



Digital Transformation in CSR: Evaluating Portal-Based Management Systems

This dissertation, submitted by Pranav Panpalia to The IIHMR University, Jaipur, for the partial fulfillment of the Master of Business Administration (MBA) in Development Management, explores the critical intersection of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and digital transformation. It specifically evaluates portal-based management systems as tools for enhancing stakeholder engagement and impact assessment within CSR initiatives. The research provides a comprehensive analysis of how digital platforms can revolutionize CSR practices, focusing on transparency, accountability, and the measurable outcomes of social impact.

Abstract and Acknowledgment

Abstract: Key Insights

This study, led by Pranav Panpalia under the guidance of Mr. Vikram Chauhan, Head In-charge of Sedi Ambuja Foundation, and Dr. Goutam Sadhu, Professor and Proctor at IIHMR University, explores the pivotal role of portal-based management systems in transforming CSR practices. The research highlights their potential to significantly enhance stakeholder engagement and improve impact assessment mechanisms. Utilizing a hybrid methodological approach, combining Soft Systems Methodology (SSM) and Work Systems Methodology (WSM), the study demonstrates how these systems can centralize CSR functions, promote transparency, and boost accountability.

Key findings indicate that the integration of SSM and WSM successfully addresses both technical and human-centric requirements, overcoming cultural and political barriers. Digital portals are shown to improve communication, consolidate data, and facilitate real-time stakeholder interaction, with features like recommender systems and personalized access further boosting usability. The study concludes that such systems enhance the visibility, engagement, and measurable outcomes of CSR initiatives, enabling CSR to become a more strategic and sustainable framework aligned with global development goals.



Acknowledgments

The author extends heartfelt gratitude to Mr. Vikram Chauhan for his unwavering support and guidance throughout the dissertation process, noting his foresight and work ethic as a significant source of inspiration. Appreciation is also extended to Dr. Goutam Sadhu for his invaluable assistance and belief in the author's work.

Further thanks are given to Mrs. Srimi Karthikeyan, Mrs. Kalaivani Sukumaran, the HR Team, and friends for their constant encouragement and support. Finally, the author acknowledges divine strength in completing this project.

Introduction

The Program, an initiative under Skill India, is dedicated to transforming the youth workforce through employment-linked skill training. This report specifically focuses on the comprehensive performance of the Center of Excellence – Nagaur during FY 2024–25, with insights extending into FY 2025–26. The Nagaur center is instrumental in providing structured vocational training across critical trades such as hospitality, electrician work, beauty care, and packaging, directly contributing to national skill development objectives.

Objectives of the Report

- Performance evaluation of yearly batch plans.
- Assessment of training-to-placement transition.
- Review of gender inclusiveness and accessibility.
- Success of special initiatives like Kaushal Connect and on-site placements.
- Observations and insights to guide future planning.

Internship and Practical Exposure

A cornerstone of the program is its real-time internship opportunities through event-based and hotel partnerships. Collaborations with major hospitality brands like ITC Hotel Jaipur and Ranwas Hotel, Nagaur, provide students invaluable experience in live customer service, workplace discipline, and team coordination. These internships not only hone technical skills but also instill crucial soft skills like time management and communication.

Review of Literature: Skill Development in India

A comprehensive review of existing literature establishes the theoretical framework for understanding the Program's performance within India's broader skill development landscape. It highlights how the Nagaur center aligns with national imperatives and global best practices in vocational training.

- 1

Skill Development in India: A National Imperative

The Skill India Mission, launched in 2015, aims to train over 40 crore people by 2022. Reports by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) emphasize demand-aligned and placement-linked vocational training, especially for marginalized groups. The Program embodies these national priorities, offering structured training followed by clear placement opportunities.
- 2

Training-to-Placement Models: Best Practices and Challenges

Global literature, including an ILO (2018) study, stresses integrated training-to-placement models with employer input and post-training support. The Nagaur center's 81% placement rate and 6-month retention tracking align with these best practices, demonstrating effective industry collaboration and job matching.
- 3

