



Promoting Sustainable Livelihood through Skill Development Among the Rural Youth in Manipur

Onkholun Haokip¹

ABSTRACT: The purpose of the present study was to examine sustainable livelihood through skill development among the rural youth in Manipur. Skill development is demanded for economic growth and inclusive development; hence rural youth population cannot be overlooked. About 50 percent of the labour force is currently self-employed (Labour Report, 2014); besides, youth are the most important and dynamic segment of the population which contribute about 34 percent of India's Gross National Income (NYP, 2014).

The study discusses the existing Government skill development programs with reference to sustainable livelihood in rural areas. The study revealed that skill development among the rural youth will fetch self-employment opportunity and consequently it will result to sustainable livelihood. Further, revealed that in order to promote sustainable livelihood through skill development the rural youth need practicable updated knowledge rather than traditional training with dull lectures or thick manuals. The study suggested state youth policy shall be implemented in letter and in spirit incorporating agro-based skill training; centre and state shall more invest on program like 'start-up' schemes for SC and ST in remote rural areas; finally, market shall be look after by the Government.

Keywords: Sustainable Livelihood, Skill Development, Rural Youth, Rural Manipur



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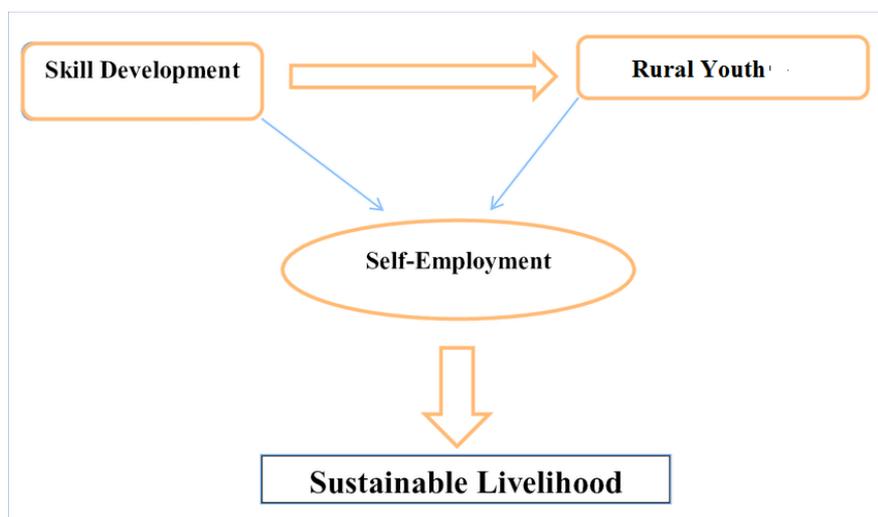
1. Introduction

As Gandhi said "If the Indian village is developed the nation is developed" is true even today. India is an agrarian society where more than 70 percent of population are living in rural area. The rural population mainly depend on agriculture and associated sectors of agriculture for their livelihood. The ability of the individuals in any society is necessity to vest them for social alteration, economic growth, contribution in development process. Therefore a nation progressing towards development requires institutions, entrepreneurship and skill development, to initiate and achieve the course of change and the changing societal structure and livelihood profiles (Singh, 2016). India is rich in human resources, what is needed now is a long term policy for development of human resources through education, training, skill development, empowerment and creation of congenial socio-economic, institutional and political environment for the fullest possible utilisation of the vast, untapped reservoirs of human power and ingenuity' (Singh, 2004).

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In order to promote self-employment among the rural youth, Government of India has taken a two-pronged approach, namely, (i) enabling skill development and (ii) implementing direct employment programmes for lower skilled individuals (NYP, 2014). To create an institutional base for skill development in India in 2009, Government launched the National Skill Development Policy (NSDP) with a target for skilling 500 million people by 2020. With the creation of National Skill Development Agency (NSDA) in June, 2013, the NCSD, the NSDCB, and the Office of the Adviser to Prime Minister on Skill Development have now been subsumed in NSDA. Ministry of Labour and Employment has taken a number of initiatives in the field of skill development and employment. For instance, training of trainers is being conducted by Advanced Training Institutes and Regional Vocation Training Institutes run by the Ministry. Similarly, the Ministry of Rural Development also runs a Scheme called Himayat under which 3 months' skill training is imparted to the youth in Jammu & Kashmir in sector where there is high employer demand, followed by job placement and post-placement support. As shown in the figure 1 it was assumed that through this skills development among the rural youth, it will enhance self-employment and consequently it will result to sustainable livelihood.

