



WWJMRD 2022; 8(08): 93-97
www.wwjmr.com
International Journal
Peer Reviewed Journal
Refereed Journal
Indexed Journal
Impact Factor SJIF 2017:
5.182 2018: 5.51, (ISI) 2020-
2021: 1.361
E-ISSN: 2454-6615

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Effects of Unemployment on Mental Health Among Youth in Tilottama Municipality of Rupandehi District

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Abstract

Background: Unemployment research over the past decades has shown quite convincingly that unemployment leads to psychological distress and that re-employment improves mental health. Aims: The aim of this study was to identify the effects of unemployment on mental health among youths in Tilottama municipality of Rupandehi district. Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study with 120 sample size among the unemployed youth was carried out in Tilottama municipality of Rupandehi district, Nepal. A pretested semi structured interview questionnaire was used to collect the data. The collected data was analyzed by using descriptive statistics. Results: The findings revealed that, almost all of the respondents had heard about mental health. The major effects experienced by the respondents were nearly half of the respondents 51(42.5%) think themselves as a worthless person. Majority of the respondents 72(60%) were not able to enjoy their day-to-day activities, nearly 1/5th of the respondents 13(10.8%) had anxiety disorder diagnosed by the doctor after being unemployed. Nearly half of the respondents 61(50.8%) were not capable of making decisions. Nearly more than half the respondents 69(57.5%) were not feeling happy. Conclusions: The results of this study concluded that the major effects experienced by the respondents were feeling unhappy, felt as worthless person, not capable of making decision, felt down or depressed, trouble in sleeping and had little interest in things.

Keywords: Unemployment, Youth, Stress, Anxiety.

1. Introduction

Unemployment research over the past decades has shown quite convincingly that unemployment leads to psychological distress and that re-employment improves mental health. In other words, there seems to be a causal relationship between unemployment and poor mental health; the so-called causation hypothesis(1). The high rate of unemployment among emerging adults (aged 18 to 25 years) is a public health concern. The risk of depression is higher among the unemployed than among the employed, but little is known about the relationship between unemployment and mental health among emerging adults. For emerging adults, long experiences of unemployment increase the likelihood of experiencing depression throughout the transition(2).

Unemployment might be expected to increase anxiety and depression, lead to lower self-esteem, and produce adverse physical health consequences, particularly when efforts to locate work are met with failure over a long period of time. Unemployment has occurred in the lives of many people in this country during the past decade. Despite some recent decreases in the numbers of persons unemployed, it has been estimated that more than 9 per cent of the work force will be out of work in 1984. Individual accounts of the devastating impact this can have on day-to-day living cannot be ignored(1).

Unemployment contributes to psychological disorder has invited research for scientific as well as applied reasons. Social epidemiologists have been interested in the issue because it offers a test of the stress model in which the stressor can be operationalized at both the individual and the ecological levels(3). Unemployment causes poor physical or mental health. The link from unemployment to health may also be important for other outcomes(4).

Unemployment contributes to psychological disorder has invited research for scientific as well as applied reasons. Social epidemiologists have been interested in the issue because it offers a test of the stress model in which the stressor can be operationalized at both the individual and the ecological levels(1).Unemployment causes poor physical or mental health. The link from unemployment to health may also be important for other outcomes(5).

Objectives

To identify the socio-demographic status of the respondents
To identify the effects of unemployment on mental health among youth.

2. Methodology

Study Design: A descriptive cross sectional study design

Population and Setting: Study population consisted of all the unemployed youth residing in Tilottama municipality of Rupandehi District.

Sample Size: 120

Sampling Technique: Non-Probability Purposive sampling technique was used to select the unemployed youth.

Research Instrument:In order to measure research variables, the researcher developed semi-structured interview questionnaire related to Socio-demographic information and effects of unemployment on mental health among youth.

Data Collection procedure: Administrative approval was obtained from the concerned authorities. Researcher obtained the verbal consent from the individual prior to data collection. Researcher herself collected the data. Interview was used as data collection method and structured questionnaire was used as a tool to measure the effects of unemployment on mental health among youth. Researcher explained the purpose of the study and advantage of the study. The subject was assured for the confidentiality of information and subject was allowed to refuse to participate in the study at any time if they wish.

Data Analysis Procedure: The gathered data was checked for accuracy, utility and completeness. Any errors, incompleteness and inconsistencies in the data that can affect the result were removed. Obtained data was entered in SPSS software latest version for further analysis. The finding of the study was presented in tables by using descriptive statistics tools such as frequency, percentage and mean.

3. Results and Findings

The findings of this study showed that nearly more than half of the respondents63 (52.5%) belonged to the age of 25-30years. The majority of the respondents were male 76 (63.3%). Majority of the respondents58 (48.3%) were Brahmin. Nearly more than 2/3rd of the respondents 90 (75%) were Hindu. Regarding family, the majority of the respondents were belonged to nuclear family 87(72.5%).

