CHAPTER - I

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Although unemployment among the educated existed in the country even prior to independence it has grown to alarming proportions over the years. This has been despite the constitutional provisions and developmental policies. In the post independent period, Article 41 of the Constitution of India provided that "the state shall within the limits of its economic capacity and development make effective provisions for securing the right to work... in case of unemployment."

The Nehru-Mahalanobis model of development put forth that the education should endow youth with scientific-temper and progressive attitudes and prepare manpower having scientific, technical and professional skills to meet the demands of existing and emerging sectors - primary, secondary and tertiary. The development of potential manpower required lengthy periods of education in general, and scientific, technical and professional in particular. The development of various systems of education like schools, colleges and universities, was given importance. A number of committees were set up, such as the Radha Krishnan Committee on Higher Education (1948), and Mudaliar Committee on School Education (1952) Kothari Commission (1964-1966). National Policy on Education (1986) and the subsequent Ramamurthy Committee (1990). The model of Economic development however failed to keep pace with educational expansion.

And now when liberalization of Indian economy has been attempted even in a limited form its backlash threatens to send 7 lakhs people from the public sector
out of work, irrespective of the future profitability. As such the incidence of educated unemployment had gone up to 12% in comparison to the usual status unemployment rate of 3.77% (Planning Commission, 1992, p-119). The Economic Survey of India (1992-93) reported that the number of unemployed were 178.38 lakhs in 1987, and have gone up to 371.20 lakhs in 1992. In fact, at the end of 1993, 783 Employment Exchanges had 3,63,06000 registered unemployed (Agarwal and Verma, 1995). This had resulted obviously from the expansion of universities and colleges during the 70's and 80's and the supply outweighing the demand for graduates in different sectors of the economy. The higher education system did not adopt either human resource development approach or the manpower training approach, rather it created a large number of educated people who did not match the skill requirement of the employer in various sectors. As cited by Verghese (1986) our higher education system expanded at a rate faster than that of the employment in modern sectors. Panchamukhi (1984) also observed that the organizational structures of education were responsible for the over supply of students in higher education.

It was seen that the unemployment growth was higher among the college educated than the high school graduates, and higher among the general subjects than the technical education graduates, and more in case of females than the males. Prakash (1993) emphasized that the situation of unemployment growth was worst in the case of liberal arts, women and graduates from rural areas than their technical, male and urban counterparts. Researchers and policy planners were thus encountered by the rural-urban, gender and discipline specific disparities in education and unemployment.
Rural-Urban Disparities

Unemployment has been found particularly severe in rural areas, as its usual status increased from 1.91 percent (1983) to 3.07 percent (1987-88), against the usual status unemployment had increased in urban areas from 6.04 to 6.56 percent during the same period. The unemployment by usual status according to Planning Commission estimate (Planning Commission, 1990, p.7) was 13.04 million of which 7.63 million, were from rural and 5.46 million from urban areas.

Gender Disparities

The incidence of unemployment was higher among women than men both in urban and rural areas. The usual status of unemployment had increased in rural area from 1.41 (1983) to 3.52 percent in 1987-88 for women, but for men from 2.12 to 2.87 percent. In urban areas also unemployment rate rose faster for women than men. Among the educated the unemployment growth rate of men and women were 7.3% and 9.7% respectively (Datt, 1990). During the period of 1987-88, the rural unemployment rate was higher for women (3.52%) than for men (2.88%).

Discipline Disparities

The CSIR (1981) data showed that among the graduates, the percentage of wage employed women were 20.54%, 29.41% and 28.71%; as compared to the percentage of wage employed males 53.54%, 56.85% and 49.29% in the faculties of arts, science and commerce respectively. Also, the percentage of unemployed women graduates searching for employment was higher than men. The Graduate Employment Probability (GEP) i.e. the ratio of number of graduate employed to total number of graduates in the labour market was low for arts and humanities (0.5811), commerce (0.6369) and science (0.6575), and higher among the professional graduates (Singh 1993). Moreover, the annual rate of shrinkage in
GEP was relatively higher in the skills of arts and humanities (2.62%) and commerce (-2.57%) and much less in science (-1.29%). The structural changes in the Indian economy have devalued skills acquired by graduates of arts, commerce and science etc (Singh, Baldev, 1993) against the professional skills.

