

Original Article

# Post-Placement Job Retention and Income Sustainability Among Ddu-Gky Beneficiaries in Guntur District of Andhra Pradesh

**'Darsi Srinivasarao**

*'Lecturer, LN College of Education, Varavakatta, Narasaraopet-Palnaadu dist, Andhra Pradesh, India.*

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**Abstract:** Placement rates are the key indicator of success by which the DDU-GKY is assessed, but there is limited tracking of whether placements are converted into sustained employment after six months. Andhra Pradesh boasts of a best-in-country DDU- GKY placement rate of 89.22% (APSSDC 2022–23), however, post- placement retention data at district is not available. This paper analyzes employment continuity, income sustainability and factors determining continuity of employment after 12 months of placement among 300 DDU-GKY beneficiaries in Guntur District of Andhra Pradesh. The study using chi-square, cross-tabulations and OLS regression reveals that 64.0% of beneficiaries remained in formal employment at 12 months and training duration ( $\beta = ₹6,840$ ) and healthcare sector placement are the strongest predictors of retention. Gender, marital status for women, and ST caste emerge as significant attrition risk factors. The results questions the sufficiency of the placement-rate-only evaluation and calls for a change in the focus to 12-month retention rates as DDU-GKY's key success indicator.

**Keywords:** DDU-GKY, Post-Placement Retention, Job Sustainability, Income Stability, Skill Development, Rural Employment, Guntur District, Andhra Pradesh.

## I. INTRODUCTION

India's skill development system seems to be missing a vital piece of the puzzle in measuring success: durable employment versus initial employment. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana lays a stipulation that 75% of the trained youth should be placed at a minimum wages of ₹6,000 per month - a placement day metric - but does not speak on retention of employment beyond first placement. Andhra Pradesh's much touted 89.22% DDU-GKY placement rate (APSSDC 2022–23), while bested by a meager 54.53% national average, nationally dominant reflects only initial placement outcomes, making the issue of post-placement sustainability empirically indeterminate. India's Economic Survey 2022–23 warns that short-term skill courses tend to lead to fleeting employment gains, as rural youth return to agricultural informality within six to 12 months of first placement, more so when after-placement support mechanisms are missing. Andhra Pradesh's 9.6% rural unemployment (PLFS 2021–22), despite good DDU-GKY traction, may reflect this cycling phenomenon. Guntur District (with a rural poverty ratio of 22.6% in SECC 2011) and 55.0% of landless beneficiaries among rural category, is also vulnerable to this risk of post-placement attrition landless households do not have an agricultural safety net to fall back on if they lose formal employment, [100] and therefore questions of income sustainability are livelihood security questions of the highest order. The 12,000+ DDU-GKY trained and placed youth of the district (APSSDC 2022–23) showcases the programme's macro success with the lurking out of post-placement attrition unmeasured risk. This paper fills this gap, based on structured primary survey data of 300 Guntur DDU-GKY beneficiaries, tracking 12-month formal employment retention, income sustainability, and the determinants of post-placement continuity in socio-economic and programme design terms. The results contribute to the very first district-level post-placement retention proof in Guntur, with direct policy-influence potential for the APSSDC, MoRD and District PIAs.

## II. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The DDU-GKY architecture mandates inclusion of post placement support, for which PIAs have to script three months of employment support services, which also includes a verification of salary payments and reporting on attrition. Implementation However, in practice, the APSSDC's PIAs monitoring in Guntur City is overwhelmingly placement-day verification with meager 12-month follow-up. The AP Skill Development Policy 2015 recognized retention as an indicator of quality, but did not lay down obligatory 12-month tracking procedures. Rising evidence from Odisha (Mishra and Jena, 2018) and Bihar (Chakravarty and Bedi, 2019) points towards post placement attrition as a major national-level DDU-GKY concern, especially among female beneficiaries and those undertaking shorter-duration training programmes trends that this study examines for Guntur District.



### **III. IMPORTANCE OF POST-PLACEMENT RETENTION IN DDU-GKY INDIA AND ANDHRA PRADESH**

Retention after placement is the real indicator of the transformative impact of DDU-GKY on rural livelihoods. Three months of placement result in a trivial income supplement, whereas 12-month formal employment engagement provides the income security and consumption upgradation demanded by the programme's poverty amelioration promissory note. Andhra Pradesh's ₹432 crore outlay on skill development (AP Annual Plan 2022–23) is to be justified with enduring employment outcomes and not placement-day metrics. MoRD's own programme review guidelines put increasing emphasis on retention as a marker of quality, and APSSDC's PIA empanelment criteria now feature placement retention clauses, yet retention data at district levels is still a rarity. This study fills Guntur District's gap for its first systematic 12-month retention evidence base.

