Youth Attitudes towards Political Agendas for Education and Employment in Bilaspur Region of Chhattisgarh

Praveen Sharma[1], Sanjay Kumar Tiwari[2]
[1]*Research Scholar, Department of Political Science, Jamuna Prasad Verma P.G. Arts and Commerce College, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, India*
[2]*Professor, Department of Political Science, Jamuna Prasad Verma P.G. Arts and Commerce College, Chhattisgarh, India*

***Abstract*—Youth attitudes toward political agendas on education and employment are crucial indicators of democratic engagement and policy effectiveness. These perceptions shape how young people evaluate government commitments, trust political institutions, and participate in development processes. A clear understanding of these attitudes is essential for designing inclusive, responsive, and sustainable policies that address the real needs of a rapidly growing youth population. The present study examined youth attitudes toward political agendas on education and employment in a stratified sample of 150 respondents, balanced across gender (80 males, 70 females) and residence (90 urban, 60 rural) groups. This research work assessed perceptions of education reforms, trust in political promises, and views on employment initiatives. Using a structured Likert-scale questionnaire, Findings revealed generally moderate optimism about education policies, with strong support for skill development across all groups (46% male, 43% female, 46% urban, and 43% rural). This consensus highlighted youth recognition of the need for practical, employment-linked training as a central priority for policy agendas. In contrast, attitudes toward employment promises were more nuanced. Reverse-coded analysis of skepticism (Q7) suggested that while a majority expressed trust in political intent (65% male, 55% female, 65% urban, 53% rural scoring high), other items showed limited confidence in scheme effectiveness and transparency. For example, agreement on job-creation opportunities remained lower, indicating persistent doubts about delivery. Gender and residence differences underscored structural disparities: rural and female respondents reported slightly lower trust and greater neutrality, reflecting barriers to access, quality education, and secure employment. These results suggest that while political messaging on development resonates with youth, credibility depends on addressing real needs through transparent, inclusive, and accountable implementation. The study contributes to understanding how demographic factors shape youth policy perceptions and offers practical insights for policymakers to strengthen engagement with this critical constituency. However, limitations included a modest sample size, reliance on self-reported data, and the absence of qualitative insights, suggesting directions for future research to deepen understanding and support evidence-based policy design.**

***Index Terms*—youth attitudes, political agendas, education policy, employment initiatives, gender differences, urban-rural disparities**

I. INTRODUCTION

Young people represent a significant demographic and sociopolitical force in many countries. Kaur et al. (2022) reported that more than half of India's population falls within the working-age group of 15 to 64 years, which comprises a young, potentially productive segment of the human resource. The Ministry of External Affairs (Government of India) specified India as one of the Youngest Populations in the World. According to the National Youth Policy, Indian youth were defined as those aged between 15 and 29 years. Shukla (2024) mentioned that India's youth population was estimated at approximately 420 million in 2024, and the PRICE survey research showed that nearly 268 million (or 64%) resided in rural India, while 152 million (36%) lived in urban areas. Besides the demographic divide of rural and urban youth, the cumulative robust policies are needed for education and employment. Jaiswal et al. (2015) stated that education and employment are critical determinants of youth empowerment and national development. Political agenda refers to the set of issues, policies, priorities, and proposed actions that political actors, such as governments, parties, or

leaders, seek to promote, debate, and implement within the public sphere. It defines what topics are considered important for discussion and decision-making, shaping legislative focus, resource allocation, and public policy directions to address societal needs and aspirations. Political agendas often promise sweeping reforms in these areas. Yet, the effectiveness of such agendas depends heavily on youth buy-in. If young people think political promises are untrustworthy or don't meet their needs, they are less likely to participate in democracy, and policies may not work well.

Previous studies viz., Sharma (2022) studied youth employment and unemployment across various labour market characteristics, with particular focus on demographic transition, regional diversity, and evolving labour market patterns. They quoted, male and female employment in India showed marked sectoral differences in 2019–20. Women were more concentrated in agriculture (47.6%) and public services (15.5%) compared to men (31.8% and 6.4%, respectively). Men dominated construction (18.4% vs. 4.5%) and transport (8.8% vs. 2.7%). Manufacturing employed similar proportions of both genders (13.7% men, 17.0% women). Trade, finance, and utilities had smaller, relatively balanced shares, highlighting persistent gender disparities across labour market sectors. Additonally, they claimed that education levels in India reveal notable patterns among youth. About 10.3% were illiterate, with a higher share among females (12.8%) than males (7.7%). The largest group had education below secondary (41.1%). Secondary or higher secondary education accounted for 30.8%, with males slightly ahead. Graduates and above comprised 14%, evenly split by gender. Technical education remained low overall (3.8% combined), indicating limited vocational specialization and underscoring the need for improved educational attainment and skills development. They have documented youth disillusionment with job-creation claims.

