

# Psychological Consequences of Unemployment and Factors for its Elimination

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## **Abstract:**

The formation of unemployment has a significant impact on the socio-psychological situation in the country. A significant number of people affected by unemployment lose confidence in the exercise of the right to work and employment, which becomes the most important factor in increasing excessive income inequality and exacerbating social stratification in society. The article analyzes the psychological consequences of unemployment and the factors of its elimination from a socio-philosophical point of view.

**Keywords:** society, unemployment, socialization, psychological consequences, employment, poverty.

Economic and social changes in society increase the feeling of conflict in people. People who consider themselves in lower positions on the social ladder feel more hostility between "vertical groups" than people holding high and middle positions. Consequently, the higher the proportion of the population who assessed their social status as low, the higher the indicator of conflict in society.

The study of the psychological aspects of the impact of unemployment on a person, their family, and society was prompted by the economic crisis that occurred in the USA and Western European countries in the 20-30s of the 20th century. This crisis led to a widespread unemployment in these countries. The research of that period was largely descriptive in nature and was based on methods of studying the life path of people who were unemployed due to observation, detailed interviews, and economic reasons. The significance of initial research is associated with the collection of empirical data, which were gradually analyzed and became the basis for theoretical approaches. This determined the directions of future research and made it possible for researchers in this field to

analyze the internal mechanisms that motivate the psychological consequences of unemployment. In psychology, the study of unemployment should be mainly divided into three periods.

First, the study of the long-term impact on a person's mental state and state of self-awareness, family relations, and behavior in society;

Second, understanding the mechanism and factors of unemployment's influence on a person's behavior;

Thirdly, it consists in identifying the chosen strategies and characteristics of job search activities to overcome this problem.

In this context, as mentioned above, the first stage corresponds to the Great Depression situation that occurred in the USA and European countries.

The researchers also linked these negative emotions to unemployment and the resulting sharp deterioration of poverty and destitution. Because not all unemployed people can receive benefits, or the period for paying benefits is short-term. The psychological experiences of the unemployed are strong and intense, and are a process related to how they perceive losses (such as financial independence, security, meaningful and interesting work). The greater the losses as a result of forced dismissal, the more negative the emotional experiences. In the study of the psychological aspects of unemployment, a research paradigm began to form, which was first presented chronologically in the works of P. Eisenberg and P. Lazarsfeld and later developed by M. Yahoda.

Men try to find new jobs, support other aspects of the family, and make plans for the future." The second category was labeled "resigned" families, who made no plans for the future. These are families that try to maintain moderate well-being in caring for children and managing the household, limiting themselves to buying only the most essential items for themselves. The third type, called "hopeless families," exhibited hopelessness, depression, and helplessness, which were also reflected in their behavior.

Describing the distribution of the family types they identified, the authors note that families of the third and fourth types, that is, the most disadvantaged, were not very numerous - only two and five percent respectively. This was probably the first typology of the unemployed, based on differences in how job loss was experienced. Robb, one of the authors of that time, describes the uncomfortable experience of an unemployed person as follows: "When a person is unemployed, there is no outlet for their energy. They begin to realize that they are no longer a free person. They are forced to ask for help from others - relatives, friends, and often from the government, including financial assistance, which is usually insufficient. As a result, they become withdrawn, experience an acute sense of isolation, and begin to build their life based on fantasies that arise from the depths of their wounded soul. They feel hatred towards those who have insulted or humiliated them, forcing them to ask even for trivial matters. Thoughts of one's own power and the possibility of revenge clash with the realization of its impossibility. Desires always contradict reality"<sup>1</sup>. The scientist further explains that such an attitude exists in a person before becoming unemployed, reflecting personal characteristics. He writes that "loss of work as a stressful phenomenon exacerbates existing weaknesses in the character of an unemployed person", and compares the effect of unemployment on a person with the effect of acid: acid can easily destroy something brittle and fragile, but not harm gold<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Beales, H.L., Lambert R.S. (eds.) (1934). *Memoirs of the unemployed*. Victor Golancz. (Republished by Yorkshire: The Scholar Press, 1973).P.274-275.