Figure 1: Framework on Skill Development of Rural youth for sustainable Livelihood



Source: Researcher's conceptual framework

In earlier days most of the rural youth are comfortable with seasonal plantation jobs, no specified skill and education was needed; besides parents do not want to send youth to far-off urban and semi-urban areas for livelihood. But recent trends showed youth were attract on skill development for their livelihood (Satyaseelan, 2014). The study suggested the need for Public Private Partnership (PPP) model for skill development of unemployed rural youth. Based on this PPP model skill development for rural youth in various skill developments will improve self-employment, then more employment opportunity will enhance sustainable livelihood among the rural youth in Manipur.

2. Objectives of The Study

- (i) To analyse the features of sustainable livelihood through skill developments for rural youth,
- (ii) To understand the perception of youth towards problems and possible remedies of skill

development for sustainable livelihood,

(iii) To propose suggestion for strengthening skill development for sustainable livelihood.

3. Methodology

Area of the Study is in rural (hill) districts of Manipur. The universe of the study is youth who are in the age group of 15 – 29 and living in hill districts of Manipur. The study was descriptive and analytical using mix method qualitative and quantitative. The size of the sample was approximately 270 respondents 46.3 percent female and 55.7 percent male.

Table No. 1: Age Wise Distribution of Sample Size

Sex	Respondents' Age by Sex			Total
	15 – 19 Early Youth	20 – 24 Middle Youth	25 – 29 Senior Youth	
Male	21.1%	14.0%	18.6%	53.7 %
Female	24.5%	18.6%	5.7%	46.3 %
Total	45.3%	30.3%	24.3%	100 %

Simple random sampling was used and collected information from village youth, and purposive from students' organization leaders. The sources of data are from primary and secondary source. The questionnaire was collected through Likert Scale's questionnaire Finally, after coding the data was process and analyze by using descriptive SPSS and express in the form of table, figure and chart.

4. Sustainable Livelihood Through Skill Development

Aajeevika - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) was launched by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India in June 2011. The mandate of the Ministry is rural poverty alleviation through programmes directly targeted at the rural poor households. The major programmes of this Ministry that directly targeted poor families for creation of assets, skill development and self-employment started with Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) in the year 1980 and included several other programmes like the Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM), Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), Supply of Improved Toolkits to Rural Artisans (SITRA), Ganga KalyanYojana (GKY). On account of multiplicity of programmes, which were viewed as separate programmes in themselves, the desired linkages among these programmes were not established effectively. These were more concerned with achieving individual programme targets rather than focusing on the substantive issue of sustainable income generation (Singh, 2016). The Planning Commission set up a committee under the chairmanship of Prof S R Hashim in 1997, to review and rationalize various Centrally Sponsored Schemes for Poverty Alleviation and Employment Generation. The Committee recommended the integration of allied programmes with IRDP for better linkages. The report formed the base for shifting from an individual beneficiary approach to a group approach for poverty alleviation. Based on the recommendations of the Planning Commission, the schemes of TRYSEM, SITRA, GKY, and DWCRA were merged into a single self-employment programme namely Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), implemented by the States government. These self-employment programs aim at work opportunity for rural people special focus on poverty alleviation.

