

Detailed Analysis of Employment Exchanges in New Delhi

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Abstract: This paper intends to find out both the positives and negatives of the functioning of employment exchanges, currently operating in National Capital Territory of Delhi. In order to carry out an in-depth analysis, these employment exchanges were personally visited and the official website of this department under GNCT, Delhi was also brought under user interface analysis, in order to check its relevance and appropriateness for the end user.

In all 3 employment exchanges were visited for this study (exact locations can't be specified due to confidentiality issues) and complete official website was analyzed for its ease of usability.

Keywords: GNCT, Employment Exchanges.

1. INTRODUCTION

Way back during the post second world war era, when a huge chunk of unsettled armed personnel were trying to find a way out for their living, the concept of employment exchange first emerged on the picture. In order to simplify the whole process and ensure uniformity in processes and policies, it was decided that the proposed machinery must be regulated and controlled under Central Government.

As a result of mutual consent between central and state machineries, DGR&E was established in July 1945, as a result of which several employment exchanges were opened in the country. Till 1946, these employment exchanges worked exclusively for placing the armed personnel into suitable professions. But in 1947, along with the country's partition, a huge segment of population got displaced from one side to the other, which required a much larger and formal body to provide job opportunities to such individuals. As a result, a broader perspective in terms of research, vocational education and so on was brought into the responsibilities of DGR&E.

It was foreseen that the transition of the organization from resettlement machinery of war personnel to a national level placement organization required a lot of restructuring. As a result, Shiva Rao Committee, also known as Training and Employment Services Organization Committee, under chairmanship of Shri B. Shiva Rao was set up to analyze the future path and proceedings of the organization, ranging from structure to scope. Today's structure and functioning of the employment exchanges is the result of recommendations made by Shiva Rao Committee, because of which State governments became in-charge of day-to-day operations of the organization, w.e.f Nov 1, 1956.

Directorate General of Employment and Training (DGE&T), under purview of Ministry of Labor, operates National Employment Service (NES) that operates through Employment Exchanges Act, 1959 and carries out the functions of registration and placement of job seekers, and collected of employment related market information, in order to create a database for optimum management of demand and supply of labor.

The main function of the **Directorate of Employment, GNCT of Delhi** is to render employment service to the job-seekers, job-providers and all other concerned through its 9 District Employment Exchanges/ 02 Special Employment Exchanges for PH & 1 Special Employment Exchange for Ex-Servicemen, UEI&GB located at University of Delhi, Jawaharlal Nehru University and Jamia Millia Islamia University. This includes online registration of the job-seekers, updating /modification of their registration, receiving of the requisition of vacancies from the employers and sponsoring the names of registrants as per the requirements of the job providers for employment.

2. CURRENT SCENARIO & BEST PRACTICES

While it seems to a layman that the usability of employment exchanges, with the emergence of various online job portals, must have reduced with the passage of time, the statistics put forth by employment exchanges (reported by respective state governments) in Dec 2014 are starkly different.

