

Recognition of Prior Learning in INDIA: A Case Study



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Abstract The objective of the present work is to study the recognition of prior learning (RPL) in the Indian scenario. Through an examination and assessment of a current RPL, it tries to toss light on the capability of RPL to help support skills development, and the difficulties around its inauguration in India, and the approach and practice that can bolster future advancement in this area. India's vast informal segment incorporates a great many individuals with unrecognized skills for whom RPL could be a truly necessary advancement once more into education and training, from which they may have been barred till date. Through a progression of contextual investigation, it was planned to assess the GAPS regarding creating and managing RPL and the perspectives of the initiatives from Certifying Agencies on the achievement and success of the programme. Given the nascent stage of development, this initiative is at, the assessment does not conclude the post-assessment impact on job roles, access to training or other forms of progression. An innovative approach has been built up to assessment design in the absence of funds/targets that form the basis of RPL and have effectively created assessments that can be actualized on a gigantic scale. The research converges to outlining and building up another model for RPL that may start to lay the basis for a more extensive presentation of RPL and it as effective as possible in contributing to skilling India.

Keywords RPL · Skills development · Skills training

1 Introduction

In recent years, the idea of recognition of prior learning has picked up enthusiasm amongst the policymakers in the zone of vocational education framework and skill development. The RPL has created specific interest for India setting because of two highlights: to draw in individuals in learning who have beforehand been barred from formal instruction for some reason, it especially considers, and in the Indian

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economy where the greater part of the workforce is informally employed, it offers the likelihood of certifying skills present in them [1]. India intends to skill 500 million individuals by 2022, a huge extent of individuals who are as of now working in different sectors. Of these, numerous individuals belong to economically, socially, or other distraught gatherings for whom entering any type of education or training might be an overwhelming undertaking. Under these conditions, interest in RPL as a device for connecting with these segments of individuals is obvious [2–4].

India is having 40% of people aged 13–35 years. Since the development of skills and utilization has a great scope with the RPL. The Indian government has practised aligning the skilled workforce by initiating various schemes, e.g. Modular Employable Scheme - Skills Development (MES-SDIS). After clearing the respective examinations, these schemes are not only offering direct entry to various modules, short courses but also providing opportunities for direct assessment and obtain a National Trade Certificate. Whilst the reason for RPL is undisputed and endeavours to place it by and by having been ongoing all around for few years; yet practically speaking, the majority of these endeavours have confronted various difficulties and shifting levels of accomplishment. We might endeavour to look at a portion of these as contextual investigations to evoke important discovering that could be used in the Indian context.

India, along with other emerging economies, however, faces momentous challenges in introducing RPL—principally the flow of funds to certify informally skilled large workforce employed. India faces an immediate challenge of up-skilling millions of people already working in the informal sector, in the process of developing policy/frameworks. The RPL is not a simple system to get right; nor is it a “handy solution” arrangement. Notwithstanding, through our endeavours, we may build up an arrangement of RPL in India that can encourage enhanced access to additional training and job for millions and improve utilization of the abilities effectively present in the nation’s workforce.

2 Initiatives in India Leading Towards RPL

Ministry of Education formerly known as MoHRD began action on RPL in September 2012 as part of the National Vocational Education and Qualification Framework (NVEQF). The NVEQF encourages people to obtain certifications in a variety of ways. The National Institute of Open Schooling’s (NIOS) RPL Manual provides a framework for evaluating the competences and skills gained through information [5–7]. NVEQF also defines the mapping between the levels acquired via RPL and through formal education. This additionally provides the student with an option to switch between the two forms of education. But till date, the framework has not been adopted by any industry or assessment body. The NVEQF also establishes a relationship between the levels attained through RPL and those attained through formal education. Additionally, the learner has the option of switching between the

two types of schooling. However, no industry or assessment agency has accepted the approach to far.

