

Abstract

The present study is aimed to be located in Ukhrul district under the state of Manipur where we can observe that more than 70 per cent of the total population of the district is directly or indirectly depended on agricultural activities (Source: Baseline Survey of Minority Concentrated Districts, Ukhrul District Report, by OKD Institute of Social Change and Development: Guwahati) as other sectors particularly the industrial sector still have to initiate its inception in the area which is established from the District Industrial Potential Survey Report of Imphal West which reveals the total absence of the micro, small and medium scale industry in the district. The educational institutions in Manipur are continuously producing educated youths in the region which is also reflected from the literacy rate (81.35) of the district according to 2011 census. The issue here is, these educated youth are depending on the public-sector for their job which is almost negligible (according to Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Government of Manipur only 4173 people from Ukhrul district were engaged in public sector as on 31st March 2015) in the area, instead of planning on the basis of resources available in the area, consequently there is rampant unemployment which is proved from the number of unemployed (52%) in Ukhrul district according to the census 2011. Hence there is a total mismatch between the supply of workers and the demand for services sectors. Moreover, the work participation rate of the district according to 2011 census is merely 47.79 %, (49.13% males and 46.37% females) which also narrate the story of the grim condition of unemployment in the district.

The problem is threatening today because these are educated people and hence can become dangerously vocal. The mounting trend of crime in the area is an attestation of the fact (5174 cases were registered during 2014-15 in comparison to 1606 cases in 2013-14 according to the Economic Survey of Manipur, 2015-16). Moreover, the amount of casualties (408 lives in 2007 according to Ministry of Home Affairs) that is caused by the participation of these youth in insurgent movements is also an indicator of the crisis.

Therefore the present study attempts to first find out the socio-economic background of the unemployed youths and also understand the status, causes, patterns, and impact of unemployment and in the process suggest remedial measures to address the issue in the study area. The study on the topic is pertinent looking at the intensity of the problem in the area and also the dearth of serious research work that has been undertaken on the topic in the area. This study is an endeavor of meaningfully suggesting intervention steps on the roots of unemployment through a scientific approach to research work.

The study shows that though most of the respondents are educated, they mostly have an only educational degree; the numbers of respondents with vocational training is very few, though most of them who have the training find it useful. Hence the study clearly reveals lack of vocational training among the respondents though most of them find it useful for them Kengoo (2012) Mandal, & Ali, (2001) Moreover most of the respondents feel that the reason for their unemployment is the lack of the requirements of the employers which raises a question on the quality of the education that is provided in the state making them almost unemployable (Dev, & Venkatanarayana, 2011, Himanshu, 2008.) In the present study, most of the educated respondents are facing the problem of underemployment where they are underemployed because their qualification does not match the job due to the failure of carrier guidance, lack of skills, mismatch of salary negotiation etc. The Marxist theory of unemployment can be observed here when the huge rise in the number of educated unemployment leading to the amplification of under employment is encouraging the employers in the area to pay even low wage to the respondents and force them to work in poor working condition which are why they are forced to leave jobs and remain idle. Even after the amplification of the crisis of unemployment in the area the instances of entrepreneur endeavours is not coming up mainly because of lack of infrastructure as communication facility, loan facility, electricity supply etc., which is why most of the respondents are thinking of joining insurgent groups and it also reveals the real reason for the increasing participation of youths of the area in these insurgent movements. The only optimistic result of the study is the role played by the institution of

family who are helping these youths financially and emotionally to carry on with chasing their dreams and not to lose hope. Moreover the data also confirmed that the rise in the number of unemployment has also facilitated most of the respondents to participate in community volunteer work without any salary as in church activities, rendering labour to poor people during occasion as marriage, funeral etc. which has helped to establish and restore the community bond in the area.

As the study confirms that the major contributors of unemployment in the study area are the outdated quality of education which is making them almost unemployable in this competitive market. The lack of assistance received from the employment office is also playing its role in the aggravating the status of unemployment in the area. Lack of vocational or technical school training is another major reason for the youth remaining unemployed as those who are having it are finding very suitable to get a job. Very low wages provided by the employers because of the rampant unemployment in jobs available is also motivating the youths to remain unemployed. The financial problem of the respondents and their family is also restricting the respondents from starting their own business or leaving Ukhruul for seeking a job. The respondents also held the poor functioning of bureaucracy, political parties and politicians, judiciary, police and other security forces and rampant corruption of the political authority responsible for the constant growth unemployment in the area. Hence the study establish the fact that vocational training to the youths, more market-oriented courses in the colleges and schools, availability of loans to the youths to initiate start-ups, proper implementation of labour laws to check exploitations of employees by the employers particularly in private sectors, constructive role played by the bureaucracy, political parties and politicians, judiciary, police and other security forces to check the rampant corruption, can together effectively address the issue of unemployment in the area.

Hence the study reveals that unemployment is causing financial, social and psychological struggle to the youths and it is not confined to the unemployed only as their entire family

is also affected by this. The negative financial, social and psychological effects of unemployment make the youth vulnerable to be victims of other social problems as addiction to alcoholic drinks (35.2%) followed by gambling (24.7%), insurgency (14.7%), addiction to drugs (13.8%), crime (11.7%), (Gould, E.D., et al 2002; Osemengbe, 2013). Though the study reveals the failure of political leadership as the majority of the respondents (89.7%) held poor political leadership as the reason for unemployment in the area (Bhagat, 2002).

Though maximum numbers of unemployed respondents are aware of the government policies that are meant to tackle unemployment in the study area but none of them are availing the facilities from the government, which reveals the problems of implementation of this programs in the grassroots level which is almost not there. Based on the findings from the study, it can be seen that maximum number of the respondents confirms the role that should be performed by self-employment or entrepreneurship to address the crisis of unemployment in the area, but the lack of capital, training, infrastructure, and opportunities given by state government is acting as an impediment to realising it.

Hence the study clearly reveals that though the opportunities are less for the respondent to start a new employment in the area but there is scope for petty business in the area according to the majority of the respondent, provided minimum facilities like loan by banks can be given to start these endeavors. It nullifies Keynesian theory of unemployment which says that effective demand results in output and output create income and income provides employment. But in the study area though there is demand for many entrepreneurship endeavors the poor infrastructure is coming out as an impediment in realizing the output which is restricting income hence employment opportunities are not generated. Therefore the study reveals the status of financial impotency which is mainly responsible for not availing the self-employment avenues in the area. It clearly exposed the inefficiency of the government machinery to implement the projects meant for encouraging self-employment opportunities in the area for financial

inclusion of this population. Hence though the study already established in the last chapter about the preference that is shown by the respondents on government jobs which are lucrative and secure, but they are also too rare to avail not only in the study area but the country as a whole. Starting a new business has its own problems particularly the challenge of arranging capital. Moreover, the study also reveals that majority of the respondent does not have any link with the political association which again reveals their lack of hope and trust in political associations. The data also reveals the distrust and lack of hope that the respondents attach with the welfare association in the area. Northeastern state in general and Manipur in particular is known for its participation and excellence in sports, but the data of the study shows that this unemployed youths do not even have hope in these associations which is also not spared from corruption and biasness charges. Hence the prescriptions of the Stockholm School Theory is also applicable in the present study where they advocated government intervention through spending during economic downturns, together with Monetarism Theory which advocated the role played by the central banks who should bear the primary responsibility for stabilizing the economy.