Role of Gender and Inclusive Participation

Academic papers, such as by Sen & Rani (2021), underscore barriers faced by women and specially-abled individuals in skilling programs. Successful models incorporate flexible timings, female-specific trades, and mentorship. Nagaur's 24% female participation and successful placement of specially-abled candidates demonstrate alignment with inclusive frameworks.
- 4

Retention as a Metric of Sustainability

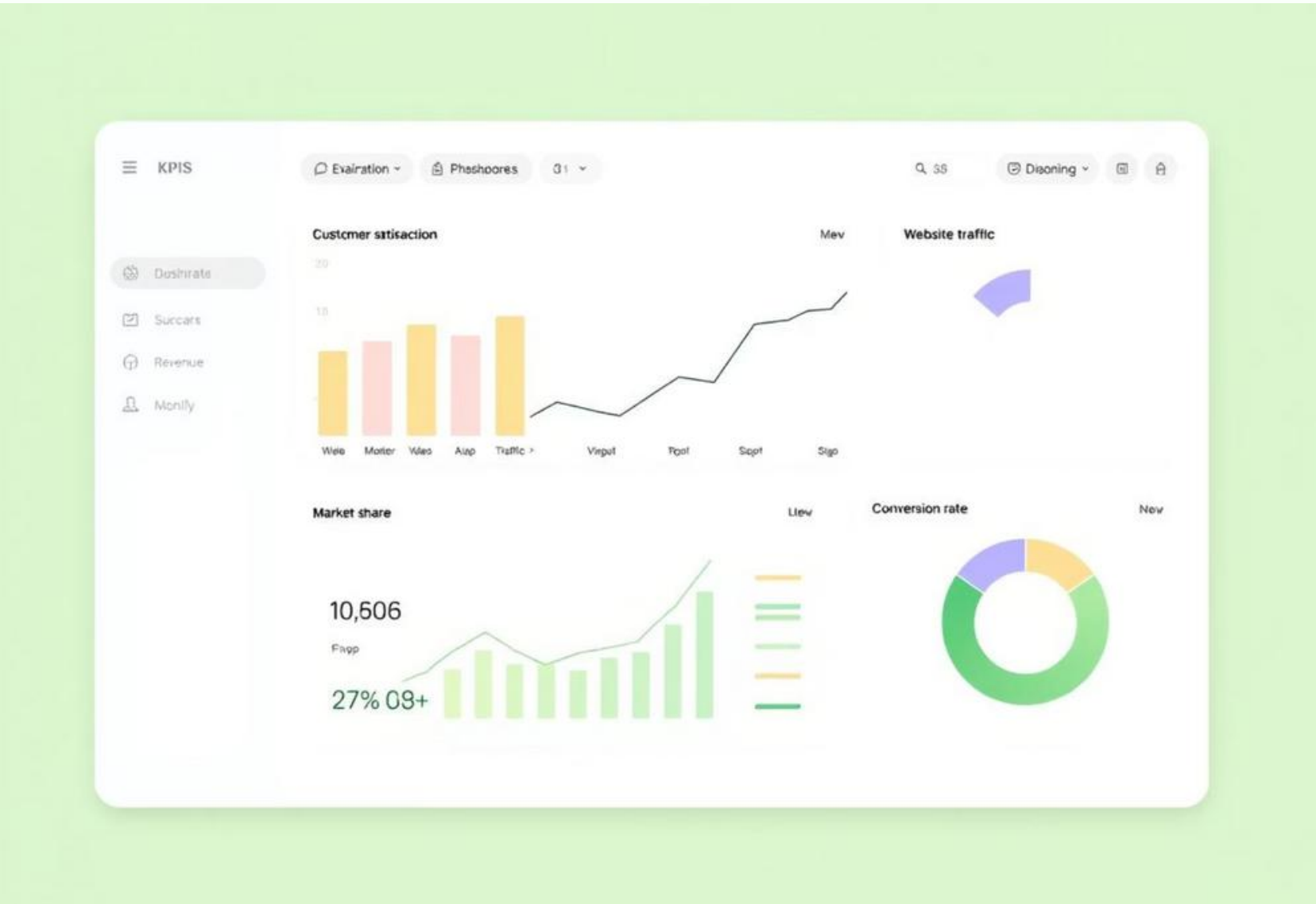
The FICCI-KPMG Skill Development Report (2020) advocates for 6-month post-placement retention as a key sustainability metric. Nagaur's 73% retention rate, supported by robust documentation, signifies both successful placements and high employer satisfaction, crucial themes in contemporary skill policy literature.