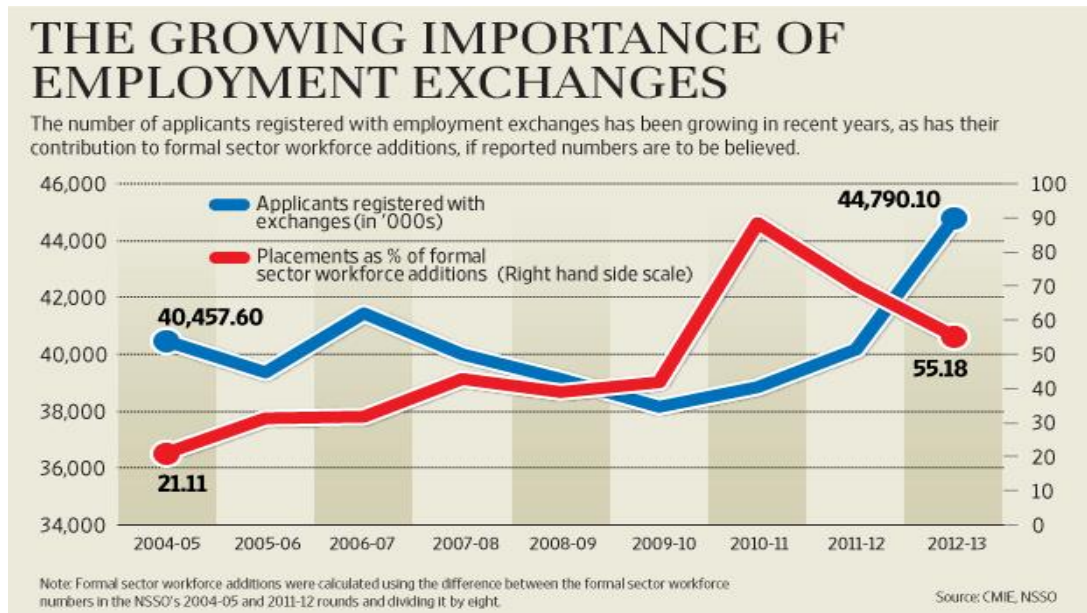


Figure 1: Growing Importance of Employment Exchanges

This data clearly shows how the efficiency of employment exchanges is increasing with the course of time, in terms of both acquiring the applicants as well as placing them in suitable job roles/opportunities.

As can be seen in the figure, the total number of applicants registered with employment exchanges all over the country was 40.4 million in 2004-05, which got increased to 44.5 million in 2012-13. Earlier in 2004-05, net placement contribution of the employment exchanges was reported to be 21% of the formal sector workforce additions, while this figure advanced to 55% in 2012-13. Though there have been some fluctuations in the years between 2004 to 2013, but the overall trend of the performance of employment exchanges has been exhibited fantastically.

Though many experts doubt the validity of such statistics, but one thing seems evident is that there are only a few states that are performing above expectations while rest are just being dragged with the flow.

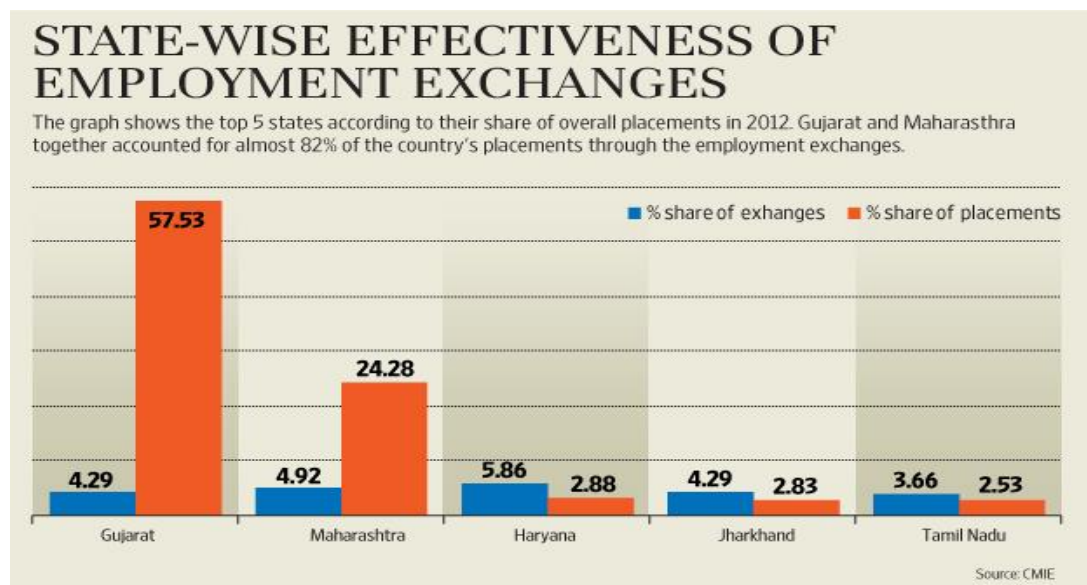


Figure 2: State-wise Effectiveness of Employment Exchanges

As seen in the figure, Gujarat and Maharashtra, having just 9.2% of the total employment exchanges in the country (as of 2012), are the best performers in terms of candidates' placements with a record 82% placements in 2012. So it can be easily deciphered that remaining 91% of the employment exchanges in the country accounted for just 18% of the total placements in 2012.

“Gujarat and Maharashtra have adopted more modern techniques such as outreach programs and job fairs,” said a senior labor ministry official, who declined to be identified. “The other states are not so proactive, still relying on traditional methods. Another key factor why these states are doing better is because they are placing people in the private sector, while the others cater only to the government and public sector.”

Maharashtra has been successful in fulfilling the employment needs of its people, despite having the maximum migrants from all over the country. Job seekers in Mumbai are highest in numbers all across the country, and they still trust employment exchanges more than any other online job portal to fulfill their job needs.