2.1 All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)—Skill Knowledge Provider (SKP) Scheme

The AICTE has launched a Skill Knowledge Provider programme (SKP). To build a credit-based approach to vocational higher education, the programme relies on a system of co-creation of skills and general academics. The first two levels are equivalent to school grades IX and X. Every year, approximately, 1000 h of study and training are required for each level. [8]. So, if one has the abilities and has passed your 10th grade exam, he/she can go to a skill knowledge provider and can have talents assessed for a certificate. The system will be implemented in 12 different industries, including information technology, telecommunications, banking, tourism, autos, finance, marketing, entertainment, and construction. The sector has contributed to the creation of curriculum and assessments. The skill credit can be transferred to a vocational training score at the university where the candidate is registered for pursuing formal education. The central university or the technical board committee can also adopt and facilitate the same for a certain certificate course. Certificate courses also allow the candidate to pursue a professional career and acquire additional credit simultaneously with distance/part-time programmes for degree courses [7, 9, 10].

2.2 National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)—Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)

The core interest of the skill certification is to benefit the skilled youth population at large. Providing a platform to get industry required skills and help them to make a better livelihood. The skilled individuals who have prior learning experience from informal training can be assessed and get certified by the RPL scheme. The three core objectives of RPL are (i) to line up the unorganised unregulated workforce populations with the NSQF standardisations, (ii) to increase the job opportunities and employability in the relevant industry at an individual level and open the ways to pursue higher education through proper channels, (iii) to mitigate the inequality on basis of giving privilege to one over the other for not having prior experience from the proper channel [7].

3 RPL Process: “The RPL Process Comprises of Five Steps, Specified in Fig. 1”

3.1 Mobilization

The engagement of NGO/training cum testing agencies (training partners)/association by project implementation agency (PIA) can be done in mobilizing the rpl candidate to the training centres.

3.2 Counselling and Pre-screening

TOT passed qualified trainers approved by the SSC will facilitate the counselling and pre-screening of the RPL candidate for all types of projects discussed above. The pre-screening stage comprises of two parts named below:

- Part 1: Collection of supporting documentation and evidence from the candidate.
- Part 2: Candidate self-assessment.

3.3 Orientation

For all project types, the following orientation activity would be adopted.

3.4 Final Assessment

The common guidelines for the assessment of all types of projects can be adopted as follows.

PIA will initiate the final assessment of the candidate at the accredited assessment agencies (AA). The AA will be declared by the National Board for skill certification (NBSC) body or the SSC. Overlapping of duties of RPL facilitator and AA will



Fig. 1 5-step RPL process

be avoided. The assessment process will likely be done in the same manner as the short-term training component of PMKVY and in compliance with NSQF. SSC shall earmark the scoring system as CORE for a qualified person (QP)NOSs and non-core. The core NOSs part will have 70% weightage, and the remaining belong to non-core as per NSQF level 4.

3.5 Certification and Payout

Once the assessment agency uploads the computed result, the skill service centre will validate and approve it. The registered candidates can avail the mark sheet and the certificate at the facilitated centre after the final declaration of result by the PIAs. PIAs can also notify the candidates by sending SMS and emails regarding examination and result schedules. The skill certificate will have the grades A/B/C as per the marking system. The candidate will be facilitated with a skill certificate and mark sheet and payout (INR 500) following the eligibility of the candidate.

4 PPP-Based RPL Model

Certification Agency and PPP Partner will work through PPP mode as shown in Fig. 3. Step wise procedures are given in Table 1. Through PPP model, network of training cum testing centres will be established across with special focus on remote and inaccessible areas. The hierarchy is given in Fig. 2.

5 Conclusion

India is a developing country with moderate growth in the industrialization and education sector. A major of the population who belongs to the informal sector are lacking basic education but they have acquired certain labour skills for their livelihood. Inaccessibility of proper channels is a barrier to obtain skills. Here, RPL plays an important role. RPL encircle all these issues and provide a framework through which aids skilled labours to get the benefits available to the skilled person. RPL fills the gap between vocation and formal learning. The RPL facilitates the professional gain to the employee who obtained skills by informal channels, e.g. master craftsman, automobile mechanics, etc., and also increases the socio-economic mobility of the skilled labour.