Data Collection Techniques and KPIs



Multiple data collection tools were used, including document review of enrollment sheets, attendance registers, and placement letters. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with students, and the center's environment was observed. Individual success stories were analyzed as case studies.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) monitored include total enrollment vs. actual turnout, training completion ratio, placement success rate, placement proof collection, and 6-month retention status. Gender and trade-wise representation, event-based internships, and digital success stories were also tracked.



Observations and Ground Realities at Nagaur

This chapter delves into the qualitative insights from the Program at the Center of Excellence – Nagaur, based on direct interactions with trainees, mobilizers, and trainers in May 2025. These observations reveal the human experience behind the performance metrics.



Candidate Behavior & Motivation

Urban students exhibited higher confidence and communication skills, while rural students faced challenges with formal etiquette and digital literacy. However, once placed, rural students showed high job retention, especially in roles near their hometowns.



Female Participation Realities

Despite mobilization efforts, female participation was 24% due to family reluctance, safety concerns, and social stigma. However, female trainees demonstrated strong work ethic and quick adaptability, often outperforming male counterparts in customer-facing roles with minimal support.



Insights from Specially-Abled Trainees

The successful placement of one specially-abled trainee highlighted their punctuality and dedication. Minor training adjustments, not content changes, were needed, demonstrating that with empathetic support, they can compete effectively in the workforce.



Placement Distance vs. Retention

A clear correlation emerged: trainees placed closer to home (Nagaur, Jodhpur, Jaipur) showed higher retention (>75%). Placements in metros like Delhi saw higher dropout rates due to homesickness, high living costs, and cultural mismatch, favoring hyperlocal strategies for sustainable employment.



Learning Environment & Exposure

The robust training infrastructure, aligned with NSQF, thrived with practical sessions in hospitality and beauty. Mock interviews, local language use, and industry-experienced trainers significantly boosted confidence. On-field events like the Sufi Festival deepened understanding of real customer service.



Community Involvement & Mobilization

Mobilizers served as unsung heroes, counseling parents, providing transport, and offering emotional support. Their efforts fostered noticeable community trust, evidenced by consistent enrollment even from remote areas.

Objectives

The Program at the Center of Excellence – Nagaur is a goal-oriented intervention designed to foster employment, build community trust, and drive long-term economic development. This chapter outlines the program's key objectives as demonstrated through its activities, data, and outcomes from the May 2025 review.

General Objectives

These vision-level goals align with the national Skill India Mission:

- Bridge the skill gap between industry demands and workforce capabilities.
- Enhance employability of rural and underprivileged youth.
- Promote inclusive development through gender and ability diversity.
- Offer sustainable livelihood options via industry tie-ups and job placements.

Strategic Objectives

These define the long-term direction and structure of the program:

- Achieve 100% target fulfillment in batch training year-on-year.
- Maintain high placement-to-training ratios consistently (above 75%).
- Establish strong post-placement retention systems.
- Integrate practical exposure and event-based learning into the curriculum.

Operational Objectives

These are the day-to-day goals driving execution and team performance:

- Mobilize trainees through targeted field outreach.
- Maintain detailed documentation of training, placement, and retention.
- Run soft skill and personality development sessions for every batch.
- Ensure successful use of residential facilities and transit housing.

Program-Specific Objectives (FY 2024–25)

These reflect the current year's unique focus areas:

- Conduct at least three event-based learning exposures per batch.
- Increase the number of digital success stories published.
- Ensure special support for female and specially-abled candidates.

Broader Socio-Economic Objectives

Beyond numbers, the program has larger developmental goals:

- Reduce unemployment in semi-urban and rural Rajasthan.
- Build confidence, dignity, and social mobility through skills.
- Create a scalable and replicable center model.



Strategic Objectives: Long-Term Growth and Retention



Achieve 100% Target Fulfillment

With 98% target achievement and 101% enrollment in FY 2024–25, the center consistently meets its batch training goals.



