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IMPACT OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT INFRASTRUCTURES: A STUDY OF MANIPUR

T Thangjahao Haokip[1] and Reimeingam Marchang[2]

Abstract

The significance of skill development institutions in skilling and imparting the required skills to people is critical. Lack of it hinders people from accessing and undergoing skill development training to improve the intensity of workers, which further affects socio-economic development in a society. The present study is based on secondary data sources. It measures the availability of skill development infrastructure in terms of ratios and density per population and geographical area. Its main objective is to analyse the impact of skill development training infrastructure in Manipur. The state has better access to institutions for general education than for technical/professional education. That results in a substantial supply of a non-technical workforce and a lack of technical skills. A wider dependence on traditional industries combined with a lack of large-scale industries leads to a scarcity of employment opportunities. Thus, the conditions necessitate the establishment of skill development institutions to train and impart the necessary technical and other high-level skills and strengthen industries for the creation of job opportunities in the state.

Keywords: skills, skill development institution, infrastructure, technical, professional, vocational, accessibility.

Introduction

A skill is an ability that enables people to do something easily and in a productive way. Skill development means developing the skill sets to add value to the organisation and career development (Katole, 2020). It is important for enhancing the intensity of workers. The economy is more productive and innovative when there is more skilled human potential (Akram, 2012). For the development of a state, adequate availability of skill development institutions with sufficient human resources is necessary. The skill development infrastructure in the present study includes general, technical/professional, and vocational education institutions and also human resources such as teachers and instructors. Lack of it hinders people from accessing and undergoing skill development programmes and training that leads to socio-economic development in a society. The insufficiency of institutions offering technical education in the North Eastern Region (NER) due to several constraints has hampered the creation of the right human resources for economic development (Pant, 2011). Adequate and standardised skill development institutions are needed across the country in general and Manipur state in particular for equal access by all sections of society.

People get into technical/professional and vocational education to improve their skills after the completion of certain levels of general education, which is the primary requirement for skill development courses. Technical/professional education is becoming a need for people in the present world of work

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due to the advancement of technology. It is defined as higher education programmes that are designed for learners to acquire the knowledge, skills, and competencies specific to a particular occupation (MHRD, 2019). The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI, 2020) in the NSS 75th round stated that technical education at the school education level is a part of vocational education. The technical/professional and vocational courses include medical, engineering, agriculture, law, management, chartered accountancy and similar courses, and IT/computer courses from recognised institutes.

Moreover, as per MSDE (2015), the National Policy for Skill Development Entrepreneurship 2015 specifically mentioned 24 major sectors of skills, such as 1) auto and auto components, 2) beauty and wellness, 3) food processing, 4) media and entertainment, 5) handlooms and handicrafts, 6) leather and leather goods, 7) domestic help, 8) gems and jewellery, 9) telecommunication, 10) tourism, hospitality & travel, 11) furniture and furnishing, 12) building, construction and real estate, 13) information technology-enabled services (ITeS) and IT, 14) construction materials and building hardware, 15) textiles and clothing, 16) healthcare, 17) security, 18) agriculture, 19) education/skill development, 20) transportation and logistics, 21) electronic and IT hardware, 22) pharmaceuticals and life sciences, 23) banking, financial services and insurance (BFSI), and 24) retail. These skill sectors provide vocational education through a variety of programmes and schemes throughout the country.

The study included all these courses and sectors to analyse the skills of people and institutions. These courses are generally known as job-oriented courses since they make it relatively easier to get a job. It means people who possess such skills are more likely to be employed, which enhances their income and living standards. Skills and knowledge are the major driving forces of socio-economic growth so a country that has a significant number of highly skilled human capital has higher income levels (Saini, 2015). However, during 2017-18, Manipur's per capita net state domestic product (NSDP) at current prices (2011-12 Series) was Rs. 65,411, which is nearly half that of India's average of Rs. 114,958 (Ministry of Finance, 2020). Manipur has been recorded as one of the lowest per capita income states in India, which could be due to a lack of a skilled workforce. Among the many influencing factors on income, improving one's skills is one of the most important factors for more productive work within a given timeframe. The level of employment and the growth in opportunities increase with the level of technical and skill development (Akram, 2012). However, the state is one of the industrially underdeveloped states in India. All the industries in Manipur fall under the category of micro or small-scale industries, except the cottage and village industries (Directorate of Economics and Statistics, 2019). It shows a lack of medium and large-scale industries that can employ a large number of people, especially educated youth. Therefore, improvement of existing industries is necessary to enhance employment opportunities for a skilled population that could further improve industry production, raising the income required for their long-term survival and expansion. This could help workers earn a more stable income and enhance their standard of living.

