

REFLECTING ON THE ISSUE OF LOW EMPLOYMENT IN INDIA

This study intends to focus on the issue of low employment in India. I have considered this as a wicked problem because it has multiple aspects to analyse. In this study I will further discuss my statement and utilise my knowledge of design thinking to show how a sustainable solution can be developed.

Firstly, I will discuss the issue because as per IDEOU (2021), for implementing design thinking, it is important to understand the issue from a comprehensive viewpoint. The issue of low employment in India is a critical problem in my opinion because the employment rate in India has been low in the last few years. As per O'Neil (2021), in 2020, the youth unemployment rate was 23.75%, which is all-time high. Amidst Covid infection, all industries are trying to reform their business strategies to sustain and therefore, this is the high time when suitable measures are required to fix this issue as much as possible. This issue aligns with the 8th UN SDG of 'Productive employment'. This social issue is a wicked problem due to its multiple root causes. As mentioned by Rittel & Webber (1973), such types of public issues have no ultimate test of an answer and therefore, one cannot surely tell if one solution can solve the issue completely. It is possible that one solution is more effective than the other but each of them can cause further issues. Therefore, the motto is to find and implement the best solution to achieve sustainable growth.

Design thinking can help in this aspect. As per Wong (2020), to deal with a wicked problem one has to fall in love with the problem itself; this was also taught by our professor Dr. Ronika Chakraborty during BU7003 course. In design thinking methods, one tries to understand interconnectivity between different intertwined issues of a wicked problem. After Buchanan (1992) introduced this method to counter social issues, an agile system thinking method became popular in social planning and also in the daily business world. Such method helps one to drive deep in the wicked problem through iteration and visualization of the intertwined causes. As there is no ultimate solution, the design thinking process suggests that one should identify different solutions and test each of them via prototyping to understand possible results. These results can be then used to improve the solution. This is how design thinking can help in countering a complex issue in a sustained way of abductive reasoning (Kolko, 2012).

The motto of dealing with any wicked problem is to help the target audience and their pains (The Economist, 2018). Thus, empathizing is the first step of the design thinking process. In

this wicked issue of employment, the target audience are young Indian citizens with potential. The motto is not just about finding employment but about finding ways to live a life full of abundance. The 5-Why method can be used to start with this wicked problem to find the root cause (Design Kit, 2021). Often, this method can help one to identify the nodes of intertwined aspects and converge into a simpler reason for the wicked issue. There can be two main reasons for the wicked problem, namely the education-skill gap due to low education quality and stagnant industrialisation. The 5-why analysis method has been used to identify the root causes for each of these (*Appendix 1*). Based on this analysis, there are 4 reasons, namely overtrust on the old political system, low self worth, lack of regulatory support and lack of proper advisory.

After understanding the issues, the upcoming changes and available opportunities can be identified. As mentioned earlier, Covid-19 has been a serious change agent in all industries. Education systems are turning digital all over the country and many businesses are looking for ways to reform (Iivari, Sharma & Ventä-Olkkonen, 2020). In this aspect, business leaders as well as social leaders can brainstorm ideas to support Indian economy and identify solutions for the wicked issue. The solutions can be regulatory reform by the prime minister. There is a high chance that a solution might cause other issues but iteration of prototyping through feedback can help to build a suitable regulation as per needs. However, as mentioned in Appendix 1, power hunger is a major issue in the political scenario in the country. Therefore, it is hard to tell how effectively different political parties and business leaders might work along. In this aspect, design thinking can help to look for solutions from different viewpoints. Awareness is needed in all levels starting from individual families to the nation as a whole.

The children should be taught from a young age to not overtrust anyone. This is the responsibility of parents and teachers. This will teach the children to think critically and solve a lot of social issues. The schools should teach children how to develop self-trust. This can build confidence in them from a young age and they will not be afraid to try new things that can add value. India can thus have more entrepreneurs, business people and industrialists and there will be abundance of jobs. In a conservative social system that is prevailing in current India, these sound like fairy tales but proper awareness can make this dream come true. Another feasible solution is developing the advisory services in India. The advisors should have a sound knowledge in different Indian business regulations and social issues to provide valid consultancy options to the business owners to grow in different circumstances. This can encourage more businesses to start and grow. As there will be more businesses, economic issues in India will be reduced as well.

Thus, design thinking can help India deal with this wicked problem in an empathetic way.

