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Perceptual Differences Across Various Stakeholder Groups:
A Study of Challenges for Skill Development in Sikkim, India

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ABSTRACT

In 2009, National Skill Development (NSD) Policy was reformed to modify the vocational education system in India. The skills development and entrepreneurship policy developed in 2015 tries to solve the challenges of skill development by inspiring early signs, development, and variations. The present study is based on a primary survey conducted in four districts of Sikkim involving 600 respondents from amongst the various stakeholders and examines whether there is any significant difference in the expressed belief held by stake-holders vis-à-vis the challenges identified in the skill eco space in Sikkim. These challenges are namely resistance to relocation by Sikkim's youth for employment, stigma against labor-oriented jobs, preference for government jobs, belief that skilling is for low academic achievers, and lack of industrial opportunities and development in the State of Sikkim. The findings can be utilized for suggesting recommendations and way forward to remove these barriers for better outreach and effective implementation of various schemes by adopting suitable practices.

KEYWORDS

ANOVA, Bhutia, Employment, Gangtok, Government Job, Labor-Oriented Job, Lepchas, Nepalese, NSDC, Training, Youth

INTRODUCTION

India has been estimated to have around 64% of the total population in the age bracket of 15–59 years by 2026 in which only 13% of the people will be more than 60 years of age. By 2020, India is all set to become the world's youngest country. The average age of Indians would be 29.5 years, and they would account for being 28% of the world's workforce. India is expected to be a developed economy within the next 10–15 years in terms of human resources. Assessing the need of skilled and

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competent manpower in the current scenario, the Indian Government is aiming to fulfill the mission of achieving the formal/informal skill development of country's working population by providing them vocational training education and other upcoming learning methods to make them competent and employable (Kumar, Mishra, & Das, 2016).

Sikkim is the least populous State in India and the second smallest State having an area of 7096 sq.kms. The population of this state is 6.1 lakhs which is about.05% of total population of India. It has 3 ethnic groups i.e. Lepchas, Bhutia and Nepalese. The State is divided into only 4 Districts- North West East and South District. Around 60% of the state's population is in the working age group while 35% falls into the age-group of 0-14 years. As per the NSDC skill gap study of 2012 the projections for Sikkim state that there will be an increase in demand for human resource by the year 2021 for near about 1.48 lakhs of people. 7% of job vacancies is estimated to be created by people in the age group of 50-60 years who would be retiring. Thus, there will be a shortfall in demand for human resources to the extent of 1.31 lakh people. The literacy rate is as high as 82% after Kerala but employment opportunities are not adequate to meet with the requirements of the youth of Sikkim. Around 68000 are working in the organized sector and there are very few industries to generate employment other than pharmaceutical companies.

The state capital, Gangtok is the centre of social infrastructure and houses major centres of health, education, Government and legislature.is mostly concentrated in Gangtok. There is in migration within the state in the East District from other regions of the State. Vocational training in the state is provided by three Polytechnic and three ITI (Industrial Training Institute) educational institutions which provides courses and programmes as per the domestic demand. The rate of growth of primary sector has been slow compared to the growth of secondary and tertiary sectors. During the years 2004-2011, the tertiary sector has witnesses a doubled growth while the secondary sector has tripled. The Public Sector Undertakings (PSU), have been taking care of fruit preservation, watch and tea manufacturing along with few other precision industries. However, NSDC (National Skill Development Corporation) skill gap study has identified migration and skilling opportunities in various sectors within and outside the State.

Globally various challenges have been identified in the skill interventions across the world. A Report on Skill Development: attitude & perceptions, City & Guilds Center for Skill development 2008 (UK) based on a study indicated 3 common challenges across 9 countries:

1. 'Skills crisis' needs to be addressed;
2. Students fail to get employment after completing skill enhancement training;
3. Parents attitudes are greatest barrier towards attainment of vocational education and training as they have a high regard to academic education.

Other concerns include recognition of skills gap within and between countries due to globalization which further leads to marginalization on the basis of social class, gender and ethnicity. Due to modernization, the Asian countries are facing skills mismatch. The education systems are not being able to fulfil the demands of evolving skills. Lack of the governments and its educational institutions to create capacity and growing dynamism of the economy and absence of good strategies and policies to respond to the demands of the market also further widen this gap at global level. Problems associated with sexist norms and practices have limited the involvement of girls and women in TVET (UNESCO, 2011). Their participation is driven more by necessity than being asp rational for womenfolk (Unterhalter, 2007; Maclean, 2010; Klasen & Pieters, 2012) Material provided to the trainees has found to be inappropriate to the curriculum, the ability of learners, their cognitive levels and their language proficiency. (Heugh, 2002; Canlas et.al., 2009).

The facilities provided by the educational institutions is insufficient for the increasing demand of skilled labor in India. The lack of trained and skilled trainers along with inappropriate and insufficient infrastructure adds to the problem of skill development in the country. (Sharma & Nagendra, 2016).

Social stigma attached with migration for employment is prevalent not only in India but other countries like China. For rural migrants and their community's social stigma interferes with respect to social capita bonding (Chen et.al., 2011).

In India the notable problems are low engagement with industry, lack of funds, trainers, absence of accreditation, no standardized mechanisms and information. Unlike formal education system, skills education is not able to get proper acceptance in India. This is mainly due to lack of knowledge and awareness about job opportunities and benefits that are associated with skill education (Pachouri & Sharma, 2016; Palit, 2009). Unemployment, especially among rural people in India is a big challenge. Tripathi & Singh (2017) identifies that entrepreneurship and new businesses in different sectors: food processing, tourism and logistics can create employment opportunities for rural areas and fight poverty. Recent articles examine the difficulties, gaps and suggestions for effective implementation of skill development programme (Kureel & Verma, 2018, Tara & Kumar, 2016, Deka & Batra, 2016).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Resistances to Relocate

Resistance to relocate has been identified as one major reason behind the unemployment of skilled people. Tharenou (2008) has identified that greater family barriers lead to non-relocation of youth. A particularly vulnerable group in this context is family restricted females. Yamada 2000) and (Tran, 2006) have focused upon the parasite singles, a phenomenon that began in Japan since 1990s but is no longer restricted to that country. Theses refer to skilled youth who are not ready to give up the comfort of their home. Frank Furstenberg (2010) has researched upon extended timetable. His studies reveal that the lifecycle events for youth are getting extended. They are finding jobs, getting married and having children at a much later date and hence may relocate also at a slower pace. (Wang, 2008) finds Intergenerational changes amongst the Chinese people. He reports that younger generation relocates more easily than the older one, Henderson and Tulloch (2008) and Stilwell, et.al. (2004) find that Healthcare workers from certain countries like, India Phillipines and Malaysia are eager to migrate for employment. White (1994) and Aquilino (1991) have also focused on this phenomenon. Krishna (1976) has identified that work and location preferences, unwillingness to migrate magnify the problem of unemployment.

