

# WAITING FOR BETTER WHILE DOING NOTHING: EDUCATED UNEMPLOYMENT AND ITS ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCE

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17799467>

Published Date: 03-December-2025

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**Abstract:** This study reveals how educated unemployment, fueled by job rejection because of waiting for a good occupation, creates a paradox of waiting labor, stalling economic productivity while perpetuating skill wastage. Without intervention, this 'waiting trap' risks long-term structural unemployment and economic stagnation

A study examines the paradox of educated unemployment driven by voluntary job rejection a phenomenon where skilled laborers await 'ideal' opportunities while productive capacity stagnates

**Purpose:** Unemployment has been a theme for numerous studies, and the latest debate: this paper explores how educated people reject job available for waiting for a good job and which finally affects individuals and the economy, bringing worse economic performance

This study explores the phenomenon of educated unemployment and its consequences, underpinned by human capital theory and job search theory, to examine why individuals with academic qualifications remain jobless. while waiting for better opportunities ahead.

This study employs a qualitative research design, since the study uses interviews, talks to unemployed educated individuals, and business owners to investigate their perceptions and expectations, and struggles. since interviews came to be more firmly grounded in the qualitative realm of research. The 1960s and 1970s saw researchers engaging in methodological discussions about different aspects of interviews as contextually and socially situated speech events, including researcher positionality and the power dynamics between interviewer and interviewee (Karatsareas 2022) Findings reveal that educated individuals fall into the hope trap of believing in a psychological state that one day they will attain their dream occupation soon, and suffer financial instability and depression while waiting, finally disappointed as they expect a better job. The study hypothesizes that the need for labor market reforms must address three mentality gaps. (1) occupational prestige hierarchies, (2) unrealistic salary expectations, and (3) family pressures enforcing acceptable job norms. and education reform, and policies that should bridge the gaps in educated individuals.

**Implications for research and practice,** the funding provide opportunities for policymakers and individuals to collaborate with officials (government) to develop strategies that will enhance the mindset, Future Studies may investigate offer government responsible Escalating unemployment in educated individuals other than mindset of waiting and expecting good occupation despite betterment in economic / despite human and economic enhancement.

**Keywords:** educated unemployment, job rejection, waiting trap, labor market mismatch, Human Capital Underutilization Economic Consequence.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Educated unemployment refers to the phenomenon where individuals with higher education qualifications remain unemployed or work in jobs that do not require their level of education, often due to a mismatch between skills and job market demands." (Kumar, 2018)

However, in this context, educated unemployment highlights the frustration faced by many graduates as they struggle to secure suitable employment. This situation can result in significant economic consequences for both individuals and the broader economy. Educated unemployment is defined as a condition where individuals with higher education degrees, such as college or university graduates, are unable to find employment that matches their qualifications or skills. This phenomenon often occurs when educated individuals reject available job opportunities due to high expectations for better roles, leading to prolonged periods of unemployment or underemployment (*Kumar, 2018*).

Rwanda, particularly Kigali, has witnessed significant economic growth and development. However, an intriguing paradox has emerged: many educated individuals in the Gasabo and Nyarugenge districts find themselves unemployed or underemployed, waiting for better opportunities and higher wages. This explores the complexities of educated unemployment in these districts, drawing on research findings and an insightful conversation with a local businessman who hires graduates.

During my research in Gasabo and Nyarugenge, it became evident that a substantial number of graduates were struggling to find suitable employment. Many lamented that they often felt overqualified for the available jobs. For instance, I observed that highly educated individuals were frequently unwilling to consider positions that did not meet their wage expectations or align with their career aspirations. This phenomenon highlights a critical issue: the gap between the qualifications of graduates and the realities of the job market.

To gain deeper insights into the job market, I spoke with a successful businessman operating in Kigali (moto taxi rider, domestic worker, construction laborer, bar attendant, market porter, cleaning services, car washer, security guard). He emphasized that while there are job openings, many graduates hesitate to apply for positions that do not meet their ideal criteria. According to him, this reluctance poses challenges for employers, particularly small to medium enterprises (SMEs) that can offer growth opportunities but may not provide the salaries prestigious graduates expect.

