

ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Social Science

CHARACTERISTICS AND DETERMINANTS OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN SMALL ISLAND ECONOMY: LAKSHADWEEP

KEY WORDS:

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the determinants of unemployment in Lakshadweep through educational and job searching characteristics of unemployed in the island. The study finds that educated youth are the main victims of the unemployment in island. Initially the urge of employment mostly covered through providing jobs in government sector, but today this avenue is not possible for them because of high administrative cost but still, youth job searching surrounded with the government job which is more competitive now. Job mobility is very limited in island, highly bounded social relationship and low salary and job security in outside of the island are major concern for them while searching job outside of the island.

1. INTRODUCTION

The developmental paradigm, challenges and constraints of small island economies are quite unique. Exceptional economic disadvantages faced by most small islands are because of their permanent impediments like its small size, lack of arable land, scarce natural resources other than fisheries, high transport cost, limited internal market etc. Rather than these discarded problems they are facing high unemployment due to lack of employment opportunities. Lakshadweep, an archipelago of 36 small and tiny islands, located 200 to 400 km away from the mainland in southwestern India, is the smallest union territory (UT) of the country with just 32 sq. km in area and a population of 64473 in (Census, 2011). It is spread largely over 10 inhabited islands (11, including Bangaram), 16 uninhabited islands, three reefs and five submerged sand banks. The social character of the population in Lakshadweep represents a unique mix of the Hindu tradition of the Kerala coast with an Islamic superstructure. Its Hindu tradition is reflected in the class cum caste division. Seen in the global context as a small island economy Lakshadweep offers an interesting case study. Apart from the persisting issues due to geographical isolation, meager resources, ecologically flimsily area, Lakshadweep now, faces high rate of unemployment.

In the current scenario, importance of unemployment and Decent Work getting more established through new agenda with Sustainable Development Goal, SDG 8: "Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable growth full and productive employment and decent work for all" (U.N. Report, 2012). According to the ILO's estimation, global unemployment was 5.6 per cent in 2017 (ILO, 2018). Among the states and union territories Lakshadweep is one among the highest unemployed state with 16.1 per cent as against national scenario of 5 per cent according to Employment Unemployment Survey 2015-16 (Labour Bureau, 2016). It has been observed at the all India level 5.1 per cent of the households did not have even a single earner. Lakshadweep has the highest percentage of (13.8 per cent) households with no earner followed by Kerala (13.2 per cent) and Chandigarh (12.4 per cent). Due this high unemployment, economy is not getting benefitted from the high literate human capital. It is badly affecting the overall performance of the economy.

2. REVIEW OF THEORETICAL BASE

Unemployment is a multidimensional notion that involves economic, social, political aspect. Economic literature provides many explanations for the unemployment problem. Some causes blame the economic systems, and others blame the unemployed workers. Still, other theories shift the problem to external sources and shocks, or unpredictable events, and others argue that technology and labour market institutions are the causes of the unemployment problem. Classical and Keynesian theories of employment and unemployment start from a common framework. There is a single composite good, output, produced under conditions of diminishing returns to each scarce factor of production and constant returns to scale (Brunner & Meltzer, 1978).

The classical theory, as analyzed by Pigou and Solow argues that

the labour market consists of demand and supply of labour. Demand for labour is a derived demand, obtained from the declining portion of the marginal product of labour. The supply of labour is derived from worker's choice whether to spend part of time working or not working (leisure). Wage rate flexibility makes labour market clear in classical theory (Mouhammed, 2011). But the wage rate flexibility is not trouble-free one, on the side of labours trade unions. When a union raises the wage above the equilibrium level, it increases the amount of work provided and reduces the required amount of work, leading to result in unemployment. So when unions achieve to raise wages for some workers that are syndicated, then a certain number of workers remain unemployed while the rest are employed at higher wages, this causes the number of unemployed in the economy to grow and for thereby to increase the supply of labour in industries not syndicated and to reduce the level of wages (Hadroj, 2016).

The Marxist School challenged the foundations of the Classical theory. They rejected the abstract individualism of liberalism, and instead understood human behaviour in its societal context; where by people's actions are shaped by their place in the economic system. Marx predicted that capitalism would produce growing misery for workers as competition for profit led capitalists to adopt labour-saving machinery, creating a 'reserve army of the unemployed' who would eventually rise up and seize the means of production (Celik, 2006).

