

SOCIO-ECONOMIC ISSUES OF CONTRACTUAL LECTURERS OF KASHMIR**Sabah Jan****Shazia Manzoor****Department of Social Work, University of Kashmir****ABSTRACT**

Unemployment is highly visible temporary problem, while underemployment is less visible and even can be permanent. Unemployment is an increasing phenomenon in Kashmir. With the increase in unemployment the problem of underemployment in the form of contractualism in the education sector emerged. Underemployment is a global stressor and in the valley of Kashmir, underemployed youth particularly contractuales feel frustrated to cope up with the needs. The duration of underemployment increases its effects on workers and their families. Although the human misery caused by underemployment is less visible it can have wide ranging and long-lasting consequences for every family member. Contractual—whose nature of work is non-permanent even faces lot of problems in his personal life, whether economically and socially. The present paper entitled “Socio-economic issues of contractual lecturers of Kashmir” is an attempt to explore the problems faced by the contractual section of our society in the higher education department and bring the same to the forefront. It presents the real picture of the contractual lecturers who not only face problems on the economic front but also bear the social implications of the same.

Keywords: Contractualism, contractual lecturers, Underemployment, Socio-economic, Implications

Introduction

Employment is the main source of livelihood and self-fulfillment for the most of human beings. Although access to employment is an essential component of freedom of economic choice, absence of such opportunity means depriving our youth not only of economic freedom but of hope as well. Employment opportunity is largely dependent on one's education and the technical knowhow. The higher education is not oriented towards individual students' attitude and ability to satisfy the market needs. The functioning of the educational institutions, as well as the educational choice of the youth has remarkably been influenced by the market economy. Quest for knowledge is not always or the only motivating factor for prospective learners; rather it is the availability of employment in the market that makes the learners choose their areas of study'. The mass uniform education bereft of this cardinal principal has resulted into the abated rate of growth of unemployment of the youth. During the last few years the higher education sector in J&K has shown unprecedented expansion and is now available to a large section of the society across the boundaries of caste, class and gender disparities. However such endeavor has failed to provide quality and necessary education. Increasing enrollment and churning out graduates with traditional routine has been institutionalized thus belying the aim of education. Poverty and unemployment continue to be major zero sum factors inter alia which perpetuate underemployment. The economic imbalance in Kashmir due to socio-political uncertainties is one of the greatest causes of underemployment in the valley and thus hampered the economic growth and ended up damaging the social fabric of the society. This not only involves skill/knowledge underutilization but also leads to brain drain. Underutilization of the human resources leads to the underdevelopment of the nation. The problem of underemployment among the college contractual lecturers of Kashmir Division has received very less attention both from scholars and

policy makers as well. The present paper attempts to study the socio-economic issues of contractual lecturers of Kashmir.

Review of Related Literature:

UN in its World youth report (2012) , explores the transition of young people from schools and training institutions into the labour market, a phase marking a critical period in the life cycle. The current employment scenario for young people, worsened by the global economic crisis, poses an urgent challenge with long-term implications for both young people and society as a whole. Young people themselves are crucial stakeholders in the pursuit of decent and productive work for all but their voices go unheard and their positive and negative experiences and viewpoints unshared, particularly with decision-makers.

UNs article Employment Issues in Social Perspective mentions generation of productive employment as the most effective means of reducing poverty and promoting social integration. It also calls for broader, more integrated action to promote employment in national development strategies. The goal of full and productive employment at the forefront of the UN development agenda was put up by world summit for social development.

In its world youth report (2012) UNs Programme emphasizes the concern of youth over employment prospects and call for investment increase. The report reveals that young people are worried about the quality and relevance of their education. There is huge mismatch between their educational attainment/trainings and the market needs. Other subjects of concern include job vulnerability, labour migration, delayed marriage, and the rural divide, as well as age, gender and racial discrimination.

P. Sudhakar (2012) in the paper “A study on Employment Trends in India” analyzes the trends on employment in organized sector of India. In India, as population growth is higher, the employment growth is not proportionately equal to it. For the expansion of economy, transforming the employment trend in India is one of the significant economic and social factors. Employment has always featured as an element of development policy in India. According to author, employment plays a key role in the economic security of developing country. It is the main source of livelihood and self fulfillment for the most of human beings. The main goals of economic policy are accelerating growth and expanding employment opportunities in different sectors of the country. So, employment has always featured as an element of development policy in India.

