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AN OUTLOOK OF STRUCTURAL UNORGANISED UNEMPLOYMENT IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

To attain and maintain the level of full employment is one of the chief objectives of the present day economies. But in under-developed countries like India, is the deficiency of the stock of capital in relation to the needs of the growing labour force. Hence there is always some unemployment. Indian economy is characterised by the existence of high level of organised and unorganised unemployment. The unorganised sector refers to those enterprises whose activities and/or collection of data are not regulated under any legal provision or where any regular accounts are not maintained. The 12th five year plan has special schemes to encourage the unorganised sector to employ more labour and simultaneously, to improve labour productivity in the sector. It also aims at making employment generation, as an integral part of the growth process.

KEYWORDS

unorganised unemployment, human capital.

INTRODUCTION

Employment is the major source of incomes for a great majority of people, a fall in employment signifies a fall in their incomes also. Full employment is a situation when there is no involuntary unemployment, though there may be voluntary, casual, seasonal, structural, technological, and frictional unemployment. By unemployment, economist means a situation in which people are willing to work, at the existing rate of wage, but they do not get the work. In the words of Pigou, "A man is unemployed only when he is both without a job or not employed and also desires to be unemployed". Thus, while calculating unemployment, only those persons are taken into account who are able to work and are willing to work at existing wage rate. Under this concept, labourer is taken as an individual unit and employment in India is measured in terms of Standard Person Year (SPY). One Standard Person Year means a person working 8 hours per day for 273 days in a year. It means if a person gets work for minimum eight hours per day for minimum 273 days in a year he is not unemployed. Our country is set to be progressing by leaps and bounds in the matter of economy but there is sharp increase in the number of unemployed persons also. Today, we have over 1.15 billion people in our country and so is the increasing unemployment rate.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To evaluate the structure and nature of unorganised unemployment in India.
2. To review the existing trends of unorganised sector of unemployment.
3. To analyse the policy framework of unemployed people in the unorganised sector.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present paper is explanatory and descriptive in nature and based on secondary data collected from authenticated sources.

NATURE OF UNORGANISED UNEMPLOYMENT SECTOR

Unemployment scenario in India has always been quite acute. With a large population and slower growth in job opportunities, unemployment is widespread in India. We have both educated and uneducated unemployed people. We have skilled and unskilled unemployed youths both in the urban and the rural areas. Even degree holders are unemployed. Large scale unemployment has led to several socio-economic problems like poverty, malnutrition, antisocial and criminal activities, drug and substance abuse etc. Unemployment and disguised unemployment are the normal features of Indian economy. There is heavy dependency on unorganised sector of the labour force for their employment, income and livelihood. Indian economy is characterised by the existence of high level of informal or unorganized labour unemployment. The workers in the organised sector constitute less than 20 per cent of the country's total work force and the rest comprises of subsistence farmers, agricultural workers, fisherfolk, dairy workers and those working in traditional manufacturing like handlooms, are grouped under unorganised sector. The share of workers in the unorganized sector fell only marginally from 86.3 per cent in 2004-5 to 84.3 per cent in 2009-10 and to 82.2 per cent in 2011-12.

The first Indian National Commission on Labour (1966-69) defined the 'unorganised sector work-force' as "those workers who have not been able to organise themselves in pursuit of their common interest due to certain constraints like casual nature of employment, ignorance and illiteracy, small and scattered size of establishments". On the other hand, the unorganised sector refers to those enterprises whose activities and/or collection of data are not regulated under any legal provision or where any regular accounts are not maintained. The unorganised sector has low productivity and offers lower wages. India's economy has been adding about 8 million new jobs every year predominantly in low paying, unorganised sector. The other important facts concerning this sector are given below--

- India's labour force is growing at a rate of 2.5 per cent annually, but employment is growing at only 2.3 per cent. More than 90 per cent of the labour force is employed in the "unorganised sector", i.e. sectors which don't provide with the social security and other benefits of employment in the "organised sector."
- In the rural areas, agricultural workers form the bulk of the unorganised sector. In urban India, contract and sub-contract as well as migratory agricultural labourers make up most of the unorganised labour force.
- Unorganised sector is made up of jobs in which the Minimum Wage Act is either not, or only marginally, implemented. The absence of unions in the unorganised sector does not provide any opportunity for collective bargaining.