In case of Manipur implementation of National Rural Livelihood Mission is very complicated, more than 90 percent of Manipur is in the rural areas (hilly district) while only 9 percent are urban (valley) region. The rural areas (hill district) covered an area about 20,082 sq. km (about 91 %) and the centrally located valley area of the state cover an area of about 2,238 sq.km (around 9 %) accounting for only one tenth of the total area of the state as shown in Table 2. The tribal groups are distributed in all the ten hill districts (rural areas) of Manipur. Scattered pockets are also found in the valley and urban areas. The oval shape small valley area is its targeted place for all section of the people in the state for any purposes e.g. dwelling agriculture, business, industry but the rural. Thus, for effective implementation of rural livelihood mission, youth centered skill training was one of the options.

Table No. 2: Areas and population of rural and urban in Manipur

	District/Region	Area (in sq km)	Person			Density (per sq.km)
			Rural	Urban	Total	
Hill Districts (rural)						
1	Senapati	3,721	4,71,627	7,476	4,79,148	146
	Kangpokpi	*	*	*	*	*
2	Tamenglong	4,391	1,21,288	19,367	1,40,651	32
	Noney	*	*	*	*	*
3	Churachandpur	4,570	2,55,786	18,357	2,74,143	60
	Pherzawl	*	*	*	*	*
4	Chandel	3,313	1,27,335	16,847	1,44,182	44
	Tengnoupal	*	*	*	*	*
5	Ukhrul	4,544	1,56,811	27,187	1,83,998	40
	Kamjong	*	*	*	*	*
Sub total		20,089	11,32,897	89,230	12,22,122	61
Valley District (urban)						
6	Imphal East	703	2,72,906	1,83,207	4,56,113	643
	Jiribam	*	*	*	*	*
7	Imphal West	519	1,95,113	3,22,873	5,17,992	998
8	Bishnupur	496	1,49,894	87,505	2,37,399	479
9	Thoubal	514	2,70,835	1,51,333	4,22,168	821
	Kakching	*	*	*	*	*
		2,238	8,88,748	7,44,924	16,33,672	730
Grand Total		22,327	20,21,640	8,34,154	28,55,794	128

* Newly created district in December, 2016 (data not available)

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Manipur, 2016

Manipur Society for Skill Development (MSSD) is an initiative of the Government of Manipur under National Skill Development Corporation and State Skill Development Mission (SSDM) to enable youths to be skilled and to get employment opportunities in a holistic manner. The mission aims that the youths would be trained in skills as per their capabilities & merit to make them employable. About 40 percent of population in Manipur are in the age group of 15 – 29 years. They can act as agents of transformation, by being empowered with various employable skills which will enable them to make impact not only on their lives but also on the lives of other individuals.

The recently approved Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), a flagship scheme for imparting skill training to youth, focussing on improved curricula, better pedagogy and trained instructors. The training includes soft skills, personal grooming, behavioural change at all. Prime

Minister Narendra Modi launched Skill India Mission on 15th July 2015, on World Skill Day. While launching the Mission he said, it is aimed at providing vocational training to youth across the country. Through the skill India Mission, the Government is aiming at providing vocational skills to over 40.02 crore people in the country by 2022. National Skill Development Mission which seeks to coverage, coordinate, implement and monitor skilling activities on all India basis. It initiates to make network for creating skill man power in India with all ministries government of India, corporations and private sector. . The salient features of National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) are:

- (i) Upgrade skills of work force through significant industry involvement especially for under privileged sections and backward regions of the country.
- (ii) Enhance, support and coordinate private sector initiatives for skill development through public-private partnership (PPP) model.
- (iii) NSDC will play a significant role in some of the essential support services like curriculum, faculty and their training, standards and quality assurances, technology platforms, student placement mechanisms and setting up standards and accreditation systems in partnership with industry associations.