Keynes draw to close wage rigidity in his explanations and assumed a closed society where the producers can be difficult for them to sell the products, but they always make a profit on all units they sell. Under such conditions it seems reasonable to expect that the demand for labour is determined by how much labour is needed to produce that quantity of products which is demanded. We can then get unemployment of a type usually called Keynesian. Here is a strongly simplified version of a theory dealing with such unemployment. Quantity produced is a monotonously increasing function of the employment (Holte, 1988). Keynes considers unemployment as an involuntary phenomenon.

All these theory explains with in the macro frame work, at the same in the demand and supply of labour power in a small isolated geographical area with limited internal market may not work with the predefined variables in economics. Job seekers in the labour market different in their tastes and skills mostly directed by their social context of living. Studies harmonizing that unemployment lead to the loss of subjective, mental, economic wellbeing but we cannot generalize it in all situations because the economic social and cultural factors impinged in economies are different. Due to severe unemployment, the young and educated labour force is forced to move other parts of the country and abroad for employment. In island economies job mobility is crucial one because the intrinsically unsolved factors of island putting limitation to create more employment opportunities of growing educated population. This is similar in the case of Lakshadweep but out-ward migration is very limited (confined mainly to very few people with professional qualifications), and in the process they

tend to become more inward looking (Jeromi, 2002). Preferring jobs is highly interlinked with his relation with the family and society. Local preference may lead job seekers to refuse a job offer from too far away from his family or friend's mean time when the level of well-being among the unemployed is sufficiently high may discourage them to actively and effectively seeking work. In Lakshadweep there is no food security, malnutrition, no acute poverty; there is also low crime rate and high social harmony (Lakshadweep developmental report, 2007). In this conjunction the nature of unemployment, job seeking pattern of unemployed were focused in this paper.

3. RESEARCH PROBLEM

With fear that India experiencing jobless growth and skepticism abounding that the country may not be able to cash on its demographic bonus, the world largest working age population. The issue of unemployment is seriously attacking geographically small isolated Lakshadweep despite its very small population. In earlier years of development the urge of job seekers was well pleased by government jobs but this avenue is not possible any more since the level of establishment expenditure in the island administration and the ratio of public servants to the population is pretty high. There are also limited opportunities for creating skill based employment due to lack of private sector activities, further Lakshadweep is a non-industrialized area. Aspiring youths coming out of the Universities are faced with an uncertain future due to the scarcity of job opportunities. How to bring down the unemployment and how to tap the youth for the development of island economy is a big rampage among policy makers and Lakshadweep administration.

4. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The empirical analysis of the study based on primary data collected from 128 unemployed in the two islands of Lakshadweep by interview method with a structured schedule. Multi - Stage Random Sampling technique were used to get the sample for the study. Descriptive methodology by using percentage analysis was carried out in this study.

5. DISTRIBUTION OF WORKERS: AN OVERVIEW

How the working population disseminate across different sectors in island is very crucial. Basically Lakshadweep is a non-industrial area with a lot of constraints including geographical and economic difficulties. So working in large scale industries is non-doable to them. Then the next fling for them is the endowed natural resource that is fishing, it is the main livelihood of the inhabitants of island at the same time it is not a preferred avenue for educated as their employment. Active fisherman is high at Agatti and low in Bitra, Bitra has small amount of population, 271 persons as per 2011 census.

Table 1
Fishermen in Lakshadween (2013 - 2014)

Island	No.of Active Fisherman(Full time)	Partime/ Occasional Fishermen & Fishermen associated in allied activities
Kavaratti	715	1225
Agatti	1600	1236
Amini	265	696
Kadmat	296	633
Kiltan	356	652
Chetlat	215	319
Bitra	96	104
Andrott	615	1296
Kalpeni	478	1018
Minicoy	1205	1289
Total	5841	8468

Source: Lakshadweep Key Indicator 2015

Census classifies workers in to two categories i.e. main and marginal workers. The main workers are those who worked for more than six months in a year and the marginal workers are those who worked for less than six months. The analysis of census data mentioned in Lakshadweep Key Indicators shows that percentage of marginal workers doubled from 2001 to 2011. The percentage of main workers decelerated from 19.3 per cent in 2001 to 16.76 per cent in 2011.