Year	Total National Placement	Placements Provided in Gujarat	Percentage	Rank
2002	1,53,000	70,700	46%	1 st
2003	1,54,900	64,900	42%	1 st
2004	1,37,700	64,900	47%	1 st
2005	1,73,200	92,900	54%	1 st
2006	1,77,000	99,000	55%	1 st
2007	2,63,500	1,78,300	67%	1 st
2008	3,04,900	2,17,700	71%	1 st
2009	2,61,500	1,53,500	59%	1 st
2010	5,09,600	2,07,586	41%	1 st
2011		2,25,550		

Figure 3: Placement Record (2002-2011) of Gujarat

Gujarat's performance cannot be said no less than phenomenal, when it comes to providing job placements through its employment exchanges. As can be seen in the figure, Gujarat has topped the chart in providing jobs to its youth since year 2002. Main reasons for such a superior performance from the western state of the country have been regular job fairs through which Gujarat government has built a public-private partnership model, where the students studying across various ITIs in the state are placed across various private enterprises through such fairs.

In addition to it, government has established formal placement advisory bureaus across 37 ITIs in the state in year 2007-08 and 2008-09, which are responsible for guiding as well as placing the students across various public as well as private enterprises, as per their needs and demands. International players such as Toyota and L&T have been involved in delivering specialized trainings in ITIs across the state. Moreover Gujarat government in December 2008, in association with Larsen & Toubro (L&T), started construction skill training centers (CSTC) across 12 ITIs that were specifically formed to provide construction training to the youth owing to high demand for construction workers that was foreseen by the DGE&T.

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

To find out the loopholes in the existing operations of employment exchanges in GNCT Delhi, that includes the analysis of functioning of such exchanges and user interface analysis of department's official website.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Exploratory research was carried out for this study, as most of the observations were made by visiting 3 employment exchanges in Delhi. Senior officials (Employment Officers) were interviewed about the current state, future plans, challenges and other aspects of their respective employment exchanges.

User Interface (UI), also referred to as 'human machine interface', is a medium that connects a human user to a system or machine in order to enhance the usability and user experience. User interface tends to minimize the amount of user inputs while maximizing the quality of output from system/machine that allows the user to make more efficient and effective decisions.

User Interface Design (UID) is thus considered to be one of the most critical phases of system development where a designer tends to use both typography and aesthetics, in order to enhance the overall user experience while drawing minimum attention to the interface itself.

Though there are various ways to evaluate a user interface of any system (employment exchange website in our case), we have brought into use following parameters for our UID analysis:

- **User Familiarity:** User interface must contain concepts and terminologies that are known to the end user. For example, a university's website must use terms that can be easily understood by faculties, staff, students as well as research scholars.
- **Consistency:** Terms, concepts, notations and so on, must be consistently used throughout the interface. Disparity in their usage would lead to user ambiguity that would spoil the whole purpose of leveraging enhanced user experience through the interface.
- **Minimal Surprise:** Users must be provided with an easy to use interface that behaves in a way that is expected by any layman user, under normal circumstances. For example, 'Next' button on a web page should always lead to next page rather than the previous or back page.
- **Recoverability:** User should always be provided with the flexibility to roll back any errors/mistakes that he/she commits while operating the system. Recoverability measures include 'soft deletes', undo functionality, alerts for destructive actions and so on.
- **User Guidance:** A well-developed interface always provides sufficient directions to the user, in order to facilitate him/her to carry out required operations in a smooth manner. Examples of user guidance include online user manuals, help text and so on.
- **User Diversity:** A user interface must be comprehensible to a wide array of user categories. For example, a website intended to provide some agricultural knowledge to farmers, must always have an option of converting the text into local language; a website for old age senior citizens should always have larger font size.

Think Aloud Protocol was used for this research, where the general feelings of the user while navigating through the website were recorded that straightaway illustrated various pros and cons across the website.

5. ANALYSIS

During our visit to 3 employment exchanges in Delhi, we observed following key issues that need to be addressed at the earliest, for the betterment of beneficiaries:

- People with inferior educational background, who visited employment exchange for registration, were provided website link for registration, without any hands-on guidance on usability of computer system
- Directorate of Employment website (<http://employment.delhigovt.nic.in/dee/>) is currently in English language only
- Earlier vacancies were filled on the basis of seniority of registered candidates, while currently that system has been abolished
- Currently there are no counselors in any of the employment exchanges visited
- No provision of training & skills development at any of the employment exchanges, as of now
- As per a senior official, job fairs have to be conducted through contingency funds
- Lack of uniformity of information, in terms of employment related data, exists amongst Employment Officers at different employment exchanges
- No university employment exchange is present at Delhi University, while the address and phone number are still mentioned on website

