Will I ever get a job? – Comparison between long-term and short-term unemployed academics

Roxana Paz & Achim Hättich

Networking for Jobs (NFJ), Zürich

ABSTRACT

Once, people with tertiary education were guaranteed to get a good job. However, today, people of the same educational qualification can even have a higher unemployment rate compared with non-academics. The current manuscript deals with the question, how long-term unemployed differ from short-term unemployed academics. It is known that the long-term unemployed have a particularly unfavourable profile. To test this, we conducted a cross-sectional study among unemployed people with tertiary education in the Swiss canton of Zurich, who had registered at the personal employment service (PES). A total of 1,208 questionnaires were filled out completely and 278 only partially. This leaves a response quote of 42.2 %. The long-term unemployed attributed success in finding a job less to their own appearance and a head-hunter than the short-term unemployed. The long-term unemployed were significantly older than the short-term unemployed. No differences were found in terms of self-regulation, career adaptability, sex, nationality, and mental and physical health.

Keywords

Long-term unemployment – health and unemployment – personality self-regulation – career adaptability – attribution

1   Introduction

Work is a socially central good that is understood as a field of action. If work is missing, life is of half the value (Lewin, 1920, as cited in Ulich, 2011, p. 21). Unemployment is commonly perceived as a burden and a shame. However, it is even worse if one remains unemployed for a long time. As a special group, the chances of the long-term unemployed are far worse in the labour market. A potential explanation for this is that the long-term unemployed have poorer prospects due to poorer starting conditions, f. e. lower education. A contrasting explanation is that their bad outcomes are a consequence of the extended unemployment they have experienced (state dependence). In their study of census data, Abraham et al. (2016) supports the state dependence hypotheses: Even with controls for individual heterogeneity, they found that unemployment duration has a strongly negative effect on the likelihood of future employment. Kroft et al. (2013) performed an experiment by submitting 12,000 invented CVs with similar education, background, and experience. The only difference was how long

the applicant had been without a job. The researchers found that the probability of a candidate not being called back by an employer increased steadily as the duration of unemployment grew longer, from 7.4 % after one month of unemployment to 45 % at the eighth month, from where on remains constant over time. Rothstein (2016), showed with logit estimates from hazard models, showed that being black, having lower educational attainment, and having lower cognitive skills were associated with increased odds of being subject to a long-term period of unemployment. One can conclude to long-term unemployment is unfavourable for re-employment. Unemployment shows higher values during the summer months. Ferreira et al. (2015) demonstrate that Individuals who reported a long period of unemployment at T1 but were re-employed at T2 showed meaningful gains in positive affect and life satisfaction compared with those who had a shorter history of unemployment and were re-employed.Our study focusses on the effects of unemployment on individuals' psychological and physical well-being. Our empirical work experience in this field over the last 17 years in supporting

academics to find jobs has shown us that long-term unemployment has a devastating effect on individuals.

The present study focusses on the effects of unemployment on individuals' psychological and physical well-being. Our empirical work experience in this field over the last 17 years in supporting academics to find jobs has shown us that long-term unemployment has a devastating effect on individuals.

It is surprising about the high rate of unemployment among academics in relation to the general population in the canton of Zürich. People with a tertiary degree from bachelor's onwards face a high unemployment rate; it fluctuates by an average of 20 %, as Figure 1 shows. From the total population of the canton of Zürich, 22.6 % have tertiary education. Thus, academics are slightly underrepresented when it comes to unemployment.
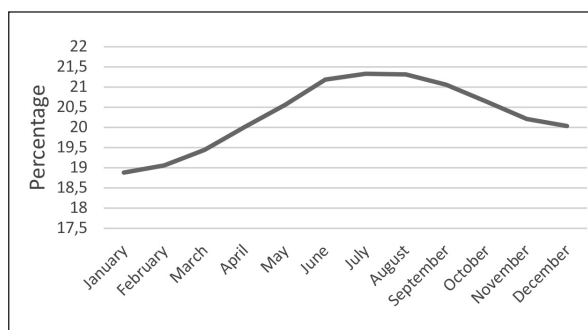

Figure 1: Quote of unemployed people with a university degree, 2016, Canton Zurich, Switzerland (Source: https://www.amstat.ch).

Literature Overview

Psychological and physical effects of unemployment

Unemployment affects people differently and has a considerable negative impact. (f. e. Lu et al., 2010; Kroll & Lambert, 2011; Kwon et al., 2016). Research and meta-analyses have proved that unemployment has many negative effects such as a decline in individuals' psychological and physical well-being (Brand, 2015). There is especially a significant risk of mental illness and depression, loss of psychosocial assets, social withdrawal, family disruption. (Norström et al., 2014). Likewise, perceived job insecurity has a stronger impact on psychological health (e. g., causing depression) than unemployment does (Kim & von dem Knesebeck, 2015, 2016).

