

Research Report

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NO MORE BOUNDARIES Baseline Livelihood Aspirations Study



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Abstract

India has the youngest people in the world who are being added in the working age population every year. It becomes imperative that they are absorbed by the job market.

Haryana is among the 5th wealthiest states in India, but yet has 2nd highest unemployment rate. The Government of Haryana has responded to this with massive Skill Development programmes targeted at endowing youth with relevant skill set to participate in the secondary and tertiary sector along with encouraging self-employment for youths. In this context, this study attempts to understand the aspirations of youth in Sonipat district, so to assess the linkage between the youth's vision for their own careers and the avenues available to them for livelihoods including various programmes by the state to facilitate the participation of youth within the workforce. The findings of this survey will be used by the No More Boundaries programme to inform its interventions.

This Livelihood Aspiration study by PRIA and Martha Farrell Foundation was conducted in 10 schools near villages of Sonipat, Haryana where 944 students participated. Mixed methodology consisting of both Quantitative and Qualitative research methods was used while conducting this study. It was found that a large percentage of youths want to participate in government jobs and defence related jobs especially Boys with a significant representation of girls. When it comes to professional employment avenues, most of the boys want to be Engineers, while girls want to be teachers. Upon asking them about the challenges that the youth face in their pursuit of employment, a large percentage of youths said that there is a lot of competition that comes their way, a significant percentage of youth are not aware about the career opportunities available to them and neither about the government programmes that could aid them. A significant percentage of youth are available about the skill development programme (Industrial Training Institutes) but do not want join it.

While majority of these youths are aspiring for conventional career options such as government jobs, where there may not be enough number of jobs available simultaneously they lack information about other employment avenues. In this context, it is up for consideration how the government programmes focusing on skill development and participation of youth in workforce then see their uptake with the youths whose aspirations are drastically different than the career avenues and skill development alternatives available to them.

1. Introduction

India has the youngest population in the world presently, a median population age of 27.5 years compared to China where the same is 35 years and around 47 years for Japan. It is estimated that India has around 390 million young people and about 12 million people are added to the working age population every year.¹ This phenomenon when more people enter the workforce in a country is known as the demographic dividend, where the economy benefits from the enormous workforce participation. Given the above, it becomes critical for the young people to imparted contemporarily relevant skills according to the changing nature of jobs so that these young people can be absorbed in the economy.

It also becomes essential to understand the aspirations of youth in the job market so to be able to contextualize the employment generation and skill development programmes accordingly. Industry experts suggest that 72% of the workforce² won't be work ready and this could lead to massive unemployment further increasing the crime rates within the country.¹

1.1 Context of Haryana

Haryana has a flourishing economy which ranks at the 6th place when it comes to the measure of the per capita income. The state has been witnessing a transition from primarily being agrarian to moving towards manufacturing and services sector. In 2011-12, the primary sector contributed to a little over one-fifth of the total GSDP, while contribution from the secondary sector had remained a little less than 30 percent of the total economy. Tertiary sector has shown the maximum growth amongst the segments with a contribution of 50.60 percent in 2011-12.³

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1. ¹¹ <https://www2.deloitte.com/in/en/pages/about-deloitte/articles/india-to-make-massive-gains-from-its-demographic-dividend-press-release.html>
 2. <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/demographic-dividend-will-help-in-indias-future-growth/article25142900.ece>
 3. [http://esaharyana.gov.in/Data/StateStatisticalAbstract/StatisticalAbstract\(2011-12\).pdf](http://esaharyana.gov.in/Data/StateStatisticalAbstract/StatisticalAbstract(2011-12).pdf)
 4. [http://esaharyana.gov.in/Data/StateStatisticalAbstract/StatisticalAbstract\(2011-12\).pdf](http://esaharyana.gov.in/Data/StateStatisticalAbstract/StatisticalAbstract(2011-12).pdf)

Despite decreasing relative contribution to the overall economy, the employment and occupational dependence of the state on agriculture is very high. There is found to be a massive divide between urban and rural areas when it comes to employment opportunities, while in urban areas the secondary and tertiary sector present avenues for work, districts in rural areas have significant number of workforce employed in agriculture.²⁴ This indicates a need to diversify the skill set of the current population involved in the primary sector, to ensure a sustained livelihood mechanism.

A recent study conducted by Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy suggested that unemployment rate in India has reached 7.4% in 2018, Haryana has reported second highest unemployment rate in 2018 at 15.5%.⁵ Jeffrey asserts that as education may not necessarily result in youth finding employment, which could result in youth's participation with religious and political outfits in the context of UP. (Jeffrey 2004) Similar phenomenon is observed in the context of Haryana where educated men are either taking up jobs that need minimum skilling or participate in religious organizations which could be responsible for creating unrest in the local socio-cultural context. Further, the increasing crime rate against women in Haryana has also been owed to its unemployed youth which takes up alcohol and does substance abuse and perpetrates violence against women, as is obvious with the increasing number of gang rapes in Haryana. It has been reported that some of these youth are educated and qualified to take up jobs but angry as either they have found very low paying or no jobs.⁶

Owing to increase in the crimes and violence against women in public spaces, even though the female Literacy rate in Haryana has risen, yet the female work participation ratio remains to be at 21% in the rural areas of Haryana.⁷ This could be attributed to women's limited access to public spaces to avail opportunities.

In order to combat the various challenges that unemployment posits in Haryana, the government of Haryana has brought in various programmes. There is a realization that even though there is constant creation of government jobs, it is not enough to absorb the entire labour force available. Therefore, the government of Haryana is focusing on skilling youth for the existing and emerging jobs in secondary and tertiary sector so that the youth

5. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/education/news/unemployment-rate-in-india-nearly-31-million-indians-are-jobless/articleshow/63182015.cms>

6. <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/patriarchy-popular-culture-unemployment-why-haryana-is-india-s-rape-capital/story-MGXBCioEeVZ9yNYEXmKsFJ.html>

7. http://rchiips.org/NFHS/pdf/NFHS4/HR_FactSheet.pdf

8. <http://www.hsdm.org.in/>

can find employment in different sectors apart from agriculture. Secondly, the government has also emphasized on facilitating Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment, starting localized industries that results in creation of localized employment avenues in the given area. The Government of Haryana has claimed to have enrolled 40,000 youth in its Skill Development Mission and trained around 25000 youths in the process.⁸ The India skills report suggests that Haryana has been ranked 3rd after long for youth employability.⁹ . And yet, the state currently stands at second position for unemployment rate in the country. One of the major reasons for this could be a gap between government programmes and youth's career aspirations as suggested by the Skills Gap study for the state of Haryana conducted by the NSDC. (NSDC 2013) Therefore, it becomes of utmost importance to understand youth's Livelihood aspirations.

1.2 Livelihood Aspiration Studies

The ILO's Global employment trends report (2017) shows that over half of the young people in developed countries – and about one-third in emerging and developing countries – view their future working life with fear or uncertainty. A considerable number of youths in the developing countries require job security and stability.

