

## Alienation as a Predictor of Unemployment in Kashmir Valley

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### Abstract

**Objective:** The present work aims to analyze the level of alienation among unemployed and employed youth of Kashmir valley.

**Methods:** The sample of the study consists of 320 subjects randomly selected among which 160 were unemployed and remaining 160 were employed youth. The effect of experimental variable was study on one criterion variable (Alienation). For data analysis mean, S.D. and t-test were applied.

**Results:** The results revealed that the two groups significantly differed in their level of Alienation. Unemployed youth were experiencing high level of alienation in comparison to employed youth.

**Conclusion:** Compensatory measures as part of social and employment policy, must buffer the effect of unemployment, so as to minimize negative effects on health.

**Keywords:** Alienation; Unemployment and Youth of Kashmir

### Introduction

Unemployment is a curse for any nation. No nation can develop unless its labour force is engaged in gainful employment. In fact, the whole national income is the sum of wages, rent, profit and interest, which is simply share of different factor payments. So, when these factors are employed then national income increases and economic growth takes place. There is highly significant association between family income of the respondents and psychological impact of unemployment [1]. Sadness and depression are common in unemployment [2]. It has a countless socioeconomic problem; it is a great cause of individual's poverty. Due to unemployment, corruption and crimes increased. So, unemployment creates the negative feeling in unemployed person that may lead to suicide [3]. The Unemployment situation of Jammu and Kashmir in comparison to Northern States is quite higher. Jammu and Kashmir has the highest Unemployment rate (UPS) of 4.9 percent in comparison to its neighbouring states like Punjab (2.8 percent), Himachal Pradesh (2.0 percent), Delhi (4.7 percent) and Haryana (3.2 percent) (NSSO 68<sup>th</sup> round, Employment and Unemployment report 2011-12 [4]. The unemployment rate is recorded highest in CDS approach, in Jammu and Kashmir, which is an indication of labour underutilization (India Labour and Employment Report, 2014). Unemployment rate for males in Jammu and Kashmir (UPS) is 3.1 percent whereas that of females was 20.6 percent which is far too high when compared to the unemployment of females at all Indian level (3.7 percent). Further the unemployment is more prevalent in urban areas than in rural areas of Jammu and Kashmir. Unemployment rate in urban areas of Jammu and Kashmir, based on 68<sup>th</sup> Round of NSS, stood at 7.8 percent as against 3.9 percent in rural area. The unemployment amongst urban male (4.7 percent) is higher than that of rural males (2.7 percent) in Jammu and Kashmir [5]. The problem of unemployment gains more importance because of higher incidence

of unemployment among the educated section of youth in the State. Due to limited job opportunities available for educated youth in the State, the number of unemployed youths has been increasing with every passing year (Jammu and Kashmir Economic Survey 2014-15) [6]. The number of unemployed youth registered in various District Employment and Counselling Centres is 6.01 lakhs ending September 2011, Economic Survey for the financial year 2011-12 has revealed. As per the figures, 3,21,562 youth have registered themselves in Kashmir region while the number is 2,80,285 in Jammu province. Out of the registered unemployed youth only 3203 are illiterate, while 77,087 are middle pass and 1,65,208 are matriculate. More than 85,000 graduate and more than 20,000 post-graduates have also registered themselves with the employment cells to seek jobs [7]. Unemployed persons are more likely than the employed to report psychological distress. In addition, lowered psychological well-being due to unemployment could adversely influence the probability of re-employment by weakening the individual's motivation and ability to search for a new job, thus contributing to further unemployment [8]. Social isolation is a risk factor between unemployment and mental health suggest that the opportunity for contacting may be an important contributing factor twenty years ago. Warr found a link between the interaction with friends and level of mental health in unemployed individuals. Thus, social isolation not only exert main effects but also interaction with each other [9]. Governments are rightly concerned about rising levels of youth unemployment and underemployment, because of it not only the direct economic costs, but also due to the social impact of joblessness as manifested by increased crime, mental health problems, violence, drug taking and social exclusion [10]. It causes an increase in burglaries, thefts and drug offences [11]. The crime was on its peak among unemployed society [12]. Looking into the influence of alienation in relation to the unemployment and provide an integrated valuation depiction of unemployment and its consequences on unemployed youth of Kashmir.