Stigma Against Labour Oriented Job

Stigma against labor oriented job has been identified as one of the major reason behind unemployment of unskilled people. Mohan (2016) conducted his research on Small Tea Growers of Sivasagar District of Assam and identified various socio-economic conditions, responsible for problems of Small Tea Growers. Alam and Mitra (2012) highlighted absence of a comprehensive social security which provides safety at the work place and suggested that health interventions need to be made occupation-specific. Palanithurai (2014) highlighted that after skilling there are very less efforts taken by the government and educational institute to make the people employable. Bhanushali (2008) has researched and reveals that informal sector is small but very productive in the developing countries but highly unregulated. Based on the north-eastern region of India, the work of Devi (2014) focuses on handloom sector for finding scope related to economic upliftment of the people.

Preference for Government Job

Preference for government job has been also identified as one of the factor responsible for willingly unemployment. Mains (2012) has researched on urban Ethiopia and concluded that Ethiopian youth prefer government job which is responsible for unemployment in the region. Kingdon & Knight (2004) conducted his research in South Africa and revealed that the individual do not want to enter in the informal sector, though it is common in other developing countries.

Reimeingam (2014) conducted research on Sikkim youth and revealed that the problem of educated unemployment problem due to the failures of educational systems which fails to produce employable persons. NEDFI (North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Ltd) report (on Sikkim youth) for the year 2015 stated that students (more than 50%) looked for Government jobs. Reimeingam (2014) revealed that the process of job creation is very slow in the Government sector. The severity of educated unemployment problem in Sikkim in recent years is revealed in the works of Puttaswamaiah (1977).

Meant for Low Academic Performers

NEDFI study shows that parents are of the opinion that vocational streams are for school drop-outs and for lower academic performers. Moreland & Levine (1989) revealed that many students are the first in their families to go for higher education and they are from very poor families. The research he of York-Anderson and Bowman,(1991) brings out the differences between first-generation and traditional students. It was reported that first-generation students were at a disadvantageous position with respect to basic knowledge of college, family support and personal commitment. Vocational education was not considered important and received a step motherly treatment in Tamil Nadu,, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Maharashtra, four very prominent states of India (Majumdar, 2005). The case study by Yunos, Sern & Hamdan (2016) reveals that perception of the society plays an important role for the stakeholders towards skilling as it is perceived as the second class education.

Lack of Industrial Opportunity

NSDC study (2012) indicates that there are few Industrial opportunities in Sikkim but whatever opportunities are available the locals are not willing to take up industrial jobs especially in construction sector as they consider it inferior and have a preference for government jobs only. Mehrotra, (2014) suggested that industry participation must also expand in order to encourage the growth of VET in both public and private sectors of India. In Sikkim, tourism is another unexplored sector which has scope of providing ample job opportunities with appropriate skilling and planning. Singh & Kumar (2016) suggested in his work that new avenues of employment to be created and industries to be promoted to generate employment. Palanithurai (2014) revealed in his work that student enrolment is high in learning institute but the attention on employability is missing. So, he stressed that the gap between the policy framing and the implementation should be minimised.

Underdeveloped Region

Sundas (2015) has revealed that a sense of isolation negligence and backlog still persists in NE States including Sikkim. Kumar & Singh (2017) highlighted in their work the shortage of skilled manpower could be overcome by promoting vocational education & training. McDuie-Ra, (2012) in his work on different communities of Sikkim highlighted that the communities of Sikkim are still apprehensive and show resistance to accept and adjust to the demands of integration and assimilation with mainstream India. Mandal & Sengupta (2016) suggested the integration of environmental management with tourism to form tourism policies in Sikkim, which could lead to better future.

Review of General Challenges

Sau & Biswal (2011), highlighted the increasing regional, gender and social disparities in secondary education. Zimmermann et.al., (2013) in his paper focused on education policies and role of vocational training. The author also gave important recommendations for enhancing the implementation of education and training systems. Basant, (1987) tries to link between the impact of agriculture technology on the employment of farmers/labor. Agrawal, (2012) highlighted that there has been a considerable increase in the number of Industrial Training but the coverage of the system is not appropriate in India. Saini (2015) highlighted on the various challenges that skill development initiatives in India face and suggested that instead of work in isolation there should be a requirement

of integrated approach. Mehrotra, (2014) highlighted that India will soon face the serious skill-related shortages of workers. Chenoy, (2013) also highlighted the requirement of an integrated approach of public and private to tackle the challenges of Skilling in India.

METHODOLOGY

The nature of this research is empirical and exploratory. The descriptive statistics is based on the data on the belief expressed by various stakeholders having some experience and understanding of skill eco system in Sikkim. The research-design for the research work is conclusive.

Objective of the study is to determine the perceptual differences of various categories of stake-holders regarding challenges peculiar to the State of Sikkim in implementing skill development programs.

The sampling population includes students undergoing training in skilling in sectors under various centrally and state sponsored schemes in different districts, parents, trainers, industry HR heads in Sikkim and officials associated with the skill department. The sample size has been provided below:

- Students engaged in Skill Training. 400 in numbers;
- Trainers teaching skill courses. 100 in numbers;
- Industry partners providing employment:50 in numbers;
- Government officials & administrators associated with skill initiatives in the State: 40 in numbers;
- Parents of trainees undergoing skilling: 100 in numbers.

Random and judgmental sampling methods have been employed for this study. The Skill Development & Entrepreneurs Department Govt. of Sikkim and private player/stakeholders involved in the progress and development of skill development directly or indirectly were chosen on judgmental basis and trainees and trainers on a random basis from a select group.

Data collection was undertaken in three phases. For the exploratory study stake-holders involved in in skill development were approached with open questions asking them to identify the challenges for this endeavor in the context of state of Sikkim. In the second phase the inputs from exploratory study were used to come up with a structured interview schedule. These schedules have been distributed amongst the sample stake-holders and their responses collected. For the students and their parents, interpreters were employed who could explain the questions in native (Nepalese) language. The unwillingness to respond was extremely low at around 1.8%, mostly from students and parents. The statements were framed on a five-point Likert scale. The confidentiality of the survey information was guaranteed to the respondents. The filled questionnaires were collected the same day and on a few occasions after a few days.

Reliability of the data is an important measure for any study of this kind which is based on the beliefs of people. The reliability of the data collected for this study has been measured by Cronbach's alpha. In statistics, Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach LJ (1951) is a coefficient of internal consistency. For our study it was found to be 0.87. A value of Cronbach alpha above 0.7 is considered good for further analysis of data. 0.87 may be viewed as an excellent reliability. For ensuring the face-validity the questionnaire were evaluated by 4 experts for the correct match between what is being asked and what is being understood. This was measured on a 1 to 5 scale. Any statement scoring 3 or less were modified or dropped. The construct validity has been derived from a focus group interview where various stake-holders participated to identify the variables which are a challenge for skilling the youth of Sikkim. More than 3 hours of video recording is available for the same. Likert scale is primarily a ordinal scale and hence it should not ordinarily be subjected to model building and hence our analysis does not attempt to do so and each variable has been dealt with individually. Yet for determine the validity statistically we subjected the data to exploratory factor analysis (extracted using principle component analysis and rotated through varimax). This resulted in relatively clean 3

components (with an eigen value more than 1 and none of the variables was found to be distributed across two components. The largest factor having an Eigen value of 38.4 did not account for most of the variance in the variables. Therefore, in accordance with Podsakoff and Organ (1986) no general factor is apparent. As the first-factor contribution is below 50% it is interpreted that method bias is unlikely to have significantly affected the study results.

