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A Study about Unemployment in India – 2004 - 2018

Sahana Prasad Dr
NMKRV college for women, sahanaprasad.p@gmail.com

Harshini N
harshini.1623@gmail.com

Aishwarya N
aishwarya.nagaraj25@gmail.com

Aishwarya HR
aishwaryabhathr@gmail.com

A Study about Unemployment in India – 2004 - 2018

Dr. Sahana Prasad*[1], Harshini N[1], Aishwarya N[2], Aishwarya HR[2]

[1]NMKRV college for women, Bangalore, India

[2]Christ (Deemed to be University), Bangalore, India

Abstract

Unemployment is one of the growing economic concerns for a developing country like India, which has the world's largest youth population. Young Indians face a lot of barriers due to poverty and lack of technical skills required to get into the right job. Though there are a lot of reforms in the education sector, gaining a stable position in the labour market is difficult. Most men in rural areas are now shifting to casual jobs rather than farming activities and women tend to be self-employed. This paper explores the trend in the unemployment rate from 2004 -2018. It provides an overall analysis of the unemployment rate among males and females, rural and urban areas, states and the union territories as well as the relationship between GSDP and unemployment. The paper provides a comparative analysis on the unemployment rate during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Keywords: Unemployment rate, Labour force, Joblessness, Population, Effects, Types, Economy, Education, Society

1. Introduction

India is the fastest-growing economy in the world and the second-largest country in terms of population after China. With over 1.37 billion populations it is hard to find suitable employment according to individual needs and aspirations. With the increase in its population, the production has also expanded over the years to provide employment. Unemployment refers to the state of being jobless despite the individual willing to work and is capable of working. The individual being jobless is

referred to as an unemployed person. The unemployment rate refers to the percentage of unemployed workers in the total labour force. In India, the unemployment rate is collected by the Ministry of Labour and Employment every five years from the sample study conducted by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO). The NSSO is the main organization in India that collects the unemployment, employment and unemployment rate at the National and State Levels every five years through sample surveys.

In India, the unemployment rate is usually measured through the "Usual Status" unemployment and the "Current Weekly Status" unemployment. "Usual Status" unemployment uses a reference period of 365 days/1years preceding from the data of the survey conducted by the NSSO as a measurement whereas in "Current Weekly status" seven days preceding the date of the survey is used as the reference period. In this case, the individual who pursues some useful work for at least one hour on any day is considered as employed. The unemployment total varies based on various factors like if the person has been working for pay or no pay, worked for 30 days during the reference period of 365 days, worked for 1 hour for the reference period of 7 days preceding the date of the survey.

According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey conducted during 2017-2018, the unemployment rate is higher in rural areas. As per the usual status, the unemployment rate in rural areas is 5.3% whereas in an urban area it is 7.8% with a 6.1% overall usual status unemployment rate.

As per the "Current Weekly Status" rural unemployment is 8.5% and 9.6% in urban areas with an overall 8.9% "Current weekly Status" unemployment rate. It also reports that unemployment among youth aged 15-29 has also risen sharply since 2011-2012. The unemployment rate among rural males and females are 5.7% and 3.8% respectively. The female unemployment rate (10.8%) in urban areas is higher than the male unemployment rate (6.9%). The unemployment rate among the educated has also increased.

Types of Unemployment

i.   Open Unemployment

In Open unemployment, an individual willing to work has no proper opportunity to work even though he/she can work. This type of unemployment affects the production of goods and services in the economy. This type of unemployment can be seen and counted in terms of the number of unemployed persons.

ii.   Disguised Unemployment

In this type of unemployment, an individual is employed but he is unemployed. The situation occurs when there is surplus manpower. Removal of the employed does not affect production.

iii.   Seasonal Unemployment

This type of unemployment is mostly visible in industries involved in seasonal productivities like the agriculture industry, textile industries involved in the production of sweaters and raincoats, ice-cream productions etc.

iv.   Cyclical Unemployment

Cyclical unemployment is caused due changes in the economic cycle such as recession and inflation.

v.   Educated unemployment

Educated unemployment is when an educated person is not able to find a suitable job that matches his/her qualification. It may be due to a lack of skills or technical knowledge or the required skills does not match the qualification of the individual.

vi.   Technological Unemployment

Unemployment is caused due to the advancement in technology. Technology advancements include the production of new types of machinery, automation which reduce the work of individuals resulting in job loss.

vii.   Structural Unemployment

Structural unemployment occurs due to the drastic changes in the economic structure of the country. It occurs when there is a mismatch between the workers' skills and job prerequisites or the workers may be living too far from the place of work.

viii.   Underemployment

This type of unemployment occurs when an individual is working in qualifications lesser than his capabilities. The individual is not gainfully employed.

ix.   Casual Unemployment

This type of unemployment occurs when an individual is working for a short term of a period daily. Contractors, caterers, decorators come under this category.

x.   Frictional Unemployment

When an individual chooses to leave his current job and is in search of a new job and the individual who joins work for the first time constitutes frictional unemployment. This type of unemployment is always present in the economy. This unemployment does not include an individual who is still, working and searching for a job.

