

PERCEPTION OF EDUCATED YOUTH IN RELATION TO UNREST AND INSURGENCY - A STUDY IN MANIPUR

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Abstract - This study reports the findings of a study on the perception of educated youth in relation to unrest and insurgency. The sample constituted 256 students selected through random sampling drawn from various colleges and departments of Manipur University. The investigator developed an opinionnaire for collecting data. The findings as a whole revealed that unemployment and lack of self-employment opportunities, lack of guidance, corrupt practices, stepmotherly treatment from the Centre are the major causes of unrest and insurgency. The paper also highlights suggestions for tackling such issues viz, creation of adequate employment opportunities, negotiation with various underground outfits with an appeal for peace, adopting tougher stand against the insurgent groups, checking of migrants.

Keywords - Perception, educated youth, unrest, insurgency, Manipur

INTRODUCTION

Youth of today are the cream of the society and the citizens of tomorrow. Every now and then it is emphasized that the future of our country lies with the youth and that they will be able to transform our society in the desired direction. However, youth unrest and insurgency has assumed a serious proportion in the country and the state of Manipur in particular. Due to development in science and technology, rapid changes and mounting problems, the attitude of the youth has also changed to a great extent. The problem of disorganization and maladjustment, lust for power and money has affected the youth in an unusual way. In addition to that, when their needs for emotional support, security and recognition of aspirations and developments are neglected, they developed a sense of desperation and frustration thereby developing hostility in their minds. This may also create a climate of indiscipline, defiance of authority and proneness to anti-social activities.

Therefore, in this paper, an attempt is made to study the perception of the students of higher education programme with regard to their unrest and insurgency.

OBJECTIVES

1. To find out the factors propelling youngsters to join various underground outfits and to compare them in relation to gender, tribe and level of education.
2. To find out the problems that youngsters experience during their higher education programme and to compare them in relation to gender, tribe and level of education.
3. To find out the factors compelling the insurgent groups to demand secession from India and to compare them in relation to gender, tribe and level of education.
4. To find out the suggestions of the educated youth to tackle the problem of unrest and insurgency and to compare them in relation to gender, tribe and level of education.

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey method was employed for the present study. The population consisted of all the students enrolled in the colleges and university departments affiliated to Manipur University. A self-developed questionnaire was used for the study. In order to collect information, a limited segment of college students was selected randomly. In all, the questionnaire was given to 300 students but only 256 returned them with complete information. Thus, the final sample consisted of 256 students. In collecting the data, the investigator personally administered the tools to the respondents either in groups or individually and collected necessary information.

ANALYSES AND FINDINGS

The data was analysed in a simple tabular form and percentage was calculated on the basis of the responses of the students. Attempt is also made to show in distribution, a comparative manner between boys and girls, tribal and non-tribal students, and also between post graduate and under graduate students.

Table No. 1: Nature of responses of the sample of higher education students with regard to their perception about factor propelling youngsters to join various underground outfits.

Options		(a) Uncertain future	(b) Lack of job /self-employment opportunities	(c) Lack of guidance	(d) To earn easy power and money	(e) Any other	
Total	N		256				
	Score	45	142	102	64	12	
	%	17.58	55.47	39.84	25	4.69	
Gender	Boys	N	146				
		Score	24	86	56	40	10
		%	16.44	58.90	38.36	27.39	6.85
	Girls	N	110				
		Score	21	56	46	24	2
		%	19.09	50.91	41.82	21.82	1.82
Tribe Status	Tribal	N	116				
		Score	18	62	54	20	6
		%	15.52	53.44	46.55	17.24	5.17
	Non-Tribal	N	140				
		Score	27	80	48	44	6
		%	19.28	57.14	34.28	31.43	4.28
Level of Education	P/G	N	60				
		Score	25	45	48	20	8
		%	41.67	75	80	33.33	13.33
	U/G	N	196				
		Score	25	45	48	20	8
		%	10.20	49.49	24.55	22.45	2.04

Table No. 1 shows that out of the total number of respondents majority (55.47%) of them felt that lack of job/self-employment opportunities propel youngsters to join various underground outfits while 39.84% of the respondents opted lack of guidance as the reason. At the same time, uncertain future and to earn easy power and money has been felt as the reason by 17.58% and 35% of the students respectively. Again, few percentages (4.69%) of the students cited some other reasons like unauthorised use of power by men in uniform, communalism, corruption, narrow concept of nationalism, step motherly treatment from the concerned government, broken family.

