Certificate Programme in Motorcycle Service and Repair (CMSR): An Innovative Programme Design

The IGNOU-HMCL Motorcycle Technicians Vocational Qualification Project (IH- MTVQP) is a collaborative initiative of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) and Hero MotoCorp Ltd. (HMCL), world's no 1 motor cycle manufacturing company, towards the competency based skill development training for the motorcycle technicians of the country. Under the project, a Certificate Programme in Motorcycle Service and Repair (CMSR) is on offer since April, 2006. The innovative programme design of the CMSR programme includes firstly, the theoretical and demonstrative training of learners at PSCs and then attaching them to actual work place to practice what is learnt. In fact, it is a perfect example of education-work linkage in vocational education where industry is participating shoulder-to-shoulder in terms of arranging the hands-on job training of the learners in the actual work place. Here, the learners are exposed to real world situations and the challenges of the field. Under innovative evaluation mechanism, the learners are continuously evaluated by their trainer during the hands-on training session apart from participating in Trade Test at the end of the programme.

Introduction

The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), the largest open university in the world, in the pursuit of its consistent endeavour for quality, access and equity has joined hands with Hero MotoCorp Ltd. (HMCL), world's no. 1 motorcycle manufacturing company, to initiate a competency-based skill development programme under IGNOU-HMCL Motorcycle Technicians Vocational Qualification Project (IH-MTVQP) (popularly known as IGNOU-HERO Project). It is a collaborative initiative of IGNOU and HMCL towards the competency based skill development training for the existing motorcycle technicians and educated raw learners of the country.

Under the project, a non-credit Certificate Programme in Motorcycle Service and Repair (CMSR) is on offer since April, 2006. The salient features of the programme include use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), resource sharing, education-work linkage, competency based training, and fulfilment of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

Background

It had been observed that due to non-availability of skilled and certified technicians in the locale, a large number of motorcycle owners (around 70% as per the estimation of HMCL) visit untrained technicians for the service and repair of their motorcycles after the expiry of warrantee period and in the process, they face several problems due to inept handling of their vehicles. It is a well-known fact that such technicians lack appropriate skills due to non-availability of avenues for such trainings.

Therefore, to mitigate this problem, it was felt necessary that motorcycle technicians working in private garages or in authorised dealers' workshops be provided structured training in motorcycle service and repair to enhance their skills in tune with the changing techniques and technologies.

Figure 1 : Student technician practising their skills.

The Creative Process

Apart from the qualitative reasons cited above, the other motivational reason for initiating the project is quantitative too. Keeping in view the motorcycle population on the roads, the service and repair capacity of authorised dealers' workshops and its growth is heavily disproportionate. This deficit of the service and repair capacity of authorised dealers' workshops can be overcome with the growing number of trained and certified motorcycle technicians working in private garages.

Thus, it is in the interest of the motorcycle manufacturing companies to search for an alternative mechanism to create service and repair facilities for the motorcycles. The IGNOU-HERO Project is helping them in this endeavour by creating a pool of trained and certified technicians capable of handling the additional load without compromising on the confidence level of the customers.

About the Innovation

a. Description

The innovation contains the following features:

1. Use of ICT : The very first activity of the programme, i.e., Induction and Orientation Session for students of CMSR programme conducted through teleconferencing from EMPC, IGNOU, New Delhi.

2. Resource Sharing : All nine existing training centres of HHML recognised as PSC (v) FOR THIS PROGRAMME AND A STRONG NETWORK OF HHML Dealers' Workshops is being used as Work Centre for imparting Hands on Training to the learners (Fig. 2).

3. Education – Work Linkage : Intense participation of industry all along in delivery of the programme making this model of public-Private Partnership (PPP) as a good example of industry–institute interaction.

4. Competency based Training : The training methodology adopted on the basis of Competency Statement developed for the programme. Here the stress is on "doing the work" instead of "knowing the work".

5. Fulfilment of CSR from HHML side : Hero Honda Motors Ltd. Sponsoring this project and working towards the betterment of technicians, the backbone of automobile industry is an example of discharging their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

6. Fulfilment of mandate of the University : As per the Act of the University, it has a mandate to initiate programmes for disadvantaged and marginalised segments of the society. This vocational training programme certainly fulfils the objective of the university.