Causes/Reasons for Unemployment

i.   The rapid growth of the population

The constant increase in the population increases the demand factor and the labour force. The country's economic growth cannot keep up with the population growth which leads to large scale unemployment.

ii.   Slow economic growth

Indian economy is relatively underdeveloped. As the population increases the country cannot satisfy the demands for employment.

iii.   Slow growth in the agricultural sector

India is a land of agriculture. Nearly 61.5% of the population depend on agriculture for their living. But agriculture employs for a few months only during the crop season and the rest of the months they are unemployed.

iv.   Defective system of education

There is a huge difference in the quality of education an individual has received and the requisites required for a specific job. Quality of education is one of the main reasons for youth unemployment prevailing in India.

v.   The slow growth of industrialization

The industrial growth sector is low and thus fails to employ with an increase in population.

vi.   Immobility of labour

The mobility of labour in India is slow. Due to the attachment towards the family and land, people do not go in search of a job too far off places or overseas. Religion, language, climate also contribute to the immobility of labour.

The slow growth of industrialization, quality of education, slow economic growth, shortage of means and productions are not only the various reasons for unemployment but can also be caused due to demand-side(employer) and supply-side(employee). Reasons from the demand side are low rates of job creation, an increase in the capital-labour ratio and lack of jobs for highly skilled whereas the supply side reasons can be lack of skills, work experience, job search abilities and financial resources to find a job.

2. Literature Review

Taking into consideration all the micro issues, the labour demand needs to be assessed separately for rural and urban areas through field studies focussing on youth. More than 11% of the Indian graduates and the post-graduates are unemployed. While the unemployment rate among the youth is 6.8%. Jhilam Ray et al. suggest that we need to relook at the human resource development strategy to change the demographic dividend of the country [1]. As per Dr Rubee Singh and Archana Raj, population explosion is not the only factor influencing the unemployment rate, but also other factors such as illiteracy, population growth, violence against women in her workplace, unawareness of opportunities, lack of training centres etc. too have its effects on unemployment. According to the Labour Bureau, the unemployment rate in illiterate youth is lower than in educated youth [2][3].

AnalaUpadhya and SruthyUnnikrishnan mention that less tax revenue, slower economic services, the high supply-side cost for technical training are the factors that are affecting the functioning of the government due to unemployment. The Unemployment rate as of 2016 was 4.9% and also substantiates the fact that high unemployment rates are faced by educated youth. 48% of urban youth are unemployed. Educational institutions, running behind the trend, pressure from parents are the reasons for unemployment among the youth [4]. Arup Mitra and Sher Verick found that nearly 75 million youths were unemployed across the world and according to the 2010 population figure, one in every five young people in the world is Indian. According to the paper, youth unemployment is much more prevalent and the youth labour force participation rate is typically low [5]. Dr Sapna Bansal and Mrs Chandna Jain, mentions that the highest unemployment rate is recorded in the urban areas as compared to rural areas [6].

Santosh Mehrotra and Jajati K. Parida noticed falling employment in agriculture and manufacturing sectors across the states of India during 2011-12 and 2017-18 [7]. As suggested by Jitendra Kumar Dixit et al. unemployed youth are facing a lot of psychological transformations and they turn out to be dishonest, have poor expertise and are facing serious health issues [8]. C.P. Chandrasekhar et al. stated that the agricultural sector is facing a rapid fall in employment and remain unemployed for five months in a year increasing the rural unemployment rate and also found that self-employment was increasing among rural women [9]. Sushmita Biswas discusses various initiatives taken by the government. She suggests that the interest rates should be decreased which would lower the cost of credit and encourage people to spend and invest. Also, the exchange rates would get reduced and which would lead to increased export. Lower Corporation Tax encourages young entrepreneurs to start their ventures [10].

3. Methodology

Secondary data compiled from the Report on Periodic Labour Force Survey (2017–18) released by the Ministry of Programme Implementation and the NSSO reports released by the Press Information Bureau, Government of India is taken into consideration for the analysis of Unemployment in India from 2004 -2018. A dataset for determining the Unemployment rate during Covid-19 is obtained from Kaggle. Various statistical analysis is performed on the dataset in R, after converting them to the proper format. Graphical Interpretations are obtained through Excel.

4. Data Analysis

The average rural unemployment rate in India during 2017-2018 was 7.25 % which was the highest rate since 2004. Spanning through the years 2004 to 2018, 2004 had the least unemployment rate of 2.5 %. There is an overall increase of 34 % unemployment rate in rural areas from the year 2004 to 2017. With the progress in

the years, the unemployment rate is also increasing rapidly with a correlation value ranging from 0.53 to 1.00. Similarly, Urban areas faced the highest unemployment in theyear 2017-2018 at 9.71 % just 2 % higher than rural areas. [Figure.1]
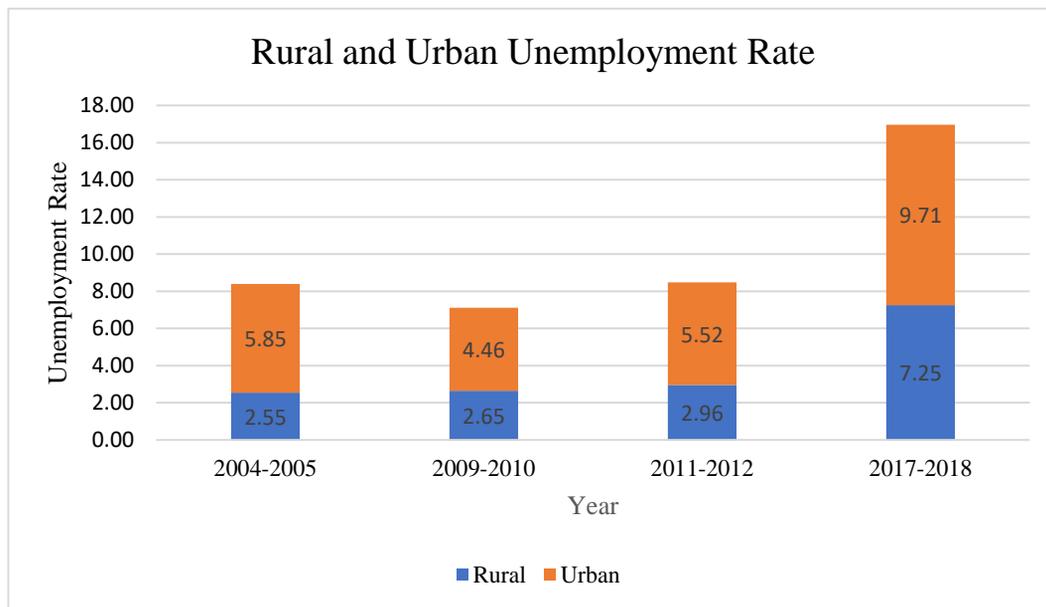

