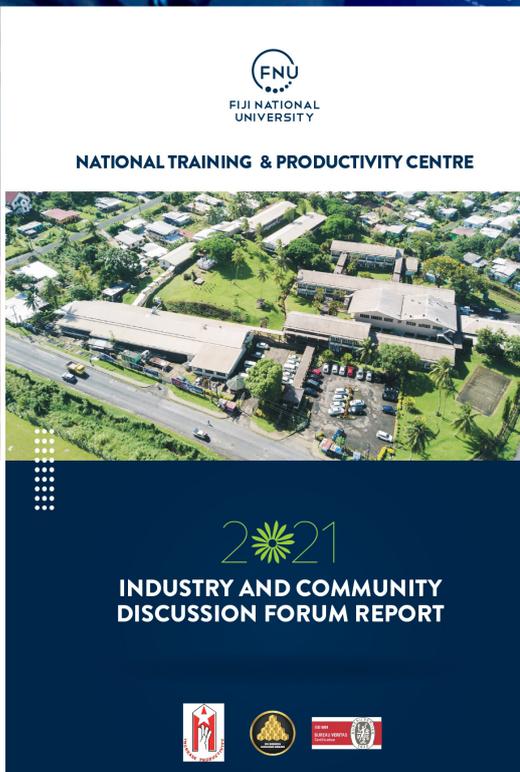


NTPC launches 2021 ICDF Report

FNU
FIJI NATIONAL
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2021
INDUSTRY AND COMMUNITY
DISCUSSION FORUM REPORT



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NTPC launches 2021 ICDF Report



NTPC's ICDF team members Manasa Bainivatu (second from left) and Amrish Narayan (second from right) with the firefighters in Levuka earlier this year.

The Fiji National University's (FNU) National Training and Productivity Centre (NTPC) released its 2021 Industry Community Discussion Forum (ICDF) Report today. The report contains a review of existing and forecasted skills gaps in the workforce in Fiji, as well as planned remedial actions to address these gaps by the institution.

The NTPC, which is also the National Productivity Organisation of Fiji, conducts this annual study by identifying workforce upskilling and re-skilling areas. This assists the Centre in strengthening and ensuring the relevance of its training courses for organisations in Fiji.

Director NTPC, Dr Isimeli Tagicakiverata, said that the study also considered the impact of Covid-19 on businesses and employees. It was conducted earlier this year in major parts of Fiji - Sigatoka, Nadi, Lautoka, Ba, Tavua, Rakiraki, Labasa, Savusavu, Levuka and Suva.

"The 2021 Industry Community Discussion Forum Report contains feedback from more than 200 organisations from various sectors in Fiji. We collected feedback through industry visits and an online survey from the public and private sector employers and employees from various occupational fields and different employment ranks. The study also includes community groups, Non-Government Organisations, and Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)," Dr Tagicakiverata said.

"It was encouraging to note the positive contributions of Fiji's industry leaders and employers to get the economy back on track."

According to the 2021 ICDF Report, the industries and sectors that have indicated the greatest need for upskilling included the public sector, tourism and hotel industry, construction sector, food and beverage industry.

In addition, the skill-sets most commonly demanded by various industries in upskilling their workforces included Occupational Health and Safety, Human Resources, Information Technology, Trade Testing, Leadership skills and Productivity improvement.

"As Fiji slowly tries to get back on its feet, NTPC is playing its part to upskill people in their respective fields of work. We have mapped out plans to educate and re-skill our national workforce so they can take the country forward on the path to prosperity. In this small way we are contributing to the Fijian Governments' efforts," Dr Tagicakiverata said.

The ICDF 2021 Report was launched by Dr Tagicakiverata and witnessed by the heads of the various organisations, senior leaders of FNU, and industry representatives.



