

**INFORMATION NEEDS AND INFORMATION SEEKING
BEHAVIOUR OF EDUCATED UNEMPLOYED YOUTH
IN NAGALAND**

ABSTRACT

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Introduction

Youth is the most crucial phase of life. Contemporary youth is confronted with many problems and challenges, in which, problems relating to unemployment remains the most fundamental concern both for the individuals as well as for the society. Every year various educational institutions produce thousands of educated persons, however, majority of them do not get employment opportunity immediately after the completion of their study. The educated unemployed youth represent the intellectual and the twitchiest section of the society. If, therefore, they are made to remain idle without any gainful work, it will lead to an enormous waste of material and human resources and also create imbalances in the socio-economic, religious, cultural and political life of the society. Though unemployment is universal, it is more marked in developing countries such as India, causing and adding much human misery. Youth is a stage of life and a transient population in demographic terms, sandwiched between childhood on one hand and adulthood on the other. The United Nations Organisation has identified the age between 15-24 as the youth. In India, the age within 15-34 is recognized as youth (Saraswathi 1988). The periods of youth stand for growth, development, action and leadership. If their energy is channelled constructively, it yields delightful future, not only for them, but also for the society as a whole. The youth, therefore, need to be guided and not pushed, gently led and not prodded.

Pigou (1985) considered unemployment in its etymological sense to be phenomenon of involuntary idleness and says, "A man is only unemployed when he is both not employed and also desires to be employed." In Great Britain, a person is said to be unemployed any day when fallen under any of the following situations:

- (a) On which he does no work under a contract of service.
- (b) On respect of which he is not entitle to wager under a contract of service.
- (c) On which he is not following any occupation from which he derives remuneration or project.
- (d) Which is not a day of holiday at the establishment where one work.

Need of the study

The educated unemployed youth in Nagaland are expected to play a fundamental role in shaping and transforming the socio-economic conditions of the

state in particular and the nation as a whole by exploiting and meaningfully utilizing the opportunities available to them and for them. This, in turn, calls for right decision at the right time, hence needs information pertinent to the decision context. The present study aims at exploring into possible answers to a number of research questions that remains unanswered. Some of the questions that need to be addressed on a priority basis are given below:

- What is the exact pattern of information needs of the educated unemployed youth in Nagaland and how the needs pattern varies across the socio-economic characteristics of those unemployed?
- What types of sources are used by educated unemployed youth to cater to the above identified information needs?
- What are the channels available to cater to the information needs of the above said group?
- Are the existing channels efficient and effective enough in providing relevant and timely information to the information seekers of the above category?
- What are the problems associated with the existing channels of information used by the educated unemployed youth in the state of Nagaland?
- How can these problems be eradicated?

Objectives

The following objectives had been formulated for carrying out the present study.

- To identify the information needs and information seeking behaviour of educated unemployed youth.
- To identify various information sources used by educated unemployed youth
- To identify the channels of information used and probe into their efficacy in satisfying the information needs of the educated unemployed youth.
- To study the association between socio-economic characteristics with information seeking behaviour of the educated unemployed youth.
- To suggest an information system for the educated unemployed youth.

Hypotheses

While pursuing the above objectives the following null hypothesis have been considered and were tested:

- *There is no association between the socio-economic characteristics and the information seeking behaviour of the educated unemployed youth in Nagaland.*

- *There is no significant impact of the subject background on the pattern of information needs and the channels of information (formal informal) used by the educated unemployed youths in Nagaland.*

Scope and Sample

The study has been basically of a questionnaire based survey type and the design is based on sampling techniques. Moreover it has been designed to investigate and analyze the information needs and information seeking behaviour of educated unemployed youth confining the geographical area to the state of Nagaland. Further, the study has limited to only graduates and post graduates in various academic and professional disciplines.

The population of the study consists of all graduates and above in the streams of ARTS, SCIENCE, COMMERCE and TECHNICAL courses registered in the employment exchange of the state. Other registered members with qualification less than graduation are therefore excluded in this study. A sample of 538 educated unemployed youth has been drawn through stratified random sampling method by assigning weightage on the basis of their strength to various strata (streams of education). The sample size worked out is 16.19 % of the total population of 3323 applicants (job seekers) as per the Live Register of the state Employment Exchange located in the capital town of Kohima.