The gender-wise analysis of main and marginal workers has shown that percentage of male worker in total workers increased but their contribution in main work fall from 2001 to 2011. In case of female the pattern is little different, it shows an increasing trend. In case of marginal workers both male and female workers are increasing. The increase in marginal workers is the important rationale behind the improvement of total workers in island from 2001 to2011 (Table 2). Another generalization we can infer from the below table is that the majority of main workers are from Government employees, so the falling number of main workers may be because of falling government jobs in island.

Table 2
Percentage of Workers to Total Population

2001 Census	Percentage 2011 Census		Percentage
Total Workers (Main workers+ Marginal Workers)	25.32	Total Workers (Main workers+ Marginal Workers)	29.09
Male	42.41	Male	46.25
Female	7.28	Female	10.96
Main Workers	19.31	Main Workers	16.76
Male	33.05	Male	27.59
Female	4.82	Female	5.32
Marginal Workers	6.01	Marginal Workers	12.33
Male	9.37	Male	18.6
Female	2.47	Female	5.64

Source: Lakshadweep Key Indicator 2015

FINDINGS FROM THE PRIMARY SURVEY 6. DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC FEATURES OF UNEMPLOYED

In this section, the background characteristics of selected unemployed were analyzed. Gender has significant role in unemployment studies. Unemployment studies highlight the issue of female unemployment is higher than that of male. Table (3) shows that out of 128 selected sample size, 47 per cent of respondents are from Amini and 53 per cent from Kavarathi. 69 respondents which is around 54 per cent are female and 59 respondents (46 per cent) are male.

Table 3
Area and Gender Classification of Unemployed

Area of the	Gender	Total	
Study	Female	Male	
Amini	28 (40.6)	32 (54.2)	60 (46.9)
Kavarathi	41 (59.4)	27 (45.8)	68 (53.1)
Total	69 (100)	59 (100)	128 (100)

Source: Field Survey

Note: Figures in parentheses refer to percentages

Age is an important demographic factor in the unemployment problem. Proportion of youth population in the labour market is very crucial for the growth of any country in the world. Cross tabulation of age group with gender is given below. Such statistics helps us to understand some general trends.

Table 4 Age and Gender wise Distribution of Unemployed

Gender	Gender Age Group						
	18 and	19-23	24-28	29-33	34-38	39 and	
	below					above	
Female	1	18	30	14	5	1	69
	(0.80)	(14.10)	(23.40)	(10.90)	(3.90)	(0.80)	(54)
Male	0	13	33	9	2	2	59
	(0.00)	(10.20)	(25.80)	(7.0)	(1.60)	(1.60)	(46)
Total	1	31	63	23	7	3	128
	(0.80)	(24.20)	(49.20)	(18.00)	(5.50)	(2.30)	(100)

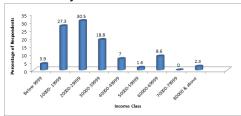
Source: Field Survey

Note: Figures in parentheses refer to percentages

The above table indicates the fact that, out of 128 respondents nearly half of the respondents 49 per cent belong to the age group of 24 to 28 is found to be unemployed, whereas 24, 18, 5 per cent of respondents belong to the 19-23, 29-33, 34-38 age groups respectively. The respondents 18 years and below are only a minute percentage and the respondents above 39 years old is also negligible one. The percentage of respondents declining as age increases. It is very important to consider that from the total, 73 per cent of respondents lies between 19-28 age group and in this case women belonging to this age group nearly, 37 per cent of male. So it indicates that unemployment in Lakshadweep is basically the problem of youth. Further it may be assumed from the table that as far as the respondent's age of 29 and above reported as unemployed among male are 10 per cent but in case of female it is 16 per cent (Table 4).

Low income and high incidence of unemployment is widely accepted in the case of developing economies. Based on the survey data, 30 per cent of the unemployed belongs to the household having monthly income between 20,000-29,999. Another 27 per cent unemployed belong to household having a monthly income between 10000-19999. Higher proportion of unemployed in low income household is not holding as per our findings from island, it may be the influence of government employees with high central government salary in the study area. From the below table, it is evident that about half of the unemployed belong to households having monthly income between 20000- 39999. On the other hand, 11 per cent of the unemployed belong to the income above 60,000. Average monthly income of the respondents is around 32 thousand, which is high enough to lead a standard life in island, because comparatively low expenditure in island.

