

Ramaiah Webinar on Productive Employment Creation in India during COVID-19

The challenge of employment creation has been a prevalent issue across the world and is especially evident in India considering the unprecedented and severe impact of the COVID-19 crisis on its economy. In the post-2015 global development agenda, there has been a growing focus on 'productive employment' and its ability to engender sustained poverty reduction. India has maintained an average growth rate of 7% for the last decade but has not witnessed subsequent employment growth. This has led to increased poverty levels as well as rising rates of informality in its labour market. The COVID-19 pandemic, and the resulting national lockdown, has starkly illustrated the fragility of certain labour markets in India and the vulnerability of particular factions of the workforce. The Indian labour market has long been in need of structural transformation, wherein the labour force moves from low to high-productivity occupations to ensure more productive employment. Before the pandemic, the central government had advocated a variety of policy interventions, encompassing entrepreneurship, monetary support, and sustainable livelihoods to capture higher returns. We seek to gain a comprehensive understanding of productive employment creation in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, using the lens of the ontology in Figure 1.

The ontology encapsulates the core logic of schemes that directly impact productive employment creation in the Indian economy. The framework explains how the allocation of resources for an employment objective in a particular sector impacts various types of employment, on the basis of age, gender, education level, and settlement. Resources allocated for employment creation can be financial, human, material, spatial, informational, and temporal in nature. The allocation objectives have been divided into interventions at market-level, enterprise-level and individual-level, including a variety of employment objectives such as investment promotion, credit support, skills training. The sectors covered are agriculture, manufacturing, services, and a catch-all inclusive term, other.

The ontology acts as a cognitive map - a 'Google' mindmap - for feedback and learning through its analysis of Indian Government's 122 major centrally sponsored schemes. Figure 1 maps the guidelines of schemes onto the framework; this highlights the elements that are highly emphasized, the elements that are less emphasized, and the elements that are ignored or overlooked. Governmental response to the outbreak is crucial for the mitigation of significant economic consequences, and by clearly identifying which areas of employment require further support, appropriate policy measures can be put in place to ensure a smoother economic recovery. The panel discussion, structured by the ontology, will help reassess the pathways adopted, reinforce the effective ones, fix and re-direct the ineffective ones, while identifying the innovative ones to generate productive employment.

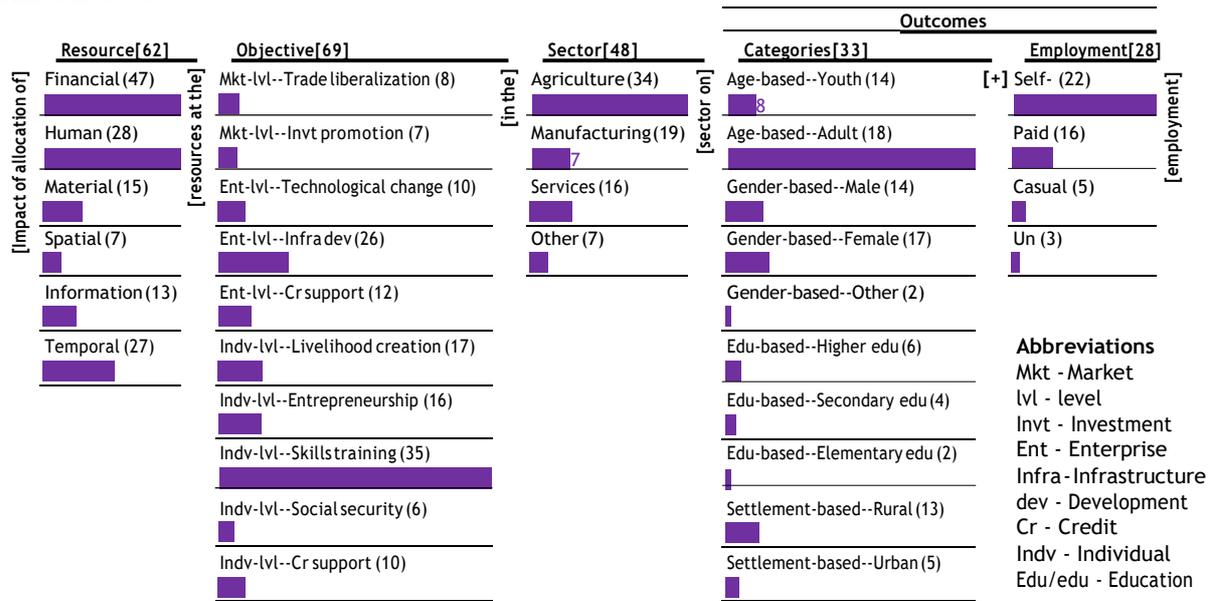


Figure 1: Ontological Map of Monads for Productive Employment Creation

The webinar’s brainstorming will be structured and free flowing among policymakers, practitioners (NGOs and industry) and academics on labour markets and policy in India. Its structure will follow the ontology and will address the following questions:

- What resources do schemes employ to target employment creation? Which employment objectives have been targeted and which have not been? What sectors have been of higher focus?
- What impact have the schemes had on age-based, gender-based, education-based, and settlement-based employment? What employment outcomes have been addressed?
- What are the major gaps in policy emphasis? Which employment objectives portray significant sectoral disparity? Can shifts in employment outcomes lead to higher productivity?
- What combinations of resource, objective, sector, and outcomes have been effective? What combinations have been ineffective? What combinations can be tried?

The results of the discussion will highlight the vital role of government intervention in effective employment generation, by delineating a roadmap for future research, policy, and practice to address the problem systematically and systematically.

Date: August 28, 2020

Time: 3 pm to 5 pm (IST)

Facilitator: Dr. Arkalgud Ramaprasad, Director, Ramaiah Public Policy Center, Professor Emeritus, University of Illinois at Chicago, USA

Moderator: Dr. Chetan Singai, Deputy Director, Ramaiah Public Policy Center, Bengaluru

Coordinators:

1) Ms. Sukanya V. Subramaniyan, Webinar Coordinator, Ramaiah Public Policy Center

2) Mr. M Anilkumar, Research Fellow, Ramaiah Public Policy Center

List of Panellists

Sl.No	Name	Affiliation
1.	Mr Abhijit Mukhopadhyay	Senior Fellow, Observer Research Foundation
2.	Prof Aradhna Aggarwal	Professor, Department of International Economics, Government and Business, Copenhagen Business School (CBS), Frederiksberg
3.	Mr B Chandrashekar	Research Fellow, Centre for Public Policy Research (CPPR), Kerala
4.	Dr Chetan Singai	Deputy Director, Ramaiah Public Policy Centre, Bengaluru
5.	Prof Indrajit Bairagya	Assistant Professor, Centre for Human Resource Development (CHRD), Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC)
6.	Mr Mounik Lahiri	Deputy Manager and Senior Government, Advisory/Public Policy Consultant, Deloitte, India
7.	Ms. Nalini Gulati	Country Economist, Ideas for India, International Growth Centre (IGC), New Delhi
8.	Dr Padmaja. V	Associate Professor, Ramaiah Institute of Management, Bengaluru
9.	Dr ShwetmalaKashyap	Senior Research Fellow, Ramaiah Public Policy Centre, Bengaluru
10	Prof H. S. Shylendra	Professor, Institute of Rural Management, Anand, Gujarat
11	Dr Susanna G Mitra	Senior Research Fellow, Ramaiah Public Policy Centre, Bengaluru
12	Dr Vaidehi Tandel	Junior Fellow, IDFC Institute, Mumbai.
13	Dr C. Veeramani	Professor, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, (IGIDR), Mumbai