Table 1 Proposed RPL model

Steps	Activities	Responsible agency	to	Engage entity
Step 1	Target	Certification Agency (CA)	to	Implementing Agency (IA)
Step 2	Revenue generation	Candidate Employers RPL Centres Company Social Responsibility (CSR) Fund	to	Implementing Agency (IA)
Step 3	Engagement of partners	Implementing Agency (IA)	to	Testing Cum Training Provider (TTP) Assessment Agency (AA)
Step 4	Mobilization	Testing Cum Training Provider (TTP)	to	Candidate
Step 5	Counselling screening of candidate			
Step 6	Orientation			
Step 7	Assessment	Assessment Agency (AA)	to	Candidate
Step 8	Skill evaluation report of candidate	Assessment Agency (AA)	to	Implementing Agency (IA)
Step 9	Verification of evaluation report	Implementing Agency (IA)	to	Certification Agency (CA)
Step 10	Certification	Certification Agency (CA)	to	Candidate
Step 11	Distribution of fund	Implementing Agency (IA)	to	Certification Agency (CA) Testing Cum Training Provider (TTP) Assessment Agency (AA)

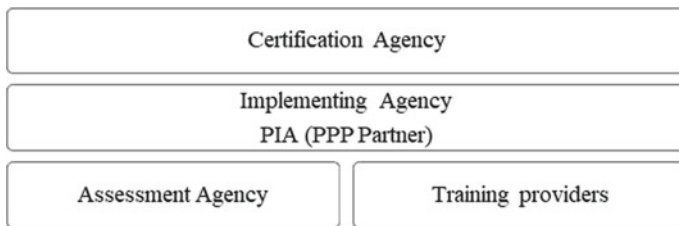


Fig. 2 Structure of PPP model

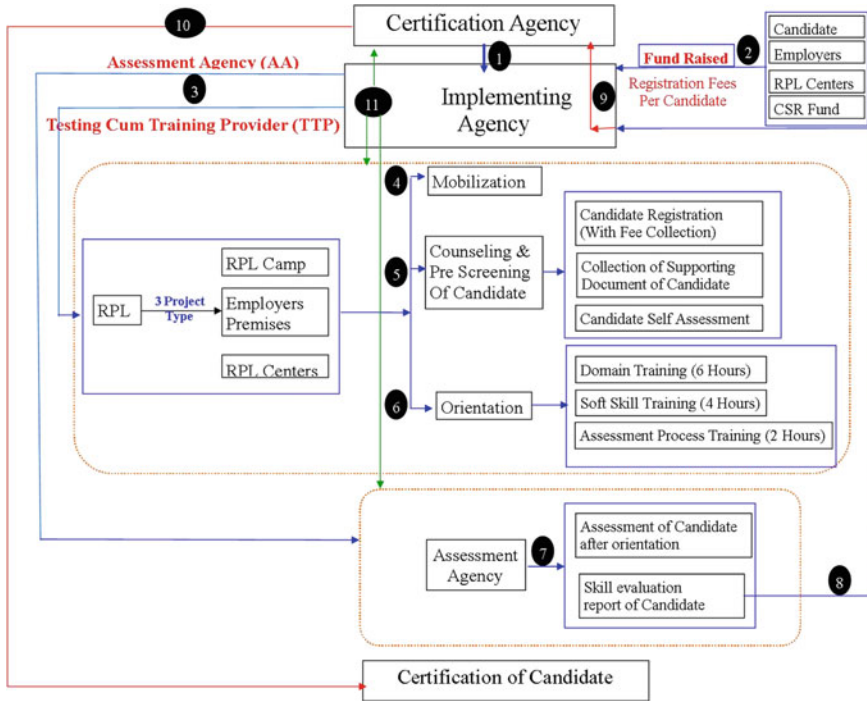


Fig. 3 Route map of proposed RPL model

Acknowledgements Authors are grateful to the Federation of Skill Development Organization (FSDO) and Chhattisgarh Swami Vivekanand Technical University, Bhilai (CSV TU Bhilai), a state government university of Chhattisgarh state in India for signing MoU to implement the proposed PPP-based RPL model named as Swami Vivekanand Yuva Kaushal Setu (SVYKS).

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