In the Indian context, according to world economic forum's study on youth aspiration about work in seven Indian states with an urban participant sample, it was found that more youth want to participate in public sector jobs as compared to private jobs. The reasons stated included job security and stability. Secondly, 38 % youth were interested in pursuing Entrepreneurship. Both girls and boys are interested in pursuing the government skill development programmes. (ORF, 2018)

On the contrary, the findings of **skill gap study (NSDC, 2013)** conducted in Sonipat, Haryana suggested that while the youths preferred government jobs primarily over other career alternatives but showed not many showed interest in entrepreneurship. The youth in this area and overall rural areas of Haryana are not aware of the skill development programmes in general and a significant percentage of those who are aware of these programmes do not wish to participate in them.

In the Youth aspirations study conducted by Karnataka Knowledge Commission, it is found that 70% youths in both rural and urban areas are anxious about finding employment. There is a high level of preference for government jobs both in urban and rural areas more in the latter than the

9. <https://www.aicte-india.org/sites/default/files/India%20Skill%20Report-2019.pdf>

former. In this study, the aspiration of government job is linked with the financial background of the youth, lower the financial condition, more is the aspiration for government job. (Karnataka Knowledge Commission, 2011)

Another study conducted in rural areas of Uttar Pradesh points out that as youth enrol themselves in the process of education, they directly link to the prospects of finding 'suitable' employment for themselves as educated folks should according to them. They reject the local avenues of livelihoods around them as agriculture. It is further stated in the study that a lot of them are unable to find these "suitable" jobs according to their expectations. (Jeffrey 2004)

It becomes of paramount importance to understand the aspirations of young people so to be able to facilitate the process of these young people participating into the work force.

1.3 Rationale and Objectives

Participatory Research in Asia and Martha Farrell Foundation has been working in Haryana on different issues such as Dalit women's political mobilization and participation in local governance processes and addressing female foeticide. During the interventions, it was realized that in the wake of low female sex ratio, existing khaps and violence perpetrated against women, their participation is limited in various kinds of opportunities including employment avenues. Also, young girls are socialized to take up career avenues apt for them such as teaching, beautician and tailoring prevailing in the society. Upon this realization the No More Boundaries programme was started with an overall objective of addressing Violence Against Women in public spaces and supporting young girl's participation in the workforce, helping them avail a diversified skill set and a career of their choice. The specific objectives of the programme in the field of livelihood are:

- Provide relevant career counselling, guidance and exposure to the youths enrolled in schools in Sonipat Haryana with special focus on girls.
- To increase the participation of girls in the skill development programmes as the Industrial Training Institute.
- To engage youth in localized Entrepreneurial activities according to their interest areas.

In order to facilitate this process through interventions it is important to understand what livelihood aspirations young people have with special focus on young girls. Therefore, the baseline survey is being conducted to explore overall perceptions of young people about employment avenues they want to avail and the factors influencing it. The youth survey forms an important

element in the pre-implementation phase to assess the overall community (youths), their demography, current social status, for effective implementation of the programme. Baseline Survey is an integral component as the success and effectiveness of the programme depends on this initial interaction with target group and the assessment of their interests in the intervention.

Hypothesis: Young people equipped with education want to avail different employment avenues for themselves as a strategy for upward mobility in the social strata present around them. They may experience various challenges in the process of availing their career aspirations.

Objectives of the Study:

- To understand Livelihood aspirations of the youth.
- To understand their awareness about the local livelihood opportunities available to them.
- To understand their perceptions about the barriers in pursuing these livelihood opportunities
- To understand their awareness and perceptions about government programmes on Employment creation and skill development.
- To understand their perceptions about Skill Development programmes (Industrial Training Institutes) – awareness and willingness to join.

1.4 Key Concepts and Operational Definitions

▪ Livelihood:

A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets /capitals (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stress and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base. (Chambers & Conway, 1991)

The Sustainable Livelihood Framework views livelihoods as systems and provides a way to understand:

1. The assets people draw upon
2. The strategies they develop to make a living
3. The context within which a livelihood is developed

4. Those factors that make a livelihood more or less vulnerable to shocks and stresses.

Livelihood assets: Assets may be tangible, such as food stores and cash savings, as well as trees, land, livestock, tools, and other resources. Assets may also be intangible such as claims one can make for food, work, and assistance as well as access to materials, information, education, health services and employment opportunities. Assets or Capital are of different types including human, social, financial, natural and physical.

In the given context of the baseline study, “Livelihoods” has been used in the terms of financial capital which means an income generating activity. This also includes other kinds of capital including human which looks at the kinds of skillsets a person needs in order to avail employment and physical, which looks at what can further add to a person’s existing physical capacity to work.

- **Occupational Aspiration:**

Oxford defines the word “Aspiration” as a strong desire to have or do something. This has been used in the similar terms in this study. Occupational aspirations are the thoughts, feelings, fantasies and goals that people have about their work, that affect their motivation and decision making with respect to their occupational choice and subsequent participation in their occupation. Rojewski (2005) defined occupational aspirations as “an individual’s expressed career related goals or choices”. This was also referred as expressions of occupational goals, leading several authors to regard them as important career motivational variables, proving to be predictive of later career attainment levels (Chung, Loeb, & Gonzo, 1996). Indeed, Looker and McNutt (1989) argued that adolescents’ occupational aspirations are a cause rather than an effect of educational and career attainment. Adolescent’s occupational aspirations and expectations have been viewed as significant determinants of both short-term educational and long-term career choices. The critical role for occupational aspirations in the career development of adolescents is reflected in their integral position in most career theories and in the large body of research conducted over the last half century (Rojewski, 2005).

In the baseline study, Livelihood or Career Aspiration refers to the choice of income generating avenue the youth would consider for themselves. This extends unto the dreams and visions the youth have with regards to their choice of occupations.

- **Occupation:**

The word “occupation” is defined as job or profession and hobby or regular activity one does by the oxford dictionary. For the purpose of this study, the

word occupation would mean an income generating activity and would be classified according to the categories as laid down by the National Skill Development Corporation.

- **NSDC categories nomenclature used for classifying occupations**

The categorical names of occupations used in Figure have been drawn from the National Skill Development Corporation categories of nomenclature. The resultant categories then are Government and Allied occupations, Professional and Associate professional occupations, Business and Services.

In the figures 3.2, the categories indicating the avenues youths want to avail after completing school and in figure 3.4, youth indicate categories or names of the local livelihood avenues available around them. These livelihood alternatives and other options were used in the questionnaire as these emerged from the insights and familiarity with the local Sonipat context as a result of PRIA's already existing interventions in the area.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Framework

This study adopted mixed methodology consisting of both Quantitative and Qualitative research techniques for data collection and analysis. This was done as the primary objective of the study was to make an enquiry about the youth's present aspirations for livelihood along with understanding various factors that shape these. While the survey consisted of objective questions within a structured questionnaire associated with specific themes, the participants were also asked to explain the reasons for the choices that they had made within the questionnaire. This was done so to be able to understand the socio-cultural factors influencing their choices.

The study has been done from an interpretivist stance, which has to do with understanding the social world through examination of perceptions of that world by its participants Bryman (2008). This will enable the researcher to understand and interpret the participant's point of view regarding their aspiration for career choices and factors that influence it.