[Figure.1] Chart depicting the unemployment rates in rural and urban areas

Even though we can see a lot of technological advancements in urban areas, urban areas have a higher unemployment rate than rural areas. Tripura is the state which constantly had the highest rate of unemployment over the years both in rural and urban areas. In 2004-2005 its unemployment rate was 13.3 % but in 2017-2018 the unemployment rate spiked to 30 % [Figure.8]. The lowest rate of unemployment can be seen in the state of Meghalaya which was just 0.6 % in the year 2017-2018 in the rural areas[Figure. 9]. These two states have been discussed separately in the further part of the paper. Arunachal Pradesh has the lowestunemployment rate in the urban areas at 9.9 % in the year 2017-2018 which is 33% lower than the state with the highest unemployment rate

i.   Comparison between States and Union Territories

Comparing the states and union territories, union territories have a higher rate of unemployment. From 6.107 % in 2004-2005, it increased to 9.07 % in the year 2017-2018. An increase of 67% in the unemployment rate can be seen from 2004 to 2018 whereas in the states, the increase in the unemployment rate from 2004 to 2018 is 49 % with 8.54 % in 2017-2018 and 4.22 % in 2004 - 2005. Lakshadweep which had 7.7 % unemployment in 2009-2010 increased to 19.3 % in 2017-2018marking it as the highestunemployment rate compared to theother union territories. Daman and Diu mark the lowestunemployment rateof just 4.4 %.However, in 2011-2012, its unemployment rate was just 0.25 %. [Figure.2].
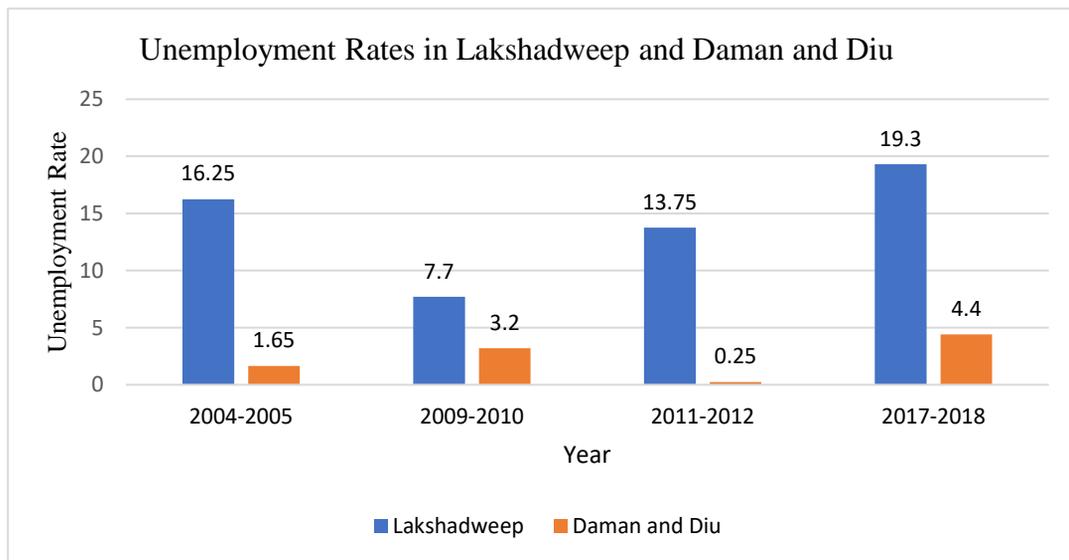
[Figure.2] Unemployment rates in Lakshadweep, Daman and Diu

ii.   The Effect of GSDP on Unemployment

From the analysis, it is found that the state with low GSDP will have a higher unemployment rate. Nagaland has recorded the highest unemployment rate in the year 2011-12 and Tripura has recorded the highest unemployment rate in the year 2018-19 as per the report given by CMIE. When we compare the GSDP of Nagaland

(2011-12) and Tripura (2018-19), It is clear that the lowest GSDP corresponds to the highest unemployment rate.