<sup>2</sup> Beales, H.L., Lambert R.S. (eds.) (1934). *Memoirs of the unemployed*. Victor Golancz. (Republished by Yorkshire: The Scholar Press, 1973). P.286

This study also revealed dynamic changes in the state and experiences of the unemployed, which can serve the emergence of a further scientific conclusion about the psychological states associated with unemployment. E. Wight Bakke was the first to describe the sequential changes in the state and experiences of an unemployed person. The author is based on a detailed study of the behavior and experiences of an unemployed driver. After his dismissal, the driver hoped to find a job for a while, but after several weeks of unsuccessful searches, he fell into despair and began to blame himself, and after seventeen weeks, he became gloomy and depressed. Living in the environment of the unemployed, the author extensively studied the activities of the unemployed using the method of observation (including direct participation). He also interviewed a group of unemployed people and their families, studying thirty-one unemployed families for a long time. As a result of these studies, two books were published in 1940 - "Unemployed Citizens" (Citizens Without Work)<sup>3</sup> and "Unemployed Worker" (The Unemployed Worker)<sup>4</sup> will appear.

Unemployment processes, which were a factor in the Great Depression, laid the methodological foundations for further research in this area. In particular, Elder noted that men who faced economic difficulties in those years died earlier than those who did not face these difficulties<sup>5</sup>.

In a study conducted with researcher Rockwell, Elder examines the impact of early impressions of children from unemployed parents on their personal life development. The researchers analyzed the life paths of men born between 1925-1928, whose early childhood years coincided with the Depression era, and whose parents were unemployed and from impoverished families. In the socialization of these children, certain characteristics were observed: uncertainty in relationships with parents, rapid mood swings, inconsistency of thoughts, as well as a lack of perception of the father as the embodiment of a man who is the head of the family. Such features of socialization occurred in childhood and emerged years later in adulthood. They exhibited a lack of a strong sense of self, feelings of defeat, alienation from society, and negative attitudes. Additionally, as they reached adulthood, many cases of apathy, problems with alcoholism, and the need for psychological support were observed.

Researcher O'Brien presents three different strategies for analyzing the psychological consequences of unemployment. One of them involves studies that observed the relationship between unemployment rates and mental illness in the population across different years. Another researcher, Brenner, studied the number of patients admitted to psychiatric clinics in the USA between 1910 and 1970, linking it to unemployment. In his subsequent research, he observed correlations between employment levels and the number of suicides, murders, heart attacks, and crimes against property. In years of high employment, low rates of cardiovascular diseases, liver cirrhosis, and mortality were noted. Job loss causes severe stress and anxiety, which often leads to heart disease and alcoholism. The aforementioned diseases are not immediately detected in cases of unemployment; they usually appear three or four years after the period of unemployment begins. Such a decline had a delayed effect on the number of suicides, murders, and other crimes, as well as on the overall mortality rate.

In our opinion, a number of scientists (Hartley-1980; O'Brien, Kabanoff-1979; Warr-1978) have inconsistent findings regarding the psychological consequences of unemployment. For example, some studies have highlighted cases where unemployed individuals feel relieved after being forced to leave their jobs. We can interpret this situation as an opportunity to find a more suitable job for

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<sup>3</sup> Citizens Without Work (Yale University Press, 1940) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E.\\_Wight\\_Bakke](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E._Wight_Bakke)

<sup>4</sup> The Unemployed Worker: A Study of the Task of Making a Living Without a Job (Yale University Press, 1940) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E.\\_Wight\\_Bakke](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E._Wight_Bakke)

<sup>5</sup> O'Brien, G.E. Psychology of work and unemployment. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1986. 315 p.

those who were dissatisfied with their previous employment. Similar results were found by Fineman's<sup>6</sup> can also be seen in the research of.

The hypotheses formulated in the comparative studies determined the directions of the research, which focused on the individual characteristics of experiencing job losses.

As the result suggested, the level of stress (or other mental disorders) was higher in unemployed youth groups. The authors did not identify significant changes in the personality of young unemployed, but identified defects in the psychological and social development of young people, which could lead to serious consequences in the field of further development. "The result is that unemployment directly affects development progress and hinders the development of a sense of personal competence. Young unemployed individuals may halt their progress at this stage, but their peers will continue to progress"<sup>7</sup>.