Figure 1 Household Monthly Income



Source: Field Survey

7. EDUCATIONAL STATUS AND JOB SEARCHING PATTERN OF UNEMPLOYED

In this section respondents informations related with unemployment are discussed. Educational qualification, source of job informations, preferences towards sector of job, unemployment duration, difficulties related with job search, willingness to work ouside were analysed.

Unemployment is highest among people with highest level of educational qualification, this is the present trend in unemployment. The educated are those persons who have attained an educational level of secondary and above including those completed diploma/ certificate courses (NSSO Report, 2011-12). It is estimated that the unemployment rate is highest among persons having higher secondary education is 42 per cent (Table 5). The next category with the highest incidence of unemployment consists among degree holders that are 37 per cent. Half of the respondents having an educational level of graduation and above are reported as unemployed. From the definition of NSSO we can conclude that 96 per cent of respondents are educated.

This shows that the major share of unemployed in Lakshadweep are from the educated category. Thus, unemployment in Lakshadweep is basically a problem of educated youth. To know about the educational and skill level of the educated unemployed, collected information about the vocational and technical courses attended by them table (6).

Table 5
Educational Status Of Unemployed

Educational Qualification	Female	Male	Total
Below SSLC	0 (0)	1 (1.7)	1 (1)
SSLC	2 (2.9)	2 (3.4)	4 (3)
Higher Secondary	26 (37.7)	28 (47.5)	54 (42)
Degree	28 (40.6)	19 (32.2)	47 (37)
Post-Graduation	12 (17.4)	5 (8.5)	17 (13)
Hotel Management	1 (1.4)	4 (6.7)	5 (4)
Total	69 (54)	59 (100)	128 (100)

Source: Field Survey

Note: Figures in parentheses refer to percentages.

It can be seen from the table (6), 77 per cent of the unemployed having secondary education had undergone either vocational or technical training courses and 23 per cent were not gained any certified vocational technical training. Among which 23 per cent completed teacher training courses and 38 per cent among the total respondents completed DCA (Diploma in Computer Application). So in total 16 per cent had undergone with technical training and 94 per cent completed formal vocational training. The vocational training that took place in educational and training institutions which followed a structured training program and led to certificates, diplomas or degrees, recognized by State/Central Government, Public Sector and other reputed concerns was considered as formal vocational training (NSSO, 2011-2012).

Table 6
Vocational and Technical Education.

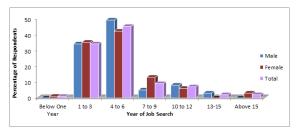
Category	Number of Respondents
ITI/Diploma	14 (14)
TTC	13 (13)
DCA	38 (38)
PGDCA	1 (1)
Type Writing	4 (4)
Diploma in Health Inspector	2 (2)
Bachelor of Education	13 (13)
Pre Primary Teacher Training	3 (3)
Stenography	5 (5)
CDC	6 (6)
Total	99 (77)
No. of respondents without vocational / technical education	29 (23)
TOTAL	128 (100)

Source: Field Survey

Note: Figures in parentheses refer to percentages

So it is understood the job seekers are highly qualified but the opportunities to reaping them is highly confined in island, this is showing long unemployment spell. Period of job search or unemployment spell means uninterrupted period of months in which an individual was unemployed. Figure 2 shows that 45 per cent of respondents have been searching job for the period of 4 to 6 years. 1 to 3 years is the unemployment spell for 34 percentages of respondents. One per cent of respondents have been unemployed below one year. Long term unemployment defined by the Bureau of Labour Statistics as unemployment lasting 26 weeks or more (Labour Bureau, 2016). So we can conclude that long term is the basic characteristics of island unemployment. Women have longer unemployment duration than male; this is the common ground precept. It can be seen from the Figure (2) among the total male respondents majority of the respondents searching job for the period between 4 to 6 year; it is similar in the case of female too.

Figure 2 Unemployment Spell



Source: Field Survey

Employment registration in the public and private agencies is another tactics following jobseekers. In the case of island around 87 per cent registered in government employment agency working at Kavaratti, it may be due to the influence of government job among the unemployed. But the functioning of private agencies is low in island comparing with other places. It shows the lack of private employment opportunities in island. People from the island mainly depending Kerala and Mangalore for their medical, educational and other purposes. But only 2.3 per cent of unemployed registered placement agencies outside Lakshadweep.

