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Long-term youth unemployment in East and West Germany: A qualitative analysis of personal and context-related resources

In its past 25 years of research, the psychology of unemployment has been primarily devoted to the consequences of unemployment but less so to concrete actions taken by the unemployed themselves. This presentation looks into the conditions under which unemployed youth make job-related decisions, their personal and situational resources, and what links can be made to their psychosocial well-being.

The empirical data employed in this line of inquiry have been taken from the European research project “Youth Unemployment and Social Exclusion: Dimensions, Subjective Experiences, and Institutional Responses in Six Countries of the EU” (YUSEDER), which was conducted under the coordination of Thomas Kieselbach at the University of Bremen between January 1998 and June 2000. In the course of this project, the German study employed the problem-centered method to interview 50 long-term unemployed youths in Eastern and Western Germany between 20 to 25 years of age.

The present study has been evaluated according to the qualitative method of “empirical based typology”. The interviewed persons are thereby grouped within the comparative framework of (a) possibilities or chances for action, (b) beneficial and inhibiting environment as well as (c) psychosocial stress. Such a grouping makes it possible to elucidate typical courses of actions taken by youths in light of their available resources and specific strategies of action.

***key words:* CHANCES FOR ACTION, BENEFICIAL AND INHIBITING ENVIRONMENT, PSYCHOSOCIAL STRESS, PERSONAL AND CONTEXT-RELATED RESOURCES**

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Experiential learning contexts increase employability: The Scandinavian experience

Is there a way to provide learning opportunities and organise learning using the individual's own experiences – experiential learning - that increases employability by means of increasing the tendency for personal initiative? What could be the theoretical basis for such a process beyond double loop learning theories? How is this organised and realised in the context of educational programs? These questions were the bases for a case study of the experiences of unemployed people attending a folk high school (a Scandinavian type of organisation providing individualised education for adults) during an extended period. The research focused on the relationship between individual learning and growth leading to employability and the humanistic and didactic ideals of the folk high school movement in Scandinavia, and the theoretical explanation. As a first step, 16 interviews with students at four different folk high schools formed the bases for a questionnaire for students finishing their education in 1995 or 1996. The results (obtained on 197 completed questionnaires) showed an extremely positively experienced educational context, resulting in positive effects on employability. The results are interpreted in the context of Frese's concept of personal initiative and Kolb's concept of experiential learning.

key words: PERSONAL INITIATIVE, EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING, EDUCATION AND EMPLOYABILITY

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A Comparison of explanatory models of well-being in the unemployed: Shame versus latent deprivation

This study examined the relative efficacy of two models (deprivation and financial distress/shame) that have been proposed to account for the negative well-being effects typically associated with unemployed people. One sample of 125 unemployed people and a second sample of 133 full-time employed people were administered scales measuring well-being, the latent benefits of employment, financial strain, shame and neuroticism. First, it was expected that the unemployed would report poorer well-being, less access to the latent benefits of employment, and more financial distress and shame than the employed, and that these differences would be moderated by gender, length of unemployment for those out of work and number of hours worked for those employed. Second, the study examined the level of well-being accounted for by each of the proposed models and investigated the relative contributions of each model to the prediction of well-being. Third, the study tested the proposition that financial distress and shame influence psychological well-being by reducing activity and social support. Neuroticism was examined in the study as it has been found to moderate responses to unemployment.

The results indicated differences in the unemployed and employed in the expected directions. No significant difference was found between the two models' capacity to predict well-being in the unemployed, although most of the variance was accounted for by financial strain and neuroticism. Both models predicted more of the variance in well-being in the employed rather than the unemployed sample. Shame did not emerge as a meaningful predictor of well-being. The latent benefits of social support (unemployed) and status (employed) were significant predictors. Social support, but not level of activity, was identified as an influential mediator variable.

key words: DEPRIVATION, FINANCIAL DISTRESS/SHAME, NEGATIVE WELL-BEING EFFECTS

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Quality of life of unemployed individuals: A comparative field study

Unemployment and employment have been shown to adversely affect health, with regards to the different health outcomes including mortality, morbidity and self-rated health. research consistently show that unemployed people report diminished levels of psychological health and well-being in comparison to their employed counterparts. However no clear cause specific effects have been proven. Moreover, economic and cultural factors may act as mediators or interact between unemployment and health relationship. On the other hand, a vast majority of the studies has been conducted in the western countries in which social rights are much more developed compared with the Third World.