Initial analysis was essentially univariate in nature where using MX excel the sum of all the 8 variables was added and ranked according to their score. This was repeated for individual category of stake-holders to get a clearer picture. Inferential analyses have been conducted using Statistical Software (SPSS) 16.0 version. The test statistics was found to follow normal distribution. For the hypothesis testing, the confidence limit was set at 95%. t - Test and ANOVA has been used to determine the significance of beliefs. At 95% confidence limit significance (p-value) less than 0.05. The significance level, (α) gives the probability of null hypothesis rejection criteria when it is true. Study explores existence of significant difference across stake-holders, caste, gender, education and district in the context of challenges in skill development in the state.

The variables have been coded for the sake of simplicity and this has been shown in Table 1.

RESULT AND FINDINGS

Overall Ranking of Challenges Peculiar to Sikkim

For the objective to identify the challenges peculiar to the State of Sikkim in implementing Skill Development programmes, seven challenges have been identified and based on the survey scores, the first and most important challenge emerges to be: resistance to move out of Sikkim for work (with a total score of 2132), second challenge is: lack of genuine interest & motivation among youth (with a total score of 2121), the third challenge emerges as: lack of awareness and career counseling about Skill Development programmes (with a total score of 2118), the fourth challenge was: Lack of Industrial opportunities in Sikkim (with a total score of 2107), the fifth challenge was: remoteness and isolation because of being mostly landlocked and Stigma against labor oriented jobs (with a total score of 1967), the sixth challenge was: most of the parents believe that skill courses are only suitable for drop outs and low academic performers (with a total score of 1931) and the seventh or least important challenge emerges to be: unwillingness of youth to acquire skills for other employments because of preference for Govt. jobs with simple degrees (with a total score of 1881).

Table 1. Coding of variables

SN	Code	Variable
1	PGJ	preference for Govt. jobs
2	RTM	Resistance to move out of Sikkim for work
3	LlO	Lack of Industrial opportunities in Sikkim
4	RI	Remoteness and isolation because of being mostly landlocked
5	LACS	Lack of awareness and career counseling about Skill Development programmes
6	LAP	Skill courses suitable for drop outs and low academic performers
7	SLOJ	Stigma against labor oriented jobs
8	LM	Lack of genuine interest & motivation

Table 2. Overall ranking of Challenges peculiar to Sikkim

	Overall	Teachers	Students	Industry	Parents	Policy-makers
PGJ	1881	330	1250	127	125	49
RTM	2132	325	1507	130	127	43
LlO	2107	298	1535	134	107	33
RI	1967	301	1377	123	126	40
LACS	2118	312	1511	108	146	41
LAP	1931	330	1348	118	96	39
SLOJ	1967	326	1366	124	107	44
LM	2121	340	1507	123	117	34

Ranking of Challenges Peculiar to Sikkim as per the Teachers

For the above objective, survey of teachers revealed that the most important challenge from the perspective of teachers was: lack of genuine interest & motivation among youth (with a total score of **351**), the second most important challenge was: most of the parents believe that skill courses are only suitable for drop outs and low academic performers and Unwillingness of youth to acquire skills for other employments because of preference for Govt. jobs with simple degrees (with a total score of **330**), the third most important challenge was: Stigma against labor oriented jobs (with a total score of **326**), the fourth challenge was: Resistance to move out of Sikkim for work (with a total score of **325**), the fifth challenge was: Lack of awareness and career counseling about Skill Development programmes (with a total score of **312**), the sixth challenge was: Remoteness and isolation because of being mostly landlocked (with a total score of **302**), the least or the seventh challenge was: Lack of Industrial opportunities in Sikkim (with a total score of **298).**

Ranking of Challenges Peculiar to Sikkim as per the Students

For the above objective, survey of students revealed that the most important challenge from the perspective of students was: Lack of Industrial opportunities in Sikkim (with a total score of **1535**), the second most important challenge was: Lack of genuine interest & motivation among youth (with a total score of **1515**), the third most important challenge was: Lack of awareness and career counseling about Skill Development programmes (with a total score of **1511**), the fourth challenge was: Resistance to move out of Sikkim for work (with a total score of **1507**), the fifth challenge was: Remoteness and isolation because of being mostly landlocked (with a total score of **1377**), the sixth challenge was: Stigma against labor oriented jobs (with a total score of **1366**) and the seventh challenge was: Most of the parents believe that skill courses are only suitable for drop outs and low academic performers (with a total score of **1348**) and the eighth challenge was: Unwillingness of youth to acquire skills for other employments because of preference for Govt. jobs with simple degrees (with a total score of **1250**).

Ranking of Challenges Peculiar to Sikkim as per the Industry Partners

For the above objective, survey of specialists from the industry revealed that the most important challenge from their perspective was: Lack of Industrial opportunities in Sikkim (with a total score of 134), the second most important challenge was: Lack of genuine interest & motivation among youth (with a total score of 131), the third most important challenge was: Resistance to move out of Sikkim for work (with a total score of 130), the fourth challenge was: Unwillingness of youth to acquire skills for other employments because of preference for Govt. jobs with simple degrees (with a total score

of 127), the fifth challenge was: Remoteness and isolation because of being mostly landlocked and Stigma against labor oriented jobs (with a total score of 124), the sixth challenge was: Most of the parents believe that skill courses are only suitable for drop outs and low academic performers (with a total score of 118) and the seventh or the least important challenge was: Lack of awareness and career counseling about Skill Development programmes (with a total score of 108).

Ranking of Challenges Peculiar to Sikkim as per the Parents

For the above objective, survey of parents revealed that the most important challenge from their perspective was: Lack of awareness and career counseling about Skill Development programmes (with a total score of 146), the second most important challenge was: Resistance to move out of Sikkim for work (with a total score of 127), the third most important challenge was: Remoteness and isolation because of being mostly landlocked (with a total score of 126), the fourth challenge was: Unwillingness of youth to acquire skills for other employments because of preference for Govt. jobs with simple degrees (with a total score of 125) and Lack of genuine interest & motivation among youth (with a total score of 125), the fifth challenge was: Lack of Industrial opportunities in Sikkim and Stigma against labor oriented jobs (with a total score of 107), the sixth challenge was: Most of the parents believe that skill courses are only suitable for drop outs and low academic performers (with a total score of 96).

Ranking of Challenges Peculiar to Sikkim as per the Policy Makers

For the above objective, survey of policy revealed that the most important challenge from their perspective was: Unwillingness of youth to acquire skills for other employments because of preference for Govt. jobs with simple degrees (with a total score of 49), the second most important challenge was: Stigma against labor oriented jobs (with a total score of 44), the third most important challenge was: Resistance to move out of Sikkim for work (with a total score of 43), the fourth challenge was: Lack of genuine interest & motivation among youth (with a total score of 42), the fifth challenge was: Lack of awareness and career counseling about Skill Development programmes (with a total score of 41), the sixth challenge was: Remoteness and isolation because of being mostly landlocked (with a total score of 40), the seventh challenge was: Most of the parents believe that skill courses are only suitable for drop outs and low academic performers (with a total score of 39) and the eighth challenge was: Lack of Industrial opportunities in Sikkim (with a total score of 33).