iii.   Unemployment Rate during the year 2020

At present (2020) the unemployment rate in the rural areas is 14.089 which is 54 times higher than the unemployment rate in 2018. An increase of 59% in the unemployment rate can be seen from the year 2018-2020 in the urban areas. [Figure.3]
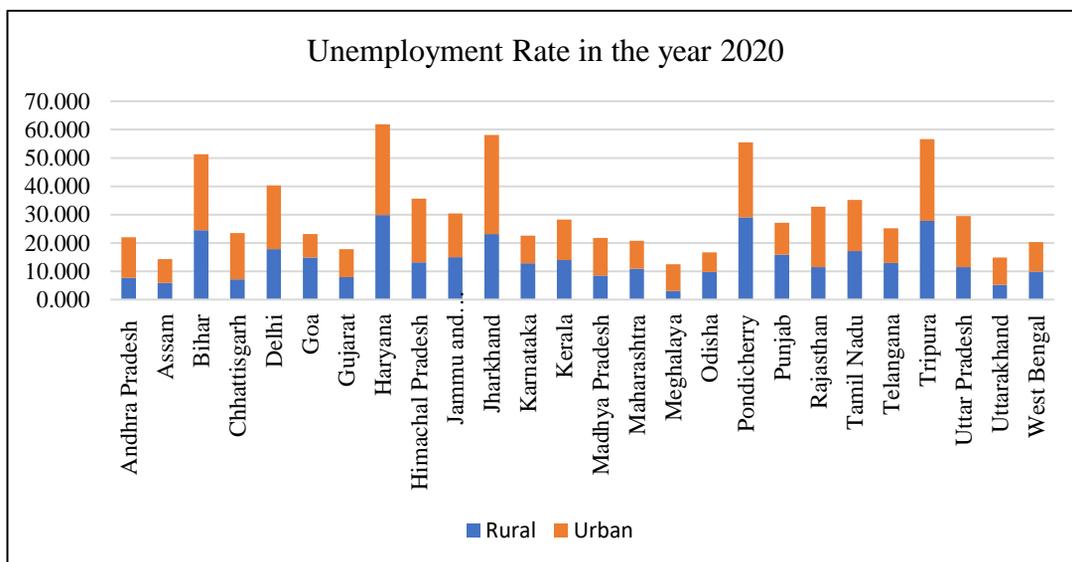
[Figure.3] A subdivided bar chart depicting the unemployment rates in the year 2020

The unemployment rate which was 7.60 % until December 2019, gradually increased to 10.99 % by June 2020.
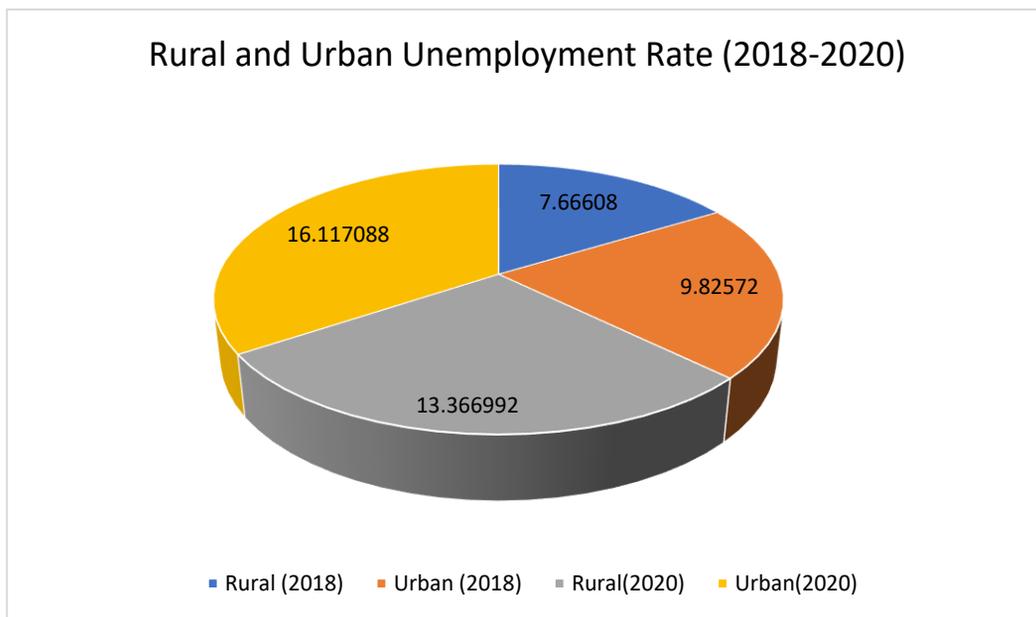
iv.   Unemployment rate during the Covid-19 pandemic

The sudden spike in the unemployment rate was due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus. Due to the lockdown imposed for over three months, the companies and the other micro industries were forced to shut down and there was zero economic

turnover. Even after the lockdown was lifted the industries were facing very little turnover and were forced to lay off employees and in critical cases, they had shut down their business completely. This resulted in a very high unemployment rate.