Methods

In this study industry workers and unemployed were interviewed in a cross - sectional setting to assess quality of life (QOL). Two sets of questionnaires were used in the study. A short form questionnaire (SF 36) was used to assess QOL. The second questionnaire contained socio-demographic and economic information. In order to assess contribution of the variables to the quality of life scores, the multiple regression models were constructed. The study covered unemployed individuals who applied to Izmir Employment Office between 3-7 April 2000 and all the workers in a paper processing plant.

Results

The study was completed with a total of 345 people of whom 201 were unemployed and 144 were workers. The age of the study group was between 17 and 59 years and the mean age was 28.9. Subjective financial strain did alter significantly MCS (Mental Component Scale) scores. The MCS mean scores of the unemployed who have been seeking a job more than 6 months were significantly lower than those who have been seeking a job for less than 6 months. Among the workers who were seeking a job get lower MCS scores. Regarding the employment status there was no differences in the MCS mean scores. On the other hand, the unemployed group had significantly higher PCS (Physical Component Scale) mean scores than employed counterparts. According to the regression model gender, marital status, alcohol consumption, and employment status were found to be predictive with PCS. For the MCS being married, using alcohol and financial strain have influenced adversely.

Discussion

In this study it was found that, long standing unemployment adversely affects mental health. Additionally those who were seeking a job in the working group had lower MCS scores, which indicates that the negative influence on mental health is mainly due to seeking a job even further than being unemployed. PCS scores were lower in the employed group which suggested working conditions, job satisfaction and reason of job loss might play crucial role in work life and health relationship.

Poverty and unemployment should be considered together. This suggestion is explicitly strong in the developing countries in which the social support and other official remedial factors, if any, are limited. In our study it was found that there was a strong association between financial strain and MCS scores. This finding supported that financial strain might have modifying effects on unemployment and health relationship.

***key words:* QUALITY OF LIFE, FINANCIAL STRAIN, POVERTY, MENTAL HEALTH**

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Job insecurity and organisational citizenship behaviours: Effects of permanent versus contract employment

This study investigated organisational citizenship behaviours (OCBs) in a sample of 154 Victorian school teachers, of whom 101 were in permanent employment, and 53 in fixed-term contract employment. Participants completed measures of OCBs, organisational commitment, organisational identification, work-related values, and job insecurity. The Results showed that OCBs were positively related to job insecurity for the contract workers and are positively related to a composite measure of organisational identification for the permanent employees. The contract workers reported more job insecurity and more OCBs compared to the permanent employees. The results were found to support a functional analysis of OCBs.

key words: JOB INSECURITY, ORGANISATIONAL IDENTIFICATION, ORGANISATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOURS, PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT, CONTRACT EMPLOYMENT

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Long-term health consequences of early unemployment: Results from a 14-year follow-up

The health consequences of unemployment differ in some respect between men and women. Research on a societal level can be used to analyse the effects of unemployment in a society on those who are employed. In a study comparing the health of a cohort of young people in boom and in recession, it was found that while the health of the unemployed did not change between boom and recession, young people in studies, work and labour market measures deteriorated their health during recession compared to boom. The trade cycle was correlated with ill-health among women only.

Research on the effects of youth unemployment on an individual level shows that in a population of young people unemployment seems to decrease the gender gap in relation to psychological symptoms. On the other hand, there are dramatic gender differences in relation to alcohol consumption and sexual risk-taking - which are much more common among young men - as well as smoking which is more common among young women. In spite of the gender segregated labour market, which favours men, the young unemployed men seem to have poorer prognosis compared to young unemployed women.

