INNOVATIVE RESEARCH IN MULTIDISCIPLINARY FIELD

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Innovative Research is a community based space for exploring new and creative ways of conducting, displaying and utilising academic research. This edited book includes many of the author's research papers which encourage sharing their original research work and getting new ideas for developing their research in application aspects.

About the Editors



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A Study on India's Unemployment Rate's Causes and Effects

-Dr. Praveen Kumar S.1

ABSTRACT

The unemployment rate in India has been on the rise over the years. This paper seeks to examine the factors contributing to unemployment and its effects on the Indian economy. It highlights the critical role of employment in driving overall economic development. Relying on secondary data, the study focuses on the current unemployment scenario in both rural and urban areas. It explores how factors such as population growth, poverty, illiteracy, inflation, and underemployment contribute to economic stagnation. Furthermore, the paper discusses the challenges posed by high unemployment rates and proposes strategies to enhance the current employment situation in the country.

Keywords: unemployment, population, growth, development

INTRODUCTION

Unemployment arises in an economy when individuals actively seeking work are unable to secure suitable employment. The Indian economy is currently experiencing a significant slowdown due to the rising unemployment rate. As a developing nation, the nature of unemployment in India differs markedly from that in developed countries. Both rural and urban areas in India face unemployment challenges. The stagnant growth rate and high unemployment levels are largely attributed to a shortage of capital equipment.

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Unemployment results in the underutilization of labor and human resources, leading to reduced productivity. This, in turn, exacerbates issues such as poverty, malnutrition, and a decline in per capita income. While frictional unemployment, typically ranging from two to three percent, is considered inevitable in any economy, the overall unemployment rate in India has continued to rise despite government efforts to address the issue.

OBJECTIVES

- 1. To examine the current state of unemployment in rural and urban areas.
- 2. To identify the various types of unemployment prevalent in India.
- 3. To explore the causes of unemployment and recommend strategies for improving employment levels in the economy.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Abraham Vinoj (2009) highlights that during periods of economic distress; household incomes may fall below subsistence levels, compelling non-working members of the population to enter the labor market to supplement income. This distress, often prevalent in the agricultural sector, leads to reduced productivity, lower incomes, and economic stagnation. The study indicates that the income crisis affecting farming communities contributed to employment growth in rural areas.

Bairagya Indrajit (2018) demonstrates that unemployment rates are higher among the educated population compared to the uneducated, with unemployment increasing as education levels rise. The study examines the factors driving this trend, revealing that individuals with higher education levels tend to seek well-paying jobs and are less inclined to accept positions in the informal sector. The research underscores the importance of enhancing capital formation to address rising unemployment rates in India.

THE INDIAN SCENARIO

India's vast population has resulted in an overwhelming demand for employment opportunities, but the number of available jobs falls significantly short of the growing number of job-seekers. Low levels of education and inadequate vocational skills among the population have further exacerbated the unemployment crisis. Insufficient government support and poor infrastructural facilities have deepened the economic challenges. As a developing country, a significant portion of India's population resides in rural areas, where people are largely reliant on informal, irregular jobs that often involve health risks. In the primary sector, low productivity and limited alternative opportunities hinder the shift of agricultural workers to the industrial or services sectors. Additionally, low investment and sluggish growth in the manufacturing sector constrain its capacity to generate employment.

The issue of unemployment slows the pace of economic growth and development, increasing poverty and malnutrition. This, in turn, adversely affects the health and well-being of the population, creating a cycle of socioeconomic challenges.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

The government has implemented various initiatives to address unemployment and create job opportunities in the economy:

- *Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP):* Introduced in 1980, this program aims to achieve full employment in rural areas.
- *Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM):* Launched in 1979, this scheme seeks to equip unemployed rural youth aged 18-35 with self-employment skills.
- *Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act* (*MGNREGA*): Enacted in 2005, this program guarantees a minimum of 100 days of paid work annually for families with adult members willing to perform unskilled, labor-intensive tasks, thereby providing social security.
- *Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY):* Initiated in 2015, this scheme aims to provide skill training to a large number of youth, aligning their skills with industry requirements.
- *Start-Up India Scheme:* Launched in 2016, this initiative fosters an ecosystem to promote entrepreneurship and innovation across the country.
- *Stand-Up India Scheme*: Also launched in 2016, this scheme facilitates bank loans ranging from ¹ 10 lakh to ¹ 1 crore for at least one SC/ST borrower and one woman borrower per bank branch to establish Greenfield enterprises.

