkey mama)

It has been a huge learning experience to witness how people in India live with limited resources compared to Fiji where resources are abundant. I will go back and start applying these principles...like reducing the consumption of red meat and thereby saving a lot of money and also enjoying better health.

(Fiji mama)

When I go back home, I will train other women so that they are also more empowered. When you train a woman, you train a nation....that is the real value of training. I think formal education does not matter, living and learning with other people is the biggest education. See like when Taliban attacked the homes of Afghan mamas last week, we all prayed together. Now we know how they feel. Everybody becomes equal here, like a family.

(Tanzania mama)

I will teach the Syrian refugee women in that way the lives of their children will improve and that is the biggest satisfaction for me. Living here, I have also learnt the value of patience and slowness and will practice that when I go home.

(Turkey mama)

I have learnt how to survive without family and alcohol which is beyond my imagination! I am uneducated but when I go back home with this training, I will be very special for the community and will be considered to be an important person and not as being useless like before.

(Botswana mama)

Everyone will now listen to me, treat me like God! I will feel good. I have to do well, was sent so far. I will work all day and earn, doesn't matter how much. I will also do all other things that were taught such as make compost, etc. At home, there are household tensions, no tension here. Only tension is to learn all things properly.

(Assam mama)

Although it was difficult to adapt at the beginning since my country is very liberal and here there are many rules...but here I find time for myself which is great for reflection. In the last 45 years, I have not had a chance to go within myself and see all the dark areas. I can see the spots on the face, but not the spots inside. Also, learnt tolerance which is very good. It is a role reversal here- I am a teacher back home and student here. Now I will be more empathetic towards the other side.

(Argentina mama)

Enriche taught me budgeting, I was bad at managing money earlier. I also learnt to make manure. Earlier I used to buy manure, now I will be able to make good manure and teach others as well. This give me new hope. Feel I am useful to myself and other people. I can see that the future will be bright!

(Uganda mama)

7.3.2 Value of training – the case of PMKVY

Valuable learning and development opportunity: Majority of the trainees attached a learning value to the training and were hopeful that it would be useful going forward. They also appreciated that that in a short time span they acquired skills comparable to other long duration paid programmes. This sentiment was expressed as follows:

I am happy that I did the training, I knew nothing earlier and learnt everything here. Even if I am not able to work, it is due to my problems. They taught well...

(28-year-old woman: PMKVY: Solan-Makeup Artist)

It is useful to learn computers. Now I can troubleshoot if there is any problem, nobody needs to be called from outside.

(24-year-old man: PMKVY VKI-Electricals)

I learned how to conduct myself...

(22-year-old man: PMKVY: Jaipur-BFSI)

The training helped me to learn more about tailoring. I can now do my job better. I will also get a certificate, which is a good thing.

(32-year-old woman: PMKVY Solan-Handicrafts)

I am happy to get a job in this resort. I will work here now and later I want to open a hotel of my own.

(22-year-old man: PMKVY Tiker-Jarol, Hospitality)

Evidence from this research shows that measuring the success of skills training in terms of obtaining an opportunity to work, though important, is a reductionist approach. Although majority of the people did not get a job, they attached significance to the learning and experiential aspects of training. People appreciated the opportunity for personal development. Descriptors such as – confidence, tolerance, patience, conduct, motivation, determination, appreciation for diversity – indicate the richness of the qualitative improvements experienced and attributed to the training programme.

7.4 Deriving (failure of) functionings in the S2C framework

The following functionings and failures were derived by analysing people’s narratives and responses to questions ascertaining their position since training including (section 7.1), the dominant issues that lead to the present position (section 7.2) and finally, reflections on the actual value of training were analysed (section 7.3). The same was then mapped with the list of capabilities (table 4.2), and a consolidated view was obtained as presented in table 7.2 below:

Table 7.2: (failure of) Functionings in the S2C framework

Work related	People are (not) working
	People are (not) satisfied with their working terms and conditions
Education and skills training related	People are (not) pursuing further education or training
Personal development and family well-being related	People are (not) better-off in terms of personal development
	People are (not) hopeful of being able to live a good life and fulfil their valued life goals
	People are (not) hopeful that they can secure their family’s well-being and future
Community development related	People are (not) hopeful of being able to engage in community development works

Source: author

The above list depicts two scenarios, one which includes achievements such as those related to work where people are working and are satisfied with their working conditions. In terms of education or skills training, people are pursuing their desired prospects. It also includes aspects of personal development where people are better-off after training and are hopeful of being able to live a good life and fulfil their valued life goals. They are also hopeful that they can secure the well-being of their family. In terms of aspirations related to development of the community, people are hopeful of being able to contribute towards the same. In the

second scenario, there is a failure of functionings where people have not been able to achieve either of the desired functionings. In addition, analysing people's narratives shows that there is an in-between scenario where people are satisfied with some aspects of the achievements, however not all. This scenario is depicted in the concept of 'degrees of achievement' as shown in the S2C framework. The implications of these varied conditions are examined below.

7.5 Achievements and failures: examining implications

In this section, the actual achievements after training are compared with the work and life related aspirations expressed by the trainees at the beginning of the programme as examined in chapter 4. The reasons for failure of aspirations and capabilities are examined and linked with factors of the external environment and gender inequality (chapter 6) and attributes of the training programme (chapter 5). Finally, the actual value of skills development training is established and compared with the expected value ascertained at the beginning (chapter 5).

1. Aspirations and capabilities vis-à-vis actual work-related achievements

The aspirations and capabilities of trainees in BFC and PMKVY as examined in chapter 4 included to be able to work, pursue further education / training, experience personal development, ensure family well-being and undertake community development initiatives. The analysis shows that the actual work-related achievements were limited. Although everyone wanted to be able to work after training (with the exception of those in PMKVY who were keen to complete their education before pursuing work), however only 50% of the trained people found an opportunity to work after training. Significantly, 12% of the trainees across BFC and PMKVY were in the NEET category, due to lack of opportunities. 39% of the trainees (all from PMKVY) pursued education/ further training. The trends across the two states were similar with no inter-state differences. However, there were institution level differences in the trends as examined below.

Over 90% of the BFC trainees, mostly the master trainers were working after training. In terms of earnings, those employed in BFC earned a fixed amount of approximately rupees 6000 per month. Others who continued their previous work, earned the same money as they did earlier. In the case of solar mamas based on information from few (25%), and from the institution, it was evident that they had not yet started working as solar engineers. While few of them continued to work in the same occupation as they did before training, 9% of BFC trainees were not engaged in any activity (NEET category).

In the case of PMKVY, only 36% of the trainees were working after completing their training, of which 65% had found work through their own social networks and 35% were placed through the Training Centre. In terms of earnings, there was a marginal increase from rupees 6000 per month before training to an average income of rupees 7000, ranging from 1500 to 15000 per month. Further disaggregating PMKVY numbers for gender shows that although the employment outcomes in terms of numbers were better for women compared to men, however, women's terms of employment were poor. They worked from home and their earnings were dismally low. In addition, 13% of the trainees were NEET, with double the percentage of women in the NEET category, compared to men. 52% of the PMKVY trainees reported that they were in further training, either preparing for government jobs or pursuing

education. However, at the same time, most of them were also seeking flexible work opportunities.

Overall, majority of the trainees in BFC and PMKVY were either working or pursuing further education / training. However, instances of lack of fulfilment of valued work aspects such as – job security, safety, low wages, long work hours, tough working conditions were also reported. Particularly those who were NEET reported feeling unhappy, dejected, wasted and regressed. This led to shame, loss of face and reduced social standing. There was a sense of hopeless about achieving anything for themselves or improving the condition of their family and community. This shows how one aspiration failure leads to another, thus promoting a downward spiral.

2. Failure of achievements – restrictive external environment, gender inequality and deficient training resources

As discussed in chapters 5 and 6, the post training data analysis confirms that the reasons for failure of achievements can be traced to the following three factors: 1) a restrictive external environment, 2) gender inequality and 3) deficient training resources. This research found that the external policy and macro-economic environment did not support the desire of trainees to be able to work locally and earn decent wages in a safe and progressive work environment. In addition, support services such as access to career and mental health counselling, mentoring, expert guidance, further training and finance were lacking. Women particularly experienced larger capability deficits as a result of gendering of education and work options, restrictions on mobility, burden of care duties and violation of bodily integrity and safety.

The extent to which the above factors restricted, or enabled achievements was also determined by the approach of the respective institutes. For instance, the employment outcomes for BFC trainees were better due to the integrated approach to training and work of the BFC model. In addition, as a grassroots model that is focussed on community development by harnessing the inherent knowledge and attributes of women from disadvantaged backgrounds; it remains more insulated from the labour market dynamics. Importantly, BFC provided full support to the solar mamas such as access to finance, capital, mentoring, networking, etc. so that they could work effectively. However, due to delays in funding and other issues, the mamas were not able to begin work and the future seemed ambiguous to them due to lack of communication and clarity from the institution. The master trainers who did not qualify the requirements were assigned other works about which they were not happy since it was not prestigious.

On the other hand, although PMKVY is a market-driven programme that focuses on empowering youth to enable them to become employable, the employment outcomes were poor. Data shows that this was due to several factors of the external environment including labour market conditions such as lack of local employment or entrepreneurship opportunities in the sector for which people were trained. The other prominent issue was the lack of industry connects and industry participation due to lack of awareness of short-term training and lack of recognition of the level of skills. Therefore, the trainees relied on their own social networks to seek opportunities and most of them continued to pursue the same job as before

training. In addition, low wages and lack of financial assistance for those who were keen to pursue entrepreneurship was problematic. Other factors such as the type of industry and their capacity to absorb people at above minimum wages also mattered. The analysis also shows that due to lack of counselling services, the interests and expectations of the trainees were not aligned with the market conditions. In the case of women, these factors combined with restrictive socio-cultural norms produced even poorer outcomes.

These results support the current literature on labour market outcomes for youth and women in India. Studies show that skilled youth are now disheartened due to lack of quality job opportunities and rising unemployment (Mehrotra and Parida, 2019). Women additionally need to navigate restrictive socio-cultural gender norms and lack of support systems that impacts their achievements (Raveendran, 2016; Verick 2018).

In terms of training resources, lack of enabling services and a conducive social environment mattered. Further, as discussed in chapter 5, the training resources and environment assume significance beyond simply being the *means to achieve*; access to these resources is empowering by itself. The trainees voiced concerns when the training attributes / resources were found lacking. Such as in the case of BFC, the duration of training, trainer competencies, no training certificate, delay in being able to start work and lack of fulfilling work opportunities emerged as areas of concern. In PMKVY, the mobilisation and counselling strategy, issues in the assessment and certification process, lack of industry linkage to facilitate desired placement opportunities were dominant concerns.

Therefore, it can be said that although there was universality in the aspirations of trainees across BFC and PMKVY i.e., to be able to work and undertake community development initiatives, however, actual achievements were determined by the restrictive impact of the external environment, which led to particularly poor outcomes for women. It also shows that deficient training resources and environment impacted the capabilities of trainees. Finally, the extent to which these factors restricted, or enabled achievements was also impacted by the approach of the two institutional models. Therefore, the identification of specific deficits in the external environment and the training environment holds significant policy implications that will be discussed in the next chapter.

3. Value of skills development training – hope for the future

As discussed in chapter 5, people valued skills training for its potential to enable them to fulfil their aspirations and capabilities - to work, pursue further education / training, experience personal development, ensure family well-being and undertake community development initiatives. For most of the people the learning and training experience was valuable and for few, it also enabled them to find work opportunities. Therefore, although within the review period after training, the actual work-related achievements were limited, the trainees expressed hope for the future.

Significantly, positive outcomes on account of personal development were reported. Testaments from the trainees revealed that they were more confident, tolerant and patient after training. They also noticed an improvement in their personal conduct, they were more motivated, their self-determination was better and they acquired a sense of appreciation for

diversity. Women particularly said that the training was especially empowering for them. They experienced greater freedom and mobility. It also increased their confidence to be able to participate in work and other social settings. They felt more competent to address the needs of their children. In the future, they hoped to be able to earn and become independent, and also be recognised and included in decision-making.

This sense of achievement and hope for the future can be attributed to the learning and experiential aspects of the skills training intervention, the nature of which varied across the institutional models. For instance, the potential of SDT to enable community development was valued much higher by BFC trainees. This was attributed to BFC's grassroots institutional model that promotes strong linkages between enabling women to learn a skill and work towards development of the community. The post training reflections on the value of training also highlight the transformational nature of the learning experience and how it would enable them to work towards development of their communities.

On the other hand, PMKVY trainees most valued the programme for the opportunity it provided to learn and work and become independent. The reason can be located in the advocacy and mobilisation strategy of the institution which is aligned with the aim of PMKVY to enable a large number of Indian youth to take up industry-relevant skill training that will help them to secure better livelihood. The advocacy and awareness campaigns focus on the value of the certificate in securing employment which attracts people to join the programme. The post training reflections on the value of training highlight the learning and development opportunity afforded by the programme and the hope that it will enable them to find desired work opportunities in the future.

Conclusion

This chapter addressed RQ 4: *After training, what is people's position and what are their reflections on the value of the training?*

In this chapter the narratives of trainees after completing the training programme were examined. The actual achievements after training were compared with the work and life related aspirations expressed by the trainees at the beginning of the programme as examined in chapter 4. The reasons for failure of aspirations and capabilities were examined and linked with factors of the external environment and gender inequality (chapter 6) and attributes of the training programme (chapter 5). Finally, the actual value of skills development training was established and compared with the expected value ascertained at the beginning (chapter 5).

This examination resulted in listing people's achievements and failures, completing the last component of the S2C framework. Therefore, methodologically, an expanded notion of functionings was conceptualised in the S2C framework. This included accounting for failures and introducing the concept of degrees of achievements. This conceptualisation enabled a complete assessment of the actual outcomes. In addition, it was argued that achievements or failures might not be absolute.

The list of (failure of) functionings was mapped with the capability list in table 4.1. It included (failure of) functionings related to – work; education and skills training; personal development and family well-being; and community development. The analysis showed that overall, majority of the trainees were either working or pursuing further education / training. However, instances of lack of fulfilment of valued work aspects were also reported. Particularly those who were NEET reported a sense of hopelessness about achieving anything for themselves or improving the condition of their family and community. This shows how one aspiration failure leads to another, thus promoting a downward spiral.

