CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE
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2.1. Introduction:

A survey of related literature was found necessary to have an idea of what has been done in similar areas of research, to scrutinize the methodology used, to coordinate the study with others, to find gaps, to avoid duplication and to direct the work along useful lines.

The researcher has undertaken extensive literature survey connected with the study spanning several years. By visiting various libraries, information bureau, organizations, institutions by surfing the net and by indigenous/ international communication, the researcher has reviewed various journals, abstracts, books etc.

For the purpose of review of literature visits were made to National Library (Kolkata), British Council (Kolkata), Calcutta University Central Library, Department of Psychology and library of Department of Applied Psychology, Calcutta University.

What the researcher experienced is that literature on Psychological variables associated with unemployment problem is scanty

2.2. Related Studies:

Let us look at some studies for detailed discussion:

In one cross sectional study in 2005 from unemployed persons registered with the Kaunas Labour Market office, the severity of depression symptoms was evaluated using the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI). In the study logistic regression was used to estimate the risk factors for occurrence of depression. "Sex, age, place of residence, marital status, education, income and practiced
religion were taken as independent variables and long term unemployment was defined as lasting a duration of 12 months or more. The findings showed that long term unemployed persons had more episode of depressive mood in the past 12 months in comparison to the group of short term unemployed. It was estimated that the duration of unemployment and BDI score had a positive correlation. Overall the results indicated that the depression is a severe problem in the unemployed population (Mystakidou K, Tsilika E, Parpa 2005).

In 1997, National Survey of Mental health and Well-being of Adults cross-sectional study was undertaken to compare the prevalence of anxiety and affective disorders among unemployed. Results showed that adults were more likely to have symptoms of anxiety or an affective disorder. These results confirm studies reported elsewhere that prevalence of symptoms of anxiety and/or affective disorders is higher for unemployed people.

One study determined the attributable risk of suicidal ideation of depression and psychosocial and traumatic events like unemployment. Data were gathered from a random and representative sample of 2501 South Australians. Suicidal ideation and clinical depression were determined by general health questionnaire (GHQ-28) and the short form health survey (SF-12) respectively. Data were subjected to univariate and multivariate analysis to determine the population attributable risks for suicidal ideation. Results showed that overall 5.6% of men and 5.3% of woman had suicidal ideation. Univariate analysis demonstrated a significant attributable risk for suicidal ideation for unemployment and the majority of the psychosocial and traumatic events. Multivariate analysis demonstrated that clinical depression remained significantly associated with unemployment also, with a population attributable risk of 46.9%. So results confirmed that the importance of traumatic events like unemployment significantly contributing to suicidal ideation (Jesse R. Farnet et. al 2008).
Another study related to unemployment and suicidal ideation showed that age adjusted odd ratios (95% confidence intervals) of death by suicide among 25 to 64 year olds who were unemployed compared with employed were 2.46 (1.10-5.49) for women and 2.63 (1.87 – 3.70) for men. Unemployment was also strongly associated with suicide death among 18-24 year old men. Sensitivity analysis suggested that confounding by mental illness might explain about half, but not all, of the association between unemployment and suicide. Being unemployed was associated with a twofold to threefold increased relative to risk of death by suicide, compared with being employed (Dr. T. A. Blakely, Department of Public Health, University of Otago 2003).

Another research examines the socializing effects of work experience on the competence dimension of the self concept. The purpose of the study was to investigate some psychological effects of unemployment, using a longitudinal research design. Comparisons between the unemployed and employed groups revealed that the unemployed were generally less adjusted than their employed counterparts (Dr. A. Lundin Division of Occupational and Environmental Medicine 2004).

One related study between unemployment and psychological distress in young people conducted a 3 years longitudinal study of English School leavers age between 18-26. Data on General Health questionnaire and an index of employment commitment showed that psychological distress was higher for the unemployed than for the employed. (Jackson, Paul R, Stafford, Elizabeth M, Banks, Journal of Applied Psychology, Vol-68 (3), Aug 1983, 525-535).

A study conducted by Dr. Baljit Singh (head of the Department of Economics) in the year 1955 titled “A report on Unemployment in the city of Lucknow” focussed upon the incidence of unemployment, the unemployed men and women, the cases of unemployment and the time-spells of unemployment. The
sample of the study included a total of 20,666 families. The study pointed out that the unemployed: earner ratio existed roughly at 1 to 10, that is for every ten earners there was one unemployed. The incidence of absolute unemployment as reported in the study came to be at 10.36% of earner and 0.25% per family. On an average there was one unemployed person in every four families in the city. Applying these ratios to the Lucknow city population as a whole, the study concluded that there were less than 22,660 absolutely unemployed person in the city towards the beginning of the year in 1954 and therefore absolute unemployment affected more than 22,000 families. According to this survey, nearly one-fifth of the unemployed persons were women while unemployed men comprised a little more than four-fifths of the total. The comparative study also concluded that unemployment also affects their mental health as well. Research suggested that male are more depressed and their self esteem is lower than the woman, and their anxiety is relatively more compared to woman.

