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**A Study on Employability Skills of Rural Young Automobile
Mechanics in Selected Development Blocks of Thiruvananthapuram District.**

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Introduction

The automobile repair and servicing workshop is viable business provided with a good entity that involves having a thorough knowledge and experience of the repair and service operations and also managing the jobs with the right type of skilled manpower. When these factors combine with good customer relationship management and effective business development skills, the business is expected to give profits which are expected to grow over the years.

Automobile Industry is the essential part of the global economy and the wellbeing of the world's citizen the world's automobile industry made over Sixty-six million cars, vans, trucks and buses in 2005. This level of output is equivalent to a global turnover of 1.9 trillion Euros. Building sixty-Six million vehicles requires the employment of more than eight million people directly in making the vehicles and that go into them. This is over five percent of the world's total manufacturing employment. In addition to these direct

employees, about five times are more employed indirectly related manufacturing and service provision, such that an estimated more than 50 million people earn their living from cars, trucks, buses and coaches.

The Indian auto industry is one of the largest in the world. The service sector is a dominant sector in India's gross domestic product (GDP). Indian service sector grew at approximately 8 percent per annum and contributed to about 64 per cent of India's GDP in Fiscal Year 2015-16. Among these automobile sector is one of the largest in the world. This sector accounts for 7.1 percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). According to the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers the performance of automobile sector during 2015-16 produced a total 2.3 Cr. including passenger, commercial, three wheeler, two wheeler, and quadric cycle in April-March 2016. The two wheelers segment with 81 percent market share is the leader of the Indian automobile industry owing to a growing middle class and a young population. Moreover, the

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growing interest of the companies in exploring the rural markets further aided the growth of the sector. The overall passenger vehicle (PV) segment has 13 percent market share.

Furthermore, a consistent growth rate of Indian GDP during the last decades and increasing competition between leasing companies have caused the lease rates to decline considerably which have made automobiles an affordable commodity for a majority of the middle-income class. These factors coupled together reflect on the growing need for quality repair and service facilities. Once the vehicle comes on the road it is expected to run for an indefinite period requiring major repair and maintenance services throughout its operational life. Moreover there is a considerable demand for wheel alignment and wheel balancing services, which is

required by almost every vehicle, whether new or old. The roughness of the roads and continuous friction causes a continuous disruption to the alignment and balancing of the wheels which require adjusting at least once every two weeks for proper upkeep and maintenance. Conclusively it can be said that there exists an ample demand for quality repair and service workshops with skilled mechanics and also that the existing scenario provides conducive opportunities for entry into this venture.

Definition

Employability skills

"A set of achievements, understandings and personal attributes that make individuals more likely to gain employment and to be successful in their chosen occupations"

Peter Knight & Mantz Yorke (HEFCE/DfES ESECT group)

Youth

According to the National Youth Policy "Youth is defined as the persons who are in between the age group of 15-29 years"

Statement of the problem

India's passenger car and commercial vehicle manufacturing industry is the sixth largest in the world, with an annual production of more than 3.9 million units. Increasing rate of vehicles leads road accidents. As per the report of NATPAC, Kerala stands fifth position in road accidents. Statistics shows 4107 persons are died and 40675 persons were injured due to road accidents. 35% of road accidents are by two wheelers. Lack of quality repair, maintenance and service of vehicles is also a reason for the increasing road accidents. This increasing production of vehicles and road accidents leads to the high demand for skilled repair and service mechanics. Based on the increasing employment opportunities many workers are engaged in the automobile mechanic profession and majority of them are young people. In this profession most of them are skilled workers in unorganized sector especially in workshops of rural area. These skilled workers who are majorly dropouts in school education don't possess any theoretical background and severely lack employability skills in their occupation. They are also not well equipped to meet the modern technology in the automobile sector.

They are not recognized and accredited by any central or state government skill development agencies. These uncertainties may unconstructively affect their development in profession and also their contribution to the sector. This context makes essential to study on issues, problems, needs, and priorities of the young automobile mechanics to enhance their employability skills.