Data collection

The data used in the present study has been collected from both primary and secondary sources. Literature in the field has been collected from various academic libraries. Primary data has been obtained by means of a questionnaire based survey. A structured questionnaire was designed, that consisted of five parts to capture data relating to five different aspects of the study namely socio economic characteristics, information needs, information sources, information channels and information barriers. There was total of 70 questions which was finalised based on the pilot study. Likert five point scale was employed.

Findings

Data collected was analyzed by means of suitable statistical and non statistical (qualitative) techniques. The major statistical techniques employed were:-

- a) Factor analysis with varimax rotation,
- b) Inter co-relation among the inferred variables,
- c) Analysis of variance (ANOVA).

Major findings of the study are given as below:

Information needs

The factor analysis employed to identify the information needs of educated unemployed youth reveals that the educated unemployed youth in Nagaland need information for two important purposes and accordingly the two information needs in order of their importance are named as, job seeking information need and job creating information need. The coefficient of correlation between these two information needs being 0.28, the analysis further reveals that there exists a very low order of co-relationship between the above two information needs. Therefore it is found that the educated unemployed youth with higher job seeking tendency have lower job creating tendency.

Information sources

Factor analysis to identify the various sources of information used by the educated unemployed youth in Nagaland reveals that general secondary source that comprising textbooks, newspapers, magazines and dictionaries has emerged as the most important source of information followed by selective secondary source, geographical source, primary source, electronic source and audio-visual source in order of their respective magnitude of importance. This result is explained by the very realities of the state. Availability of electronic source such as CD ROMs, internet and on-line database is of a recent phenomenon and the reading habit of the educated unemployed youth is too poor to refer to the source like encyclopaedias, directories etc. Further it is found that selective secondary source is moderately correlated with geographical source and primary source of information maintain a low order of co-relationship with general secondary source, selective secondary source and geographical source. In all other cases the co-relationship is found to be insignificant at one percent level of significance.

Information channels

By means of factor analysis with respect to 14 items incorporated in the questionnaire three channels are identified to have been approached by the educated unemployed youth of Nagaland in order to satisfy their information needs. Informal channel with mean value of 17.85 and standard deviation of 3.55 has emerged as the most important channel approached by the respondents followed by formal channel with mean score of 16.14 and standard deviation 4.66. Other channel including libraries, electronic media and interaction with senior has emerged as the least approached channel with mean value of only 9.75 and standard deviation 2.61. This is perhaps due to inadequacy of electronic media and relevant library resource to cater to their needs. Further it is found that informal channel maintains a moderate co-relationship with formal channel.

Information barriers

The factor analysis employed to identify the major information barriers reveals that three categories of barriers to have been confronted by the educated unemployed youth in Nagaland while seeking information to satisfy their needs. Those barriers in order of their magnitude are: 1. personal barrier, 2. management barrier, 3. policy barrier. Personal barrier is found to be positively correlated with management barrier ($r=0.36$) and policy barrier ($r=0.38$). Management barrier is also found to be correlated with policy barrier ($r=0.53$).

Socio-economic characteristics

From the analysis of the socio-economic characteristic it is observed that the sample consist of 55.5% males and 44.5% females, which indicates the adequate representation from both the sex. With regard to marital status, the educated unemployed youth in Nagaland consist of 87% unmarried and 23% married. This finding is very much in consonance with the social norm in the state that marriage is normally performed after economic settlement. The study reveals that majority of the educated unemployed youth in Nagaland are below 30 years of age. Around 14% of educated unemployed youth are found to have crossed the age mark of 30 years. This finding is based on the fact that the unemployment problem for the educated unemployed youth is a recent phenomenon that has emerged after the 80s particularly