V.   Unemployment Rate in the Rural and Urban Areas

As of June 2020, Haryana has the highest rural unemployment rate whereasMeghalaya has the least ruralunemployment rate of 3.078.The urban unemployment rate is higher in Jharkhand with 35.01 % and Orissa has the least unemployment state. Due to the pandemic, there is not much difference between theunemployment rates in the urban and rural areas. [Figure.4]

Rural and Urban Unemployment Rate (2018-2020)

7.66608
9.82572
13.366992
16.117088

■ Rural (2018)   ■ Urban (2018)   ■ Rural(2020)   ■ Urban(2020)

[Figure 4] A pie chart depicting the Rural and Urban unemployment rate during 2018-2020

vi.   Gender wise Unemployment Rates

The average unemployment rate among males is 6.905 % with 6.34% in the rural areas and 7.47% in the urban areas. The female unemployment rate is higher than the male unemployment rate in both rural and urban areas. The female

unemployment rate in the urban areas is 14.1% higher than the female unemployment rate in the rural areas which was 7.53% during 2017-2018. There is not much variation in the unemployment rate among males and females in rural areas and urban areas. [Figure.5]

Male Unemployment Rate (2017-2018)

45.89%

54.11%

■ RURAL   ■ URBAN
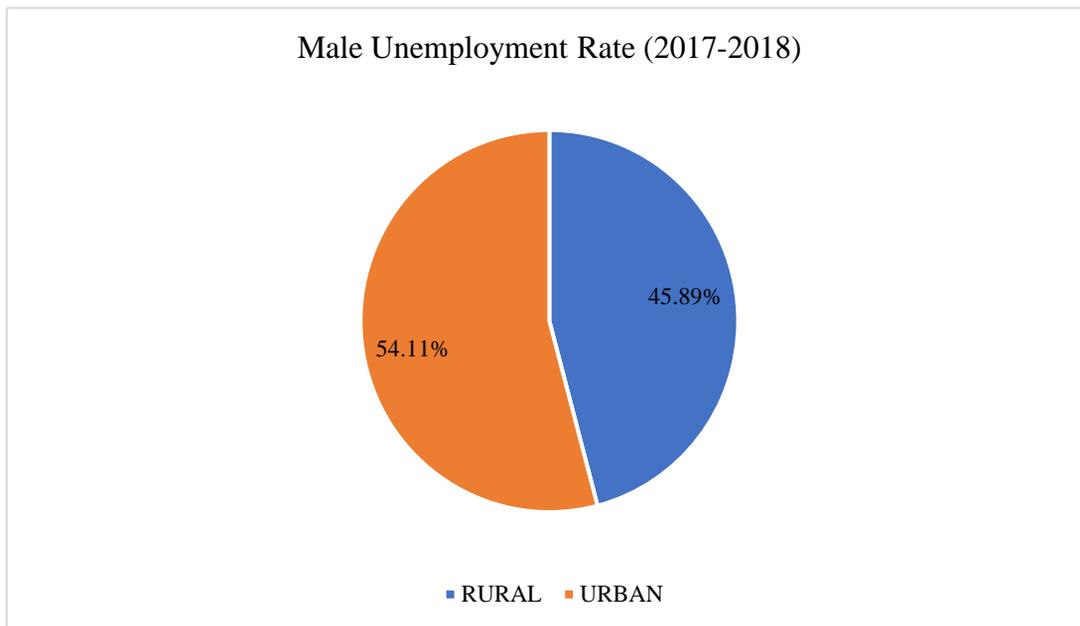
[Figure.5] A pie chart depicting the male unemployment rates during 2017-2018 in rural and urban areas

But while comparing the unemployment rate in the urban areas we can find a significant difference in the male and female unemployment rates. Comparing the unemployment rate among men in both rural and urban areas, we find no significant difference in both but the female unemployment rate in the urban areas is high compared to that of the female unemployment in the rural areas. [Figure.6]

Female Unemployment Rate (2017-2018)

34.84%

65.16%

■ RURAL   ■ URBAN
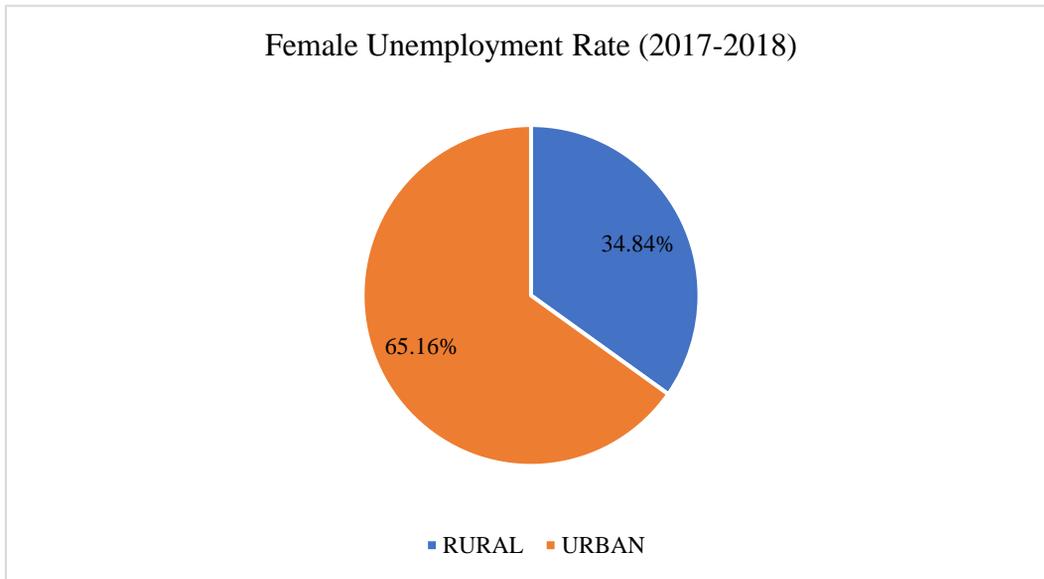
[Figure.6] A pie chart depicting the female unemploymentrates during 2017-2018 in rural and urban areas.