Datta and Rajan (2024) revealed an education and employment paradox in India and found that higher levels of education were associated with elevated unemployment rates. This underlined not only the nature of employment creation but also the quality of education, as many educated youths remained unemployable or worked in low-productivity occupations that were misaligned with their qualifications. Spatially, rural and backwards regions exhibited particularly high rates of educated unemployment, largely due to pervasive joblessness and limited employment opportunities.

Adipat and Chotikapanich (2022) emphasized that high-quality education supports Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 by promoting stable, enduring communities through expanded opportunities and greater societal tolerance, aiming for universal youth proficiency in numeracy and functional literacy by 2030. Grover et al. (2024) highlighted that mobile learning (M-Learning) in India enhances accessibility, educational quality, lifelong learning, sustainability, innovation, and monitoring. However, they stressed that realizing SDG 4 requires higher education institutions, government agencies, and administrators to design and implement effective policies to successfully integrate M-Learning in Indian higher education, ensuring inclusive, equitable, and quality learning opportunities for all. Sharma (2021) aimed to examine and explore how political attitudes had evolved among youth over the previous seven years through qualitative analysis. For the study, 30 individuals—both male and female—aged between 22 and 28 years were contacted. A self-designed, subjective political attitude questionnaire was administered via telephonic interviews and online forms, given the ongoing pandemic. The study comprehensively assessed political attitudes among youth in relation to religion, political ideology, media influences, gender, race and ethnicity, development issues, and preferred prime ministerial candidates, and found that these factors influenced voting trends and potentially hindered the country's progress.

Kedar (2019) examined the persistent challenges faced by Indian youth in education and employment, underscoring implications for political agendas. He observed that despite expanded educational access, dropout rates remained high and quality was inconsistent, leaving many young people ill-equipped for labour market demands. High youth unemployment, particularly in rural and marginalized regions, reflected limited opportunities and structural inequalities. Kedar highlighted widespread frustration with political promises that failed to deliver meaningful employment or address skill gaps. He found that many youth perceived government job-creation schemes as inadequate and lacking transparency. This mismatch between education and

employment outcomes eroded trust in policy initiatives. They finally concluded that to address these issues, policymakers needed to prioritize investments in vocational training, labour-intensive industries, and equitable education reforms, ensuring political agendas were genuinely responsive to youth needs and capable of delivering inclusive economic growth and social stability.

Existing studies have explored youth employment patterns, educational disparities, and political attitudes separately; there is limited research connecting youth perceptions of political agendas directly to education and employment outcomes. This gap is particularly evident in understanding how such perceptions influence trust in policy and participation across diverse groups. Therefore, the present research addresses this gap by surveying youth attitudes toward current political agendas on education and employment, analysing demographic correlates, and recommending strategies to enhance policy credibility and democratic engagement.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A cross-sectional descriptive survey design was utilized to investigate youth attitudes towards political agendas for education and employment in the Bilaspur region of Chhattisgarh during 2024-25. The present study was conducted in urban and nearby rural areas of Bilaspur to capture a diverse representation of the population. The target population comprised youth aged 18–30 years, reflecting a demographic critical to understanding perspectives on education and employment policies. A sample size of 100 respondents was selected using stratified random sampling to ensure proportional representation from both urban and rural strata to enhance the generalizability of findings within the region. Additionally, the sample included balanced representation from both male and female groups to capture gender-based variations in responses. A structured questionnaire was designed as per the guidelines by Ranganathan and Caduff (2023) for systematic data collection. The questionnaire had two key sections, viz., a demographic section to categorize respondents by rural or urban residence and a Likert-scale section (Table 1) to assess attitudes towards political agendas related to education and employment. This tool was designed to elicit reliable and quantifiable responses, enabling a systematic evaluation of youth perceptions.