5. Perception of Youth Towards Skill Development for Sustainable Livelihood

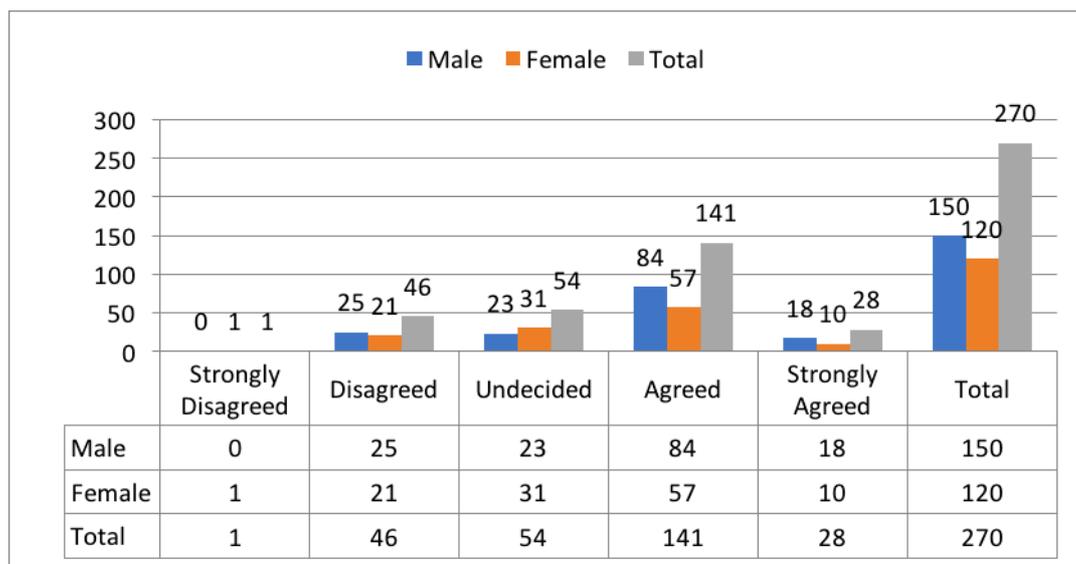
The formation of the National Skill Development Mission (NSDM) has necessitated the need to re-examine the need for skill development in relation to rural livelihood in Manipur. This is felt more in a State like Manipur where the challenge emanating from the demographic dividend rural and urban set up. By 2020, India is set to become the world's youngest country with 64 per cent of its population in the working age group. As of 2016-17, youth unemployment (for the age group 15-35 years) in Manipur stood nearly 40 per cent Skill development can, therefore, be seen as the need of the hour for promoting rural livelihood in Manipur. Manipur is one of the highest unemployment in India which mostly belong to youth in the age group of 15 - 29. Besides, according to Young Entrepreneurs Summit (G20 YES) 2011, India has an extremely strong skill and entrepreneurial culture. 98 percent of Indian entrepreneurs agreed that Indian culture encourages entrepreneurship, as compared to 80 percent for the rapid growth markets and 72 percent for the mature economies. But the case was different in rural areas of India especially in Manipur. Though youth have the zeal to do something new and innovative due to lack of training opportunity, lack and skilled, financial support they become frustrated sometime drug addict or join insurgent groups.

Nearly 7 lakhs are seeking for job in Manipur of which mostly belong to youth in the age group of 15-29 years. Highest number of unemployed is found in matriculate with 33.36 percent, closely followed by under matric with 31.08 percent. Intermediate or Class XII account 18.82 percent, graduate 2.96 percent, post graduate 2.28 percent and diploma and engineering with 1.50 percent. The highest number of unemployment (matric and under-matic) show that youth belong to the highest number of unemployment. Thus, in order to improve self-employment opportunities through skill development for sustainable development the question was asked to the respondent on three aspects as follows:

6. Aspect of Skill Training Institutes for Sustainable Livelihood

Absence of professional training Institution is one of hindrance to accessing skill training in rural (hill districts) of Manipur. Due to absence or lack of skill training institution in rural areas many youths are searching for gainful job in other states. In order to validate the above statement question was administered to the respondents as "absence of skill training Institutions consequence unemployment among the rural youth".