The overall unemployment rates among males and femalesare not the same.Unemployment among females is highercompared to male unemployment. But there exists a strong positivecorrelation between male and female unemployment rates. [Figure.7]

Male and Female Unemployment Rate

39%

61%

■ Male   ■ Female
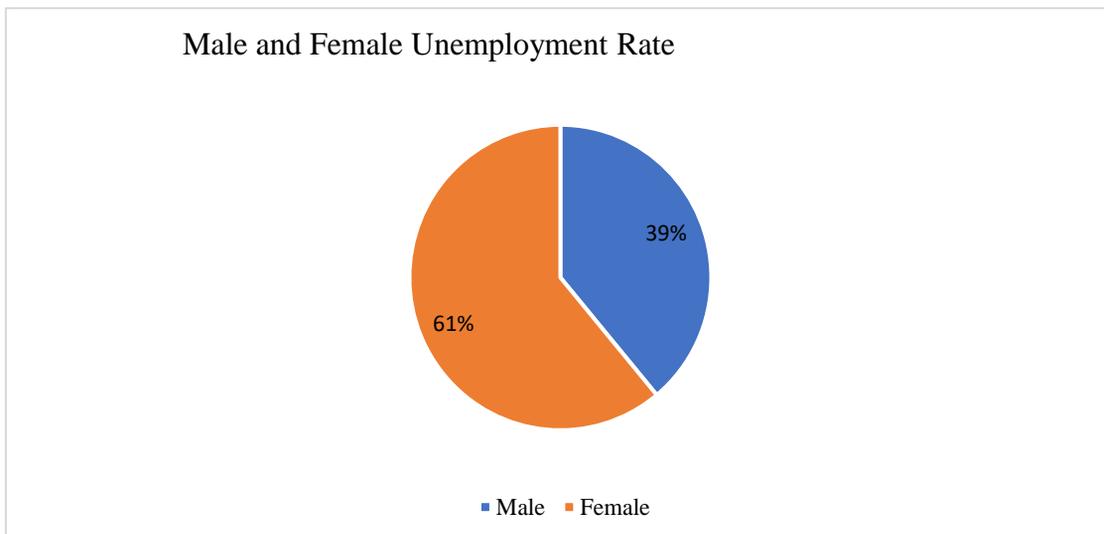
[Figure.7] A pie chart depicting the overall male and female unemployment rates.

5. Discussions

i.   Tripura – The state with the highest unemployment rate

The 8 North-Eastern States of India Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram, Sikkim and Tripura of which the highest unemployment rate recorded in Meghalaya and Tripura respectively.

The North-Eastern states are growing rapidly in the field of education, reducing their dependencies on agriculture and generally prospering but the growth is not creating enough jobs and livelihood opportunities. Meghalaya, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh recorded the highest growth rates in GSDP in 2013-2014. According to the report published by CMIE for September 2019, Tripura recorded the highest unemployment rate of 31.2% whereas the Indian National Unemployment rate was 7.3% among 29 states. [Figure.8]
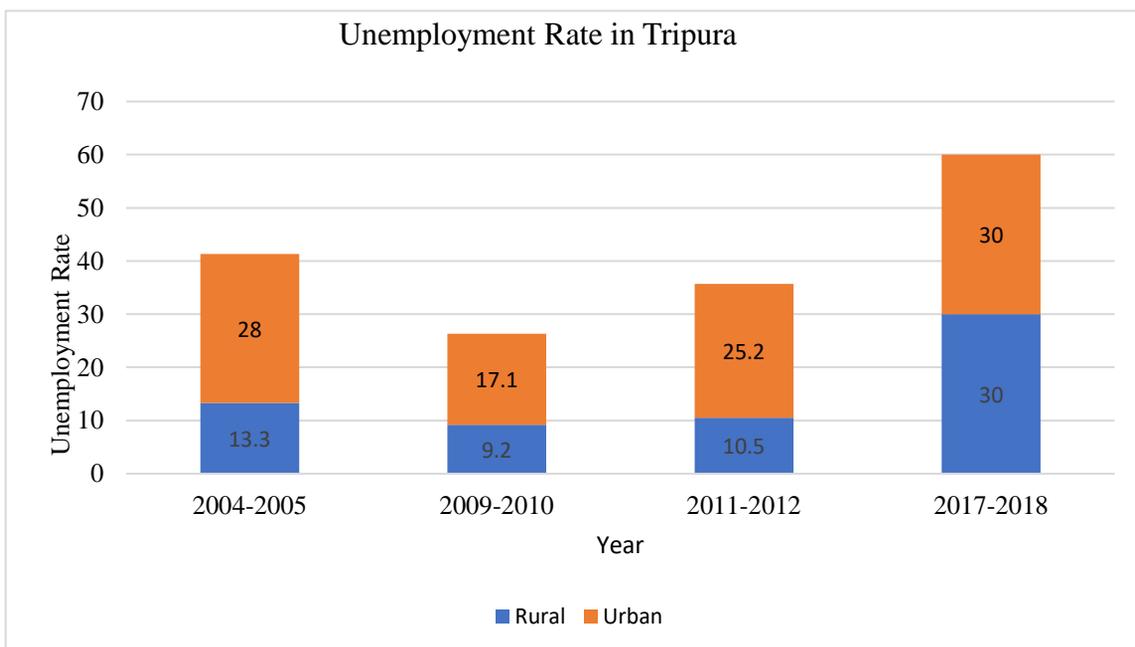
[Figure.8] A subdivided bar chart depicting rural and urban unemployment rates in the state of Tripura