Ranking of Challenges (Comparative Ranking)

From the comparative ranking of the challenges we find that "Unwillingness of youth to acquire skills for other employments because of preference for Govt. jobs with simple degrees" emerges as the least challenge in the overall and 8th for students, while it is the most important for policy makers, 2nd most important for teachers. It is perceived to be 4th most important challenge by industry experts and parents:

- **The challenge:** Resistance to move out of Sikkim for work is the most important challenge as per the overall score, while it is 2nd for parents, 3rd for industry experts and policy makers and 4th for teachers and students.
- **The challenge:** Lack of Industrial opportunities in Sikkim, gets an overall ranking of 4. It is considered to most important by students and Industry experts, while it gets the lowest ranking by teachers and policy makers. Parents give it a ranking of 5.
- **The challenge:** Remoteness and isolation because of being mostly landlocked gets an overall ranking of 5. It is ranked as 6th by teachers and policy makers while it is ranked 5th by students and industry experts. It is ranked as 3rd by parents.

- **The challenge:** Lack of awareness and career counseling about Skill Development programmes gets an overall ranking of 3. It is ranked as 5 by teachers, 3 by students, 7 by industry, 1 by Parents and 5 by Policy-makers.
- **The challenge:** Most of the parents believe that skill courses are only suitable for drop outs and low academic performers gets an overall ranking of 6. It is ranked as 2 by teachers, 7 by students, by 6 industries, 6 by Parents and 7 by Policy-makers.
- **The challenge:** Stigma against labor oriented jobs gets an overall ranking of 5. It is ranked as 3 by teachers, 6 by students, 5 by industry, 5 by Parents and 2 by Policy-makers.
- **The challenge:** Lack of genuine interest & motivation among youth gets an overall ranking of 2. It is ranked as 1 by teachers, 2 by students and industry and 4 by Parents and Policy-makers.

Significance of Differences Across Stake-Holders Group

Hypothesis - HO1: There is no significant difference in the expressed belief held by stake-holders vis-à-vis the specific challenges faced in Sikkim.

ANOVA Challenges

For the variable PGJ it is seen that the means are different. Mean is lowest for students while it is highest for policy makers. For variables RTM, LACS, RI and LM the means are almost similar for all. LlO has significantly low mean for policy makers and parents while LAP and LM has low mean for parents.

The data has been subjected to ANOVA to determine if significant differences exist amongst the stake holders for the challenges facing skill development initiatives. From the table we find that Null hypothesis that no significant differences exist is rejected for Variable PGJ, LlO, LAP and SLOJ. For the rest it is accepted. We, therefore, infer that differences do exist partially for the challenge variables.

From the above table we find that null hypothesis for the variable PGJ is rejected. The null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the expressed belief held by stake-holders towards unwillingness of youth to acquire skills for other employments because of preference for Govt. jobs with simple degrees is rejected. This is a difference of opinion on this significant challenge as expressed by the different stakeholders in the skill eco space.

Table 3. Ranking of Challenges (Comparative Ranking)

	Overall	Teachers	Students	Industry	Parents	Policy-makers
PGJ	7	2	8	4	4	1
RTM	1	4	4	3	2	3
LlO	4	7	1	1	5	8
RI	5	6	5	5	3	6
LACS	3	5	3	7	1	5
LAP	6	2	7	6	6	7
SLOJ	5	3	6	5	5	2
LM	2	1	2	2	4	4

Table 4. ANOVA Challenges

Variable	Teachers		Students		Industrial Partners		Parents		Policy Makers	
	Mean	Std	Mean	Std	Mean	Std	Mean	Std	Mean	Std
PGJ	3.63	0.74	2.92	1.13	3.73	0.99	3.3	0.93	4.1	0.67
RTM	3.57	0.78	3.52	0.99	3.82	0.87	3.34	0.94	3.58	0.79
LlO	3.27	0.9	3.58	1.04	3.94	0.88	2.81	0.95	2.75	1.14
RI	3.36	0.89	3.21	1.14	3.64	1.09	3.31	0.93	3.33	0.98
LACS	3.43	0.9	3.55	1.04	3.17	1.19	3.84	0.67	3.41	1.08
LAP	3.63	0.89	3.15	1.26	3.47	1.05	2.53	1.11	3.25	0.87
SLOJ	3.62	0.75	3.2	1.1	3.65	0.95	2.82	0.56	3.67	0.89
LM	3.86	0.69	3.53	1.07	3.85	0.74	3.29	1.16	3.5	1

Table 5. Summary of Hypothesis acceptance or rejection

Variable	F-value	Significance	Null Hypothesis
PGJ	14.739	.000	Rejected
RTM	1.236	.294	Accepted
LlO	9.613	.000	Rejected
RI	1.427	.223	Accepted
LACS	2.231	.064	Accepted
LAP	6.656	.000	Rejected
SLOJ	6.770	.000	Rejected
LM	3.305	.011	Accepted

DISCUSSION

Implications for Government, Teachers, and Parents/Students

A focus group discussion conducted with the Industry and Government representatives of the stakeholders earlier indicated that the youth of Sikkim were reluctant to come out of their comfort zone and undertake any risk of striving for a private sector job elsewhere. Lack of information on alternate employment avenues and counseling as expressed by students and teachers was found to be a major hurdle which needs to be addressed. This was further reinforced by the findings of a Comprehensive study done by NEDFI in 2015 and stated that out of 1395 students interviewed from different blocks of Sikkim during data collection,62% looked for Government jobs.

The students however have given 8th rank to this variable and a standard deviation of 1.13 indicates that they are willing to acquire skills for other employments given the opportunities. The NEFDI study indicated that there is a high demand for engineering Trades in ITIs in Sikkim but except for Wireman and Surveyor other training opportunities in core engineering Trades is absent. There is lack of adequate hostel facilities in ITIs and Livelihood centers and poor Internet connection and library facilities Transportation availability of raw materials and quality food are other deterrent factors. Even the enrolment data of the two Poly techniques show a decreasing trend from 2010 to 2014.

The data analysis implies setting up of an information infrastructure by launching an integrated network and a single window facility to provide information on careers and skill development

programmes for students and parents and Industries to post their needs and requirements. A robust online labor Market Information system should be developed in the State supported by dedicated call centers and Career guidance cells to disseminate information on job opportunities l and serve as a counselor to resolve all queries of the stakeholders. The skilling efforts should be intensified by the State in the growth sectors in the State like Tourism, Handloom & Handicrafts Pharmaceuticals Constructions Agriculture Floriculture Electronics and IT sectors to create more jobs for the youth in due course. Success stories of individuals and the Institutions should be posted on social websites, print and audio media to motivate the youth to explore other venues of employment.