People are encouraged to undergo skill development training when they have easy access to skill development institutions (SDIs) and when there is sufficient industry demand for skilled workers. Therefore, the present study aimed to find out the conditions of SDIs in terms of people's accessibility levels, as well as whether the SDIs available in the state are adequate to meet the needs of the people.

Its main objective is to analyse the impact of skill development infrastructure in Manipur. It also tries to examine the availability of human resources as well as the institutions' facilities.

Materials and Methods

The present study is based on secondary data. They are collected from the reports of government ministries and departments such as the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), North Eastern Council (NEC) Secretariat, National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India, National Commission on Population (NCP), and Department of Economics and Statistics (DES) Manipur.

Using secondary data, the present study explores the challenges of skill development infrastructures in the state of Manipur. It employs simple statistical methods like percentage, ratio, and means or averages. The infrastructural conditions are measured in terms of ratio and density per geographical area and population in comparison with the averages of national levels to draw inferences.

Skill Development Infrastructure Conditions in Manipur

Skill development is becoming a must and a basic requirement for people in the present world of work. It is formally facilitated by skill development institutions that play a vital role in improving the knowledge and skills of people in a state. The skill development institutions in the present study include general education institutions as well as technical and vocational education institutions. Their availability levels and implications are discussed in the following section concerning the state of Manipur.

General Education Institutions

In India, the educational level is broadly divided into school education and higher education. School education includes primary school to higher secondary school (+2) level and higher education begins from college till university level and other stand-alone institutions for diploma and professional courses (MHRD, 2014). The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has prescribed a radius of distance for each level of school education. People have to access a primary school (PS) within a distance or radius of 1 km, upper primary or junior high school (JHS) within a distance or radius of 3 km, secondary or high school (HS) within a radius of 5 km, and higher secondary school (HSS) within a radius of 8 km (NCERT, 2016). If the nearest school is located beyond the given radius of distance (km), the school is stated as less accessible for the people.

Manipur has a geographical area of 22,327 sq.km and India 3,287,263 sq.km (NEC Secretariat, 2015). The projected population ('000) was 3,103 people in Manipur and 1,332,900 in India in 2019 (NCP, 2019). Based on these figures, the ratio between the geographical area or population and educational institutions in the Manipur and all India is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: The ratio between geographical area or population and educational institutions in Manipur in 2018-19

Educational Institutions	Manipur			All India		
	No. of institutions 2018-19	Population: Educational Institution*	Geographical: Educational Institution*	No. of institutions 2018-19	Population: Educational Institution*	Geographical: Educational Institution*
Schools	4663	665:1	5:1	1507708	884:1	2:1
Colleges	102	30422:1	219:1	42343	31479:1	78:1
Universities	8	387875:1	2791:1	1043	1277948:1	3152:1

Note: * calculated by the author.

Sources: Ministry of Education (2021) and MHRD (2020)

In Table 1, the smaller the area coverage and the fewer people served, the better the availability of educational institutions. Schools include primary to higher secondary levels run and managed by the government, government-aided, and private. Each school in Manipur serves approximately 5 sq.km, which is considerably larger than India's 2 sq.km. However, each school in the state serves 665 people, which is less than the national average of 884 people. It implies that the lack of access to schools in the state is mainly due to the sparse distribution of the population. Except for primary schools, the availability of schools with an approximate distance of 5 km is within the norms of distance or radius, although this may not explain the exact distance. It does not mean that all the schools are located within the prescribed radius of distance, especially in rural and remote areas. In terms of physical availability, the educational institutions appear accessible to people in the state.