According to the report of the Ministry of Labour's Annual Employment-Unemployment Survey 2015-16 Tripura had the highest Unemployment rate of 19.7%. 64% of the state's population depends on agriculture for employment but 60% of the state is forestland and barely 27% of the land is available for cultivation. The Economic Survey Report of 2017-18 Tripura ranked 24 of the 36 states and union territories for the per-capita income. With an income of Rs 71,666 per person in 2014-15, Tripura stood below the National Average of Rs 86454 as per an Indian Spend analysis of government data. Also, the State Economic Survey 2015-2016 reported that high rate of poverty, low per-capita income, low capital formation, inadequate infrastructural facilities, geographical isolation, communication bottleneck, inadequate exploitation, inadequate use of forest and mineral resources, low progress in the industrial field and high unemployment are the reasons for Tripura's backwardness.

Education plays an important role in moulding the future of students which plays a crucial role in their employment opportunities. Dr. Arubindo Mahato, coordinator of, Department of Rural Studies in a newspaper interview said that a suitable livelihood system is not created in Tripura due to lack of access to quality education. Improvement in the quality of education can allow the students to compete in National level entry into service examination in addition to establishing themselves on the innovative won entrepreneurship venture. It is very eventual to change the education in Tripura for achieving suitable livelihood & employment opportunitiesfor the youth of Tripura. He also stated that the state had the strength to explore sustained economic development by increasing employment through the development of IT Industries.

ii.   Meghalaya – The state with the lowest unemployment rate

Training for skill development is very important and necessary to cope with the situation. Meanwhile, the state government through the labour department and the other public and private organisations had been trying to create various skill and

development programmes to set up ITI in almost all districts of the state and launching various short courses training programmes, also many NGOs have taken up such training to our youth. The training for Skill Development is a must in this part of our country, but the state is still lacking behind in producing jobs in various industries and commercial enterprises. [Figure.9]
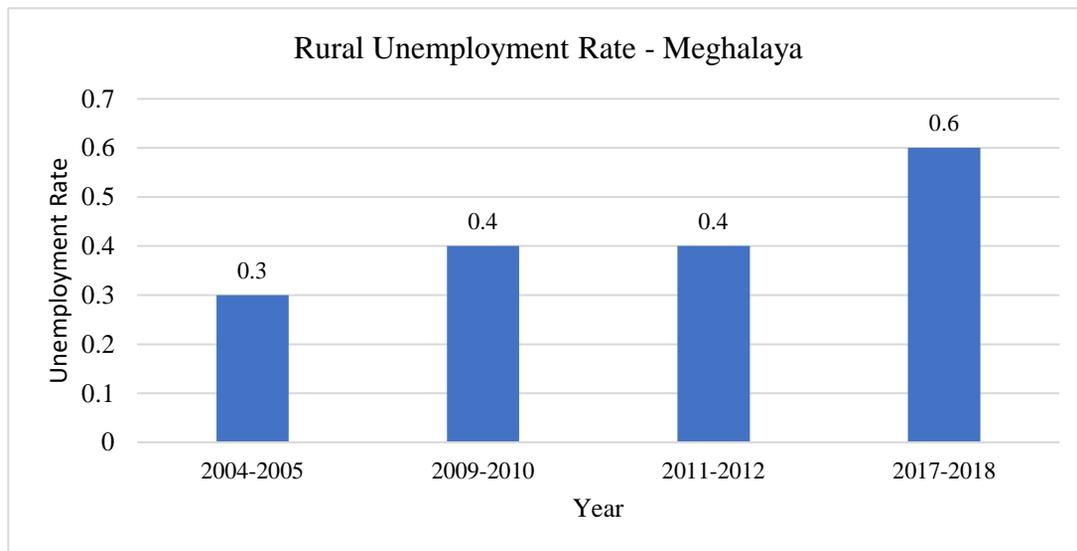
[Figure.9] A bar chart depicting the rural unemployment rate in Meghalaya

The initiatives taken by the government of Meghalaya to tackle the unemployment rates:

a) In 2018, a mobile app was launched by the Meghalaya government in July to connect youngsters with employers. By this, the state aimed to provide around 2600 jobs to the youth and support 500 entrepreneurs. (It had a following more than 4500 registrations on the Meghalaya Youth Network (MYN).

b) The Supporting Human Capital Development in Meghalaya (SHCDM) programme aims toskill the youth as per the industry requirements.

c) Meghalaya also registered a high percentage of literacy rate; however, the employment rate is dropping which is due to the lack of skill knowledge and experience, therefore there is a need to concentrate on the development of skill training for the youths of Meghalaya.So, the Meghalaya State Skill Development Society (MSSDS) provides a programme. And under this programme, the students and their parents are provided with counselling to expand their horizons (to improve and develop their skills).

d) Highlighting the steps taken to address the unemployment problem in the state, senior cabinet minister-2018, Prestone Tynsong said a three-pronged strategy has beenadopted by the state government of Meghalaya.These include the generation of self-employment opportunities by providing training/capacity building programmes and enhancing skills through Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana, National Rural Livelihood Mission and Market & Placement Linked Skill Development Initiatives.Provision of daily wages through some programmes such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act and provision of jobs in different departments of the government, agencies, private sectors as per the existing norms and policies. Apart from this, he also stated that several steps have also been taken up by the different departments and agencies for the generation of different types of employment opportunities[11].

iii. Review on the Employment Rate in Jammu and Kashmir after the Abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A.