When comparison was made between boys and girls, it shows that more percentage of boys (58.90% and 27.39%) felt lack of job/self-employment opportunities and to earn easy power and money as the reason than their girl counter parts (50.91% and 21.82%) respectively. On the other hand, the number of students blaming uncertain future and lack of guidance as the reason is greater among the girls (19.09% and 41.82%) than the boys (16.44% and 38.36%) respectively. A small group (6.85%) of boys were found to have given some other reasons like communalism, unauthorised utilisation of power by men in uniform, political domination, corruption, step motherly treatment from the government. The number of girl students citing other reasons appear to be negligible.

Comparison between tribal and non-tribal students recalls that almost an equal percentage of tribal students (53.44%) and non-tribal students (57.14%) opted the reason as lack of job/self-employment opportunities Similarly 15.52 % of tribals and 19.28% of non-tribal students opted uncertain future. On the other hand, there is a sharp difference between the tribals and the non-tribals in their perception about factors propelling youngsters to join various underground outfits in their future. The former scoring 46.55% and 17.24% and the later 34.28% and 31,48% considered lack of guidance and earning of easy money and power as the cause of uncertainly in life respectively.

The findings as a whole indicated lack of job/self-employment opportunities as the most frequently occurring response followed by lack of guidance. The third choice appears to be earning easy power and money while uncertain future became the fourth choice perceived by the students which propel youngsters to join various underground outfits.

Table No. 2: Nature of response of the students of higher education programme with regard to the problems that the youngsters experience.

Options		(a) Insurgency	b) Unemployment	(c) Corruption	(d) Drug abuse	(e) Any other	
Total	N		256				
	Score	82	140	122	63	1	
	%	32.03	54.69	47.66	24.61	0.39	
Gender	Boys	N	146				
		Score	60	84	66	42	0
		%	41.09	57.53	45.66	28.77	0
	Girls	N	110				
		Score	22	56	56	21	1
		%	20	50.91	50.91	19.09	0.91
Tribe Status	Tribal	N	116				
		Score	44	62	44	20	1
		%	37.93	53.45	37.93	17.24	0.86
	Non-Tribal	N	140				
		Score	38	78	78	43	0
		%	27.14	55.71	55.71	30.71	0
Level of Education	P/G	N	60				
		Score	35	50	45	16	1
		%	58.33	83.33	75	26.67	1.67
	U/G	N	196				
		Score	47	90	77	47	0
		%	23.98	45.92	39.28	23.98	0

With regard to the problems faced by youngsters in Table No. 2, more than half (57%) felt that the rising trend of unemployment among the younger generation is creating serious problem. It has resulted in protest against the entire system of production. Out of the total number of respondents, majority of them perceived that the problem they experienced is unemployment while 45.20% of them blamed corruption, less than half (32.03 %) of them felt the problem they encounter is insurgency. At the same time 24.01% of them found drug abuse as the problem. A negligible size (0.39%) of the youngsters felt factors like dictatorship and unstable political situation as one of the problems being faced by them.

When post-graduate and under-graduate students were compared, it was found that both the group thought unemployment to be the biggest problem followed by corruption and insurgency. Drug abuse seems to be one of the least problems encountered by them.

Again, when comparison made between tribal and non-tribal students, both the group considered unemployment to be the biggest problem they encountered. The figure also indicated that the tribal students felt the problem of corruption and insurgency to be (37.93%) on equal footing whereas the non-tribals felt employment and corruption to be biggest problem followed by drug abuse (30.71%) and insurgency (27.14)

The findings as a whole indicated the rising trend of unemployment as the biggest problem experienced by the youngsters followed by corruption. Insurgency and drug abuse appeared to be the third and fourth factor encountered by the youngsters.