when the job opportunities in the government sector reached the point of saturation. Analysis of respondents according to their discipline of study reveals that, the sample consist of 159 from arts representing 44.8% of the sample strength, 90 (25.5%) from science, 54 (15.2%) from technical line and 52 (14.5%) from commerce. This is to indicate that commerce education in the state is in its infancy and science education at college level is available in only few places, hence the representation from these two disciplines is found to be much lower as compared to that from the arts stream. The analysis further reflects that educated unemployed youth in the state of Nagaland are mostly graduates. Their percentage is found to be 70.1% where as the representation of postgraduates is observed to be only 29.9%. With regard to residential status it is found that the majority of the educated unemployed youth representing nearly 72% of the sample are from urban areas and the rest are from rural areas. This uneven distribution between the rural and urban employed youth is attributable to two reasons, viz. more concentration of educated unemployed youth in urban areas due to greater access to higher education and higher chance of getting job opportunities in urban areas. With regard to representation from different tribes it is found that majority of the respondents are from the major tribes namely: Ao, Angami, Sema, Lotha and other tribes of the state represent only around 14% of the strength. The general population strength from the tribes included here as "other tribes" is quite large but due to their educational backwardness, their representation in the sample has been much lower. Further, the analysis reveals that the distribution of the respondents in terms of their parent's education is negatively skewed. The representation of the respondents goes on declining along with increase in the level of their parent's education. The finding from the analysis further reveals that the distribution according to the level of their fathers' education is less skewed than the distribution according to the level of their mothers' education. Majority of the respondent's mother (51.5%) are under matriculates, whereas one third of their father's are observed to have fallen in this educational category. While one third of the fathers are either graduate or post graduates only 11% of the mothers are found to be in this category. This finding is in consonance with the educational structure of the older generation at the national as well as the regional (N.E. India) level. With respect to monthly family income of the

respondents it is found that majority of the respondents (58.4%) belong to the families having monthly income less than Rs.10000. Only 22.85% of the respondents are found to have family income between Rs.10000-15000. When we move up on the line of family income, the percentage representation of the educated unemployed youth is observed to have declined. 10.4% of the respondents belong to families having income between Rs.15000-20000; where as only 8.5% is found to be included in the category of family having income above Rs.20000. The distribution is skewed towards the left thereby meaning that the frequency of the respondents in this study decreases when the value of the income class increases. Further analysis with respect to the tenure of unemployment it is found that that majority (51.3%) of the respondents are fresh graduates and post graduates having less than two years of unemployment tenure. Nearly one third (33.5%) of the sample have remained unemployed for a period more than two years but less than four years. Only 54 respondents are having unemployment tenure exceeding 5 years. As in the analysis of family income and level of parents education, the distribution of the respondents is found to be negatively skewed i.e. higher frequencies are observed against the lower tenure of unemployment and vice versa. It is further found that the tenure of unemployment has caused high magnitude of worriness among the educated unemployed youth. Their distribution with respect to the level of worriness distribution is observed to be positively skewed as higher frequencies are observed against the class with higher level of worriness. Except 14% of the respondents every one is worried but the degree of worriness varies. 141 respondents representing nearly 40% of the sample strength are included in the category “very much worried” followed by 118 (33.2%) in “somewhat worried” category and 46 (13%) in “very little worried” category.

Information needs and socio-economic characteristics

With regard to association between information need and socio-economic background characteristics the following are the major findings.

1. The information need for the purpose of both job seeking and job creating is higher in case of the male educated unemployed youth than their female counterparts.

2. Job seeking information need of the younger unmarried respondents is found to be greater than the aged married respondents but when it comes to job creating information need this finding gets reversed. Thus age and marital status are positively associated with job creating need and negatively associated with job seeking information need.
3. The degree of vocational orientation in academic discipline and the level of education of the educated unemployed youth are found to be positively associated with job seeking information need and negatively associated with job creating information need.
4. It is found that the information need for both the purposes is recorded high for those coming from the lower income background than for those coming from the higher income background. It is further to note that information need declines along with income but after sometimes it increased along with increase in the level of income. But when it comes to the association between the tenure of the unemployment and information need it takes a reversal mode. It is found that the level of the worriness tends to push the information need of the individual respondents.

To sum up, the job seeking need of the educated unemployed youth gets positively influenced by their level of qualification, branch of study, urban status, and level of worriness arising out of unemployment but remain independent with respect to their sex, marital status, age, tribal status, family type, parent's education, family income and unemployment tenure. The job creating need of the educated unemployed youth in Nagaland gets positively influenced by their age, sex, marital status but remains independent with regard to their branch of study, educational qualification, residential and tribal status, parental education, income, tenure of unemployment and the magnitude of worriness for their unemployment.