The Industry should effectively utilize its CSR funds for providing trainings for needed job roles, and tie up with Senior Secondary schools and Colleges to implement the Apprenticeship trainings. It will provide opportunities for on the job trainings and employment. The trainers should be encouraged to counsel the students by revising the recruitment rules, salary incentives and defining progression pathways. They need to be adequately compensated and motivated through incentive schemes.

The 41 Livelihood Centers need to be revamped, restructured and operationalized to cater to the needs of the youth and their skill aspirations. The infrastructure and practical training arrangements should be made to attract the students. 51% students out of 1395 perceived that is was truly important to acquire skills however almost 59% were not aware about different Skill Development programmes. About 78% reported to show inclination towards gaining additional skills and therefore my analysis suggest that a strategy should be formulated to make this prospective workforce employable.

In the focus group discussion conducted at DCB in 2016 the Training partners implied that Skilling in schools in remote areas should be provided and mass media involvement including involvement of village panchayat through skill awareness program should be encouraged. More success stories to be quoted to inspire others to undertake skilling for employment. The NEDFI study pointed to the fact that most of the parents of urban areas were adverse towards migration. Less than 10% was aware about ITIs Polytechnics and little or no awareness about Private Training partners of the Government. A career fair was organized by SICB in 2015 in which 22 Industries from Sikkim participated and out of 334 students who were selected showed lack of confidence to go out of the State to work. This belief was reinstated in the FGD conducted with the different stakeholders of Skill eco-system. NSDC Skill Study on Sikkim expressed that migration opportunities exist for the excess supply of human resources. Specialty, new skills and skill up gradation are the three different types of shilling categories that needs to be taken care of for the following sectors: beauty and wellness, Flight Attendants and Ground Staff, hospitality, IT/ITeS, Retail Services, Music, Sports, Fashion design and Healthcare.

The Trainers and the Service providers believe that Migration Support Centers should be set up by the Government to provide guidelines and assistance for migration by way of employment avenues, accommodation facilities and directing Banks and other partner agencies to give ancillary services like loans, medical aids and Industry related information. Career fairs and Annual meets should be organized including cultural festivities and Alumni and parents encouraged to participate to remove homesickness and isolation and feeling of loneliness.

Differences in Expressed Beliefs Across Caste

In this part of the study the significant difference across caste (for students was explored with the null hypothesis (HO2) being that There is no significant difference in the expressed belief held by students across various caste groups vis-à-vis the specific challenges faced in Sikkim Student-Caste.

ANOVA STUDENT CHALLENGES-CASTE

The Null hypothesis for variables PGJ, RTM, LlO, RI, LAP and SLOJ in Table 6 is that there is no significant difference in the belief held by students across caste vis a vis the specific challenges is rejected. This is proved by the F-values being shown as more than 3. This indicates that that there were varying opinions against the challenges faced by students across caste differences. For variables

Table 6. ANOVA student challenges-caste

Variable	Caste	Mean	Std	F-value	Sign.	Null Hypothesis
PGJ	General	2.4783	1.20626	3.943	0.009	Rejected
	ST	3.1429	1.14550			
	SC	3.0746	1.05222			
	OBC	3.0234	1.06785			
	Total	2.9882	1.09516			
RTM	General	3.9348	.71187	3.033	0.029	Rejected
	ST	3.3571	1.06160			
	SC	3.5597	.88012			
	OBC	3.5327	.96237			
	Total	3.5735	.92629			
LlO	General	3.8913	.84927	3.599	0.014	Rejected
	ST	3.7500	1.07583			
	SC	3.4060	1.00028			
	OBC	3.4252	1.04882			
	Total	3.4917	1.02495			
RI	General	3.6739	1.15575	3.515	0.015	Rejected
	ST	3.1429	.97046			
	SC	3.1269	1.05789			
	OBC	3.0986	1.15115			
	Total	3.1734	1.12159			
LACS	General	3.7826	.94076	2.413	0.066	Accepted
	ST	3.7037	.95333			
	SC	3.3684	1.03334			
	OBC	3.4554	1.01132			
	Total	3.4797	1.01257			
LAP	General	3.7174	1.22317	4.203	0.006	Rejected
	ST	2.7857	1.19744			
	SC	3.1269	1.17250			
	OBC	3.1502	1.21545			
	Total	3.1805	1.21526			
SLOJ	General	3.8696	1.06685	10.085	0	Rejected
	ST	3.0357	.99934			
	SC	2.9774	.88306			
	OBC	3.2254	.98379			
	Total	3.2048	.99448			
LM	General	3.8913	.90008	2.416	0.066	Accepted
	ST	3.4643	1.10494			
	SC	3.4580	1.02477			
	OBC	3.4567	1.04860			
	Total	3.5061	1.03487			

LACS and LM in given Table 6 the Null hypotheses that there is no significant difference in the belief held by students' vis a vis the specific challenges is accepted and is indicated by significant value of .006. Therefore, it shows the opinion of the youth of different castes was unanimous towards lack of awareness and career counseling about Skill Development programmes and genuine interest and motivation. The challenges mentioned above needs to be tackled universally across all caste and class to make the skilling intervention effective and have broader outreach.

Differences in Expressed Beliefs Across Gender

In this part of the study the significant difference across gender (for students) was explored with the null hypothesis (HO3) being that There is no significant difference in the expressed belief held by students across gender groups vis-à-vis the specific challenges faced in Sikkim Student-Caste.

ANOVA-GENDER

The null hypothesis there is no significant difference in the expressed belief held by students across gender vis-à-vis most of the challenges faced in Sikkim is accepted for all the variables except RI. This is expressed by F value being less than 0.5 and significant value being greater than 5. The challenges are faced both by males and female equally. Even secondary literature review suggests that there are no gender disparities in the North East States and obstacles in training and employment are faced by both sexes.

Differences in Expressed Beliefs Across Caste

In this part of the study the significant difference across various educational subgroups (for students) was explored with the null hypothesis (HO4) being that There is no significant difference in the expressed belief held by students across various educational sub groups vis-à-vis the specific challenges faced in Sikkim Student-Caste.

Challenges ANOVA Education

The null hypotheses that there is no significant difference in the expressed belief held by students across education level vis-à-vis the specific challenges for all variables is accepted in Table 8. This proves the null hypotheses has no correlation with the challenges faced by respondents across their educational qualifications. The perception of students irrespective of their educational levels was the same against the challenges faced by them. The NEFDI study indicates that 78% of the students who were interviewed had acquired some skills through informal channels, the most dominant being the informal route. It reflects that Sikkim as a State do not have many formal institutions to facilitate acquiring skills. The administrators in Focus group discussion held with the stakeholders in the eco system expressed the opinion that Skilling should reach the doorsteps for better outreach and training in traditional skills and up gradation of existing skills should be done. The Training providers expressed the view that counseling and mobilization in schools in remote areas should be done through Mass media involvement and involvement of village Panchayat in skill awareness program. More success stories to be quoted. They also suggested that more avenues for skilling in various sectors like Organic, Tourism and Retail should be provided.