Possible explanations for these findings will be discussed from a gender-theoretical framework, where gender is analysed as a relationship, a construction as well as a power factor.

key words: GENDER, HEALTH, POWER FACTOR

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Social convoy in occupational transitions: A viable tool for the alleviation of the unemployment stress?

Empirical evidence for the detrimental effects of job loss and unemployment is reviewed. The effects on psychosocial health are explained in the framework of victimisation theory. On the basis of this theoretical concept, it is asked what should be the societal and individual pre-requisites modifying the most relevant moderator variables of the unemployment experience:

- Coping competencies like self-initiative, self-reliance or entrepreneurship will be relevant for enhancing the primary appraisal of the stressors job loss and job insecurity.
- Secondary appraisal will primarily depend on the availability of comprehensive approaches of a "social convoy" for occupational transitions.

These prerequisites should consist of integrated concepts of outplacement/replacement counselling being part of the social contract in general, but specifically of the work contract as well. These could build the legitimate basis for seeking and accepting professional help in a period of occupational reorientation.

Only with such changes on the individual level as well on the societal level directed towards a strengthening of personal and social resources foreseeable labour market trends that imply an distinct increase of job transitions can be dealt with adequately. If we don't want to impose the burden of adaptation to industrial restructuring to the individual alone, it is imperative to develop innovative answers from the various disciplines occupied with employment transitions.

A first overview on responses from various European countries will be given resulting from the research project „*Social convoy and sustainable employability: Innovative outplacement / replacement strategies*“ (SOCOSE), an interdisciplinary 5-country study supported by DG Research of the European Commission and co-ordinated by the University of Bremen.

key words: VICTIMISATION THEORY, OUTPLACEMENT, REPLACEMENT, SOCIAL CONVOY, EMPLOYABILITY, SOCIAL CONTRACT

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Occupational transitions: Unemployment, underemployment and health

There is ample circumstantial evidence indicating that unemployment, and underemployment, can cause or contribute to physical, mental and social morbidity.

According to the United Nations Convention on Human Rights, the States “recognise the right to work, which includes the right of everyone to the opportunity to gain his living by work which he freely chooses or accepts, and will take appropriate steps to safeguard this right”.

In the same vein, the European council concludes that “regaining full employment not only involves focusing on more jobs, but also on better jobs. Increased efforts should be made to promote a good working environment for all, including equal opportunities for the disabled, gender equality, good and flexible work organisation permitting better reconciliation of working and personal life, lifelong learning, health and safety at work, employee involvement and diversity in working life”.

And, according to Article 152 of the Treaty of Amsterdam, “a high level of human health protection shall be ensured in the definition and implementation of all Community policies and activities”.

Briefly, then, the insights exist. But they are not implemented.

Given the present world rates of unemployment, underemployment and overemployment, there is an urgent need for integrative approaches to

- minimise unemployment and underemployment,
- minimise overemployment,
- promote “the good job”, and
- humanise workforce restructuring.

Aiming at a birds-eye-view of options for such approaches and obstacles encountered, the paper discusses what may be flexible in a short and longer perspective.

key words: UNDEREMPLOYMENT, OVEREMPLOYMENT, OCCUPATIONAL TRANSITIONS, HEALTH

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Effects of organisational context on transition from employment to long-term unemployment

Background

The associations between poor mental health and unemployment has been subject to study in Denmark for several years (e.g. Iversen & Sabroe, 1988; Borg & Burr, 1997). Focus has been partly on unemployment as a predictor of poor mental health, partly vice versa. The Danish Work Environment Cohort Study, DWECS (Borg & Burr, 1997) established an association between risk factors in the work environment and transition from employment to unemployment. A recent study facilitating DWECS (Lund & Csonka, 2001) indicated a modifying effect of organisational policies and practices on the effect of poor mental health on transition from employment to temporary and permanent work disability: Employers practising a flexible managerial concept were more likely to retain employees with (mental) health problems. Given the substantial costs for the individual and for society, it is of interest to identify whether or not individual level work environment exposures and organisational policies and practices have abilities towards reducing the part of unemployment attributable to poor mental health.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine the abilities of potentially changeable factors in the work environment and organisation, to modify the effect measures of selected health variables, primarily poor mental health, on transition from employment to long-term unemployment.