People are more likely to attend higher education if the institution is easier to access, which is determined by distance and affordability. However, access to government schools is highly dependent on the distance of the nearest school as it provides free education at the school level of education. Thus, a government school is stated as being accessible to people if it is located as per the prescribed radius, irrespective of the district's administrative boundaries. However, mere availability does not serve the purpose without sufficient availability of human resources and proper management and functioning. It consequently affects the enrolment of students.

Table 2: Enrolment of students and pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) in schools (primary to higher secondary) by all types of management and government schools, NER

State/ Country	Academic years	All types of management#			Government school			Enrolment in Govt. school % all types of management*
		Total enrolment of students	Total teacher	PTR*	Total enrolment of students	Total teacher	PTR*	
Manipur	2011-12	503682	27042	19	195526	15080	13	38.8
	2019-20	718514	45321	16	199958	19001	11	27.8
India	2011-12	193051999	6403234	30	130077660	4312948	30	67.4
	2019-20	264527575	9687577	27	130931634	4938868	27	49.5

Notes: *calculated by the author. # Figures for all types of management are for the academic year 2010-11.

Sources: NUEPA (2013) and Ministry of Education (2021)

In Table 2, the enrolment of students increased in government schools and all types of management from 2011–12 to 2019–20 with the growth of the population in the state as well as in the country. Despite this, the share of enrolment of students in government schools has been decreasing over the years. The government schools in Manipur shared 39 per cent of students in all types of management in 2011-12 and this figure decreased to 28 per cent in 2019-20. Similarly, they shared 67 per cent of students in all types of management in 2011-12 and decreased to 50 per cent in 2019-20. It indicates that at the school level of education, the preference for private schools over government schools is remarkable. It was mainly due to poorer school management and infrastructural facilities, like buildings and classrooms, in government schools as compared to private schools, particularly in Manipur.

The pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) in both government schools and all types of management has been better in Manipur as compared to the whole of India. In Manipur, PTR is reduced from 19 in 2011-12 to 16 in 2019-20, which is less than India's 30 to 27 respectively (Table 2). A similar situation was found in government schools. This shows that the availability of teachers is higher in the state than at the national level. It was also contributed to by the sparser distribution of the population in the state than in India. However, appointed government teachers in remote areas of Manipur in turn paid a salary to another untrained person to fill in for them in the posting area (Sharma, 2015). This type of action impedes the improvement of students' knowledge and skills.

At the higher education level, according to the MHRD (2019) in its all-India survey on higher education 2018-19, the average enrolment per college in the state is 1,039 students, which is higher than the national average of 693 students. In higher education, the gross enrolment ratio of 33.7 per cent in Manipur is higher than the 26.3 per cent in all India. Despite this, the pupil-teacher ratio of 26 in the colleges and universities of Manipur appears better than that of all India's 33. Based on these indicators, the educational infrastructure condition of Manipur can be stated to be on par with all India's averages. However, in 2018-19, only 41 per cent of 20,338 pass-out students for under-graduates have enrolled in post-graduate courses, whereas 62 per cent of the 6,474,715 pass-out students for under-graduates in all India have enrolled as post-graduates. It implies a shortfall in institutional intake capacity, particularly for post-graduates and other higher education levels in the state.

Technical and Vocational Education Institutions

The adequate availability of technical/professional, and vocational educational institutions is particularly important for providing skill development training. In Manipur, these institutions are lacking in providing and imparting skill training programmes and courses. As per the DES (2019), there are some Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) that provide training in engineering and non-engineering trades for young people in the age group of 14–40 years. For technical and professional education, the state has only a few institutions, such as Adimjati Technical Institute (government polytechnic), the National Institute of Technology (NIT), and other institutions under the AICTE that offer diploma and degree levels in technical and engineering courses. Besides, as per MeitY (2019), the National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT) Imphal had two extension centres in the hill districts of

Churachandpur and Senapati districts in 2013. NIELIT offers 30 courses (22 short-term courses and 8 long-term courses). It also conducts some other skill development training programmes in different sectors for youth and government employees under other ministries. In Table 3, the ratio between skill development institutions and the population with their intake capacity in the state is presented.

