



A Study on Youth Unemployment in Nagaland Employment Prospects and Opportunities

Avibou Nagi¹, *²Dr. Besii Kholi

¹Research Scholar, Department of Sociology, St. Joseph University, Ikishe Model Village, Virgin Town, Dimapur, Nagaland

²HOD, Department of Sociology, St. Joseph University, Ikishe Model Village, Virgin Town, Dimapur, Nagaland

ABSTRACT

Nagaland with the highest rate of unemployment in the Northeast and the second highest in the country, it will keep increasing with time. From 2019-2020 the state saw a sharp increase in unemployment which shows that the labour market has not been able to accommodate the fast-growing supply of labour. According to Nagaland Economic Survey 2021-22 published by the Department of Economics & Statistics, there were 77,746 applicants registered in the employment exchanges on 31st December, 2021, the issue of unemployment and employment is quite evident. The rapid increase and the severity of youth unemployment rate could be minimized to a great extent through employment generation focusing mainly on skill development programs and education on entrepreneurship which have a better deal on self-employment. This paper focuses mainly on the measures and employment prospects and highlights the program and initiatives taken by the state government to promote self-employment and entrepreneurship which will not only boost the economy of the state but also help in minimizing and tackling the problem of unemployment among Naga youths.

Keywords: Unemployment, Employment, Entrepreneurship, Opportunities, Skill Development

I. Introduction

Unemployment has become one of the severe social problems of the present day. Unemployment is a state where a person is actively searching for employment yet fails to find any; it is an involuntary state of idleness and leads to waste of labour. Unemployment is a situation where an individual is looking for job but is not able to find one. It is a condition of joblessness in one's life (Bajpai, 1992). With the increase of literacy rate and the race for employment, the rate of unemployment seems to increase more and more.

Friedman defines youth as "The group of human beings who have reached the end of puberty but have not yet acquired the full rights and duties of adult life" (1971). According to the United Nations Organization people between the ages of 15-24 years have been categorized as youths. About 25% of the population in the world consists of youths and such a big population plays a major role in nation-building and thus cannot be ignored. In India, The National Youth Policy of India (2003) defines youth as those between the ages of 15-34 years which is divided into three categories: i) 15-19 years as sub juniors ii) 20-24 as juniors, iii) 25-34 years as senior youths. The National Youth Policy of India in 2014 changed this age grouping of youths and has categorized persons between the age group of 15 and 29 years as youth. It is between the stage of adulthood and childhood, and constitutes a significant segment of population in every society. Taking this in to account, age group between 15-29 years is taken for the purpose of the study.

India with 66% of its total population under the age of 35 years has the largest population of youths in the world. In 2010 the median age in India was just 25.2 years which is a great boost to its labour force. It is no surprise to consider and regard the youth as the backbone of any society and thus plays an important role in the advancement of the country. Providing necessary education and skill development and training the young energetic mind and also employment opportunities to the underemployed and unemployed youths should be the goal of the nation.

Nagaland with a total population of 19, 78,502 have a very high rate of unemployment among the youth. According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) which is conducted by the National Statistical Office (NSO) in its 2020 report states that, Nagaland has the highest educated unemployment rates in north-east and the second highest in the country. Nagaland Economic Survey 2021-22 published by the Department of Economics & Statistics, there were 77,746 applicants (JOB SEEKERS) registered in the employment exchanges on December 31, 2021. Out of this 52589 are male and 25157 were female. This number is divided according to the qualification of the individual, 22116 -under metric, 13232-matriculate, 11917-Pre-University, 21923-Graduate, 6309-postgraduate, 1698-Degree (Technical) and 551-Diploma. It is a matter of concern as the number can be much higher as many unemployed youths are not registered in the employment exchange office.

According to the recent Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), the unemployment rate of the state in 2018-2019 was 17.4 % which jumped to 24.7 % in 2019-2020. Table below shows the number of applicants (Jobseekers) registered under the Government of Nagaland.