Pravin Sinha (2013) in his article “Combating Youth Unemployment In India” discusses that in an environment of ever-increasing costs of living and non-existent social protection, a young worker is condemned to fend for him- or herself and also to provide for dependents”. In desperation, they accept any job with any conditions that are offered to them. Most of these jobs are without any rights. They are made to work for longer hours, paid much less and can be terminated without any notice. As a result, India is faced with increasing numbers of working poor. The other challenge that young people are facing is insecurity at the workplace. Regular and continuous forms of employment have been replaced with non-permanent job contracts that involve a specific project or activity for a defined period of time. In the process, workers not only lack employment-related benefits but also the capacity to plan their own life. As already mentioned, the majority of young people have either limited or no skills.

The International Labour Organization (ILO)

To ensure decent and productive working atmosphere of freedom, equity, security and human dignity for men and women, the International Labour Organization (ILO) devotes itself for the advancement of

required opportunities. Its main aims are to promote rights at work, encourage decent employment opportunities, enhance social protection and strengthen dialogue in handling work-related issues.

S. Mahendra Dev (2011) in his article "Employment and growth in India: Trends and Policies" is of the view that expanding productive employment is central for sustained poverty reduction and food security in the low income countries as labour is the main asset for majority of the poor. Also high output elasticity of employment generally ensures that growth is egalitarian. The experience of the last two decades in India indicates that employment opportunities created were inadequate in spite of rapid growth. Jobless growth is a concern but on the other hand, we should not have growth less jobs.

David et al (2011) explores how the effects of an individual's underemployment spiral out to affect others in their environment. For the family, these negative consequences include a lower standard of living, lower social status, greater marital discord, and greater strain in relationships with children, decreased interaction with extended family members, and isolation in friendship networks. He further stresses higher levels of underemployment are associated with higher levels of property crime, lower participation in voting and loss of social services.

Douglas C. et al (2012) mentioned underemployment is a challenge faced by all industrialized nations and their organization and individuals. It further reveals that underemployment is a multidimensional problem which has an impact on social, economical, cultural and psychological level of a person.

Layton Reynold et al (2012) mentioned underutilization of skills, skill/knowledge mismatch, and low pay as the characteristics of underemployment. It further reveals that youth are at higher risk of skill underutilization, temporary work and minimum wage employment.

Adfer (2012) mentions Kashmiri youth are in dire need of sustainable and overall social development which could be met with many primordial elements like education, employment opportunities, health, justice, economic security, self-employment schemes, proper regulation and disciplined orientation.

Objectives of the study:

To study the economic issues of contractual lecturers in the higher education department.

To analyze the social issues of contractual lecturers in the higher education department.

Research Methodology:

Universe

The universe of the study comprises of Contractual lecturers working in higher education department of Kashmir Valley in the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Sampling and sample size:

Random sampling is done to extract the exact sample and the sample size is 140 college lecturers.

Tools of data collection:

A well drafted questionnaire is used to collect the data from contractual lecturers of Kashmir.

Socio-Economic Issues of Contractual Lecturers

Employment is a state of having paid work and proper utilization of skills and abilities. The nature of the job of any individual has a profound impact on the life of that individual, not only in terms of economic and social aspects, but also psychologically. The permanent job means security, economic stability, eligibility to various incentives and a social recognition. While, the contractual nature of the job makes an individual feel insecure, it is more about economic instability, less incentives and a diminishing social status. The skills, qualifications and the capabilities of an individual don't match the nature of the job and

the position of an individual holds in a particular job. The skills, abilities, capabilities acquired by the individual in a particular timeframe remain underutilized or in most of the cases it leads to the exploitation as the salary doesn't match the nature of job. In this paper, the overall impact of the contractualism on the youth employed in the higher education has been studied in the framework of underemployment. Youth is the cornerstone of future life. It is the period of transition from dependence of adolescence to independence of adulthood. Decent work is the right not only to survive but to prosper and have a dignified and fulfilling quality of life. Access to decent job is the foremost and important thing needed to successfully complete this transition towards adulthood. Unemployment is severe problem but has given rise to underemployment. While underemployment is not a new phenomenon, it is becoming far more prevalent today given the current economic climate marked with restructurings, downsizing and streamlined global enterprises, and people choosing to study for longer in order to improve their employment opportunities. The problem of over education stems from the significant investments in education by industrialized nations and the inability of market economies to absorb the steady increase in supply of well - educated workers. Yet for more and more young adults, graduation from tertiary study is leading to neither full-time employment in high-skilled positions nor unemployment, but rather to a third outcome: employment in jobs which do not require as much education as they possess, often in positions which are temporary or part-time in nature, and which offer little potential for career advancement. Studying the problem of underemployment has been a matter of concern for the social work practitioners. Facing immense problems have largely impaired their capabilities and acquiring a dignified position in the society. The present part of the study has analyzed the impact within the context of social and economic paradigm.