Table 3: The ratio between population and skill development institutions with their intake capacity in Manipur during 2018-19

Types of Institutions	Manipur				All India			
	No. of Institutions	**Population: institution ratio***	**Total Intake capacity**	***Intake capacity % population**	**No. of Institutions**	**Population: institution ratio***	**Total Intake capacity**	***Intake capacity % population**
Technical Institution^	4	775750:1	560	0.02	10,428	127819:1	3393065	0.25
ITI (Govt. and private)	11	282091:1	1804	0.06	15042	88612:1	2282000	0.17
NIELIT Centre#	3	1034333:1	8152	0.26	43	30997674:1	1705683	0.13
Total	**18**	**172389:1**	**10516**	**0.34**	**25,513**	**52244:1**	**7380748**	**0.55**

Notes: *calculated by the author, ^ include technical institutions under AICTE, and

Number of the trained person in the year as intake capacity

Sources: AICTE (2019), MSDE (2017), MeitY (2019), DES (2019), and NCP (2019).

Each institution (all three types of skill development institutions) in Manipur serves 172,389 people, which is three times poorer than the 52,244 people of India in 2018-19 (Table 3). As a result, the yearly intake capacity of institutions in the state works out to 0.34 per cent of the population, which is lower as compared to 0.55 per cent of the population in all India. The population per institution appears higher in the state than in all India. On the contrary, the average population density of 122 people per sq.km in Manipur was lower compared to all India's 382 people per sq.km (Census, 2011). It shows that institutions are generally established based on population distribution. Despite the state having a lower population density than the rest of India, each skill development institution serves a larger number of people, indicating a lack of institutions per population. It hampers the accessibility levels and intake capacity of institutions to meet the needs of people for technical/professional and vocational education.

Among the technical/professional institutions, access to medical institutions appears better in Manipur than in other states of the North Eastern Region (NER). According to the NEC Secretariat (2015), there are 11 medical colleges with a 1,176 intake capacity in the NER. Of those, Manipur has two medical colleges located in Imphal with an intake capacity of 100 people per academic session in each college. The ratio of medical colleges per population in 2015 (NCP, 2019) was such that each medical college served 1,490,000 people in Manipur, which is nearly three times better than that of NER's 4,361,545 people. Additionally, there are some private nursing schools in the state. However, medical institutions are less accessible in the hills than in the valley where they are largely located.

Level of Skills and Skilled Workforce in Manipur

Skill development institutions play a vital role in imparting skills and supplying a skilled workforce. People tend to acquire higher skills and knowledge when they have attained higher educational qualifications. According to the National Skill Development Corporation (2013), the skill levels of people are categorised based on their level of educational attainment and years of working experience. The three main levels are: 1) semi-skilled workforce, which refers to general college degree graduates, ITI pass-outs, and other vocational training; 2) skilled workforce, which refers to specialised degrees such as engineering, medical, and other technical courses; and 3) highly skilled workforce, which refers to postgraduate degrees and other equivalent degrees. Based on this, the state lacks a supply of skilled people in engineering and other technical skills due to the inadequate availability of the institutions. However, it has a sufficient supply of a semi-skilled workforce, especially graduates in general education.

According to the MHRD (2019) all India survey on higher education 2018-19, Manipur's total population in the category (18–23 years) was 327,201, accounting for 0.23 per cent of India's total higher education population of 142,078,501 people. In Manipur, the pass-out percentage of students at higher education levels such as certificate, integrated, diploma, undergraduate, postgraduate (PG), PG Diploma, MPhil, and PhD works out to 7 per cent, which is slightly higher than all India's 6.4 per cent. It demonstrates that the supply of skilled and highly skilled people in non-technical work in the state is slightly higher than the national average. Concurrently, the availability of institutions for general education is considerably better than that of technical and professional education in the state. It appears that the better availability and accessibility of institutions encourage people to take available courses. It requires the adequate availability of technical and professional institutions to improve the technical skills of labour in Manipur.