The post training examination also confirmed that the reasons for lack of fulfilment of people's aspirations and capabilities were linked to factors of the external environment including policy and macro-economic issues that did not enable the desire of trainees to be able to work locally and earn decent wages in a safe and progressive work environment. In addition, support services such as access to career and mental health counselling, mentoring, expert guidance, further training and finance were found to be lacking. Women particularly experienced larger capability deficits as a result of gendering of education and work options, restrictions on mobility, burden of care duties and violation of bodily integrity and safety.

Moreover, the extent to which these factors restricted, or enabled achievements was also impacted by the approach of the two institutional models. Therefore, it can be said that although there was universality in the aspirations of trainees across BFC and PMKVY i.e., to be able to work and undertake community development initiatives, however, the actual achievements varied.

Finally, ascertaining people's reflections on the actual value of the training showed that although within the review period after training, the actual work-related achievements were limited, the trainees expressed hope for the future. They particularly valued the learning and experiential aspects that provided an opportunity for personal development. Therefore, evaluating the space of both capabilities (during training) and functionings and failures (after training) provided a comprehensive view of the SDT intervention's value. A comprehensive assessment of all components of the framework – means to achieve, freedom to achieve and actual achievements was conducted. It thus enabled to complete the loop between perceived value as determined at the beginning of the programme and post facto analysis of the actual value of the intervention.

The above four data chapters presented a thick description and analysis of the S2C linkage. This was done by examining the respective secondary research questions and analysing them in accordance with the S2C framework. The final chapter concludes this discussion by linking the findings in view of the primary research question. It also presents the research contributions, limitations and insights for future research.

CHAPTER 8: Conclusion

8.1 Research objectives and findings

This thesis examined the ‘Skills to Capabilities’ linkage and asked the research question – does skill development training facilitate opportunities for people to fulfil their aspirations and achieve their capabilities? The research was situated in BFC and PMKVY skill development programmes in India. The primary research question was unpacked through a series of secondary research questions analysed in accordance with the S2C framework. The data analysis presented a thick description revealing multiple non-linear aspects of the S2C linkage as discussed below.

8.1.1 Thematic findings: Consolidated view

1. Aspirations and capabilities

An examination of the aspirations and capabilities of trainees in BFC and PMKVY training programmes (RQ1) provided an integrated conceptualisation that included both life and work-related aspirations. From here, a multi-dimensional conceptualisation of capabilities was derived. One that included capabilities related to pursuing work; further education / skills training; personal development; family well-being and community development. It also showed that people’s aspirations and capabilities were not limited to valuing only work and money. Although significant, these aspirations were not the end, but the means to reach other equally significant dreams and opportunities. In addition, the range of aspirations showed that people from disadvantaged backgrounds could imagine better futures for themselves and could be positioned as agents of change. However, the results also found instances of adaptation, particularly in the case of women.

2. Valued attributes of skill development training

Examining the attributes of the training programme that are valued by the trainees (RQ2) the research found that trainees valued the provision of enabling services such as counselling and environmental aspects including safety and opportunity for social networking and building relationships. Attributes of the training programme such as the training hours, training content including life skills training, innovative training pedagogy were appreciated. The competency of trainers also mattered, and provision of basic amenities and safety were valued. It thus showed that the training resources and the training environment were beyond simply being the *means to achieve*, they were empowering by themselves. Therefore, an expanded view of the value of skills development training as enabling learning for life was thus conceptualised.

3. External environment and gender inequality

Analysing the constituents of the external environment, including gender inequality led to drawing an integrated conceptualisation of factors that impact people’s ability to pursue skills training and fulfil their goals (RQ 3). These included a range of factors from the individual to the macro-environment. It was further argued that these factors were not simply nice-to-haves for a well-functioning SDT system. They needed to be accounted for within the framework of the SDT intervention.

These factors included labour market conditions that determined the capability of trainees to be able to work locally and earn decent wages in a safe and progressive work environment. In addition, institutionalised provision of support services such as career and mental health counselling, mentoring, expert guidance, further training and finance was also significant. Results also showed that in absence of the same, people depended on their social networks to fulfil the same. Therefore, people's ability to build and nurture these networks emerged as a significant enabling factor.

The research also substantiated the evidence that women experienced larger capability deficits compared to men. Women reported that their worthiness to be able to undertake certain types of works is questioned. Women reported that early marriage and childbirth, the burden of household work and care responsibilities restricted their mobility, time autonomy and opportunities. They did not have the time to pursue any leisure activities. In addition, religious restrictions and social taboos also promoted women unfriendly practices. Women reported that they were not treated with respect and their bodily integrity was violated, at home and at work. Overall, this reduced their sense of self-worth and power to negotiate and participate in decision-making. The results also showed that the intersectionality of age and gender produced restrictive results for younger women. Therefore, the need to specifically account for issues of gender inequality within the context of training delivery was ascertained.

4. Reflections after training: degrees of achievements

Finally, examining people's position after training and their reflections on the value of the training (RQ 4) led to ascertaining people's actual achievements and failures. The analysis revealed that although everyone wanted to be able to work after training however only half of the trained people found an opportunity to work. The remaining either pursued further education / training or were in the NEET category. This led to a sense of hopelessness about achieving anything for themselves or improving the condition of their family and community. It thus showed how one aspiration failure leads to another, thus promoting a downward spiral.

The reasons for lack of fulfilment of people's aspirations and capabilities were traced to a restrictive external environment, gender inequality and deficient training resources. The external environment including policy and macro-economic issues did not support the desire of trainees to be able to work locally and earn decent wages in a safe and progressive work environment. In addition, support services such as access to career and mental health counselling, mentoring, expert guidance, further training and finance were found to be lacking. Women particularly experienced larger capability deficits as a result of gendering of education and work options, restrictions on mobility, burden of care duties and violation of bodily integrity and safety. In terms of the training resources, the provision of enabling services and a conducive social environment was also found to be wanting.

Significantly, the research found that although within the review period after training, the actual work-related achievements were limited, the trainees expressed hope for the future. They valued the learning and experiential aspects of the skills training intervention. Positive outcomes on account of personal development were reported. Women particularly said that the training was especially empowering for them. Therefore, overall,

people's hopes for a brighter future where they would be able to fulfil their aspirations and capabilities remained.

8.1.2 Institution-level findings

BFC and PMKVY models of skills development: Impacting Aspirations, Capabilities and Actual Achievements of trainees

Drawing from the above section, the research showed that the aspirations and capabilities of trainees in BFC and PMKVY training programmes were multi-dimensional. The trainees not only imagined better futures for themselves, they also had the capability to be positioned as agents of change. Moreover, majority of the trainees believed that after training they will be better-off to be able to fulfil their aspirations and capabilities. In terms of work, they wanted to be able to work locally and earn decent wages in a safe and progressive work environment. They were dependant on the training institute to facilitate such work opportunities. In addition, they needed a conducive training environment and access to services such as career and mental health counselling, mentoring, expert guidance, further training and finance.

In terms of actual achievements, the analysis revealed that only half of the trained people found an opportunity to work. The remaining either pursued further education / training or were in the NEET category. Although this led to a sense of hopelessness in the present, the trainees valued the learning and development aspects of the training. Women particularly said that the training was especially empowering for them. Therefore, overall, people's hopes for a brighter future where they would be able to fulfil their aspirations and capabilities remained intact.

This consolidated view suggested that although the two institutional models of BFC and PMKVY varied in character, there was commonality in the aspirations, capabilities and actual achievements of the trainees. However, at the same time, differences in patterns across BFC and PMKVY were observed which can be attributed to intuitional characteristics and further located in local cultural norms, socio-economic contexts and demographic factors. The state level differences in the case of PMKVY were mostly attributed socio-economic and demographic variables; the institutional model per se was standardised across states.

The BFC model: a grassroots approach to work and development

BFC follows an integrated approach to training and work where people are trained for specific jobs to be undertaken after training. BFC also enables extended training support after training in the form providing mentoring and access to finance. Therefore, the work-related outcomes for BFC trainees were better. However, although the model is insulated from labour market dynamics to a greater extent; it is more dependent on philanthropy. Besides other issues, this dependency leads to delays in the trainees being able to start work after training since the required money and materials are not supplied. Another issue is that the wages are on the lower side since the institution promotes a notion of equality by ensuring standardisation of wages in a democratic manner. Therefore, the capability of trainees to enhance their incomes by undertaking subsidiary works assumes significance.

As a grassroots model, BFC focusses on community development by harnessing the inherent knowledge of women from disadvantaged backgrounds. This was also evident from the capability achievements of the women trainees, who reported that the training experience was particularly empowering for them. Although concerns were voiced by the trainees regarding training aspects such as the long training duration, English language competency of trainers and getting no certificate as proof of training. In the overall assessment, the post training reflections on the value of training highlighted the transformational nature of the learning experience and its potential to enable the trainees to work towards development of their communities.

The PMKVY model: a market-driven approach to work and development

PMKVY is a market-driven programme that focuses on empowering youth to enable them to become employable. However, the employment outcomes of PMKVY trainees were worse-off. This was attributed to the impact of restrictive labour market conditions such as lack of local employment opportunities in the sector in which people were trained. The other prominent issue was weak industry participation and their capacity to absorb skilled and certified people at above minimum wages. In addition, lack of financial assistance for those who were keen to pursue entrepreneurship was problematic and these factors impacted women more adversely. The trainees also voiced concern regarding aspects of the training programme such as issues in the mobilisation-counselling, and assessment-certification process and lack of facilitation of desired placement opportunities.

Therefore, to improve their future work outcomes the trainees used this opportunity as a platform for learning and pursuing varied other pathways. This included undertaking further education and training to be more competitive, and in many instances, hoping to get a government job in the future. In the overall assessment, the post training reflections on the value of training highlighted the learning and development opportunity afforded by the programme and the hope that it will enable the trainees to find desired work opportunities in the future.

The above findings have significant implications for the theorisation of skills development and application of the capability approach, including policy implications. The same is examined in detail below.

8.2 Research contribution

Based on the findings, the implications of the research in expanding the research frontiers of the skills discourse and the application frontiers of the Capability Approach, including policy implications of the same are highlighted.

8.2.1 Expanding the research frontiers of the skills discourse

The thesis, situated in the context of skills development in India, conceptualises a humanistic view of the skills discourse. Addressing the observed gaps in the present skills discourse, this thesis extends theoretical knowledge in the following ways:

Conceptualising an integrated vision of skill development

An integrated view of the underdeveloped notion of skill development including both work and life related aspects is conceptualised. The thesis thus presents a wider vision of skill development, one that reflects what it is to be truly human. In doing so, it reclaims the evaluative space from the dominant productivist paradigm and conceptualises a humanistic orientation of the skills discourse. It thus accounts for not only economic benefits, but also includes all other non-material dimensions of life. The research re-positions the value of skills training as learning-for-life, beyond technical learning of the skill. It extends the individualistic and short-term focus on immediate employability by including wider questions of aspirations for a good life.

Proposing a human development-oriented approach to skill development

It is argued that since skill development is about people learning, working and living, it is imperative to draw insights from alternative development theories. Therefore, moving beyond mainstream economic theories, a human development-oriented approach to skill development is proposed. The research draws upon the human development paradigm of Amartya Sen's CA. The CA puts people at the centre of the development process and views the purpose of development as expanding people's freedoms *to be* and *to do*. It therefore reimagines the purpose and possibilities of skill development as a means of human development.

The thesis develops an integrated view of people's aspirations and capabilities to include those related to work, living a good life and working towards development of the community. It thus accounts for both, needs of employers for skilled workers and the capability for human flourishing. It also stresses the empowering nature of skills development alongside the technical aspect, with significant pedagogic implications.

Building local research

It is argued that paucity of local research leads to importing unrealistic menus of best-practices and tool-kits of reforms from other countries. These are seldom contextualised for local realities, thus endangering outcomes. India particularly has ambitious national skill development plans, including becoming the global skills capital. This ambition needs to be supported by a strong research tradition which is lacking. This thesis contributes towards building the same.

8.2.2 Expanding the application frontiers of the Capability Approach

Conceptualising the S2C framework, this thesis demonstrates the merit of adopting the CA to analyse the processes of skill development. It thus fulfils an extant gap on the lack of empirical research using CA for the study of skill development. The thesis also contributes to the study of aspirations and its linkage with capabilities. It extends knowledge regarding other factors that impact a SDT intervention's outcomes. These aspects in addition to the design of an innovative research methodology are discussed below.

Skills to Capabilities framework

Drawing upon the tenets of the CA, this thesis develops an integrated S2C framework to conceptualise skills development. The highlights of the S2C framework include –

- Conceptualising capabilities of people in SDT intervention by examining their aspirations;
- Presenting an expanded view of the external environment that includes various factors that operate at the level of the individual and the family and community. It also addresses the impact of socio-cultural gender norms and institutional and policy level factors;
- Extending the space of functionings to include failure of functionings and the notion of degrees of achievement. This enables to account for all outcomes of the SDT intervention from achievements to failures and those that are in-between.

In addition, engaging with the concepts of – aspirations, external environment, gender inequality and the notion of degrees of achievement, this thesis extends the respective theoretical debates.

Innovative methodology

Drawing upon Clark’s three-part questionnaire, this thesis provides guidance to develop and administer an innovative three-part questionnaire that contains – background information, open-ended questions and close-ended questions. The close-ended questions are mostly drawn from current lists of capability indicators to measure various aspects of the SDT intervention such as – extent of gender inequality (Robeyns, 2002), valued past work experiences (Anand, et.al., 2009) and the capability to apply skills in daily life (Young, 2009). The application of this questionnaire provides empirical evidence to contextualise and operationalise the selected lists in the specific setting of the SDT intervention.

It also shows the merit of deriving lists of – valued resources of the SDT; aspirations and capabilities of people enrolled in these programmes; constituent factors of the external environment; and people’s actual achievements and failures, by analysing people’s narratives and responses. It thus provides a grounded methodology for the conceptualisation of people’s capabilities and the support needed to be able to fulfil the same in the context of skill development.