At social level the focus is on the issues of inter-personal relationships, educational level of respondents, impact on marriage, responsibilities towards family, job security, family support, Social stigma and other related aspects. On the economic front the focus has been on the financial position, family income, personal and family expenses, inability to meet the daily expenses, debt, etc. in the perspective of the socio-economic variables the extent of the impact has been studied.

Findings of the study:

Majority of the respondents are in the age group of 25-30 and this is the age when the desire to be economically stable and to act a contributing member to the family is at its highest. This comes from the constant struggle of an individual to be a fully functional individual according to the social norms at a given stage, which at this age is to earn and support the family members.

Regarding highest educational level of respondents, it was found that majority of the respondents are having NET/SET with M.phil degree.

For majority of the respondents, income is in the slab of Rs.11000 to 15000 which in the today's era of inflation is too less to cater towards the needs of a family. The salary component should be taken into proper consideration while offering jobs to youth. Decent salaries should be provided to the contractual lecturers.

The study reveals that a majority of contractuales reside in Nuclear families but it cannot be neglected that a good amount of contractuales reside in joint families as well and for the majority of respondents , the income of household is in the slab of Rs.10,000 to 20,000. Income of the household involves income from

all sources which contribute toward the family income. Various sources of family income involved business, government or private jobs.

Majority of the respondents aren't able to contribute fully to the major and basic necessities including education of children, marriage of siblings, medical expenses, food and housing etc. Banks don't provide any loan to them but of their non-permanent nature of job. They often have to borrow money from friends, family and relatives. It is also revealed that majority of them borrow money from friends only because of status concerns, ease of approachability for help and also to avoid sarcastic remarks, taunts and gibes from their relatives and neighbors.

For Majority of respondents Food and housing, Marriage of siblings, Education Of children, Medical expenses are some of the major responsibility on them. The psychological tussle seems evident among contractual when they concatenate their meager salary with the challenges of price hike on every essential commodity. Balancing the two ends seems a distant dream for the contractual section of our society. Majority of the respondents have to borrow money to cater their immediate needs whether it is day to day family issues, medical expense or marriage of the siblings. The growing fee structure of school is also considered as the main reason of worry by the contractual as they are not in a position to keep up with the demands of their family as well as the society.

Majority of the respondents are not married yet as they want to earn a handsome income to support and cater to their family needs. There has been an increase in the trend of late marriages in Kashmir because of the fact that families and individuals look for achieving financial stability before getting married. This is because of the simple fact that marriage brings increased responsibility and as such requires financial stability to support a family. Given the dearth of government jobs, absence of private sector and a reluctance to start a self-initiated venture, marriages often get delayed.

It is found that changing gender roles, expectations along with the increasing inflation are responsible for creating hurdles in youth getting married at a proper age. Given financial dependence, and unavailability of a steady stable income, it gets difficult for youth to get married at the right time thereby supporting late marriages in Kashmir.

Majority of the respondents reveal there is no social security associated with their job. They can be terminated at any time. Social security provides a sense of satisfaction related to their jobs in an employee.

Majority of the respondents reported that underemployment can lead to corrupt practices. It is also possible that given drastic underemployment, it is easier to dupe people by promising them jobs and taking money from them.

Majority of the respondents reveal that they are not given full Maternity/paternity leaves. While paternity leaves are not given to male respondents, leave of two months without honorarium is given to female contractuales. The maternity leave without honorarium makes the contractual job more insecure and further increases the socio-economic problems of the respondents. Maternity leave is a right of every working mother. Denying the full maternity leave hampers the functioning of working women as a mother. Mother is the first and an important institution for the socialization of a child and denying her full maternity leave is a violation not only of her rights but of the Childs as well. In our society, fathers' role is never appreciated in the Childs' development despite knowing the importance of a happy and responsible family in child's development. He is looked as an earning member who only has to support family financially but when he is emotionally involved, it is frowned upon. A father is a pillar of strength for his

family and someone whom children look upon as their role model. So denying paternity leave to male contractual lectures is harming fatherhood and eventually family life as well. It is very important to develop conscious and civilized human rights. It is the primary responsibility of state to take care of its citizens and their rights and develop appropriate policies and programs for their welfare. State should ensure of having crèche facilities in the campus where 30 or more women are working which was earlier approved as per section 48 of The Factories Act, 1948 but till date it has been on paper only and seen nowhere in sight.