The number of students aged 15–29 years by their types of education, such as general, technical/professional, and vocational education, in the state during 2014–15 is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Distribution (%) of students (15-29 years) by their types of education in Manipur and all India during 2014-15

Types of education	Manipur			All India		
	Per 1000 students (No.)	* % of students	Average expenditure (Rs.)	Per 1000 students (No.)	* % of students	Average expenditure (Rs.)
General	897	89.7	10,012	850	85.0	6,788
Technical/professional	93	9.3	81,152	126	12.6	62,841
Vocational	10	1.0	24,195	24	2.4	27,676
Total	**1000**	**100**		**1000**	**100.0**	

Note: *Calculated by the author.

Source: MoSPI (2016) in NSS Report No. 575

In terms of per 1,000 students, the majority of students are from general education in the state and all India. In Manipur, technical/professional students account for 9 per cent and vocational students account for 1 per cent, which are lower when compared to all India's 13 per cent and 2 per

cent respectively (Table 4). This highlighted the state's paucity of people who have completed skill development and job-oriented training. Lack of technical skills affects people's capabilities and innovative ideas in several development aspects. The average expenditure on technical/professional education is relatively higher than that for general and vocational education. It hinders people from undergoing technical courses and training. Moreover, it is higher in Manipur at Rs. 81,152 as compared to Rs. 62,841 in all India. Students spend more money due to a lack of facilities and materials needed for their studies. The distribution of students (academic session of 2014–15) who are undergoing technical/professional courses is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Distribution (%) of students pursuing technical/professional courses in Manipur and all India during 2014-15

Sl No	Types of education/courses	Manipur		All India	
		Total	*%	Total	*%
1	Medical	230	23.1	73	7.3
2	Engineering	298	29.9	400	40.2
3	Law	24	2.4	16	1.6
4	Management	31	3.1	72	7.2
5	IT/Computer	151	15.2	108	10.9
6	ITI courses	66	6.6	128	12.9
7	Others courses	196	19.7	197	19.8
	Total	**996**	**100.0**	**994**	**100.0**

Note *:* *Calculated by the author.

Source *:* MoSPI (2016) in NSS Report No. 575

Engineering students account for 30 per cent and management students account for 3 per cent in Manipur, which is lower than the national average of 40 per cent and 7 per cent, respectively (Table 5). However, the state has 23 per cent of medical students and 15 per cent of IT/computer students, significantly higher than the 7 per cent and 11 per cent in India overall. The better accessibility of medical colleges in the state as compared to other NE states is one of the main reasons for the higher percentage of medical students. According to the NEC Secretariat (2015), there are 11 medical colleges with a total of 1,176 intake capacity in NER during 2011–12. Manipur has two medical colleges, with a total of 200 intake capacity. The ratio of medical college per population of Manipur in 2011 works out to 1,360,878 people, which is better than that of NER's 4,144,362 people. It shows that better access to an institution is a condition for undergoing the available courses.

In the state, the hill people suffer from a lack of access to technical/professional institutions as well as high competition for entrance examinations for a limited intake capacity per institution. The scheduled tribe (ST) people accounted for 41 per cent of the population in 2011 and 95 per cent of them were found in the hills (DES, 2019). However, the ST allocation in most educational institutions is lower than their population share. For example, Manipur University follows Manipur's reservation norms of 31 per cent for ST for student intake and teacher recruitment (Saikia, 2018). It is difficult for the disadvantaged tribal people to compete with the non-tribal valley people. As a result, people living in the hills have fewer opportunities to study such courses.