The findings of the study have further been corroborated by secondary data at several places. This was done with the purpose of understanding the career aspirations of the youth within the broader context of Sonipat and Haryana's present economy and state programmes. This enabled the

researcher to give inferences and ways forward informing the interventions of the No More Boundaries Programme.

2.2 Sampling

The study was conducted in 10 schools based in 10 villages in Sonipat. The villages are namely, Murthal, Bhigan, Mahara, Rehmana, Rajlugarhi, Bhogipur, Rajpur, Shehzadpur, Kaami. These 10 villages are chosen for the No More Boundaries Programme as Participatory Research in Asia has already worked in these on the subject of addressing Violence against Women in Public spaces. There is familiarity with the socio-cultural dynamics in these villages along with the knowledge of basic village demographics which will help in contextualising the findings for each school based in the respective village for the purpose of conducting the baseline study. The existing rapport with the schools and community in the village alike contributed to the ease and accessibility of conducting the survey process with this group.

944 was the sample size of the survey including **450 girls and 494 of young boys**. Around 100 students were targeted to fill the questionnaire from each school with equal participation of boys and girls. This small sample would represent the aspirations of the youth studying in the respective school.

Young boys and girls from class 9th-12th participated in the survey. This group was chosen as the youth here at this age undergoes the process of major decision making regarding continuation of their education, choosing to opt for vocational skills etc. The No More Boundaries interventions are being held with the youth studying in this age group and therefore, it becomes essential to understand their perceptions.

The details of the number of participants per school is given below:

S.No.	Name of the school	Boys	Girls	Total	Total No. of youths in each school (8 th -12 th)
1.	Bhigan School	81	82	163	(NA)
2.	Murthal Boys	94	0	94	230
3.	Murthal Girls	0	96	96	430
4.	Kaami School	17	9	26	35

5.	Mahara School	80	84	164	150
6.	Rajlugarhi School	35	35	70	150
7.	Rajpur School	48	56	104	200
8.	Sitawali School	27	22	49	50
9.	Sandal Kala School	77	66	143	110
10.	Shahzadpur School	35	0	35	170
	Total	494	450	944	1525

Table 2.2

The survey involved designing of the questionnaire and an orientation on the survey to the regional representatives. The outreach executives and animators at the field level ensured that 944 sample data is collected from all 10 schools.

The quantitative data was analysed through assessing correlation amongst different variables such as age, gender and class of study for which data is collected. The Qualitative responses were further analysed and categorized according to major themes that emerged from the data and they corroborate, provide reasons for the quantitative findings within the report. The analysis includes Livelihood aspirations, challenges, awareness about government programmes characterised by division of sex (male, female) in terms of participation. This was done to facilitate a gender lens within the study.

The analysis of the data is represented in this report in different sections according to the major thematic insights that emerged. Each insight also consists of school level representation of data. Suggestions and Ways Forward have been presented on the basis of the findings

3. Key Findings

3.1 Livelihood Avenues youth want to avail

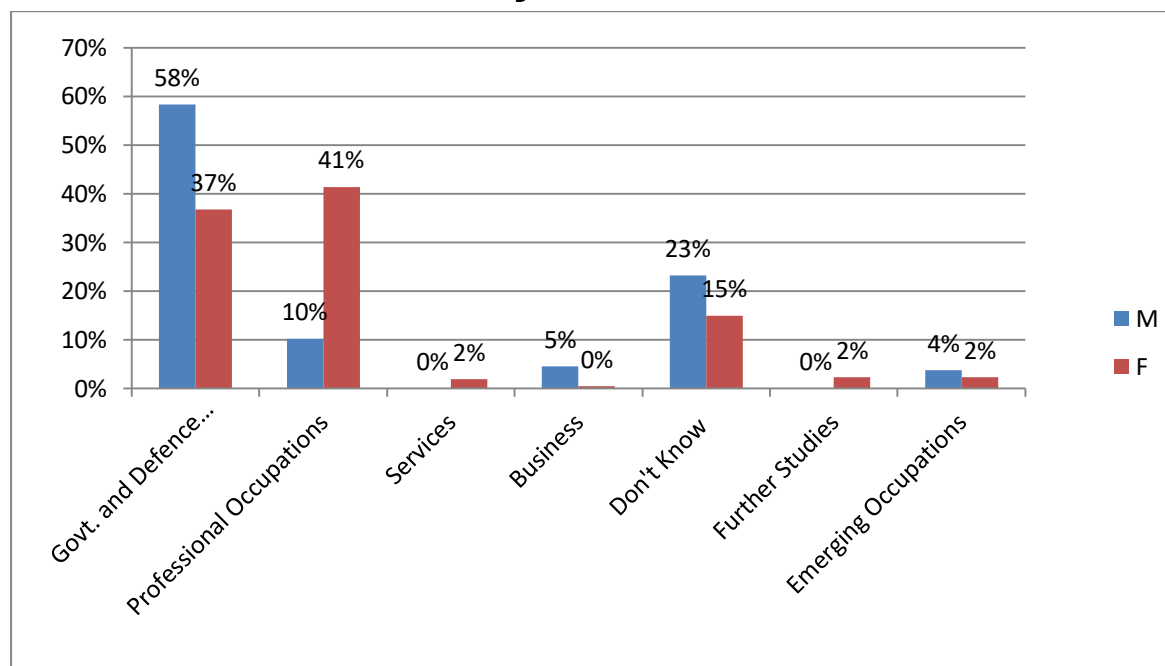


Figure 3.1 Livelihood Aspirations divided according to sex (Total Sample = N = 900)

a. Government and Defence Occupations

It can be inferred from the data that a significant percentage of girls (37%) and majority of boys (58%) want to take up government jobs. A skill gap mapping study by NSDC corroborates that majority of youths enrolled in schools in Sonipat prefer government jobs over private jobs. (NSDC, 2013)

Both boys and girls have associated government job with security and stability associated with employment. Further, it was stated that such jobs are preferred because the youth want to improve the financial condition of their family. They have stated that government jobs as a parameter of being successful in life. Some of the girls mention government mention that getting a government job is acceptable to the family and will enable them to access outside world. Some other young girls feel that having a government job is valuable in the process of getting married and finding a suitable groom for themselves. There are girls who have opted for administrative services, they want do it in order to become independent.

Similar findings were suggested by a study conducted by Karnataka Knowledge commission with 9000 participants in both rural and urban regions. It was found that a majority of the participants chose government

jobs over private jobs. They rejected the idea of following their passion stating prioritising income and job security.