Maintain High Placement Ratios

The objective is to consistently maintain placement rates above 75%, achieving 351 placements out of 432 trained.



Establish Post-Placement Retention

Achieving a 73% retention rate with 6-month documentation reinforces long-term employment success.



Integrate Practical Exposure

Events like Sufi Festival and collaborations with hotels blend classroom learning with fieldwork, enhancing job readiness.

Research Questions Guiding the Program Evaluation

To guide this performance-based research report for the AU Flagship Program (Nagaur Center), a series of structured research questions were formulated. These questions facilitated the organization of data, selection of indicators, and analysis of outcomes during FY 2024–25. The questions align with the program's objectives and operational realities presented at the AU Review Meeting on May 3, 2025, focusing on the effectiveness, inclusiveness, and sustainability of the training and placement ecosystem.

- 1

Enrollment and Training-Related Questions
 - Was the enrollment target for FY 2024–25 achieved, and how was dropout handled?
 - What mobilization strategies were effective in reaching underrepresented populations?
 - Did training modules meet NSQF standards and industry expectations across trades?

- 2

Placement and Retention-Oriented Questions
 - What was the placement rate, and which trades were most effective?
 - How did placement location impact job retention and stability?
 - What was the 6-month retention rate, and how did it compare to the previous year?

- 3

Gender and Social Inclusion Questions
 - What is the gender participation ratio, and how has female participation evolved?
 - Were there especially-abled candidates, and what support was provided?
 - What social factors limit female trainee retention in certain sectors?

- 4

Event-Based and Internship Experience Questions
 - How effective were event-based internships in preparing trainees for real roles?
 - What was the total financial benefit earned by trainees through events?
 - Did on-ground exposure improve soft skills and time management?

- 5

Social Media and Motivation-Related Questions
 - How did LinkedIn success stories impact student motivation and center visibility?
 - Does digital branding influence employer trust and public credibility?

- 6

Documentation, Monitoring, and Quality Evaluation Questions
 - How effectively was performance tracked across key metrics?
 - Are systems in place for documenting success stories and feedback?
 - What challenges exist in maintaining accurate records?

Operational Objectives: Day-to-Day Execution

Mobilize Trainees

Targeted field outreach ensures high enrollment and wide geographic reach.

Maintain Detailed Documentation

High placement and joining proof collection rates ensure accountability and transparency.

Run Soft Skill Sessions

Personality development sessions prepare trainees behaviorally for the workplace.

Ensure Residential Facility Use

Managing logistics, food, and safety for hostel and transit accommodation.



Research Methodology and Data Validation

This chapter elucidates the structured approach for data collection, verification, analysis, and presentation within this report. The methodology ensures transparency, objectivity, and completeness in capturing the AU Flagship Program's performance at the Nagaur Center for FY 2024–25 and projections for FY 2025–26. The report integrates both quantitative and qualitative data from official documents, field inputs, stakeholder interactions, and observational analysis.

Research Design

The study employs a descriptive and evaluative research design, focusing on recording factual data (enrollments, placements), describing performance trends, evaluating training-to-placement effectiveness, and identifying challenges for improvement. This approach creates a comprehensive and verifiable record of the center's activities.

Data Sources

Both primary and secondary data were collected from multiple reliable sources:

- **Primary:** Direct feedback from trainers, mobilizers, placed students; one-on-one discussions with center managers; observations of training and hostel facilities; field notes from Kaushal Connect and placement events.
- **Secondary:** Internal AU Review Meeting PPT (May 3, 2025); placement and joining confirmations; attendance and retention records; fitment test results; LinkedIn screenshots; past reports and NSDC guidelines.

Data Collection Techniques

A multi-tool approach ensured a complete picture:

- **Document Review:** Analysis of enrollment, attendance, placement, and training logs.
- **Interviews & Feedback:** Semi-structured interviews with selected students.
- **Observation Method:** Direct observation of the center's environment.
- **Case Study Method:** Analysis of individual success stories like Sayed Samir Ali.
- **Online & Social Media Audit:** Review of LinkedIn success posts and digital presence.

Data Validation and Verification

A multi-layered verification system ensured data accuracy:

- Cross-checking placement data with employer proofs and telephonic confirmations.
- Matching attendance records with training logs.
- Adjusting enrollment post-dropout.
- Confirming retention with both students and employers.
- Verifying social media success stories with internal documentation.