Differences in Expressed Beliefs Across Caste

In this part of the study the significant difference across districts (for students was explored with the null hypothesis (HO5) being that There is no significant difference in the expressed belief held by students across four districts vis-à-vis the specific challenges faced in Sikkim.

Table 7. ANOVA-GENDER

Variable	Caste	Mean	Std	F-value	Sign.	Null Hypothesis
PGJ	Male	**2.9424**	**1.05223**	0.382	0.537	Accepted
	Female	**3.0087**	**1.13057**			
	Total	**2.9787**	**1.09502**			
RTM	Male	**3.5497**	**.90982**	0.228	0.633	Accepted
	Female	**3.5931**	**.94120**			
	Total	**3.5735**	**.92629**			
LlO	Male	**3.4789**	**1.00110**	0.1	0.722	Accepted
	Female	**3.5108**	**1.05031**			
	Total	**3.4964**	**1.02730**			
RI	Male	**3.0474**	**1.11406**	4.36	0.37	Rejected
	Female	**3.2771**	**1.13112**			
	Total	**3.1734**	**1.12794**			
LACS	Male	**3.4550**	**1.00231**	0.203	0.652	Accepted
	Female	**3.5000**	**1.02693**			
	Total	**3.4797**	**1.01493**			
LAP	Male	**3.2053**	**1.18856**	0.003	0.954	Accepted
	Female	**3.2121**	**1.24168**			
	Total	**3.2090**	**1.21656**			
SLOJ	Male	**3.2316**	**.91954**	0.171	0.68	Accepted
	Female	**3.1913**	**1.05231**			
	Total	**3.2095**	**.99349**			
LM	Male	**3.5450**	**1.02850**	0.125	0.724	Accepted
	Female	**3.5089**	**1.03738**			
	Total	**3.5254**	**1.03223**			

ANOVA Challenges District

The null hypotheses that there is no significant differences in the expressed belief held by students across districts vis a vis the specific challenges faced in Sikkim is rejected for variables RTM, SLOJ and LM in Table 9. The respondents from the 4 districts of North South West and East showed difference of opinion against the following variables.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

A focus group discussion conducted with the Industry and Government representatives of the stakeholders in 2016 and they opined that the youth of Sikkim were reluctant to come out of their comfort zone and undertake any risk of striving for a private sector job elsewhere. There was much preference for the Government jobs. Lack of information on alternate employment avenues and counseling as expressed by students and teachers was found to be a major hurdle which needs to be addressed. This was further reinforced by the findings of a Comprehensive study done by NEDFI in

Table 8. Challenges ANOVA Education

Variable	Caste	Mean	Std	F-value	Sign.	Null Hypothesis
PGJ	elementary	3.2286	.97274	0.644	0.587	Accepted
	School	2.9596	1.11136			
	Graduation	2.9574	1.08262			
	Post graduation	3.0000	1.05409			
	Total	2.9831	1.09465			
RTM	elementary	3.2571	.98048	1.9	0.129	Accepted
	School	3.5963	.90948			
	Graduation	3.6809	.95795			
	Post graduation	3.3000	1.33749			
	Total	3.5700	.93554			
LIO	elementary	3.3824	.92162	0.213	0.887	Accepted
	School	3.5062	1.02991			
	Graduation	3.4468	1.03857			
	Post graduation	3.6000	1.50555			
	Total	3.4915	1.03251			
RI	elementary	3.4000	.88118	0.235	0.72	Accepted
	School	3.1869	1.13851			
	Graduation	2.7872	1.21470			
	Post graduation	3.3000	1.15950			
	Total	3.1622	1.13434			
LACS	elementary	3.4286	.97877	2.05	0.106	Accepted
	School	3.5392	1.01755			
	Graduation	3.1489	.97755			
	Post graduation	3.5000	1.26930			
	Total	3.4842	1.02010			
LAP	elementary	3.3714	1.05957	1.97	0.118	Accepted
	School	3.2243	1.23472			
	Graduation	3.0426	1.23284			
	Post graduation	2.4000	1.17379			
	Total	3.1961	1.22387			
SLOJ	elementary	3.0882	.75348	1.54	0.203	Accepted
	School	3.2399	1.02855			
	Graduation	3.2340	.88986			
	Post graduation	2.6000	.84327			
	Total	3.2112	.99222			
LM	elementary	3.6571	.90563	0.954	0.414	Accepted
	School	3.5472	1.04292			
	Graduation	3.3333	.92833			
	Post graduation	3.8000	.91894			
	Total	3.5407	1.01788			

Table 9. ANOVA Challenges District

	North	2.7241	.99630	1.2	0.211	Accepted
	East	2.9369	1.09113			
	West	3.1194	1.12172			
	South	3.0698	1.11451			
	Total	2.9802	1.09572			
RTM	North	3.5862	.90701	2.8	0.04	Rejected
	East	3.6667	.90081			
	West	3.2985	1.05909			
	South	3.5930	.81714			
	Total	3.5842	.91870			
LIO	North	3.7241	.99630	0.736	0.531	Accepted
	East	3.4820	1.01889			
	West	3.4545	1.08389			
	South	3.5930	.95027			
	Total	3.5186	1.01311			
RI	North	3.1724	1.25553	0.152	0.928	Accepted
	East	3.2127	1.13819			
	West	3.1940	1.11788			
	South	3.1163	1.07833			
	Total	3.1861	1.12750			
LACS	North	3.2857	1.04906	0.79	0.5	Accepted
	East	3.5091	1.01357			
	West	3.3582	1.11058			
	South	3.5349	.96647			
	Total	3.4738	1.02222			
LAP	North	3.2414	1.21465	2.58	0.053	Accepted
	East	3.2748	1.22241			
	West	2.8030	1.21807			
	South	3.1512	1.21285			
	Total	3.1687	1.22629			
SLOJ	North	3.0357	.92224	4.93	0.002	Rejected
	East	3.3919	1.01327			
	West	2.9394	.87493			
	South	3.0814	1.00838			
	Total	3.2264	.99925			
LM	North	3.7857	.83254	4.262	0.006	Rejected
	East	3.5963	.99879			
	West	3.1231	1.16603			
	South	3.4762	1.05826			
	Total	3.5063	1.04315			

2015 and stated that out of 1395 students interviewed from different blocks of Sikkim during data collection,62% looked for Government jobs.

The students however have given 8th rank to this variable and a standard deviation of 1.13 indicates that they are willing to acquire skills for other employments given the opportunities. The NEFDI study indicated that there is a high demand for engineering Trades in ITIs in Sikkim but except for Wireman and Surveyor other training opportunities in core engineering Trades is absent. Choices for Trades for NSQF level 5 and above need to be given due importance and Training providers to be identified and roped in. The University Teachers pointed out in the Focus study that the choice of Trades offered by Sector Skill Councils for engineers' likes LED design engineering conceptualization design green skills were missing. This belief was reinforced in the orientation programme conducted for Sikkim Manipal University students during the counseling session addressing more than 500 student participants from various disciplines of the engineering stream.