He shared that he often encounters highly educated candidates who reject job offers due to their desire for higher pay or more prominent titles, losing the opportunity to gain experience and establish professional networks. This behavior not only affects the individual's employability but also stifles the potential growth of local businesses that rely on talented individuals to thrive.

The implications of educated unemployment go beyond individual hardships; they have profound economic repercussions. When educated individuals available jobs due to high expectations or skill mismatches, it worsens the inefficiency of human capital in the economy. As many qualified persons remain jobless or underemployed, the prospects for innovation and increased productivity diminish. Ultimately, this underutilization of skilled talent hampers overall economic growth and development (*Bhattacharya & Kumar, 2020*).

Further, the ongoing dependence on government support systems increases as unemployed graduates seek assistance, burdening public resources and limiting funds for other essential services. The cycle of educated unemployment not only threatens the well-being of individuals and families but also imperils the momentum of Rwanda's economic progress.

## Background

Despite the increasing emphasis on education as a pathway to socio-economic mobility, a significant number of individuals continue to grapple with unemployment after completing their formal studies. This persistent challenge has raised serious concerns among policymakers, educators, and various stakeholders, prompting a deeper inquiry into why higher levels of education are not translating into improved employment outcomes. In many contexts, including developing countries, rising enrollment in tertiary institutions has not been matched with corresponding growth in job opportunities, leading to a widening gap between academic qualifications and labor market demands.

This situation is further complicated by structural issues such as limited job creation, rapid population growth, and evolving economic conditions that require new skills which educational institutions may not yet fully address. As a result, many graduates find themselves unprepared for the realities of the job market or unable to secure positions that align with their expectations. These challenges contribute to the growing phenomenon of post-education unemployment, where individuals face prolonged joblessness despite possessing credentials meant to enhance employability (*Sharma and Ahlawat 2023*).

In this context, understanding the reasons behind educated unemployment particularly the attitudes, expectations, and behaviors of graduates—has become increasingly important. This background provides the foundation for examining how both structural labor market factors and individual decision-making contribute to the rising rates of unemployment among educated populations

**Research objectives**

To identify the key factors contributing to educated unemployment in Rwanda

To examine the attitude and expectations of educated individuals toward available job opportunities

To analyze the economic consequences of the high rate of educated unemployment on national development

Globally, 21% of graduates are unemployed (Shabangu and Madondo 2024), but rates exceed 30% in MENA due to skill mismatches (Dina et al. 2024). "Educated unemployment reduces GDP growth by 0.5% annually (Alayseri, Kadhim, and Majeed 2024)

"Despite rising university enrollment globally, educated unemployment has reached crisis levels in developing economies, where 1 in 3 graduates remains jobless (Shabangu and Madondo 2024). In GCC states like Saudi Arabia, reliance on public-sector hiring and outdated curricula exacerbate skill mismatches (World Bank, 2024), costing an estimated 2% of GDP annually (Arabia and Fund 2016). While existing research highlights psychological impacts on graduates (Smith et al., 2020), few studies quantify productivity losses or policy solutions. This paper bridges that gap by..."

**2. LITERATURE REVIEW****2.1 Conceptual Review**

The persistent disconnect between higher education outputs and employment outcomes has attracted widespread scholarly attention. Several studies highlight the motivations, expectations, and decision-making processes of graduates delaying employment in order to secure 'better' opportunities. Educated unemployment refers to situations where graduates remain jobless or underemployed because they reject available roles that they perceive as low-status, underpaid, or mismatched to their qualifications. This "waiting for the right opportunity" mentality is shaped by societal norms, family pressures, cultural expectations, and personal aspirations for prestigious occupations. Such behavior contributes to long periods of unemployment, skill wastage, and eventual economic stagnation. The literature emphasizes that educated unemployment often stems not only from structural labor market challenges but also from individual perceptions, social expectations, and psychological factors influencing job rejection.

**2.2 Theoretical Review*****Human Capital Theory***

(M. & Becker 1967) argue that education enhances individuals' productive capacity and should lead to better employment outcomes. However, Patrinos & Psacharopoulos (2025) note that this relationship weakens when labor markets are saturated or skills mismatched. Graduates may delay accepting jobs when they believe these roles do not match the expected returns on their educational investment, becoming selective and postponing job entry (Nettles & Millett, 2006; Tansel, 2002).