Key Results and Analysis:

This chapter presents the key results achieved by the Center of Excellence – Nagaur under the AU Flagship Program for FY 2024–25. It covers enrollment performance, placement success, retention status, gender participation, and the impact of success stories. Each outcome is supported by robust data and visual charts, demonstrating the program's effectiveness and its contribution to skill development.

101%

Enrollment Achieved

Percentage of enrollment target achieved after adjusting for dropouts, indicating strong mobilization.

81%

Placement Success Rate

Out of 432 trained candidates, 351 were successfully placed, showcasing high effectiveness.

93%

Placement Proof

Percentage of placement proofs successfully collected, indicating strong documentation.

73%

6-Month Retention

Retention rate reflecting sustained employment and post-placement support, an improvement from FY 2023–24.

Gender-wise Participation



Summary Table of Key Results (FY 2024–25)

Performance Indicator	Result Achieved
Total Enrollment (post-dropout)	101%
Total Trained	432
Total Placed	351 (81%)
Placement Proof Received	328 (93%)
Joining Proof Received	265 (75%)
6-Month Retention Rate	73%
Total LinkedIn Success Stories	390+
Female Participation	24%
Specially-Abled Candidates Trained & Placed	1
Earnings from Event-Based Internships	₹98,300

Discussion: Program Strengths and Areas for Growth

The Program at the Center of Excellence – Nagaur demonstrates strong performance across enrollment, training completion, placement, and retention. This discussion section reflects on the implications of these results, highlighting observed patterns throughout the training lifecycle and evaluating the program's effectiveness in achieving the Skill India mission. It also identifies areas for continued strengthening to ensure long-term success and scalability.

Enrollment & Community Mobilization

The 101% enrollment achievement underscores the success of the mobilization team and growing community trust. However, sustaining student retention beyond the initial weeks requires ongoing counseling, especially for female and economically weaker students. Mobilizers are crucial not just for recruitment but also for providing emotional support.

Training Quality & Industry Readiness

An 81% placement rate, well above the national average, reflects the high quality of training. Integrating practical exposure through events like the Sufi Festival significantly enhances confidence and familiarizes students with real work environments, while also providing short-term income. The effectiveness of industry-experienced trainers highlights the need for continued investment in quality personnel.

Placement, Distance Sensitivity & Retention

While placement numbers are robust, job location significantly impacts the 73% retention rate. Placements closer to Nagaur yield better continuity, whereas metro cities see higher dropout rates due to adaptation challenges, cultural differences, and safety concerns. This suggests hyperlocal or regionally-matched placements are key for sustainable employment.

Inclusion of Female & Specially-Abled Candidates

The program's commitment to social inclusion is evident with 24% female participation and one successfully placed specially-abled candidate. However, family pressure and cultural attitudes remain barriers to female retention in distant placements or non-traditional sectors. Community engagement and showcasing female alumni success stories are crucial for improving these ratios.

Importance of Digital Presence

The 390+ LinkedIn success stories have a multi-layered impact: boosting candidate confidence, increasing trust among prospective trainees, and improving employer perception. Expanding these digital efforts with video testimonials and employer feedback will further strengthen the Nagaur center's public brand.

Event-Based Training as a Scalable Model

Internships at places like Ranwas Hotel, generating ₹98,300 in earnings, prove the model's potential for skill refinement, customer interaction training, and financial motivation. Expanding partnerships with event management firms and resorts is recommended to scale these opportunities across other Skill India centers.

Lessons and Areas for Strengthening

- Accelerate collection of placement and joining proofs.
- Formalize soft skill modules, especially in English and client handling.
- Implement mentorship models for students relocating for jobs.
- Enhance documentation of field challenges by mobilizers for improved feedback loops.

Overall, the program's performance reflects a mature, evolving, and replicable model that consistently meets or exceeds national benchmarks.

Recommendations for Program Improvement

Based on insights from FY 2024–25, the following actionable recommendations are proposed:

📌 Strengthen Female Retention

Launch mentorship programs and safe placement zones for female trainees to reduce dropouts in distant locations.