Table 1: Questionnaire on Likert-scale

Question No.	Statement	Agenda
Q1	Govt education reforms address real needs	Education
Q2	Trust in political promises on education	Education
Q3	Govt improved higher education quality	Education
Q4	Policies should focus on skill development	Education
Q5	Adequately informed about education initiatives	Education
Q6	Govt job schemes provide genuine opportunities	Employment
Q7*	Political promises about employment are unrealistic	Employment
Q8	Start-up/entrepreneurship policies beneficial	Employment
Q9	Employment initiatives transparent/fair	Employment
Q10	Govt will prioritize reducing youth unemployment	Employment
Q7*: Reverse-coded (higher score = more skepticism)		

Data analysis was performed using descriptive statistics, which facilitated the summarization and interpretation of responses to identify trends and patterns in attitudes (Cooksey, 2020). This methodological approach ensured a robust framework for capturing and analyzing the perspectives of Bilaspur's youth and provided insights into their views on critical socio-political issues. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and no form of coercion was applied at any stage. Informed consent was

obtained from all participants after clearly explaining the study's purpose and procedures. Confidentiality of responses was strictly maintained, ensuring that no personally identifiable information was disclosed. The research adhered to ethical aspects, viz., respecting participants' autonomy, privacy, and right to withdraw at any time without any negative consequences.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present research study was designed and executed to maintain rigour and relevance, aligning with the objectives of understanding the influence of political agendas on education and employment in the region. The Demographic Profile of Respondents is shown in Table 2

Table 2: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Categories	n = 150	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	80	53
	Female	70	47
Residence	Urban	90	60
	Rural	60	40
Age (years)	Mean (SD)	23.8 (±3.1)	-
Education Level	Below Secondary	62	41
	Secondary/Higher Secondary	46	31
	Graduate and Above	42	28
Employment Status	Employed	55	37
	Student	55	37
	Unemployed	40	26

A set of 10 questions on Likert-scale were floated towards respondents, and the data were systematically collected, tabulated and analyzed. Question 7, which originally assessed the belief that "political promises about employment are unrealistic," was reverse-coded in the analysis. Thus, higher scores (4–5) reflected greater trust, while lower scores (1–2) signified strong skepticism.

Male respondents expressed moderately positive views on education reforms. For instance, 41% agreed that government education reforms addressed real needs, and 46% supported policies focused on skill development. Regarding Q7 (reverse-coded), 40% scored 4 and 25% scored 5, indicating that 65% of males demonstrated trust in employment-related promises (Figure 1). This finding contradicted expectations and suggested that while men were cautious in general policy trust (e.g., 30% agreement on Q2), they showed greater optimism about employment initiatives, possibly due to higher visibility of job schemes among working-age males or exposure to entrepreneurship promotion.

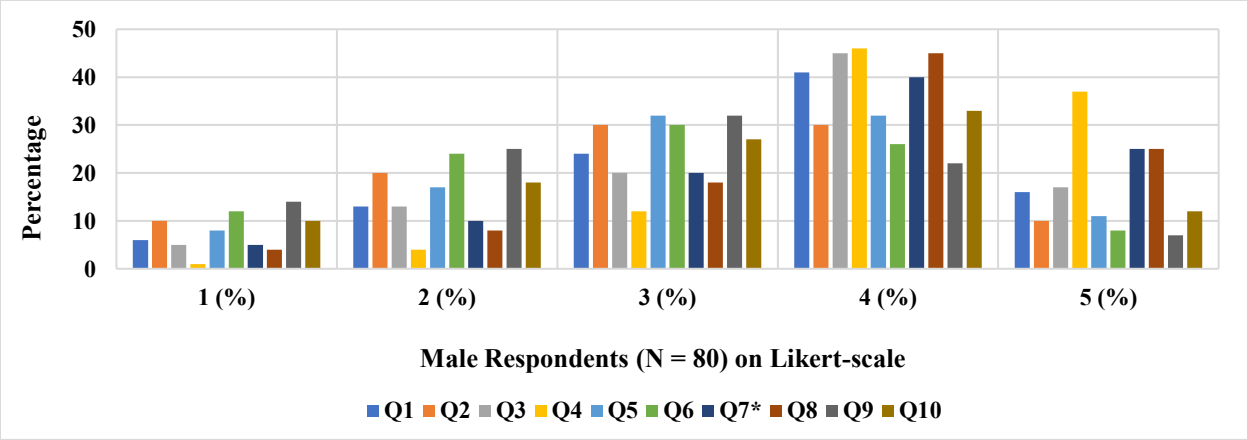

Figure 1: Male Respondents (%) on Likert-scale

Female respondents showed mixed views. Only 26% agreed that political promises on education would be fulfilled. While 43% supported skill-based education, just 24% felt adequately informed. For Q7, 36% scored 4 and 19% scored 5-55% expressing trust in employment promises (Figure 2). However, 21% gave low trust ratings (scores 1–2), suggesting that a considerable portion remained skeptical. This divergence could be due to the uneven accessibility of employment schemes for women and the persistent gender gap in workforce participation despite political rhetoric.