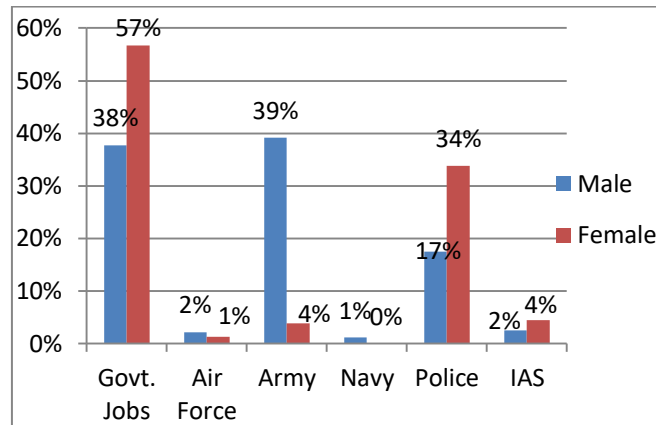


Figure 3.1.1 Aspirations for Government and Allied occupations divided according to sex (Total Sample = N = 407)

Out of youth who indicated their preference for government and defence jobs, **a majority of boys have chosen to participate in defence jobs.** Defence jobs have some more takers as compared to government jobs. This could be owed to the fact, that in absence of the availability of government jobs for everyone, defence jobs promise both financial and social capital to young boys in terms of resources and also the valour of serving the nation.

The youth have substantiated his aspiration as they desire to do something for the country. A considerable number of boys want to pursue this occupation out of interest; some have aspired for it for a very long time and also acquired relevant skill set to aid them towards this goal such as shooting.

A significant percentage of girls have also been interested in being a part of the **local police force** where they will be required to access the public space constantly. Interestingly, a previous study conducted by Martha Farrell Foundation suggests that a majority of youths do not feel that women travel for work or access public spaces frequently. This indicates that girls are also opening up to the aspirations for jobs that require being in public areas.

b. Professional Career Avenues

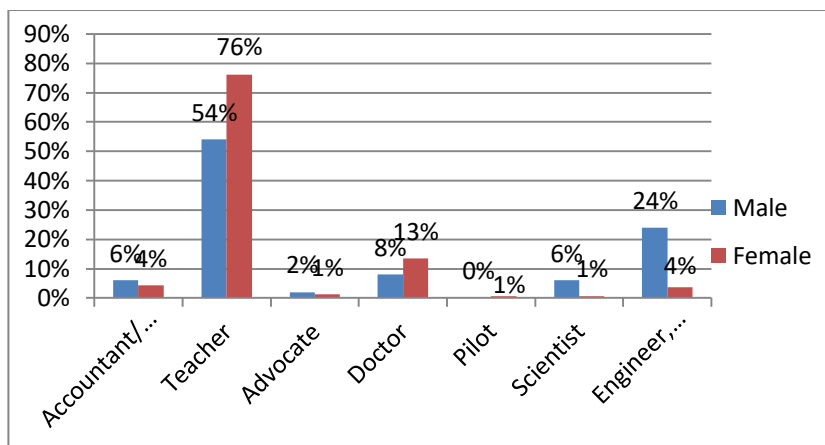


Figure 3.1.2 Professional Livelihood Aspirations divided according to sex

(Total Sample = N = 183)

Even though a majority of girls (41%) in figure want to participate in professional occupations, but it can be seen that both the girls and boys primarily want to be teachers and Engineers respectively.

Few girls have also expressed their willingness to take up professions such as doctors, accountants, advocates etc.

c. Emerging Occupations

As it is evident, less than 5% of boys and girls have shown their willingness to take up new and emerging professions. Boys have wanted to participate in professions like becoming bouncers, artists, chef whereas a significant number of boys and girls want to participate in sports, they have expressed that this is as their primary interest and some of them also feel that taking the sports career route in their particular region actually helps one in becoming successful in life.

d. Business and Services

Only 5% young boys out of the sample have expressed interest in pursuing business as a career alternative. The Skill Gap study (NSDC 2013) conducted in Sonipat, Haryana also suggests that the youth enrolled in school do not prefer entrepreneurship as career as they have an inclination towards jobs with stability and income which helps them in upward mobility.

However, when the youth were asked if they wanted to pursue business at any point in their lives, 54% of youth of youths in the overall sample have said yes and also mentioned the preferred industries where they want to do this business. Among the up takers of business, 52% are girls. Some of the

youths corroborated that they would want to start business at a later stage after savings. **Out of 944, 253 youths answered about the kind of business they would like to start.**

- **Girls for Social Enterprises benefitting society**

It is of interest that a significant number of **girls** who responded have expressed interest in pursuing “**Social Enterprises**” which benefit their communities, lead to alleviation of poverty and upliftment of women. Secondly, young girls have also been interested in pursuing businesses as Hospitals and owning schools which again points towards endeavours which will benefit the community around them. While relatively fewer girls have also expressed interest in taking up tailoring and beauticians as businesses, others have also mentioned electrical shops and computer centre.

We see that while the percentage of self-employed women in Haryana is more than that of men who go for salaried professions. Beauty parlour and Tailoring are usually seen to be self – employment¹⁰ avenues befitting women but here girls are going one step further wanting to start social businesses, it is noteworthy to consider if the programmes and schemes designed for the youth entrepreneurship caters to the aspirations of these young girls.

- **Boys aware of locally existing business opportunities and want to utilize those**

In Sonipat, industries such as food processing, services such as Hotels and Hospitality have picked up due to the district’s proximity with urban areas. (NSDC 2013)

It appears young boys are aware of these developments and want to make the most of these opportunities. Some have mentioned that they want to take up food processing businesses such rice production, dairy and milk production, secondly, they have expressed their willingness to open hospitality and , juice corner, property dealing.

A considerable number of them have expressed to open businesses of technical nature which includes Air conditioning, Electrical shops, computer centres.

While a majority of girls expressed interest in social business which would benefit the society, boys want to take up business opportunities that seem to be readily available around them be it the hospitality or food-dairy industry or technical businesses.

3.2. Avenues Youth avail immediately after completing school

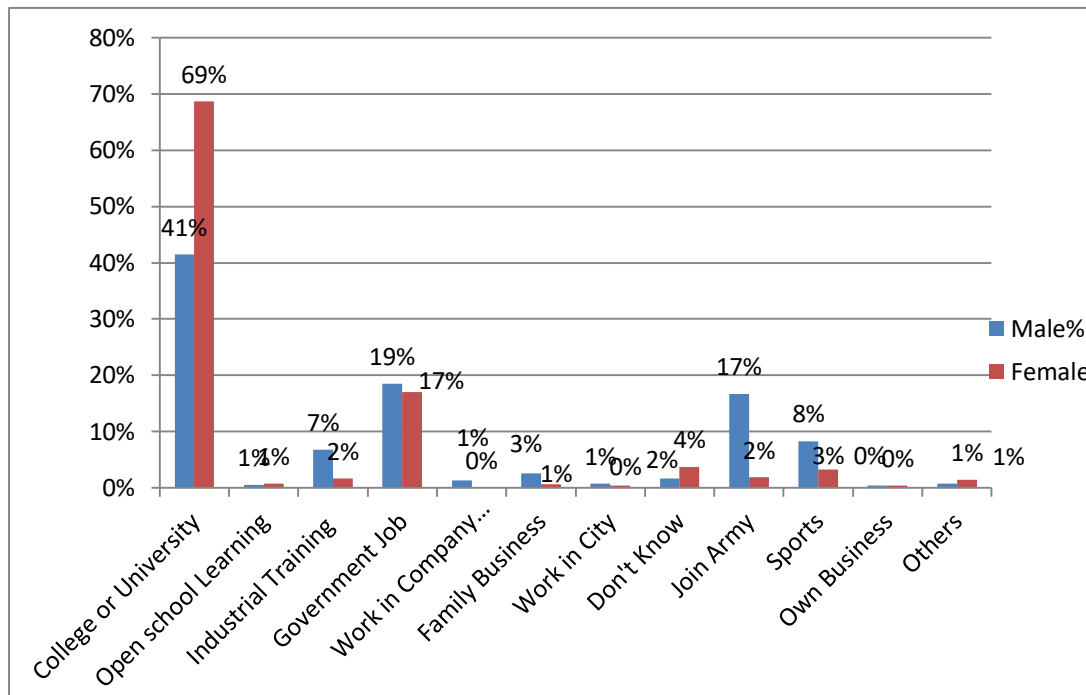


Figure 3.2 Career avenues youth avail immediately after school represented with male female division (Total Sample = N = 907)

In Sonipat, less number of youth make it to higher education as compared to the number of youth enrolled in secondary and primary education. (NSDC 2013) Rest of the youths drop out due to various reasons. Under this context, in this study the youth were asked about their aspiration after completing school.