Table 1. Indicates a Rising Unemployment Trend, with the Unemployment Rate Increasing from 2.2% in 2011 to 6.1% in recent years.

Year	Unemployment Rate (in %)
2011-12	2.2
2012-13	4.0
2013-14	4.6
2014-15	4.9
2015-16	5.0
2016-17	5.7
2017-18	6.1
2018-19	5.33
2019-20	5.27
2020-21	8.00
2021-22	5.98
2022-23	7.33
2023-24	7.8 (As of September 2024)

Source: National Sample Survey Office, 2018.

Table 2. Showing the Unemployment Rate Among Youth in Rural Areas (in percentage), Including Data from 2018 Onward Based on Available Reports

Year	Male (%)	Female (%)
2012-13	3.9	4.2
2013-14	4.7	4.6
2014-15	5.0	4.8
2015-16	7.9	5.8
2016-17	9.6	6.7
2017-18	17.4	13.6
2021-22	13.6	9.4
2022-23	14.2	9.8
2023-24	12.4	8.2

Source: National Sample Survey Office (NSSO), 2018; Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), 2024

The data shows a sharp rise in unemployment rates among rural youth between 2016-2018, followed by some recovery and a gradual decline in recent years due to targeted government initiatives. However, rural youth unemployment remains a pressing issue, particularly among males.

Table 3. Unemployment Rate Among Youth in Urban Areas (in Percentage) with Data Extending to 2024 Based on the Latest Reports

Year	Male (%)	Female (%)
2012-13	8.8	14.9
2013-14	7.5	14.3
2014-15	8.1	13.1

(Contd...)

Year	Male (%)	Female (%)
2015-16	7.9	5.8
2016-17	9.6	6.7
2017-18	18.7	27.2
2021-22	16.3	24.5
2022-23	14.7	22.1
2023-24	12.8	20.1

Source: National Sample Survey Office (NSSO), 2018; Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), 2024.

This updated data demonstrates a declining trend in urban youth unemployment since 2017-18. However, urban female unemployment remains significantly higher compared to males, indicating persistent gender disparities in the urban labor market.

CAUSES OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN INDIA

In India, the rate of unemployment has been increasing over the past few years in both rural and urban areas. This has led to a slow rate of growth in the economy and hinders economic development. The following are the main reasons for unemployment in India:

- *Higher population:* The rate of growth of population is increasing continuously for the past decades. The number of people in the country, especially the youth population, is much greater compared to the number of jobs available. This creates a situation of unemployment in the economy.
- *Poverty and Illiteracy:* One of the main reasons for unemployment is due to a lesser number of people being educated and literate. As they do not possess the skills necessary for employment due to low levels of income and standard of living, they often find it difficult to obtain jobs in the formal sector.
- *Inflation:* A continuous rise in prices without a proportionate increase in goods and services produced, leads to fall in real income in the hands of the public. When there is an increase in population, supply of labour is greater than the demand which has an adverse impact on wages. This leads to more people being unemployed as they are not satisfied with the current wages being offered to them.
- *Agricultural workers:* The people who are employed in the agricultural sector are employed only up to a certain period of time and are unable to find jobs for other parts of the year.
- *Casual and informal labour:* As the number of jobs available is much lesser compared to those who are in need of work, people

- tend to work in the informal sector which comprises of low and irregular wages.
- Lack of full employment: The industrial sector does not work to its maximum capacity due to lack of adequate machinery and supply of raw materials due to which they are unable to hire maximum workers in factories.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The following are the suggestions made in order to reduce the problem of unemployment in India and to improve the status of workers:

- By providing adequate skill based and vocational training, unemployed youth can obtain jobs in industrial and services sector.
- An increased investment from the government and diversification in the agricultural sector will not only increase productivity but also helps to reduce unemployment.
- Labour- intensive technology has to be adopted by the formal and informal sectors in order to increase employment opportunities in both rural and urban areas.
- An increased and continual growth in services sector can create greater employment opportunities for highly-skilled workers and improve the standard of living in the society.
- Improvement in education and health care services increases human capital formation and provides more employment opportunities to the public.
- On-the Job training and employment subsidies can be provided to the existing employees to improve their current skills and to increase job satisfaction and reduce shift from one job to another.

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