The term alienation is a sociological concept and is derived from the word alien means "foreign" or estranged. In other words, it is the condition of the subject who no longer recognizes himself or rather can only recognize himself by others. In short, alienation is loss of the feeling of one's own personhood. An unemployed person always feels detached from themselves and their society, they loss their self-identity, meaning of life and its purpose and always feel they are worthless, weak, because of their financial insecurity and joblessness. Due the feeling of alienation their physical as well as mental health also got affected. The young people's increased social alienation is a consequence of unemployment rather than a predisposition towards it, but that high social alienation at school leads to later job dissatisfaction [13].

Social isolation is the feeling of loneliness even such moments one is in the society and among others Persons who feel socially isolation tend to separate from common social groups because of perceived insignificance feeling, lack of close relationship with others, family and broader society. They think that they don't have relationship with others and generally think that others don't notice them [14]. In some studies, it has been suggested that through the process of alienation the unemployed may lose the desire and capacity even to dream of consumption [15], consumption responses to unemployment may involve a temporary increase in consumption behaviour as individuals attempt to restore their damaged self-identity through symbolic consumption [16]. The effects of unemployment reduce the individual's ability to cope up with stress and other kind of psychological competencies. Youth unemployment is social and economic challenge in each countries of this fast changing world. The negative outcomes of unemployment related to wellbeing have been found in various studies [17]. Negative effects of unemployment into individual and family was investigated. Individual effects consists of physical and psychological effects. Physical effects encompass an increase in headaches; Stomach aches; Sleep problems; Lack of energy etc. Psychological effects include increased depression, anxiety, stress, anger, fear, and social isolation, and low self-esteem, low life satisfaction, aspiration levels, concentration and personal identity. In family effects, an increase in spousal abuse, marital friction, spousal depression, family conflict, and child abuse and a decrease in family cohesion are common [18]. Hill believes that the effects of unemployment are conceptually and experimentally similar to those of bereavement. He further reported that joblessness can be followed by reactions similar to those that occur in bereavement [19]. Marie Jahoda, on the basis of the research conducted, has found that unemployment makes it more difficult to formulate goals, limits social contacts and activity of individuals, diminishes the sense of self-confidence and develops a sense of hopelessness in individuals [20]. Some recent studies also provide enough evidence regarding the relationship between alienation