The study titled ‘Population Growth and The Problem of Unemployment’ by Prof. S.P. Gupta (1990) represents the first milestone in the direction of framing the programming of growth and welfare which has so far been tragically overshadowed by the growing population pressure in India. The study has come out with an analysis of trend that psychosocial trauma is more found with unemployed. A comparative study shows that male are 0.4% more intend to having psychological illness than woman which include excessive anxiety, depression with possibility of having suicidal ideation also.

The current state of the economy continues to be an enormous stressor for Americans, with 78 percent reporting money as a significant source of stress (APA, 2009). Unemployed workers are twice as likely as their employed counterparts to experience psychological problems such as depression, anxiety, psychosomatic symptoms, low subjective well-being and poor self-esteem (Paul & Moser, 2009). Like unemployment, underemployment (e.g., people working part-time because they cannot find full-time employment) is unequally distributed across the U.S. population, with women, younger workers and African Americans reporting higher rates of involuntary part-time employment and low pay, as well as higher proportions of “discouraged” workers who have given up on searching for a job (McKee-Ryan et al., 2005). Unemployment not only affects those who lose their jobs. Coworkers who are still employed may
experience a heavier work load and suffer from anxiety that they too will soon be unemployed, (Kivimaki, Vahtera, Elovainio, Pentti, & Virtanen, 2003). Unemployment and underemployment also affect families and communities.

According to the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues’ Policy Statement “The Psychological Consequences of Unemployment,” the stress of unemployment can lead to declines in individual and family well-being (Belle & Bullock, 2011). The burden of unemployment can also affect outcomes for children. The stress and depressive symptoms associated with job loss can negatively affect parenting practices such as increasing punitive and arbitrary punishment (McLoyd, 1998). As a result, children report more distress and depressive symptoms. Depression in children and adolescents is linked to multiple negative outcomes, including academic problems, substance abuse, high-risk sexual behavior, physical health problems, impaired social relationships and increased risk of suicide (Birmaher et al., 1996; Chen & Paterson, 2006; Le, Munoz, Ippe, & Stoddard, 2003; Verona & Javdani, 2011; Stolberg, Clark, & Bongar, 2002).

Widespread unemployment in neighborhoods reduces resources, which may result in inadequate and low-quality housing, underfunded schools, restricted access to services and public transportation, and limited opportunities for employment, making it more difficult for people to return to work (Brisson, Roll, & East, 2009). Unemployed persons also report less neighborhood belonging than their employed counterparts, a finding with implications for neighborhood safety and community well-being (Steward et al., 2009).

High unemployment and growing income inequalities are key factors in declining social climate (International Labour Office, 2010). The United Nations (2010) claimed that growing social inequality fueled by extended, global unemployment will increase social unrest and tension and a growing sense of unfairness. Increasing inequality in advanced economies is fundamentally linked to growing rates of physical, emotional, social and political disorder (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010).
Unemployment does not affect all groups equally. Rates are higher among Latinos/as (13.1%) and African Americans (15.7%) than European Americans (9.5%). Immigrants (Kochhar, 2009) and people with disabilities (Shapiro, 2009) are also especially vulnerable to layoffs as are those without college degrees (Leonhardt, 2009). Unemployed women report poorer mental health and lower life satisfaction than unemployed men (McKee-Ryan et al., 2005). Women are more likely to report that they have consumed unhealthy foods, or skipped a meal as a result of stress. Women are also more likely to report physical symptoms of stress, including irritability, anger, fatigue and lack of interest or motivation and energy (APA, 2009). In combination with other health disparities, the unequal impact of unemployment on some groups may have devastating effects on already vulnerable communities.

The negative effects of unemployment can be lessened. Individuals who face unemployment with greater financial resources, as well as those who report lower levels of subjective financial strain, report better mental health and more life satisfaction than those who experience unemployment with fewer economic resources and a greater sense of financial stress (McKee-Ryan et al., 2005). Social support can also mitigate the negative impacts of unemployment and underemployment (Belle & Bullock, 2011). For example, being married is a protective factor during periods of unemployment and underemployment (Dooley & Prause, 2004; McKee-Ryan et al., 2005).

