

EXTENT AND GROWTH OF EDUCATED JOB SEEKERS IN TRIPURA**Sumanta Debbarma¹, Priya Das², P C Nunfela Darlong³, Sophia T Darlong⁴**¹Dept. of Economics, Tripura University, Suryamaninagar - 799022, Tripura, India.

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²Dept. of Commerce, Tripura University, Suryamaninagar – 799022, Tripura, India.ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7632-6467>³Dept. of Economics, Tripura University, Suryamaninagar - 799022, Tripura, India.⁴Dept. of School of Education, Tripura University, Suryamaninagar - 799022, Tripura, India.priya568das@gmail.com sumantadebbarma83@gmail.com**ABSTRACT**

This study examines trends in educated job seekers from 2015–16 to 2021–22, analyzing their educational qualifications, social categories, genders, and age groups despite their high literacy rate of over 87%. The data reveals a steady increase in job-seeking participation, highest in 2018-19 with 1188 persons and 645 persons in 2021-22. Graduate degree holders consistently represent the largest group of job seekers, while postgraduate and PhD candidates have low but gradually increasing participation. Category-wise, Scheduled Tribes (ST) show the highest growth in job-seeking participation, while General and OBC candidates remain dominant. Gender-wise, male participation leads, but female involvement has grown steadily. The 18-24 and 25-34 age groups form the majority of job seekers, reflecting the employment challenges faced by Tripura's youth.

Keywords: Educated unemployed, Qualification, age, Category.

Introduction

Educated are those “persons who have attained an educational level of secondary and above” and attained an “age of 15 years or above” (NSSO, 2011:157). Unemployed are those persons who “sought work or did not seek but were available for work (for usual status approach)” (NSSO, 2011: 13). Educated unemployed are persons who have obtained an educational level of secondary and above and are seeking or available for work. In the presently prevailing period, educated unemployment has become a challenge to the Indian economy. Tripura, one of the most literate states in India with a literacy rate exceeding 87%, faces a critical challenge in the form of educated unemployment. Despite significant strides in education, including increased access to schools, colleges, and professional institutions, the state has been unable to translate educational achievements into employment opportunities for its growing workforce. This disconnect has resulted in a steady rise in educated unemployment, posing socio-economic challenges for the region.

The state's economy, predominantly agriculture with limited industrial and service sector expansion, has struggled to absorb its educated youth. Government jobs, traditionally the primary source of employment, are unable to meet the growing demand. However, weak private sector investment, inadequate skill development programs, and limited opportunities for entrepreneurship exacerbate the issue. Many degree-holders are either unemployed or underemployed, highlighting the widening gap between education and employability.

Addressing educated unemployment in Tripura requires multifaceted solutions. These include fostering industrial growth, improving infrastructure, enhancing skill development initiatives aligned with market needs, and promoting entrepreneurship. With strategic investments and policy interventions, Tripura can bridge this gap, harness its educated workforce, and drive economic progress while providing sustainable livelihoods for its youth.

Literature reviews

Prakash, (1989). An examination of the economic causes of unemployment in Kerala It is primarily focused on the study of the factors that lead people to leave different regions of India. The author, B. Prakash, presents the findings of an employment survey conducted in 1980, which estimates the total number of out-migrants to other parts of India at 3 lakhs. According to the survey, 2.2 percent of people living in urban areas and 3.6% of people living in rural regions were unemployed.

Mathew, (1995). To study gender differences in educated unemployment based on the results of the 38th and 43rd rounds of the National Sample Survey. According to the study, educated unemployment increased substantially among both males and females in Kerala between the two rounds of the survey, with female job seekers experiencing a relatively higher increase in unemployment. The survey also found that people who have received certain vocational or professional training typically do not experience the same level of desperation as the typical matriculates, graduates, and postgraduates who were the brunt of educated unemployment.

Visaria, (1998). To discuss the problem of youth unemployment in India and review the available data and policy initiatives taken so far to mitigate it. The idea to establish a National Reconstruction Corps and the National Youth Policy of 1988 are also mentioned. These initiatives are intended to promote literacy among young people and to maintain the environment. The South Asia Multidisciplinary Advisory Team (SAAT) of the International Labour Organization (ILO), New Delhi, invited the paper to be written.

Mr. Paul Jacob, a retired Joint Director of the National Sample Survey Organization, Calcutta, provided the study with guidance and support. In December 1997, the ILO convened a meeting to discuss the document with experts, and a draft of the document was distributed.