8.2.3 Policy implications

The MSDE aims to address the issue that only a small percentage (4.69%)⁵⁵ of the workforce in India is formally skilled. This problem acquires an even greater urgency considering the demographic position of the country. More than 62%⁶¹ of the country’s population is in the working age group (15-59 years), and more than 54% of the total population is below 25 years of age. Furthermore, on the demand side, a skills gap of 110 million workers by 2022 across 24 key sectors of the economy⁶¹ has been projected. The MSDE therefore aims to address the challenge of providing skills training at scale with speed, standard and sustainability. In doing so, it also aims to meet the rising aspirations of the country’s youth for sustainable livelihoods. In order to achieve the same, few key objectives and several enablers have been identified.

This thesis however argues that unless an integrated framework that addresses the various aspects of the skill development ecosystem and considers the aspirations of people is

⁵⁵ National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, 2015

adopted, the policy agendas would remain unfulfilled. The thesis also shows a pathway for conceptualising the same i.e., by adopting the S2C framework and in doing so, reimagines the possibilities of skills development as a means of human development. Furthermore, the thesis provides the following recommendations for skill development policy and planning.

1. Adopting an integrated and inclusionary approach to skills development

Drawing upon the BFC and PMKVY models, this thesis recommends that an integrated view of training, employment and development needs to be established. First, to facilitate desired work outcomes, there is need to identify local employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in sectors that are aspirational and the wages are decent. In addition, strong market linkages need to be established and required support in the form of counselling, mentoring, networking and access to finance needs to be provided.

Second, to facilitate desired development outcomes, both in terms of personal and community development, there is need to strengthen the life-skills and experiential aspects of training. This includes strengthening the life-skills curriculum and establishing linkages with local CSR or grassroots initiatives. Such an integrated approach would have the potential to truly enable opportunities for trainees to fulfil their aspirations and capabilities of being able to work, promote personal development and undertake community development.

Thirdly, it is recommended that the skills discourse needs to be more inclusionary and narratives that promote discrimination based on gender, age or level of education need to be systematically identified and altered. For instance, the positioning of certain job roles as being more or less worthy for women, or the aged or for those with no formal education. This research establishes that the typical trainee is knowledgeable, educated, has the capacity to aspire and be an agent of change. This aspect needs to be acknowledged and harnessed to promote better skills development outcomes and sustainable development.

Specifically, there is need to adopt practices to address gender barriers that promote unequal outcomes for women. These include introducing programmatic level interventions throughout the training value chain. Beginning with the mobilisation and counselling strategy, to introducing flexible learning options and investing in support services like safe travel and childcare facilities, amongst others. It also includes strategies to tackle socio-cultural gender norms which is a longer process of behavioural change. There is also a need to expand the dominant discourse on women's work in India which is centered on the gendered division of labour, the double burden of undertaking paid work and domestic and care responsibilities and their presence in the informal sector. While these issues continue to be prevalent, there is also the need for a more progressive discourse such as on the role of women in shaping the future of work.

2. Transforming the skills training delivery system

This research found specific deficits in the skills training delivery systems and therefore recommends relevant considerations. These include introducing effective and efficient mobilisation and counselling processes and training orientation sessions upon commencement of training. It is also recommended that the non-technical training content such as soft skills training, English language, digital skills training and other life skills training should be strengthened. There is also a need to adopt innovative pedagogical techniques to

effectively deliver different types of trainings and ensure that trainers are qualified to deliver the mandate. The assessment and certification process needs to be transparent and fair; the certificate is valued as a proof of competence and associated potential of decent employment. In addition, participation of industry and other partners needs to be strengthened to facilitate desired placement opportunities.

Significantly, it is important to establish a strong system of sustained post-training support. This includes, providing access to capital and finance, facilitating linkages to ensure smooth transition to work and providing long-term mentoring support. Finally, there is need to ensure a nurturing training environment by providing for other hygiene factors such as cleanliness, recreation rooms, library, etc. Ensuring an environment that promotes diversity and equality and provides a safe space for people to interact freely and build social networks.

It is also important to ensure that skills delivery is decentralised and there is effective capacity building at the local level. This includes empowering the respective state and district skill development missions and including civil society members. In addition, institutionalised provision of support services such as career and mental health counselling, mentoring, expert guidance, further training and finance is also significant.

3. Reforming the skills development ecosystem

This research shows that the effectiveness of skills development is also dependant on the labour market conditions. Therefore, it is argued that skills development needs to be closely aligned with the emerging work trends which necessitates the following considerations: 1) Creating skills based opportunities for entrepreneurship / self-employment in both rural and urban areas due to the lack of job creation in the formal sector, especially in the rural areas. 2) Mapping skilling with sectors in which jobs are created ranging from low-skilled construction jobs to high-skilled production and technology jobs. 3) Aligning skills development processes to support migrating workers whose choices to work locally are constrained due to persistent differentials in wages and the ongoing process of urbanization. 4) Ensuring improved skilling and employment outcomes for women for improved aggregate LFPR and economic growth.

Overall, this calls for reforming the larger ecosystem in which skills development is located by ensuring that the employment and industrial policies take the issue of skilling into consideration. At the same time, advocacy to secure equality of skills training opportunities and decent work environments and minimum wages for skilled workforce is also necessary. An integrated and aligned approach to education, skills and employment will produce better outcomes in terms of the trainees being able to work locally and earn decent wages in a safe and progressive work environment.

8.3 Research limitations and way forward

This thesis focussed on addressing the research question – does skill development training facilitate opportunities for people to fulfil their aspirations and achieve their capabilities? The research was situated in the context of BFC and PMKVY training institutions in India. The case studies were identified by following a paradigmatic process of case selection. However,

depending on the research context, there could be other programmes / institutions that could be considered.

The research draws on operationalising the capabilities literature and is not located in the technical aspects of skills delivery such as pedagogical issues of content, standards, quality assurance systems, etc. From a theoretical perspective, the research does not extensively engage with the varieties of skill development systems. Similarly, while describing the recent history of skill development in India, the research does not focus on tracing its historical traditions. Other market aspects such as the impact of the nature of the economy, i.e., the formal and informal economy are not specifically considered. Likewise, related issues of job creation, wage levels, etc. are addressed in context of their impact on people's ability to fulfil their aspirations and capabilities.

In terms of the analytical framework, the S2C framework included the study of aspirations and provided an expanded vision of the conversion factors. However, it does not engage with issues of choice, agency and power relations amongst others. From the perspective of research methods, the research is primarily based on qualitative data. Whilst other statistical methods of data interpretation were explored, the methods that were applied were found to be best-suited to answer the stated research questions. In addition, on account of various uncontrollable external conditions, the post-training phase of the research is less rigorous compared to the during-training phase.

This leads to the following recommendations for future research, not in any particular order. Based on the findings of this research, an S2C based impact evaluation framework for skills development programmes can be examined. In addition, innovative participatory forms of research to conduct similar empirical investigations can be considered. Similarly, various quantitative methods such as designing a skill index can be explored. This research studied two short-term skill development programmes, similar work can be conducted on long-term programmes, particularly assessing comparative effectiveness and possibilities of convergence. Likewise, the same can be extended to include the education sector examining complementary pathways. From a theoretical perspective, conducting a historical analysis of skill development and examining other issues such as the cognitive and psychological aspects of skill formation can be explored. Linking with the growing area of behavioural economics, various design insights can be studied. Finally, research can be undertaken to explore the sustainability of public delivery of skills and examine other innovative funding models.

Conclusion

This thesis conceptualised the S2C framework to examine the aspirations and capabilities of people in skills development training programmes. In addition, the valued attributes of skill development training and factors of the external environment, including gender inequality that impact people's ability to pursue skills training and fulfil their goals were also analysed. Finally, people's reflections after training were examined to ascertain their actual achievements and failures. Unpacking the aspirations and capabilities of trainees in BFC and PMKVY skill development programmes, an integrated and multi-dimensional conceptualisation of aspirations and capabilities was derived. In addition, it was also found

that people from disadvantaged backgrounds could imagine better futures for themselves and could be positioned as agents of change.

Next, the thesis found that the training resources and the training environment assumed a significance beyond simply being the *means to achieve*, they were empowering by themselves. These included enabling services such as counselling and environmental aspects such as safety and the opportunity for social networking and building relationships. Attributes of the training programme such as the training hours, training content including life skills training, innovative training pedagogy were appreciated. The competency of trainers also mattered and provision of basic amenities was valued.

Thirdly, analysing the constituents of the external environment, including gender inequality, an integrated conceptualisation of conversion factors was presented. The thesis argued that these factors that ranged from the level of the individual to the macro-environment, needed to be accounted for within the framework of the SDT intervention. These factors included labour market conditions that determined the capability of trainees to be able to work locally and earn decent wages in a safe and progressive work environment. In addition, institutionalised provision of support services such as career and mental health counselling, mentoring, expert guidance, further training and finance was also significant. The thesis also substantiated the evidence that women experienced larger capability deficits compared to men. Therefore, the need to specifically account for issues of gender inequality within the context of training delivery was ascertained.

Finally, the thesis found that in terms of actual achievements, only half of the trained people found an opportunity to work. The remaining either pursued further education / training or were in the NEET category. Although this led to a sense of hopelessness in the present, the trainees valued the learning and development aspects of the training. Women particularly said that the training was especially empowering for them. Therefore, overall, people's hopes for a brighter future where they would be able to fulfil their aspirations and capabilities remained intact. The thesis therefore concluded that for the selected case studies of BFC and PMKVY skill development programmes in India, skill development training does facilitate opportunities for people to fulfil their aspirations and achieve their capabilities. However, these need to be viewed in a larger context of both work and life related achievements. In addition, they need to be viewed in context of both immediate achievements, and the capability of trainees to be able to achieve their aspirations in the future.

Overall, the findings of the thesis have significant implications for the theorisation of skills development and building local research. This includes conceptualisation of an integrated vision of skill development based on a human development oriented approach. The thesis also contributes towards expanding the application frontiers of the Capability Approach by proposing the S2C framework and designing an innovative methodology to measure the same. Drawing from the learnings of the grassroots model of BFC and the market-driven PMKVY model of skills development, the thesis provides policy recommendations for adoption of an integrated and inclusionary approach to skills development. In addition, recommendations for transforming the skills training delivery system and engaging with the larger ecosystem in which skills development is located, are also presented.

This thesis therefore shows that unless an integrated and inclusionary framework that addresses the various aspects of the skills development ecosystem is adopted, the purposes of all stakeholders would remain unfulfilled. The thesis also shows a pathway for achieving the same by adopting the S2C framework. The thesis further argues for reimagining the purpose of skill development and placing people at the centre of the development process. As Mahbub-Ul-Haq wrote in 1990⁵⁶, “The real wealth of a nation is its people. And the purpose of development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy, and creative lives. This simple but powerful truth is too often forgotten in the pursuit of material and financial wealth”. By adopting this vision, skill development training could perhaps truly facilitate opportunities for people to fulfil their aspirations and achieve their capabilities.

⁵⁶ http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/219/hdr_1990_en_complete_nostats.pdf page 19

APPENDICES

Appendix A

DURING-TRAINING CAPBILITIES PROFILE

Scheme/Programme	
Training Partner	
Training Centre	
Centre Address	
Residential Facility	Yes No
Sector	
Sub-sector	
Occupation	
Role	
NSQF Level	
Batch Start Date	
Batch End Date	
Candidate ID number (Biometrics Aadhar ID)	

CONSENT STATEMENT

Hello, I am Avneet and I am doing research on different types of training programmes to understand the ways in which these programmes are beneficial for the trainees. In connection with this, I would like to ask you a few questions. Everything that you share will be kept confidential. Your views will be included in my research which will be circulated for academic purposes only and your identity will be protected.

If you are willing to participate, I would like to ask you few questions and record your responses. I will contact you again after you complete your training for another interview session. If you are not comfortable in answering a particular question, please feel free not to answer. In case you do not wish to proceed with the interview at any point in time, we will stop the session and your responses will not be used. The total time required would be approximately 45 minutes for the first session and 30 minutes for the second session.

Do You Agree To Be Interviewed?	Yes	No
Interview Date	DD / MM / YYYY	
Interview Start Time		
Interviewer's Signature		

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Write the response in the provided space / circle the code

Abbreviations: NR=No Response, NA=Not Applicable, DK=Don't know

Contact Details

Full Name: _____

Mobile number: _____

1.3 Home Address

State /UT			
District			
Village/Town			
Settlement	Rural 1	Urban 2	Slum 3

1.4 Distance of residence from training centre (Km): _____

Work History

2.1 Worked before? Yes No

2.2 For how many years? _____

2.3 What did you last do? _____

2.4 Where was your place of work? _____

2.5 Nature of occupation (could be multiple)

Wage employment	1	Home-based paid work	3
Self-employment	2	Unpaid farm/livestock work	4

2.6 Sector

Agriculture	Industry	Services
1	2	3

2.7 Industry / Service sub-sector:

Apparels	1	Handicrafts	11	Oil & Gas	21
Automotive	2	Healthcare	12	Plumbing	22
Aviation & Aero Space	3	Infrastructure Equipment	13	Power	23
Beauty & Wellness	4	Iron & Steel	14	Retail	24
BFSI	5	IT / ITeS	15	Rubber	25
Capital Goods	6	Leather	16	Security	26
Construction	7	Life Sciences	17	Sports	27
Electronics & Hardware	8	Logistics	18	Telecom	28
Food Processing	9	Media	19	Textiles & Handlooms	29
Gems & Jewellery	10	Mining	20	Tourism & Hospitality	30
Others	31	Specify:			

2.8 How much did you earn monthly:

Below Rs 3000	1	Rs 6,000-10,000	3
Rs 3000-6000	2	Rs 10,000-20,000	4

2.9 When did you stop working? (YYYY) _____

2.10 Why did you leave? _____

2.11 How much do you expect to earn after training?

Around Rs 3000	1	Rs 6,000-10,000	3
Rs 3000-6000	2	Rs 10,000-20,000	4

2.12 What is your preference for job location?

Home location/Home based	1	Outside State	4
Within District	2	Outside Country	5
Outside District (same State)	3		

3. Personal Details

3.1 Gender

Male	Female	Other
1	2	3

Year of Birth (YYYY): _____

Category

General	1	ST	3
SC	2	OBC	4

Religion

Hindu	1	Sikh	4	Tribal	7
Muslim	2	Buddhist	5	Others	8
Christian	3	Jain	6	None	9

3.5 Education level

School	1	(Class _____)	MA	3
BA	2		Others (Specify)	4
None	5			
Why?				