Table No.22.5 NUMBER OF PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED APPLICANTS REMAINING ON THE LIVE REGISTER OF EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGE AS ON 31st DECEMBER 2020 & 2021

Sl.no	Educational Level	2020			2021		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Graduate & above	29	5	34	30	6	36
2	Pre-University	25	4	29	25	4	29
3	Matriculate	49	24	73	47	23	70
4	Below Matric	669	309	978	601	281	882
Total		772	342	1114	703	314	1017

Table No.22.6 NUMBER OF APPLICANTS (Job Seekers) REMAINING ON THE LIVE REGISTER OF EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGE AS ON 31st DECEMBER 2020 & 2021

Sl.no	Categories of Application	2020			2021		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Below Matric	21033	3922	24955	18911	3205	22116
2	Matriculate	11245	3344	14589	10358	2874	13232
3	Pre-University	8311	4995	13306	7472	4445	11917
4	Graduate	12661	11162	23823	11667	10256	21923
5	Post Graduate	2649	3690	6339	2623	3686	6309
6	Degree (technical)	1175	577	1752	1164	534	1698
7	Diploma Holder	446	187	633	394	157	551
Total		57520	27877	85397	52589	25157	77746

Source: Directorate of Employment, Skill Development & Entrepreneurship

II. Research Methodology

For the purpose of the study, respondents have been taken from Dimapur district, which is inhabited by all the tribes from all the districts and which is also the hub of the state. The primary data's were collected mainly through questionnaire and secondary data was collected from, articles, newspaper, websites, published and unpublished material, journals and books. A total of 254 respondents were taken from Dimapur Sadar to represent the universe. Stratified random sampling has been adopted as the sampling technique.

III. Understanding the Problem

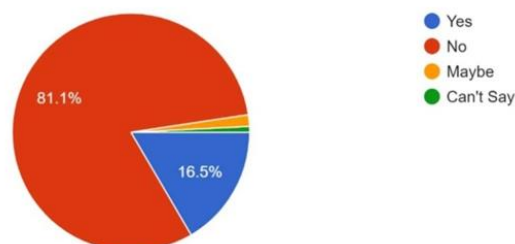
Nagaland's poor industrial sector and the application of traditional method of agriculture can be considered one of the many reasons for the high rate of unemployment in the state. With the coming of modern education and the idea of government jobs in Nagaland, most parents want their children to study in the best schools, focus only on their studies and appear for competitive exams. This shift of occupational structure from an agricultural society to race for government/ white collar jobs has directly affected the skill development and the idea of self-employment in the state. From the many reasons for the high rate of unemployment in Nagaland, four major possible reasons are discussed below.

1. Lack of skilled & semi-skilled labour

Most of the skilled workers are mainly manned by non-locals and migrant workers in Nagaland. The State government has undertaken several initiatives to increase youth access to vocational training by providing training through Industrial Training Institutions. As per Nagaland Economic Survey 2021-22 report, 682 trainees have undergone various trainings (electrician, mechanic, plumbing, tailoring, fitter, mason, COPA, steno, etc) in different fields during 2022.

Have you ever gone under skill development training Programme put up by the govt.

254 responses



(Source: primary data)

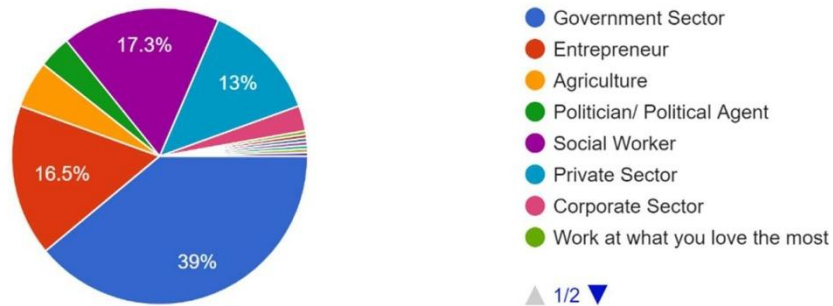
The above chart shows that most of the youths fails to avail or are unaware of the skill development programs provided by the government of the state and by other similar agencies. The lack of information on programs and the lack of desire to acquire skills can be considered one major reason for the high rate of educated unemployment in the state, because these skills enhances the ability of the individual as well as employability.