Method

A sample of 3,318 Danish employees was followed from 1995-2000. The respondents were interviewed in 1995 in order to assess health status, work environment exposures, and smoking status. The individual level work environment exposure assessment focus on psychosocial and ergonomic exposures. Organisational context of the workplace was assessed through questionnaire-based interviews with the employers. The organisational dimensions addressed were primarily concerned with organisational policies and practices on flexibility, employee development and use of supplementary training.

key words: LONG TERM UNEMPLOYMENT, ORGANISATIONAL POLICIES, WORK ENVIRONMENT, ORGANISATION

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Long-term youth unemployment and activation policy: The Finnish experience

Activation policy aims to integrate groups of population such as long-term unemployed or unemployed youth considered at risk of social exclusion. Very often the policy is also motivated by economic factors, the double tendency of reducing the financial burden of social benefits and promoting labour market flexibility. There are two main approaches of activation policy, the one implying financial pressure on the target group or legal obligations to participate in certain policy measures, and another emphasising the right to access various schemes or services by which employment and independent living can be supported.

In Finland, there have been several major legislative reforms of activation policy. Firstly, in 1988 the new Employment Act stated that the public sector is obliged to find work for unemployed youth or long-term unemployed job seekers. These two groups were then considered the most vulnerable ones in the Finnish work society. However, the Employment Act was abolished during the economic recession of the 1990s, since it was financially not sustainable. Secondly, in July 1996, an intervention programme designed to assess the service needs of the long-term unemployed aged 50-58 was launched. The programme has covered over 15 000 persons in 10 municipalities. It aimed to study the working capacity and the needs of the target group and to support its re-integration in the work life. The results of the programme remain thin, but a number of well-structured monitoring and evaluation reports have been produced. Thirdly, in September 2001, new legislation concerning activation and rehabilitative work activity of long-term unemployed job seekers and unemployed youth living mainly on social assistance was launched after a vivid controversy. The target groups will cover some 70 000 persons, and the outcomes and implementation of the legislation will be monitored and evaluated in 2001-03.

In addition to these reforms, some activating elements have been introduced in the standard services of the Public Employment Service (PES). Judging by the costs and number of beneficiaries the shares of active measures for unemployed job seekers, social assistance recipients or disabled people are in Finland still much smaller than that of passive measures.

The three examples of Finnish reforms of activation policy are all different and their monitoring and evaluation are based on a number of heterogeneous approaches. The paper will give the main outlines of these approaches and the results until now available from them. The links between labour market and health problems among the Finnish unemployed job seekers and the gate-keeping role of health and rehabilitation sector are also discussed in the light of existing research.

The key finding is that the Finnish activation policy has been based on a mixture of good purposes in order to tackle with the problems of groups at risk of social marginality. The local level of PES and municipal services has had lots of leeway in the implementation of the policy measures. Activation policy cannot be a one-way approach: a prerequisite of good activating results is joint action of employment, social and health services, their partnership with local NGOs and economy.

key words: ACTIVATION POLICY, SOCIAL EXCLUSION, REHABILITATION, JOINT ACTION

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A recent trend of unemployment and health in Japan

Nowadays, the global economic situations have been declining, by which business stagnancy has led to an increase in the number of unemployed persons. Unemployment has become a socio-political problem of the highest importance. One of an occupational physician's most important tasks is to keep the unemployed persons as well as workers in good health conditions.

We had happened to meet the unemployed persons by the abrupt bankruptcy of a shoemaking company, and followed them up for 2 years. In particular, mood disorders occurred around one year of jobless, when the unemployment benefit was invalidated.

We would like to introduce to you a recent trend in Japan. The Industrial Safety and Health Law in our country protect health of workers against labour hazards. If the workers were laid off once, they would be out of the protection, however. Although we have made an effort to include the unemployed persons inside of the law, we could not break through the hard wall of the administration. We believe that establishing a medical check-up system for unemployed persons is an urgent task..