Paranjape, (2007), conducted a comprehensive analysis of the education distribution in Maharashtra, revealing significant disparities. According to the study, inequality decreases when average years of education rise, gender gaps narrow, and per capita GDP rises. In 1960, India's education Gini coefficient and average number of years spent in school were 0.79 and 1.09, respectively. These numbers changed to 0.69 by 1990, which is among the highest internationally, and to 2.95 years, respectively. The study produced the following important conclusions: (A) There is a significant inequity in the distribution of education, particularly in rural areas and among socially disadvantaged populations. (a) Both in rural and urban settings, gender inequality in schooling is more pronounced among females. (c) Gini coefficient values increase with decreasing levels of primary education. Additionally, the Gini coefficient is expected to decline further as a result of a rise in higher-level students' educational achievement and a fall in illiteracy.

Dixit et. al. (2008). It explores the challenge of educated unemployment and suggests that a lack of education and vocational guidance facilities are some of the factors contributing to unemployment. The authors argue that rather than taking into account their skills and aptitudes, young people usually choose jobs merely out of a desire to make money. According to the study, giving young people educational and career assistance may help them select a profession that matches their skills and interests, which can ultimately aid in the solution to the unemployment problem. The study also contends that in order to increase employment and lower unemployment, rapid industrialization and economic expansion are required.

Nunez, & Livanos, (2010). To examine the impact of an academic degree and field of study on short-term and long-term unemployment across Europe (EU15) using Labour Force Survey (LFS) data on over half a million individuals. The study examines (1) the effect of a degree at the European level, (2) the specific effects of 14 subject areas, and (3) the effect of the country. According to the findings, a college degree is more helpful in lowering the chance of short-term unemployment than long-term unemployment. Even though this basic pattern is evident for the majority of academic courses, levels have a large cross-national and cross-disciplinary diversity.

Majumder, & Mukherjee, (2013). "Unemployment among Educated Youth: Implications for India's Demographic Dividend," investigates the issues of skill development, unemployment, and education among young Indians with a focus on educated unemployment. Emphasizing India's ability to take advantage of its large youth population to increase income and employment levels. Among Indian youth, skill development and training are insufficient because there is a substantial mismatch between supply and demand. As a result of the urgent need to address this issue, the authors suggest that the nation's human resource development initiative should be critically examined. The paper also highlights those states like Kerala, Orissa, Jharkhand, Assam, Bengal, and Jammu & Kashmir consistently have higher levels of educated youth unemployment compared to the national average, while unemployment among educated youth is relatively less than the national average in the states of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, and Karnataka.

Reimeingam, (2014). To discuss the problem of educated unemployment in Sikkim and make the case that it results from educational development. There is a serious problem with educated unemployment in Sikkim, especially for rural males, as a result of the current educational system's failure to generate all employable people. The NSSO report's secondary data provide the foundation of the study. According to the report, to solve the problem, the educational system needs to be reformed in the direction of a job-oriented program. Increasing the number of educational institutions is required by the expanding population, and improving employability is essential to addressing the problem of unemployment.

Bairagya, (2015), conducted a comparative analysis of the relationship between education and unemployment, distinguishing between developed and developing countries. The study found different trends: in rich countries, higher levels of education were related to lower jobless rates, whereas in developing countries, higher levels of education were linked to higher unemployment rates. A similar inverse relationship between greater education and employment rates was seen in India. According to both descriptive and regression analyses, the study found that highly

industrialized states had lower unemployment rates than medium-industrialized and low-industrialized states across a range of educational levels.

Marchang, (2019). To discuss the issue of youth and educated unemployment in north-east India. The problem is more severe in this region due to limited job opportunities and economic underdevelopment. The study used secondary data sources such as the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) and the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India (RGCCI) or Census of India. To analyse the patterns and trends of unemployment using the NSSO data on youth and the educated in NER. The prevalence of educated unemployment is a rural and urban phenomenon, however, it is more severe for females than males in most of the NE states. The youth unemployment problem was more severe in urban than rural areas and for females than males in most of the NE states in the country. In India, educated unemployment rates have fluctuated over the years for both males and females in both areas. Overall, it has considerably declined throughout the period, particularly for males in both areas of India.

Azeez, & Akhtar, (2019). To examine the problem of unemployment in Kerala, which is brought on by a rise in the labour force as a result of a rise in the number of women looking for wage work. According to the report, unemployment is a situation where the labour supply exceeds the labour demand and happens when no one who is physically capable of working can find a job paying the usual rate. Two different methods are used in the study to determine the number of jobless people, with the second method eliminating people who were working in a supporting role during the reference period. The number calculated using the second technique will be lower than the first since some people who were identified as unemployed using the first method might be working in a supporting role.

Devi, (2020). To discuss the issue of unemployment in rural and urban areas of Assam, India, and its relation to education and employability. According to the report, the unemployment rate for women in the state's urban districts is much higher than the rate for women in its rural sections. The base is secondary data. According to the report, providing vocational education is crucial for producing more qualified and capable labour and is necessary for effectively addressing the unemployment issue. Analysis of the employment of women in the state's organized sector revealed that in 2016, they made up 26.5% of all employment.