3.6 Languages known and proficiency level

Language	Read	Speak	Write
	1	2	3
	1	2	3
	1	2	3

3.7 Technology use

Smartphone	Computer
1	2

3.8 Do you have sisters / brothers?

Yes No

How many?	
Number of sisters	
Number of brothers	

3.9 Marital status

Single	1	Married	3
Divorced	2	Widowed	4

3.10 Spouses' Education level

School	1 (Class_____)	MA	3
BA	2	Others (Specify)	4
None	5		

3.11 What does she / he do? _____

3.12 How much does she/he earn monthly?

Below Rs 3000	1	Rs 6,000-10,000	3
Rs 3000-6000	2	Rs 10,000-20,000	4

3.13 Do you have children?

Yes	No	How many?	
Daughters		Sons	

Household details

4.1 Who is the HH

Grandfather	1	Mother / MIL	4	Others (specify)	8
Grandmother	2	Spouse	5		
Father / FIL	3	Self	6		

4.2 What is their education level

School	1 (Class_____)	MA	3
BA	2	Others (Specify)	4
None	5		

4.3 What does she / he do? _____

4.4 How much does he/she earn monthly?

Below Rs 5000	1	Rs 20,000-30,000	4
Rs 5000-10000	2	Above Rs 30,000	5
Rs 10,000-20,000	3	Don't know	6

4.5 When decisions are made regarding household matters like living expenses; health; children's education, who is it that normally takes the decision:

Grandfather	1	Mother / MIL	4	Jointly(specify)	7
Grandmother	2	Spouse	5		
Father / FIL	3	Self	6	Other	8

4.6 Cooking fuel used

Crop residue	1	Firewood	4	Any other (specify)	7
Cow-dung	2	Kerosene	5		
Coal	3	LPG	6		

4.7 Who is responsible for procuring cooking fuel? _____

4.8 Source of lighting used

Thermal Grid	1	Biomass	5
Hydro	2	Kerosene	6
Solar	3	Any other (specify)	7
Wind	4		

4.9 What is the level of availability?

Good	1	Average	2	Poor	3
------	---	---------	---	------	---

SECTION B: OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Question 1

How did you get to know about this training programme?

--

Question 2

Do you think skills training is important? Why?

--

Question 3

Do you think skills training could be useful for people of all age-groups? Why and how?

--

Question 4

Why did you enrol for <x> training?

--

Question 5

In your view, what could be the problems / challenges in doing <x> work?

--

Question 6

Practically and culturally speaking, do you think <x>work is better suited for women, or for men or it is equally suitable for both? Why do you think so?

--

Question 7

Given a chance, would you have liked to do some other training? Or instead do something else? What other training / what else? And why?

Question 8

Do you face any difficulties/problems in attending this training? What? How do you manage?

Question 9

What do you like most about the training programme, the environment, the experience?

Question 10

What can be changed or improved?

Question 11

What do you want to do after completing the training?

Question 12

What do you want to do later in the future?

Question 13

In addition to this training, what else do you need to be able to fulfil your work-related goals?

Question 14

(14.1) Do you think the following job aspects are important? (14.2) Which of these aspects did your previous job fulfil? (14.3) In your view, are these job aspects equally available to women doing the same job, or are they more, or less for women?

No	Job aspects	Important=v Not important=x	Previous Job Fulfilled =v Did not fulfil = x	Equal for M&F=0, Less for F=1, More for F=2
1	Good income / timely payment			
2	Job security			
3	Safe working conditions / work is not physically harmful			
4	Good working environment / no discrimination			
5	Treated with respect			
6	Job satisfaction / learning new things			
7	Good relationship with employer (NA for agri)			
8	Good position (NA for agri)			
9	Power and Influence (NA for agri)			
10	Recognition (NA for agri)			
11	Opportunities for future growth (NA for agri)			

Question 15

What do you aspire for in life? [wish / desire] What about your life would you like to change? Why are these things important for you?

--

Question 16

What do you need to be able to fulfil your aspirations? (resources, guidance, support etc.) Who do you think can help you most to bring these changes in your life? (Self, family, friends, community, govt.)

--

Question 17

(17.1) I am going to read you a list of items, tell me if you think these things are necessary for a person to live well or not? (17.2) In terms of your ability / opportunity to fulfil these needs: do you think after this training you will be better off, worse-off or there would there be no change? (17.3) To what extent do you think women have equal, more, or less opportunity to fulfil these needs?

No.	Items	Live well	Training Utility	Gender Equality
		Yes ✓ No x	No change=0, Worse off=1, Better-off=2	Equal for M&F=0, Less for F=1, More for F=2
1	Access to productive assets like land, animals			
2	Access to income / credit			
3	Health & nutrition			
4	Sanitation			
5	Infrastructure and facilities- roads, power, health care			
6	Safety			
7	Family and friendship			
8	Taking part in community life			
9	Leisure time/ free time			
10	Happy and tension-free state of mind			
11	Religion			

SECTION C: CLOSED QUESTIONS

No.	Question	Rating Scale NR=98, NA=99, DK=100	Rating				
			5	4	3	2	1
1	Do you have information regarding other skills training programmes?	Very well informed=5, Mostly informed=4, Some info=3, Hardly any=2, No info=1	5	4	3	2	1
2	To what extent do you find it easy or difficult to work with others in the classroom to solve tasks?	Extremely easy=5, Easy=4, Neither easy nor difficult=3, Difficult=2, Extremely difficult=1	5	4	3	2	1
3	To what extent do you find it easy or difficult to participate in the classroom, like ask questions, seek clarifications?	Extremely easy=5, Easy=4, Neither easy nor difficult=3, Difficult=2, Extremely difficult=1	5	4	3	2	1
4	To what extent do you find it easy or difficult to interact with people in the classroom who come from a different culture, speak a different language, follow other religious practices, are not your age, gender?	Extremely easy=5, Easy=4, Neither easy nor difficult=3, Difficult=2, Extremely difficult=1	5	4	3	2	1

5	To what extent will you be able to apply the skills you gain from here in practical matters such as managing your finances, taking care of your health?	Always apply=5, Mostly apply=4, Sometimes apply=3, Rarely apply=2, Never apply=1	5	4	3	2	1
6	Do you have information and guidance on what you want to do next?	All information=5, Most information=4, Some info=3, Hardly any=2, No info=1	5	4	3	2	1
7	To what extent would your family support you in what you want to do after training?	Very supportive=5, Mostly supportive=4, At times =3, Rarely =2, Never =1	5	4	3	2	1
8	In the past, did your parents and teachers support you to study what you wanted?	Always supportive=5, Mostly supportive=4, At times supportive=3, Rarely =2, Never =1	5	4	3	2	1
9	Have you ever experienced any form of bad behaviour in the classroom (a. verbal, b. physical, c. sexual)?	Yes=1, No=2	(a) 1 2	(b) 1 2	(c) 1 2		
10	In the work you did, to what extent were you able to make use of your skills and talents?	Always =5, Mostly=4, Sometimes=3, Rarely=2, Never=1	5	4	3	2	1
11	Do you think that the work you were doing was useful / contributing to something?	Extremely useful=5, Mostly useful=4, At times useful=3, Rarely useful=2, Not useful=1	5	4	3	2	1
12	Did you tend to find it easy or difficult to relate to people at work?	Extremely easy=5, Easy=4, Neither easy nor difficult=3, Difficult=2, Extremely difficult=1	5	4	3	2	1
13	Were you treated with respect?	All the time =5, Most of the time=4, Some of the time=3, Rarely=2, Never=1	5	4	3	2	1
14	When seeking employment in the past, have you ever experienced discrimination because of your a. caste, b. gender, c. age?	Yes=1, No=2	(a) 1 2	(b) 1 2	(c) 1 2		
15	While working, have you ever experienced any form of bad behaviour (a. verbal, b. physical, c. sexual)?	Yes=1, No=2	(a) 1 2	(b) 1 2	(c) 1 2		
16	To what extent are you able to apply your knowledge and skills in fulfilling basic household needs?	Always =5, Mostly=4, Sometimes=3, Rarely=2, Never=1	5	4	3	2	1

17	Is the household work of — cooking, cleaning, taking care of young ones and elderly —shared between all family members?	Always shared=5, Mostly shared=5, Sometimes shared=3, Rarely shared=2, Never shared=1	5	4	3	2	1
18	Does taking care of people in the house prevent you from going out?	All the time =5, Most of the time=4, Some of the time=3, Rarely=2, Never=1	5	4	3	2	1
19	Can you move around within the house and in the neighbourhood without any restrictions?	Always shared=5, Mostly shared=5, Sometimes shared=3, Rarely shared=2, Never shared=1	5	4	3	2	1
20	How much control do you think you have in deciding how to manage your time for study work, house-work, outside work and leisure activities?	Complete control=5, Mostly can control=5, Sometimes can control=3, Rarely can control=2, No control=1	5	4	3	2	1
21	In your free time, do you pursue any leisure activities such as watching TV, reading, playing?	All the time =5, Most of the time=4, Some of the time=3, Rarely=2, Never=1	5	4	3	2	1
22	In your free time, do you do any other work such as weaving, crafting, etc. which also adds to your income?	All the time =5, Most of the time=4, Some of the time=3, Rarely=2, Never=1	5	4	3	2	1
23	Do you participate in community activities such as public meetings, religious gatherings, savings group, SHG, sports group?	Always participate =5, Mostly participate=4, Sometimes participate=3, Rarely =2, Never =1	5	4	3	2	1
24	Do you exercise your right to vote during elections?	Every time =5, Mostly=4, Sometimes=3, Rarely=2, Never=1	5	4	3	2	1
25	Are you able to live together with your neighbours in harmony?	All the time =5, Most of the time=4, Some of the time=3, Rarely=2, Never=1	5	4	3	2	1
26	Do you think you are treated with respect and dignity?	All the time =5, Most of the time=4, Some of the time=3, Rarely=2, Never=1	5	4	3	2	1
27	To what extent are you able to receive help from your friends in times of need like emotional support, or financial help?	Always =5, Mostly=4, Sometimes=3, Rarely=2, Never=1	5	4	3	2	1
28	Do you feel restricted by religious practices and taboos?	All the time =5, Most of the time=4, Some of the time=3, Rarely=2, Never=1	5	4	3	2	1
29	Are you careless about your health and avoid seeking medical attention when required?	Always careless=5, Mostly careless=4, Sometimes=3, Rarely=2, Never careless=1	5	4	3	2	1

30	How often do you feel sleepless, worried, or lonely?	All the time =5, Most of the time=4, Some of the time=3, Rarely=2, Never=1	5	4	3	2	1
31	Can you imagine a better future life for yourself?	Always =5, Mostly=4, Sometimes=3, Rarely=2, Never=1	5	4	3	2	1
32	Are you able to seek information and guidance to bring improvement in your life?	Always =5, Mostly=4, Sometimes=3, Rarely=2, Never=1	5	4	3	2	1
33	Have you ever experienced any form of bad behaviour at home (a. verbal, b. physical, c. sexual)?	Yes=1, No=2	(a) 1 2	(b) 1 2	(c) 1 2		

Any additional comments from the respondent related to closed questions

--

Interview End Time:	
---------------------	--

Thank You For Your Time And Cooperation

Interviewer Observations

Body language and non-verbal behaviour of the respondent (eye-contact, confidence)

--

Any difficulty in conveying the purpose of the interview / understanding the questions?

--

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abrokwa, C. K. 1995. "Vocational Education in the Third World: Revisiting the Debate." *The Vocational Aspect of Education* 47 (2): 129–140.
- Acemoglu, D. and Jorn-Steffen P. 1999. "Beyond Becker: Training in Imperfect Labour Markets." *The Economic Journal* 109 (453): 112–42.
- Agar, M. H. 1996. *The Professional Stranger*. San Diego: Academic Press
- Agarwal, B. 1997. "Bargaining and Gender Relations: Within and Beyond the Household". *Feminist Economics* 3(1): 1 – 51.
- Agrawal, T. 2012. "Vocational education and training in India: Challenges, status and labour market outcomes". *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 64(4), 453-474.
- Agrawal, T. 2013. "Vocational education and training programs (VET): An Asian perspective", *Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education*, 14(1), 15-26
- Agrawal, T. 2014. "Skill Development in India: An Examination." *Journal of Education and Work* 27 (6): 629–50. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2013.787485>.
- Alkire, S. 2002. *Valuing Freedoms: Sen's Capability Approach and Poverty Reduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Alkire, S. 2008. "Choosing Dimensions: The Capability Approach and Multidimensional Poverty. In *The Many Dimensions of Poverty*, edited by N. Kakwani & J. Silber, 89–119, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Alkire, S., F. Bastagli, T. Burchardt, D. A. Clark, H. Holder, S. Ibrahim, M. Munoz, P. Terrazas, T. Tsang, and P. Vizard. 2009. "Developing the Equality Measurement Framework: Selecting the Indicators". *Report for the Equality and Human Rights Commission*, Equality and Human Rights Commission, Manchester.
- Alkire, S. 2010. "Human Development: Definitions, Critiques, and Related Concepts". *OPHI Working Paper* No. 36.
- Allais, S. 2012. "Will Skills Save Us? Rethinking the Relationships between Vocational Education, Skills Development Policies, and Social Policy in South Africa." *International Journal of Educational Development* 32 (5): 632–42.
- Amjad, R. 2005. "Skills and competitiveness: Can Pakistan break out of the low-level skills trap?" *The Pakistan Development Review*, 44(4), 387–409.
- Anand, P., Hunter, G., Carter, I., Dowding, K., Guala, F. and Van Hees, M. 2009. "The Development of Capability Indicators." *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities* (1): 125–52.