Next, we organised a regional society of unemployment and health at the end of 2000, meetings are held twice a year. A newsletter has been circulated for occupational health persons concerned twice a year as well. The China-Japan-Korea joint meeting on Occupational health was held at Beijing this May, where we introduced the international discussion on "Unemployment and Health" to the Asian participants.

key words: MEDICAL CHECK-UP SYSTEM, MOOD DISORDERS, REGIONAL SOCIETY UNEMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH

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Can volunteering be a moderator of the detrimental effects of engagement in paid work?

Job strain and its determinants in various parts of the paid work force have attracted the attention of researchers for many years.

Effective moderator variables such as social support and job control have been demonstrated in some studies. There is some evidence that engagement in formal volunteering activity, which can be regarded as unpaid work for an organisation, has beneficial effects on the individual in terms of e.g. health, self-esteem, adjustment, learning new skills and role-replacement in retirement.

The question whether these beneficial effects carry over to perceived job strain in (other) paid work is addressed, with the aid of both theoretical and empirical evidence from previous studies and research in progress.

key words: VOLUNTEERISM, JOB STRAIN, SELF-ESTEEM, SOCIAL SUPPORT, JOB CONTROL

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The varying effects of unemployment on mental well-being

Classic research on unemployment and mental health has focused on the functions of employment. These functions are considered to be of equal importance for all unemployed. A critique of this perspective has been that it views the unemployed as passive and homogenous. Instead, an agency approach has been suggested, which focuses on the individual goals of the unemployed. This paper develops and tests a model for understanding the differentiated mental consequences of unemployment, which on a theoretical level integrates both the structural restrictions of the unemployment situation and the agency of the individual.

The model is based on previous findings which indicate that mental well-being is dependent on the economic need for employment, on the one hand, and on the psychosocial need for employment, on the other hand. The model integrates both these aspects and results show that the combined effect is of central importance for the differentiated mental well-being of the unemployed. The analysis is based on a longitudinal survey of 3,500 randomly selected, unemployed Swedes.

key words: MENTAL HEALTH, NEED FOR EMPLOYMENT, INDIVIDUAL GOALS, AGENCY APPROACH

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Unemployment and mental health: Meta-analyses

We review three core issues of psychological research on unemployment: (1) Is there a relationship between employment status and mental health? (2) Are there any groups of people who suffer more than others (moderator effects)? (3) Is unemployment the cause for this psychological distress (question of causality)?

In order to answer these questions we present the main results of recent meta-analyses. These meta-analyses confirmed that unemployed people have consistently a poorer mental health than employed people. The effects are of small to medium size. Further analyses revealed that youth (in comparison to adults), those who are unemployed for more than one year (vs. less than one year), men (in comparison to women) and people with blue collar jobs (vs. white collar jobs) suffer more from being unemployed.

Results of causal analyses based on longitudinal studies showed that employment status is not only correlated with mental health but unemployment causes poor mental health. In addition, selection effects which have been a topic of controversy in the literature can also be found: There is both a higher probability that people with poorer mental health will become unemployed and have problems to find a new job.

key words: MODERATOR, CAUSALITY, META-ANALYSIS, MENTAL HEALTH, GENDER, AGE

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Retrenchment and health parameters:

A 12-month longitudinal examination of a cohort of retrenched steelworkers

The Newcastle BHP Steelworks closure in 1999 resulted in approximately 1500 workers losing their jobs. The BHP Health and Employment Project recruited 230 of those retrenched workers in order to investigate the physical and mental health impacts of the retrenchment. Health parameters were collected over 3 six-monthly data collection periods. Participants were all males; aged between 22 and 66 years (mean age 46 years); most (77%) were married or in a de facto relationship; most (84%) owned their own homes; 61% had no post-secondary qualifications; and 15% were from a non-English speaking background.

This presentation describes the 12-month longitudinal trends in psychosocial outcomes (including stress, optimism, social support, and mental health); clinical outcome measures (including blood pressure, cholesterol and BMI); and risk-behaviours (including smoking, alcohol use, and exercise) for this retrenched cohort. Analyses will be conducted to assess any association between changes in outcome measures over time and age, employment status transitions, and qualifications.

