

Job Preferences and Joblessness amongst the Educated Youth in Rural Punjab

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Abstract

The educated youth across the globe have shown a preference for white-collar jobs in general as they are averse to manual work and blue-collar jobs. Another school of thought considers the above viewpoint as a “sociological half-truth” as they have observed in various studies that the educated do ultimately accept lower-paid quasi-manual work, as empirical facts show a fall in earnings over time. The paper deals with various aspects of job preferences and perceived reasons for not getting a job among educated unemployed rural youth in Punjab. The major objectives of the study were to indicate the job preferences of unemployed persons and their expectations; and to analyze the perceived reasons for being unemployed. The present paper tries to investigate the job preferences of the educated unemployed in rural Punjab with special reference to Rupnagar, Amritsar and Bathinda districts. The data used for further analysis were generated using a well designed questionnaire administered on the sample households at personal level. The research paper is mainly based on primary data collected from the three selected districts of Punjab.

Key Words: Punjab, Education, joblessness, unemployment

Introduction

The educated youth across the globe have shown a preference for white-collar jobs in general as they are averse to manual work and blue-collar jobs. Another school of thought considers the above viewpoint as a “sociological half-truth” as they have observed in various studies that the educated do ultimately accept lower-paid quasi-manual work, as empirical facts show a fall in earnings over time (Blaug et al, 1969;38-39). One frequently comes across the argument as stated in the above lines even in the state of Punjab as well. The paper deals with various aspects of job preferences and perceived reasons for not getting a job among educated unemployed rural youth in Punjab.

The major objectives of the study were:

- i. to indicate the job preferences of unemployed persons and their expectations; and
- ii. to analyse the perceived reasons for being unemployed.

Methodology:

Sampling Design:

The present paper tries to investigate the job preferences of the educated unemployed in rural Punjab with special reference to Rupnagar, Amritsar and Bathinda districts. The data used for further analysis were generated using a well designed questionnaire administered on the sample households at personal level. At the onset, for the Stage 1 of district selection, the major criterion was the literacy rate of the districts. One district each was selected from the highest literacy group (55-65 per cent literacy rate); medium literacy group (45-55

per cent literacy rate), and low literacy group(35-45 per cent literacy rate). The final selection of districts viz., Rupnagar, Amritsar and Bathinda was made to represent the three agro-climatic zones and also different literacy levels. For Stage 2 of the multi-stage stratified random sampling, two Community Development Blocks(CD Blocks) –one with maximum literacy and the other with minimum literacy were selected from each of the chosen districts. The selected CD blocks were Nathana(19.42 per cent literacy rate & Budhlada(8.42 per cent literacy rate) from Bathinda district; Rayya CD block(58.92 per cent literacy rate) & Valtoha CD block(35.19 per cent literacy rate) from Amritsar district; and Rupnagar CD block(67.36 per cent literacy rate & Nurpur Bedi CD block(56.53 per cent literacy rate) from Rupnagar district. The Stage 3 of village selection was also based on the literacy criterion, though the literacy rate was calculated by the researcher with the available information of the number of literates being divided by the difference in total population and population in the (0-6) age group; and multiplying the result so obtained by 100. The villages thus selected were: Chak Bakhtu(26.91 per cent), Bhaini(17.84 per cent) & Seman (8.43 per cent) from Nathana CD block; Alampur Bodlan(15.82 per cent), Gurney Kalan(13 per cent) & Rali(11.27 per cent) from Budhlada CD block of Bathinda district; Rayya(79.23 per cent), Baba Bakala(62.57 per cent), & Sathiala(49.82 per cent) from Rayya CD block; Khemkaran(54.07 per cent), Rajoke(30.96 per cent) & Rattoke(19.81 per cent) from Valtoha CD block of Amritsar district; and Phoolpur Grewal(93.30 per cent), Singh(73.82 per

cent) & Khalidpur(8.33 per cent) from Rupnagar CD block; Nurpur Kalan(74.22 per cent), Kartarpur (56.66 per cent) & Balewal(39.87 per cent) from Nurpur Bedi CD block of Rupnagar district. The Stage 4 of selection of Households and respondents was initiated by preparing a list of target population containing the details regarding age of family members and their educational qualification was prepared for each family of the selected villages in consultation with the Sarpanch/ knowledgeable persons of the concerned village. Thus, the sampling frame was completed and respondents were randomly chosen from the sample frame.

Data Sources

For the analysis, primary data was collected using the multi-stage stratified sampling technique; and secondary data has been collected from the various published and unpublished sources like NSSO publications, Census of India, various issues of Statistical Abstract of Punjab, magazines and journals. The research paper is mainly based on primary data collected from the three selected districts of Punjab.