Table No. 3: Nature of response of the students of higher education programme with regard to factors compelling insurgent groups for demanding separation or secession from India.

Options		(a) Stepmotherly treatment from the centre	(b) Corrupt practice in the allocation & distribution of funds and jobs	(c) Appeal to a life of adventure	(d) Craving for power and identity	(e) Any other	
Total	N		256				
	Score	108	66	18	76	14	
	%	42.19	25.78	7.03	29.69	1.56	
Gender	Boys	N		146			
		Score	78	25	6	38	4
		%	53.42	17.12	4.11	26.02	2.74
	Girls	N		110			
		Score	30	41	12	38	0
		%	27.27	37.27	10.91	34.54	0
Tribe Status	Tribal	N		116			
		Score	48	36	4	56	2
		%	41.38	31.03	3.44	48.27	1.72
	Non-Tribal	N		140			
		Score	60	30	14	20	2
		%	42.86	21.44	10	14.28	1.43
Level of Education	P/G	N		60			
		Score	50	30		31	2
		%	83.33	50	6.67	51.67	3.33
	U/G	N		196			
		Score	58	36	14	45	2
		%	29.59	18.37	7.14	22.96	1.02

The above Table No. 3 indicates that out of the total number of respondents 42.19% of them felt step motherly treatment from the centre as the factors compelling insurgent groups to demand separation from India while 29.69% of the students felt craving for power and identity as the factor. Again 25.78% of the students felt that the factor compelling insurgent groups to go for such demand may be corrupt practices in the allocation/distribution of funds and jobs. 7.03% of the students are of the view that appealing to a life of adventure may be the reason for it. A negligible percentage of students gave some other reason like injustice.

When boys and girls were compared, it was found that 53.42% of the boys and 27.27% of the girls view step motherly treatment from the centre as the factor while 17.12% of boys and 37.27% of girls indicated corrupt practices in the allocation/distribution of jobs and funds as the reason for such demand. Appealing to a life of adventure has been found to be the factor according to the opinion of 4.11% and 10.91% of boys and girls respectively. The percentage of students indicating the factor as craving for power and identity is 26.02% among the boys and 34.54% with the girls.

Comparing tribal and non-tribal students reveals that 41.38% of tribals and 42.86% of non-tribals indicated step motherly treatment from the centre as the factor for demanding secession while 31.03% of tribals and 21.44% of nontribal perceived corrupt practice in the allocation/distribution of fund and jobs as the reason. Craving for power and identity is another factor viewed by 48.27% of tribals and 14.28% of non-tribals. Another reason viewed is appealing to a life of adventure by 3.44% and 10% of tribals and non-tribals respectively.

When comparison was made between the post graduate and under graduate students, the table reveals that 83.33% of the post graduate students viewed stepmotherly treatment from the centre as the factor for demanding separation from India while the same could be seen with 29.59% of the undergraduate students. Corrupt practice in the allocation/distribution of funds and jobs was viewed as the factor by 50% of under graduate students. Again, the factor of appealing to a life of adventure and craving for power and identity has been viewed by 6.67% and 51.67% of the post graduate students respectively against 7.14% and 22.96% of the under graduate students.

On the whole, the findings indicated stepmotherly treatment from the centre as the most frequently occurring response while craving for power and identity became the second choice. Corrupt practices in the allocation/distribution of funds and jobs and appealing to a life of adventure appeared to be the third and the fourth factor respectively which compel the insurgent groups to demand separation or secession from India.

Table No. 4: Nature of response of students of higher education programme with regard to their suggestion to tackle the problem of unrest.