CATEGORIES OF UNORGANISED UNEMPLOYED

Unorganised sector, also known as informal sector or own account enterprises refers to all unlicensed, self-employed or unregistered economic activity such as owner manned general stores, handicrafts and handloom workers, rural traders, farmers, etc. The Ministry of Labour has categorised the unorganised labour force under four groups in terms of occupation, nature of employment, specially distressed categories and service categories. In terms of occupation, it included small and marginal farmers, landless agricultural labourers, share croppers, fishermen and those engaged in animal husbandry, beedi rolling, labeling and packing, building and construction workers, leather workers, weavers, artisans, salt workers, workers in brick kilns and stone quarries, workers in saw mills, oil mills etc. In terms of nature of employment, they are attached agricultural labourers, bonded labourers, migrant workers, contract and casual labourers. Toddy tappers, scavengers, carriers of head loads, drivers of animal driven vehicles, loaders and unloaders, belong to the specially distressed category while midwives, domestic workers, fishermen and women, barbers, vegetable and fruit vendors, newspaper vendors etc. come under the service category. In addition to the above categories, there exists a large section of unorganised labour force such as cobblers, handicraftsmen, artisans, handloom weavers, lady tailors, physically

handicapped self-employed persons, rickshaw pullers/ auto drivers, sericulture workers, carpenters, leather and tannery workers, powerloom workers and urban poor.

The extent of unorganised unemployed workers is significantly high among agricultural workers, building and other construction workers, and among home based workers. In general, these workers are observed to be large in numbers, suffering from cycles of excessive seasonality of employment, scattered and fragmented work place, poor in working conditions, and lack of attention from the trade unions. India needs a labour intensive technology at least in the unorganised sector to accommodate the job-seeking labour force. Although the process of globalisation and liberalisation sets on a shift towards capital-intensive technology. Thus, it is needless to say that in order to meet competition and to increase productive efficiency, firms are forced to modernize their operations involving machineries, capital and high technologies. The choice of labour intensive technology becomes obsolete. The immediate and direct consequence of the shift in the industrial technology is the replacement of unskilled personnel with skilled people (Rao and Rao:1994, Wood:1997).

TRENDS OF UNORGANISED UNEMPLOYMENT SECTOR

There has been an alarming rise in the rate of unemployment in India and this was because the working age population grew faster than the total population and labour force participation rates increased, particularly among young women. As per the findings from the 68th round (2011-12) of the NSS Employment and Unemployment Survey, women's employment has increased in urban areas and declined in rural areas. The Indian Government is committed to generate employment opportunities in both- organized and unorganized sector. The unemployment rate in India is estimated at 9.4 percent or 94 persons out of 1000 persons in the labour force for the fixed reference period of financial year 2009-10. The rural unemployment rate is 10.1% and the urban unemployment rate stands at 7.3%. The unemployment rate is calculated as a percentage of labor force, and not the total population. So, this means that 9.4% of that part of population which is interested in working is unemployed, and not 9.4% of the entire population is unemployed. So, out of an estimated population of 1,182 million – 424 million persons are either employed or are interested in working. The unemployment rate of 9.4% means that out of those 359 persons per thousand, or 424 million people – there are 9.4% or about 40 million who were unemployed. During 2011 to 2012, the unemployment rate for males stood 22%, whereas for females the unemployment rate was 25%.