2021 ICDF Online Survey showing Prevalence of skills training programmes undertaken at NTPC

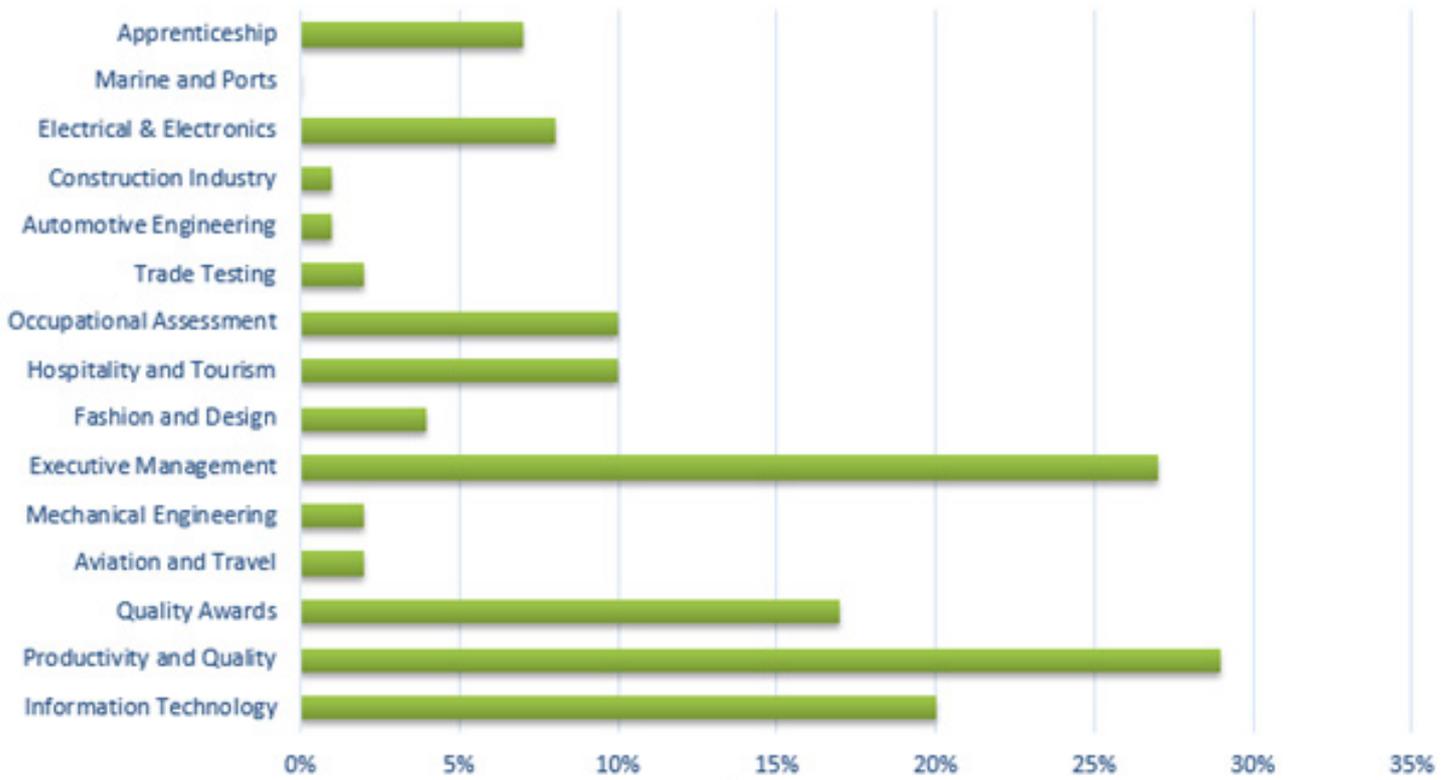


Figure 1

Figure 1 shows the most popular programmes offered by NTPC for the workforce, including upskilling, are Productivity and Quality related programmes at 29 percent, followed by Executive Management short courses at 27 percent, Information Technology related courses at 20 percent, and Quality Awards at 17 percent. NTPC has been prevalent in Apprenticeship training as well at seven percent. There is a need to hike numbers in Technical Trade areas such as Construction, Automotive Engineering and Mechanical Engineering. However, it can be assumed that not many persons from these fields participated in the 2021 ICDF online survey.