The northernmost part of the Indian subcontinent Jammu and Kashmir was administered by India as a state from 1954 to 2019. It constituted the southern and the south-east portion of the larger Kashmir which has been a subject of dispute from the mid-20th century between India, Pakistan and China.

a) Article 370 and 35 A

Article 370 of the Indian Constitution gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir. This article acknowledges the special status of Jammu and Kashmir in terms of autonomy and its ability to formulate its laws for the state's permanent residents. This article along with Article 35 A defined that Jammu and Kashmir residents live under a separate set of laws, including those related to citizenship, ownership of property and fundamental rights as compared to the other Indian states. As a result of this provision, Indian citizens from other states could not purchase land or property in Jammu and Kashmir.

b) How is the Article related to Unemployment?

As per the State's Economic Survey Report -2016, the unemployment rate in Jammu and Kashmir was higher than the average national Unemployment rate. 24.6% of the population under the age group 18-29 were unemployed which was higher than the all-India Unemployment rate of 13.2%. As per the report of the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) Jammu and Kashmir had the highest monthly average unemployment rate of 15% between January 2016 and July 2016 while the national monthly average unemployment was 6.4% during this period. Due to Article 35A, no person other than the resident of Jammu and Kashmir could get into a Government Job and also private companies were supposed to hire only the residents. While the rest of the nation was able to adopt the ongoing developments in various fields Jammu and Kashmir remained stuck in the past. Local people find it difficult to grab multiple education and employment opportunities.

After the abrogation of the Articles, the future economy of Jammu and Kashmir would face a lot of challenges. The limitations on the land ownership will be dissolved which will enable the locals as well as the citizens of other states to buy the land, invest in it and build schools, colleges that provide quality education. As mentioned by Rajiv Kumar Upadhyay in his paper "Opportunities for the growth

and investment in Kashmir", Jammu and Kashmir have been lacking in skilling and education for the last 30 years due to the continued conflicts due to which schools and colleges have not been functioning properly which harms overall skilling and development of the child. Education and skill are the most important criteria for the cause of unemployment [12]. Investing in the development of a quality school and colleges for better education would enable the children to pursue their dream careers and find suitable employment for them. Also setting up industries, hotels can improve the employment rate. Technical training institutes can be set up which in turn enables the unemployed to gain the necessary skills and grab employment opportunities.

6. Results

There was an overall increase of 34 % unemployment rate in rural areas from the year 2004 to 2018. In rural areas, the highest unemployment rate was recorded in 2017-2018 with 7.25 % and the least was in 2004 with 2.5%. The highest unemployment in urban areas was 9.71 %. But Tripura with 13.3% remains as a state with the highest rate of unemployment in both rural and urban areas. Meghalaya with 0.6% was the state with the least unemployment rate in rural areas and Arunachal Pradesh with 9.9% was the state with the least unemployment rate in urban areas.

Union territories had the highest rate of unemployment when compared to states. There was an increase of 67% in the unemployment rate from 2004 to 2018. In union territories, the unemployment rate was 6.107% in 2004 which was then increased to 9.07% by 2018. Lakshadweep had the highest unemployment rate with 19.3% and Daman and Diu had the lowest unemployment rate with 4.4%. Whereas in states there was an increase of 49% from 2004-2018. With 4.22% in 2004-2005 and 8.54 in 2018. From the study, we found that states with low GSDP will have the

highest unemployment rate. According to the study and analysis, Tripura has recorded the highest unemployment rate in the year 2018-19.

Also, we found that there is an increase of 59% in the unemployment rate from the year 2018-2020 in urban areas and a gradual increase of the unemployment rate from 7.60 % in December 2019 to 10.99 % by June 2020. The dynamic increase in the unemployment rate in this year (2020) is due to the Covid-19 outbreak. Females are unemployed more as compared to males in both urban and rural areas. But there is a more significant difference in male and female unemployment rates in urban areas as compared to rural areas. The state with the highest female and male unemployment rate is Nagaland, and Meghalaya has reported the least male unemployment rate with 2.95 % and West Bengal has reported the least female unemployment rate of 3.85 %.

7. Conclusions

The main aim of this paper was to analyse the changing trend in the unemployment rate from 2004 to 2018. Despite the changing economic reforms, educational policies, various government initiatives, vocational training institutes set up by the government, the unemployment rate is constantly increasing. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (2005) aims to employ the unemployed for 100 days in a year and he gets paid with the minimum wage. But the question arises as to how far is it going to reduce the unemployment rate and the livelihood of the person for the remaining 265 days. Providing efficient training to the individuals relevant to their skills and interest can transform the individual to have a better livelihood. The National Skill India Mission aims to train over 40 crore people in India in different skills by 2022. The Make in India (2015) movement promoting the manufacturing sector in the country, can promote a huge number of

start-ups which in turn will indirectly increase the employment rate among the youth. PM Mudra Yojana (2015) which provides loans to small businessmen can help the economically backward people aiming to start new businesses or start-ups. The government aims to provide various schemes and initiatives but the extent to which it is getting implemented, reaching the needy and the efficiency of these initiatives plays a key role. However,the participation of the youth is very important. Overall better-quality education, on the job training, skill development, productive job creation must be implemented efficiently.

Future directions in this area:

The study can be continued for further years and by taking more variables. Data collected can be applied to understand the effects of different variables and the extent of influence on the unemployment rate.

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