According to a survey by the Labour Bureau under the Labour and Employment Ministry, the unemployment rates are estimated at 101 persons and 73 persons out of 1000 persons in the labour force in the rural sector and urban areas, respectively. At overall level out of 1000 employed persons, 455 are employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing group. In the manufacturing and construction sectors 89 and 75 persons out of 1000 persons respectively are found to be employed. According to the survey, the worker population ratio is estimated at 325 persons per 1000 population at the overall level. In the working age population, the worker population ratio is 465. In the rural sector, 457 persons and 435 persons out of 1000 persons are in the categories of self employed and casual labour respectively. Rest 108 employed persons belong to regular wage or salaried class in the rural areas. In the rural areas, the worker population ratio is estimated at 329 persons per 1000 population. Within the employed population, self employment is the dominant category. Out of 1000 persons employed, 439 persons are self employed, 168 persons are regular wage/salaried and the rest 393 persons are employed as casual labour at the overall level.

In the urban sector, a maximum 173 persons out of 1000 persons are employed in the wholesale and retail trade group followed by 154 persons in the manufacturing and 146 in the community services group. In the urban sector, out of 1000 self employed persons, 299 persons are employed in wholesale retail trade group followed by 173 persons in the manufacturing group at overall level. In case of regular wage or salaried persons, 227 persons per 1000 persons in this category are employed in the community services group followed by 153 persons in the manufacturing group at the overall level. The survey was conducted in 300 districts of 28 States and Union Territories.

ROLE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR & EMPLOYMENT

The Ministry of Labour & Employment has made serious efforts to implement various provisions mandated relating to enhancement of the welfare and well-being of farmers, farm labour and workers particularly those in the unorganized sector, ensuring the fullest implementation of minimum wage laws for farm labour, striving for elimination of child labour and examination of labour laws. The main highlights of their sincere efforts are given below.

- The National Employment Policy is being formulated. Unorganized sector is emphasized more with various schemes.
- Vocational Training with a view to creating a world-class skilled labour force is being given maximum importance. To help the youth in building their career, training courses are offered through a network of 2178 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and 6464 Industrial Training Centres (ITCs) located all over the country. About 1.19 million training seats are available in these Institutes.
- Upgradation of 100 ITIs with domestic resources, 400 ITIs with World Bank assistance and 1,396 ITIs under Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode was undertaken to create Centres of Excellence for producing multi-skilled workforce of world standard.
- 'Skill Development Initiative' (SDI) Scheme was started in 2006-07 for training school drop-outs and existing workers especially in the informal sector under Modular Employable Skills (MES) framework was implemented. A special scheme to train youth of J&K region under SDI scheme is being launched. Under the scheme, 8,000 youths are proposed to be trained in 2010-11 and 8,000 in 2011-12 of which 25% will be trained within J & K itself and 75% will be trained outside the State. Training cost would be fully borne by the Central government. Trainees would be provided boarding, lodging & travel expenses, if they are required to stay away from their home. To facilitate an accelerated and sustainable transformation and for expansion of outreach of the vocational training, a scheme has been prepared to set up 1,500 ITIs and 5,000 Skill Development Centres (SDCs) in PPP mode under a project 'Kaushal Vikas Yojana'.
- Kaushal Vikas Yojana to set up new 1,500 ITIs and 5,000 Skill Development Centres. Skill Development Plan for Youth, supplementing infrastructure deficiencies in ITIs in NE states and Sikkim and modernization of all 969 Employment Exchanges in the country under e-governance plan, are being taken up.
- Labour Bureau has conducted eight quarterly quick employment surveys to assess the impact of economic slowdown on employment in India. It covered units pertaining to important sectors like textiles, leather, metals, automobiles, gems and jewellery, transport, IT/BPO and handloom / powerloom etc. The overall estimated employment in the selected sectors has experienced a net addition of 12.96 lakh in September, 2010 over September, 2009.
- The Prime Minister's National Council on Skill Development has set a target of training 500 million individuals by 2022, followed by the 2009 National Policy on Skill Development (NPSD).
- The 12th Plan aims at extending labour protection for women in the informal economy, strengthening the implementation of the Equal Remuneration Act 1976, Maternity Protection Act 1961 and other related legislations, and envisages special efforts for scaling-up of efforts for skills development of women.