Table 7
Employment Registration of Unemployed

Agencies for Employment Registration	Government	Private	Agencies Out Side the Lakshadweep	3	Total
Frequency	111 (86.7)	1 (0.8)	3 (2.3)	13 (10.2)	128 (100)

Source: Field Survey

Note: Figures in parentheses refer to percentages

Source of job information is very relevant to job seekers. Job seekers depends number of sources for getting a job. It is clear from the table (8), 74 per cent depends on internet, it is because government of Lakshadweep sites all job information on their official website. At the same time proper network availability is a major threat in island, only 3 G is available to them. Sometimes they may not get even 3 G networks. Friends and internet is the another high opted category, 16.4 per cent of respondents depends both friends and internet. News media is working poor in this field. Proper distribution of national and local newspaper is not working in the island because of the transportation problem. This also badly affecting the aspiration of the unemployed.

Table 8
Sources of Job Information

		Employmen t Exchange			Both friends and Internet	Total
Frequency	5	1	6	95	21	128
	(3.9)	(8.0)	(4.7)	(74.2)	(16.4)	(100)

Source: Field Survey

Note: Figures in parentheses refer to percentages

Job search proved through the effort from the side of unemployed. Their effort visible through number of jobs they have applied. 11 per cent of respondents did not apply for any jobs. More than half of the respondents applied job in between 0 to 5 in numbers. 79 per cent were applied the jobs below10 in number. About 21 per cent applied above 10 numbers of jobs during their unemployment spell. The low number of job application may due to the lack of job opportunities in island (Table 9).

Table 9
Number of Jobs Applied by the Respondents

Class Intervals	0-5	6 to 11	12to 17	18 to 23	above 23	Total
Frequency	68	34	16	9	1	128
	(53.1)	(26.6)	(12.5)	(7.0)	(8.0)	(100)

Source: Field Survey

Note: Figures in parentheses refer to percentages

There are various difficulties have to face job seeker while searching jobs, like lack of opportunities, qualification, low salary, gender issues etc. but it depends upon geographical, economic, political situation of the area where job seekers belong. Overall point in the below table is the sum of all the weighted values.

Table 10
Difficulties faced by unemployed while Searching Job

	Lack of Opport unities		Lack of Experience	Low Score in Exams		Gender	Qualifi cation
Overall Points	716	532	599	718	341	249	429
Overall Rank	2	4	3	1	6	7	5

Source: Field Survey

Note: Figures in parentheses refer to percentages

Low score in exam is the overall first ranked choice of the respondents. Overall ranking calculated to understand the most preferred one by assigning the weight in reverse. We can draw two inferences on this, first Government job oriented labour market in the island, and second because of the changed marking system to grading, number of students those who completed studies few years back faced the problem of low score in interviews. Lack of employment opportunities is the evergreen ails to the island. Overall grade is 2 to the lack of opportunities that means next problem after low score, facing unemployed is lack of opportunities and significant finding is that first, second, third, and fourth rank cumulatively per cent for lack of opportunity is 99 per cent. That means 99 per cent opted this choice as their first four choices. Lack of experience is the third overall ranked item. Gender issues is not relevant in island labour market, it shows the quality of their society.

Setting limitations on preference of job location is a limiting factor of job search and also increase unemployment. This shows the flexibility of job seekers. Local preference is the important attribute of the respondents, only 2 per cent of respondents has chosen foreign nation as their first rank.

Table 11
Preferred Job Location of Unemployed

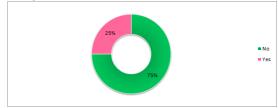
Ra		Native Island	Within Lakshadweep		Other Parts Of India	Foreign Nation
	erall ints	615	508	392	264	141
Ov Ra	erall nk	1	2	3	4	5

Source: Field Survey

Note: Figures in parentheses refer to percentages

The interest in flexible job search behavior is missing among jobseekers i.e., the extent to which job seekers looking for job outside of their island is very less, two third of the not extended their job seeking outside of their island.