Majority of respondents reported that their nature of work is a source of stress for them and their families. It is observed that large percentage of respondents feel stressed because of the nature of their job which can further be attributed to work culture and environment, family and peer group pressure and also lack of healthy recreational activities at workplace. A reason for this is also not being in a job of choice or job expectations exceeding capacities of the individual.

Conclusion

Contractualism is a trend which the world is observing today. The industrial sector whether public and private is in shambles thereby failing to absorb a big chunk of educated youth of the state. Absence of less entrepreneurial avenues and private sector in Kashmir, the youth have cloned themselves only towards government sector which is already disguised. Government is only offering contractual jobs to youth despite the immense need in educational institutions. The pros and cons of contractualism are many but its cons are immense and our youth suffers a lot due to it. Contractual lecturers face immense social and economic issues due to their nature of work. Stigma, Stress, Work Load, Family expenses, Loans and Debts, Late marriage trend, economic pressures are among the major issues faced by these contractual lecturers. Maternity or paternity leave is not given to contractual lecturers. The violation of having a decent work with decent salary is violated by contractualism. Rights of Contractual lecturers as their individual's selves, as parents get violated. Their life is marred between the two ends of uncertainty. Contractualism not only affects those people who are working as contractual employees but also their families immensely and adversely.

References

- UN Habitat. Global Urban Youth Research Network, (2013). State of Urban youth, India 2012. Employment, Livelihood, Skills IRIS Knowledge Foundation
- Ahuja, R. (2010). Social Problems in India. Rawat Publications, Jaipur.
- Aman, N. (2009). Higher Education In Changing Scenario challenges and prospects. Ara, Z., Gilkar, N.A., Bashir, S., Iqbal, H. (Eds.) Kashmir Book Trust. Srinagar
- Ara, Z., Gilkar, N., Bashir, S., and Iqbal, H., (2009). Higher Education In Changing Scenario Challenges and prospects. Kashmir Book Trust
- Atkins's (1999). Oven-ready and self-basting: Take stock of employability skills. Teaching in Higher Education
- Burris, B. H. (1983). The human effects of underemployment. *Social Problems*, 96-110.
- Chaudhary, S.V.S, (2014). Quality Education In India Problems and prospects. Sahoo, P.K, yadav, D., Das, B.C., (Edt.) Concept Publishing Company. New Delhi

- Derek, B (2004). *Universities in the Marketplace: The Commercialization of Higher Education*. USA: Princeton University Press, P. 321-334.
- Dey, A. (2000). *Who Actually Paid for My Education? Socio-Cultural*. Retrieved on June 20, 2013 from <http://www.deeshaa.org/who-actually-paid-for-my-education>.
- Dev, S.M and M. V. (2011). *Youth Employment and Unemployment in India*, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, Mumbai, April Available at: <http://www.igidr.ac.in/pdf/publication/WP-2011-009.pdf>
- Dooley, D & Prause, J. (2004). *The Social Costs of Underemployment Inadequate Employment as Disguised Unemployment*. Cambridge University Press.
- Mahapatra, B.C., Sharma, Kaushal (2008). *Interacting factors For Social Development A Structural Approach for social Development*. Sarup and Sons. New Delhi
- Midgley, J. (1995). *Social Development The developmental Perspective in social welfare*. SAGE publications, London
- Majumdar, N. A. (1961) *some problems of Underemployment*. Popular Book Depot. New Delhi
- Sinha, P. (2013). *Combating youth unemployment in India* Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Department for Global Policy and Development Hiroshimastr. 28 | 10785 Berlin | Germany
- Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*. Oxford University Press. New Delhi
- Shah, A. (2012). *Restless Beings: Understanding Kashmiri Youth in Sociological Contour*, *The Tibet Journal* (4)
- United Nations,(2012) *World Youth Report*
- United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). UNWorldYouthReport.org
- Internet: <http://undesadspd.org/Employment>
- Internet :http://www.ilo.org/global/Themes/Youth_Employments/lang-en/index.htm Accessed on August 10,2014