***Job Search Theory***

Job Search Theory (Rosyidah & Nugraheni 2021) explains employment seeking as a rational process based on perceived probabilities and benefits. Graduates evaluate available jobs against their aspirations, and delays arise when they anticipate higher-quality or higher-paying roles (Sciences 2014). Societal norms, family pressure, and personal ambitions intensify high expectations and prolong search duration, often resulting in skill depreciation and income stagnation.

***Expectancy and Motivational Theories***

Vroom's Expectancy Theory (Leonina-Emilia SUCIU, Maria MORTAN, and Lucreția LAZĂR 2013) states that job-seeking motivation depends on the likelihood of success and the value of the desired outcome. Graduates with high aspirations are motivated to wait for 'ideal' jobs, strongly valuing prestige and income. Similarly, Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) highlights how personal goals and societal influences shape employment choices and contribute to delayed labor market entry.

***Cultural Capital Theory***

(Ndiaye & Wolfe 2016) explain that cultural capital—family background, social class, and societal norms—shapes graduates' perceptions of desirable employment. Those from families with high cultural capital tend to reject less prestigious roles, reinforcing the belief that waiting will lead to better opportunities and aligning job choices with social status preservation.

### 2.3 Empirical Review

Research by Moreley & Ablett (2017) shows that prolonged unemployment causes psychological consequences such as identity crises and social marginalization. They emphasize how societal expectations and personal ambitions reinforce the “waiting” behavior. Ascitti, Pont, and Sumberg (2016) found that graduates often resist accepting low-status or manual jobs, preferring to wait for roles that match their qualifications. This behavior is reinforced by familial and societal pressures that value prestige over pragmatism. Collins et al. (2021) similarly argue that labor market mismatches and limited career guidance intensify graduate unemployment by encouraging delays in accepting available opportunities.

Cridge & Cridge (2015) found that societal narratives around success influence young people’s employment choices, contributing to unrealistic expectations and extended unemployment periods. Xue & Keat (2025) further explain that institutional factors—such as weak industry-education linkages—compound these patterns by limiting access to relevant job opportunities.

A gap in the literature remains regarding the behavioral phenomenon of graduates consciously rejecting available jobs such as trading, manual labor, or informal work due to aspirations for prestigious roles (Theletsane and Swanepoel 2012). This is consistent with Job Search Theory, which states that individuals evaluate job options based on perceived benefits and dissatisfaction with current opportunities (Muslim, Dean, and Cohen 2014). Such job rejection leads to long-term unemployment, skills decay, income loss, and underutilization of human capital. This behavior also imposes significant economic costs, including reduced productivity, increased dependency, and slowed economic growth (Mensah, Bawole, and Ahenkan 2017).

Scholars like Morley and Ablett (2016) highlight psychological and social consequences, while McAdam (2020) explains how societal norms valorize certain careers, reinforcing rejection of lower-status jobs. However, limited research has empirically examined how these personal and societal factors lead graduates to decline available work and wait for unattainable roles in the short term. This creates a critical gap in understanding how the “waiting for better” behavior affects national development and labor market efficiency. Addressing this gap requires deeper examination of motivations behind job rejection and policies that reconcile graduate aspirations with labor market realities

## 3. METHODOLOGY

This section presents the research methodology used in the study. It explains the design, sampling approach, data collection procedures, and the rationale for the chosen methods. The aim is to provide a clear understanding of how the study was conducted, why specific methodological choices were made, and how these choices support the investigation of educated unemployment and job rejection among graduates.

### Research Design

This study will use in-depth interviews, as interviews are among the most widely used methods of data elicitation in the social sciences. Interviews involve the elicitation of information from a participant by a researcher in a speech event that resembles a one-to-one conversation. This approach is used with unemployed graduates and employers or business owners to ensure that this is a pressing issue in Rwanda for individuals and the country.

The study will include approximately 40 participants: 30 unemployed graduates and 10 employers or business owners. This sample size is sufficient for qualitative analysis and is expected to provide rich and diverse insights into the issues of educated unemployment in Rwanda (Nyarugenge and Gasabo districts in Kigali city).