Results will report on the changes in physical and mental health status of a cohort of retrenched male steelworkers over a 12-month period and examine the influence of demographic and employment variables on health outcomes.

key words: OCCUPATIONAL TRANSITIONS, UNDEREMPLOYMENT, HEALTH, RETRENCHMENT, RISK BEHAVIOUR, CLINICAL MEASURES, PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS

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Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT): From research to practice

In Australia there is evidence that people who are unemployed are more than twice as likely to experience anxiety and depression than people who are employed. Despite this there have been few attempts to systematically develop programs that address the impact of unemployment on psychological health. This paper discusses the challenges of implementing interventions in the existing support structures that exist for people who are unemployed.

CBT has been shown to be effective in improving the psychological health of people who are unemployed and in improving employment outcomes. The authors have been involved in three interventions based on CBT training to improve the psychological health of people who are unemployed through existing support systems. Specifically programs were developed in employment support agencies, mental health rehabilitation services and general practice.

The interventions have had mixed success and highlight the difficulties in moving from research to practice and how factors affecting implementation vary across organisational type. However many of the difficulties experienced stem from a general acceptance that depression and anxiety are acceptable consequences of unemployment and re-employment the only outcome worth pursuing.

key words: COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY, DEPRESSION, ANXIETY

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Life-style and mental health among Japanese unemployed persons vis-à-vis gender difference

Objectives

To examine the change of life-style and mental health condition among unemployed persons in relation to gender difference.

Methods

768 workers were unemployed because of an abrupt bankruptcy of a large shoemaking company. A self-administered questionnaire was mailed to 473 persons who were belonging to the organised association of unemployed people every six months after leaving the company. The questionnaires composed of 75 items including somatic and mental symptoms, mental status, daily living habits of diet, smoking, sleep, and drinking. Finally, we analysed the data of the second and the third surveys among 203 subjects (males 91, females 112) in this study. This was an important phase because the invalidation of the benefit for unemployed persons occurred during this period.

Results

The prevalence rates of good diet habits, non smoking, non drinking in female subjects were significantly higher than those in male subjects. These rates didn't change after the invalidation of unemployment insurance. The evaluation of depressive state was assessed by SRQ-D. The mean score of SRQ-D in male was higher, but not significant comparing to the value in female subjects before the invalidation of benefit. In persistent unemployment group, the mean score of SRQ-D and the prevalence rate of light or masked depression were significantly higher in male subjects.

Conclusion

Life style was maintained or improved in both genders after invalidation of benefit. Although mental status was worsened in male subjects, especially in the subjects with persistent unemployment, there was reverse response in female subjects. This suggest that the husband still has the responsibility as the main provider of family income in Japan. Depression score may be associated with their responsibility for the family income.

key words: GENDER DIFFERENCES, DEPRESSION, LIFE-STYLE, MENTAL HEALTH

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Selection and exposure as explanations of the relation between health and unemployment

It is commonly agreed upon that both health selection and exposure to unemployment are important determinants of the health status of unemployed. A simple model could be outlined like this:

Selection is sort of a filter that affects the probability that a person will enter or leave the status of being unemployed. If the flow in and out of unemployment is unaffected by health status, there is no health selection effect. If the flow is facilitated or obstructed by health status, there is a selection effect.

Hypothetically health status during unemployment could be looked upon as a function of selection mechanisms, exposure to unemployment plus the other determinants (e.g. sex, age, education etc.).

Exposure could be measured with some type of unemployment measure, but health selection can only be indirectly estimated by comparing the situation during boom and recession.

Those who leave work due to health reasons during a boom are probably a highly selected group, as there is a need for manpower on the labour market. When a person is looking for job health selection probably plays a minor role, due to the same reason (shortage of manpower). Under recession the situation is quite opposite: a large number of people get unemployed, and health status is seldom an argument for firing people. On the other hand, when you are looking for a job during a recession the competition is hard, and fitness and health plays a role.