2. Dependency on Government jobs:

The joy and the pride to have the title of having a government job in Nagaland is very much evident. The Nagaland State Governments payroll, as of march 21, 2021 indicates that the total number of government employees in Nagaland is 1, 23,182. This number of employee is said to have surpassed the required employees by the state government. As such it is evident that the state government cannot provide employment for each educated youth. The immense value on government results limits the vision to ventures into other fields like entrepreneurship and other sector of employment.

Occupational preference?

254 responses



(Source: primary data)

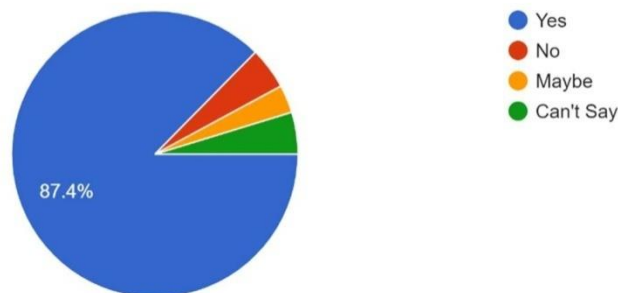
The above chart shows the occupational preferences of the Naga youths. With the increase of unemployment and awareness of secondary sector of employment, the dependency on the state government can be considered reduced to a certain extent among the some youths, yet for the larger part of the youth population, getting a government job still remains the priority. Apart from personal aspiration, Family and social pressure can be considered the reasons for the race of employment within the government sector.

3. Lack of Industries and Investment:

Nagaland remains industrially backward even after 59 years of statehood. Land-holding system, insurgency, poor infrastructure (power and road) and mismanagement of funds are some of the major factors for the lack of industries and also the failure of earlier existing industries such as the Nagaland Pulp & Paper. Co Ltd, Tuli, Nagaland Sugar mills Cp. Ltd, & Nagaland Distillery Ltd, Dimapur and Wazeho Cement factory. These various factors cut off the opportunities for business entities and setting up of companies. (Longkumer, 2013)

Do you think the govt should invest in setting up industries to tackle youth unemployment?

254 responses



(Source: primary data)

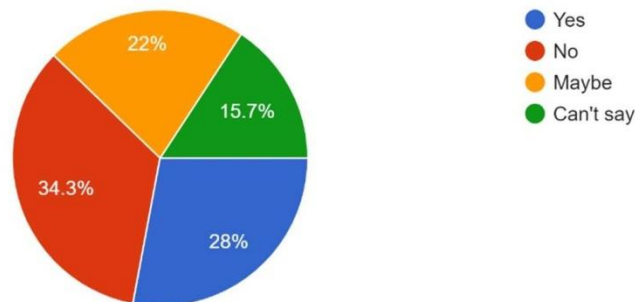
The above chart indicates the youths of the state are of the opinion that, to tackle unemployment and create more employment, the government should invest in setting up of industries because lack of industries is one of the major reasons for the low generation of employment. Government should also make more effort in attracting investment from various corporations from within and outside the state and also encourage setting up of Medium and Small Enterprises (MSE).

4. Work ethics:

The work culture for the Naga society before the coming of modernization can be considered uniform for all families. Agriculture was the only means of survival and money was unknown. Each individual was expected to produce food to be consumed by the family. Every member of the family has the moral duty to produce sufficient food for the whole year, as the idea was of 'work and eat'. In contrary to what was followed, with the coming of modern education, Naga parents today, regardless of the family's financial status works hard so that their children will receive formal education and become government employees. This has resulted in the youths not engaging in physical manual work. The values such as dignity of labour, hard work, sincerity, integrity and honesty can be considered very low among the Naga youths today.

Does the Nagas possess the idea of dignity of labor?

254 responses



(Source: primary data)

The above chart shows that majority of the Naga youths thinks that, the youths of today does not possess the idea of dignity of labor, and this is evident because very less participation of the Nagas can be seen working as a brick mason, plumber, carpenter, electrician, truck drivers, painters, mechanics, welder etc., and all these employments are taken up the migrants workers and earning quite well too.

