CHAPTER - VI

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS
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The Problem

The effects of personal and environmental factors on psychological health of the unemployed graduates are examined.

Objectives

The following broad objectives were framed for this study:

To study the effects of rural-urban background, discipline studied and gender on (a) personal factors including self-esteem, locus of control, alienation, and employment commitment; (b) environmental factors and (c) psychological health.

To explore the relationship between personal, environmental and psychological health factors.

To explore the relationship of demographic factors with (a) personal self factors, (b) environmental factors and (c) psychological health.

To determine the predictability of psychological health of the educated unemployed by using the personal and environmental factors as independent variables.
Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested
1. There will be significant main and interaction effects of residence, discipline and gender on personal self factors and environmental factors of the educated unemployed.
2. There will be significant main and interaction effects of residence, discipline and gender on the psychological health of the educated unemployed.
3. There will be significant relationships among the personal and environmental factors, and the psychological health.
4. There will be significant relationships between demographic characteristics, personal and environmental factors and psychological health.
5. The personal and environmental factors will differential predict the psychological health of the different rural-urban background, discipline and gender groups.

Research Design

This study used ex-post factorial research design. To study the main and interaction effects of residence, discipline and gender 2x3x2 analysis of variance had been used. The first unit referred to discipline - arts, science and commerce and the third unit referred to gender - Males and Females.

Sample :

The sample included unemployed graduates registered at Coimbatore District Employment Exchange Office. Incidental sampling procedure was used. Unemployed graduates were tested spreading over a period of six months.
This included 107 urban graduates. Using purposive sampling technique 113 urban unemployed graduates and 107 rural unemployed graduates were interviewed. Out of 113 urban graduates 32 were from arts, 45 from science and 36 from commerce discipline. On the other hand, out of 107 rural graduates 33 were from arts, 44 from science and 30 were from commerce discipline. Out of 32 urban - arts graduates, 15 were male and 17 were female graduates. Out of 35 urban-science graduates 18 were male and 17 were female. Out of 36 urban-commerce graduates, 20 were male and 16 were females. On the other side, out of 33 rural-arts graduates 16 were male and 17 were females of 44 rural-science graduates, 26 were males and 18 were female and of 30 rural-commerce graduates, 15 were male and 15 were female graduates.

VARIABLES

The variables were as follows.

I. Matching variables

Residence (Urban and rural), discipline (arts, science and commerce) and gender (men and women).

II. Measured Variables

Self-esteem, locus of control, alienation, employment, commitment, perceptions of environment, social support and psychological health.

III. Demographic characteristics

Age, caste, marital status, number of family members, number of attempts made for employment, waiting period for employment, and socio-economic status.
Tools:

The following tools were used after a careful pilot study and reliability.

1. **Self Esteem.** The Rosenberg (1965) Self esteem scale, had six items which were rated on a five point scale. The internal consistency of the scale was 0.71 (winefield and Tiggemann, 1984).

2. **Locus of control scale.** The Locus of control scale was originally developed by Rotter (1966) modified and used by Feather and Barber (1986) and later used by Pal (1993) had nine items on two point rating scale with the internal consistency of 0.48.

3. **Alienation.** The alienation scale (Dean 1961) had been used in this study which had 24 items in a five point scale. The reliability of the scale was measured as 0.64 and 0.84 in Indian context (Singhal, 1990).

4. **Employment commitment.** The Employment commitment scale consisted of two measures work involvement (Warr, Cook and Wall 1979) and work commitment (Warr 1983), which had eleven items rated on a five point scale with the reliability of 0.70 and 0.71.

5. **Perceptions of Environment.** The study constructed scale for the present study, which is based on vitamin model of Warr (1987). This scale consisted of 40 items rated on a five point scale.

6. **Social Support.** The Social Support scale by Sarason and Sarason, (1984) consisted of six items rated on a five point scale.

7. **Perceived Stress Questionnaire** (Levenstein’s et al, 1993) been used in this study which consists of 28 items rated on a four point scale. The internal consistency of the scale was 0.82 (Levenstein et al, 1993).
8. **Cognitive Difficulties.** The Cognitive Difficulties Scale (Warr and Fryer, 1984) having eleven items rated on a five point scale.

9. **Life Satisfaction.** The Life Satisfaction Scale by Warr, Cook and Wall (1977) consisted of fifteen items rated on a five point scale which showed a reliability of 0.47.

10. **Personal Information Sheet** - information on respondents age, marital status, caste, discipline of study, residence, waiting period for employment, number of attempts made to get an employment, number of family members and information of parents income, education and occupation were obtained.