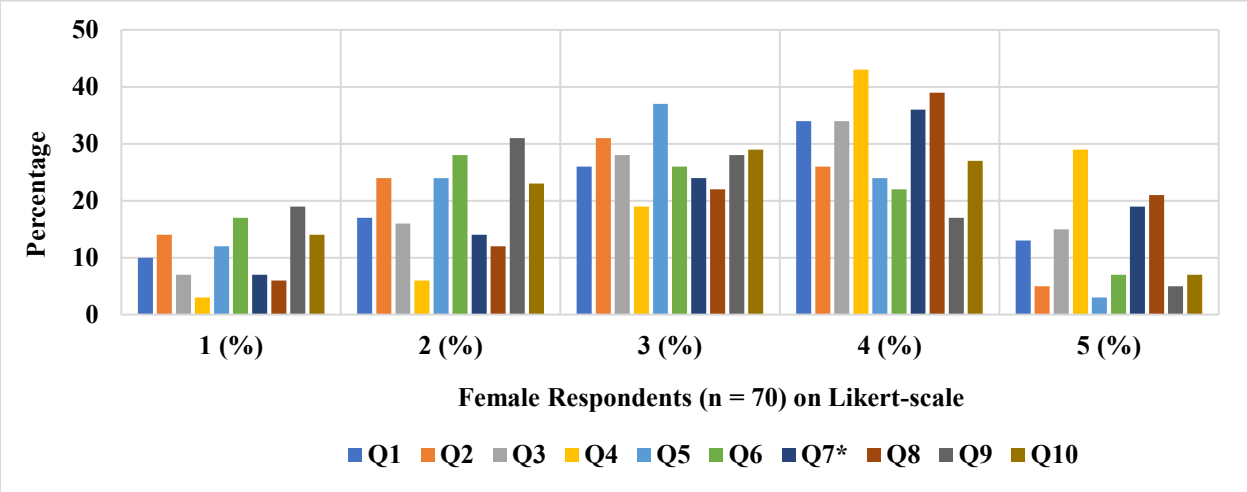

Figure 2: Female Respondents (%) on Likert-scale

Urban respondents demonstrated strong support for educational reform: 42% agreed that reforms addressed real needs, and 46% prioritized skill development. On Q7, 65% gave high scores (4–5), indicating greater trust in employment promises among urban youth (Figure 3). This may reflect more exposure to formal recruitment platforms, start-up ecosystems, and government awareness campaigns targeting urban centers. Still, only 26% of urban respondents believed job schemes genuinely created opportunities, reflecting a disconnect between perceived intent and actual delivery.