Social Psychological experiences of unemployment

Unemployment is now as much an individual as a social problem, and of interest to economists, political scientists, sociologist, psychologists and many more. The unemployment researches beyond documenting health impacts of unemployment have moved to identify the specific economic, social and psychological antecedents which are responsible for damaging consequences. The unemployment leads to ill health, lower nutritional standards, inadequate housing, lower spending capacity, drastic cut in the pocket money, which could have been used to meet friends, social activities etc. The employment as a social institution plays a major role in adult psycho-social development. A satisfactory occupational role has been viewed as a identity consolidation (Erickson, 1968), and healthy ego development (Tiffany, Cowan and Tiffany 1970). Besides the personal loss, the social cost of unemployment was also important. The wastage of human resource not only hampers individual development, it also destroys the social development.

Socio - Psychological Approaches to Unemployment

The numerous attempts made by investigators to analyze the psychological consequences of unemployment have provided a few identifiable conceptual frames to understand, and appreciate the psychodynamics of unemployment. Some of these conceptualizations are of Jahoda (1982), Feather and Davenport (1981) Fryer (1986), Panye and Hartley (1987), Warr (1987) as mentioned below.
Jahoda's Deprivation Theory:

Jahoda has been the only researcher who worked on 1930's depression period as well as on the 1980's unemployment situation. As described by her (Jahoda, 1982) during the last half century, the material circumstances and the standard of living in industrialized countries, including that of unemployed have dramatically improved making unemployment situation only a relative deprivation for the unemployed. She constructed a complex theory based on the central notion of relative deprivation. It was argued that what produces the psychological distress during unemployment is the deprivation of certain consequences of being employed, which normally sustain one's well-being. There are no fundamental needs to be experienced by the individuals, since these are imposed on pliable human organisms by the power of prevailing social structure, and now employment is the only dominant structure that combines the automatic provision of these categories with the overwhelming economic necessity for people to work for their living.

The five categories of experiences suggested are that employment imposes a time structure on the active day, implies regularly shared experiences and contacts with people outside the nuclear family; links individuals to goals and purposes that transcend their own; defines aspects of personal status and identity, and finally it enforces activity. These categories of experiences are unintended byproducts of employment, which are denied during unemployment period. The unemployed have to experience reduced social contacts, lack of participation in collective purposes, the absence of an acceptance status and its consequences for personal identity, and the absence of regular activity. However, different groups of unemployed experience the absence of one category of experience or another with differing intensity. The unemployed people who experienced genuine satisfaction in their previous employment tried to maintain
their 'status quo' (Jahoda, 1982,) during their unemployment, but their status quo failed to be maintained their frustration may accumulate beyond a tolerable level and explode depending on their personality dispositions. It was possible to live a fulfill life without a job, and those who succeeded in this attempt were few in number. Jahoda articulated the facts boldly saying, that in reality nobody prevents the unemployed from creating own time structure and social contacts, form goals and purposes with others or exercise their skills as best they can, but the psychological inputs required to be put in on a regular basis were colossal (Jahoda, 1979).

Expectancy - Valence Approach

According to the expectancy-valence approach (Feather and Davenport, 1981) the individual motivation was related to the expectations held and the subjective values (or valences) associated with alternatives instrumental in possible outcomes. The subjective values (or valences) may be positive or negative, signifying attractive or aversive events or outcomes. In unemployed situation, the person may have strong expectation of self to perform well at a job interview, and that succeeding at the job interview will have positive consequences. The outcome may also be linked to other consequences that have positive or negative subjective values. The motivational determinants (subjective values) attached to instrumental actions and to goals are thus linked to the affected system.

Agency Theory

The agency theory emphasized that human beings are active agents whose activity level was restricted by unemployment. He considered economic hardship in unemployment, as a 'central explicator of the psychological impairment'. What people carried with them to a situation was unfamiliar and
problematic rather than what was taken away from them by removal of a habit bound set of imposed consequences was important to the theory. Hence the pivotal problem of the unemployed is not the psychological deprivation but the frustration of agency. The theory emphasised the negative aspects of unemployment and its experience by the people, their desire for "self-directedness born of a sense of future" and the part of agency rather than the positive aspects of employment and the benefits out of their dependency born of habit and positivity. It implied that a person was an active social agent striving to make sense of his or her situation and acting according to reasons and intentions to pursue chosen goals with the expectation of what the future may be like and what exactly he or she was trying to make for. Hence, an individual was progressing towards his/her goals.

The external environment set the limits to the individuals in their striving to assert themselves, and discouraged their intrinsic motivation. The agency theory predicted different degrees of the capacity to exercise agency and hence frustration and well-being of the unemployed and the employed. An individual could thwart the stress either in a working place or in unemployment condition provided one was clear about the perceived options, encountered impediments and the reasons believed choices. The planning through cognitive intention was stressed as, important to thwart frustration and other negative consequences which may result in poor psychological health.