Figure 4 **Job Enquiries in Other Places**



Source: Field Survey

There are three choices provided to the respondents to know their preference about the sectors of employment. Overall first rank is for government sector and next preferred sector is Private sector and last preference for self-employment. The least preference for self-employment among unemployed respondents should seriously scrutinize from the side of government.

Table 12 Unemployed Preference towards the Sector of Employment

Rank	Government	Private	Self-Employment
Overall point	382	251	135
Over all Rank	1	2	3

Source: Field Survey

Note: Figures in parentheses refer to percentages

It can be seen from the table 64 per cent of respondents are ready to accept a job outside of Lakshadweep. 46 per cent were not willing to work outside of their island. So in this conjunction a gender wise analysis is necessary to understand the true nature of this response, it is provided in the table (13). Among the respondents, those who show readiness to work outside, more than half of them are male i.e. 59 per cent and those who reject or not willing to work outside, 76 per cent are female. So there is gender difference in the decision to work outside.

Table 13 Willingness of Unemployed to Work Outside of the Island

Gender		Total	
	Accept the Job	Reject the Job	
Female	34(41)	35(76)	69 (54)
Male	48(59)	11(24)	59 (46)
Total	82(100)	46(100)	128 (100)

Source: Field Survey

Note: Figures in parentheses refer to percentages

While the respondents those who accept the job from outside may have concerns about leaving their family, friend, travelling, mingling with others etc. table (14) shows the ranking of respondents about their concerns while leaving their island. If the job seekers move from island to main land they may have concerns regarding their mobility. In order to access this, question rose regarding their concerns while they move from island to only those who shows willingness to work outside. Overall ranking calculated to understand the most preferred one by assigning the weight in reverse. Highest overall points got for leaving family and next to job security then salary least score for skill and leaving friends. We can conclude from the overall ranking leaving family is the most concern and job security and salary is the second and third concern. By and large travelling difficulties is the general reason everyone think as the reason behind the lack of job mobility, but the overall ranking is 5 for travelling. The choice skill added to understand their confidence to work outside. But this is least concern to them.

Table 14 Concerns when Accepting Job from Outside of the Island

Rank	Leaving Family	Leaving Friends	Travelling	Language	Mingling With others	Salary	Job Security	Skill
Over all points	568	293	351	361	341	370	391	277
Overall ranking	1	7	5	4	6	3	2	8

Source: Field Survey

Note: Figures in parentheses refer to percentages

8. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this paper we observed educational and job searching characteristics of unemployed in Lakshadweep, a small isolated island in Arabian Sea. While analyzing the educational qualification of unemployed, it found that they are highly qualified and the unemployment in Lakshadweep is basically the problem of youth. Long unemployment spell or long duration of unemployment could find from the response. Glaring difference among male and female in the case of unemployment spell could not find, both of them are facing long term unemployment. Definitely they have instinctive impinged economical, geographical issues for the long period unemployment, yet to be from the side of respondents they picked out low score in exam as their first difficulty while they searching job, next to lack of opportunities, 99 per cent opted this choice of lack of opportunity with in their the first four choice. Lack of experience is the third overall ranked difficulty, gender issue is not at all a problem in island while searching job. From this, government sector oriented job searching behavior could see because mark based job selection is practicing Govt. of Lakshadweep. Respondent's preference towards the Govt. sector job make the statement sensible. Private Job is the second preference and last preference given to selfemployment, similar conclusion drawn by Mathew (1995) the educated youth in Kerala prefer clerical job to self-employment.

Job seekers in island is very much informed about limited opportunities they have, then usually searching should extent outside of their island but only 25 per cent searched job outside of their island. 75 per cent are not. While accepting job from outside they have number of concerns. Leaving family is the first ranked concern, job security is the second concern and salary is the third and language is the fourth one. One important finding deviated from usual thinking is about travelling; it is only fifth concern to them. So again a well secured, well settled job seeking pattern is visible from their response because they have concern about the salary and job security of the jobs outside of their island. So in this conjunction government has to do much more for solving serious unemployment issues in island by taking initiatives like various selfemployment schemes for women and provide financial help for establishing small co-operatives for the production of those goods and services for which resources are plenty in island. Career centers should start to motivate the job seekers and people to go outside for jobs. Adequate guidance should be given to the jobseekers and family about the opportunities they can seek.

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