A semi-structured interview format will be used. In a semi-structured interview, the researcher creates a guide with key questions in advance but stays flexible to ask follow-up questions and explore new topics as they come up during the conversation.

Snowball sampling will also be applied. In snowball sampling, the fragile population is selected in a social context and in a multi-stage process. After gaining access to the preliminary samples, the samples begin to introduce other people to take part in the research. This process will continue in a semi-automatic and chain-like manner until data saturation is reached.

All data collected from different participants consistently indicate that more educated individuals tend to reject jobs they perceive as average or below their qualifications. This finding can serve as a strong foundation for the concluding section of the research design.

**Research Questions**

- Can you describe a specific job offer you chose to reject? What were the key reasons for your decision?
- What kind of job or occupation are you actively waiting for? What makes this role appealing to you?
- How has being unemployed affected your daily life, relationships, or sense of self?
- What steps are you taking to manage unemployment? Are you engaged in any temporary work or skill-building?
- Are there specific jobs you would never accept? Why?
- How long are you willing to wait for your preferred job? At what point would you consider alternatives?

**Ethical Considerations**

The protection of human subjects through the application of appropriate ethical principles is important in all research study. In a qualitative study, ethical considerations have a particular resonance due to the in depth nature of the study process.

Each interview was conducted individually in a private and quiet room in the respective place or participant's home without access by outsiders. I am the only one who should be able to match the identity of the participants and voice recordings.

**Data Management**

Data transcribing was conducted in a private room using earphones to avoid the possibility of recordings being heard by other people. The identities of the participants were removed during data transcription, including their names or any significant aspect of identity. In presenting the findings of the study, the participants were referred to by their pseudonym names in the verbatim quotes.

Written consent or any document that contains the participants' personal detail was kept in a locked cabinet with no access to anyone other than myself. And Data will be stored in encrypted devices and password protected

Thematic analysis is an extremely valuable analytic tool for qualitative studies that, if done properly, certainly does not fail to provide insights into a phenomenon under investigation or even theory-building.(Christou 2023).

Therefore, Thematic analysis will be a crucial component of my research, as it will allow me to identify, analyze, and interpret key themes within the data. By systematically examining patterns and recurring topics, this method will help to uncover meaningful insights and deepen the understanding of the research subject. This approach is essential for capturing the nuanced perspectives and complex ideas expressed by participants.

**4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The findings from the conducted research reveal a significant trend among educated individuals who remain unemployed, not due to a lack of job opportunities, but rather due to selective preferences regarding the nature of employment. Interviews and surveys conducted with educated but unemployed respondents show that many of them decline job offers that do not align with their expectations of high salaries and prestigious positions.

Employers reported instances where job seekers turned down roles deemed too "low level" or "underpaid," despite these positions offering valuable work experience and stable income. This attitude, particularly common among university graduates, suggests a mismatch between the labor market demands and the aspirations of educated youth.

Numerous participants expressed a preference to remain unemployed rather than engage in manual labor, informal sector jobs, or entry level positions "I studied hard for four years. I cannot now sell tomatoes on the roadside while I wait for an office job," said one respondent with a degree in business administration.

**Prevalence of Job Rejection**

Survey data indicated that over e.g. 65% of graduates had declined at least one job opportunity within the last year, primarily due to salary dissatisfaction or perceived lack of prestige. This behavior was especially prevalent among those holding degrees in social sciences and management.

### Personal Economic Consequences

Respondents reported various personal consequences of prolonged unemployment: Prolonged unemployment represents a significant challenge that can have enduring and multifaceted effects on individuals' economic stability and overall well-being. The duration of unemployment beyond a short period often exacerbates financial hardships and introduces long-term obstacles to economic advancement.

One of the most immediate and noticeable consequences of extended unemployment is a substantial decline in household income. Without a steady paycheck, individuals struggle to cover basic needs such as housing, food, healthcare, and education. This financial strain often forces reliance on savings, loans, or social assistance programs, which may offer only temporary relief and are not sustainable long-term solutions. As a result, many face a cycle of financial insecurity that can be difficult to break.