Job loss is associated with elevated rates of mental and physical health problems, increases in mortality rates, and detrimental changes in family relationships and in the psychological well-being of spouses and children. Compared to stably employed workers, those who have lost their jobs have significantly poorer mental health, lower life satisfaction, less marital or family satisfaction, and poorer subjective physical health (McKee-Ryan, Song, Wanberg, & Kinicki, 2005). A meta-analysis by Paul and Moser (2009) reinforces these findings - unemployment was associated with depression, anxiety, psychosomatic symptoms, low subjective well-being, and poor self-esteem. Unemployed workers were twice as likely as their employed counterparts to experience psychological problems (Paul & Moser, 2009).
Unemployment can contribute to reduced life expectancy. In a longitudinal study in which the employment, earnings, and work histories of high-seniority male workers were tracked during the 1970s and 1980s, mortality rates in the year after job displacement were 50 to 100 percent higher than would otherwise have been expected. The effect on mortality risk declined sharply over time, but even 20 years after these men had lost jobs, elevated risk of death was found among those who had lost jobs earlier, in comparison to the stably employed (Sullivan & von Wachter, 2009). Even after controlling for baseline health and other demographic characteristics, unemployed workers report significantly poorer health and more depressive symptoms than those who remain stably employed (Burgard, Brand, & House, 2007). Low paying jobs typically offer minimal opportunities to utilize one's skills and come with a host of negative outcomes (McKee-Ryan et al., 2005). Underemployment is associated with decreased self-esteem, increased alcohol use, and elevated rates of depression, as well as low birth weight among babies born to underemployed women (Dooley & Prause, 2004).

Countries with stronger systems of protection for the unemployed have lower rates of mental health problems among the unemployed than countries such as the United States, with its relatively weaker supports (Paul & Moser, 2009; Murphy & Athanasou, 1999). Poorer outcomes for the unemployed are also found in countries with high rates of income inequality and low levels of economic development. For these reasons, comparative analyses find that U.S. workers fare less well than their Dutch counterparts in terms of mental health (Schaufeli & Van Yperen, 1992). An economic and cultural climate that is more accepting of collective responsibility for its citizens coupled with the availability of generous unemployment benefits may make job loss less psychologically distressing.
The broader economic and political climate including unemployment rates also influences the level of distress experienced. Workers who lose jobs when unemployment is high may engage in less self-blame and consequently experience less psychological distress (Dooley & Prause, 2004). Conversely, unemployment may be more stressful when general unemployment levels are high because the competition for remaining jobs is more intense and the chances for re-employment lower. However, other studies find no evidence that unemployment rates impact the level of personal distress associated with losing a job (Mckee-Ryan et al., 2005).

Early research on the impact of unemployment focused almost exclusively on men, although today women are equally likely to be included. In a study by Kessler, House, and Turner (1987), women were part of a subgroup of respondents who appeared to experience no adverse health effects despite being unemployed for considerable periods of time. In particular, single mothers of young children and women married to men who were the chief family breadwinners seemed to be protected from the negative health effects of unemployment. Similarly, in Paul and Moser’s (2009) meta-analysis of studies published between 1963 and 2004, men were more distressed than women by unemployment. However, McKee-Ryan et al.’s (2005) review of studies published between 1985 and 2002 found that unemployed women reported poorer mental health and lower life satisfaction than did unemployed men. With over 70% of U.S. women now employed outside the home and heterosexual married women earning 36% of the income in two-parent families, future researchers may find that women’s responses to underemployment and unemployment are increasingly similar to those of men. This will likely be the case among female-headed households in which women are the sole or primary earners.
The impact of job loss and of inadequate employment is lessened for those who have economic, social, and personal resources to cushion the blow. Individuals who face unemployment with more financial resources, as well as those who report lower levels of subjective financial strain, report better mental health and more life satisfaction than those who experience unemployment with fewer economic resources and a greater sense of financial stress (McKee-Ryan et al., 2005). Such factors may account for a finding from Paul and Moser’s meta-analysis that blue-collar workers were more distressed by unemployment than were white-collar employees.

Attributions for unemployment are also important in determining the extent of distress following job loss. Those who blame themselves by making internal attributions for their unemployment report lower life satisfaction and poorer physical health than those who externalize blame for their situation (McKee-Ryan et al, 2005).

2.3. Review of Literature and Revelation of a Fertile Topic of Research:

From the above literature review it is clear that no study was conducted to compare unemployed and employed youths with respect to the variables Self-Concept, Anxiety, Depression, Anger and Suicidal Ideation.

Hence, in the present study attempt has been made to compare unemployed and employed youths with respect to the above mentioned psychological variables.