**Method of Analysis**

The data were analyzed by using the statistical technique of analysis of variance, correlation and regression. Analysis of variance was computed to detect the treatment effects of residence, discipline and gender on different measured variables. The correlational analysis was done to find the relationship among different variables. The regression analysis was done to predict the variance in dependent variables by using the independent variables Means and standard deviations were obtained.

**Findings**

The analysis of results showed following findings.

1. The main effect of residence was found significant on employment commitment and employment importance. The urban graduates showed higher employment commitment and employment importance than rural graduates. This revealed that unemployment situation has created a sense of insecurity more
among urban graduates. Their desire for achieving personal identity and autonomy were threatened by unemployment situation.

Discipline was found having significant effect on self esteem, perception of environment and its various components, showing the importance of curriculum in building one's own image and in determining perception of environment. The science graduates had positive self esteem, but perceived their environment lacking of control filled with ambiguity, uncertainty and other directedness. Although the science graduates had positive self evaluation due to high value attached to their discipline, they perhaps do not take this as instrumental for labour market access.

The effect of gender on personal and environmental factors showed that the males had better self-evaluations and lower alienation, normlessness and isolation than females. The fact that females grew up under ambiguity because of differential role identity, dominant family needs along with career commitment. Although, females, were given equal opportunity with men, the patriarchal nature of society and labour market attitudes never allowed them to exploit this opportunity positively.

The results of interaction effects indicated that urban science graduates had better self esteem than their rural counterparts. On the other hand rural arts and commerce graduates had more positive self esteem than their urban counterparts. The male science graduates had positive self esteem and perceptions of environment than those in arts and commerce, but the arts females had positive self esteem and perceptions of environment than the science and commerce females. It was observed that rural females felt more alienated, normless and meaningless than their male counterparts. All the above
findings clearly expose the impact of labour market structure and very social reality of employment importance faced by men and women.

2. The urban and rural graduates did not differ significantly on stress and its components except the factor of fatigue. The rural graduates showed significantly higher fatigue than urban graduates. Along with rural labour market, lack of guidance, commitment in society, and lack of social mobility perhaps inhibited their job search behaviour. The effect of discipline on psychological health revealed that commerce graduates had higher level of stress, tension and insecurity than the arts and science graduates. This may be because of poor opportunity in private sector. No significant gender differences were found on components of psychological health, indicating that unemployed men and women were equally affected by the unemployment situation. However, females higher fear of future suggested that their expectations were restricted by other social and personal constraints.

The discipline and gender interacted to influence factors of stress significantly. The arts male graduates showed more stress, tension, insecurity, joylessness and fatigue than science and commerce male graduates. The commerce females had more stress, tension, joylessness, insecurity and fatigue than arts and science females. The interaction effect of residence and discipline showed that rural arts and science graduates experienced more fear of future than their urban counterparts. The level of stress was found higher among urban arts males than rural arts males. The rural science and commerce males had higher level of stress and tension than their urban counterparts.

3. The relationship between personal, environmental factors and psychological health showed some significant findings. The self esteem, locus of control and alienation were significantly related to perceptions of environment and social
support. Those who had higher self esteem and lower externality and alienation perceived their environment in a positive way. This finding was consistent with the perceptual theory that subjective factors were important determinants of social events (Murray, 1938; Gaskell & Smith, 1985; Guimond, 1991).

Among the personal variables, self esteem, employment commitment and its components, locus of control, alienation and its components were significantly related to psychological health components. Unemployed having positive self esteem perceived the environment positively. It appeared that self esteem acted as a significant coping resource (Pearlin & Schooler, 1978), and protective factor (Antonovsky, 1981) in the presence of life strains. The significant negative relationship of employment commitment with stress and cognitive difficulties did not confirm the expectancy valence theory of Feather and Davenport (1981).

The group specific findings suggested relationships between commitment, stress and cognitive difficulties. It was found true for rural, arts and science graduates and males. The unemployed graduates having higher feelings of alienation, isolation and powerlessness and externality led experienced more stress and cognitive difficulties.

The perceptions of environment and its components were found significantly related to factors of psychological health. The unemployed having negative perceptions of environment experienced higher stress and cognitive difficulties and lower life satisfaction. These findings were found consistent with the Warr’s (1987) vitamin model, which emphasized the role of environmental features on mental health. The above correlational findings suggested that the personal factors and perceptions of environment were important covariates of psychological health.
4. The relationship of demographic variables with personal factors showed that unmarried arts had higher externality and employment commitment and less isolation and powerlessness. Arts graduates coming from higher Socio-Economic Status and upper caste had less externality and more employment importance. Females who were unmarried had less employment importance. Upper caste males had higher employment importance. Males coming from higher Socio-Economic Status and larger family had less self esteem and reverse was true for females. Graduates from upper caste and high Socio-Economic Status had negative perceptions of environment, but higher social support.