**Vitamin Model**

Warr (1987) developed vitamin model based on Jahoda’s (1982) deprivation theory, but it has many more features to look upon. According to this model the principal causes of deterioration of mental health are the nine environmental features, namely, opportunity for control, opportunity for skill use, externally
generated goals variety, environmental clarity, availability of money, physical threat, opportunity for interpersonal contacts and valued social position.

At the micro level the `opportunity for control' explained the independent action of an individual, and his/her chances of controlling the situation, the `opportunity for skill use' showed the individual's acquired skill utilization during their crises period and the chances of utility. The 'externally generated goals' emphasized the external demands and purposeful activity. The 'variety as an environmental feature explained the different activities of an individual within and outside the family as leisure time activities. The environmental clarity showed a clear view of the environment and it's reciprocation of information. The availability of money from the environment was vital for other livelihood activities, like applying for post, attending interviews, meeting people etc. The 'physical security' emphasized the living and maintenance of daily routines like comfortable stay, proper food intake, feeling secure in the surroundings. The opportunity for interpersonal contacts took care of the transactions between individuals and their mutual help, which would keep individuals busy without making them feel alienated and depressed. And finally the valued social position' emphasized the self identity in the public as a useful and respectable person.

The above mentioned environmental features were considered analogous to vitamins. Therefore the mental health followed the pattern of physical health resulting from the consumption of vitamins. As Warr (1987) put it, vitamins intake was important for physical health, but to a certain level. While complete absence of vitamins caused impairment in health, the over consumption would also not improve the health further. The unemployment environment provided environmental features which could be divided into two categories: having the constant (beneficial) effect, such as opportunity for control, opportunity for
use, externally generated goals, variety, environmental clarity and opportunity for interpersonal contacts and the decrement categories such as the availability of money, physical security and valued social position. Depending on these environmental features whether of facilitative or inhibitive nature, the mental health of an individual will change either positively or negatively.

**Stress model of unemployment**

The stress model (Payne and Hartley 1987) acknowledged that different individuals coped with unemployment in different ways and their personality factors influenced their response to the stress of unemployment. Basically, the model focused on the stressfulness of the environment, which was held to be a function of the relative balance between the problems faced by the unemployed, the degree of support/constraint received in meeting the problems, and the perceived opportunities of unemployment. This model proposed to analyze four sets of variables, namely the perceptions of environment, current affective states, personal attributes and the conditioning variables, which included social class, measures of financial position and health. In the first stage, the perceptions of the environment indicated that beyond the effects of the conditioning variables, these unemployed who see their environment as presenting to them more problems and less support and opportunities have lower positive affect. The effect being mutual, each set affects the other set of variables. In the second stage, the personal attributes of internality-externality, employment commitment and coping tactics affected both the perceptions of the environment and the current affective states, (Payne and Hartley, 1987).
Stress Model of Unemployment [Payne and Hall, 1987]

CONDITIONING VARIABLES
- Financial Worries
- Financial behaviours
- Income changes
- Reported health
- Health change
- Social class

CURRENT AFFECT
- Felt threat of continuing unemployment
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Strain felt yesterday
- Pleasure felt yesterday

PERCEPTION OF ENVIRONMENT
- Demands
- Support
- Constraints
- Opportunities

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES
- Externality
- Employment Commitments
- Coping Tactics
Theoretical Constructs Used

Using the theoretical frameworks discussed above proposes the present study proposes to focus on the psychological health of the unemployed, and in this the role of personal and environmental factors. A brief presentation of some of the variables may be made below:

Psychological Health

Psychological health is, indeed a holistic phenomena involving cognitive, affective and behavioral dimensions. It may include stress, cognitive difficulties, difficulties in thinking, perception, learning, etc and life satisfaction. The relevance of including psychological health as a variable was based on recorded effects of unemployment on psychological health in the literature.

Personal Factors

The personal self as a phenomenological construct had been recognized to covary with psychological health of the unemployed. These include

1. **Self-esteem** - The reality that an individual consistently evaluated himself and arrived at judgement with regard to the worthiness of oneself. Self-esteem, reflected an attitude of approval or disapproval of oneself. It also connoted the belief an individual had with regard to how far one was capable of significant success or worthiness in estimation.