### **IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Gaur (2017) observed that the post-2014 reforms to DDU-GKY's accountability framework led to improved placement rates, but that the sustainability of employment after six months continued to be a challenge, especially in states where mature post-placement monitoring systems were absent. Chakravarty and Bedi (2019) showed in Bihar that short-duration rural skill training programmes led to modest long-term income gains, with substantial informal employment reversion post-placement in the absence of a strong support system a result this paper examines for Guntur. Mishra and Jena (2018) showed in Odisha that 12-month employment retention was higher for 9-month and 12-month DDU-GKY trainees as compared to 3-month course graduates significantly, corroborating the period of training as a predictor for retention. Lalitha (2019) observed that private PIA graduates of DDU-GKY fared better in 6 months retention as compared to government-body graduates in Telangana, demonstrating the value of industry-embedded post-placement support. Okada (2012) held that the core weakness of India's skill training system was its emphasis on certification rather than employment continuity, thereby forecasting the placement-retention gap reported in this study. Verma (2015) reported that female DDU-GKY graduates were subjected to higher rates of post-placement attrition owing to household duties and societal constraints, mirroring the gender retention outcomes of Paper 1. Phukan (2021) recorded that DDU-GKY tribal trainees in Assam faced high rates of post-placement attrition, citing distance from placement areas and non-availability of community support systems elements that factor into Guntur's interior mandal ST receivers.

### **V. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Andhra Pradesh's 89.22% DDU-GKY placement rate masks the reality of post placement retention at the district level. 12-month formal employment retention in Guntur District is either indicative of sustainable livelihood change or of seasonal income bolstering cannot be gleaned from aggregate placement figures alone and calls for the micro-level primary data presented in this study.

### **VI. NEED FOR THE STUDY**

With ₹432 cr. invested in AP skill development (2022–23) and 12,000+ youth placed in Guntur alone, the non-availability of 12-month retention data has handicapped APSSDC to assess programme return-on-investment or to determine risk factors for post-placement attrition. The present study is the first systematic Guntur District analysis of post-placement retention, with direct bearing on the accountability framework for APSSDC's PIA and the programme evaluation framework of MoRD.

### **VII. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To study the 12 months after placement formal employment income sustainability and drop-out trends of the beneficiaries of DDU-GKY in Guntur District of Andhra Pradesh.
2. To determine the socio-economic and the programme design factors associated with post-placement job retention through chi-square tests and OLS regression analysis amongst the beneficiaries of DDU-GKY in Guntur Dist.

### **VIII. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The present study had a primary source of data, which was obtained from 300 DDU-GKY trainees by administering a pre-tested interview schedule using multi-stage random sampling from 3 taluks and 6 mandals of each taluk. 50 respondents were selected randomly in the Guntur district. The Schedule included a question on employment status at 12 months post-placement. Secondary data was gathered from AP Economic Survey 2022–23, APSSDC Annual Reports 2022–23, MoRD Annual Reports, PLFS 2021–22, SECC 2011 and Census 2011. Descriptive statistics, chi-square tests, cross-tabulations and OLS regression with 5% level of significance were used.

### **IX. PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA**

The area of Guntur District is 11,391 km<sup>2</sup> which is divided into 57 mandals and the total population accounts to 48,87,813(2011 census) and rural population 58.4%. Rural poverty ratio is 22.6% (SECC 2011) and rural unemployment 9.6% (PLFS 2021–22). APSSDC has trained and placed more than 12,000 youth in Guntur under DDU-GKY as of 2022–2023. The major placement industries are retail chains, hospitals, construction companies, and hotel industry in Guntur, Hyderabad and bengalore.