Among various skill development programmes and schemes in India, the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) is one of the flagship skill certification schemes under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE). As per the MSDE (2017), the PMKVY scheme was launched on 15th July, 2015. It aims to train 10 million young people for four years (2016–2020), owing to the substantial achievement during its first year of implementation. It is envisaged to impart the trainees with relevant skills, which are required by the available industries to secure better livelihoods. The scheme is implemented by the National Skill Development Corporation. Its training programmes include short-term training (STT), recognition of prior learning (RPL), and special projects (SP). The PMKVY trainees by the types and sectors of skills training in the hill and valley districts of Manipur are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Distribution (%) of PMKVY trainees by the types and sectors of training in Manipur as on 21st September 2020

Sl.	***Types and sectors of training***	***Hill***	***Valley***	***Total***
		***% (No.)**	***% (No.)**	***% (No.)**
A	PMKVY trainees in Manipur	16.9 (2115)	83.1(10386)	**100.0(12501)**
B	Types of training			
1	Short term training (STT)	0.0 (0)	11.2 (1163)	9.3 (1163)
2	Recognition of prior learning (RPL)	100.0 (2115)	88.5 (9195)	90.5 (11310)
3	Special projects (SP)	0.0 (0)	0.3 (28)	0.2 (28)
	Total	**100.0 (2115)**	**100.0 (10386)**	**100.0 (12501)**
C	Sectors of training			
1	Agriculture	3.9 (83)	0.0 (0	0.7 (83)
2	Apparel	0.0 (0)	0.9 (90)	0.7 (90)
3	Beauty and wellness	0.0 (0)	0.9 (90)	0.7 (90)
4	Electronic and hardware	0.0 (0)	8.3 (866)	6.9 (866)
5	Food processing	0.0 (0)	0.3 (28)	0.2 (28)
6	Power	0.0 (0)	0.8 (88)	0.7 (88)
7	Textiles and handlooms	96.1 (2032)	88.5 (9195)	89.8 (11227)
8	Tourism and hospitality	0.0 (0)	0.3 (29)	0.2 (29)
	Total	**100.0 (2115)**	**100.0 (10386)**	**100.0 (12501)**

Note: *calculated by the author

Source: MSDE (2020) in PMKVY periodical report as on 21/9/2020

In Table 6, among the types of training, RPL training is the most prominent, followed by STT and SP training in the state. RPL has been undergone by all trainees in the hills and 89 per cent in the valley. Among the sectors of training, the majority of trainees have undergone training in the textile and handloom sectors, with a majority of 96 per cent of trainees in the hills and 89 per cent of trainees in the valley. There are some trainees in the electronics and hardware, agriculture, apparel, beauty and wellness, power, and tourism and hospitality sectors. In the state, the prominence of training in the textile and handloom sectors shows higher demand for skills in these sectors. Moreover, it also highlighted the undeveloped condition of other industries that provide employment opportunities.

As per the MSDE (2020), in the periodical report on PMKVY as of 21st September 2020, out of 1,048,575 trainees who have completed PMKVY training in all India, 12,501 trainees are from Manipur. The share of Manipur works out to 1.2 per cent of trainees, which is significant as compared to 0.2 per cent of all India's population (NCP, 2019) shared by the state in 2020. Out of the state's total trainees, the share of hills works out to 17 per cent of trainees, which is four times poorer than the valley's 83 per cent. However, the hill people account for more than 43 per cent of the state's population (DES, 2019). The scheme benefits the hill people less as training requires well-equipped, smart classrooms, and a lack of such institutions has become one of the impediments in hills. Despite all this, the implementation of the scheme appears successful, which has substantially increased the number of skilled people in the state.

