

Young, employed and unhappy?

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Some 134 million literate youth in India are employed in some job or other; 58% of them are satisfied with their job profile while 38% are dissatisfied. A higher proportion of the employed, urban youth are satisfied (63%) than those employed in rural areas (55%). Correspondingly, a higher percentage of the employed youth in the villages (41%) are not satisfied as compared to 34% in the towns.

The major reasons for dissatisfaction with a current job seem to be 'unsecured job', 'low salary', 'stressful environment' and a job-qualification mismatch as suggested by 35, 34, 14 and 7% respondents respectively. The proportion dissatisfied on account of low salary was higher in the urban areas (39%) than in rural areas (31%), while a stressful environment is reported more from rural (15%) than from urban areas (10%).

The level of satisfaction among female employees (64%) was reportedly higher compared to males (57%). Dissatisfaction was seen more among male employees than among female ones. While unsecured job and stressful environment affect males and females equally, low salary is more likely to put off male employees (34%) than females (29%). Similarly, the job-qualification mismatch is more likely to be a reason for dissatisfaction among female employees (9%) than male (7%).

About 2 million graduates and half a million post-graduates are unemployed in India. It is interesting to note that the level of unemployment increases with the level of education. At the 'primary' level, unemployment is 3.6%, which increases to 5.2% at matriculation. It rises to 8% at graduation and further to 9.3% at the post-graduate level.

Education level	Estimated literate youth population (million)	Unemployed (million)	% share of unemployed	% share of rural to unemployed
Below primary	32.2	0.9	2.9	77.0
Primary (5 th)	68.1	2.4	3.6	65.2
Middle (8 th)	90.1	3.6	4.0	57.0
Matric (10 th)	63.7	3.3	5.2	61.2
Higher secondary(12 th)	46.7	2.6	5.6	63.1
Graduate	24.8	2.0	8.0	53.0
Postgraduate & others	5.8	0.5	9.3	45.8
Professional degree	1.3	0.1	10.6	17.3
All India	332.7	15.6	4.7	60.1

Sources: NYRS (2009), NCAER

While the majority of lowly-qualified unemployed youth prefer to live in villages, the highly-qualified are generally found in the towns due to employment and professional reasons. Some 54% of the post-graduate-unemployed, 83% of the professionally qualified ones and those with higher research degrees reside in towns.

The vast majority of the unemployed are from the Arts and Science streams. The percentage of unemployment among Arts degree holders increases with the level of qualification but declines in the case of Science degree holders. While 39% of Arts graduates are unemployed, the percentage rises to 49% among the professional degree holders of the Arts stream. In contrast, the percentage falls from 37 to 22 in the case of Science degree holders. There is more unemployment among engineering post-graduates than among ordinary graduates and the reverse is the case with Commerce graduates.

The most important reasons for unemployment among Indian literate youth are shortage of jobs, non-availability of suitable jobs and family responsibilities. Shortage of jobs applies to a higher percentage of rural unemployed (38%) than to their urban counterparts (31%). The problem of not getting a suitable job

is faced more by urban youth (48%) than rural (46%). Family objection is another reason for unemployment among educated youth. It is reported by 7% of urban and 4% of rural unemployed.

The respondents were asked whether they supported the current, caste-based reservation of seats in higher education. As is evident in NYRS 2009, about 48% of all literate youth indicated that they supported it, while 35% were against caste-based reservations. While 54% of SC, 50% of ST and 47% of OBC are in favour of the current system, 43% of the general castes back it.

Increasing globalisation and exposure to international media outlets as also the Internet and mobile telephony have given a completely new dimension to social interactions between the youth and the society at large. The youth are also often prone to violence. Frustration is a key driver of this increasingly marked attribute and it arises from unfulfilled aspirations. The major reasons for frustration in today's youth are unemployment, injustice and corruption. What rubs salt on this wound is a sense of victimhood to the forces of unemployment, injustice and corruption. Their impressionable minds are hemmed in from all sides by glamorous objects and options that most cannot possess.

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