The paper presented will demonstrate health selection and exposure effects based on a cohort study of school leavers which have been followed for 14 years.

Key words: SELECTION. EXPOSURE, BOOM, RECESSION

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Unemployment, secure, insecure employment and self-reported ill-health: A comparison

Research on the relative importance of employment vs. unemployment for psychosocial well-being and mental health show that the employed are better off. However if considerations are taken to job security and the psychosocial quality of work a more complicated pattern appears. Job insecurity as well as poor psychosocial quality of work seem to be associated with deteriorating mental and physical health. Studies are indicating that the increasing flexibility in the labour market (short contract, downsizing) might lead to increasing psychosocial health problems among the workforce.

The study that will be presented will consider these aspects. Using data from a cross sectional study in a mid-Sweden region the health situation for five different groups in the labour market are compared. Four of the groups are employed and the fifth group unemployed. The four employed groups differ with respect to job security and with respect to psychosocial quality of work.

The five groups are compared with regard to different measures of self-reported health (GHQ, self-reported complaints).

The results show a relatively complicated pattern. Roughly when controlling for different factors like social background, economic stress and critical life-events two of the groups seem to be most in risk for ill-health namely the unemployed and those who have an insecure job combined with poorer psychosocial quality of work. The association is more pronounced for men than for women.

key words: SECURE AND INSECURE JOBS, QUALITY OF WORK, SELF REPORTED ILL HEALTH

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The "why" and "why not" of job searching behaviour: A self-deterministic approach

The purpose of the present contribution is twofold. First, we attempted to compare two theoretical frameworks, namely Expectancy-Valence Theory (EVT; Vroom, 1964; Feather, 1982, 1989, 1992) and Self Determination Theory (SDT), that have been useful to come to a better understanding of the psychological consequences of unemployment. Second, we examined whether the impact of the length of unemployment on pessimism towards job searching and willingness to do a sacrifice in order to obtain a job was mediated by the motivational constructs proposed by both theories.

A wide variety of affective (i.e., negative and positive experience of well-being, Life Satisfaction Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsson & Griffin, 1985), General Health Questionnaire (e.g., Banks, Clegg, Jackson, Kemp, Stafford, & Wall, 1980) and behavioural (i.e., job search intensity, willingness to do a sacrifice to get a job) outcome variables was measured in both conducted studies (Study 1, N = 273; Study 2, N = 163), while an additional affective (i.e., Self-Actualisation Index (Jones & Crandall, 1986) was included in study 2.

EVT suggests that an unemployed person's actions and emotions will be related to the expectation that the unemployed holds regarding finding a job in the near future and to the value or importance that the unemployed attributes to work. In line with Feather and Davenport (1987) the results in both studies indicated that job valence was positively related to job seeking behaviour, while expectancy was found to be unrelated. Furthermore, in line with Bandura (1982) and Feather (1989), job commitment tended to be negatively related to diverse well-being indicators, while expectancy was rather positively related. In general, our results supported EVT.

Next to these two motivational determinants accentuated within EVT, Self-determination Theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985, 1991, 2001) points out that the reason why one undertakes an action also plays an important role in explaining behavioural and affective outcomes. SDT proposes that those reasons can reflect more or less self-determined behaviour; one might engage in job searching because of financial problems (control motivation) or because one perceives work as a way to develop one's personality and skills (autonomous motivation).

Introducing, next to expectation and job value (as suggested by EVT), controlling and autonomous reasons to engage in job searching in a regression analysis, revealed that both controlling and autonomous job search motivation were found to be significant predictors of well-being and job search behaviour in both studies, with controlling motivation being negatively related to well-being, and autonomous job search motivation being positively related to both job search intensity and well-being.

The second goal of this contribution consists in examining whether expectancy, job valence and autonomous motivation would mediate the relation between impact of length of unemployment and job search pessimism as well as willingness to sacrifice. Results indicate that (1) the positive impact of length of unemployment on job search pessimism is mediated by all three motivational concepts, (2) the negative impact of length of unemployment on willingness to follow a formation training is mediated by expectancy and autonomous motivation, and (3) the negative impact of length of unemployment on willingness to accept an organisational sacrifice is mediated by value and expectancy.