## X. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1: Profile of DDU-GKY Beneficiaries by 12-Month Retention Status-Guntur District**

Characteristics	Retained Formal (n=192)	Shifted Informal (n=72)	Exited (n=36)	Total (N=300)
Male	132 (75.9%)	30 (17.2%)	12 (6.9%)	174 (58.0%)
Female	60 (47.6%)	42 (33.3%)	24 (19.0%)	126 (42.0%)
Training: 3 months	36 (40.0%)	33 (36.7%)	21 (23.3%)	90 (30.0%)
Training: 6 months	66 (66.0%)	24 (24.0%)	10 (10.0%)	100 (33.3%)
Training: 9–12 months	90 (81.8%)	15 (13.6%)	5 (4.5%)	110 (36.7%)
SC/ST	81 (52.6%)	48 (31.2%)	25 (16.2%)	154 (51.3%)
FC/BC	111 (76.0%)	24 (16.4%)	11 (7.5%)	146 (48.7%)
Healthcare Trade	60 (76.9%)	12 (15.4%)	6 (7.7%)	78 (26.0%)
Other Trades	132 (59.7%)	60 (27.1%)	30 (13.6%)	222 (74.0%)

(Source: Primary data)

The retention pattern is characterized by a firm timewise and gender-wise gradient. Beneficiaries of 9 to 12-month programs remain in formal jobs at 81.8 percent at 12 months compared to merely 40.0 percent of 3-month trainees, a 41.8 percentage point gap that truly illustrates the premium on retention of longer training. Demleger & Govt (2018), Female beneficiaries (19.0%) exit is higher than that of male beneficiaries (6.9%) which is consistent with marital attrition finding of Paper 1. SC/ST are significantly less likely to be retained (52.6 per cent) than their FC/BC counterparts (76.0 per cent), which suggests that caste-based labour market disadvantage is not restricted to wages but continues into post-placement continuity. Healthcare trade beneficiaries are retained at 76.9% compared to 59.7% for non-health trades, which is representative of the steady demand, formal contracts and better working conditions in healthcare that facilitate retention.

**Table 2: Cross-Tabulation of Training Duration and 12-Month Retention Status**

Training Duration	Retained Formal	Shifted Informal	Exited	Total
3 months	36 (40.0%)	33 (36.7%)	21 (23.3%)	90 (100%)
6 months	66 (66.0%)	24 (24.0%)	10 (10.0%)	100 (100%)
9–12 months	90 (81.8%)	15 (13.6%)	5 (4.5%)	110 (100%)
Total	192 (64.0%)	72 (24.0%)	36 (12.0%)	300 (100%)

$\chi^2$  (Calculated) = 42.18 | df = 4 |  $\chi^2$  (Table value at 5%) = 9.488 (Source: Primary data)

The chi-square value of  $\chi^2=42.18$  far exceeds the table value of 9.488 at 4 degrees of freedom for 5% level of significance, which strongly suggests that the null hypothesis has to be rejected. Length of training and 12-month status retention being associated at a very high level of significance – the single most powerful chi-square outcome in this series of studies. The retention trend is clear: trainees with formal retention were 3 months (40.0%), 6 months (66.0%) and 9–12 months of training (81.8%). Similarly, the 3-month trainees exit rate plummets from 23.3% to 4.5% for 9–12-month trainees. This result is the strongest empirical case for APSSDC and MoRD to make a wholesale shift of DDU-GKY Guntur District enrolments towards longer-duration programmes, as by the evidence 3-month programmes produce nearly five times the post-placement exit rate compared to 9–12-month courses.

**Table 3: Cross-Tabulation of Post-Placement Support Received and 12-Month Retention**

Support Received	Retained Formal	Shifted Informal	Exited	Total
Full Support (3 months+)	96 (80.0%)	18 (15.0%)	6 (5.0%)	120 (100%)
Partial Support (1–2 months)	72 (60.0%)	36 (30.0%)	12 (10.0%)	120 (100%)
No Support	24 (40.0%)	18 (30.0%)	18 (30.0%)	60 (100%)
Total	192 (64.0%)	72 (24.0%)	36 (12.0%)	300 (100%)

$\chi^2$  (Calculated) = 31.46 | df = 4 |  $\chi^2$  (Table value at 5%) = 9.488 (Source: Primary data)

The value of  $\chi^2 = 31.46$  is much higher than 9.488; the null hypothesis is rejected with a very high significance level. Post-placement support and retention for 12 months are highly correlated. Those who benefit from three months or more of post-placement support maintain formal employment at 80.0%, while those who received no such support hold on to that employment for just 40.0%, a twofold rate increase. The no-support survival rate of 30.0% is six times as high as that of full-support exit rate of 5.0%. This finding delivers a conclusive empirical verdict on the importance of post-placement support for DDU-GKY retention and a strong enough indictment of APSSDC's current monitoring framework, which permits PIAs to meet placement metrics without providing post-placement support as mandated.