Following findings emerged:

- **Girls value further education as it is seen as the path to good employment avenues**

A majority of youth both girls (69%) and (41%) of boys have confidently stated that they prefer to go to the university or college after completing school. A considerable percentage of girls wanted to participate in government jobs.

With the above insight, it appears that they want to take up this career alternative only after availing further education at university. Girls also provide reason for this as according to them acquiring further education will empower them to opt for their career of choice, as some indicate it even eases out the process of attaining government and professional jobs. Some have indicated that their families want them to study more. Girls have also

expressed that acquiring further education endows them with knowledge to make informed career decisions.

- **Boys inclined towards Work more than Education immediately after school**

A considerable percentage of boys have chosen to participate in the **army** and **sports** immediately after school which corroborates their aspiration mentioned in the above figure but the number of boys who actually participate in this occupation is considerably less than the number of boys aspiring for it.

Secondly, while majority of girls want to avail education post their school, **a majority of boys** have showed interest in different kinds of **activities such as income generation through availing government job** immediately after school. It is interesting that both girls and boys have expressed that they may not have enough finances in their family for education. But it is only boys who want to opt out of the education process and begin earning mentioning one of the reasons as providing financial support to the family.

This could mean more participation of girls as compared to boys at the stage of higher education due to prevalent gender norms. Boys are encouraged to work early on if their families require resources as compared to girls and therefore, chose it for themselves after school. Less percentage of boys are also seen to be involved in business activities, working in company, migrating from the city to find jobs at this stage.

In a similar context in rural UP where drop outs were increasing, when the reasons for the same were studied, it was found that the parents of the children from marginalized communities have lost faith in the process of education because even after completing education a lot of youth from their communities do not find employment. (Jeffrey 2004)

While the aspiration of young people is to enrol further in education, only limited number of youth get to do it as less number of youth gets to participate in higher education in Sonipat (NSDC 2013) schools as compared to the number of youths enrolled within primary and secondary education. Also, though a lot of boys may withdraw from the education process to pursue income generating activities. There is no guarantee that they will find employment with their school degrees as corroborated by study conducted in UP where in perception education is directly linked with employment but post graduates struggle to find jobs. (Jeffrey 2004)

Given the gaps between youth's aspirations and available avenues for livelihoods locally, it's important to assess these youth's perceptions about the challenges that they have.

3.3. Challenges experienced by the Youth in availing their career of choice

Perceptions about Challenges youth face while availing employment avenues

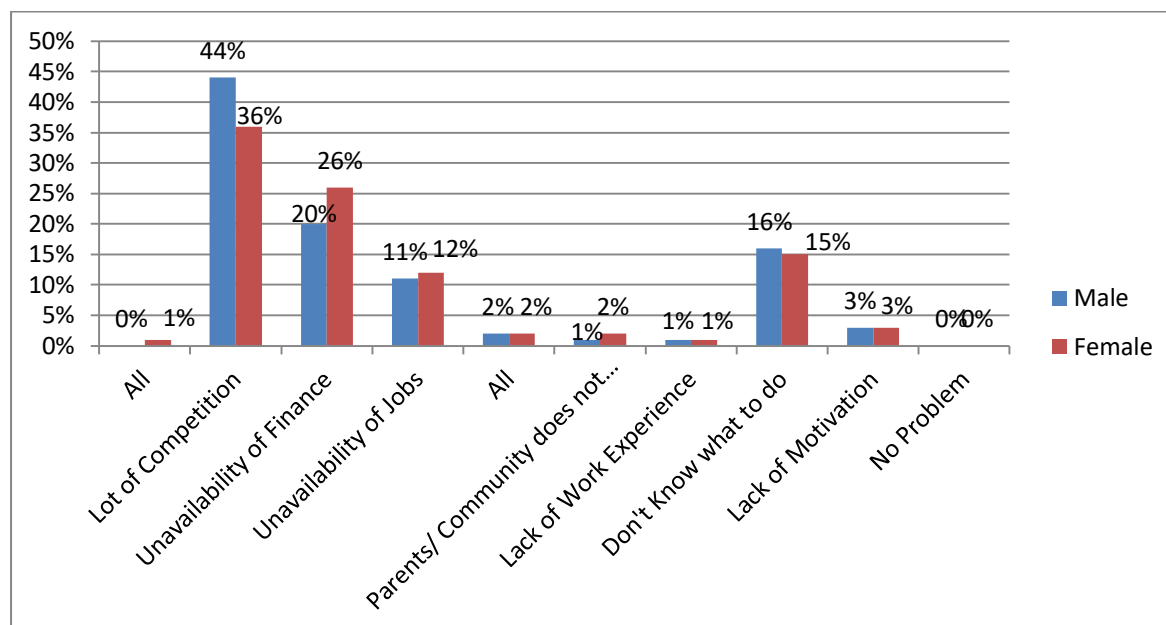


Figure 3.3 Challenges divided according to sex (Total Sample = N = 919)

Various kinds of challenges faced were shared by the youth. These challenges can be divided into two categories:

3.3.1 External Level Challenges

- **Lot of Competition**

Both young girls and boys have agreed that competition is one of the major obstacles that youth face while availing employment avenues. Based on the above data in figure 3.1, a substantial number of these youth perceive themselves to be aware about only a limited number of career avenues in which their preference are conventional careers such as govt. jobs. When a majority of the participants aspire to take up government jobs, they feel the competition as they are only aware of and chasing certain conventional careers around them.

More boys than girls have expressed competition to be a major challenge. This could be due to the fact that girls in rural Haryana have limited access to public areas even for accessing employment avenues and therefore, they are aware of the competition but not as much as the boys due to less participation of women in the work force.

Lastly, some of the participants stated that people bribe the concerned authorities to ascertain employment avenues. There was similar finding in the study conducted in UP where upper caste, upper class candidate's families pumped in money in

order for these youths to get government jobs. Youths from Dalit communities in this particular area were systematically relegated from white colour jobs. (Jeffrey 2004)

- **Unavailability of Jobs**

Both 11% Boys and 12% girls have agreed that there are not enough number of jobs if someone wants to avail it. Though this is a systemic problem as well, there could be multiple reasons for individuals who are not able to avail jobs.