The caste of the unemployed played a significant role in psychological health. The upper caste experienced lesser insecurity, cognitive difficulties and cognitive incompetence and greater life satisfaction. The unmarried as compared to the married experienced lesser stress, fatigue, fear of future and cognitive difficulties. Socio-economic status was positively related to the psychological health. Those from higher socio-economic status reported less stress and cognitive difficulties and higher life satisfaction.

5. The regression analysis showed that among personal factors, self esteem and locus of control emerged as principal predictors of stress, cognitive difficulties and life satisfaction. The unemployed having high self esteem and feelings of controllability were able to cope with stress in an efficient manner, and feel less threatened in the over all situation and had better life satisfaction. This was found consistent with other studies showing the significant relationship of self concept with psychological well being (Tiffany, Cowan & Tiffany. 1970; O'Brien & Kabanoff, 1979; Stokes & Cochrane, 1984).

Among environmental factors, the perception of environment emerged as a meaningful contributor to psychological health namely stress, cognitive difficulties and life satisfaction. The vitamin model of Warr (1987) which stated that the
environmental features were important determinants of mental health was supported to some extent.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. Urban graduates perceived employment as important and were committed to it more than the rural graduates.
2. The science graduates had higher self esteem than the arts and commerce graduates. They also had more negative perception of environment than the arts and commerce graduates.
3. Commerce graduates were more stressful tense and insecure than arts and science graduates.
4. Males had higher self esteem than females.
5. Females felt more alienated, normless and isolated than males. They also felt more fear of future.
6. Males in science had better self esteem and higher psychological satisfaction than males in arts and commerce. Similarly females in arts had better self esteem and psychological satisfaction than females in science and commerce.
7. The rural males and urban females felt more alienated and normless than the urban males and rural females.
8. Male in arts felt more stressed, tense, joyless, fatigued and insecure than their counterparts in science and commerce.
9. Females in commerce reported more stress, tension, joylessness, insecurity and fatigue than their counterparts in arts and science.
10. Science graduates in urban area and arts and commerce graduates in rural areas had higher self esteem than their respective counterparts.
11. The urban science males, rural arts and commerce males felt more normless and more cognitive incompetent than their rural and urban counterparts respectively. The urban arts and commerce females, and rural science females felt more normless and cognitively incompetent than their rural and urban counterparts.

12. The urban arts males and rural science and commerce males experienced higher stress and tension than their rural and urban counterparts; Whereas urban commerce females and rural, arts and science females experienced higher stress and tension than their rural and urban counterparts.

13. Self esteem and feeling of controllability were found important predictors of psychological health of unemployed.

14. The unemployed who felt more alienated, isolated and powerless reported poor psychological health.

15. The employment commitment, employment importance and employment involvement did not play any significant role in psychological health of unemployed graduates.

16. The perception of environment significantly determined psychological health, but not social support.

17. Age, academic qualifications, number of attempts made and waiting period for employment, did not play any significant role in the psychological health.

18. Females who were unmarried perceived employment less important. Males from upper caste had higher employment involvement and employment importance.

19. Arts graduates coming from higher socio-economic status and upper caste had less externality and perceived employment more important.

20. Males coming from higher socio-economic status and larger family had less self esteem, while reverse was true for females.
21. Graduates from upper caste and high socio-economic status had negative perception of environment.
22. The higher caste graduates experienced lesser insecurity, cognitive difficulties, cognitive incompetence and greater life satisfaction.
23. Unmarried as compared to married experienced lesser stress, fatigue, fear of future and cognitive difficulties.
24. Socio-economic status of the unemployed positively influenced the psychological health.
25. The unemployed graduates who had high self esteem, lesser externality, more alienation perceived their environment in a positive way.
26. Although psychological health of unemployed was predicted by self esteem, locus of control, alienation and perceptions of environment, the maximum variance was explained by perception of environment.

Implications
The findings of the present study have some of the following implications.
1) Employment Policy
   The results of the present study showed that rural, the women and Arts graduates were badly affected groups in the labour market. Even before getting into the employment market, they felt alienated, isolated and normless, though for different reasons. This implied that these groups were having some apprehensions about the labour market. It was seen that the labour market recruitment process was not really transparent, and sensitive to their needs. These groups in general think that the demands of the labour market were unfair to meet. Virtually a kind of psychological block was formed and they felt threatened with the existing job market. They start feeling that they were not well equipped to meet the demands of the job market, and they may fail.
In principle the employment market should be accommodative of all graduates without any bias, but rural-urban, discipline and gender inequities were pervasive. Equity should be maintained in all kinds of jobs, since the required qualifications were same for all. The role of electronic and print media could be relevant in employment policy. How job requirements are depicted, the language used, the symbols, the variety they all could be relevant. The weaker sections like rural people, women and those from lower economic strata were not having enough access to media. Hence they tend to have less information about the labour market. The media usage would be the greatest help for the disadvantaged in the society.