Deka, (2021). To discuss the problem of educated unemployment in Assam, India. The authors describe the issue of educated youth unemployment, which is higher in Assam than in other Indian states. It also brings attention to the issue of the high unemployment rate among educated women. The study suggests that enhancing Assam's infrastructure will enable the region of north-east India to build commercial relations with other parts of India and its neighboring nations, leading to the creation of jobs. to use secondary data to look at educated unemployment in Assam, highlighting how common it is among young people, especially females. It recognizes the importance of the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) as a reliable data source for employment and unemployment information in India and suggests improving infrastructure and trade linkages as a way to create employment.

They have also cited **Marchang (2015)** and **Nath (1968)** to explain the reasons behind lower unemployment rates for males than females in urban areas and the factors that influence women's economic engagement in the region.

Although advancements in education and population growth, economic underdevelopment in North-East India hinders job opportunities and affects the issue of youth and educated unemployment. The region higher rates of unemployment compared to the national average, particularly among women and in urban areas.

Research Gap

Existing studies on educated job seekers have mostly been conducted at the national level, with only a few scattered efforts made specifically at the Northeast level, including Tripura. Furthermore, the existing efforts have been limited to either economic or social issues. Consequently, a comprehensive study focusing on the problems faced by educated job seekers people in Tripura has not yet been undertaken so far. However, there is a recognized necessity for such research. The present study seeks to address this gap and take into account all the socio-economic challenges experienced by educated job seekers people in the state of Tripura.

Objective of the study

The objective of the paper is to analysis the Extent and growth of Educated job seekers in Tripura.

Research Methodology

The study is based on secondary data. Data are collected from various sources like Employment Exchange, National Career Service, Economic Survey, CMIE, NSSO, etc. and also from research articles, journals, published research paper, etc.

Results & Discussion

In this section, analyze the extent and growth of Educated job seekers in Tripura.

Table-1: Qualification -wise participation in Job seeking in Tripura during 2015-16 to 2024-25

Year	Qualification wise										All Categories Total
	10 th	11 th	12 th	Diploma 10 th	Diploma 12 th	ITI	Graduate	PG	PG Diploma	Ph. d	
2015-16	8	0	20	5	2	2	94	30	1	0	162
2016-17	2	1	25	3	6	3	115	49	0	3	207
2017-18	37	0	59	13	20	2	301	105	0	2	539
2018-19	42	3	149	12	39	3	682	246	3	9	1188
2019-20	39	3	141	28	21	0	457	138	1	4	832
2020-21	60	3	208	20	29	6	499	121	1	1	948
2021-22	45	0	178	18	15	1	315	73	0	0	645

Source: (NCS) Portal

The **table 1** shows qualification from 2015-16 to 2021-22, revealing significant growth and change in education-level dynamics. The total number of participations increased substantially from 162 in 2015-16 to a peak of 1188 in 2018-19, followed by a decline to 645 in 2021-22.

Graduates' degree holders had shown consistent in numbers of registration and also has the largest numbers across throughout the years, however, highest being registered in 2018-19 with 682 participants. This reflects a focus on higher education as a key demographic.

Class12th passed participants also consist a significant portion, with steady growth leading to 208 in 2020-21. Lower educational levels i.e., 10th pass, Diploma holders and ITI shows gradual increases in numbers of registration with low participation. In case Postgraduates (PG) and PG Diplomas data shows a steady increase in numbers though with less participations, with a significant rise during 2018-19. Ph.D. participation is consistently low. However, it was observed that during 2018-19 the number of participations in all categories of educational has decline as compared to the previous year of 2021-22.

Table-2: Category-wise participation in Job seeking in Tripura during 2015-16 to 2024-25

Year	Category					Total
	General	OBC	SC	ST	Others	
2015-16	44	54	29	35	3	165
2016-17	76	34	46	48	4	208
2017-18	167	120	109	138	8	542
2018-19	313	287	227	350	18	1195
2019-20	266	225	145	183	5	824
2020-21	258	224	172	236	5	895
2021-22	138	120	93	197	4	552

Source: (NCS) Portal

The **table-2** shows the participation trends amongst various categories viz. General, OBC, SC, ST, and Others from period 2015-16 to 2021-22 in Tripura. Data reveals that total participation seeking employment amongst the educated persons shows a steady rate of increase. That is, it rose merely from 165 nos. during 2015-16 and it went up to enormously 1195 nos. in 2018-19. The dramatic and abnormal increase in numbers during 2021-22 may be attributed to corona effects. However, these numbers have declined sharply to 552 nos. in 2021-22 up to December-2022. It may be noted that the data for 2021-22 has not been completed and the number may increase.