**Table 4: Determinants of 12-Month Post-DDU-GKY Annual Income Sustainability (₹)**

Variable	Coefficient ( $\beta$ )	Standard Error	t-value	p-value	Significance
Constant	36,140	5,960	6.06	0.000	***
Training Duration (months)	8,240	1,020	8.08	0.000	***
Post-Placement Support (months)	6,180	1,140	5.42	0.000	***
Healthcare Trade (1=Yes)	10,320	2,480	4.16	0.000	***
Gender (1=Male)	9,860	2,540	3.88	0.000	***
SC/ST Caste (1=Yes)	-5,940	2,120	-2.80	0.005	**
Education Level (years)	2,760	640	4.31	0.000	***

$R^2 = 0.693$  | Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.686$  | F-statistic = 108.4 ( $p < 0.001$ ) (Source: Primary data)

The regression ( $R^2 = 0.693$ ;  $F = 108.4$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) accounts for 69.3% of the variance in post-programme income sustainability at 12 months this is the largest  $R^2$  of all regression models presented in this series of studies. The duration of training is the strongest predictor of income sustainability ( $\beta = ₹8,240$ ;  $t = 8.08$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ): an additional month of DDU-GKY training is associated with a ₹8,240 increase in the income sustainability annualized, substantiating that the longer training retention premium has direct income implications. Post-placement support is also the second strongest predictor ( $\beta = ₹6,180$ ;  $t = 5.42$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ): an additional month of mandated post-placement PIA support is associated with a ₹6,180 increase in the income sustainability, giving arguably the strongest evidence that post-placement support is not just an administrative formality but a direct lever on income sustainability. The premium for healthcare trade stays firm ( $\beta = ₹10,320$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). Gender income gap remains ( $\beta = ₹9,860$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) and SC/ST penalty survives ( $\beta = -₹5,940$ ;  $p = 0.005$ ), persistent across all three papers. Education is a good complement to vocational skilling ( $\beta = ₹2,760$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ).

## XI. DISCUSSION

The post-placement retention analysis delivers the most policy-critical findings in this study series. The  $\chi^2$  for duration of training (42.18) is the highest of all 9 tables in this series, clearly indicating that a 3-month DDU-GKY programme is inherently ill-suited for long-term employment retention, with quits are 23.3% for the 3-monthers, as compared to 4.5% for 9–12-month graduates. The support for post-placement assistance ( $\chi^2 = 31.46$ ) is equally strong, the finding being that omission of required PIA assistance doubles withdrawal rates. The highest  $R^2$  in the regression model (0.693) also suggests training duration and postplacement support are the 2 most feasible programme design levers, with combined gain implications of ₹ 14,420 per beneficiary per extra month of training and support. Gender, caste and education gradients are robust across all retention measures.

## XII. CONCLUSION

Post-placement retention is the most critical indicator and design gap of DDU-GKY. 64.0% 12-month formal employment retention rate of Guntur District, considering an 89.22% placement-day rate, conceals a post-placement attrition reality of 25.22 percentage points that cannot be captured in aggregate metrics. The verdict is clear: 3-month programmes produce exit rates at 23.3% while 9–12-month programmes produce 4.5%, full post-placement support results in 80.0% retention, and none results in 40.0%. For DDU-GKY to deliver on its mandate to transform rural poverty, Andhra Pradesh needs to urgently move its evaluation focus from placement-day metrics to 12-month retention metrics, mandate the provision of full post-placement support with PIA penalty clauses for attrition, and significantly scale up 9- to 12-month programme enrollments. The Guntur result statistically substantiates the policy argument: duration and support are the twin pillars on which sustainable DDU-GKY impact rests.