The Government constituted the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector (NCEUS) under the Chairmanship of Dr. Arjun Sengupta on 20.09.2004. The Commission completed its term on 30.04.2009 and submitted its Report on Social Security for Unorganized Workers. The salient features of the proposed legislation includes social security benefits, employment injury benefits, housing schemes, educational schemes for children of workers, skill upgradation and any other schemes to enhance the socio-economic security of unorganized workers; etc. The 'Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008 provides benefits determined by the Government for unorganised workers. The National Board recommends to the Central Government, suitable schemes for different sections of unorganised workers; monitor the implementation of schemes and advise the Central Government on matters arising out of the administration of the Act. The National Social Security Board was constituted on 18.08.2009 to consider extension of social security schemes for these workers. The Board has recommended that social security schemes viz Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) providing health and maternity benefits, Janshree Bima Yojana (JBY) providing death and disability cover and Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension (IGNOAP) providing old age pension may be extended to certain categories of unorganized workers. It has been decided to set up a National Social Security Fund for unorganised sector workers with an initial allocation of Rs 1000 crore. This fund will support schemes for weavers, toddy tappers, rickshaw pullers, beedi workers etc. The Government of India drafted the National Policy for Domestic Workers during 2011, to enhance protection and rights of this growing segment of workers.

Various government schemes have been undertaken in India to tackle the problem of unemployment. Government of India has implemented various employment generation and poverty alleviation programmes in both rural and urban areas to increase employment opportunities, such as, Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY); Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY); Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) & Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). SGSY has been restructured as the National Rural Livelihood Mission to make it universal in application, focused in approach and time bound for poverty eradication by 2014-2015. For promoting inclusive growth in line with the 12th Plan, International Labour Organisation (ILO), enhancing employment outcomes for youth; promoting women's labour force participation; sectoral policies; improved effectiveness of GOI flagship programmes, and emphasis on the employment impact of infrastructural schemes.

CONCLUSION

Unemployment scenario in India has always been quite acute. Indian economy is characterised by the existence of high level of organised and unorganised unemployment. The unorganised sector refers to those enterprises whose activities and/or collection of data are not regulated under any legal provision or where any regular accounts are not maintained. The objective of the paper is to evaluate and analyse the policy framework of unorganised unemployment in the country. With a large population and slower growth in job opportunities, unemployment is widespread in India. We have both educated and uneducated unemployed people. We have skilled and unskilled unemployed youths both in the urban and the rural areas. Even degree holders are unemployed.

The unorganised sector has low productivity and offers low wages. More than 90 per cent of the labour force is employed in the "unorganised sector", which doesn't provide with the social security and other benefits of employment in the "organised sector." Unorganised sector is made up of jobs in which the Minimum Wage Act is either not, or only marginally, implemented. The absence of unions in the unorganised sector does not provide any opportunity for collective bargaining. The extent of unorganised unemployed workers is significantly high among agricultural workers, building and other construction workers, and among home based workers. In general, these workers are observed to be large in numbers, suffering from seasonal employment, scattered and fragmented work place, poor working conditions, and lack of attention from the trade unions. India needs a labour intensive technology at least in the unorganised sector to accommodate the job-seeking labour force. But in order to meet competition and to increase productive efficiency, capital intensive technology is also required.

There has been an alarming increase in the rate of unemployment in India and this is because the working age population is growing faster than the total population growth rate and labour force participation rate. The Indian Government is committed to generate employment opportunities in both- organised and unorganised sector. The Ministry of Labour & Employment has made serious efforts in implementing various provisions for workers in unorganised sectors such as The National Employment Policy, Vocational Training Centres and Skill Development Initiative, under the 'Kaushal Vikas Yojana' project etc. The Government constituted the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector (NCEUS) under the Chairmanship of Dr. Arjun Sengupta. The Report includes the proposal of social security benefits, employment injury benefits, housing schemes, educational schemes for children of workers, skill upgradation and many other schemes to enhance the socio-economic security of unorganized workers, etc. The 12th Plan recognizes the role of industry and enterprises as key drivers of inclusive growth and job creation.

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