- No one attends the telephone call, on any of the contact numbers mentioned on Directorate of Employment website

UID Analysis

- Help manual pdf is only in English
- Website is only in English, with no option of translating it in Hindi
- Website still asks for internet explorer to be used.
- Different pages for login and new user registration
- Header of login page breaks if you scroll right to the page
- On 'Add Qualification and Experience Details' page, headings of items are mentioned below them. For eg., Qualifications added to list
 - 'Add to list' button appears only if we scroll right on the page, otherwise candidate might not be able to record more rows of details
 - In Qualifications added to list header, Subjects are displayed in a selection box rather than a drop down button
 - Qualification is asked twice; once in Qualifications Details section and then again in Experience section
 - Experience details/employer's name asked after skill set on the page
 - In languages tab, 'ALL' checkbox is provided at the end. So user would click all the checkbox first and would then get to know about the All box
 - Official Indian languages such as Mizo, Assamese, Kokborok (Tripura) have not been included in the dropdown
 - Search skill is not functioning as it is showing error on the page.
 - List of international languages is incomplete
 - English has been included twice, in both the lists

Login Form

- No use of Candidate drop down at home page
- Clicking on 'Add qualifications' link brings an entirely fresh form, rather it should produce the already filled version, so that the candidate can modify it
- None of the links allow you to come back to home page; you need to re-login for that
- No need for separate hyperlinks for add and delete qualifications and experience; when these things can be achieved by a single 'Modify' button

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of our conversation with Employment Officers of various employment exchanges and analysis of best practices being followed in the top-performing states like Gujarat and Maharashtra, we recommend the following measures to Directorate of Employment, New Delhi:

- People visiting the employment exchange offices, especially those with the inferior educational background, should not just be given website link for registration, rather should also be shown a live demonstration of website usage through official computer systems available in the exchange
- Directorate of Employment website should have an option of Hindi language as well, as Hindi being the language spoken and understood by majority of people living in Delhi
- Since job vacancies are not being filled on the seniority basis of registered candidates at the employment exchange, so the criteria being followed to forward suitable profiles to respective employers must be publicized for transparency in the process
- Significant emphasis need to be laid on career counseling and skills development of the registered beneficiaries, which can only be done by hiring career counselors and skilled trainers, who can impart required information to the registered candidates. Though Employment Exchange at R.K.Puram is being developed into a 'Career Model Center' with the help of Delhi State Government, but more such centers are required in Delhi region, considering the number of beneficiaries it caters to.

- As it was reported by a senior official at one of the employment exchanges that job fairs and seminars usually need to be conducted through contingency fund at the department, so it can be assumed that there is a lack of financial support from state government's side due to which officials are bound to utilize contingency funds for this purpose. Therefore adequate funding needs to be provided from government's end to ensure smooth functioning of these employment exchanges.
- As it has been mentioned earlier as well that no university employment centre exists at Delhi University for more than last one year, but its address and contact numbers are still being displayed at Directorate of Employment website. Therefore website needs to be updated on regular basis, in order to avoid provision of any false/misleading information to the beneficiaries.
- With the emergence of central-level programs like Make in India, Digital India and so on, a huge requirement of skilled and semi-skilled individuals is foreseen in the coming times. Therefore Directorate of Employment, New Delhi should look for public private partnerships (as in case of Gujarat government), in order to place more registered candidates across private organizations.

Recent job summit organized by Directorate of Employment for physically challenged candidates, in the month of August, witnessed private players such as Mudra, Bikanerwala and so on, recruit more than 2000 candidates within 2 days. Thus such initiatives need to be carried out frequently, in order to benefit as much candidates as possible.

- As observed in case of Gujarat, ITI and polytechnic institutes need to be tapped directly by setting placement bureaus in their campuses. Placement bureau would also be responsible for skill training and career counseling of the candidates, in addition to placement services that would be their primary area of operation.

These placement bureaus can also advice Directorate of Employment to add/modify/remove any particular course from the curriculum of an institute/training, looking at the market demand of the jobs pertaining to that particular course.

7. FUTURE SCOPE

Since this study was conducted by visiting only 3 employment exchanges in Delhi, therefore it can be carried out a larger scale by visiting all 15 employment exchanges including district employment exchanges, special employment exchanges for persons with disabilities, special employment exchange for ex-servicemen, university employment information & guidance bureau (UEI&GB).

Such kind of research (including both operational and UID analysis) can also be carried out across other states of the country, where the performance of employment exchanges is not at par with the above average performing states of the country.

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