IV. Employment Opportunities and measures against the problem of unemployment.

Efforts has been made by the state government to tackle and minimize the problem of unemployment through organizing programs relating to Entrepreneurship Development and schemes to set up medium and Small-scale industries. The establishment of Nagaland Mini Tool Room & Training Centre at industrial Estate, Dimapur; Industrial Growth Centre at Ganeshnagar; the Nagaland Bamboo Development Agency at Dimapur, and Border Trade Centers at international boundary areas are some of the few out of many steps taken by the state government to provide employment to the youths of the state.

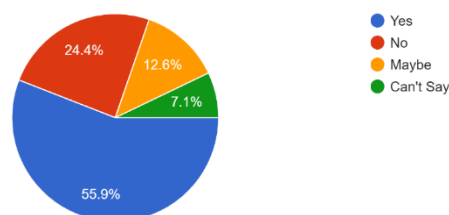
Mentioned below are some of the measures and employment opportunities in the state.

1. Integrating Skills Training with Education

Educational institutions must integrate skills training with the current syllabus because it is much evident from the past years that individuals who gain skills in vocational programmes but lack basic educational qualifications struggle to grow their careers. The new National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 addresses the need to integrate vocational skills with education to provide young Indians with the skills required for sustainable employment, which has also been followed by the state education department. Nagaland Board of School Education (NBSE) and Samagra Shiksha Nagaland in association with Lend Hand India have started with the implementation of Vocational Education which aims to fill the gap between education and employability through demand-driven-competency-based modular vocational courses. Over the last few years, the government has undertaken several initiatives to increase youth access to vocational training by setting up centers such as Nagaland Tool and Training Centre which focuses on training such as programming and operation of Computer Numerically Controlled (CNC) Machines, Machine Operator (Lathe, Milling, and Grinding etc.), and Desktop Publication etc.

Do educational institutions provide skill development apart from the academic syllabus?

254 responses



(Source: primary data)

The above chart indicates that the schools are now focusing on skill development apart from the academic syllabus, and this will certainly boost employment among the youths. Youths should avail the opportunity provided by the government to specialize skills in various areas, this will boost the employment prospect.

2. Entrepreneurship:

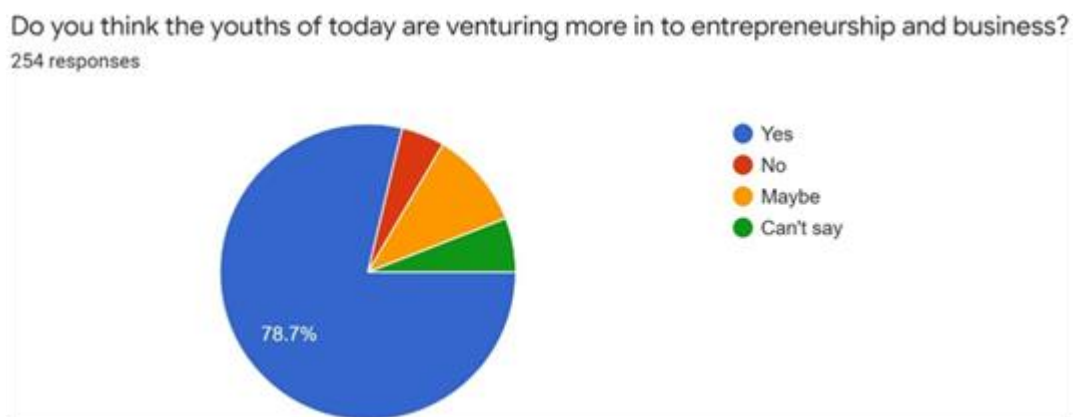
Entrepreneurship has become increasingly important for economic growth and employment creation. Nagaland has huge potential for entrepreneurship in food processing sector, organic sector, textiles, minerals, animal husbandry, floriculture, beauty & wellness, tourism sector, education, etc. As per the research, Handicrafts and Handloom is the best business sector in the state, yet venturing and upgrading to other fields of entrepreneurship is the need of the hour. The youths today realizes that there is a far bigger field apart from government jobs and as such they are venturing into the business, though the competition is very high as the majority of the business sector in the state were owned by the non-locals resulting in an economic drain from the state.