Prevalence of Productivity programmes (tools) in the Fijian Workforce

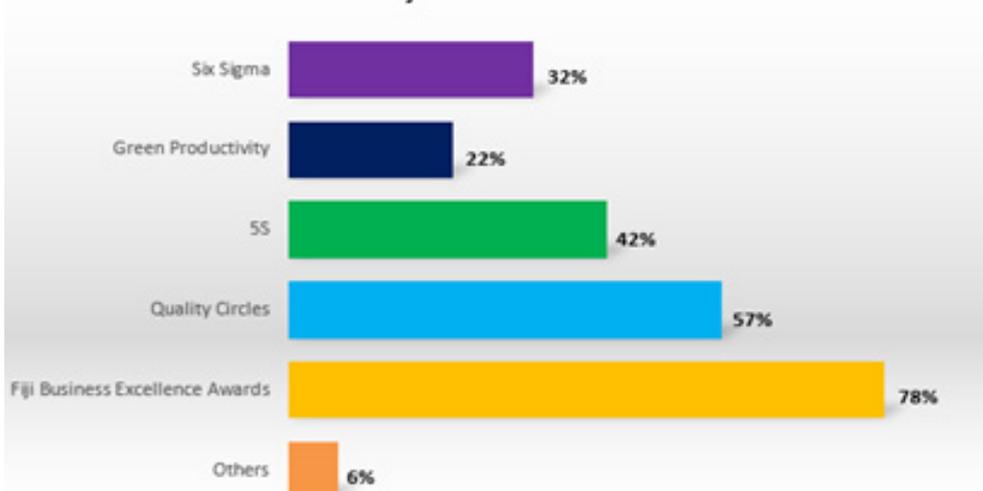


Figure 2

Figure 2 shows the dynamic range of consultancy and training courses in Productivity related tools. The most popular implemented in the various industries is the Fiji Business Excellence Awards, at 78 percent. The FBEA adopts the US-based Malcolm Baldrige Framework is designed to improve workforce productivity and process and product quality amongst organisations. The second most popular tool is Quality Circles at 57 percent, 5S at 42 percent, Six Sigma at 32 percent, and Green Productivity at 22 percent. However, 38 percent of the respondents indicated they never engaged any of these tools. Therefore, this is the segment that NTPC's needs to reach out to implement best business practices in organisations.

Skills Gap Training Identified Across All Industries

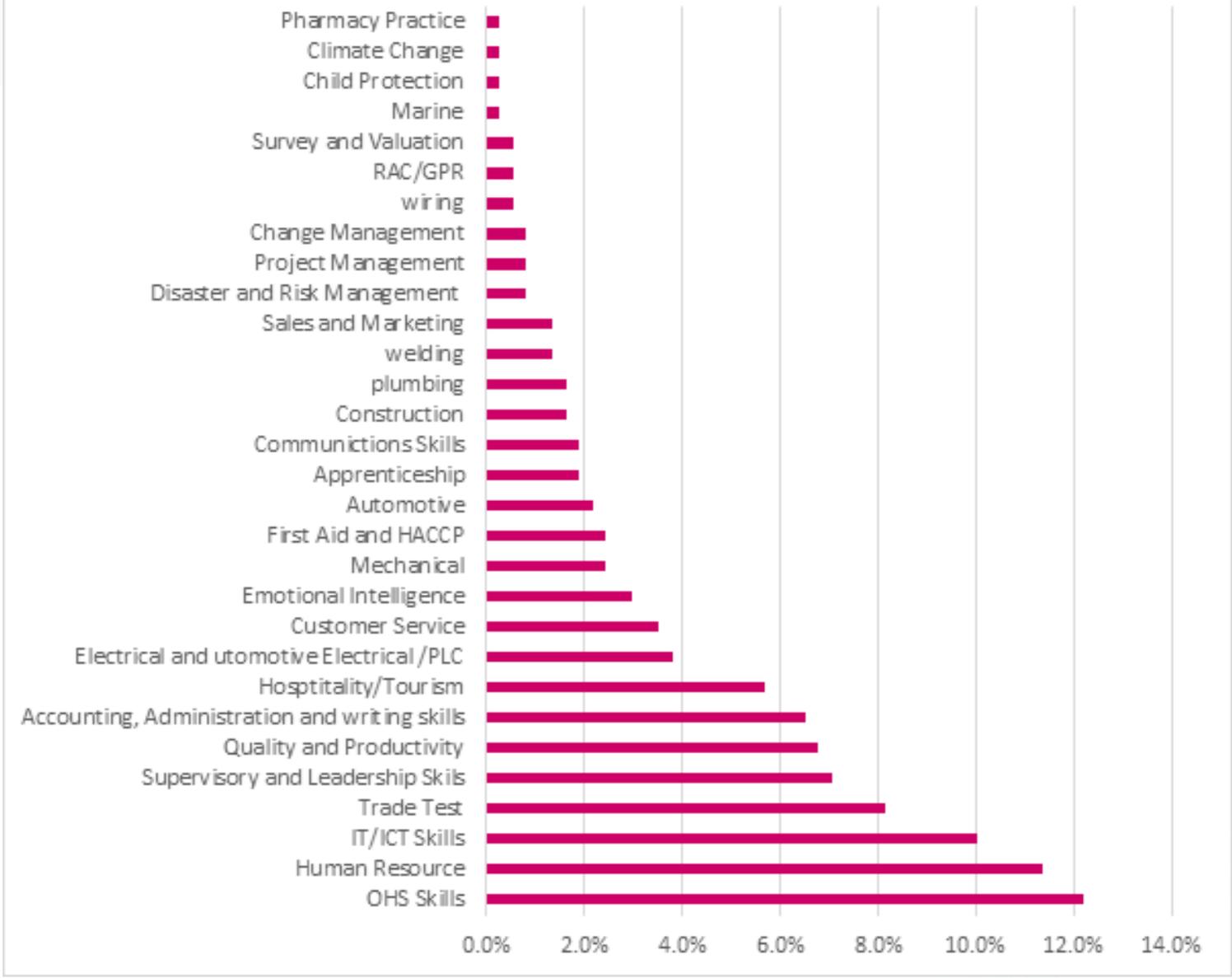


Figure 3 Figure 3 shows the skills sets that are popularly demanded by the various industries in upskilling their workforce was identified during the ICDF 2021. The most popular skills demand it is for Occupational, Health and Safety, followed by Human Resource and Information Technology and others. One of the main objectives of the Industry and Community Discussion Forum is to gain an insight into the various skills required to bridge the existing skills gaps in our workforce. Through personal meetings during industry visits and the online survey, popular skill set gaps were identified.