Options		(a) Creating adequate employment opportunities	(b) Checking of migrants	(c) Negotiation with underground outfits with appeal for peace	(d) Adopting tougher stand against insurgent groups	(e) Any other	
Total	N		256				
	Score	136	18	120	38	8	
	%	53.12	7.03	46.87	14.84	3.12	
Gender	Boys	N	146				
		Score	86	10	65	18	6
		%	58.90	6.85	44.52	12.33	4.11
	Girls	N	110				
		Score	50	8	56	20	2
		%	45.45	7.27	50.91	18.18	1.82
Tribe Status	Tribal	N	116				
		Score	80	10	48	18	2
		%	68.96	8.62	41.38	15.52	1.72
	Non-Tribal	N	140				
		Score	56	8	72	20	6
		%	40	5.71	51.43	14.28	4.28
Level of Education	P/G	N	60				
		Score	60	12	58	14	4
		%	100	20	96.67	23.33	6.67
	U/G	N	196				
		Score	76	6	62	24	4
		%	38.78	3.06	31.63	12.24	2.04

A cursory glance at Table No. 4 shows that majority of the respondents (53.12%) suggested creating adequate employment opportunities to tackle the problem of unrest in the North East Region while 46.87% of the students suggested negotiating with underground outfits with appeal for peace as the measure for tackling such problem. But 14.84% and 7.03 % of the students suggested other measures like adopting tougher stand against insurgent groups and checking of migrants respectively. It can also be noted that 3.12% of the total number of respondents gave other suggestions like organising seminars and workshops on the theme of peace and harmony, giving special attention from the centre, accountability and transparency of the government policy, equal treatment from the central government, existence of a sincere leader for taking the problem of unrest in Manipur.

When comparison was made between boys and girls with regard to their suggestions, boys scored higher (58.90%) than the girls (45.45%) on creating adequate employment opportunities. The percentage of students suggesting negotiation with underground outfits with appeal for peace was greater among the girls' students (50.91%) than their boy counterpart (44.52 %). 18.18% of boys and 12.33% of girls suggested insurgent groups while nearly equivalent percentage of boys (6.85%) and girls (7.27%) suggested for checking of migrants. A negligible percentage from both boys and girls suggested other measures.

Again, when the tribal and non-tribal students was compared, it was found that the percentage of students suggesting creating adequate employment opportunities was higher among the tribal students (68.96%) than the non-tribal students (40 %). Migration was suggested by 50.91% of non-tribal students and 41.38% of tribal students. The percentage of students suggesting adopting tougher stand against insurgent groups is almost same with the tribal students scoring 15.52% and non-tribal students scoring 14.28%.

Comparing the post graduate and undergraduate students reveals that all (100%) the post graduate students suggested creating adequate employment opportunities and (96.67%) of them cited negotiation with underground outfits with appeal for peace respectively as the measure for tackling the problem of unrest. While it was only 38.87% and 31.63% among the under-graduate students respectively. The percentage of students suggesting adopting tougher stand against insurgent groups and checking of migrants was higher among the post graduate students (23.33% and 20%) respectively) than their under graduate counterpart with a score of 12.24% and 3.06% respectively .Other measures like sincere leader, equal treatment from the government, organising seminars and workshops on the theme of peace and harmony, acceptability and transparency of the government policies and schemes was suggested by 6.67% of postgraduate and 2.04% of under-graduate students.

The findings as a whole indicated that creating adequate employment opportunities appeared to be most frequently occurring suggestion while negotiation with underground outfits with appeal for peace became the second response suggested by the students. Adopting tougher stand against insurgent groups became the third suggestion. The least frequent suggestion is checking of migrants.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the findings of the present study, it is suggested that the policy makers need to pay serious attention on issues pertaining to high rates of unemployment lack of guidance, stepmotherly treatment from the centre, corruption, negotiation with underground outfits, drug abuses etc. This will not only alleviate the frustrations of the youth but also minimize the chances of their deviant behaviour. Thus, the need of the hour is creation of adequate employment opportunities along with dedicated individuals and a favourable environment which will give the youth a sense of pride, self-satisfaction and relate to others in meaningful way. This will help the students to face the ever-growing challenges of corruption, globalisation, unemployment and ever-increasing demand of the people from all sections of the society.

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