The Government has taken various initiatives to promote entrepreneurship through various schemes and initiatives-Entrepreneurship Development Programs, Prime Minister's Employment

Generation Programme (PMEGP), Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY):Micro Units

Development & Refinance Agency Ltd. (MUDRA), Stand Up India scheme, etc. implemented through Government Departments and agencies like NABARD, NEDFi, Banks, SIDBI to promote entrepreneurship among the youths, as such, the youths should take advantage and utilize the various schemes and programs provided by the State and Central government.

Nagaland with the aim to promote local entrepreneurs of the state has initiated the Nagaland Start-up Policy 2019-2023. This policy aims to make Nagaland as a model for start-up leader in the north east region. The dept. of industries and commerce has tied up with YouthNet in 2021 for EDC, especially in educational institutions. These opportunities provided by the govt and other agencies can and will uplift the upcoming youths in the field of entrepreneurship.



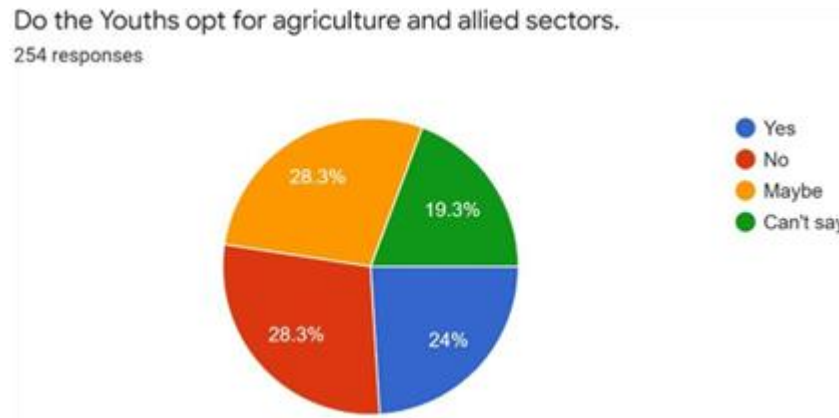
(Source: primary data)

The above chart shows the attitude of the youths towards entrepreneurship and business. It is a known fact that most of the business in the state is controlled by non-locals and yet with time, it is quite evident that many Nagas especially the youths are venturing in to entrepreneurship and setting up their own business which will not only boost the economy of the state and individual but also encourage the upcoming generation in this field which have been neglected for quite some time now.

3. Accelerating Investment in Agriculture and allied sectors:

Nagaland with an area of 16,579 sq. km depends on other states for its survival. The agricultural climate condition of the state provides ample economic opportunities for agro-based industry. Forest-based and agro-based industries, mineral extraction, food processing, tourism, poultry, cattle farming, piggery, beekeeping, handloom and handicraft sector are some of the areas where the state have high potential and also the state to encourage the people to venture in to these field

and have been offering policies and fiscal incentives which is one important sector to boost the economy of the state. The Department of Agriculture, Nagaland launched the State Agriculture Portal (SAP), "nagafarmer.nagaland.gov.in" to provide a platform for the welfare of the farming community. Nagas are yet to explore and utilize agro-based and allied sectors to its maximum potential, which is one of the key areas to tackle economic failure and unemployment in the state.



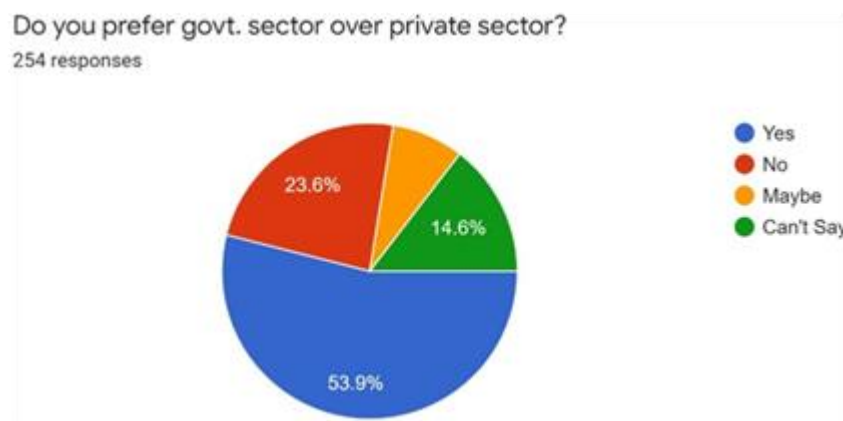
(Source: primary data)

The above chart shows the perspective of the youths towards agriculture and allied sector of employment. It cannot be denied that most Naga youths today do not recognize the immense potential in agriculture. Better awareness and education on the opportunities in the field of agriculture and allied sector should be imparted.