Education is a ladder to your success, says Kumar

Education is key for individuals to unlock their full potential and live a successful life, says Ashween Kumar, who is interested in studying the National Training and Productivity Centre's Training of Trainers modules.

Kumar is currently pursuing a Master of Commerce in Accounting and holds a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting and a Postgraduate Diploma in Accounting from the Fiji National University.

The 33-year-old, who works as a Finance and Human Resource Officer for a Government Statutory Agency, said NTPC's TOTs modules are highly recognised in the work field.

"With time, individuals should upgrade their qualifications so that they can work in diverse fields, and find new opportunities to grow and enhance their professional and personal development," Kumar said.

"My wife and I have been interested in the TOTs programme for some years and wanted to explore the options and we are glad it was given to us via the internet platform."

"I have spent years working in the financial and human resource areas, developing policies, coordinating staff training and



submitting budgets proposals, and doing other assigned responsibilities. After completing the programme, I will be able to teach and coach new employees as they begin their careers. I like assisting people in realising their full potential with the help of my experience in my field of work. Guiding the employees would help them, their families, and the country as a whole would benefit."

"I learned about TOTs programme through a friend, and my wife and I discussed it further; if all goes as planned, we may join soon."

Kumar said that his message to the young students was to prioritise their education.

"In today's society, if you want to advance in life, your qualifications are critical, which means you must experience hardship and walk on tough roads to get there,"

"Our parents have worked tirelessly to ensure our success, and it is time for the younger generation to provide them with a comfortable life after retirement, which can only be done with a solid education and a steady profession that provides for your family's needs."

NTPC provides TOTs Module 1, 2, and 3 at the Nabua and Naceva camps, and interested parties can obtain further information by contacting info.ntpc@fnu.ac.fj.

Singh plans to turn passion into a profession

Arrell Singh has always had a passion for cooking and pastry, and he is planning to turn that passion into a career through the National Training and Productivity Centre programmes.



The 21-year-old enquired and expressed a strong desire to work in the hospitality business. His interests and passions include commercial cooking and pastry and he now wants to further develop his skills with the relevant courses and qualifications.

Having gained some hands-on experience via his own creativity, he wishes to obtain appropriate training and skill set to become a valuable contributor to the hotel business.

"I am intrigued by NTPC's excellent presentation and career path prospects in terms of training and skill set upgrading," Singh stated.

During the FNU's Virtual Open Week last month, Singh, originally from Nabulo, Tailevu, enquired about the courses he could enrol in.

"I have had a long-standing interest in cooking and pastry, and I enjoy preparing various foods for my family and friends. I constantly post images and videos of the foods and pastries

that I prepare on Facebook, and people have been loving and positively commenting on my posts," he explained.

"This has motivated and encouraged me to think about turning my passion into a profession as Fiji is renowned for its tourism industry, and I would count myself fortunate if I could in any way contribute towards the tourism sector and help the Fijian economy."

Singh believes being a chef is an important profession, but at the same time, it could be very challenging and face a lot of criticism when the dishes do not impress people.

"Being a chef is not an easy job as you have to cook with your team considering the people whom you are serving and their likes and dislikes. When people enter into the restaurants, they expect a top level of service and food, so you have to be on your toes and serve them with your best menus," he said.

"So far, I have not received any negative criticism, but I want to better my skills and knowledge from a reputable academic institute that can help me get a stable future. The virtual open day platform has enabled me to grasp a lot of information, allowing me to make a productive decision about my career.

"I look forward to enhancing my skills and knowledge by enrolling at the NTPC."

NTPC's technical programmes consist of 30% theory and 70% practical.

For more information contact us on info.ntpc.ac.fj

The National Training and Productivity Centre's Build the Future is a monthly newsletter which aims to promote the Centre's activities to the wider community. This newsletter is produced by the Centres Customer Service, Research and Promotion team. For views or comments please email pravin.narain@fnu.ac.fj.

Build the future welcomes submission by staff and students for publication in the newsletter. Please send your suggestions, comments or articles for consideration to pravin.narain@fnu.ac.fj