- Anderson, D. 1998. "Chameleon or Phoenix: the metamorphosis of TAFE", *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Vocational Education Research*, 6(2), pp. 1-43.
- Anderson, D. 2009. "Productivism and ecologism: changing discourses in TVET". In *Work, Learning and Sustainable Development*, edited by Fien, J., Maclean, R. and Park, M.G. Dordrecht: Springer
- Appadurai, A. 2004. "The capacity to aspire: culture and the terms of recognition". In *Culture and Public Action*, edited by V. Rao and M. Walton, 59–84. Washington, DC: The World Bank
- Ashton, D. & Green, F. 1996. *Education, training and the global economy*, Aldershot: Edward Elgar
- Badroodien, A. 2004. "Technical and vocational education provision in South Africa from 1920 to 1970". In *Shifting Understandings of Skills in South Africa. Overcoming the Historical Imprint of a Low Skills Regime*, edited by McGrath, S., et al., 20–45. Cape Town: HSRC Press
- Balestrino, A. 1996. A Note on Functioning Poverty in Affluent Societies, *Notizie di Politeia*, 12, 97-105.
- Batliwala, S. 1994. "The Meaning of Women's Empowerment: New Concepts from Action". In *Population Policies Reconsidered: Health, Empowerment and Rights* (pp. 127–138), edited by G. Sen, A. Germain, & L. C. Chen. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Batliwala, S. 2007. "Taking the Power Out of Empowerment: An Experimental Account". *Development in Practice*, 17(4–5), 557–565.
- Becker, G. S. 1964. *Human capital*. New York: Columbia University Press
- Becker, G. 1993. *Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis, with Special Reference to Education*, 3rd edn. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Bennell, P., 1996. "Using and abusing rates of return: a critique of the World Bank's 1995 Education Sector Paper". *International Journal of Educational Development* 16, 3, 235-248.
- Bennell, P., Segerstrom, J., 1998. "Vocational education and training in developing countries: has the World Bank got it right?" *International Journal of Educational Development* 18, 4, 271-287.
- Bernard, T., Taffesse, A. S. and Dercon, S. 2008. "Aspirations and Well-Being Outcomes in Ethiopia: towards an empirical exploration".
- Biggeri M., Bellanca N., Bonfanti S. and Tanzj L. 2011. "Rethinking policies for persons with disabilities through the capability approach: the case of the Tuscany region" *European Journal of Disability Issues*, 5(3)
- Blunden, R. 1995. "Practical intelligence and the metaphysics of competence", *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Vocational Education Research*, 3(2), p. 5.

- Boaz., Ashby. 2003. "Fit for purpose? Assessing research quality for evidence based policy and practice" *ESRC UK Centre for Evidence Based Policy and Practice*
- Bonvin, J. M. and Moachon, E. 2008. "Social integration policies for young marginalised: a capability approach", *Social Work and Society*, 6: 296–305.
- Bonvin, J. M. 2009. "Ensuring capability for work: outline of a capability-oriented labour market policy". In *From Employability Towards Capability*, edited by K. Schneider and H. U. Otto, Luxembourg: Inter-Actions, pp. 55–69.
- Bonvin, J. M. and Orton, M. 2009. "Activation policies and organisational innovation: the added value of the capability approach", *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 29, 11: 565–74.
- Bourdieu, P. and Nice, R. 1977. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Braverman, H. 1974. "Labour and monopoly capital", New York: Monthly Review Press
- Breman, J. 1996. *Footloose Labour: Working in India's Informal Economy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brockmann, M. 2011. "Higher education qualifications: convergence and divergence in software engineering and nursing". In *Knowledge, Skills and Competence in the European Labour Market. What's in a vocational qualification?* edited by Brockmann, M., Clarke, L., Winch, C. 120–135. Abingdon and New York: Routledge
- Brown, P., Green, A. & Lauder, H. 2001 *High skills: globalisation, competitiveness and skill formation*, Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Bryman, A. 2008. *Social Research Methods*. 4th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bryson, J. 2015. "Putting skill in its place". *Journal of Education and Work*, 28(5), 551-570.
- Bubeck, D. 1995. *Care, Gender and Justice*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press.
- Buchanan, J., Watson, I. & Briggs, C. 2004. "Skill and the renewal of labour", In *The skills that matter*, edited by C. Warhurst, I. Grugulis & E. Keep, London: Palgrave
- Burchardt, T., T. Tsang, and P. Vizard. 2009. "Specialist Consultation on the List of Central and Valuable Capabilities for Children". *EHRC Research Report 41*. Manchester: Equality and Human Rights Commission.
- Busemeyer, M.R. and C. Trampusch. 2011. *The Political Economy of Collective Skill Formation*. New York: Oxford University Press
- Bussi, M. and Dahmen, S. 2012. "When ideas circulate. A walk across disciplines and different uses of the 'capability approach'", *Transfer: European Review of Labour and Research*, 18, 1: 91–5.

Cantor, L. 1985. "Vocational education and training: The Japanese approach". *Comparative Education*, 21(1), 67-75.

Cantor, L. 1989. "The 'Re-visioning' of Vocational Education in the American High School", *Comparative Education*, 25, pp. 125-132.

Carnegie, J. 2000. *Pathways to Partnerships*. Canberra: AVCC

Carter, I. 1996. "The Concept of Freedom in the Work of Amartya Sen: An Alternative Analysis Consistent with Freedom's Independent Value", *Notizie di Politeia*, 12(43/44), 7-22.

Chambers, R., & Conway, G. 1992. *Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Practical Concepts for the 21st Century* (IDS Discussion Paper 296). Brighton, UK: Institute of Development Studies.

Charmaz, K. 2004. "Grounded Theory", in *The Sage Encyclopedia of Social Science Research Methods*, edited by M. S. Lewis-Beck, A. Bryman, and T. F. Liao, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Chandrasekhar, C. and J. Ghosh. 2013. "Where Have All the Women Workers Gone?" https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315768570_Where_have_All_the_Women_Workers_Gone.html.

Chiappero Martinetti, E. 1994. "A New Approach to the Evaluation of Well-being and Poverty", *Giornale Degli Economisti e Annali di Economia*, 53, 367-88.

Chiappero Martinetti, E. 1996. "Standard of Living Evaluation Based on Sen's Approach: Some Methodological Suggestions", *Notizie di Politeia*, 12(43/44), 37-53.

Chiappero Martinetti, E. 2000. "A Multi-Dimensional Assessment of Well-being Based on Sen's Functioning Approach", *Rivista Internazionale di Scienze Sociali*, 108, pp. 207-31.

Chiseri-Strater, E. 1996. "Turning in upon ourselves: Positionality, subjectivity, and reflexivity in case study and ethnographic research". In *Ethics and responsibility in qualitative studies of literacy* edited by P. Mortensen & G. E. Kirsch, 115-133, Urbana, IL: NCTE.

Clark, D. A. 2000. "Concepts and Perceptions of Development: Some Evidence from the Western Cape", *SALDRU Working Paper 88*, University of Cape Town.

Clark, D. A., and M. Qizilbash. 2001. *The Essentials of Life*. Survey Schedule, Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit, University of Cape Town.

Clark, D. A. 2002. *Visions of Development: A Study of Human Values*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Clark, D. A. and Qizilbash M. 2002. Core Poverty and Extreme Vulnerability in South Africa" *Discussion Paper No. 2002-3*, School of Economics, University of East Anglia, UK.

Clark, D. A. 2003. "Concepts and Perceptions of Human Well-Being: Some Evidence from South Africa", *Oxford Development Studies*, 31(2), 173-196.

- Clark, D. A. 2005. "The Capability Approach: Its Development, Critiques and Recent Advances." *Economics Series Working Papers*, 18.
- Clark, D. A. and Qizilbash, M. 2005. "Core Poverty, Basic Capabilities and Vagueness: An Application to the South African Context", *GPRG Working Paper 26*, Universities of Manchester and Oxford, UK.
- Clark, D. A. 2006. "Capability Approach." In *The Elgar Companion to Development Studies*, edited by D. A. Clark, 32–45. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
- Clark, D. A., and M. Qizilbash. 2008. "Core Poverty, Vagueness and Adaptation: A New Methodology and Some Results for South Africa." *Journal of Development Studies* 44 (4): 519–544.
- Clark, D. A. 2009. "Adaptation, poverty and well-being: some issues and observations with special references to the capability approach and development studies". *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*, 10(1), 21-42.
- Clark, D. A., and D. Hulme. 2010. "Poverty, Time and Vagueness: Integrating the Core Poverty and Chronic Poverty Frameworks." *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 34 (2): 347–366.
- Clark, D. A., ed. 2012. *Adaptation, Poverty and Development: The Dynamics of Subjective Well-Being*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Clark, D. A. 2017. "Valuing and revaluing education: what can we learn about measurement from the South African poor?" *Comparative Education*, 53:1, 54-80
- Clark, D. A., and S. Hodgett. 2019. "The Integrated Capabilities Framework: Exploring Multiculturalism and Human Well-Being in Participatory Settings." In *The Capability Approach, Empowerment and Participation: Concepts, Methods and Applications*. Edited by Clark, D. A., M. Biggeri, and A. A. Frediani. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Clarke, L. 2011. "Trade? Job? Or occupation? The development of occupational labour markets for bricklaying and lorry driving". In *Knowledge, Skills and Competence in the European Labour Market. What's in a vocational qualification?* edited by Brockmann, M., Clarke, L., Winch, C., 102–119. Abingdon and New York: Routledge
- Clarke, L. and C. Winch. 2006. "A European Skills Framework? But What Are Skills? Anglo-Saxon versus German Concepts." *Journal of Education and Work* 19 (3): 255–69.
- Cobban, A.B. 1975. *The Medieval Universities: their development and organisation*, p. 165. London: Methuen.
- Coffey, A., and Atkinson, P. 1996. *Making Sense of Qualitative Data: Complementary Research Strategies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Collier, G. 1994. *Social origins of mental ability*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

- Comim, F., Fennell, S. and Anand, P. B. (eds) .2018. *New Frontiers of the Capability Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Conradie, I. 2013. "Can deliberate efforts to realise aspirations increase capabilities? A South African case study". *Oxford Development Studies*, 41(2), 189–219.
- Conradie, I. and Ingrid. R. 2013 "Aspirations and human development interventions". *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*, 14(4), 559–80.
- Cook-Sather, A., 2002. "Authorizing students' perspectives: toward trust, dialogue, and change in education" *Educational Researcher* 31 (4), 3.
- Copestake, J. and Camfield, L. 2010. "Measuring multidimensional aspiration gaps: a means to understanding cultural aspects of poverty". *Development Policy Review*, 28(5), 617–33.
- Corbridge, S. 2002. "Development as freedom: The spaces of Amartya Sen". *Progress in Development Studies*, 2(3), 183–217.
- Creswell, J. W., Plano Clark, V. L., Guttman, M. L., & Hanson, E. E. 2003. "Advanced mixed methods research design". In *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioural research*, edited by A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie, 209-240. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Crocker, David A. 1995. Functioning and Capability: The Foundation of Sen's and Nussbaum's Development Ethic, part II, in *Women, Culture and Development*, edited by M. C. Nussbaum and J. Glover, Oxford: Clarendon Press, pp. 153-98.
- Croll, P. and Attwood, G. 2013. "Participation in higher education: Aspirations, attainment and social background." *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 61, 2, 187–202.
- Curtis, S., Gesler, W., Smith, G., & Washburn, S. 2000. "Approaches to sampling and case selection in qualitative research: Examples in the geography of health". *Social Science and Medicine*, 50, 1001-1014.
- Davis, J. 2003. *The Theory of the Individual in Economics*. London: Routledge.
- De Vaus, David. 1991. *Surveys in Social Research* (3rd edition). London: Allen and Unwin
- Dearing, J. 1997. *Report of the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education*.
- Dembo, T. 1976. "The dynamics of anger". In *Field theory as human-science*, edited by J. De Rivera, 324-422. New York: Gardner Press. (Original work published 1931)
- Devereux, S. 2001. "Sen's entitlement approach: Critiques and counter-critiques". *Oxford Development Studies*, 29(3), 245–263.
- Dreze, J., and Sen, A. 1995. *India: Economic Development and Social Opportunity*, Oxford University Press: Delhi

- Dreze, J. and Sen, A. 2002. *India: Development and Participation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Dreze, J. and Sen, A. 2013. *An Uncertain Glory: India and Its Contradictions*. New Delhi: Allen Lane
- Dreyfus, H. and Dreyfus, S. 1986., *Mind Over Machine*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Egdell, V., and R. McQuaid. 2016. "Supporting Disadvantaged Young People into Work: Insights from the Capability Approach", *Social Policy & Administration*, Vol. 50, Pp. 1–18
- Engestrom, Y. 1994. *Training for Change*, Geneva: Labour Office.
- England, K. V. L. 1994. "Getting personal: Reflexivity, positionality, and feminist research". *The Professional Geographer*, 46(1), 80–89.
- Evans, P. 2002. "Collective capabilities, culture, and Amartya Sen's development as freedom". *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 37(2), 54–60.
- Feinberg, W. 1983. *Understanding Education: towards a reconstruction of educational enquiry*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Festinger, L. 1989. "Wish, expectation, and group standards as factors influencing level of aspiration". In *Extending psycho- logical frontiers: Selected works of Leon Festinger*, edited by S. Schachter & M. Gazzaniga, (pp. 3-20). New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Fine, B. 2002. "Economic imperialism: A view from the periphery", *Review of Radical Political Economics* 34: 187–201.
- Flybjerg, B. 2006. "Five misunderstandings about case study research", *Qualitative enquiry* 12 (2), 219-245
- Folbre, N. 1994. *Who Pays for the Kids? Gender and the Structures of Constraint*. New York: Routledge.
- Foster, P., 1965. "The vocational school fallacy in development planning". In *Education and economic development*, edited by Anderson, C. and Bowman, M. Chicago: Aldine
- Foucault, M. 1977. *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. London: Penguin Books.
- Foucault, M. 1980. *Power/Knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings (1972–1977)*, edited by Gordon, London: Harvester.
- Frank, J. D. 1935. "Individual differences in certain aspects of the level of aspiration". *American Journal of Psychology*, 47, 119-128.
- Frank, J. D. 1941. "Recent studies of the level of aspiration". *Psychological Bulletin*, 38, 218-225.