These could be lack of required skill as Skill gap study conducted in Sonipat (NSDC 2013) points out, lack of awareness about the employment opportunities available around them including lack of accessible mediums on which these opportunities are advertised and available. For instance, a lot of the youth look gets career related guidance from the newspaper but a lot of the government jobs are advertised online of which the youth are in oblivion

3.3.2 Individual Level Challenges

- **Don't Know what to do and Lack of Motivation**

16% Boys and 15% girls stated that one of the stifling pointers for them is that they are not aware of the career opportunities available to them. This was also previously stated by them when they were asked about their career aspirations. This could be due to the marginalization rural students face when cannot avail required information from the eco-system surrounding them.

Some students stated that they have aspirations to achieve bigger goals in life but lacked motivation to do hard work or study in a focused manner and it limits their avenues in life and the perception that everyone holds about them.

- **Unavailability of Finance**

20% Boys and 26% Girls stated that lack of financial resources deters them from participating in the workforce. Not having financial resources can affect the prospects of acquiring required skill set for jobs and relevant education, to be able to access and avail opportunities.

More girls (26%) than boys (20%) have agreed on the above which shows that the problem may be worse in case of girls where parents do not want to invest the available financial resources in the education of girls as their participation in work opportunities accessing public spaces is discouraged in the society and parents may see no return upon investing in their daughter's education as she may have to be married till a certain age. Study conducted by Vikalp Sansthan (2016) on Child Marriage shows that parents choose to invest in the girl's marriage than her education..

It was also mentioned that pressing circumstances are the reason that they want to find employment as soon as possible. Some of them will also consider working right after school due to the financial necessities. Considerable percentage of the youth want to improve their own and their parent's life by availing employment and preferably a stable one. Study assessing the aspirations of youth in Karnataka found

that financial condition of the family is directly linked to aspiration for a government job. (Karnataka Knowledge Commission, 2011)

- **Parents do not want me to work**

More girls than boys have stated that their parents do not want them to work. This is due to the socio-cultural factors stated above where parents prefer that daughters are in doors and safe, get married rather than going out of the house to work.

3.4. Awareness of Youths about Local Livelihood Opportunities

Youths were asked about the Local livelihood opportunities available around them. This indicator would help in assessing the awareness of youths about these opportunities available to them.

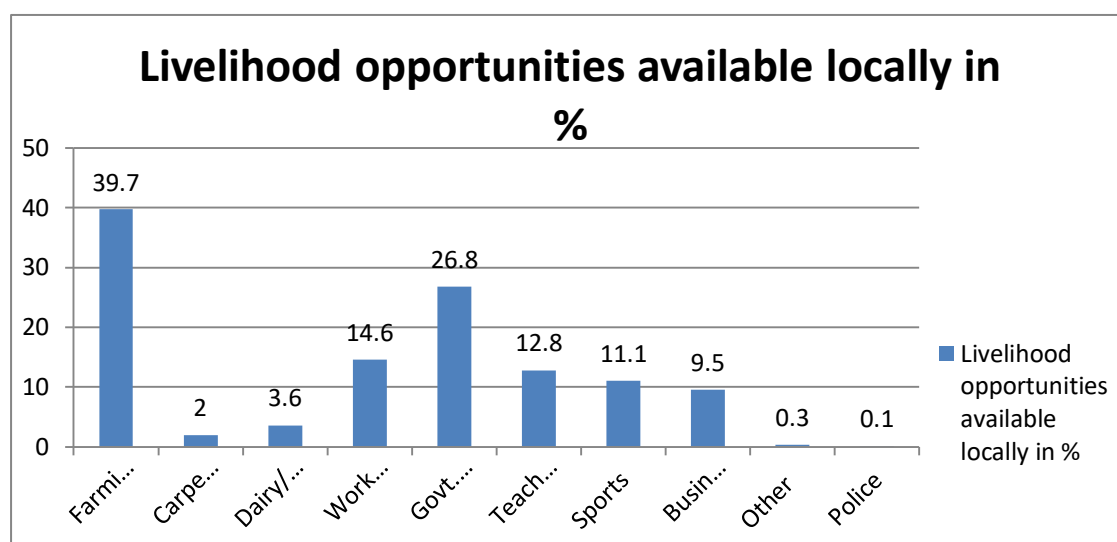


Figure 3.4 Perceptions of youth about Livelihood opportunities available to them locally (Total Sample = N = 909)

In Haryana, 44% of the population participates in agriculture (2004), a figure which has gone down as compared to 53.2% in 1991. 27% participate in secondary industry followed by 28% in the tertiary sector. In Sonipat, 70% of the population lives in rural areas. The main worker participation in the district of Sonipat is at rate of 29.98 percent is just above the state average number of 28.66 percent. There is a limited proliferation of industry and overdependence on the primary sector. (NSDC, 2013)

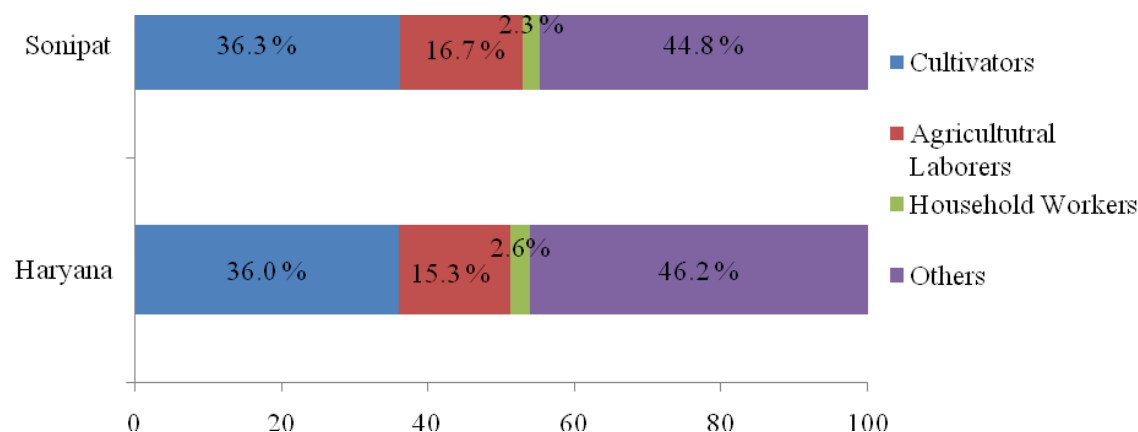


Figure 3.4.1 Participation of Workforce in various occupations in Sonipat (NSDC 2013)

- **Youth's aversion towards agriculture, a sector which predominates the economy**

In this context, conventional livelihood options such as farming, poultry dominate the economy according to the youth. Among the workforce, 52 % participate in agriculture. (NSDC 2013) This awareness also stems from the fact that a lot of youths parents are also involved in agricultural activities either as farmers or contractual labourers. Jeffrey (2004) in the context of UP mentions that as the youths from rural and marginalized areas acquire education, they tend to move away from agriculture as a livelihood option and more towards jobs they consider suitable where a lot of them are not able to find it. A similar transition can be seen here in the aspiration of youths as more of them seek government job.