### Major Findings

1. The DDU-GKY placement retention rate for 12 months in Guntur District stands at 64.0% as compared to the lauded placement-day rate of 89.22% in the case of beneficiaries, which points towards an attrition difference of 25.22 percentage points after placement on an aggregate level, which is obscured by the overall metrics.
2. Training length and 12-month retention are very strongly correlated ( $\chi^2 = 42.18 \gg 9.488$  at 5%) - 9-12-month trainees retain formal employment at 81.8% as opposed to 3-month trainees at 40.0% - a 41.8 percentage point retention premium.
3. Support after placement and retention ( $\chi^2 = 31.46 \gg 9.488$ ) correlate positively, with three-month-plus support yielding greater retention (80.0%) versus no support (40.0%), indicating that post-placement support could serve as a direct retention multiplier.
4. Length of training was the strongest predictor of income sustainability at 12 months ( $\beta = ₹8,240$  per month;  $t = 8.08$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), the largest t-statistic for this whole study series of regressions, corroborating the conclusion that longer training is the single most potent design lever in the DDU-GKY programme.
5. Length of post-placement support is the second strongest predictor of income sustainability ( $\beta = ₹6,180$  per month of support;  $p < 0.001$ ), offering conclusive empirical proof that prescribed post-placement support through PIA is a tool of income sustainability support, and not a mere instrument for fulfilling administrative obligation. Female recipients drop out

from formal work at 19.0% around thrice that of males at 6.9%, with gender continuing to be an important predictor of income sustainability ( $\beta = ₹9,860$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), parallel to marital attrition, domestic responsibilities, and gender barriers at work.

6. At 12 months, the healthcare trade retains 76.9% of its beneficiaries in formal employment, the highest of all trade sectors, with other trades at 59.7%: a healthcare income sustainability premium of ₹10,320 ( $p < 0.001$ ), reaffirming healthcare as the best female enrolment sector.
7. SC/ST beneficiaries achieve a meagre 52.6% 12-month retention compared to 76.0% for FC/BC counterparts, and sustain an income sustainability penalty that is statistically significant ( $\beta = -₹5,940$ ;  $p = 0.005$ ), suggesting that labour market disadvantage on the basis of caste persists not only in placement but also in post-placement employability.
8. DDU-GKY programme graduates of duration 3 months show 23.3% postplacement exit rate, five times higher than 4.5% of 9–12 month graduates, thus providing the empirical basis for APSSDC to dispense with short-duration courses from the DDU-GKY portfolio in Guntur District.
9. The regression model ( $R^2 = 0.693$ ) accounts for 69.3% of the variance in income sustainability is the highest among this series of studies, with training duration, post-placement support, healthcare trade, and gender as four key policy-actionable sustainability predictors.

### **Policy Implications And Suggestions**

1. Use 12-month retention instead of placement-day metrics as DDU-GKY's primary KPI: Given that the 12-month retention rate is 64.0%, this shows a 25.22 percentage-point divergence from placement-day claims, and APSSDC must immediately begin the 12-month post-placement employment tracking for all Guntur District PIAs, with MoRD revising the DDU-GKY performance evaluation frameworks to weight the 12-month retention as 60% of PIA performance scores and disincentivizing the placement-day primacy that encourages short-term placement without sustainability responsibility.
2. Abolish 3-month DDU-GKY programmes and introduce 9–12-month programmes: The 41.8 percentage-point retention difference between 3-month (40.0%) and 9–12-month (81.8%) programmes and training duration being the best income-predictor ( $\beta = ₹8,240$ ;  $t = 8.08$ ) provides indisputable empirical ground for APSSDC to eliminate all 3-month DDU-GKY courses in Guntur District by one programme-cycle and divert enrolment support to only 9- and 12-month specialist trade programmes.
3. Make full post-placement support obligatory with PIA penalty clauses: As post-placement support yields twice the retention (40.0% to 80.0%) and contributes ₹6,180 more per month to income sustainability, APSSDC must mandate the already existing three-month post-placement support mandate with authenticated PIA compliance paperwork, and APSSDC must know hold 30% of the PIA performance-linked disbursements until six-month retention confirmation and de-empanel PIAs whose beneficiaries' 12-month formal employment retention dips below 60% in Guntur District.
4. Set up a separate post placement grievance and re-employment cell for in Guntur District: For the 36.0% of beneficiaries that migrate to informal employment or drop out after 12 months, APSSDC must put in place a dedicated Guntur District DDU-GKY post placement support cell that provides re-skilling vouchers, facilitating alternate placement, mediating industry grievances and rendering emergency income support viewing attrition incidents as opportunities for programme re-entry rather than as permanent livelihood reversals.
5. Develop a real-time PIA retention performance ranking for Guntur District's: Quarterly PIA-wise 12-month retention rankings for Guntur District DDU-GKY implementing agencies by trade, gender, and caste should be made public to create competitive accountability pressure, enable APSSDC to track and share best practices of high-retention PIAs, and equip potential beneficiaries with pre-enrolment PIA quality information that can help them make better programme participation decisions.

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