Table 1: Information of the Respondents According to Age, Sex, Ethnicity, Religion.
n=120

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age (In years)		
20-25	54	45.0
25-30	63	52.5
30-35	3	2.5
Sex		
Male	76	63.3
Female	44	36.7
Ethnicity		
Brahmin	58	48.3
Chhetri	16	13.3
Janajati	41	34.2
Dalit	5	4.2
Religion		
Hindu	90	75.0
Buddhist	20	16.7
Christian	8	6.7
Muslim	2	1.7
Types of family		
Nuclear	87	72.5
Joint	33	27.5

The Majority of the respondents 48(40%) of the respondents were unemployed from less than 6 months. Nearly 2/3rd of the respondents 71(59.2%) were unmarried. Majority of the respondents 48(40%) of the respondents were unemployed from less than 6 months. Nearly 2/3rd of the respondents 71(59.2%) were unmarried. Nearly half of the respondents 65(54.2%) were graduated. The majority of the respondents 65(54.1%) were cigarette smokers and 55(45.8%) were non- smokers. Nearly more than 2/3rdof the respondents 89(74.2%) had no any health coverage including health insurance and the remaininghad health insurance coverage i.e. 31(25.8%).

Table 2: Information of the Respondents According to Family Types, Unemployed Period and Marital Status, Educational status, Cigarette Smoking and Health Insurance.
n=120

Variables	Frequency(F)	Percentage(P)
Types of family		
Nuclear	87	72.5
Joint	33	27.5
Unemployed period		
Less than 6 months	48	40.0
6-12 months	21	17.5
1-2 year	33	27.5
More than 2 year	18	15.0
Marital Status		
Married	49	40.8
Unmarried	71	59.2
Educational Status		

primary education	14	11.7
secondary education	32	26.7
Higher secondary education	65	54.2
Literate	9	7.5
Cigarettes Smoking		
Everyday	28	23.3
Someday	37	30.8
Not at all	55	45.8
Have health Insurance		
Yes	31	25.8
No	89	74.2

4.1 Effects of Unemployment on Mental Health among the Respondents

Out of 120 respondents, almost all of the respondents had heard about mental health i.e. 100%. Most of the respondent’s opinion upon the meaning of mental health was Depression and stress i.e. 46.7% and the least opinion of the respondents was ability to take own decisions i.e. 16.7% followed by 36% was Free from mental illness. Majority of the respondents preferred to be working i.e. 95.8%. Over the last two weeks, 45(37.5%) respondents

never had little interest or pleasure in doing things. In the past 30 days most of the respondents felt down or depressed. Majority of the respondents 72(60%) had felt bad about themselves that they were a failure or they had let themselves and their family. Most of the respondents had trouble in concentrating on things among them 36.7% had trouble for 1-2 days.

Table 3: Information of the Experience of the Respondents during Unemployed Days. n=120.

Variables	Frequency(F)	Percentage(P)
Had little interest		
Never	45	37.5
2-6 days	48	40.0
7-11 days	16	13.3
12-14 days or more	11	9.2
Felt down or depressed		
Never	45	37.5
1-2 days	44	36.7
3-5 days	20	16.7
5 or more days	11	9.2
Trouble in falling asleep		
Never	46	38.3
1-2 days	47	39.2
3-5 days	17	14.2
5 or more days	10	8.3
Felt bad about yourself		
Yes	72	60.0
No	48	40.0
Trouble in concentrating		
Never	45	37.5
1-2 days	44	36.7
3-5 days	22	18.3
5 or more days	9	7.5

Majority of the respondents had no any anxiety disorder i.e. 89.2% after becoming unemployed. Nearly half of the respondent’s quality of health was good i.e. 50.8%. Regardless of financial situation, 11.7% of the respondents were rich, 37.5% were comfortable, 29.2% were modest and 21.2% were poor. Nearly half of the respondents

61(50.8%) didn’t felt themselves as capable of taking decision. Majority of the respondents were not able to enjoy their day-to-day normal activities i.e.72 (60%). Among total respondent nearly half of the respondent i.e. 51(42.5%) of respondent think themselves as a worthless person.

Table 5: Information of the Respondents Regarding their opinion about psychological stress. n=120.

Variables	Frequency(F)	Percentage(P)
Have any anxiety disorder		
Yes; after becoming unemployed	13	10.8
No; Never	107	89.2
Quality of health		
Excellent	39	32.5
Good	61	50.8

Poor	20	16.7
Financial situation		
Rich	14	11.7
Comfortable	45	37.5
Modest	35	29.2
Poor	26	21.7
Capable of making decision		
Yes	59	49.2
No	61	50.8
Able to enjoy normal day to day activities		
Yes	48	40.0
No	72	60.0
Think as a worthless person		
Yes	51	42.5
No	69	57.5

The opinion of the respondent’s about dealing with psychological stress was 36(30%) of respondents told chat with friends and family, 20(16.7%) told listening music and travel, 23(19.2%) told smoking and drinking and 41(34.2%) told meditation and yoga. Most of the respondents 69(57.5%) weren’t feeling reasonably happy,

all things considered and the remaining 51(42.5%) were feeling happy. Most of the respondents felt that they were not playing useful parts in things i.e.54.2% and the remaining 45.2% felt that they were playing useful parts in things.