4. Promotion of IT and Private sector:

The **private sector** is critical to economic growth and poverty **reduction**, but it cannot and does not act alone. Government plays a central role in supporting this sector. The Government must encourage the private sector to become more productive, cost-effective and profitable. Private sector reforms can help reduce unemployment and less stress on the dependency of Government jobs. Also, various initiatives can be taken up in Public Private Partnership model because employment generation in the private sector can be more in the private sector compared to the government sector. Setting up private sectors of different levels for self-employment and also generating employment for others should be the goal of the youths instead of just being an employee or depending on the government.

IT sector-with the advancement of technology, the IT sector is developing at a fast pace and can provide employment in the following ways: BPO services through telecommunication, advertising, print, film, multimedia, Electronic, Information and Communication Technology, etc. Nagas have only scraped the surface of the IT sector and as such this should be one the focus areas as the opportunities in this area are huge as it is both labour-creating and labour-saving.



(Source: primary data)

The above chart shows the response of the youths towards employment in private sector. With the limitation of employees in the govt. sector, youths should now shift their attention towards the opportunities before them in the field of private and IT sector, as these sectors together can generate much more employment. Focus should be concentrated to promotion of these sectors because not much importance has been given to this sector till date, which can also be considered as one of the reason for the high rate of unemployment in the state.

In conclusion, of the 254 respondents, 72 percent were of the view that the government is not providing enough jobs for the youths, which is a clear indication of high dependency on the government. The lack of proper information on the various schemes and the opportunity available to the youths of the state can be considered as one of the key reasons for the failure to venture into

other fields and the reason for depending on the government to provide job for each individual. Vision 2030 Nagaland focuses on skill development and employability which is one great initiative and idea which will not only enhance the youths but also boost employment and economy of the state. Educating the young and building a self-employment-friendly environment in the society will enhance and encourage the youths to venture in the various sectors of employment, which will not only boost the economy of the state but also uplift the individual and the society as a whole.

References

- Bajpai, Pramod Kumar (1992). *Youth, Education and Unemployment*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House
- Banerjee, A., Newman, A. (1993). "Occupational choice and the process of development", *Journal of Political Economy*, 101, 274-298
- Friedman, F.G (1971). *Society and youth*. London: MacMillan
- Govt of India, Annual Report. Various issues, Ministry of Small Scale Industries, New Delhi
- Govt of Nagaland, Directorate of Evaluation, "Evaluation Study on Employment Opportunities For gone by Nagas and Employment of Non-Nagas in the State"
- Kikhi, Kedilezo (2006). *Educated Unemployed youth in Nagaland: A Sociological Study*. New Delhi: Akansha Publishing House.
- Longkumer, Akumtenla (2013, oct13). Industrial Scenario in Nagaland. *Eastern Mirror* .<https://easternmirrornagaland.com/industrial-scenario-in-nagaland/>
- Marchang Reimeingam, (2014) Educated Unemployment in Sikkim: An Outcome of Educational Development, *Journal of North East India Studies* 1st July, 2014, pp.55-66.
- Nagaland Statistical Handbook 2022. Published by Directorate of Economics & Statistics. Govt of Nagaland
- NSSO. (2011): *Employment and Unemployment Situation in India 2009-10*. Report No.537. GOI: MOSPI
- Sema, A. (2006). Economic Development in Nagaland: Prospects and Constraints. *Economic Development in Nagaland: Prospects*
- Venuh, N (2004). *Naga Society: Continuity and Change*. New Delhi, Shipra Publications.
- And Constraints* (pp.3-15). Kohima: N.V Press.