Figure No. 2: Perception of youth towards Skill development Institutions for sustainable livelihood



Source: Fieldwork survey result, 2017

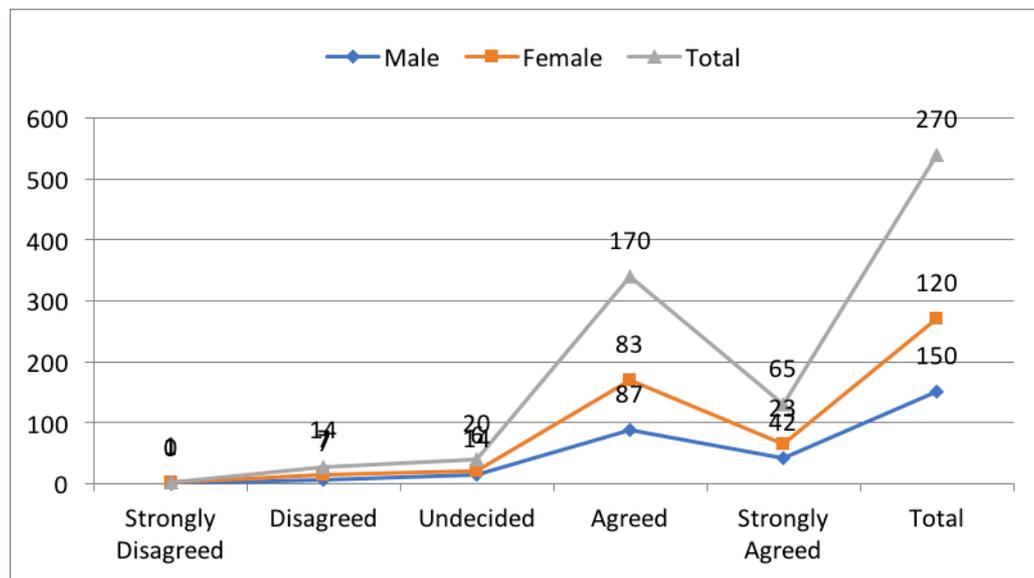
The above figure 2 gives a vivid picture of the youth’s perception about the need for skill and entrepreneurship training centre in rural areas. The majority 141 (52.2 %) are in favour of the while 46 (17.0%) were disagreed to the above statement. Within the gender group 84 (31.1%) of male were agreed and 57 (21.1%) are were female. The table can be broadly groups into Favourable (Strongly agree and Agree) with 169 (62.5%), Unfavourable (Strongly disagreed, disagreed) with 47 and Neutral (Undecided) with 54. The table shows that majority 62.6 percent of the respondents were agreed that absence of training centres on entrepreneurship is one of the results for unemployment in rural area. It is evident from the above figure that opening of skill training centre will enhance self-employment opportunity for rural youth.

In support of the above statement, Satyaseelan (2014) cited that ‘in earlier days most of the rural youth are comfortable with seasonal plantations jobs, no specialized skill and education was needed, but the present showed the need for institutional skill development of unemployed rural youth’. Further, suggested the need for PPP model of skill development institution. Further, Kumar and Ajay (2014) revealed that rural youth agricultural labourer migrated to urban for construction works, industry/ factory workers. Thus the Institutionalised skill development will enhance sustainable livelihood among the rural youth in Manipur.

7. Aspect of Agro-based skill for Sustainable Livelihood

In search of fitting the problems on lack of skill on green skill for sustainable livelihood the researcher administered a question to the respondents on 'Training on agro-based farming, will enhance self-employment'. Since, rural Manipur have a vast resource on agriculture and forest product. More than 70 percent of rural people are depending on agriculture and allied product for their livelihood (Census, 2011).