Employment Opportunities for Skilled Workforce in Manipur

A skilled workforce is needed mainly for the industrial and service sectors of the economy. It depends on the size of the industry, as a higher number of workers is required in larger industries. In India, the Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) classifies industries mainly based on the size of their investment and turnover. As per MSME (2020) in the revised criteria on 1st July 2020, the definition of manufacturing and service industries is measured in terms of investment in plants and machinery. The investments in 1) micro-enterprise should be less than one crore rupees, 2) small enterprise between one and ten crore rupees and 3) medium enterprise between ten and fifty crore rupees. Industrially, Manipur is one of the least developed states in the country. According to DES (2019), all the industries in Manipur come under the category of micro or small-scale industries. Among them, only handloom and handicraft industrial activities are worth it. There are 57,004 handloom and handicraft establishments with an employment of 75,121 people in 2013. It shows the prominence of traditional industries and the underdeveloped condition of medium and large industries in the state. Moreover, the workers of these traditional industries have attained low educational qualifications, primarily due to their low socio-economic status. The majority of them acquired skills through on-the-job training while working. That affects some required skills, like marketing skills and innovative ideas. Additionally, the lack of these industries adversely affects the improvement of livelihood support in the state. The situation calls for the expansion of existing industries as well as the establishment of medium-scale and large-scale industries. This can result in improved employment generation for trained and educated young people in the state.

As per the MoSPI (2019) in its periodic labour force survey 2017-18, in the primary or agriculture sector, wherein unskilled or minimally skilled workers were mostly engaged or skilled workers were less required, the state had 36 per cent of workers, which was poorer than 44 per cent of all India averages. In industries with few employment opportunities, the proportion of workers is lower, whereas, in industries with more job opportunities, the proportion of workers is higher. Manipur is endowed with favourable agro-climatic conditions. However, the agro-based industry faces operational difficulties in obtaining raw materials of desirable standards and quality from a large number of growers (Zou, 2020). The usual working person by the industry of work in Manipur and all India is shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Distribution (%) of usually working persons (ps+ss) by the industry of work for Manipur and all India during 2017-18

The industry of work sections and divisions of NIC-2008			% of Persons	
Section	***Division***	***Name of groups***	***Manipur***	***All India***
A	01-03	Agriculture, forestry, and fishing	36.41	44.14
B	05-09	Mining and quarrying	0.15	0.41
C	10-34	Manufacturing	12.06	12.13
D	35	Electricity, gas, steam, and air conditioning supply	0.03	0.34
E	36-39	Water supply; sewerage, waste management, and remediation activities	0.09	0.25
F	41-43	Construction	7.10	11.67
G	45-47	Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	11.76	10.09
H	49-53	Transportation and storage	5.35	4.93
I	55-56	Accommodation and Foodservice activities	1.05	1.87
J	58-63	Information and communication	0.43	0.99
K	64-66	Financial and insurance activities	0.49	1.05
L	68	Real estate activities	0.00	0.21
M	69-75	Professional, scientific, and technical activities	0.92	0.83
N	77-82	Administrative and support service activities	5.23	1.19
O	84	Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	5.76	1.62
P	85	Education	8.36	3.78
Q	86-88	Human health and social work activities	2.50	1.20
R	90-93	Arts, entertainment and recreation	0.12	0.28
S	94-96	Other service activities	1.69	1.92
T	97-98	Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods and services-producing activities of households for own use	0.50	1.08
U	99	Activities of extraterritorial organizations and bodies	0.00	0.00
		All (Total)	**100.00**	**100.00**

Notes: Primary sector: division 01-03, Secondary sector: division 05-43, and Tertiary sector: division 45-99 as per NIC 2008

Source: MoSPI (2019) in Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2017-18

In Table 7, within the three sectors of the economy, the service sector is the highest, with 44 per cent in Manipur, which is also higher than India's 31 per cent. However, the secondary or industrial sector employs the fewest people at 19 per cent, followed by the primary or agricultural sector at 36 per cent, which is lower than the national average. It shows a lack of industry in the state, which consequently impedes the improvement of employment opportunities for people. The state must intervene in the form of financial support to boost industries and strengthen technical/professional institutions to improve worker skills. This could help to alleviate socio-economic problems such as unemployment among people.

Discussion

Adequate access to skill development institutions such as schools, colleges, universities, and technical and vocational institutions are necessary for improving skills and knowledge. In Manipur, the availability of government institutions for general education is on par with national levels in terms of density per population, students' enrolment per institution, and pupil-teacher ratio. As a result, the state has a large supply of the non-technical skilled population. However, government schools and colleges are facing challenges such as absenteeism of teachers, teaching aids, infrastructural facilities, and shortfalls in management. It hinders the development of the skills and knowledge of students, which results in the preference for private institutions, especially school-level education. This consequently has led to higher education costs and a failure to receive free education by the students in their state.