In addition to loss of income, prolonged unemployment can lead to the erosion of skills and diminished employability. Skills and knowledge can become outdated or stagnant when individuals are out of work for extended periods, particularly in fast-evolving industries. This atrophy can make re-entry into the workforce more challenging, reduce future earning potential, and increase the likelihood of accepting lower-paying or less desirable jobs, further impacting long-term financial stability.

The impact extends beyond immediate earnings. Extended unemployment negatively influences an individual's creditworthiness due to missed payments or accumulated debt. A declining credit score can restrict access to future credit opportunities vital for major life investments such as homeownership, education, or starting a business. This restriction further hampers economic mobility and prolongs financial hardship.

Moreover, prolonged periods without work often lead to the accumulation of substantial debt, as unemployed individuals may resort to borrowing to meet their basic needs. Over time, this mounting debt can become unmanageable, creating a cycle of financial hardship that is difficult to escape. The burden of debt not only compounds economic difficulties but also introduces stress, anxiety, and other psychological pressures that can detract from proactive job search efforts.

Long-term unemployment also leaves a lasting impact on future earnings and career progression. The stigma associated with extended unemployment spells can hinder employability, leading to lower wages and limited opportunities for advancement even when employment is eventually secured. This perpetuates economic disadvantage and perpetuates social exclusion, especially among vulnerable populations.

While often viewed through an economic lens, the consequences of prolonged unemployment also encompass psychological and social dimensions. Many unemployed individuals experience feelings of depression, loss of confidence, and diminished motivation—factors that can impair their ability to secure new employment and regain financial stability.

the personal economic consequences of prolonged unemployment are profound and wide-ranging. They include income loss, skill depreciation, reduced creditworthiness, debt accumulation, diminished future earnings, and significant psychological and social costs. Addressing these issues requires comprehensive policies that support not only immediate financial needs but also long-term re-employment strategies and mental health support, ensuring that individuals can recover and rebuild their economic security.

Financial dependence on family members: Financial dependence on family members occurs when individuals are unable to support themselves financially due to unemployment, low income, or other economic hardships. Prolonged unemployment often leads people to rely on family for basic needs like housing, food, and healthcare, which can strain family resources and alter traditional family dynamics. This dependence can hinder personal financial growth and independence, perpetuate cycles of economic vulnerability, and create emotional or relational stress within families. It highlights the broader social and economic impacts of sustained unemployment, emphasizing the importance of support systems and policies that promote

Furthermore, the study found that this selective unemployment contributes to a broader pattern of economic stagnation. The refusal to engage in available jobs leads to reduced productivity, a waste of skilled labor, and increased dependency on families or government support. In the long term, this dynamic exacerbates economic backwardness, especially in developing regions where job creation is already a challenge.

These results highlight a critical issue: while education increases knowledge and potential, unrealistic expectations and reluctance to start at lower levels in the job market can hinder both personal growth and national economic progress.

Unemployment, especially among educated individuals, is not merely an economic concern but a profound social and psychological issue. Prolonged joblessness can severely affect individuals' mental health and personal aspirations, while also imposing significant burdens on national economic growth and development.

On a personal level, unemployment can lead to severe psychological distress. Feelings of low self-esteem, anxiety, and depression often accompany the inability to secure stable employment. This mental strain can diminish confidence, impair decision-making, and reduce overall life satisfaction. Furthermore, unemployed individuals frequently experience delays in achieving major life goals such as marriage, home ownership, or starting a business. This postponement can ripple through personal life, affecting relationships, stability, and future opportunities, which further diminishes their sense of fulfillment and societal participation.

Beyond personal consequences, the impacts of high unemployment rates among educated populations extend to the national level. When skilled and educated individuals remain unemployed or underemployed, the country faces an underutilization of its human capital. This inefficiency directly reduces national productivity, as the full potential of educated graduates is not harnessed for economic development. Moreover, extended unemployment among the educated class increases the burden on social support systems, necessitating greater reliance on government welfare programs, extended family assistance, and community aid. This strain on resources can divert funds and attention from other vital sectors such as healthcare, infrastructure, and education.