On the contrary, Stolove et al. (2017) show in their longitudinal study that it is depression due to unemployment which causes lower chances of reemployment rather than unemployment itself. This fact increases the risk of continued unemployment. Generally low mental health amongst unemployed

individuals, migrants, people older than 45 and being financial dependent, was associated with lower levels of re-employment after one year (Skärlund et al., 2012). The longer the unemployment period lasts, the poorer the individuals' mental health becomes (Herber et al., 2019).

Career adaptability and unemployment

Career adaptability can play an important role in career construction and is defined as „individual's resources for coping with current and anticipated tasks, transitions and traumas in their occupational roles that, to some degree large or small, alter their social integration" (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012, p. 662).

As unemployed individuals' career decision-making and career confidence positively predicted re-employment quality after eight months, career adaptability is a key factor to be considered in the unemployment process (Koen et al., 2010).

It also had a positive influence on the well-being of unemployed emerging adults (Konstam et al. 2015). The study of by Maggiori et al. (2013) found that the unemployed demonstrate higher adaptability strategies than employees with high job insecurity. In fact, the unemployed showed similar career adaptability like those with a secure job. Monteiro et al. (2019) report that students with higher levels of concern, control, curiosity, and confidence are more likely to be employed 18 months after the labour market transition. Career adaptability can therefore contribute positively to the prospects of the unemployed as Klehe et al. (2011) put it: „In an organisational downsizing, those with high exploratory career adaptability showed higher job-search behaviours and turnover". This puts in evidence the stronger proactive dimension it plays for success.

Strong career adaptability turns out to be crucial for employees when companies must face turbulent times like the current pandemic's effects in the years 2020 / 2021 and deal with uncertain developments.

Self-regulation

Self-regulation is a process of altering one's responses, including thoughts, emotions, and actions, stopping oneself from enacting an impulse. Astonishingly, not much research has investigated the level of self-regulation of unemployed individuals and how self-regulation influences job search and re-employment. Self-regulation training influences people's goal orientation towards job seeking, which in turn would relate to learning from failure and strategy awareness, leading to job-seeking intentions, resulting in increased re-employment status (Noordzij et al., 2012). In the same direction, Berger et al. (2019) identified that self-

regulation training has a positive effect on the quality of application documents as well as on the probability of participants submitting their documents on time. However, they do not find a significant positive effect in re-entering the labour market.

Attribution of success

Having a good and long education results in high expectations for getting a job. If no job is obtained, the search for causalities will soon become part of the agenda. Further, in the study by Hesketh (1984), the unemployed with high self-esteem and an internal locus of control attributed their failure to lack of effort and credited success to ability. Meanwhile, unemployed individuals with low self-esteem and an external locus of control attributed success to effort and luck, but failure was not ascribed to lack of ability, nor to lack of effort, to task difficulty, to bad luck. In contrast, McGee (2015) found no difference between internal and external locus of control in job-search activities. Bendassoli, Gondim, and Coelho-Lima (2015) showed that unemployed individuals attributed their unemployment mostly to societal causes, and less to fatalistic and individual causes. In the study by Feather and Davenport (1981), those unemployed youth with higher levels of depressive affect were less likely to blame themselves for their unemployment and more likely to blame external difficulties, such as the current economic situation. Their retrospective ratings concerning how confident they were about getting a job and how much they needed and tried for a job also tended to be higher than those of the less-depressed subjects.

In a longitudinal study on young job seekers, self-regulation appeared to be more important in predicting resume submissions and first interviews, whereas positive emotions predicted success in obtaining second interviews and job offers (Turban, Stevens & Lee, 2009).

In the canton of Zurich, we conducted an online study using Lime survey, starting on 25.11.2016 and finishing at the 16.1.2017 with two times prolongation. Our sample consisted of people with tertiary education who were registered at the PES (AWA). We conducted a cross-sectional study on important factors that distinguish long-term and short-term unemployed academics in Switzerland. The study stated the following research hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: The psychological and physical health of the long-term unemployed is worse than that of the short-term unemployed.

Hypothesis 2: Short-term unemployed are younger than long-term unemployed.

Hypothesis 3: Long-term unemployed attribute their success in finding a job less to internal factors and more to external factors than short-term unemployed.

Hypothesis 4: Long-term unemployed have a lower career adaptability than the short-term unemployed.

Hypothesis 5: Long-term unemployed have a lower self-regulation than the short-term unemployed.

2 Methods

Sample

In the Swiss canton of Zurich, we carried out an online study using the survey tool LimeSurvey, starting on 25.11.2016 and finishing at the 16.1.2017 with two times prolongation.