📌 Expand Local Employer Network

Focus on hyperlocal placement opportunities (within 100–150 km) to improve retention beyond 6 months

📌 Formalize Soft Skills Curriculum

Integrate structured English communication and grooming modules into all trade-based training sessions

📌 Enhance Digital Documentation

Use cloud-based systems for real-time upload of proofs, photos, and trainee records to avoid data loss or delays

📌 Scale Event-Based Learning

Institutionalize partnerships with hotels, event firms, and industries for more hands-on, paid exposure.





Limitations of the Program & Study



Proof Collection Gaps

Not all employers shared timely joining letters; verification sometimes relied on verbal or indirect evidence.



Follow-Up Challenges

Students changing phone numbers post-placement made follow-up difficult in some cases.



Limited Geographical Scope

This review is limited to the Nagaur center; findings may not represent other AU centers or pan-India trends.



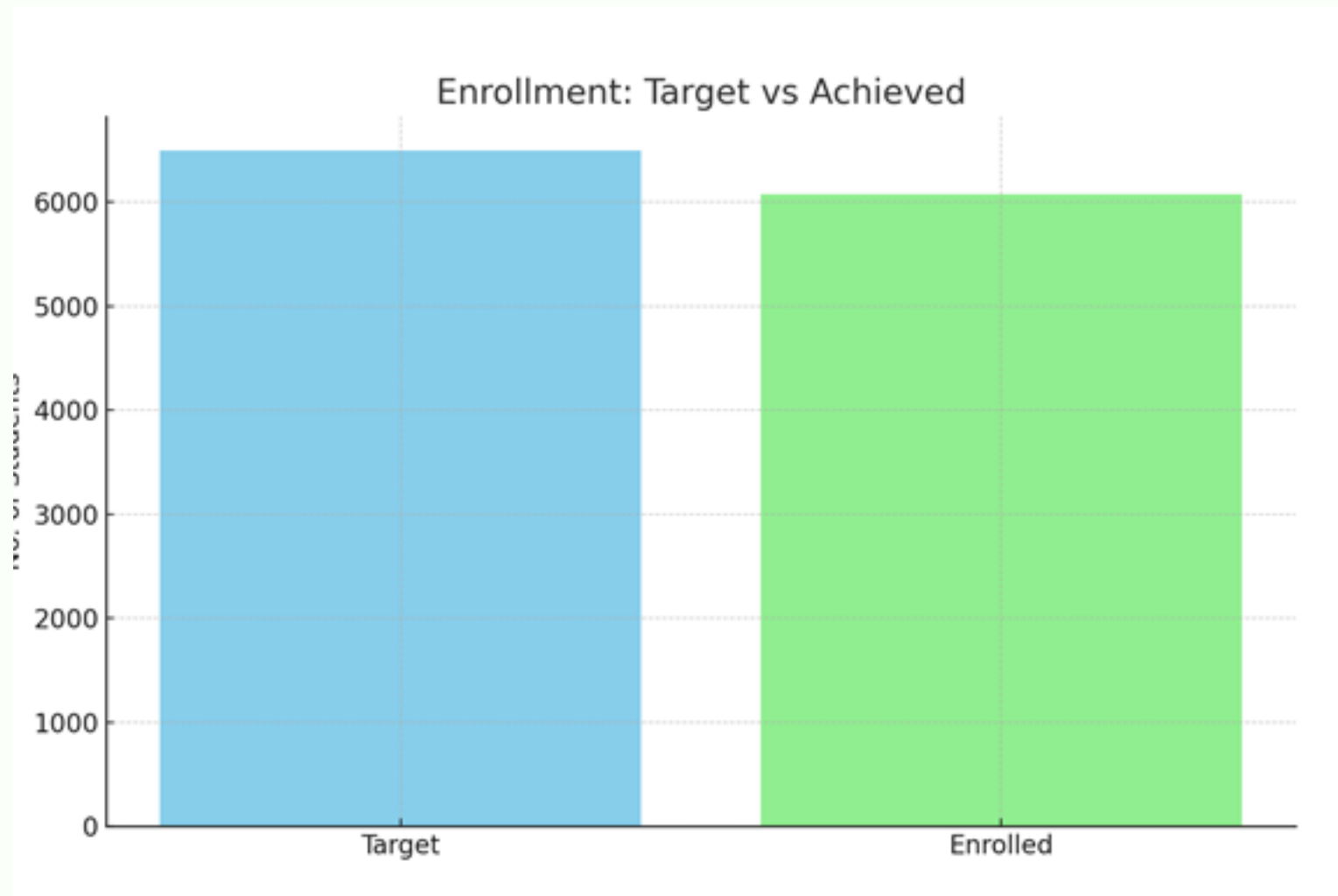
Short-Term Impact Analysis

Most outcomes are measured up to 6 months. Long-term sustainability (1 year+) remains unverified.



Center of Excellence – Nagaur: FY 2024–25 Results

This presentation highlights the key achievements of the Center of Excellence – Nagaur under the AU Flagship Program for FY 2024–25. We will cover enrollment, placement success, retention, gender participation, and the impact of success stories.



Enrollment Performance: Exceeding Expectations

The Nagaur Center achieved 98% of its enrollment target pre-dropout and an impressive 101% post-dropout adjustment. This demonstrates strong mobilisation, effective outreach, and community engagement, validating the center's field-level strategies.

This success aligns with NSDC's best practices, where 90%+ enrollment signifies high performance. The center's ability to recover from initial dropout challenges and surpass targets showcases efficient follow-up, strong community reputation, and flexible planning.

Key Results Overview: FY 2024–25

The Nagaur Center has demonstrated robust performance across various indicators for FY 2024–25, showcasing its commitment to skill development and employment. The consolidated results highlight significant achievements in training, placement, and retention.

Performance Indicator	Result Achieved
Total Enrollment (post-dropout)	101%
Total Trained	432
Total Placed	351 (81%)
Placement Proof Received	328 (93%)
Joining Proof Received	265 (75%)
6-Month Retention Rate	73%
Total LinkedIn Success Stories	390+
Female Participation	24%
Specially-Abled Candidates Trained & Placed	1
Earnings from Event-Based Internships	₹98,300