and health of unemployed adults like one of the study found that social dominance orientation had significant negative relationship with powerlessness dimension of self-alienation. These researchers concluded that powerlessness feeling can be a main element in person's powerlessness for changing the situation and condition [21]. There is some evidence of apathy among unemployed youth and greater involvement in informal action by the longer-term unemployed and their attitudes to politics vary little from those of young people in employment [22]. The persons with high level of fear of unemployment are more politically alienated, estranged, powerless and less optimistic. Furthermore, it has been examined that the sense of economic threat is also a source of alienation and was analysed in two factor model of political alienation by long as well as in other studies [23]. A study was conducted on U.S. voters between 1964 and 2000 in which alienation relationship between powerlessness, meaninglessness and cynicism was investigated. The researchers found correlation among these and suggested powerlessness and meaninglessness as an important dimension in political alienation [24]. Khaola suggested that feeling of economic powerlessness impacted negatively on self-employment intentions, and the feeling that the business exploits impacted positively on self-employment intentions in response to unemployment. The result further suggested that young people who have high feeling of economic powerlessness would normally plan to start their own business [25]. Work alienation influence organizational commitment, work effort and to a lesser extent-work-to-family enrichment. When people feel they have no influence in their work (hence, when they feel powerless) and especially when they feel that their work is not worthwhile, (when they feel meaningless) this results substantial negative effects [26]. The findings revealed that the Advertising could have unplanned consequences on the unemployed by imparting a sense of inadequacy and self-denigration through the presentation of attainable, idealized images which may magnify their alienation, lower their feelings of self-esteem and damage their sense of identity [27]. A study of multidimensionality and structure of alienation was conducted on multicultural sample of 3101 male workers from US, Poland and Japan. It was found that self-estrangement and powerlessness are most closely related to alienation. Statistical model suggests that manifestations of alienation are like original Marxian conceptualization [28]. Those who were technically and non-technically educated unemployed exhibited relatively a greater vulnerability to the feeling of alienation in comparison to their counterpart that is technically and non-technically educated employed youth [29]. Unemployment results feeling of economic powerlessness and alienation. It has also found that social dominance orientation had significant negative relationship with powerlessness dimension of self-alienation. Powerlessness feeling can be a main element in person's powerlessness for changing the situation and condition [30]. Thus, the above given literature provides enough evidence regarding the problem of alienation among the unemployed adults and its effects on their social life. This study will suggest that job-oriented courses should be ensured compulsory in the prevailing education system. It is often necessary the support of an expert for the unemployed person, help him to re-evaluate the cause that have led to unemployment.

### Methodology

#### Objective

The objective of the present study was to assess the level of alienation among unemployed youth in comparison to employed youth of Kashmir.

#### Hypothesis

There will be significant difference in the level of alienation among unemployed and employed youth of Kashmir.

#### Sample

The present study was conducted on the sample of 320 respondents among these, 160 were employed and remaining 160 were unemployed youth. Unemployed youth were selected from various colleges and universities of Kashmir, whereas employed youth were selected from different government institutions of the Kashmir valley.

#### Tool used

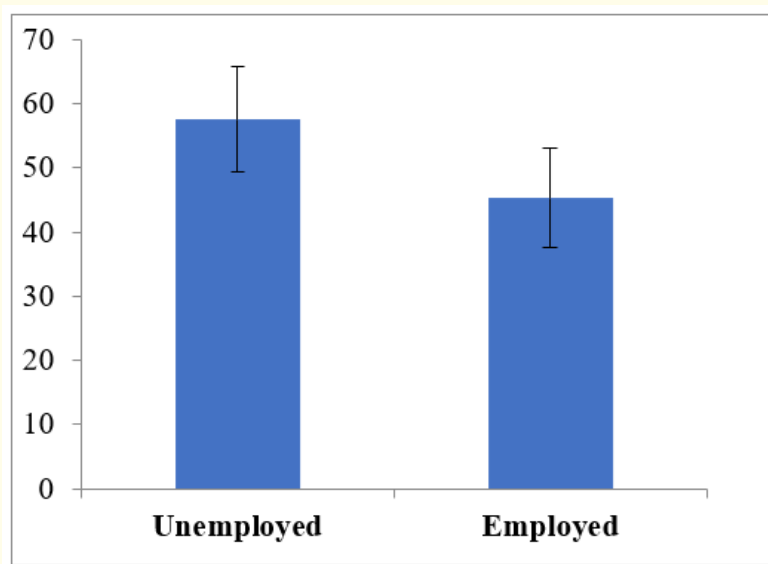
Standardized alienation scale of Hardeo Ojha (2010) was used to collect data in this study. The scale consists of 20 items having five-point Likert responses ranges from "strongly agree" (1) to "strongly disagree" (5). The reliability of the present scale was calculated on the basis of scores obtained on 20 items by Kuder-Richardson formula and it was found that internal consistency reliability reached up to the level of 0.83.

**Result and Discussion**

The t-test was applied for selected data to analyze the significant difference of mean scores for alienation between the two groups: Table 1 and Graph 1 Showing the graphical representation of Mean Scores of unemployed and employed youth of Kashmir.