Collection of Data

The data used for the research paper were collected through a well designed questionnaire. It is split into various sections: General demographic information of the individual and the household surveyed; Employment status-past and present, including reasons for seeking another employment if already working, attitude towards job sought, information regarding training centres and financial help sought or loan after training, and awareness about government schemes for the rural poor. The questionnaire was pre-tested in

Jiwan Singh Wala village of Bathinda district and necessary changes were incorporated accordingly.

Analysis and Discussion

Job Preference of Educated Unemployed

The respondents were inquired about their liking/preference for the type of job and also were made to indicate their past employment status. They were also questioned about the reasons as perceived by their own self about their unemployed status. So far as the preference for a Government job, private

sector job or being self employed was concerned, 223 respondents (58.68 per cent) out of a total of 380 respondents surveyed, indicated a preference for a government job. The number and percentage of educated unemployed preferring a government job in districts Amritsar, Bathinda and Rupnagar were 61 respondents(53.03 per cent), 88 respondents(70.97 respondents and 74 respondents(59.68 per cent), respectively. The preference for private sector employment was as follows: 112 respondents (29.47 per cent) only as a second

District/CD block/Village / State	Total number of Respondents	Number and Percentage of Unemployed Desiring			
		Government Job	Private Job	Any Job	Self Employment
Bathinda District	124	88(70.97)	23(18.55)	03(02.42)	10(08.06)
Nathana CD Block	72	54(75.00)	12(16.67)	02(02.78)	04(05.55)
a. Chak Bakhtu	17	10(58.83)	04(23.53)	01(05.88)	02(11.76)
b. Bhaini	34	27(79.41)	05(14.71)	01(02.94)	01(02.94)
c. Seman	21	17(80.95)	03(14.29)	--	01(04.76)
Budhlada CD Block	52	34(65.38)	11(21.15)	01(01.92)	06(11.54)
a. Alampur Bodlan	13	05(38.46)	05(3.85)	--	03(23.08)
b. Gurney Kalan	17	10(58.82)	04(23.53)	01(05.88)	02(11.76)
c. Rali	22	19(86.36)	02(09.09)	--	01(04.54)
Amritsar District	132	61(53.03)	55(41.66)	--	16(12.12)
Rayya CD Block	67	28(41.79)	29(43.28)	--	10(14.93)
a. Rayya	28	11(39.29)	14(50.00)	--	03(10.71)
b. Baba Bakala	25	09(36.00)	12(48.00)	--	04(16.00)
c. Sathiala	14	08(57.14)	03(21.43)	--	03(21.43)
Valtoha CD Block	65	33(50.77)	26(40.00)	--	06(09.23)
a. Khemkaran	25	12(48.00)	11(44.00)	--	02(08.00)
b. Rajoke	21	11(52.38)	07(03.33)	--	03(14.29)
c. Rattoke	19	10(52.63)	8(42.11)	--	01(05.26)
Rupnagar District	124	74(59.68)	34(27.42)	07(05.65)	09(07.25)

Rupnagar CD Block	57	33(57.89)	18(31.58)	03(05.26)	03(05.27)
a. Phoolpur Grewal	22	13(59.09)	05(22.73)	01(04.55)	03(13.63)
b. Singh	25	15(60.00)	09(36.00)	01(04.00)	--
c. Khalidpur	10	05(50.00)	04(40.00)	01(10.00)	--
Nurpur Bedi CD Block	67	41(61.19)	16(23.88)	04(05.97)	06(08.96)
a. Nurpur Kalan	29	18(62.07)	06(20.69)	02(06.90)	03(10.34)
b. Kartarpur	20	11(55.00)	06(30.00)	01(05.00)	02(10.00)
c. Balewal	18	12(66.67)	04(22.22)	01(05.56)	01(05.55)
Punjab	380	223(58.68)	112(29.47)	10(02.63)	35(09.21)

Source: Primary Survey

preference if a government job was not available to them. The preference for a private sector employment was considered only for the higher wage rate or preference for fixity of work place. 55 respondents(41.66 per cent) who preferred a private job belonged to Amritsar district; 34 respondents(27.42 per cent) belonged to district Rupnagar and only 23 respondents(18.55 per cent) belonged to Bathinda district. The major reason for the preference of a government job was its job security while that of a private job was the fixity of work place and those who replied that they would take up 'any job'(2.63 per cent of surveyed respondents) purely indicated a distress situation. Out of this, 5.65 per cent belonged to Rupnagar district. 2.42 per cent belonged to Bathinda district and none of the respondents surveyed in Amritsar district opted for 'any job'.