2. **Personal orientation** - The source of one's control. Locus of control was identified by the degree to which an individual could perceive that reinforcements from within or from outside provided an anchorage to one's behaviour, and thus control on self. It also included references to orientation to powerful others and chance an individual adopted for oneself.
3. **Alienation** - the pattern of attitudes and beliefs an individual had with regard to one’s relationship with society. Alienation subsumed isolation, normlessness, meaninglessness, powerlessness and self-estrangement of an individual. Isolation represented an individual's feeling of being alone without meaningful relationship with significant others. Powerlessness represented the helplessness one experienced consequent to one's inability to cope with a situation. Normlessness referred to the individual perceiving lack of existence of norms in societal values. Meaninglessness connoted one's feeling that there was no meaning or purpose in existence itself. The relevance of these subjective aspects of personal self to unemployment was based on available evidenced.

4. **Employment Commitment** - In industrial societies employment was the rule and everyone was committed to it or assumed to be so. The commitment to work, indeed, was regarded as a significant marker of possible consequences of employment to an individual.

**Environmental Factors:**

Individual could not be isolated from environment, indeed they were integrated into the environment. The influence of the individual and the environment was reciprocal. The conditions and resources in the environment provided opportunities of utilization to the unemployed youth. The sociable individuals may choose the environments that facilitate the development of social contacts, create opportunities for skill use, try to control over the situation etc, while people who prefer to be left alone may choose environment that can afford a degree of anonymity. However, the individual is not a passive recipient of the environmental forces but one who interacted with the environment by personal actions. Infact, there were multiple patterns of changes across the time and place and within a person concerned, but it was difficult for any individuals to identify
particular causal agents in non-artificial environment which could account for the psychological changes in them Warr (1987) had identified nine environmental features responsible for psychological health. Moreover, the society provided social support and interactions that facilitated the psychological health process. Thus, the present study would use Warr's nine environmental features and social support as the environmental factors.

**Demographic Variables:**

Demographic variables were taken as potential variables as used in earlier studies in analysing the consequences of unemployment.

**Significance of the Study:**

The negative psychological consequences of unemployment are suffered by all individuals who participate in job searching process. As the unemployment growth rates are increasing the educated unemployed were being deprived of achievement, recognition, responsibility, intrinsic pleasure, positive time structure, opportunity for social interactions and for the development of identity, and self esteem, and at times increased their depression, stress tension and other psychosomatic disorders. They were forced to assess their personal beliefs, needs, worthiness and perceptions of their environment objectively, and try to maintain their psychological health. The quality of their psychological experiences during unemployment period was important in their further social and self development and interactions.

It thus appeared that the study of personal and environmental factors of unemployed individuals would be of help to understand how individuals' beliefs, self evaluations, interest in social activities, perceptions of the environment lead to changes in the psychological health during unemployment period.
The literature showed the overconcern of researchers with consequences of unemployment rather than the impact of the individual characteristics of the unemployed. There was paucity of studies focussing on the characteristics of individuals and environment and their relationship with psychological health. Indian researches related to unemployment from the social-psychological point of view (Raj 1985; Pal 1993; Radhakrishnan 1993; Sajjan 1995) were few and limited to comparing employed professional students with the unemployed, their explanations and attributions.

The unemployment experiences differed from person to person depending on their background, residential place, educational level, age, marital status, socio-economic status, gender and so on. These background factors played a crucial role in their decision making, job search activities and perceptions of the environment. Though all educated unemployed faced unemployment in the rural-urban disparities could bring different kind of experiences to individuals. Many sociological and economic studies on regional disparities of unemployment (Parvathamma, 1984; Bose et al, 1983; Azad, 1990; Verghese, 1989; etc.,) indicated this making socio psychological analysis of education unemployed relevant.

As predicted by Singh (1993) the graduate employment probabilities were low for the non professionals, especially for arts than commerce and science discipline (-2.62, -2.57 and -1.29 but lower than the professionals. A study (Singh 1993) of the unemployed graduates from arts, science and commerce discipline should help to understand the processes of psychological changes and their well-being. Although both men and women have similar qualifications, the women unemployment has always been higher than men as shown by planning commission report, NSS data, employment exchanges, CSIR etc. No socio-
Psychological research has given much attention to educated unemployed women and men, their characteristics and perceptions.

Therefore, from the socio-psychological perspective, this study proposed to understand the role of personal and environmental factors in psychological health of the educated unemployed graduates. The proposed study of educated unemployed being retrospective in nature would also throw light on the management of changes in psychological health.
The following Conceptual Model could explain the relationship among variables to be investigated.

**Residence**
- Discipline
- Gender

**PERSONAL FACTORS**
- Self Esteem
- Locus of Control
- Alienation
- Employment Commitment

**DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS**
- Caste
- Marital Status
- No. of Family Members
- Socio-Economic Status

**ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS**
- Perception of Environment
- Social Support

**PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH**
- Stress
- Cognitive Difficulties
- Life Satisfaction

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Model proposed for the study