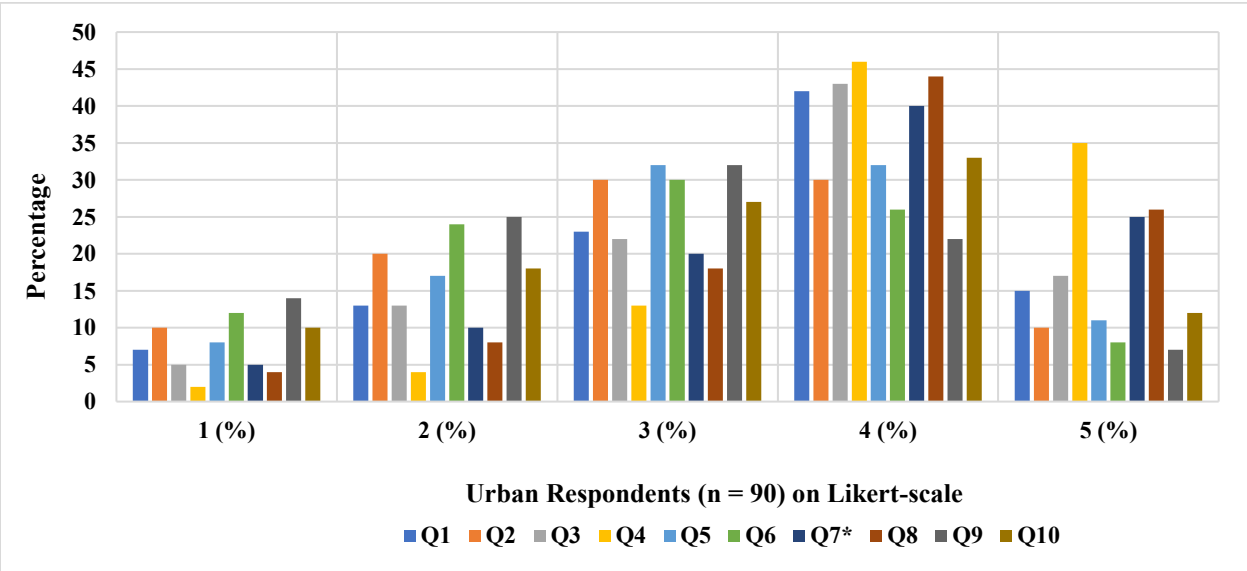

Figure 3: Urban Respondents (%) on Likert-scale

Rural respondents were more cautious overall. Just 32% felt government education reforms addressed real needs, and 25% trusted political promises on education (Figure 4). Yet for Q7, 53% scored 4–5,

implying a moderate level of trust in employment promises. At the same time, 22% expressed clear skepticism (scores 1–2). This mixed response likely stemmed from lower visibility or accessibility of employment schemes in rural areas (Mahapatra et al., 2020), or reliance on word-of-mouth over direct policy impact (Prialatha and Mathi, 2012). Across all groups, many respondents agreed on the need for skill development: 46% of males, 43% of females, 46% of urban youth, and 43% of rural youth supported this priority. This emphasized a common demand among youth for practical, employment-linked education, regardless of gender or location.

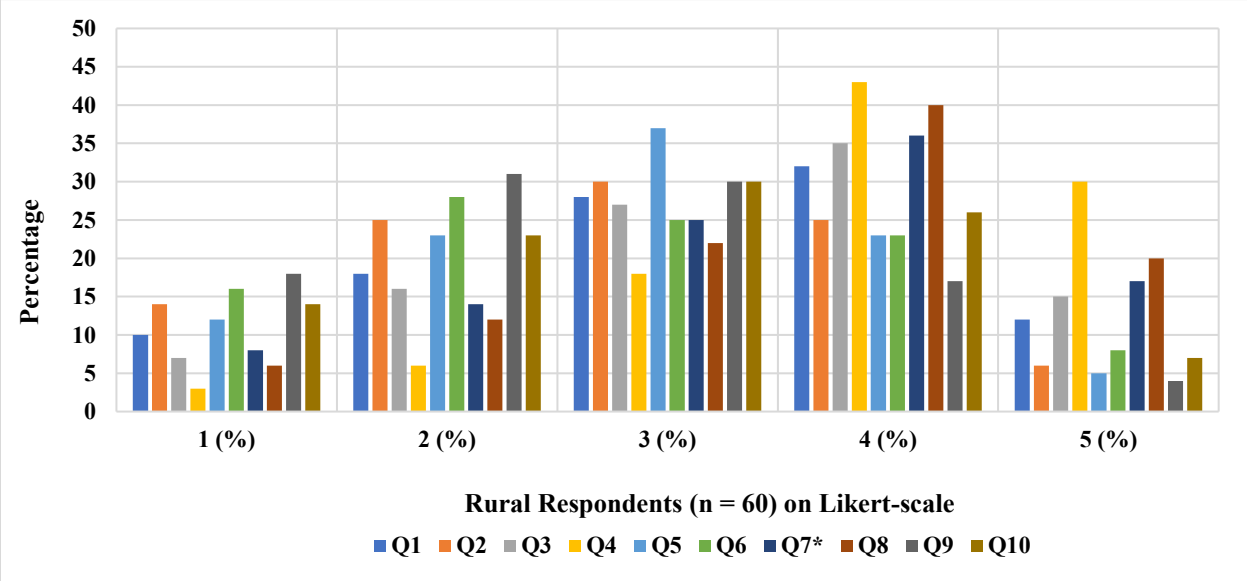

Figure 4: Rural Respondents (%) on Likert-scale

Interestingly, while skepticism about political agendas has been widely reported in prior literature, the reverse-coded Q7 data in this study revealed a more balanced or even optimistic outlook on employment promises, particularly among urban males. However, this perceived trust did not consistently translate into belief in the effectiveness of schemes (Q6), where agreement was lower across all groups (e.g., only 26% of males and 22% of females rated them positively). Henceforth, a youth displayed moderate optimism in political intent but reserved judgment on implementation effectiveness. These findings suggest that while policy messaging may resonate, youth engagement and trust can only be sustained through visible, inclusive, and accountable policy delivery, especially in employment creation.