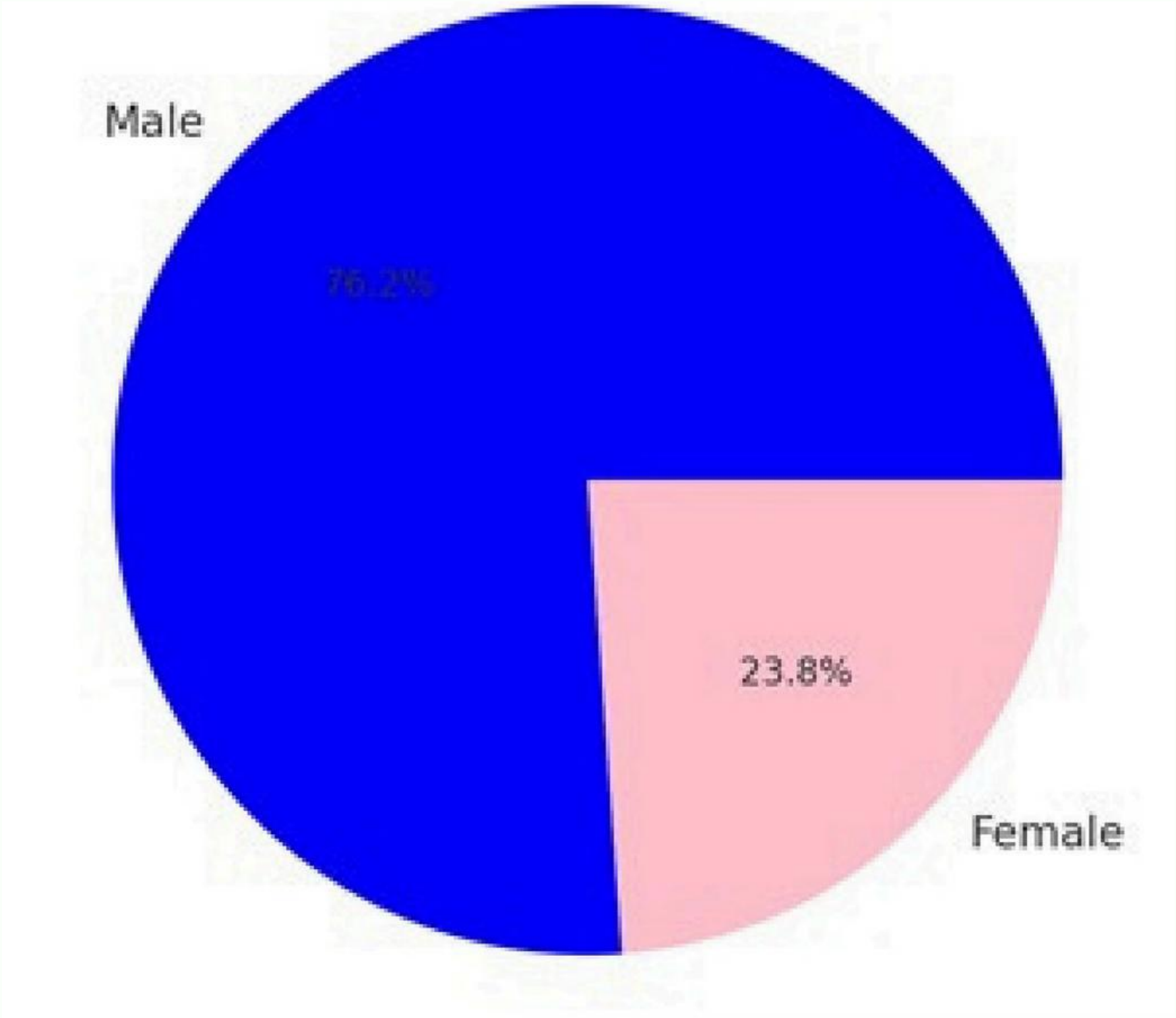
Placement Documentation Status

High Placement Proof Collection Rate (93%)

328 out of 351 placed candidates submitted placement proof, indicating effective documentation and employer engagement. This figure suggests most placements were formalised, aligning with ILO vocational training quality benchmarks for excellent system discipline.

Moderate Joining Proof Collection Rate (75%)

265 candidates submitted joining proofs. The 18% gap between placement and joining proof suggests some candidates may not have joined or dropped out early, or employers delayed documentation. Remote placements also face follow-up delays.



Document Type	Count / Percentage
Total Placement Proof Received	328 (93%)
Total Joining Proof Received	265 (75%)



Training Quality and Industry Readiness

The training quality, evidenced by fitment test results and an 81% placement rate, aligns positively with industry expectations, significantly exceeding the national average for vocational programs. Practical exposure through events like the Sufi Festival enhanced confidence and familiarised students with real work environments, providing short-term income.

Trainers with industry backgrounds were more effective in preparing students for interviews and soft skills, highlighting the need for continued investment in quality training personnel. This practical approach ensures students are well-prepared for industry demands.

Inclusion and Digital Presence Impact

Inclusion of Female and Specially-Abled Candidates

The program's commitment to social inclusion is evident with 24% female participation and one specially-abled candidate successfully trained and placed. However, female students often face pressure to drop out if placements are distant, with family approval and community attitudes being key barriers.

Community engagement efforts, such as family meetings and sharing female alumni success stories, are suggested to improve these ratios and foster greater acceptance.

Importance of Digital Presence and Success Stories

The use of LinkedIn and social media for sharing over 390 success stories has significantly boosted candidate confidence, increased trust among prospective trainees, and improved employer perception of the center's quality.

Expanding these digital efforts with video testimonials and employer feedback will further strengthen the Nagaur center's brand in the public eye, attracting more talent and partnerships.

Event-Based Training: A Scalable Model

Event-based internships, such as those at Ranwas Hotel and ITC Jaipur, provided students with ₹98,300 in earnings and invaluable real-world experience. This model offers skill refinement under pressure, customer interaction training, and financial motivation during learning, making it a potential standardised feature for all Skill India centers.

Developing more partnerships with event management firms, resorts, and local businesses is recommended to expand these opportunities. Despite some areas for improvement, the overall performance reflects a mature, evolving, and replicable model that meets or exceeds national benchmarks.





Thank
you