The theoretical and the practical relevance of the role of perceived self-determination within the job searching process is discussed.

key words: EXPECTANCY-VALUE THEORY, SELF-DETERMINATION THEORY, JOB SEARCHING BEHAVIOUR, MOTIVATION

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The effect of the Australian 'Work for the Dole' program upon participants' self-esteem and psychological well being

The Australian 'Work for the Dole' scheme is a government-funded, labour market program that places unemployed youths into work for between 24-30 hours per fortnight, over a six-month period. The anticipated benefits of the program are to: assist unemployed people in combating the drift to despondency and despair, foster appropriate work habits, and improve self-esteem (DEETYA, 1997). This presentation will outline the findings of two independent Australian studies on Work for the Dole. Both studies used an interrupted time-series design whereby measures of psychological health and self-esteem were taken before the program (T1 baseline) and then, again, after the program (T2 follow-up).

Study 1 included 156 participants at baseline and 85 at follow-up (54% response rate) while study 2 had 222 participants at baseline and 51 at follow-up (30% response rate). There was no evidence of attrition bias in either study.

The two studies used different measurement scales to assess the following psychological constructs: self-esteem, mood, and work involvement. MANCOVA revealed no significant difference in self-esteem or work involvement between baseline and follow-up, in either study. However, mood was significantly improved over time in both samples. Participants in both the studies held favourable attitudes towards Work for the Dole. This consistency in findings indicates that the results are robust and have strong external validity. Implications for research in the area of unemployment and for changes to future Work for the Dole programs will be discussed.

key words: WORK FOR THE DOLE, SELF ESTEEM, PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL BEING

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Incentives, paternalism and empowerment in different labour market policies

Unemployment is a problem both of the individual and of society. Depending on the circumstances, unemployment can lead to poverty, social exclusion, deep shame, loss of self-confidence, physical and mental ill health etc. for the individual. On a societal level, high unemployment rates tend to lead to social tension, increased public spending, decreased revenue from taxation, and an increased number of 'discouraged workers'. The individual and society thus often have a shared interest in fighting unemployment, but not always.

In most countries, the financial burden of unemployment lies primarily on the individual and his/her family. This creates a strong incentive to find a job, but the risk of poverty is also high. Some countries, especially in Northern Europe, have chosen instead to provide generous unemployment benefits often combined with active labour market policy interventions. This moves a large part of the financial burden to the state, while alleviating some of the strain on the unemployed person.

Taking a job when benefits are high sometimes becomes more of a moral than an economic question for the individual, and artificial incentives, such as control measures, are introduced to counteract abuse. Discipline and control, however, are often presented as 'aid' and the underlying conflict of interests between state and individual is negated, introducing a paternalistic element which may further stigmatise and disempower the unemployed. The paper argues, that stronger awareness of this risk is needed to make unemployment policy more efficient and humane.

key words: INCENTIVES, PATERNALISM, EMPOWERMENT, LABOUR MARKET POLICIES, INDIVIDUAL, SOCIETY AND STATE

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The tragic sense of being unemployed

The paper starts with the observation that the modern capitalist world of working has developed many of the characteristics commonly associated with total institutions, and proceeds to outline the idea of "totalitarian productivism". Within this context, unemployment has come to play the role of the major sanction for deviations from the norms of productivism. Unemployment is analysed as a situation transcending a mere deficit or a mere bundle of deficits: a predicament involving a tragic conflict between what is and what could be, resulting in the experience of living in a world of the absurd, devoid of meaning and full of contradictory imperatives. The stigma of unemployment has proved more durable than have optimistic hopes of a "normalisation" of unemployment: part of the reason for this lies in the fact that being unemployed conflicts with the central values of a totalitarian productivism creating both unemployment and the ideology needed to turn it into a thoroughly unpleasant experience.

Key words: TOTALITARIAN PRODUCTIVISM, TRAGIC CONFLICT; STIGMA