Information sources and socio-economic background characteristics

All the six important information sources identified in chapter four have been linked with the thirteen socio-economic characteristics of the respondents for finding out the association between the two components i.e. information sources and socio-economic characteristics. The major findings of the analysis made in the chapter four have been recapitulated in this section as here under:

1. The extent general secondary source is used by the educated unemployed youth positively associated with their family type, father's education, family income, tenure of unemployment and the level of their worriness but remain

- unaffected by the other socio-economic characteristics under taken in this study. Such as age, sex, marital status, level of education and residential status.
2. Selective secondary source is positively associated with respondent's level of education, tenure of unemployment, and the extent of worriness caused due to unemployment but remain unaffected by the other socio-economic characteristics.
 3. Geographical source are positively linked with marital status, educational qualification but remain disassociated with the other characteristics incorporated in this study.
 4. Primary source is positively related with sex, age, father's education, and the total income of the family but has no relation with the other characteristics in this study.
 5. Electronic source is positively associated with branch of study, educational qualification, tribal status, parent's education, income of the family but remain unaffected by all other socio-economic characteristics. Audio-visual source is found to be unrelated with any of the socio-economic characteristics undertaken in this study.

Information channels and socio-economic characteristics

The major findings relating to the association between information channels and socio-economic characteristics are as follows:

1. The extent to which all the three types of channels have been used by the educated unemployed youth in the state of Nagaland is positively associated with their age, marital status and education but remains independent of their sex and academic discipline.
2. Socio-economic characteristics like residential status, tribe, family type, parent's education, family income, tenure of unemployment and degree of worriness have negligible impact on the extent of the use of various information channels.
3. The educated unemployed youths in Nagaland assign higher priority on the informal channels as compared to the formal channel.
4. The extent formal channel have been used by the educated unemployed youth is positively associated with their sex but remain independent of the other socio-economic characteristics undertaken in this study. The extent of the use of informal channel is found to have been independent of the socio-economic characteristics of the educated unemployed youth.

The extent the educated unemployed youth use other channel is positively associated with their level of education, parent's education, total income of the family but remains unaffected by the other socio-economic characteristics incorporated in this study.

Information barriers and socio-economic background characteristics

The major findings of relationship between information barrier and socio-economic characteristics are as here under:

1. The extent the educated unemployed youth confront with various information barriers is positively associated with their sex, but negatively associated with marital status and remains independent of the level of education, residential status, tribe, family type, parents education and family income.
2. The tenure of unemployment and the degree of worryness arising from there, influence the extent of perceived impact of information barriers. When the tenure increases, the impact of barriers declines whereas, when the degree of worryness increases the impact of the barriers increases.
3. Further analysis among different types of the information barriers reveals that the impact of personal barriers is recorded very high as compared to that of the management and personal barrier. But when statistically tested the following are the important results.
 - The extent the respondents confront with the personal barrier is found to positively influence by their sex and remains unaffected by the other socio-economic characteristics.
 - The extent of confrontation with management barrier is positively associated with sex and age of the respondents but remains independent of all other socio-economic characteristics. Regarding policy barrier it is found that the extent of confrontation is positively associated with educational qualification only and remains independent of all socio-economic characteristics incorporated in this study.

Suggestions:

Findings of the present study have not only reflected the information seeking behaviour of the educated unemployed youth in Nagaland but also have provided the premise for planning an appropriate information system for the target group. So far, there is no information system specifically designed to cater to the information needs of the educated unemployed youth in Nagaland. The existing mechanism under which the EUY seek information from various sources and channels has been observed as less effective due to several barriers associated with it. Inadequacy of information, inaccessibility, inconvenient locations of information centres, non-cooperation and inefficiency of the professional staff, inconvenient working hours and lack of modern communication facilities are some of the barriers confronted by the EUY while seeking information. Any attempt to provide information to the EUY in the state

therefore, has to begin with a plan to reduce the magnitude if not eradicate completely the above said information barriers. The following are few suggestions that will go a long way to make the existing mechanisms in providing information services to the educated unemployed youth in the state:

Strengthening the state library

The state library presently functioning under the Department of Art and Culture need to be strengthened to work as an apex information centre of the state. At present, the state library has a very poor collection and is not able to cater to information needs of various categories of users. Moreover, there are hardly any useful and pertinent journals and magazines subscribed by the library, which are constantly, required by users particularly the educated unemployed. There is also shortage of professional staff who could introduce and provide effective and efficient information services to the benefit of the users. What ever information resources are available in the library are not properly organised to be retrieved at the point of demand due to non availability of trained manpower and modern communication facilities. As a result the state library is functioning far away from that was envisioned at the time of its establishment. Creation of alternative information organisations to take care of the specific needs of different user groups is not a cost-effective proposition for a small developing state like Nagaland. Hence, efforts should be channelized to revitalise the state public library to take care of the specific information needs of the users particularly the educated unemployed youth of the state. This calls for the following policy measures:

- (i) Grant of greater autonomy to the state library by upgrading it to a separate and full-fledged Directorate of its own.
- (ii) Provision of professional leadership: i.e. Opportunity of professional librarians and information officer to work as executive head of the organisation
- (iii) Restructuring the library organisation through creation of various cells to take care of specific needs of different client groups. In the process of this restructuring a cell should be created that shall collect and retrieve information needs of the educated unemployed youth. Further, the cell should be headed by a professional having skills to capture specific information from various sources, process them as per the cliental

requirements for effective and timely retrieval of information in a convenient and in a cost-effective manner. Apart from the informational repackaging the professional should have the networking skills to establish linkages with various nodal information agencies and also the relevant government departments such as education, industry, rural development, state informatics centre etc.

- (iv) Enhancing resource efficiency particularly to procure information resources required for upgrading its status as an apex information centre of the state. Further, provision should be made in the state budget for annual addition and subscription in order to prevent the organisation from information obsolescence.
- (v) Establishing a national and international connectivity through, modern information technology.
- (vi) Promotion of work culture in the library.
- (vii) Close monitoring and evaluation of the library by the higher authority.
- (viii) Providing in-service training to library professionals already working in the state central library in order to train them in latest developments in library and information services so that they can provide information technology and need based services to the educated unemployed youth.

Revitalising the district libraries:

At present there are eight districts libraries located at different district headquarters. The district libraries of all the eight districts are so poorly developed in terms of book collection and journal subscriptions and provision of other information services that very few educated youth are motivated to drop in those libraries. As a matter of fact many educated unemployed youth are not aware of the very existence of district libraries in the state. The poor image and negative user perception about the district libraries stem from a set of factors viz: non availability of adequate information, poor work culture and lack of communication facility. On top of it, the officer in charge is neither a professional by qualification nor functions with a professional spirit. So far as work culture is concerned district libraries are considered similar to other government departments where employees can afford to be absent or report a couple of hours late or leave the organisation a couple of hours before the scheduled time. When it comes to a cost benefit analysis i.e. the comparison of the costs that an educated unemployed pays to visit the library and the information

benefits that he derives out of the visit. From the interviews with the educated unemployed youth in the state it is ascertained that even the basic magazines like employment news, competition success, Yojana, which are essential for any competitive examination are not available etc., are not available in the district libraries, leave alone selective secondary sources and electronic sources.

In order to overcome the major deficiencies viz, non availability of information resources and poor information retrieving mechanism, following measures are suggested:

- (i) Professional staff being assisted by a couple of semi professionals shall manage all the district libraries. In case of already co-professional working in district library, in-service training should be provided to them on the same pattern as in state library.
- (ii) The resource base of the above libraries may be strengthened by two modes – by utilising one time grant for enlarging the current resource base and by regular annual grant to procure new arrivals and periodicals.
- (iii) Creation of a cell in the district libraries to take care of the specific needs of the educated unemployed youth.
- (iv) Close monitoring of the district libraries particularly in the matter of employees discipline and efficient fund utilisation and provision of information services.
- (v) Strengthening of district libraries and establishment of both vertical and horizontal linkages (with state library and community information centres) shall go a long way to cater to the needs of educated unemployed youth from not only the district headquarters and nearby towns but also from the rural areas.

In the wake of recent development in road communication, an educated unemployed youth can very well cover an average distance of 25 kilometres to reach the district/ library for his required information if not daily, at least once in a week.