IV. CONCLUSION

The present study explored youth attitudes toward political agendas on education and employment in the Bilaspur region of Chhattisgarh. The findings revealed a generally moderate level of optimism toward education-related policies, particularly those focused on skill development. Across all groups, nearly half of the respondents supported skill-based educational reform, indicating a shared recognition of its importance for employability. However, attitudes toward employment-related political promises were more mixed. While reverse-coded responses to Question 7 suggested that a majority of youth trusted the intent behind employment schemes, their lower agreement with statements on actual job creation and transparency pointed to a perception–implementation gap. Notably, rural and female respondents showed slightly higher levels of skepticism, likely due to limited access to quality education and fewer direct employment opportunities. These results suggest that while youth are receptive to political messaging around development, their support depends on visible and effective implementation. For political agendas to be credible and impactful, they must be accompanied by transparent mechanisms, inclusive outreach, and measurable outcomes, particularly in marginalized

regions. Future research could expand on this work by employing a longitudinal design to examine changes in youth attitudes over time. Including qualitative interviews would help uncover deeper motivations and contextual nuances behind responses. Moreover, expanding the geographic scope beyond a single region would enhance the generalizability of the findings.

V. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of Interest among authors.

VI. ETHICAL DISCLOSURE

Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and no form of coercion was applied at any stage.

REFERENCES

[1] Grover, P., Sharma, V., & Mittal, N. (2024). SDG 4 progression through mobile learning:An exploratory study of Indian HEIs. 2024 11th International Conference on Reliability, Infocom Technologies and Optimization (Trends and Future Directions) (ICRITO). https://doi.org/10.1109/ICRITO61523.2024.10522310

[2] Mahapatra, S., Pandey, A., & Narayanan, B. (2020). Socio-economic analysis of effectiveness of implementation of an employment guarantee scheme at local level: A study of a village in India. Socioeconomic Challenges, 4(2), 23–30. https://doi.org/10.21272/sec.4(2).23-30.2020

[3] Prialatha, & Mathi, M. (2012). Word of mouth: the key to unlock hinterland. Journal of Management and Science, 1(2), 150–164. https://doi.org/10.26524/jms.2012.17

[4] Cooksey R. W. (2020). Descriptive Statistics for Summarising Data. Illustrating Statistical Procedures: Finding Meaning in Quantitative Data, 61–139. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-2537-7_5

[5] Ranganathan, P., & Caduff, C. (2023). Designing and validating a research questionnaire - Part 1. Perspectives in clinical research, 14(3), 152–155. https://doi.org/10.4103/picr.picr_140_23

[6] Adipat, S. & Chotikapanich, R. (2022). Sustainable Development Goal 4: An Education Goal to Achieve Equitable Quality Education. Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies, 11(6), 174. https://doi.org/10.36941/ajis-2022-0159

[7] Kaur, U., Hasija, A. M., Chaudhary, S., & Chandna, V. (2022). Demographic dividend: An asset for India. RESEARCH REVIEW International Journal of Multidisciplinary, 7(1), 134–143. https://doi.org/10.31305/rrijm.2022.v07.i01.020

[8] Shukla, R. (2024). India's Young Harbour Big Plans. PRICE. https://www.price360.in/articles-details.php?url=indias-young-harbour-big-plans

[9] Jaiswal, B., Bhasin, S. & Sharma, A. (2015). Empowerment Of Youth: A Challenge Of 21st Century. International Journal of Social Relevance & Concern (IJSRC), 3(8), 1-8. https://ijournals.in/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/1.3801-Bimal.compressed.pdf

[10] Datta, A., & Rajan, S. I. (2024). Internal migration and development in India. Indian Journal of Human Development, 18(1), 7–19. https://doi.org/10.1177/09737030241251865

[11] Sharma, M. (2021). Exploring the Political Attitudes Amongst the Youth -A Thematic Analysis The International Journal of Indian Psychology. 9(3), 2132-2146. https://ijip.in/pdf-viewer/?id=37107

[12] Kedar, M. S. (2019). Youth in India: Education and employment. In J. Singh & V. Dubey (Eds.), Proceedings of the National Seminar on Youth in India Education and Employment. Mahamaya Rajkiya Mahavidalaya Sherkot, Bijnor (U.P.), 14–15 December 2019.

[13] Sharma, A. N. (2022). Youth employment and unemployment in India: Issues and challenges. Indian Journal of Labour Economics, 65(2), 237–267. https://doi.org/10.1007/s41027-022-00387-5