Remoteness and isolation because of being landlocked, lack of adequate hostel facilities in ITIs and Livelihood centres, poor Internet connection, library facilities, poor transportation, availability of resources and quality food are other deterrent factors. Even the enrolment data of the two Poly techniques show a decreasing trend from 2010 to 2014. (Source NEDFI) Less than 10% were aware about ITIs Polytechnics had little or no awareness about Private Training partners of the Government. In the focus group discussion conducted at DCB in 2016 the Training partners implied that Skilling in schools in remote areas should be provided and Mass media involvement including involvement of village panchayat through skill awareness program should be encouraged.

The department officials of Skill Department opined that skill Mission being a new concept the remote areas and centres are unequipped to run much training and no channels of funding for infrastructure are available to implement them. Consequently, many livelihood centres are not operational and had to be shut down. The existing job roles in some of them were not asp rational to the needs of the youth and therefore had poor or no enrolments. People in South Sikkim considered the factors like lack of livelihood opportunities, isolation and negligence as major barriers for them to overcome poverty. More success stories to be quoted to inspire others to undertake skilling for employment Sikkim has vast human resources to the tune of 60% in the working age group which needs skilling in various sectors to become employable and productive. However, the awareness and motivation levels are low because mobilization and counselling is an arduous task and still has to pave its way through the interiors of the State particularly North and West Sikkim. Most of the youth needs to be sensitised to the need for skilling in the State.

The NSDC study gap study of 2012 indicates that there are few Industrial opportunities in Sikkim but whatever opportunities are available the locals are not willing to take up industrial jobs especially in construction sector as they consider it inferior and have a preference for government jobs only. There are more than 40 Pharma companies in Sikkim and the Pharmaceutical HR head from Glenn and Sun Pharma Companies stated there is a large requirement for trained manpower in the Pharma Sector. However, the counselling session with students revealed that the aspirations of the youth are low. Even the Manipal students refused to enroll for any Pharma trade of NSDC during the counselling session. Involvement of Industries was found to be low by way of placement support; curriculum designing and investment in need gap analysis, labor market studies besides CSR funds and Apprenticeships. There is still a great shortage of trained and skilled manpower to address to the various industrial needs; and this has slowed down the industrial growth. The shortage of skilled manpower could be overcome by promoting Vocational Education & Training. (Singh, D. N., & Kumar, K. 2016). The Industry representatives who participated in the focus group discussion opined that trainees lacked professional attitude and showed indifference towards Corporate jobs. It is lack of requisite skills like Soft Skills, Technical and Operational Skills and inadequate infrastructure and Government support which makes the trainees unfit for Industrial and managerial jobs in Sikkim.

Industry partners showed willingness to provide industrial training & experienced trainers and organize career counselling camps if the government shared the costs. The trainers and the trainees

believed that it was lack of industrial training and opportunities which were the main deterrent in acquiring Industrial jobs. This is further corroborated by the Sikkim Human Development Report of 2001.The data analysis implies setting up of an information infrastructure by launching an integrated network and a single window facility to provide information on careers and skill development programmes for students and parents and Industries to post their needs and requirements. A robust online labor market information system should be developed in the State supported by dedicated call centers and Career guidance cells to disseminate information on job opportunities l and serve as a counsellor to resolve all queries of the stakeholders. The skilling efforts should be intensified by the State in the growth sectors in the State like Tourism, Handloom & Handicrafts Pharmaceuticals Constructions Agriculture Floriculture Electronics and IT sectors to create more jobs for the youth in due course. Success stories of individuals and the Institutions should be posted on social websites, print and audio media to motivate the youth to explore other venues of employment.

The Industry should effectively utilize its CSR funds for providing trainings for needed job roles, and tie up with Senior Secondary schools and Colleges to implement the Apprenticeship trainings. It will provide opportunities for on the job trainings and employment. The 41 Livelihood Centers need to be revamped restructured and operational zed to cater to the needs of the youth and their skill aspirations. The infrastructure and practical training arrangements should be made to attract the students. 51% students out of 1395 perceived that is was truly important to acquire skills however almost 59% were not aware about different Skill Development programmes. About 78% reported to show inclination towards gaining additional skills and therefore my analysis suggest that a strategy should be formulated to make this prospective workforce employable. Dr Jaya Kumar the outgoing Principal Secretary, SDED stated the necessity to start from the industry demands for skilled manpower, their projections, environmental scanning for thrust areas, policies of the government and feedback from industries

The NEDFI study pointed to the fact that most of the parents of urban areas were adverse towards migration. On the contrary NSDC gap study has revealed that the students are interested for opportunities outside the state since the locally opportunities are limited. But after getting exposure they would be interested to return to their homeland. This was reinforced by NEFDI study of 2015 that 78% of the sampled students showed interest in skill development.

A career fair was organized by SICB in 2015 in which 22 Industries from Sikkim participated and out of 334 students who were selected showed lack of confidence to go out of the State to work. This belief was reinstated in the FGD conducted with the different stakeholders of Skill eco-system.

It highlighted the fact the administration and service providers believed that the trainees showed receptivity and enthusiasm towards skill courses. There are ample migration opportunities outside Sikkim which can generate employment but the youth show resistance and poor readiness to relocate. Northeast migrants including those from Sikkim like to explore the employment opportunities in other cities of India but yet face high levels of racism, harassment, and violence. (McDuie-Ra, 2012) The Communities of Sikkim are still apprehensive and show resistance to accept and adjust to the demands of integration and assimilation with mainstream India.

In a meeting on 23rd feb 2018 with the World Bank delegates to Sikkim, 14 empanelled Training partners shared the view that retention and sustenance in the placements is a challenge. Poor salaries and lack of adequate facilities by the recruiting companies, fear of unknown cultural differences performance pressures and moving out of comfort zone also causes many to return to their homeland.

It is poor exposure, lack of employability skills and counselling which resists them to come out of their comfort zones and accept such jobs. Trainers opined that it was lack of interest and motivation which were the main causative factors toward this attitude. NSDC Skill Study on Sikkim expressed that Migration opportunities exist for the excess supply of human resources. The Trainers and the Service providers believe that Migration Support Centres should be set up by the Government to provide guidelines and assistance for migration by way of employment avenues, accommodation facilities and directing Banks and other partner agencies to give ancillary services like loans, medical aids and

Industry related information. Career fairs and Annual meets should be organized including cultural festivities and Alumni and parents encouraged to participate to remove homesickness and isolation and feeling of loneliness. it is interpreted that the Administration should enhance capacity building for skilling the migrant workforce in Sikkim. The government expressed the need for Industries to enforce the Apprenticeship Act and utilize CSR funds to boost quality of trainings and placements. Industries need to redefine their recruitment norms according to NSQF levels and come forward to take up RPL initiative for their workforce. The Service partners were of the opinion that employment and practical training support by industry should be enhanced and they should play an active role as a stakeholder in the skill eco space.