Figure No. 3: Perceptions of youth towards agro-based skill for self-employment



Source: Fieldwork survey result, 2017

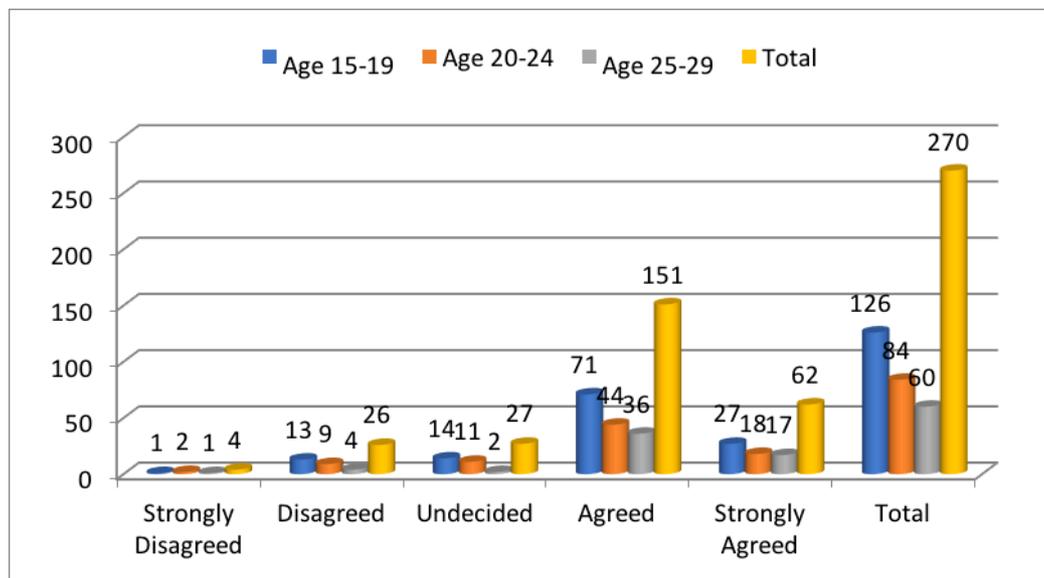
Figure 3 showed that majority 170(63 percent) of the youth agreed training of youth on local resources like agro-based farming will enhance youth employment. Among these 32.2 percent of youth are male and 30.7 percent are female. 24.1 percent of the youth are strongly agreed with 15.6 percent are male and 8.5 percent are female. Training on agro-based farming like cardamom, lemon grass, bamboo, cane, medicinal plants will enhance self-employment. Like the recent initiatives on plantation of cardamom (local name alaichi) and lemon grass in a bid to wean away people from poppy cultivation and provide them an alternative source of income (Sangai Express, July 2 2016). Since the hill district of Manipur has vast space for cultivation, its forest and agriculture resources are not yet used productively.

Singaravelu and Kavitha (2014), suggested encouragement of cottage and household industries like basket making, carpentry, carpentry since these are easily available in rural areas. Secondly encouragement for growing commercial crops like coffee, tea, ginger, cardamom, ground nut, vegetables and fruits etc. can bring good income to the farmers. Thirdly attractive programme and projects will be launched so that young people of the area get new opportunities to use their talents and energy for the developmental programmes. Prasain (2014) suggested that apart from agro-based entrepreneurship the other possible solution like self-employment through micro finance will able to combat youth unemployment. The above three aspect of youth perception towards skill development showed that three skill i.e. skill institution, training courses and agro-based skill will improved sustainable livelihood among the rural youth in Manipur.

8. Aspect of Technical skill for sustainable livelihood

Lack of skill is one of the obstacle for employability among the rural youth in Manipur. In response to youth unemployment due to technical/unskilled (not posses required skills) the question was put to the respondents on how far 'Training on skill and social entrepreneurship among the youth may enhance employment', to fixed the problem on unskilled for sustainable livelihood among the rural youth