Groups	Mean	S.D.	t-value
Unemployed	57.59	8.19	13.786*
Employed	45.27	7.78	

**Table 1:** Depicts the Mean, S.D. and t-value of unemployed and employed youth of Kashmir.



**Graph 1 :** Depicts the Mean value of unemployed & employed youth of Kashmir..

The result showed the difference between the mean score of unemployed and employed youth in their level of alienation i.e. (57.59) and (45.27) respectively. The standard deviation of both the groups are (8.19) and (7.78). The t-value (t = 13.786) of both the groups showed significant difference at (p < 0.05). Hence unemployed youth are experiencing high level of alienation in comparison to employed youth. The finding is well supported by the previous studies the results exhibited that a number of characteristics that are also symptoms of high sense of alienation among unemployed youth [31]. Similarly, Gibbs and Bankhead (2000) also stated that high level of hopelessness, anger and alienation were associated with high rate of unemployment and lack of economic development in the community [32].

**Discussion**

The result makes it clear that in Jammu and Kashmir unemployment casts an indelible impact on the social life of an individual. It makes more difficult to frame goals, restrict social contacts and activities of individuals, reduces the sense of self confidence and develops a sense of hopelessness in individuals.

Rapid growth of unemployment is due to lack of private sectors that results jobless youths in Kashmir. Due to the political turmoil of Jammu and Kashmir, the private sectors could not flourish, and the job opportunities remained limited to the government sectors only. The private job market in Kashmir is negligible and every individual goes for government job, but due to the limited opportunity in the government sector as well, only handful of the educated youth are absorbed in the jobs while as most of the youths fail to get the job opportunity. Failure of unemployed youth to full fill their expectation leads to dejection from both family as well as society, as a result they feel alienated and depressed - a negative feeling that often result in pathological outcomes.

Technically and non-technically educated unemployed exhibited relatively a greater vulnerability to the feeling of alienation in comparison to their counterpart that is technically and non-technically educated employed youth [29]. When young people are unable to find work it can cause serious psychological damage. Longitudinal research, was conducted among young people over five years, which showed that unemployment can lead to clinical signs of anxiety and depression. It was also found that inability to find work reduces self-confidence and creates feelings of isolation [33]. The relationship between the political alienation and the fear of unemployment was also confirmed by a study on a representative sample of young Swedes [34]. Unemployment may lead to social alienation, criminal or other antisocial activity and higher incidence of suicide. Unemployed youth are slipping into a spiral of self-defeating, anti-social and risky behaviour and there is little evidence of health and social care agencies working in partnership with voluntary sector organization to tackle the growing problem of dual diagnosis and youth unemployment [35]. Lack of work is often accompanied by the feelings of uselessness and worthlessness which can later lead to reduce self-esteem, depression and general unhappiness. Unemployment results in feeling of economic powerlessness and alienation [30]. High level of sense of powerlessness, political alienation and isolation was found among unemployed youth as compared to employed youth [31]. Research has shown that unemployment has its consequences also in the attitudes toward the political system people out of work more often feel disappointed by the current government, what among the younger unemployed finds its expression in political protests, breaking the law, violence [36].

### Conclusion

In the present study it was found that unemployed youth have high level of alienation in comparison to their counterparts. Stress brought by unemployment cannot be resolved by either treating physicians or the interpersonal organizations of those influenced alone. Compensatory measures as a part of social and employment strategy must safeguard effects of unemployment, in order to minimize negative consequences on public health [37]. It is suggested that there is need of amendment in prevailing education system, skill based and job-oriented courses should be ensured compulsory so that its pass outs are not rendered unproductive and jobless. There is also need of well-designed social action programme to change the traditional out look of the society especially in the context of employment. This will empower the educated youth to assemble their career on the basis of their own creativity and self-assurance instead for waiting government jobs. Jobless people should be urged to engage more actively in non-professional networks instead of detaching themselves socially.

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