Integrative thinking is needed to perform the iterative experiments to bring success.

Collaboration among different levels in the society is another critical challenge which poses as a hindrance to improve the discussed wicked problem. However, proper initiatives by like-minded people can cause a constructive reformation for a sustained future of India.

This study has discussed how design thinking can be used to improve the current situation of low employment in India. However, due to lack of time and space, there might be many gaps in the findings. Future studies can be performed to find those, which can help the nation.

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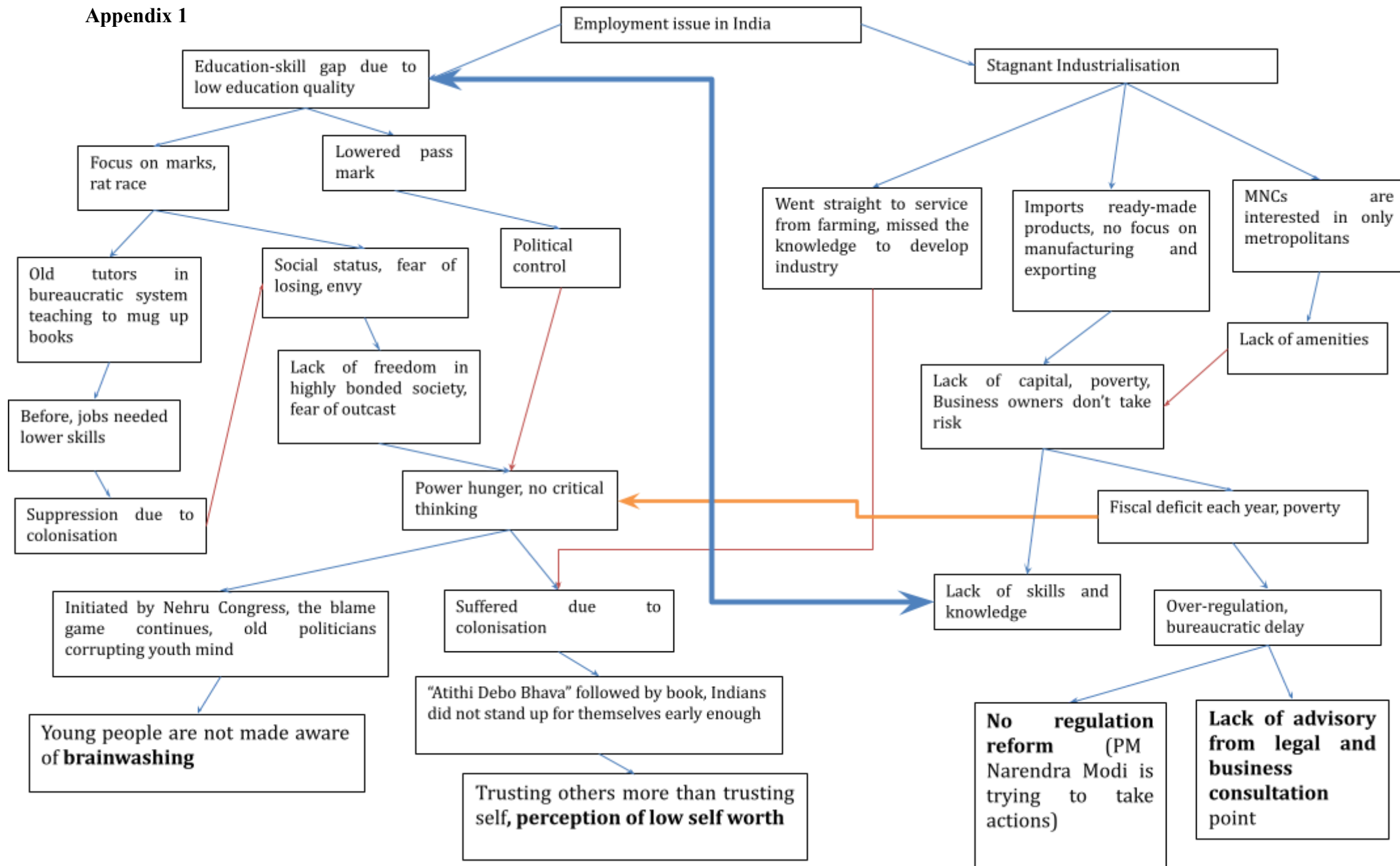
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Appendix

Appendix 1



(Sources for appendix:

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