

Youth Employment Scheme (YES) in Kashmir

A tough beginning

It has been a tough journey right from the beginning to create an institution in Kashmir. We were little skeptic about the things out here. A volatile state where situation could turn worse from being 'peaceful' within seconds. Here everything that had the affiliation of government would be looked upon as if against the interests of the society. Even a single gesture that would seem against the sentiments of people will lead us to trouble. But, despite these hardships, NYKS initiative in collaboration with B-Able sailed and sailed high through the troubled waters of Kashmir. So far first batch of students successfully completed with almost every student getting a job at the end of their training.

But it was not as easy as it seems, there were so many questions to be answered, so many queries to face. Every day, Why, Where, How and raised eyebrows sought our answers. Sometimes our phones didn't stop ringing...so on and so forth.

Early Journey

The journey started throughout the country under the YES scheme to train youth particularly those who had dropped out of school for some or the other reason. The NYKS had started the Youth Employment Scheme (YES), in which a number of institutions were selected to help the youth to compete and survive in the corporate world. So in Kashmir valley, it was B-able who got the opportunity to carry forward the YES project that spanned over 3 months.

During this process we had to face innumerable challenges that prevailed in the society, apart from those present in the corporate world to find jobs for the trainee's.

The biggest challenge to start with was the induction process. It was a difficult task to do. Select the area, begin the conversation, and win their confidence in such a situation where you were looked upon with suspicion, every time you opened your mouth.

The first question that we had to face during the process a lot was like, "Who are you? Why are doing this?" Some even asked, "How can you help us, when higher educated people are running from pillar to post for a job?" Well that is the bitter truth but these queries could not lessen our confidence.

A difficult start

We had managed to scout a batch of more than fifty trainees to be trained for the next three months. And the YES project was on...!

First Week: The majority of the students belonged to the rural areas, far away as much as 100Km from the main city. Their understanding, perception and awareness were altogether different from each other. Their communication, interaction and understanding were limited. To overcome this problem, we decided to conduct Group discussions.

And we were satisfied to note that those students who at the beginning were not able to talk properly with each other, communicated so well that it looked like they knew each other for years.

After first two months, to test the ability of the students, they were given a chance to prove themselves by enrolling in an internship program in Kashmir. And our hard work over the months had given us fruits of success. We got a positive feedback from almost all the companies where these trainees were enrolled.

This made us more confident about their placements. And eventually, at the time of selections, out of 45 trainees appeared for interview and 42 got selected.

After successfully conducting the interview session, another problem arose and this was even more difficult. The students had to go to out of the state for their job. Some of the trainees had not stepped out of their towns, and here the situation was grim. It made us skeptic 'Whether they will be able to adjust themselves in an unknown environment'. And not so long some of them proved us wrong, as numbers of students trained are busy with their jobs. Though few of them had trouble adjusting themselves.

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