Figure 2. A view of a workshop.

b. Novelty

The innovative programme design of CMSR programme includes firstly, the theoretical and demonstrative training of learners at training centres and then attaching them to actual work place to practice what is learnt. In fact, it is a perfect example of education-work linkage in vocational education where industry is participating shoulder-to-shoulder in terms of arranging the hands-on job training of the learners in the actual work place. Here, the learners are exposed to real world situations and the challenges of the field. Under effective evaluation mechanism, the learners are continuously evaluated by their trainer during the hands-on training session apart from participating in Trade Test at the end of the programme.

The vocational training model developed for CMSR programme is a live case study of implementing this kind of programme though ODL. It breaks the myth that ODL system is not capable/suitable for vocational training due to the problems in imparting hands-on training. As a matter of fact, the flexibility and industry participation being the corner stone in the programme design of CMSR, which is, otherwise, a difficult task in formal system.

c. Usefulness

The CMSR programme is very useful for the working motorcycle technicians whose training and certification needs cannot be addressed by any conventional and formal system of education. These technicians are attached with the workbench and long absence from their work is not possible for them.

In addition, the CMSR programme has been extended to the jail inmates of different Central Jails including, Central Jail, Baroda; Sabarmati Central Jail, Ahmedabad and Tihar Central Jail, New Delhi. This has created a positive impact in the lives of the jail inmates having developed skills in their hands helping them for legitimate livelihood after their release.

d. Reach

On the one hand, the programme aims at the general disadvantaged section of the society and on the other hand, it caters the customised need of specific marginalised class of technicians in general and skill development for jail inmates in particular.

e. Cost effectiveness

The whole programme is an industry sponsored project. Hero MotoCorp Ltd. (erstwhile Hero Honda Motors Ltd.) in their own calculations, while sponsoring the project for last 15 years finds this much cheaper option for handling the repair and service needs of the motorcycles plying on the roads in excess to the installed repair and service facilities of dealers' workshops.

f. Scalability

The innovative vocational education model developed for the motorcycle technicians may be helpful for designing similar kinds of vocational education and training programmes though Open & Distance Learning (ODL). Keeping in view the target population and vocations specifics, the contact sessions and other delivery components may be suitably designed.

Within the IGNOU-HERO Project, the training activities in various jails are taking a shape of separate vertical of Training in Jails and accordingly many jails are coming forward to launch the programme in the jails for their inmates.

g. Sustainability

The industry participation with an academic institution not only in terms of sponsoring the ODL project, its continuous involvement in the delivery of the programme is the strength of the model. In fact, the design and implementation parameters of this project are quite innovative in nature in comparison with conventional industry sponsored projects. This kind of Programme, if developed, certainly has long-term impact on ODL system in term of its continuous refinement in delivery mechanism.

h. Implementation and impact

Till now, over 14,000 learners have already been trained and certified under this programme through its existing network of 43 training centres located across the country. Under Skilling India

mission of Govt. of India, the CMSR programme needs to be made available to all the motorcycle technicians to cater their customised need of training/re-training and certification.

About the Innovator

Prof. Manoj Kulshrestha is presently the Director of National Centre for Innovation in Distance Education (NCIDE) at Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). He is also the Professor of Civil Engineering in School of Engineering and Technology (SOET) where he teaches Construction Project Management. He has designed and implemented several innovative training projects in engineering such as IGNOU-CIDC Construction Education and Training Project and the IGNOU-HERO Motorcycle Technicians Vocational Qualification Project. He has also worked as Director of Campus Placement Cell (CPC) of IGNOU during 2013-2016.

He has published over 30 research and technical papers in various International/National journals and leading conferences. A widely travelled scholar, Prof. Kulshrestha has delivered many keynote addresses/expert lectures in various international and national forums.

He has received many awards for his innovations. He is the recipient of all India University Gold Medal in 2008 for the innovation in Distance Education for his vocational educational initiative. He was awarded Scroll of Commendation by Construction Industry Development Council (CIDC) in recognition to his contribution to academic excellence in construction industry. He was also awarded World Education Award 2011 and World Educational Leadership Award 2011 for his innovative vocational education initiative under IGNOU-HERO Project.

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