Table No. 4: Perceptions of youth towards lack of entrepreneurship skill



Source: Fieldwork survey result, 2017

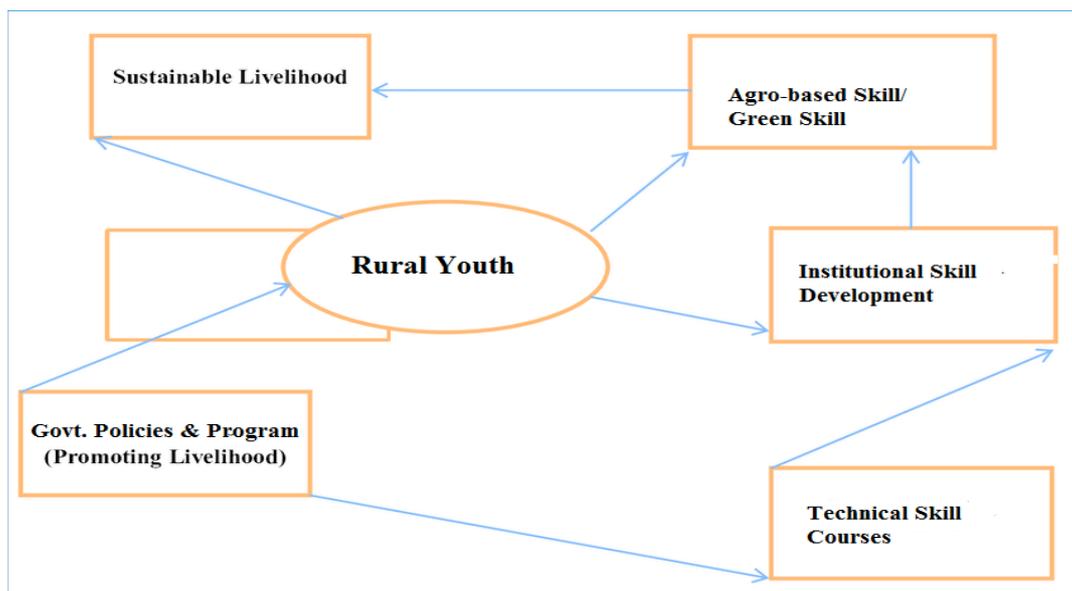
The above figure no 4 revealed that 23 percent of youth are strongly agree and 55.9 percent of the felt the need for entrepreneurship and vocational training to enhance employment. The much need for job-oriented vocational training and entrepreneurship courses have been stressed by the respondents. As of the age group of the highest respondents, 54.4 percent in the age group of 15-10 felt the need for the above statement. Here, social entrepreneurs means "individuals with innovative solutions to society’s most pressing social problems" who "find what is not working and solve the problem by changing the system, spreading the solution, and persuading entire societies to move in different directions."

The success of skill entrepreneurship and vocational training depend on hard and soft skills, and contents of the courses. Few studies suggest the way out for unskilled unemployment, Nandi E (2013) found that entrepreneurs need new emerging 'E' equity, expansion and excellence. According to Che Omar and Rajoo (2016) soft skill like communication skills, problem solving skills, speaking, writing English language are the core of finding job-related task among the youth. In rural areas, majority of the labour force are engaged in agriculture sector. The youth are looking for job and on the other hand industry is suffereing from availability of skilled workers. This mismatch makes youth unemployable (Sunita, 2014). Youth perceieved about the training on skill development was supported by the earlier study showed that skill development for rural youth will improve sustainable livelihood in Manipur.

9. Conclusion and Suggestions

To promote a sustainable livelihood through skill development the rural youth need practicable updated knowledge rather than some traditional training with dull lectures or thick manuals. The need arises for long terms measures for sustainable livelihood among the rural youth through skill development. First, Manipur State Youth policy shall be implement in letter and spirit incorporating 'Skill and Entrepreneurship as one of the priority areas as per National Youth Policy 2014. Secondly, the government shall explore the vast unexplored land and forest resources which can be used for agro based entrepreneurship. Like the recent initiatives on plantation of cardamom (local name alaichi) and lemon grass in a bid to wean away people from poppy cultivation and provide them an alternative source of income (Sangai Express, July 2 2016). Thirdly, both central and state government should take more invest in promoting the growth of entrepreneurship. Ensure that skill trainers have access to 'Smart capital" like start-up scheme for SC and ST. Strong and durable linkage of young trainers with NABARD, Rural Innovation funding for young talented innovators. Fourthly, local young skill trainers/entrepreneurs shall work for maximum number of product and the market shall be look after by the Government. Since one of the main problems is marketing of the products. Thus, Government, NGOs, shall work together and exchange their knowledge for gainful employment of rural youth through skill development for sustainable livelihood as shown in figure 5.

Figure 5: Framework on Youth cantered skill development for sustainable Livelihood



Source: Research conceptual framework

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