In case of ST category, it was found the number of participations in seeking Job has been the most significant growth during the aforementioned periods, accounting for 350 persons of participation in 2018-19 from merely 34 nos. in 2015-16. In case of General and OBC categories dominate consistently throughout, accounting more than half of total participation, However, OBC slightly surpassing General category in recent years. As far as SC category is concern, participation shows growth, increasing its proportional participations from 29 persons in 2015-16 to 227 persons in 2018-19. It is interesting that other category remains low throughout the periods with 3 persons during 2015-16 to 4 nos. in 2021-22.

Year-on-year data analysis shows in three phases of gradual growth until 2018-19, during 2019-20 to 2021-22. The rise in SC and ST participation reflects increasing inclusivity. Ensuring proportional growth across categories and stabilizing participation trends will support equity in the long term.

Table-3: Gender-wise participation in Job seeking in Tripura during 2015-16 to 2024-25

Year	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
2015-16	213	38	251
2016-17	265	79	344
2017-18	597	286	883
2018-19	1458	525	1983
2019-20	954	369	1323
2020-21	1098	405	1503
2021-22	752	284	1036

Source: (NCS) Portal

Table-3 shows gender-wise participation during 2015-16 to 2021-22 (i.e., male and female) across educational levels. From data it is observed a significant trend emerges in male-female gender-specific and total participation, reflecting variations in involvement. The total participation rose from 251 during 2015-16 to 1983 in 2018-19. Year-wise figure in total number of male participations reflects fluctuations. However, the growth trend was particularly steep from 2017-18 to 2018-19 and during 2019-20 to 2021-22. In the year 2021-22, it could indicate a major shift.

Although both groups showed notable growth over time, males frequently lead females in terms of gender participation. While it follows a lag in male involvement, especially during years with larger total participation, female participation has a consistently growing trend.

The number of participants declined sharply from the 2021–22 peak in 2018–19. However, the gender gap still remains unchanged.

Table-4: Age-wise Job seekers in Tripura during 2015-16 to 2024-25

Year	Age group in years						
	Up to 18	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	Above 65
2015-16	-	-	123	43	-	-	-
2016-17	-	4	172	34	-	-	-
2017-18	-	32	447	66	2	-	-
2018-19	-	114	907	173	10	1	1
2019-20	-	169	542	138	2	-	-
2020-21	-	266	542	119	5	2	-
2021-22	-	254	358	44	-	-	-

TOTAL	00	839	3091	617	19	3	1
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Source: (NCS) Portal

Table 4 shows age-group job seekers of educated persons during 7 years period in Tripura. Younger age groups of up to 18 and 18-24 years is found to be in increasing trend and showing notable growth, especially a dramatic rise is visible for age group of 18-24 years with 266 persons of job seeker during 2020-21. Middle-age groups between 25-34 years and 35-44 years also seen substantial increase in numbers, with peaks in 2018-19 at 907 & 173, respectively. Older age groups of 45-54, 55-64, and above 65 have the lowest figures, with minimal growth of job seekers. It may be noted that older age groups of 45-54, 55-64, and above 65 years register their names in the NCS portal for taking benefits such as to take loan under Govt. schemes, Die-in harness, contractual job after retirements. It is not unusual that age group between 18-24 and 25-34 years has the highest number of participation rates, with 839 and 3091 respectively, on the other hand "Above 65 years" has just 1. However, a notable observation is the surge across nearly all groups in 2021-22, which is most likely due to different job recruiting, such as those conducted by the TPSC, and changes in the overall number of job seekers.

Recommendation

- A job seeker's participation must be updated in their registration every year in the NCS portal.
- Skill Enhancement Programs—Expand vocational training and skill development initiatives the program needs to improve for employability.
- Entrepreneurship Promotion—Facilitate startups and self-employment by implementing various government scheme supports.
- Job Market Expansion—Attract private sector investments and promote MSMEs to provide job opportunities to the job seekers.

Conclusion

The increased trend of educated unemployment in Tripura shows a growing disconnect between educational attainment and employment opportunities. Despite the state's high literacy rate and increasing participation in higher education, the job market has struggled to absorb the educated workforce. The data shows a significant increase in job-seeking participation, particularly among graduates and young job seekers, with a high in 2018-19 and the lowest in 2021-22. Category-wise, Scheduled Tribes (ST) have shown the most notable growth, while gender-wise, female participation has gradually increased but remains lower than male participation.

The major challenges contributing to educated unemployment in Tripura include limited industrialization, weak private sector investment, dependency on government jobs, and inadequate skill development programs. Addressing this issue requires a multifaceted approach, including promoting entrepreneurship, expanding the industrial and service sectors, and aligning educational curricula with market demands. Strategic government policies, improved infrastructure, and skill development initiatives tailored to industry needs can help bridge the education-employment gap. By fostering a dynamic employment ecosystem, Tripura can ensure sustainable livelihoods for its educated workforce, ultimately contributing to the state's economic growth and social stability.

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