General Objective

- To identify the issues, problems, needs and priorities of Young Automobile Mechanics in workshops of rural areas to develop the skills and make them accredited workers

Specific objectives

- Identifying the issues, problems, needs and priorities of young automobile mechanics in their profession
- To enhance employability skills and equip them to find better opportunities.
- To develop Positive approach towards these category in skill development initiatives of central and state government

Methodology

The research paper is based on the primary and secondary data. The researcher collected data from rural areas in selected development blocks of Thiruvananthapuram district. Sample survey method with a questionnaire on interview basis was used to collect data from the respondents. The collected data is analysed using simple percentage analysis.

Data Analysis

This chapter explains the analysis of the data collected from the sample units of 50 Auto mobile mechanics which is randomly selected from the study area, selected blocks of Thiruvananthapuram district. Structured questions were used to collect information related to the objectives. The collected data were classified into tables and analyzed. The simple percentage method is used for analytical purpose. The major analyzes were represented with different types of diagrams, graphs, charts etc. The main tables related to the first objective employability skills of the study area are tabulated and analyzed as follows. The following table shows the sex composition of the households of the study area.

Table 1: Age Composition

Sl No	Age	Total No	Percentage
1	15-19	10	20
2	20-24	18	36
3	25-29	22	44

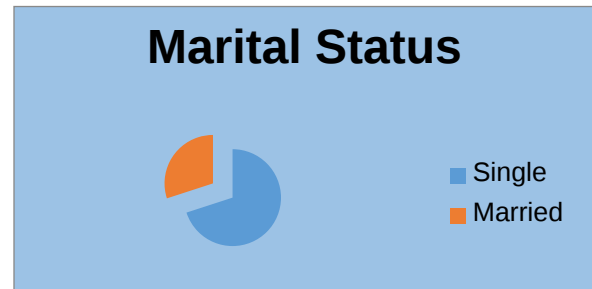
The above table gives the age wise distribution of the respondents. 20% of the respondents belong to the age up to 19, 36% belongs to 20-24 age group, 44% percent belongs to the category 25-29 age groups. Majority of the mechanics are in the 25-29 age groups, while only a minority are less than the age of 19 years. The reasons for this are the mechanics who are interested and experienced only sustains in this field.

Table 2: Gender Composition

Sl No	Gender	Total	Percent
1	Male	50	100
2	Female	0	0

The above table represents the gender composition of the respondents. The total respondents are male. The reason for this is those females are not much interested and very rare in this field.

Table 3: Marital Status



The respondents can be classified as single and married as the majority belongs to single. 70% whereas only 30% is married.

Table 4: General Education

Sl No	General Education	Total No	Percent
1	Below 10 th	17	34
2	10 th	15	30
3	SSLC	13	26
4	Plus two	3	6
5	Degree	2	4

Majority of the respondents 34% have educational qualifications below 10th standard. 30% of them have been attended 10th standard but failed. 26% have passed 10th standard. 6% of them have higher secondary qualification and 4% of them have graduation. The poor socio-economic standard of living is a reason for this educational backwardness. This also throws light to the issues and problems faced by Automobile mechanics in this sector.

Table 5: Technical education

Sl No	Technical education	Total No	Percent
1	ITI	12	24
2	Polytechnic	0	0
3	B Tech	0	0
4	Others	0	0

This table shows the technical education of the respondents that only 24% of them are having technical education. This shows that majority of the mechanics don't possess theoretical background in their field. Those who possess higher technical qualified persons are not interested to work in the rural workshops.