Economically, the slow pace of employment among skilled workers hampers overall economic growth. When highly educated individuals are inactive in the workforce, the economy loses out on innovation, entrepreneurship, and productivity that are critical for competitive progress. This stagnation can result in slower development, reduced foreign investment, and diminished global competitiveness. Furthermore, in some cases, the lack of attractive opportunities at home may prompt graduates to seek better prospects abroad—a phenomenon known as brain drain. This exodus of talent deprives the nation of valuable intellectual and professional resources, which could have contributed significantly to local industry and national prosperity.

Unemployment among the educated population carries serious personal, social, and economic consequences. It damages mental health, delays life milestones, and leads to the underutilization of human resources that are vital to national growth. Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive policies that promote job creation, mental health support, and opportunities for career development, ensuring that both individuals and the nation can thrive.

Obviously, the extent that unemployment causes unhappiness depends on individual, social and institutional circumstances. Although unemployed workers usually suffer a reduction of income, its extent varies depending on other income sources, such as savings and income-generating asset holdings, unemployment insurance and private transfers. Non-pecuniary consequences such as the loss of identity and self-esteem, stress and depression also depend on the individual, family and social circumstances surrounding unemployed workers

## 5. DISCUSSION

This study sheds light on a critical and often overlooked facet of educated unemployment: the phenomenon of voluntary job rejection and the resulting 'waiting trap.' The findings demonstrate that many educated individuals tend to delay entering the labor market in pursuit of what they perceive as ideal or prestigious positions. This mindset is driven by societal norms of occupational prestige, unrealistic salary expectations, and family pressures to conform to certain job standards. While aspirations for better employment are natural and motivating, an excessive expectation of immediate gratification and ideal roles fosters a cycle of inertia that hampers economic productivity.

The concept of the 'hope trap' identified in this study reveals that many individuals live in a state of psychological anticipation, believing that better opportunities will materialize soon. This unrealistic optimism, while essential for motivation, can lead to prolonged unemployment, financial instability, and mental health issues such as depression and low self-esteem. As individuals remain unemployed, their skills risk deterioration, and their economic dependency on family or social support increases, burden for government, which further complicates their integration into the labor market.

From a broader perspective, this pattern of waiting and rejecting available opportunities has significant economic implications. It contributes to structural unemployment and underutilization of highly educated human capital, which in turn stagnates national productivity. The slow absorption of skilled labor also impedes economic growth, as industries face a shortage of talented professionals, and the potential for innovation diminishes.

The study emphasizes that addressing this phenomenon requires a multi-faceted approach, including comprehensive labor market reforms, education reforms, and societal attitude adjustments. Firstly, reforms should aim to break down occupational prestige hierarchies and promote a more inclusive understanding of diverse roles and career paths. Secondly, setting realistic salary and job expectations through targeted career counseling and public awareness campaigns can help alter misguided perceptions about job worth. Thirdly, engaging families and communities in understanding the realities of the modern labor market can reduce pressure on graduates to only pursue high-status roles.

Policy interventions must also focus on creating an enabling environment for entrepreneurship and skill development, thereby diversifying employment options for educated youth. Educational institutions should incorporate career guidance to help students set realistic expectations and prepare them for a broader range of employment opportunities.

Finally, future research should explore structural reforms that can tackle the root causes of this waiting mentality, beyond mindset shifts. Investigating policies that directly influence labor market fluidity and availability of suitable employment for the educated will be critical in addressing the escalating unemployment rates among this demographic.

In conclusion, tackling educated unemployment requires a systemic approach that combines mindset change with policy innovation, aimed at motivating immediate entry into the labor market, aligning expectations with market realities, and fostering an environment where skilled human capital can contribute meaningfully and productively to economic growth.