Table 6: Information of the Respondents Regarding their opinion about psychological stress. n=120.

Variables	Frequency(F)	Percentage(P)
Deal with psychological stress		
chat with friends and family	36	30.0
Listening music and travel	20	16.7
smoking and drinking	23	19.2
Meditation and yoga	41	34.2
Feeling reasonably happy		
Yes	51	42.5
No	69	57.5
Playing useful part		
Yes	55	45.8
No	65	54.2

4. Discussion

Unemployment research over the past decades has shown quite convincingly that unemployment leads to psychological distress and that re-employment improves mental health. In other words, there seems to be a causal relationship between unemployment and poor mental health; the so-called causation hypothesis.

In this present study shows that out of 120 respondents, 76(63.3%) were male and 44(36.7%) were female. The finding is similar with the study done among unemployed youth adult in Gedeo Zone, Southern Ethiopia in 2020 where 820 (57.8%) were male and 529 (42.2%) were females(6). Nearly half of the respondents were graduated i.e. 54.2%, followed by 26.7% had studied secondary level of education. The finding is lowered with the study done in United States in March 2015, where 20.7% had studied secondary level of education and 38.7% had studied secondary level of education(3). Nearly more than half of the respondents were unmarried i.e. 71(59.2%) and the remaining were married i.e.49 (40.8%). The finding is similar with the study done among unemployed youth adult in Gedeo Zone, Southern Ethiopia in 2020 with total sample size of 1419 where 991(69.8%) were unmarried and 428(30.2%) were married(3).

In this study, (57%) of the respondents were unemployed since less than 1 year and (42%) of the respondents were unemployed since more than 1 year. The finding is consistent with the study done among unemployed youth

adult in Gedeo Zone, Southern Ethiopia in 2020 with total sample size of 1419 where (67%) were unemployed since less than 1 year and (33%) were unemployed since more than 1 year(3). The majority of the respondents were smokers i.e. 53.8% and 45.8% were non-smokers. The finding is similar with the study done in United States in March 2015, where 31.9% were smokers and 19.6% were non-smokers. Nearly more than 2/3rd of the respondents had no any health coverage including health insurance i.e. 89(74.2%) and the remaining had health insurance coverage i.e. 31(25.8%). The finding is similar with the study done in United States in March 2015, out of total 1525 respondent where (32.9%) had no any health insurance coverage and (17.2%) had health insurance coverage(3). In this Study, almost 82% of our sample reports good and excellent health status and the remaining 17% reports poor health status: this share does not change depending on the sample, suggesting a relative stability of subjective health over time. The finding is similar to the study done in the Great Recession in 2018 where almost 80% of the sample reports excellent and good health status of the respondents(3).

In this present study, 10.8% of the respondents had anxiety disorder after being unemployed. This finding contradict with the study done in the Great Recession in 2018 where 8.4% had anxiety disorder after being unemployed(7).

In this study, 42.5% of the respondents think themselves as a worthless person and 57.5% didn’t think themselves as a worthless person. The findings contradict with the study

done in in the Great Recession in 2018 where 10% of the respondents think themselves as a worthless person(2). In this present study, nearly half the respondent felt that they were not playing a useful part in things i.e. 54.2%. The finding is similar to the study done in in the Great Recession in 2018 where 51% of the respondents felt that they were not playing a useful part in things(3). In this study, 60% of the respondents were not able to enjoy their day-to-day activities and the remaining 40% were able to enjoy the normal day to day activities. The findings is similar to the study done in in the Great Recession in 2018 where 61% of the respondents were not able to enjoy the normal day to day activities and 39% were able to enjoy normal day to day activities(3). In this current study, nearly half of the respondents i.e. (50.8%) of the respondents felt that they were not capable of making decision about things and the remaining 49.2% of the respondents felt that they were capable of making decision about things. The findings contradict with the study done in Great Recession in 2018 where 21% of the respondents were not capable of making decision about things(3).

5. Conclusion

The results of this study concluded that the major effects found in this study were felling unhappy, felt as worthless person, not capable of making decision, felt down or depressed, trouble in sleeping and had little interest in things.

6. Limitations of the Study

This study used a cross-sectional study design that makes it difficult to determine the causality of the observed effects of unemployment on mental health. Due to the sensitive nature of the study in terms of social stigma, the study participants may have underreported depression and some other variables such as substance use. The study was conducted within limited period and resources. The results were generalized to area and population with similar characteristics but not whole population or whole working staff. The test instrument was not sufficient to measure the effects on mental health

7. Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

8. Acknowledgement

The authors wish to thanks the unemployed youth residing in Tilottama municipality of Rupandehi District, Nepal and all the helping hands who devoted their time to making this study success.

9. Ethical Permission

Administrative approval was obtained from the concern authorities and the verbal consent from the individual prior to data collection.

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