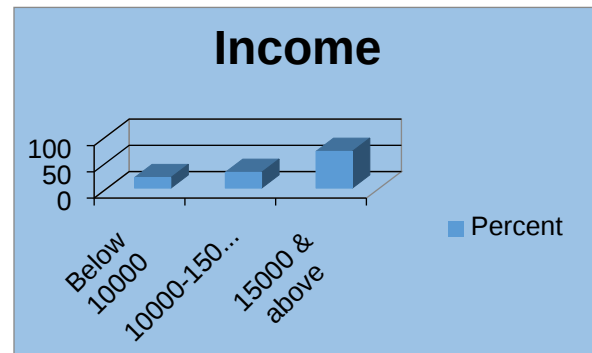
Table 6: Number of vehicles for repair works (Per day)

Sl No	Number of vehicles for repair works	Total No	Percent
1	Below 15	15	30
2	15-25	25	50

3	25 & above	10	20
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The above table shows 30% of the respondents are repairing below 15 vehicles in a day. 50% of the respondents are repairing 15-25 vehicles in a day. 20% of the respondents are repairing more than 25 vehicles in a day.

Table 7: Income



The picture represents the income pattern of the respondents. 20% of the respondents are earning only below Rs10000/- , 30% of the respondents are earning between Rs 10000-15000 and majority of the respondents are earning more than 15000 per month. This table also shows that low earnings are one of the major reasons that the people who are highly technically qualified are avoiding this field as a profession.

Table 8: Experience

Sl No	Experience	Total No	Percent

1	Below 2 years	10	20
2	Up to 5 years	15	30
3	5 Years & above	25	50

The table shows 20% of the respondents have below 2 years experience, 30% of the respondents have up to 5 years of experience and 50 % of them are having more than 5 years of experience. This table shows that lack of experienced automobile mechanics in this sector.

Table 9: Working field

Sl No	Working Sector	Total No	Percent
1	Two Wheeler	22	44
2	Three Wheeler	12	24
3	Four Wheeler	10	20
4	Others	6	12

Majority of the respondents are mechanics of two wheeler (44%), 24% of them are three wheeler mechanics, 20% of them are four wheeler mechanics and 12% are working in the related field of this sector.

Table 10: Capacity to do all kinds repairs

Sl No	Capacity to do all kinds repairs	Total No	Percent
1	Yes	40	80

2	No	10	20
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The majority of the respondents are having capacity to do almost all kinds of repair works in their field. Only 10% of them are not sure about the work on all kinds.

Table 11: Ability to identify the actual problem as per the complaints

Sl No	Ability to identify the actual problem as per the complaints	Total No	Percent
1	Yes	20	40
2	No	30	60

The table shows that 60% of the respondents show that they do not possess the ability to identify the actual problem according the complaints provided by the customer and 40% of the respondents do possess the ability or knowledge to understand the actual problem.

Table 12: Ability to repair modern vehicles

Sl No	Ability to repair modern vehicles	Total No	Percent
1	Yes	22	44

2	No	28	22
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From this table that 44% of the respondents are having the ability to repair the modern vehicles. 22% of the respondents are not having the ability to repair the modern vehicles. This table shows lack of skilled mechanics to repair modern vehicles.

Table 13: Availability of facilities to repair modern vehicles

Sl No	Availability of facilities to repair modern vehicles	Total No	Percent
1	Yes	0	0
2	No	50	100

This table shows that all the respondents are not having full-fledged facilities to repair the modern vehicles. This shows that the efficiency and capacity of the mechanics and workshop should be developed.

Table 14: Need of Technical support from other technicians

Sl No	Need of Technical advice from other technicians	Total No	Percent
1	Yes	42	84
2	No	8	16

This table explains 84% of the respondents go for a technical support and 16% of the respondents will go for technical support if needed. The senior respondents who are having enough experience may not go for technical support from others.

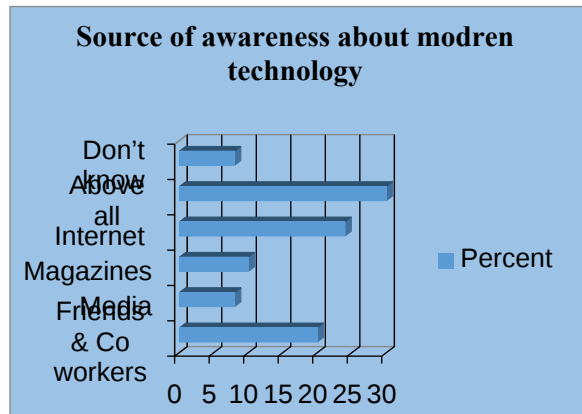
Table 15: Technical support from manufacturers of vehicles

Sl No	Technical advice from Companies of vehicles	Total No	Percent
1	Yes	3	6
2	No	47	94

Only few respondents go for a technical advice from the manufacturers of vehicles. Majority (94%) are not interested to go for technical advice from manufacturers.