- **Youth want to take up stable and secure govt. job but which are limited in availability**

26% have stated the presence of government jobs around them, but a majority of boys and a considerable percentage of girls want to participate in these. It is apparent here that there is a gap between the youth's aspirations of getting a government job majorly and the actual availability of these jobs around them. The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Haryana while addressing government polytechnic students at Manesar **said that every year for a demand of 2 lakh government jobs only twenty thousand jobs are made available to youth.**¹¹⁴

Therefore, due to fewer availability of jobs youths also mentioned that there could be a lot of competition in availing them and therefore, youth could experience difficulty in getting suitable jobs.

This was mentioned as one the major challenges experienced by youth in finding employment.

- **Less % of youth aware of industrial jobs around but a majority expressed no interest for work in the secondary or tertiary sector.**

11. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/gurgaon/cm-seeks-industry-help-to-create-more-jobs-for-youths/articleshow/64007405.cms>

29% of the youths have stated that jobs are available in companies and factories around their local areas. In the coming year by 2022, jobs will be created both in **secondary and tertiary sectors such as Manufacturing, Construction, Retail, Transportation, Health care, Communication and IT sector within Sonapat. Food processing is an already existing industry. (NSDC, 2013)** There is a wide gap between youth’s aspirations to participate in government jobs and the upcoming opportunities around them which may lead to limited participation of the youths in these areas.

3.5. Awareness about Government Schemes in Youths

Youths were asked if they were familiar with any government scheme related to Employment Creation/ Skill Development

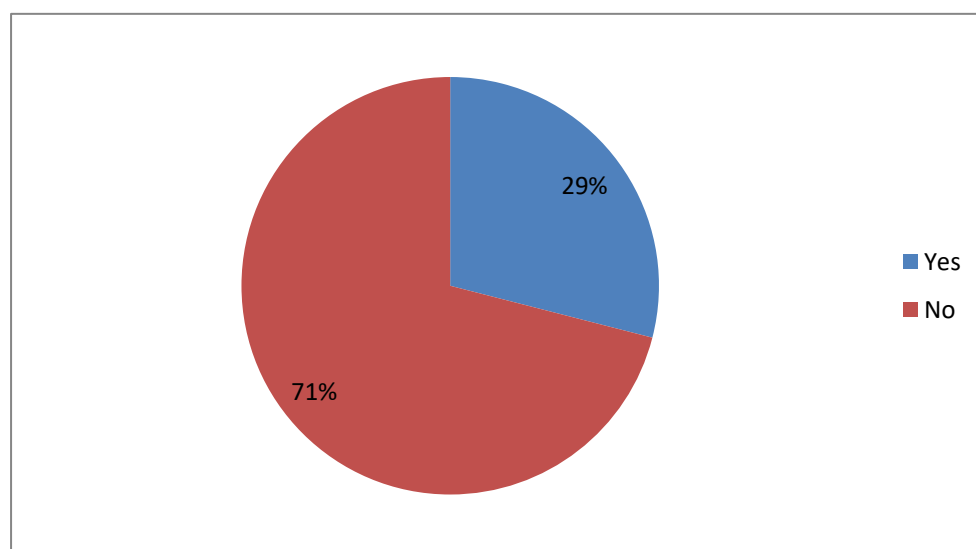


Figure 3.5 Percentage of youth divided according to their responses
(Total Sample= N = 894)

Entity	Yes	No
Male (464)	37%	63%
Female (410)	20%	80%

Table 3.5 Sex wise division of responses

Majority of the youths are not aware of any schemes related to employment or skill development, especially more girls than boys. 9 % of young boys and girls mentioned about different employment related schemes they are aware of. Some of them mentioned of National Skill Development Framework, Prime Minister Vikas Yojna, and Haryana Skill Mission etc. A considerable number mentioned of avenues

where they learn about jobs within the government system. This shows that the awareness regarding local skill development and employment schemes is present but it is relegated to only few.

Alleviation of unemployment has been one of the key priority areas of the Government of Haryana. This has been done by utilising multiple strategies:

1. Creation of employment opportunities within government departments.
2. Skill Development of youths to make improve their employability especially keeping in focus the secondary and tertiary sectors
3. Linking the skilled youths with relevant employers through Job Fairs.
4. Facilitation of creation of Self -Employment avenues for youths.

In order to fulfil the above objectives, the Government of Haryana has come up with multiple programmes, including the Haryana Skill Development mission in 2015, since, the programme claims to have enrolled around 40, 892 and trained around 24, 845 number of youths. Surya, Saksham Yuva, Prime Minister Kaushal Vikas Yojana and Daksha schemes are a part of these programmes.

While skilling, upgrading of skills takes place under the Surya scheme in association with the Industrial Training Institutes, Saksham Yuva scheme focuses on providing relevant on the job work experience to youth along with remuneration of Rs 7500 – 9000. Daksha pertains to the training of teachers involved in the process.¹²⁵

Central schemes such as MUDRA are being used for creation of self-employment opportunities. Swalamban is another scheme with the objective of facilitating women to access credit and becoming Self-Employed.

3.6. Perception towards Skill Development programme (Industrial Training Institutions)

While the government is emphasizing on Skill development as a strategy of employment creation, it is worth exploring if the youths are aware of such programmes and wish to participate in it. In Sonipat, there are 15 ITIs with a capacity of enrolling 4500 youths and including 1500 girls as 30% seats are reserved. (NSDC 2013)

The youths were asked if they were aware about **the Industrial Training Institutions** and wished to participate in them. While 57% girls and boys (63% boys and 50% girls) expressed that they are aware of the ITIs, they were further asked if they want to join the Industrial Training Institutes.

62% out of a sample of 872 stated that they are not interested in joining the Industrial Training Institutes. The sex wise division of the same is given below:

12. <http://www.hsdm.org.in/>

Entity	Yes	No
Male (458)	42%	58%
Female (414)	33%	67%

Table No. 3.6

It was discovered that the Industrial Training Institutes did not meet the aspirations of young girls in schools. These girls stated that they want to study further as it will help them in acquiring a good job not a diploma in ITIs.

Boys stated that the environment in ITIs is not good as there is a lot of violence there and boys engage in bad behaviours and loitering. A person who is serious for their career would not go to ITI according to them.

4. Key Inferences:

4.1 Occupational Aspirations

- Youth prefer government jobs due to reasons of safety and stability over other alternatives. Boys prefer defence jobs, while girls are more inclined towards Police and public service jobs along with the government.
- Among Professional occupations, primarily girls want to be teachers and boys want to be teachers. A few number of girls have shown inclination towards professions such as Doctor, Accountant and Advocates.
- Among the Emerging Professions, Sports was found to be popular among Boys and Girls.

4.2 Less inclination towards taking up business activity in short term

Very few have indicated their preference towards taking up businesses while mentioning their occupation of preference in figure 3.1. However, a significant % of youth both girls and boys have agreed that they would take up business at some point in their lives. This could be attributed to an aspiration towards stability and security in their lives and unawareness about the entrepreneurial processes, experience in their local surroundings. The Government of India on the other hand wants to boost self -employment and entrepreneurship within the region where as there is a big gap between youth's immediate livelihood aspirations and the programmes. This would lead to very less uptake of such government schemes encouraging self-employment.