- Frediani, A. 2010. "Sen's Capability Approach as a Framework to the Practice of Development." *Development in Practice* 20 (2): 173–87.
- Fuhrer, R., Stansfeld, S. A., Chemali, J., & Shipley, M. J. 1999. "Gender, social relations and mental health: Prospective findings from an occupational cohort (Whitehall II study)". *Social Science & Medicine*, 48(1), 77–87.
- Fukuda-Parr, S. 1999. "What does Feminization of Poverty Mean? It Isn't Just Lack of Income." *Feminist Economics* 5(2).
- Fukuda-Parr, S. 2003. "The Human Development Paradigm: Operationalizing Sen's Ideas on Capabilities." *Feminist Economics* 9 (2–3): 301–17.
- Fukuda, S, Raworth, K. and Kumar, S. 2003. "Human Development Index as a Policy Tool: The Potential for Stimulating Public Action," in *Readings in Human Development: Concepts, Measures and Policies for a Development Paradigm*, edited by Sakiko Fukuda-Parr and A. K. Shiva Kumar. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Gamble, J., 2003. *Curriculum Responsiveness in FET Colleges*. Cape Town: HSRC Press
- Gandhi, Mahatma .1924/2006. *The collected works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol. XXVI*, London: Obscure Press.
- Gasper, D. 1997. "Sen's Capability Approach and Nussbaum's Capabilities Ethic", *Journal of International Development*, 9(2), 281-302.
- Gasper, D. 2002. "Sen's Capability Approach an Adequate Basis for Considering Human Development?", *Review of Political Economy*, 14(4), 435-461.
- Gasper, D. 2007. "What is the capability approach? Its core, rationale, partners and dangers", *The Journal of Socio-Economics* 36 (335–359)
- Giddens, A., 1994. *Beyond Left and Right*. Polity, Cambridge.
- Gonczy, A. 1997. "Future Directions for Vocational Education in Australian Secondary Schools", *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Vocational Education Research*, 5, pp. 84, 87.
- Gooze, G. 1993. *The Development of TAFE in Australia. An Historical Perspective*. Adelaide: NCVET.
- Gopal, M. 2013. "Ruptures and Reproduction in Caste/Gender/Labour", *Economic and Political Weekly* 48, no. 18: 91–97.
- Greene, J. C., Caracelli, V. J., & Graham, W. F. 1989. "Towards a conceptual framework for mixed-method evaluation designs". *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 11, 255-274.
- Hall, P.A., Soskice, D. (Eds.) 2001. *Varieties of Capitalism: The Institutional Foundations of Comparative Advantage*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

- Hammersley, M. 1995. *The Politics of Social Research*. London: Sage.
- Hanfling, O. 1998. *Philosophy and ordinary language: the bent and genius of our tongue* London: Routledge
- Haq, M. ul 1995. *Reflections on Human Development*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hart, C. S. 2016. "How Do Aspirations Matter?" *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities* 17 (3): 324–41.
- Haslegrave, H.L. (chair) (1969) *Report of the Committee on Technical Courses and Examinations*. London: HMSO.
- Hatakka, M. and J. Lagsten. 2012. "The Capability Approach as a Tool for Development Evaluation - Analyzing Students' Use of Internet Resources." *Information Technology for Development* 18 (1): 23–41.
- Heckman, J. J. 2011. *Effective Child Development Strategies. The Pre-K Debates: Current Controversies and Issues*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.
- Hermann, G.D., Richardson, E. & Woodburne, G.J. 1976. *Trade and Technical Education. Principles and Issues*. Stanmore: Cassell Australia.
- Heyneman, S., 1985. "Diversifying secondary school curricula in developing countries: an implementation history and some policy options". *International Journal of Educational Development* 5, 4, 283-288.
- Himmelweit, Susan (ed.). 2000. *Inside the Household: From Labour to Care*. Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan.
- Hirai, T. 2018. "For a Happy Human Development," in *New Frontiers of the Capability Approach*, edited by Comim, F., Fennell, S., and Anand, P. B. 384–410 Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Hockey. J. 1993. "Research Methods-Researching Peers and Familiar Settings", *Research Papers in Education* 8, no. 2 (1 June 1993): 199–225.
- Hollywood, E., Egdell, V. and McQuaid, R. 2012. "Addressing the issue of disadvantaged youth seeking work" *Social Work and Society*, 10, 1: 1–18.
- Hoppe, F. 1976. "Success and failure". In *Field theory as human-science*, edited by De Rivera (pp. 324-422). New York: Gardner Press. (Original work published 1931)
- Hulme, D. 2007. "Integrating Quantitative And Qualitative Research For Country Case Studies Of Development". Global Poverty Research Group, WPS-063
- Hyde, J. 1983. "The Development of Australian Tertiary Education", in *Melbourne Studies in Education*, edited by S. Murray-Smith. Parkville: Melbourne University Press.

- Hyland, T. 1999. *Vocational Studies, Lifelong Learning and Social Values. Investigating Education, Training and NVQs Under the New Deal*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Ibrahim, S. 2006. "From Individual to Collective Capabilities: The Capability Approach as a Conceptual Framework for Self-help". *Journal of Human Development*, 7(3), 397–416.
- Ibrahim, S., & Alkire, S. 2007. Agency and Empowerment: A Proposal for Internationally Comparable Indicators. *Oxford Development Studies*, 35(4), 379–403.
- Ibrahim, S. 2011. "Poverty, Aspirations and Wellbeing: Afraid to Aspire and Unable to Reach a Better Life – Voices from Egypt". *Brooks World Poverty Institute*.
- Iverson, T., Stephens, J.D., 2008. "Partisan politics, the welfare state, and three worlds of human capital formation". *Comparative Political Studies* 45 (4/5), 600–637.
- Jain, B. 1992. "Vocational Education in India: Problems and Policies", *Indian Journal of Industrial Relations*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (Jul., 1992), pp. 25-36
- Jakupec, V. & Roantree, B. 1993. "Impact of the Martin Report on Technical and Further Education", in *The Binary Experiment for Higher Education: an Australian perspective*. Edited by L. V. Meek & G. Harman, Armidale: Department of Administrative, Higher and Adult Education Studies, University of New England.
- James, P. 1995. "Models of Vocational Development Revisited: reflecting on concerns", *Vocational Aspects of Education*, 47, p. 298.
- Jansen, J., 2005. *Targeting education: the politics of performance and the prospects of Education for All*. *International Journal of Educational Development* 25 (4), 368–380.
- Jasek-Rysdahl, K. 2001. , "Applying Sen's Capability Approach to Neighbourhoods: Using Local Asset Maps to Deepen Our Understanding of Well-Being", *Review of Social Economy*, 59(3), 313-29.
- Jick, T. D. 1983. "Mixing qualitative and quantitative methods: Triangulation in action". In *Qualitative methodology*, edited by J. Van Mannen. 135-148. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Johns, R. 2005. "One size doesn't fit all: Selecting response scales for attitude items", *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties*, 15(2), 237-64
- Johnson, R. B., & Gray, R. 2010. "A history of philosophical and theoretical issues for mixed methods research". In *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioural research*, edited by A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie, 69-94. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Kabeer, N. 1994. *Reversed Realities: Gender Hierarchies in Development Thought*. London: Verso.
- Kabeer, N. 1999. "Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment". *Development and Change*, 30(3), 435–464.

- Kandiyoti, D. 1988. "Bargaining with Patriarchy, Gender and Society", Vol. 2, No. 3, Special Issue to Honour Jessie Bernard (Sep), Pp. 274-290, Sage Publications
- Kangan, M. 1974. "Report on Needs in Technical and Further Education", *Australian Committee on Technical and Further Education*, Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.
- Kao, G. and Tienda, M. 1998 "Educational aspirations of minority youth." *American Journal of Education*, 106, 3, 349–84.
- Kemper, E. A., Stringfield, S., & Teddlie, C. 2003. "Mixed methods sampling strategies in social science research", In *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research*, edited by, A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie, 273-296. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- King, K., Martin, C., 2002. "The vocational school fallacy revisited: education, aspiration and work in Ghana 1959–2000". *International Journal of Educational Development* 22, 1, 5-26.
- King, K., McGrath, S., Rose, P. 2007. "Beyond the basics: educating and training out of poverty". *International Journal of Educational Development* 27, 4, 349-357.
- King, K., 2009. "Education, skills, sustainability and growth: complex relations". *International Journal for Educational Development* 29, 175–181.
- King, K., Palmer, R., 2011. "New trends in international cooperation". *Background paper for the World Report on Technical and Vocational Education Training*.
- King, K., 2012. "The geopolitics and meanings of India's massive skills development ambitions". *International Journal of Educational Development* 32 (5), 665–673.
- Kintrea, K., St Clair, R. and Houston, M. 2011. *The Influence of Parents, Place and Poverty on Educational Attitudes and Aspirations*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- Klasen, S. 1997. "Poverty, inequality and deprivation in South Africa: an analysis of the 1993 SALDRU survey", *Social Indicators Research*, 41, 51-94.
- Klasen, S. 2000. "Measuring poverty and deprivation in South Africa", *Review of Income and Wealth*, 46(1), 33-58.
- Kleine, D. 2010. "ICT4WHAT? – using the choice framework to operationalise the capability approach to development". *Journal of International Development*, 22(5), 674–692.
- Kraak, A., 2004. "Rethinking the high skills thesis in South Africa". In *Shifting Understandings of Skills in South Africa. Overcoming the Historical Imprint of a Low Skills Regime*. Edited by McGrath, S., et al. 212–268. Cape Town: HSRC Press
- Kraak, A., 2004. "The national skills development strategy: a new institutional regime for skills formation in post-apartheid South Africa". In *Shifting Understandings of Skills in South Africa. Overcoming the Historical Imprint of a Low Skills Regime*. Edited by McGrath, S., et al.

212–268. Cape Town: HSRC Press

Kraak, A., 2011. "The Post-School System and Its Contribution to Human Resources Development and Vision 2025". *Research Report commissioned by the National Planning Commission*, Pretoria.

Kuklys, W. 2005. "Amartya Sen's Capability Approach: Theoretical Insights and Empirical Applications", *Studies in Choice and Welfare*, Springer-Verlag, Berlin.

Lahelma, E. Pekka M., Ossi, R., and Karri, S. 1999. "Gender Differences in Ill health in Finland: Patterns, Magnitude and Change." *Social Science and Medicine* 48: 7 – 19.

Lauglo, J., Lillis, K. (Eds.), 1988. *Vocationalising education*. Oxford: Pergamon.

Lehwess-Litzmann, R. 2012. "What does flexicurity have to gain from the capability-approach"? *Management Revue*, 23, 2: 119–39.

Lessmann, O. and F. Rauschmayer. 2013. "Re-Conceptualizing Sustainable Development on the basis of the Capability Approach: A Model and Its Difficulties." *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities* 14 (1): 95–114.

Lewin, K., Dembo, T., Festinger, L., & Sears, P. S. 1944. "Level of aspiration". In *Personality and the behavior disorders*. Edited by J. M. Hundt (pp. 333-378). New York: Roland Press.

Lewis, T. 2009. "Towards reclaiming the high ground in the discourse on vocationalism in developing countries". *International Journal of Educational Development* 29, 6, 558-64.

Lofland, J., and Lofland, L. 1995. *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis*. 3rd edn. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Magnus, P. 1881. *Industrial Education*. London: Kegan, Paul, Trench & Co.

Majumdar, M. and Subramanian, S. 2001. "Capability failure and group disparities: some evidence from India from the 1980s", *Journal of Development Studies*, 37(5), 104-140.

Malherbe, E.G., 1977. *Education in South Africa*. Volume II, 1923–1975. Juta: Cape Town.

Marjoribanks, K. 1998 "Family capital, children's individual attributes, and adolescents' aspirations: A follow-up analysis." *Journal of Psychology*, 132, 3, 328–36.

Marx, Karl. 1844. *Economic and Philosophic Manuscript* (English Translation), London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1977.

Maxwell, J. A. 1996. *Qualitative research design*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Mayoux, L. 1993. "Alternative Vision Or Utopian Fantasy? Cooperation, Empowerment And Women's Cooperative Development In India", *Journal Of International Development*.

Mawii, Z. 2019. "Feminist Perspectives on the Future of Work in India", *Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung*. India

- McClelland, D. C., Atkinson, J. W., & Clark, R. A. 1949. "The projective expression of needs: The effect of ego- involvement, success, and failure of perception". *The Journal of Psychology*, 27, 311-330.
- McDonald, P., Pini, B., Bailey, J. and Price, R. 2011. "Young people's aspirations for education, work, family and leisure" *Work, Employment and Society*, 25, 1: 68–84.
- McGrath, S., K. King, L. Fiona, and C.H. Roy. 1994. "Education and Training for the Informal Sector." *Education Research Paper 1* (11): 332.
- McGrath, S. Badroodien, A., Kraak, A., Unwin, L., (Eds.), 2004. *Shifting Understandings of Skill*. Cape Town: HSRC Press
- McGrath, S., Akoojee. S. 2007. "Education and skills for development in South Africa: Reflections on the accelerated and shared growth initiative for South Africa". *International Journal of Educational Development* 27, 4, 421-434.
- McGrath, S. Akoojee.S. 2009. "Vocational education and training for sustainability in South Africa: The role of public and private provision". *International Journal of Educational Development* 29, 2, 149-156.
- McGrath, S. 2010. "Beyond aid effectiveness: the development of the South African further and training college sector". *International Journal for Educational Development* 30, 525–534.
- McGrath, S., 2011. "Where to now for vocational education and training in Africa?" *International Journal of Training Research* 9, 1&2, 35-48.
- McGrath, S. 2012. "Vocational education and training for development: A policy in need of a theory?" *International Journal of Educational Development* 32 (5), 623–631.
- McGrath, S. 2012a. "Building New Approaches to Thinking about Vocational Education and Training and Development: Policy, Theory and Evidence." *International Journal of Educational Development* 32 (5): 619–22.
- McGrath S., Badroodien, A. 2012. "International Influences on the Evolution of Skills Development in South Africa." *International Journal of Educational Development* 26 (1): 1–18.
- McGrath, S. and R. Lugg. 2012. "Knowing and Doing Vocational Education and Training Reform: Evidence, Learning and the Policy Process." *International Journal of Educational Development* 32 (5): 696–708.
- McQuaid, R. and Lindsay, C. 2005. "The concept of employability", *Urban Studies*, 42, 2: 197–219.
- McQuaid, R. and Fuertes, V. 2014. "Sustainable integration of the long term unemployed: from work first to career first". In *Sustainable Economy and Sustainable Employment*, edited by Larsen C., Rand, S., Schmid, J. and Keil, R. Munchen: Rainer Hampp Verlag, pp. 359–73.