The state lacks technical/professional and vocational institutions. Each institution (all three types of skill development institutions) serves 172,389 people in Manipur, which is three times poorer than the 52,244 people in all India. (Table 2). The majority of the colleges under Manipur University offer non-professional courses, do not have postgraduate and above courses, and also lack hostel facilities (Singh, 2013). Consequently, in terms of per 1,000 students, technical/professional students account for 9 per cent and vocational education for 1 per cent in Manipur, which is lower than the national averages of 13 per cent and 2 per cent (Table 3). In Manipur, the enrolment of students is very high in the arts stream, whereas it is very low in the science and commerce streams due to the lack of educational infrastructure and a shortage of qualified faculty (Kengoo, 2012).

Among the technical/professional education, a substantial proportion of students are enrolled in medical and IT/computer studies in Manipur. Concurrently, each medical college in Manipur serves a considerably smaller population than in NER. Among the NE states, Manipur is well ahead in the healthcare aspect and has a substantial number of qualified health specialists who can cater to different ailments (Akoijam and Khan, 2020). The state has better access to medical colleges as compared to other NE states, based on their availability per population. It is one of the factors in the substantial availability of the health workforce, such as doctors and nurses.

Skilled people are expected to have a higher income. However, Manipur has a considerably lower per capita income as compared to the national average. Among the various factors, a lack of skills, particularly technical and other employability skills, appears to be one of the reasons for the state's low per capita income. It also adversely affects the creation of employment opportunities and the finding of feasible business avenues. Furthermore, cottage and traditional industries have flourished on a small scale in terms of investment and production, but are unable to provide enough job opportunities. The available industries are again unable to ensure employment for people who have undergone skill development training. In India, it is found that the demand for technical education has increased with the increase in technology and knowledge content in both the manufacturing and service industries (Unni, 2016). It shows the importance of industrial development and the necessity of technical skills and innovative ideas. However, in Manipur, factories or industrial activities do not exist in the public sector (Gonmei, 2013). It affects the development of the industrial sector in which skilled people earn their livelihood. Moreover, in the state, the prominence of skill training in the textiles and handlooms sector under PMKVY has witnessed higher demand for weaving skills and a wider flourishing

of traditional industries in this sector. It has also highlighted the undeveloped condition of other medium and large industries, to provide employment opportunities for other skilled people. Besides, the implementation of the scheme appears lopsided in sectors of skills so that most of the skill sectors are left neglected.

Skilled people are more likely to get employment and improve their living standards and well-being as they are empowered with the required skills in the job market. They are also expected to have the innovative and competitive potential to bring in better employment opportunities. The state's lack of technical institutions and larger industries, on the other hand, poses challenges to people's socio-economic development. It requires the adequate availability of skill development institutions to impart and enhance skills to the people. As a result, the study suggests the establishment of additional ITIs with trades and skills based on local needs and more technical institutions under the AICTE, particularly for engineering and management courses. This may encourage young people to undergo technical courses, which help to minimise the mismatch between skills possessed by workers and those required by the industries.

Conclusion

In Manipur, better access to general education institutions has significantly improved the non-technical skills of the people, whereas the lack of technical/professional and vocational institutions results in a shortage of skilled people with technical skills, except for medical and IT/computer skills. It demonstrates that having easy access to skill development institutions is a prerequisite for increasing the skilled population. It is also caused due to a lack of industries that demand technical skills. Therefore, strengthening the skill development infrastructure is explicitly required to equip the state's rapidly rising population with a set of employable skills that could help the state overcome its socio-economic ills. Every district's ITI can be strengthened by connecting it with secondary schools, and financial aid can be provided to students who study technical courses, which are more expensive than other courses. Moreover, financial and technical assistance should be provided for the extension of existing small industries to a larger scale. The state government has a big responsibility to roll out these necessary steps due to the lack of private initiatives in the state.

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