4.3 Challenges

- Most of the youths feel that there is a **lot of competition** in pursuing their occupation of choice and not enough number of jobs are available.
- A significant number of them also admitted that **they are not aware** of the number of career opportunities that exist for them and most of them want to do government jobs in a scenario where even government is struggling to lay out enough number of jobs to absorb the workforce. On referring to secondary literature, it was found that there are upcoming industries and resultant work opportunities in the region where jobs will be available in the sector of industries such as Construction, Health care, Hospitality, Travel and Logistics according to the NSDC report. (NSDC 2013)

4.4 Awareness of Government schemes

The government of Haryana is promoting skill development with pan state skilling programmes such as Haryana Skill Mission. The objective is to prepare the youth to participate further in the upcoming secondary and tertiary sector jobs. The Government is also emphasizing on the uptake of self-employment among youth by providing them initial capital with the help of Mudra.

It is significant that majority of the youth are not aware of these government schemes that are available for them, more girls than boys. This could directly inhibit their participation in the work force as they wouldn't have acquired the skills according to current industry demands in Sonipat.

4.5 Perception towards Skill Development programme (Industrial Training Programme)

57% youth are aware of the programme but 62% youth do not wish to participate in these including more girls than boys not interested in participating in the ITIs. It is evident that there is clearly a gap between the implementation of skill development programmes such as the ITI and its awareness and perception among youths. This will eventually lead to very less uptake of the programme among youths than originally envisaged further limiting their participation in newer industries.

5. Ways Forward:

The Role of Civil society and other enablers in the existing milieu

The civil society organizations should focus on supporting and strengthening government schemes and programmes by creating linkage between these and the youths and engaging relevant stakeholders such as village community, youths parents and existing employers within the job market. This would bolster the participation of youths in the existing and upcoming secondary and tertiary sectors in Sonipat.

Following are the ways forward towards enhancing the participation of youth in workforce and the existing present economy:

5.1 Career counselling with the objective of enhancing the participation of youth in existing and upcoming industries.

- Information on existing and upcoming employment avenues under emerging industries within local Sonipat context and the required process/skill set to participate in these. **This information can be found in the 'Haryana Skill Gap Assessment' report by the NSDC.**
- Knowledge of different career opportunities will also help to tackle challenges such as **Lot of Competition, Unavailability of Jobs** which may happen when a lot of students aspire for the same conventional jobs such as with the government.
- Collaboration/Engagement with govt. programme, career counselling service providers in the area.

5.2. Building and strengthening the skill set of the Youth by dissemination of information about skill development programmes of the Government of Haryana including the Industrial Training Institutes.

- More information should be spread in schools where girls do not know about the ITIs with respect to the No More Boundaries programme focusing on their participation in technical fields along with upcoming fields such as **Hospitality, Travel and Logistics, Health care and IT sectors** for whom respective courses/trade are available within the programme.
- Exposure visits to the ITIs to develop awareness and also to address the myths about these institutions that some of the students have.
- Direct engagement of the students with the ITI teachers where all of their queries can be cleared.

- Providing handholding and support to interested candidates during the process of taking admission in the ITIs.
- The existing and emerging industry employers existing within Sonipat should be invited for the Livelihood mela.

5.3. Guidance/ Exposure related to setting up own business.

In the wake of youth's aspirations not inclined towards business in the short term but a significant percentage still wanting to pursue in the longer run, the civil society should therefore take measures to build the capacity of youths to take up entrepreneurship, spread awareness about government programmes and support available to youth interested in pursuing their own business.

- Career counselling in schools regarding setting up business activity including aspects such as financial literacy, costing, saving and other crucial steps of setting up local ventures. Schools where students are very interested in setting up businesses could be targeted.
- Making a Localized business plan should become a part of the community youth engagement programme where youths could do projects on the same. Students can be targeted and chosen from schools that have expressed interest in this.
- In the Livelihood Mela, information could be disseminated on various schemes the government is running for promoting Entrepreneurship/ Self Employment act by relevant service providers.

5.4. Information about Govt. schemes supporting meritorious students financially and employment related programmes to be given to youth in the Livelihood mela/classrooms as a substantial number of students stated the challenge to be insufficient financial resources.

5.5. Engagement/Counselling of parents with girls who are facing resistance at home to pursue further work opportunities or whose parents do not want to invest in their careers. This should be a mandatory part of the hand holding process when it comes to girls who want to take admission in the ITIs.

6. Conclusion:

Haryana is one of the wealthiest states in the country with massive inequality between its urban and rural regions. Even though the representation of agriculture in GSDP of Haryana has gone down in two decades, yet, a majority of population continues to be employed in the primary sector in agriculture and allied activities, while the major contributor to Haryana's economy is services. Haryana has second highest rate of unemployment in India according to a recent study conducted in 2018 and the government is introducing various programmes to combat the issue at hand.

With limited availability of employment opportunities within rural areas, its for the youth from rural areas to find jobs. The condition is even worse when it comes to women as it is not preferred for them to access public spaces so to avail education and employment opportunities. Within this landscape, the No More Boundaries with its Livelihood Aspiration survey attempts to understand the career related aspirations and visions of youths living in villages near Sonipat. This would help inform suitable and effective interventions with this target group facilitating their access to Livelihood opportunities of choice.

Young boys and girls want to pursue Government jobs citing stable income and job security to be the reasons. Similar trends have been reported in pan India studies and in different regions such as Karnataka. A significant percentage of boys have expressed their interest to participate in Defence related jobs while few girls are also opening up more to embrace professional jobs such as Accountant, Advocate, and Doctor etc. The major challenges experienced by youth according to them were lot of competition in the job market along with Lack of awareness on what career paths they may be pursuing. While unavailability of Finances was a major deterrent in the process of availing gainful employment, more girls than boys experienced this challenge. A considerable number of girls also reported that their parents do not want them to work. This could be due to restrictions on women's limited mobility and presence in public spaces. Although 50 % girls are aware of the Industrial Training Institutions but a majority of both girls and boys do not want to join the ITIs. While for some the reason is that they want to pursue further education, or different profession upon completing studies, for a lot of the students it's the overall perceptions about the environment at the ITIs because of which they would not take admissions there. Lastly, very few of the youths are aware of any government schemes on employment.

It is evident that a majority of youth want to take up government jobs or conventional professions such as teachers and engineers for boys and girls respectively. While these aspirations mostly informed by their respective

milieu, the challenge at the hand of the government is to facilitate the participation and eventual absorption of these youth within the economy. The government has therefore, introduced vocational and skill development programmes in order to enable young people to develop skill set relevant to the demands in the local job market given the emergence of secondary and tertiary sector. Yet, as evident by the findings there remains a gap between youth's aspirations and the programmes catered by government. It is therefore, a question on the very effectiveness and uptake of these programmes.

The findings in these study could be used by policy makers to inform and contextualize the schemes according to aspirations of the youth and explore ways in which these provisions and programmes for youth can become more accessible to them, as is evident, very few young people are aware of government laid out schemes and programmes.

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