Tourism is another unexplored Sector which has scope of providing ample job opportunities with appropriate skilling and planning. It has till date rendered Limited benefits to locals *as* most of the hotels, transport sector or travel operators are run by people from outside the state. Absence of stern regulation and standards in tourism sector is detrimental for Sikkim's tourism growth. The focus group discussion also stated that there is demand for unconventional yet high growth potential Tourism courses like Cultural tourism/village tourism/adventure tourism/home stay. It is imperative that the Govt. partners with Industry to identify and develop and design the curriculum for training in tourism and hospitality as per the needs of the State and get them certified by the National Agencies for Universal recognition and employment generation. IT and social media network needs to be strengthened to give a boost to the Tourism Industry. Tourism development and environmental management should be integrated to develop the tourism policies of Sikkim (Mandal & Sengupta, 2012).

Preference for Government jobs has also contributed to educated unemployment in Sikkim. Many educated people remain voluntary unemployed because of their particular job preference, high expectation and very high aspirations (Reimeingam, 2014). Educated unemployment problem has increased in recent years Puttaswamaiah (1977). The educated person believes that investment in education should yield higher returns in terms of salaries and therefore seeks or prefers organised and formal white collar jobs. They look for specific kind of employment and is capable of affording unemployment. This could be one of the factors that the VET programmes do not have remarkable effect on getting employment generation in Sikkim. (Kumar & Singh, 2017). New avenues of employment need to be created and Industries should be promoted to generate employment. The state needs to facilitate a knowledge based society with a special focus on Healthcare and Education.

NEDFI study shows that more than 50% parents opined that vocational streams are for school drop-outs and for lower academic performers. The students however contradicted the view by stating that right information and counselling service has not been provided and consequently most of them were unaware of the government schemes and placement opportunities. A pilot study conducted with the Government officials showed that lack of awareness & counselling, demo of success stories /case studies showing how such activities transformed lives and Lack of confidence direction & education have been a few causative factors for this belief.

The Training partners and the trainers expressed the belief that that respect and dignity need to be cultivated amongst the youth towards skill courses. Many of them faced the problem of trainees coming back post placement due to homesickness, long hours of work and alien environment. As a Department official I believe work ethics and confidence building exercises should be imparted to students and parents also counseled for the same. The possible interventions to overcome the aforesaid challenges were identified in the pilot study conducted with 50 government personnel associated with skilling programmes in Sikkim. A clear policy to curtail unrealistic expectations of youth to land a govt. Job should be evolved:

- Training should be charged to bring element of seriousness among youth;
- Motivational Camps & Counselling by Pvt.& Public Sector;
- Awareness & hand holding skill programs;

- Establishment of State Employability Exchange Board;
- Self-employment ventures with Centre assisted schemes;
- Selection of right attitude trainees through screening;
- More of skill training centres to be established with a special focus on Career counselling and mobilization and placement procedures and policies.

The data analysis reveals that:

- The challenges mentioned above needs to be tackled universally across all caste and class to make the skilling intervention effective and have broader outreach;
- The challenges are faced both by males and female equally. Even secondary literature review suggests that there are no gender disparities in the North East States and obstacles in training and employment are faced by both sexes;
- The perception of students irrespective of their educational levels was the same against the challenges faced by them. The NEFDI study that 78% of the students who were;
- The Interviewed candidate revealed that they had acquired some skills through informal channels, the most dominant being the informal route. It reflects that Sikkim as a State do not have many formal institutions to facilitate acquiring skills. The administrators in Focus group discussion held with the stakeholders in the eco system expressed the opinion that Skilling should reach the doorsteps for better outreach and training in traditional skills and up gradation of existing skills should be done. The Training providers expressed the view that counselling and mobilization in schools in remote areas should be done through Mass media involvement and involvement of village panchayat in skill awareness program. More success stories to be quoted. They also suggested that more avenues for skilling in various sectors like Organic farming and Tourism;
- Industry opines that focus should be on school drop outs.

The respondents from the 4 districts of North South West and East showed difference of opinion against the following variables:

1. Resistance to move out of Sikkim for work;
2. Stigmas against labor oriented jobs;
3. Lack of genuine interest and motivation among the youth.

Therefore, a District wide approach needs to be adopted planned and implemented to understand the specific problems of the area and suggest interventions.

CONCLUSION

From the result and discussions, we can conclude that The State government is making multiple efforts and taking initiatives to skill the unemployed youth of Sikkim with a view to give them wage employment and create self-employment. It executes trainings through various training partners and finances them under centrally and State sponsored schemes. The Livelihood schools, ITIs, Polytechnics, Directorate of Capacity Building and various other Departments of the State organize trainings and run programmes with a view to train the youth of Sikkim for employment. The recent analysis suggests that the lack of information on alternate employment avenues and counselling as expressed by students and teachers was found to be a major hurdle in skilling which needs to be addressed. However, Industry and Government believes that the youth of Sikkim were reluctant to come out of their comfort zone and undertake any risk for seeking employment opportunities outside the Government. Most of the parents and Industry feel that the youth are reluctant to avail migration

opportunities. However, the students expressed the openness to explore opportunities outside the state due to scarcity of local opportunities. However, they wish to return to their homeland after sufficient exposure and in case of opportunities in their homeland. Jain, Maitra & Mani (2019) conducted a research to investigate the impact of language (English: spoken and acquiring) on skill development. Paper focused on skill development in developing countries. Authors suggested that multidimensional policy solutions could be used to overcome barriers in skill development in such developing countries. Kaur and Dogra (2018) studied the working of skill development centers in three cities, Amritsar, Jalandhar and Ludhiana of Punjab, India. The challenges faced was studied by analyzing the annual report of Punjab skill development mission. It was suggested that by adding 'penalty clause' in admission prospectus certain problems could be solved. The role of advanced technology on high quality education was studied by Thakran & Sharma (2018). To address the challenges of higher education in India the role of open educational resources (OER) was studied in this research. The work of Mitra (2018) in West Bengal shows that instability in demand and supply causes problems in skills and employability. This work was conducted in West Bengal. The paper finds that West Bengal has a large supply of trained workforce in different categories but due to poor mapping of skill gaps this workforce cannot be channelized in industries. As per Mehrotra and Mehrotra, (2018), economic growth, development of primary and secondary education, demographic variations, urbanization and global competitiveness are the main contributors of skill demands. The study highlights that in order to perform complex tasks efficiently amalgamation of new technologies with higher-order competences and employability skills should be done. Contribution, challenges and problems of vocational education and training (VET) system in India was studied by Kumar & Jamal (2018). By comparing the vocational graduates with general secondary graduates the paper examines the outcomes of labour market concludes that level of unemployment is higher in VET holder against general secondary graduate.

The Service partners were of the opinion that employment and practical training support by industry should be enhanced and they should play an active role as a stakeholder in the skill eco space. The trainers and the trainees believed that it was lack of industrial training and opportunities which were the main deterrent in acquiring Industrial jobs. The Study also revealed low awareness of career planning and skill programmes among parents and guardians. Most of the parents also believe that skill courses are only suitable for drop outs and low academic performers. The study also points out the challenges are faced both by males and female equally. Even secondary literature review suggests that there are no gender disparities in the North East States and obstacles or opportunities in training and employment are similar as faced by both sexes. The perception of students irrespective of their educational levels was the same against the challenges faced by them. It also reflects that Sikkim as a State do not have many formal institutions to facilitate acquiring skills.

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