Medsker, L.L. & Tillery, D. 1971. *Breaking the Access Barriers: a profile of two-year colleges*. New York: McGraw Hill.

Mehrotra, S., A. Gandhi, and B. K. Sahoo. 2013. "Estimating India's Skill Gap on a Realistic Basis for 2022." *Economic and Political Weekly* 48 (13): 102–11.

Mehrotra, S. 2014. *India's Skills Challenge: Reforming Vocational Education and Training to Harness the Demographic Dividend*, New Delhi (National Institute for Labour Economics Research and Development): Oxford University Press

Mehrotra, S. and Saxena, P.K. 2014. The Skill Development System in India A Reform Agenda, in *India's Skills Challenge: Reforming Vocational Education and Training to Harness the Demographic Dividend*, New Delhi (National Institute for Labour Economics Research and Development): Oxford University Press

Mehrotra, S., and J.K. Parida. 2017. "Why Is the Labour Force Participation of Women Declining in India?" *World Development* 98: 360–80.

Mehrotra, S. 2019. "Capability Development and Decentralization" in *New Frontiers of the Capability Approach*, edited by Comim, F., Fennell, S., and Anand, P. B. 363–383, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Mehrotra, S., and K. Parida. 2019. "India's Employment Crisis: Rising Education Levels and Falling Non-agricultural Job Growth" *Centre for sustainable development working paper 2019-04*.

Merton, R. K. 1972. "Insiders and outsiders: A chapter in the sociology of knowledge". *American Journal of Sociology*, 78(1), 9-47.

Miles, M., & Huberman, A. M. 1994. *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Mitter, W. 1988. "Problems of the Interrelationship Between General and Vocational Education in Europe: a historical and conceptual approach", *Vocational and General Education in Western Industrial Societies*. Edited by in H. Rohrs. London: Symposium Books.

Monkman, K. 2011. "Framing Gender, Education and Empowerment". *Research in Comparative and International Education*, 6(1), 1–13.

Moodie, G. 2002. "Identifying Vocational Education and Training." *Journal of Vocational Education and Training* 54 (2): 265. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13636820200200197>.

Moorhouse, C.E. 1960. "Technical and Technological Education in Australia", *Australian Journal of Education*, 4(3), pp 175-190.

Munch, A., J. M. McPherson, and L. Smith-Lovin. 1997. "Gender, Children, and Social Contact: The Effects of Childrearing for Men and Women," *American Sociological Review* 62(4): 509 – 20.

- Murray-Smith, S. 1965. "Technical Education in Australia: a historical sketch", in *Higher Education in Australia*, edited by in H. Rohrs, Melbourne: F. W. Cheshire.
- Naik, J.P. 1977. *Some perspectives on non-formal education. Alternatives in development education*. Bombay: Allied Publishers.
- Navarro, V. 2000. "Development and quality of life: A critique of Amartya Sen's development as freedom" *International Journal of Health Services*, 30(4), 661–674.
- Newman, J.H. 1959. *The Idea of a University*, 1st edn. New York: Image Books.
- Nilsson, A. 2010. "Vocational education and training – an engine for economic growth and a vehicle for social inclusion?", *International Journal of Training and Development* 14:4
- Nussbaum, M. C. 1988. "Nature, Function and Capability: Aristotle on Political Distribution" *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, Supl. Vol., 145-84.
- Nussbaum, M. 1992. "Human functioning and social justice. In defence of Aristotelian essentialism", *Political Theory*, 20(2), pp. 202–246.
- Nussbaum, Martha C. 1995, "Human Capabilities, Female Human Beings", in *Women, Culture and Development*, edited by Martha C. Nussbaum and Jonathan Glover, Oxford: Clarendon Press, pp. 61-104.
- Nussbaum, M. 1998. "Public philosophy and international feminism", *Ethics*, 108, pp. 762–796.
- Nussbaum, M. C. 2000. *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nussbaum, M. C. 2001. "Symposium on Amartya Sen's Philosophy: 5 Adaptive Preferences and Women's Options." *Economics and Philosophy* 17 (1): 67–88.
- Nussbaum, M. C. 2003. "Capabilities as Fundamental Entitlement: Sen and Social Justice", *Feminist Economics*, 9(2-3), 33-59.
- Nussbaum, M. C. 2004. "Beyond the social contract: capabilities and global justice", *Oxford Development Studies*, 32(1), pp. 3–18.
- Nussbaum, M. C. 2005. "Capabilities as Fundamental Entitlements: Sen and Social Justice" In *Amartya Sen's Work and Ideas: A Gender Perspective*, edited by B. Agarwal, J. Humphries, & I. Robeyns, Abingdon, UK: Routledge.
- Nussbaum, M. C. 2006. "Education and Democratic Citizenship: Capabilities and Quality Education." *Journal of Human Development* 7 (3): 385–395.
- Nussbaum, M. 2007. *Frontiers of Justice. Disability, Nationality, Species Membership*. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Mass.

- Nussbaum, M. C. 2011. *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press.
- Okada, Aya. 2012. "Skills Development for Youth in India: Challenges and Opportunities." *Journal of International Cooperation in Education* 15 (2): 169–93.
- Oketch, M. O. 2007. "To Vocationalise or Not to Vocationalise? Perspectives on Current Trends and Issues in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Africa." *International Journal of Educational Development* 27 (2): 220–234.
- Okin, S. 1989. *Justice, Gender and the Family*. New York: Basic Books
- Onwuegbuzie, A., Collins, K. 2007. "A Typology Of Mixed Methods Sampling Designs In Social Science Research", *The Qualitative Report*, 12(2), 281-316
- Palmer, R., 2007. "Skills for work: From skills development to decent livelihoods in Ghana's rural informal economy" *International Journal of Educational Development* 27, 4, 397-420.
- Palmer, R., 2009. "Skills development, employment and sustained growth in Ghana: sustainability challenges". *International Journal for Educational Development* 29, 133–139.
- Parkes, D. 1991. "Home Thoughts from Abroad: diagnosis, prescription and prognosis for British vocational education and training", *European Journal of Education*, 26 pp. 41-53.
- Patton, M. Q. 1990. *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Peter, F. 2003. "Gender and the foundations of social choice: The role of situated agency". *Feminist Economics*, 9(2–3), 13–32.
- Pieck, E., 2011. "Using a different lens to look at technical training". *Norrag News NN46 (September)*.
- Pillow, W. S. 2003. "Confession, catharsis, or cure? Rethinking the uses of reflexivity as methodological power in qualitative research". *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 16(2), 175-196.
- Pilz, M., and J. Li. 2014. "Tracing Teutonic Footprints in VET around the World?: The Skills Development Strategies of German Companies in the USA, China and India." *European Journal of Training and Development* 38 (8): 745–63.
- Pilz, M., G. Uma, and R. Venkatram. 2015. "Skills Development in the Informal Sector in India: The Case of Street Food Vendors." *International Review of Education* 61 (2): 191–209.
- Pilz, M. 2016. "India's Skills Challenge: Reforming Vocational Education and Training to Harness the Demographic Dividend" *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 68:2, 280-281
- Plato (1974) *The Republic*, D. Lee (trans), part two, 370, b–c, pp 118-9; and part four, 415, b–

c, p 182, 2nd edn. London: Penguin Books.

Polishchuk, Y. and F. Rauschmayer. 2012. "Beyond 'Benefits'? Looking at Ecosystem Services through the Capability Approach." *Ecological Economics* 81: 103–11.

Powell, L. 2012. "Reimagining the Purpose of VET - Expanding the Capability to Aspire in South African Further Education and Training Students." *International Journal of Educational Development* 32 (5): 643–53.

Prodonovich, S., L.B. Perry, and A. Taggart. 2014. "Developing Conceptual Understandings of the Capacity to Aspire for Higher Education." *Issues in Educational Research* 24 (2): 174–89.

Psacharopoulos, G., Loxley, W., 1985. *Diversified secondary education and development*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Psacharopoulos, G., 1985. "Returns to education: a further international update and implications". *Journal of Human Resources* 20, 4, 583–604.

Psacharopoulos, G., 1991. "Vocational education theory VOCED 101: including hints for 'Vocational Planners'". *International Journal of International Development* 11 (3), 193–199.

Psacharopoulos, G. 1994. "Returns to Investment in Education: A Global Update." *World Development* 22 (9): 1325–43.

Punch, K.F. 2005. *Introduction to Social Research. Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*. Sage Publications: London

Punch, M. 1994. "Politics and Ethics in Qualitative Research", in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, edited by N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Punch, S. 2002. "Research with Children: The Same or Different from Research with Adults?" *Childhood*, 9(3), 321–341.

Qizilbash, M. 1996. "Capabilities, Well-being and Human Development: A Survey", *Journal of Development Studies*, 33(2), 143-62.

Qizilbash, M. 1998. "The Concept of Well-Being", *Economics and Philosophy*, 14, 51-73

Qizilbash, M. 2002. "Development, Common Foes and Shared Values", *Review of Political Economy*, 14(4), 463-480.

Qizilbash, M. and Clark, D. A. 2005. "The Capability Approach and Fuzzy Measures of Poverty: An Application to the South African Context", *Social Indicators Research*, 74(1), pp.103-139.

Quaglia, R. J. 1996. *Student aspirations: Eight conditions that make a difference*. Orono, ME: National Center for Student Aspirations.

- Quaglia, R. J., and Casey D.C. 1996. "Toward a Theory of Student Aspirations." *Journal of Research in Rural Education* 12 (3): 127–32.
- Rauner, F., 2007. "Vocational education and training—a European perspective". In *Identities at Work*, edited by Brown, A., Kirpal, S., Rauner, F. Springer, Dordrecht, pp. 115.
- Raveendran, G. 2016. "The Indian Labour Market: A gender perspective", *UN Women Flagship Report: Progress of the World's Women*.
- Rawls, J., 1971. *A Theory of Justice*. Belknap, Cambridge MA.
- Rangarajan, C., Kaul, P. I., & Seema. 2011. "Where is the missing labour force?" *Economic and Political Weekly*, 46 (39), 68-72.
- Ray, D. 2003. "Aspirations, poverty and economic change" in *Understanding Poverty*, edited by A. V. Banerjee, R. Bénabou and D. Mookherjee, 409-443, Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Reddy, A.K.N. 1980. "Rural Energy Consumption Patterns: A Field Study". *ASTRA, Indian Institute Of Science, Bangalore, India*
- Roberts, K. and Atherton, G. 2011. "Career development among young people in Britain today: poverty of aspiration or poverty of opportunity", *International Journal of Education Administration and Policy Studies*, 3, 5: 59–67.
- Robeyns, I. 2000. "An Unworkable Idea or a Promising Alternative? Sen's Capability Approach Re-examined". *Centre for Economic Studies, Discussions Paper Series (DPS) 00.30*
- Robeyns, I., 2001 "Sen's Capability Approach and Feminist Concerns." Presented at the Conference on Sen's Capability Approach. St. Edmund's College, Cambridge, UK.
- Robeyns, I., 2003. "Sen's capability approach and gender inequality: Selecting relevant capabilities", *Feminist Economics*.
- Robeyns, I. 2005. "The Capability Approach: a theoretical survey", *Journal of Human Development*, 6:1, 93-117,
- Robeyns, I. 2006. "Three models of education: Rights, capabilities and human capital", *Theory and Research in Education*
- Rose, M., 2004. *The Mind at Work*. Penguin, New York.
- Roy, B., & Hartigan, J. 2008. "Empowering the rural poor to develop themselves: The barefoot approach", *Innovations: Technology, Governance, Globalization*, 3(2), 67-93.
- Ruggeri-Laderchi, C. 1997. "Poverty and its Many Dimensions: The Role of Income as an Indicator", *Oxford Development Studies*, 25(3), 345-60.
- Rushbrook, P. 1997. "Tradition, Pathways and the Renegotiation of TAFE Identity in Victoria", *Discourse: studies in the cultural politics of education*, 18, pp. 103-112.

- Ryle, G. 1951. *The Concept of Mind*. London: Hutchinson's University Library.
- Sandelowski, M. 1995. "Focus on qualitative methods: Sample sizes in qualitative research". *Research in Nursing & Health*, 18, 179-183.
- Sayer, A. 2011. *Why things matter to people: social science, values and ethical life*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Schmelzer, P. 2011. "Unemployment in early career in the UK: a trap or a stepping stone"? *Acta Sociologica*, 54, 3: 251–65.
- Schokkaert, E. and Ootegem V. 1990. "Sen's Concept of the Living Standard Applied to the Belgian Unemployed", *Reserches Economiques de Louvain*, 56(3-4), 429-450.
- Schoon, I. and Parsons, S. 2002 "Teenage aspirations for future careers and occupational outcomes." *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 60, 2, 262–88.
- Schultz, T. 1963. *The Economic Value of Education*. New York: Columbia University.
- Schuman, H., & Presser, S. 1981. *Questions and answers in attitude surveys: Experiments on question form, wording and context*. New York: Academic Press.
- Seers, D. 1969. "The meaning of development". *Institute of Development Studies*, IDS Communication 44.
- Sen, A. (Ed.). 1980. *Equality of what?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sen, A. 1982. *Choice, welfare and measurement*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Sen, A. K. 1984. *Resources, Values and Development*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Sen, A. K. 1985a. "Well-being, Agency and Freedom." *Journal of Philosophy* 82 (4): 169–221.
- Sen, A. 1985b. *Commodities and Capabilities*, North Holland: Amsterdam.
- Sen, A. K. 1987. *On Ethics and Economics*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Sen, A. 1990. "Gender and cooperative conflict" In *Persistent inequalities*, edited by I. Tinker 123– 149. UK: Oxford University Press.
- Sen, A. 1992. *Inequality Re-examined*, Clarendon Press: Oxford.
- Sen, A. 1993. "Capability and Well-Being." In *The Quality of Life*, edited by M. C. Nussbaum, and A. Sen, 30–53. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Sen, A. 1999. *Development As Freedom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sen A. 2002. *Rationality and Freedom*. Cambridge, MA and London, England: Harvard University Press; 2002.

Sen, A. 2004. "Capabilities, Lists and Public Reason: Continuing the Conversation." *Feminist Economics* 10 (3): 77–80.