As O'Brien (1986) points out, the limited approach to viewing unemployment as a stressful phenomenon is significantly overcome in the concept of value expectations by emphasizing qualitative differences in the value of work and employment across different groups of the unemployed<sup>8</sup>.

In domestic reviews of foreign research on this problem, two directions are identified in the interpretation of the explanation of the negative consequences of unemployment for a person<sup>9</sup>. The first direction points to the impoverishment of the unemployment environment associated with a sharp decline in unemployment, material and social opportunities, and pays more attention to external factors (P.Warr, M.Jahoda, J.Gershuny). Other authors also note a vague connection between the modes of experience in a situation of separation from work and the individual. For example, W. Frankl writes about a "happy" unemployed person, who constructively uses his forced unemployment status to solve life's tasks, for which there is neither time nor mental strength at other times<sup>10</sup>.

Moreover, the world of labor is becoming increasingly volatile and unpredictable, which complicates the requirements for adaptation and effective professional activity. In such conditions, although the research vector has significantly expanded, it cannot fully analyze the negative impacts of unemployment on physical and psychological health. New research is emerging, in which the unemployed is seen not only as a suffering person and a person experiencing various difficulties, but also as a person actively fighting this situation.

According to researcher T.S.Chuykova, "the logical application of the results of research devoted to the social and psychological consequences of unemployment will be the development of technologies for practical psychological work with the unemployed, especially for those who are seriously suffering from job loss and face difficulties in solving it. Such activities are carried out in different countries, often on an integrated basis. For example, in 2005 in Western Europe, the "Social Monitoring and Employment Support" research project was launched, which covered five countries (the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Italy, and Spain) and was formed on the basis of the results of empirical studies of persons facing the risk of job loss, as well as those who returned to work through specially organized consultations. The project, according to the authors' plan, aims to

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<sup>6</sup> Fineman, S. White Collar Unemployment. Chichester: Wiley, 1983.

<sup>7</sup> Islamov B., Kadirova Z., Gaziyeva S. Digitization measures in the regulation of labor migration processes in Uzbekistan // ACM, New York, NY, USA, ICFNDS '22, December 15, 2022. 328-337 pp.

<sup>8</sup> O'Brien, G.E. Psychology of work and unemployment. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1986. 315 p.

<sup>9</sup> Демин, А.Н. Теоретические подходы к проблеме безработицы в зарубежной психологии // Психол. журн. 2005. №4. С. 20–29.// Модели и методы управления персоналом : российско-британское учеб. пособие [Текст] / под ред. Е.Б. Моргунова. М. : ЗАО «Бизнес-школа «Интел-Синтез», 2001 (Серия «Библиотека журнала «Управление персоналом»).

<sup>10</sup> Франкл, В. Человек в поисках смысла [Текст] / В. Франкл. М.: Прогресс, 1990.

integrate relevant recommendations at the level of management of specific companies, the education system, and the labor market<sup>11</sup>.

In the United States, the unemployment rate reached 10.0% by the end of 2009; the underemployment rate for this period was 17.3%<sup>12</sup>. That is, if we add these two indicators, then every third American does not have a job or works part-time.

In conclusion, the influence of unemployment on economic stability, social relations in society, and the mental state of a person was analyzed. The obtained results show that unemployment not only hinders the economic development of the country, but also exacerbates social instability and psychological problems.

Prolonged unemployment leads to the loss of human capital, increased imbalances in the labor market, and, as a result, an excessive burden on the state budget.

Social unemployment can exacerbate stratification processes in society, leading to an increase in crime, social exclusion, and an acceleration of migration processes. As a result of unemployment, family conflicts increase, and the formation of hopelessness and social passivity among young people is observed.

Psychologically, unemployment seriously damages a person's mental stability. Long-term unemployment can cause depression, stress, depression, and a decrease in life expectancy. Unemployed individuals, feeling unwanted by society, withdraw from social activity, which also negatively affects their personal development.

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