The desire for self-employment was expressed by a meager 35 surveyed respondents (9.21 per cent) in rural Punjab. The district-wise compositions of these respondents were as follows: Amritsar district(12.12 per cent), Bathinda

district(8.06 per cent) and Rupnagar district(7.25 per cent).

Perception about Joblessness of the EReducated Unemployed Youth in Rural Punjab:

The unemployed persons were asked the reason for their being jobless. The reason was mainly to analyse the perception of the mechanism of success in the employment market. The information was collected to understand the situation under which the respondent perceived the mechanism of success in availing a job opportunity in the market. Also the respondents were asked to cite reasons for refusal to accept a particular job offered to them. The major reasons cited for the above mentioned issues were grouped as : Favouritism, offering of Bribes, Failure in Test/Interview, and other considerations.

Among the unemployed surveyed in the three selected districts of rural Punjab,148(38.95 per cent) alleged favouritism on part of the members of the selection committee as the prime cause of their unemployed status(Table 1.2). Another 119(31.32 per cent) of the surveyed respondents stated that they could not get a

job as they were not financially sound to offer bribe to selection committee members. 91 respondents (23.93 per cent) also stated failure in test or interview as the reason for being unemployed. 22 respondents (5.79 per cent) offered a variety of other considerations such as non-availability of jobs, tough competition for job, etc. as the reason for not being able to get a job. Majority of the respondents i.e., 68(54.84

per cent) stating 'favoritism' as reason for their unemployed status belonged to Rupnagar district; 48(36.36 per cent) belonged to Amritsar district followed by 32 respondents (25.81 per cent) belonging to Bathinda district. The majority of the respondents belonging to Bathinda district (67; 51.61 per cent) stated 'bribe' to be the main reason of their being without a job.

District/CD block/Village / State	Total number of Respondents	Number and Percentage of Unemployed Stating the Reason for Unemployed Status as:							
		Favouritism		Bribe		Failure in Test / Interview		Other Considerations	
Bathinda District	124	32	25.81	67	51.61	15	10.48	10	12.10
Nathana CD Block	72	18	25.00	40	55.56	10	13.89	04	05.56
a. Chak Bakhtu	17	07	41.18	07	41.18	03	17.64	--	--
b. Bhaini	34	06	17.65	24	70.59	03	08.82	01	02.94
c. Seman	21	05	23.81	09	42.86	04	19.04	03	14.29
Budhlada CD Block	52	14	26.92	27	51.92	05	09.62	06	11.34
a. Alampur Bodlan	13	04	30.77	08	61.54	01	07.69	--	--
b. Gurney Kalan	17	05	29.41	08	47.06	02	11.76	02	11.76
c. Rali	22	05	22.72	11	50.00	02	09.10	04	18.18
Amritsar District	132	48	36.36	26	19.70	46	34.84	12	09.10
Rayya CD Block	67	22	32.84	14	20.90	26	38.81	05	07.45
a. Rayya	28	09	32.14	04	14.29	13	46.43	02	07.14
b. Baba Bakala	25	08	32.00	05	20.00	11	44.00	01	04.00
c. Sathiala	14	05	35.71	05	35.71	02	14.29	02	14.29
Valtoha CD Block	65	26	40.00	12	18.46	20	30.77	07	10.77
a. Khemkaran	25	11	44.00	04	16.00	05	20.00	05	20.00
b. Rajoke	21	09	42.86	06	28.57	05	23.81	01	04.76
c. Rattoke	19	06	31.58	02	10.53	10	52.63	01	05.26
Rupnagar District	124	68	54.84	26	20.97	30	24.19	--	--
Rupnagar CD Block	57	32	56.14	13	22.81	12	21.05	--	--
a. Phoolpur Grewal	22	12	54.55	05	22.72	05	22.73	--	--
b. Singh	25	14	56.00	05	20.00	06	24.00	--	--
c. Khalidpur	10	06	60.00	03	30.00	01	10.00	--	--

Nurpur Bedi CD Block	67	36	53.73	13	19.40	18	26.87	--	--
a. Nurpur Kalan	29	18	62.07	05	17.24	06	20.69	--	--
b. Kartarpur	20	08	40.00	03	15.00	09	45.00	--	--
c. Balewal	18	10	55.56	05	27.78	03	16.66	--	--
Punjab	380	148	38.95	119	31.32	91	23.93	22	05.79

Conclusions:

The unemployed persons were asked the reason for their being jobless. The information was collected to understand the situation under which the respondent perceived the mechanism of success in

availing a job opportunity in the market. Also the respondents were asked to cite reasons for refusal to accept a particular job offered to them. The major reasons cited for the above mentioned issues were grouped as : Favouritism, offering of Bribes, Failure in Test/Interview, and other considerations.

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