Though recruitment process in the public sector is made to look fair, but many of the applicants, those hailing from deprived background are not aware of the process of approaching such places. The media should be made more user friendly. It can plan strategies to reach out and communicate to the disadvantaged in the society as to how one can approach, the procedures involved etc.

The employment exchanges could be best use by the government to address the problem of human resource development. The employment exchanges, which virtually acting as a registration centre, except giving few coaching programmes for the scheduled caste and scheduled tribes for competitive examination, could extend their activities. The advertisements which periodically appear can be sent by them to the applicants. They can also conduct periodically some workshop for the unemployed to reorient them into strategies of approaching for the job. The self employment scheme have been of limited use, since the general graduates do not have proper skill training. The employment exchanges can also undertake the task of training them into entrepreneurial skills.
2. **Educational Policy**

The discipline of study tend to guide the orientations towards employment. Graduates from various discipline think of jobs of particular type. They are not able to cope with changing demands of labour market from time to time. The education system should thus be geared up to sharpen this general and technical skills. The declaration of National Policy of Education (1986) that the curriculum should be more dynamic and self employment oriented so that every educated person can compete on the job market should be systematically enforced. Attitudinal changes towards employment can prepare them psychologically to cope with unemployment situation.

Though the market demand is high for skilled people against unskilled, the missing link between education and employment should be taken seriously. The general discipline curriculum contents need to be improved and made responsive to the market demands. Training should included sound base in discipline with some market oriented skills. Generally, the psychological morale tends to be low among the students in the final stage as the labour market would not accommodate all of them. Besides introducing some vocational training for these students, they should be given proper guidance and counseling for employment opportunities. Educational institutions should prepare their students psychologically to be more flexible and open minded in their approach to labour market.

The Educational institutions can play a catalyst role to make the entry of rural and women into labour market and to given them confidence. For the females the guidance counseling programme should be to introduced to bring qualitative changes (confidence building, self reliance, make oneself worthy). The higher educational institutions in the rural or semi urban areas are not having
even the basic amenities like magazines, books, Journals and other extra curricular activities like NCC, NSS and clubs. Though our educational policies are same for all regions of our country, there are some regions which need special attention.

The guidance for labour market was important during the preparatory stage. The students should be given proper direction in what they were wellversed and where they can apply their skills. Overall the setting of guidance, information and counseling centres, renovation of the curriculum and introduction of vocational training, with special focus for the girls and as weaker sections could bring a qualitative change in the students out look to employment market. This will also change the methods they use in job search process and their interaction. While formulating the curriculum the educational authorities should involve the potential employers who are luminaries in their industrial domain. This will help educational institutions to identify and incorporate those skills which have assured demand in the employment markets. The educational institutions should invite executives from the industries to take special classes as a visiting faculty. The students will gain better understanding about the industry besides their routine academic activities.

3. Intervention Programmes

It was seen that one's personal factors, like self esteem and feeling of controllability affect one's psychological health, irrespective of the labour market. Some intervention programmes may be formulated to assist the unemployed to nurture their self concept and coping mechanisms to sustain their motivation while looking for job. As an extension activity should be involved directly in the developmental and social services programmes. The small scale entrepreneurial activities, self employment skills should be encouraged during course work as a part of their education.
4. *Theoretical Implications*

The relationship of perceptions of environment with psychological health had implications for developing a culture specific model of unemployment. According to Warr's (1987) Vitamin Model features in the environment are important determinants of mental health. The perceptions of various features in the environment have not been found here sufficient to cause changes in mental health. However the concept of psychological health used in this study confirmed the basic features of vitamin model. Not only the structure of the labour market, but also other features interact with person's resources to influence their mental health. The model should use this as base.

**Limitations:**

In addition to usual limitation of researches some specific limitations were felt.

* The measures of personal and environmental factors and their relationship to psychological health were restricted to a specific situation, namely unemployment. This cannot be generalized to all social contexts.

* There was no fool proof method available to check whether the concerned sample was fully unemployed or partially, since the data was based on the assumption of their active registration in the employment exchange.

* The sample was restricted to educated people a particular region. The finding was not be generalized to other regions.