Sen, A. 2005. "Human Rights and Capabilities." *Journal of Human Development* 6 (2): 151–166.

Sen, A. 2009. *The Idea of Justice*. London: Allen Lane.

Seng, L. S. 2008. "Vocational technical education and economic development: The Singapore experience", In *Toward a better future: Education and training for economic development in Singapore since 1965*, edited by L. S. Kong, G. C. Boon, B. Fredriksen, & T. J. Peng, (pp. 114–134). Washington, DC: The World Bank.

Sennett, R. 2008. *The Craftsman*. London: Allen Lane.

Sewell, W. H. and Shah, V. P. 1968. "Social class, parental encouragement, and educational aspirations." *American Journal of Sociology*, 73, 5, 559–72.

Shah, I. H. 2010. "Structure of technical education and vocational training in Pakistan". *Journal of Technical Education and Training*, 2(1), 63-76.

Sharma, L. and A. Nagendra. 2016. "Skill Development in India: Challenges and Opportunities." *Indian Journal of Science and Technology* 9 (48).

Sidebottom, R. and S. Fennell. 2019. "Gender, Inclusivity and Training", a study of global vocational training practices." Report prepared for the Ministry Of Skills Development and Entrepreneurship, New Delhi.

Silverman, D. 1985. *Qualitative Methodology and Sociology: Describing the Social World*. Aldershot: Gower.

Silverman, D. 1993. *Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for Analysing Qualitative Data*. London: Sage.

Singh, Madhu. 2013. "Educational Practice in India and Its Foundations in Indian Heritage: A Synthesis of the East and West?" *Comparative Education* 49 (1): 88–106.

Smith, Adam.1776. *An Inquiry into the Nature and the Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, reprinted in Edwin Cannon (ed.) (1976), *The Wealth of Nations*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Smith, S. 2014. "Trade Unions and Skill Development in India: Challenges and International Experience." *Report prepared for the ILO office: New Delhi*

Sorensen, A., 2013. "A Gender Lens on Skills and Youth". *Norrag News NN48 (April)*.

Stevenson, J. 1992. "Australian Vocational Education: learning from past mistakes?" *Vocational Aspects of Education*, 44, pp. 236-237.

- Stevenson, J. 1997. "Legitimate learning", *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Vocational Education Research*, 5(2), pp. 1-43.
- Stevenson, J. 1998. "Finding a Basis for Reconciling Perspectives on Vocational Education and Training", *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Vocational Education Research*, 6(2), pp. 134-165.
- Stevenson, J. 2005. "The centrality of vocational learning", *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 57:3, 335-354
- Stiglitz, J. 2002. *Globalization and its discontents*. London: Penguin.
- Stiglitz, J. 2012. *The Price of Inequality*. London: Allen Lane.
- Strauss, A.L. 1987. *Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Streeten, P. 1994. "Human Development: Means and End." *American Economic Review* 84 (2): 232–237.
- Streeten, P., Burki, S., Haq, M., Hicks, N. and Stewart, F. 1981. *First Things First, Meeting Basic Human Needs in Developing Countries*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Sugden, R. 1993. "Welfare, Resources, and Capabilities: A Review of Inequality Re-examined by Amartya Sen", *Journal of Economic Literature*, 31, 1947-62.
- Swaminathan, P. 2005. "Making Sense of Vocational Education Policies: A Comparative Assessment", *The Indian Journal of Labour Economics*, A {2,}:5il-5.
- Symes, C. 1999. "Working for Your Future: the rise of the vocationalised university", *Australian Journal of Education*, 43, pp. 241-256.
- Tikly, L., and A. M. Barrett. 2011. "Social Justice, Capabilities and the Quality of Education in Low Income Countries." *International Journal of Educational Development* 31 (1): 3–14.
- Tikly, L.P. 2013. "Reconceptualising TVET and Development : A Human Capability and Social Justice Approach". *World Report on TVET*, Online Resources UNESCO-UNEVOC .
- Tilak, J. B. G. 2002. "Vocational education and training in Asia". In *The handbook on educational research in the Asia Pacific region*, edited J. P. Keeves & R. Watanabe. Berlin: Kluwer.
- Tilly, C., 1988. "Solidary logics: conclusions". *Theory and Society* 17 (Special Issue on Solidary Logics (3)), 451–458.
- Tinker, I. 1987. "The Real Rural Energy Crisis: Women's Time". *Energy Journal* No. 3; 125-46.

Tiwari, M. 2018. "Capability of Capabilities and Aspirations of the Middle Classes in India." In *New Frontiers of the Capability Approach*, 411–35, edited by Comim, F., Fennell, S., and Anand, P. B. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tomasevski, K. 2001. "Human rights obligations". Available at http://www.right-to-education.org/content/primers/rte_03.pdf.

Tomé, E., and A. Goyal. 2015. "Human Capital, HRD and VET: The Case of India." *European Journal of Training and Development* 39 (7): 586–609. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJTD-10-2014-0069>.

Toye, J. 1993. *Dilemmas of development* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.

Trani, J. F., P. Bakhshi, N. Bellanca, M. Biggeri, and F. Marchetta. 2011. "Disabilities through the Capability Approach Lens: Implications for Public Policies." *Alter* 5 (3): 143–57.

Ul-Haq, M., and Ul-Haq, K. eds. 1998. *Human development report in South Asia, Human Development Centre, Islamabad*. Oxford University Press, Karachi.

UN, 1948. *Universal Declaration on Human Rights*. United Nations, New York.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. 1997. *International Standard Classification of Education*.

Unni, J. 2014. "The Challenge of Skill Formation and Training", in *The companion to development studies*, edited by Desai, V and Potter., B. London: Routledge

Unterhalter, E., R. Vaughan, and M. Walker. 2007. "The Capability Approach and Education" *Prospero*

Unterhalter, E., J. G. Ladwig, and C. Jeffrey. 2014. "Aspirations, Education and Social Justice: Applying Sen and Bourdieu." *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 35 (1): 133–45.

Unterhalter, E. 2014. "Measuring Education for the Millennium Development Goals: Reflections on Targets, Indicators, and a Post-2015 Framework." *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities* 15 (2–3): 176–187.

Unterhalter, E. 2017. "Negative Capability? Measuring the Unmeasurable in Education." *Comparative Education* 53 (1): 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03050068.2017.1254945>.

Unterhalter, E. 2019. "Balancing Pessimism of the Intellect and Optimism of the Will: Some Reflections on the Capability Approach, Gender, Empowerment, and Education" in *New Frontiers of the Capability Approach*, edited by Comim, F., Fennell, S., and Anand, P. B. 75–99, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Vaughan, R., and M. Walker. 2012. "Capabilities, Values and Education Policy." *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities* 13 (3): 495–512.

Verick, S. 2018. "The Puzzles and Contradictions of the Indian Labour Market: What Will the Future of Work Look Like?" *IZA DP Report No. 11376*. Germany

Vos, R. and Ballet, J. 2018 "Formal Education, Well-Being and Aspirations: A Capability-Based Analysis on High School Pupils from France," In *New Frontiers of the Capability Approach*, 549–570, edited by Comim, F., Fennell, S., and Anand, P. B. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Walker, M. 2006. "Towards a Capability-Based Theory of Social Justice for Education Policy-Making." *Journal of Education Policy* 21 (2): 163–85.

Walker, M., and M. McLean. 2013. *Professional Education, Capabilities and the Public Good: The Role of Universities in Promoting Human Development*. London: Routledge.

Walker, M., and M. McLean. 2015. "Professionals and Public Good Capabilities." *Critical Studies in Teaching and Learning* 3 (2): 60–82. <https://doi.org/10.14426/cristal.v3i2.42>.

Warrington, M. and M. Younger. 2000. "The Other Side of the Gender Gap." *Gender and Education* 12(4): 493 – 508.

Wheelahan, L. 2000. *Bridging the Divide: developing the institutional structures that most effectively deliver cross-sectoral education and training*. Adelaide: National Centre for Vocational Education Research.

Wheelahan, L., and Moodie. G. 2017. "Vocational education qualifications' roles in pathways to work in liberal market economies", *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 69:1

Wheeldon, J. and M.K. Ahlberg. 2012. *Visualizing Social Science Research: Maps, Methods, & Meaning*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications

Williams, B. 1970. A Functional Differentiation? *Vestes*, 4, pp. 121-125.

Williams, B. 1987. "The Standard of Living: Interests and Capabilities", in Geoffrey Hawthorn (ed.), *The Standard of Living*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 94-102.

Williams, H.S. 1961. "Technical Education – State or National"? *Australian Journal of Higher Education (formerly The Educand)*, 1, pp. 98-103.

Williams, H.S. 1965. The Technical Colleges, in *Tertiary Education in Australia*. Edited by J. Wilkes. Sydney: Angus and Robertson.

Wilson-Strydom, M. 2016. "A Capabilities List for Equitable Transitions to University: A Top-Down and Bottom-up Approach." *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities* 17 (2): 145–160.

Wilson, F., and Ramphela, M. 1989. *Uprooting Poverty: The South African Challenge*. New York: W.W.

Winch, C. 1998. "Two rival conceptions of vocational education: Adam Smith and Friedrich List". *Oxford Review of Education* 24 (3), 365–378.

Winch, C., 2006. "Georg Kerschensteiner: founding the dual system in Germany". *Oxford Review of Education* 32 (3), 381–396.

Winch, C., 2011. "Skill – a concept manufactured in England?" In *Knowledge, Skills and Competence in the European Labour Market. What's in a vocational qualification?* Edited by Brockmann, M., Clarke, L., Winch, 85–101, Abingdon and New York: Routledge

Yin. 1994. *Case Study Research; Design And Methods*. 2nd Ed. CA, Sage: Thousand Oaks

Young, M. 1993. "A Curriculum for the 21st Century? Towards a New Basis for Overcoming Academic/Vocational Divisions", *British Journal of Educational Studies*, XXXI(3), pp. 203-222.

Young, M. 2009. "Basic Capabilities, Basic Learning Outcomes and Thresholds of Learning." *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities* 10 (2): 259–277.

Zheng, Y., and G. Walsham. 2008. "Inequality of What? Social Exclusion in the e-Society as Capability Deprivation." *Information Technology and People* 21 (3): 222–43.

Zheng, Y. 2009. "Different Spaces for e-Development: What Can We Learn from the Capability Approach?" *Information Technology for Development*, Vol. 15 (2) 66–82 (2009)

ⁱ Published reports collected from various sources as follows:

1. BFC – www.barefootcollege.com

- Whitepaper – The Barefoot Model for Global Sustainability by Amplifier Strategies
- Three-year Strategic Plan (2015 to 2018): Align opportunity and existing resources with an ever-deepening awareness of the Barefoot Approach
- Operating bodies
- Yearly reports from 2009 to 2017

2. PMKVY – <http://pmkvyofficial.org>

- PMKVY Guidelines (2012-2016)
- Special projects guidelines (2017)
- State Engagement Guidelines
- Branding and communication guidelines
- State-wise reports from the dashboard provide real-time data regarding training centres, training partners, ongoing training, etc.

3. MSDE – <https://www.msde.gov.in>

- The Common Norms notification – ‘The Common Norms for Skill Development Schemes implemented by Government of India’ in ‘The Gazette of India, August 8, 2015 (Sravana 17, 1937)’. Pages: 799 to 811, accessed from:

<https://www.msde.gov.in/assets/images/Notification/Common%20Norms%20Notification.pdf>

It provides information on the definition of skill development, skill development courses, input standards, outcome of skill development, funding norms, funds flow mechanism, monitoring and tracking, advocacy and awareness building, empanelment of training providers and assessors, cost schedule.

- The National Policy on Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (2015) lays down the objectives, outcomes and implementation frameworks. It can be accessed from <https://www.msde.gov.in/National-Policy-2015.html>
- Information regarding NSQF can be accessed from: https://www.msde.gov.in/assets/images/Gazette_EO_NSQF.pdf

4. NSDC – <https://nsdcindia.org>

Information regarding various schemes and initiatives including annual reports can be accessed at – <https://nsdcindia.org/annual-reports>

- 5. MSDE in collaboration with the World Bank** is implementing project SANKALP (Skills Acquisition for Knowledge and Livelihoods Promotion) with a total budget outlay of \$675 Million. The project supports implementation of the Government’s skill development strategy, as outlined in the National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, over six years (2017–2023). The objective is to enhance institutional mechanisms for skill development and increase access to quality and market-relevant training for the workforce. The Project Appraisal Document can be accessed at <https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/project-detail/P158435>

- 6. State-level information** for Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan is available on the state government’s skills ministry website; NSDC website; planning commission and UNDP state

reports; other international institutions such as the Asia Development Bank that are implementing skills projects in India.

6.1 Himachal Pradesh

- <http://www.hpkvn.in> [state skill mission]: Update report “Himachal Pradesh Skill Development Project”
- <https://www.adb.org/projects/documents/ind-49108-002-rrp> [ADB]
 - Aspiration Survey of Himachal Pradesh Youth
 - Gender Action Plan
 - Report and Recommendation of the President to the Board of Directors – 2017
 - Project Administration Manual
- <https://nsdcindia.org/nsdcreports>: District-wise skill gap study for the state of Himachal Pradesh (2012-2017; 2017-2022), Prepared by KPMG for NSDC, 2013
- <https://hpplanning.nic.in/HPHDR.htm>: Himachal Pradesh Human Development Report 2002, The Government of Himachal Pradesh

6.2 Rajasthan

- <http://livelihoods.rajasthan.gov.in/rsldc> [state skill mission]: Rajasthan Skill and Livelihood Development Corporation website contains information on scheme wise circulars, orders and notifications
- Human Development report Rajasthan, prepared for government of Rajasthan, Under Planning commission, GoI and UNDP project -Strengthening state plans for human development [<http://plan.rajasthan.gov.in/content/planning-portal/en/des/publications/reports/human-development-report.html>]
- <https://nsdcindia.org/nsdcreports>: District-wise skill gap study for the state of Rajasthan (2012-2017; 2017-2022), Prepared by Accenture for NSDC, 2013

ii Stakeholders interviewed:

BFC staff members, founder, CEO, volunteers

PMKVY: Training partners and other staff members, MSDE officials, NSDC members