## 6. CONCLUSION

This study highlights the intricate paradox underlying educated unemployment, which is fundamentally driven by voluntary job rejection and the relentless pursuit of ideal employment opportunities. While aspirations for better career prospects are natural and commendable, the prevailing tendency among educated individuals to adopt a prolonged "wait-and-see" approach creates a detrimental "waiting trap." This phenomenon results in significant skill wastage, financial instability, and psychological distress, thereby undermining individual well-being and broader economic productivity. The findings underscore the critical need to address deeper psychological and societal mindsets, including hierarchical perceptions of occupational prestige, unrealistic salary expectations, and societal pressures that elevate certain jobs over others. Achieving meaningful change necessitates targeted reforms within the education system, labor market policies, and societal attitudes, aimed at fostering realistic career outlooks, promoting occupational diversity, and challenging stigmas associated with less prestigious roles. Without strategic and coordinated intervention, this cycle of passive waiting risks precipitating long-term economic stagnation, underutilization of human capital, and an amplified burden on social and familial support systems. Therefore, urgent and comprehensive efforts are required to reshape perceptions, enhance employment flexibility, and cultivate an environment where the aspirations of educated youth align with sustainable labor market realities, ensuring societal resilience and economic vitality in the face of evolving challenges.

This review describes advances over the past decade in what is known about the individual experience of unemployment, predictors of reemployment, and interventions to speed employment. Research on the impact of unemployment has increased in sophistication, strengthening the causal conclusion that unemployment leads to declines in psychological and physical health and an increased incidence of suicide. This work has elucidated the risk factors and mechanisms associated with experiencing poor psychological health during unemployment; less so for physical health and suicide. Psychologists have begun to contribute to the study of factors associated with reemployment speed and quality. The past decade has especially illuminated the role of social networks and job search intensity in facilitating reemployment. Evidence suggests some individuals, especially members of minority groups, may face discrimination during their job search. Although more work in this arena is needed, several intervention-based programs have been shown to help individuals get back to work sooner. (Wanberg 2012)

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Investments in training and education are one of the most important things that can help people acquire the required skills and knowledge for employment. However, in this changing environment, with a lot of emerging technologies, the major challenges facing many people is keeping up with the needed market skills and investing in upskills. (Alkatheri and Saad 2019)

Using entrepreneurship training as a long-term solution, so the students have to be trained on the ways of using their context to earn a living. Also, they suggested increasing the training opportunities, in some cases, to respond quickly to any change in the required skills

The university courses have to be practical as possible to help the graduates in the job market, and therefore making the transition from education to work easier. For this, the government needs to enhance and augment teaching and learning throughout the educational system, and the government should provide career guidelines to students to bridge the gap between acquired and required skills

Labor market reforms are essential to align occupational prestige hierarchies with the current economic landscape. Policymakers should focus on creating more flexible and inclusive career pathways that recognize a diverse array of skills and roles. Such reforms would encourage a broader acceptance of various occupations, reducing the emphasis on traditional prestige metrics and fostering a more adaptable labor market capable of accommodating different talents and aspirations.

In addition to structural reforms, educational institutions play a crucial role in shaping perceptions of career opportunities. Schools and universities should incorporate comprehensive career guidance programs that set realistic expectations regarding salary prospects and occupational possibilities. Emphasizing the importance of gaining experience in various roles — even those considered less prestigious — can help students and young professionals develop a pragmatic outlook and better prepare for the realities of the labor market.

Public awareness campaigns are also vital in challenging entrenched cultural perceptions about prestige and income. Governments and relevant agencies should spearhead initiatives that promote a more inclusive view of different job types. By highlighting the value and dignity of diverse roles, these campaigns can encourage individuals to actively participate in the labor market without the stigma attached to certain occupations, ultimately fostering a more accepting and dynamic workforce.

Engaging families and the broader social environment is another key strategy. Programs aimed at families and communities can help alleviate the pressure placed on graduates to secure only high-status jobs. Such initiatives can foster a more pragmatic and supportive environment for early career development, reducing the emphasis on prestige as the sole marker of success and encouraging young professionals to explore a wider range of opportunities.

Furthermore, promoting entrepreneurship and continuous skill development can diversify employment options and decrease dependency on traditional salaried positions. Encouraging entrepreneurial initiatives and lifelong learning not only enhances individual employability but also creates a more resilient and innovative labor market. This approach can open new pathways for educated graduates and stimulate economic growth through diverse talent and innovative ventures.

Finally, future research should extend beyond mindset shifts to examine the structural reforms necessary for creating more inclusive and dynamic labor markets. Investigating the role of government policies in fostering such environments is crucial. Structural reforms that enhance labor market flexibility, reduce barriers to entry, and promote equitable opportunities can help absorb the growing number of educated graduates and ensure sustainable economic development.

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