Table 16: Source of awareness about modern technology

Majority of the respondents tries to get awareness about the technological changes through various sources such as friends, media, magazines and internet. 24% of them are using internet to know about the modern technology in the industry. 20%



of them are getting information through friends and co workers. 8 % percent of them are using media and 8% of them are not aware about the advanced technologies.

Table 17: Need for training in latest technology

Sl No	Need for training in latest technology	Total No	Percent
1	Yes	50	100
2	No	0	0

100% demands training on latest technology in automobile sector to increase their capacity to work.

Table 18: Interest for joining advanced courses in automobile sector

Sl No	Interest for joining advanced courses in automobile	Total No	Percent
1	Yes	35	70
2	No	15	30

	sector		
1	Yes	35	70
2	No	15	30

Most of the respondents i.e., 70% are interested in joining in advanced courses to enhance their skill in the sector. 30% of the respondents are not interested to join the course. The reasons are distance, lack of time and are not aware about the courses available.

Table 19: Interest to work abroad

Sl No	Interest to work abroad	Total No	Percent
1	Yes	38	76
2	No	12	24

Majority of the respondents are interested to go for a job in aboard for a better earning. 24% of them are not interested to work overseas.

General findings

1. Automobile sector is one of the largest industries in India and this sector accounts for 7.1 percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
2. Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers the performance of automobile sector during 2015-16

produced a total 2.3 Cr. including passenger, commercial, three wheeler, two wheeler, and quadric cycle in April-March 2016

3. According to NATPAC Lack of proper repair, maintenance and service of vehicles are one of the major reasons for road accidents.
4. Ample demand for quality repair and service workshops with skilled mechanics to meet the increasing works of vehicles.
5. Most the automobile workers are in unorganised sector.
6. Rural automobile mechanics are not professionally or technically qualified in their sector.
7. Most of the rural automobile mechanics are demanding skill development programmes to enhance their efficiency and productivity.

Suggestions

1. The central and state government skill development agencies should accredit them by enhancing their employability skills which will help to meet the increasing opportunities.
2. The automobile workers should provide periodical training in skill

development to update their knowledge in technology and handling the most modern equipments and facilities.

3. The Vehicles corporate should plan projects as a part of Corporate Social responsibility (CSR) to upgrade the employability skills of this group
4. Academic institutions should act as community colleges and provide an opportunity to continue their studies in their sector.
5. The industrial Training Institutions, Poly Technical Colleges and Engineering colleges should function as a skill development centres for providing training to rural young mechanics.
6. The rural young mechanics should be provided a pre-departure training class those who are interested to work in overseas in their sector.
7. Publications on innovation in this sector should be available to these people for timely updating.
8. Exposure visits effective to manufacturing units to gain updated technical knowledge.

Conclusion

In every field to sustain skills are an essential part especially employability skills to do a work successfully. Young rural automobile mechanics in this field lacks employability skills which is an important factor for their survival. Huge production of vehicles coming in to the road creates demand of repair, maintenance and service mechanics. Most of the vehicles are in built with advanced modern technology. Hence the automobile workers have to meet the new requirements by updating their knowledge and skills according to the innovations in the market. The study reveals that young rural automobile mechanics are not much aware about the modern facilities and technological advance. The workshops and workers are not fully equipped to meet the current changes. These limitations may slow down their development and negatively affect their contribution to the society. In this regard the government agencies, manufacturing companies, academic intuitions should concentrate to provide skill development programmes to this group. These will in turn help to development of rural mechanics and by getting quality service for customers.

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