Creation of a cell at the community information centre:

As par the national programme each block in the state shall have information centre called community information centre. While imparting information to general public the specific needs of the educated unemployed can hardly be taken care of. A cell may be created under the leadership of semi-professionals at each of the community information centres to provide relevant information to the educated unemployed dwelling at the block headquarters and the nearby villages. The cell at the

block level is to provide information in a manner so as to prevent the EUY from making daily or frequent visit to district library or state library. At times the cell has to download the information processed at the district or state level and reprocess them to meet the specific needs of the EUY in its own jurisdiction. These cells can link forward with the village development board to serve the information needs of the rural educate unemployed.

The above three organisations are required to have only functional relationship and in a constructed manner. So as to avoid any overlapping in their respective level the major activities should be:

- (i) Organising user survey to access the information needs of the EUY.
- (ii) Organisation of user education programme for efficient use of the sources available.
- (iii) New communication devices and computer technology to help the users at the maximum level.
- (iv) Providing career guidance and counselling services to the EUY.
- (v) Establishing linkages between the EUY and the agencies and persons dealing with the problems of unemployment.

Adoptions of the information repackage strategy:

Looking at the state population and the present number of the unemployed in different geographical territory it is not feasible and cost effective to provide all sources of information in any particular cells. Therefore, the strategy to be adopted is information repackaging. Through networking the cells have to procure relevant information and repackage them in consonance with the specific needs of EUY and distribute the packages to the target groups. This repackaging activity in order to gain timeliness and cost effectiveness needs to be base on modern information technology. The declining price of the IT devices is a positive event even to make the propose strategy feasible at the state and district level cells for EUY if not at the block level.

Political Support:

However efficient techno economically may be the model of information system, their effective implementations much depend on the political support and the top leadership. The state government need to recognise the information needs of EUY and show genuine willingness to satisfy the needs. The right choice of leaders

particularly at the level of directorate and state library shall not only provide proper direction to the intended activities but also redefine the goal of the organisation in tune with the changing environment. In order that the above suggestions are taken care of and implemented properly, there is a need for the enactment of "Public Library Act of Nagaland". There needs a lot of political will for passing the bill in the legislation.

Conclusion:

The needs of the educated employed youth are genuine. Job seeking information need is more predominate than job creating information need. The sources and channels are contributing and relevant but inadequate to satisfy these information needs. The educated employed youth resort to using informal channels rather than formal channels to satisfy the needs. The reason being that, formal channels like libraries at state and district level are not well developed to provide relevant service, to satisfy the needs of the educated unemployed youth. There are management and policy related barriers which also hinder the process of information seeking behaviour of the uneducated employed youth. Therefore, it becomes very important that government libraries are strengthened with both human and non human resources by the government so that there is a network of libraries functioning at state, district and community levels. Since, an independent information system is not cost effective while taking the cognizance the size of the target population of the state, creation of special cells at each level to cater to the specific needs of educated unemployed youth emerges as a more feasible proposition.

The present study has tried to explore the information needs of educated employed youth in Nagaland, but the study is not complete in itself. Even though a sample of 538 educated employed youth was taken into consideration with adequate representation from all major academic disciplines, it was later realised that the educated unemployed youth depending on their respective academic background still differential information seeking behaviour. It is presumed that every discipline will have its own information sources and channels specific to the subject. This study has not been able to study information needs of different specific disciplines. Moreover, to arrive at better general conclusions, a large sample needs to be studied. The present

sample worked out to be only 16.19% of total educated unemployed population, which is very less for generalisations.

Keeping the above drawbacks of the study in view, it will be useful if research is conducted with a large sample that too in more comprehensive manner to identify the exact information needs and seeking behaviour of the educated unemployed youth. Further research efforts may be under taken to identify more specific information needs of the educated unemployed youth from various academic disciplines as well as different residential areas. Until the future research comes with novel ideas to tackle the problem in the long run, the suggestions made here may be implemented as a short term remedial measures. The replicate implications of the study may be explored in the other segments of the unemployed youth particularly for the educated employed youth of the state. Given political and leadership support and managerial commitment, the suggested model will go a long way in satisfying the specific information needs of the educated unemployed youth in the state. .

Refrence:

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