At the sets were generated, and 301 data sets were eliminated because they contained no information (a data set is automatically generated on the website even if there are no answers). There remained 1'486 questionnaires with at least some data. A total of 1'208 questionnaires contained complete data sets, and 278 had only partial ones. This leaves a response quote of 42.2 %. The analysis is done on all data available, including cases with missing values.
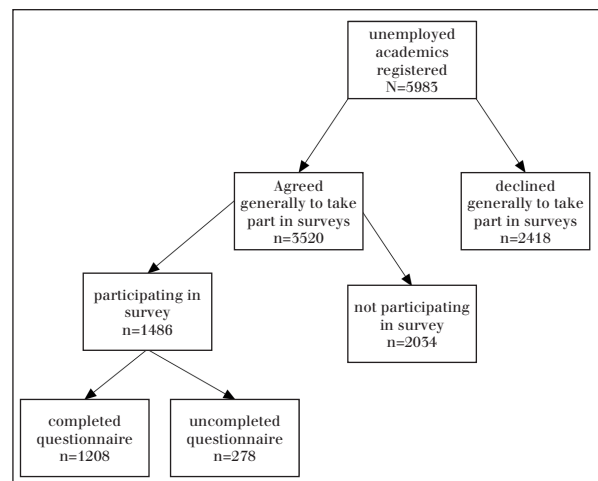

Figure 2: Overview of the sample (Source: Own Design).

680 (46.0 %) were of Swiss nationality, and 799 (54.0 %) were of foreign nationality. Further, 770 participants were male (51.9 %), and 713 (48.1 %) were female. The mean age was 43.2 years (SD = 9.7).

Measures

The following is an overview of the measurements. Long-term unemployment has multiple and relevant impacts on those affected. Duration of unemployment:

Table 1:   *Former employment status and former branches of the total sample (Source: Own calculations based on our database).*

	Number of cases	Percentage
Branches with more than 100 persons		
Financing / insurance	247	18.7 %
Informatics and communication	244	18.5 %
Processing trade and producing industries	151	10.4 %
Health and social services	135	10.2 %
Technological and scientific services	117	8.9 %
Former employment status		
Employed without a leading position	742	56.2 %
Employed with a leading position	533	40.4 %
Self-employed without a leading position	24	1.8 %
Self-employed with a leading position	21	1.6 %

Self-report: 0 up to 6 months, 6 months up to 12 months, 12 months up to 24 months, more than 24 months. All people unemployed up to 2 years were put in one group, and those unemployed for more than 2 years were assigned to another group. The results were comparable but less clear if we put the cut-off at 12 months, as the OECD or ILO[1] defines long-term unemployment. We decided to use the most extreme group – those with the most adverse outcomes – this means with the longest period of unemployment. In the group comprising the long-term unemployed, there were 45 participants, while there were 1,271 participants in the group assigned to the short-term unemployed.

We applied the following scales:

The short version of the Questionnaire (Neal & Carey, 2005) was used to measure self-regulation. 21 items, a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 – „strongly disagree" to 5 – „strongly agree", two subscales impulse control, α = .763; goal setting, α = .817.

Career Adaptability Scale – Short Form (short version – 12 items; Maggiori et al., 2015). Four subscales: concern α = .821; control α = .831; curiosity, α = .763; and confidence = .821.

6 self-constructed items on the attribution of responsibility for finding a job.

Four-point Likert-Scale: 4 – „a lot", 3 – „much", 2 – „little", 1 – „nothing at all":

Options: Important persons in a company; my own convincing appearance; professional networks; good personal friends; head-hunters; by chance / happenstance.

Self-reported health status – physical and psychological: 5-point Likert 1 „very bad" 5 „very good" (Bundesamt für Statistik, 2018).

Nationality: Swiss and non-Swiss.

Statistical analysis

All analyses were completed using SPSS 27. Initially, descriptive statistics were calculated for the demographic variables as well as the variables used to test the hypotheses. Pearson correlation testing two sided hypotheses was applied for special analysis. A bivariate analysis of variance was also applied using weighted means. Finally, logistic regression was computed with the categories of duration of unemployment as the dependent variable. The independent variables used were short version of the Self-Regulation Questionnaire (SSRQ), the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS), for health measures, nationality, sex, age and attribution patterns. Because of the unequal sample sizes, tests for variance homogeneity were calculated (Levene's test), and in case of variance inhomogeneity, Welch's test was applied instead of analysis of variance (ANOVA).

3   Results

There were no statistically significant differences in terms of sex (men: 3.5 %, women: 3.4 %, chi = 0.16; p = .898) or nationality (Swiss: 4.1 %, Non-Swiss: 2.9 %, chi = 1.44; p = .230). Long-term and short-term

---

[1]   https://data.oecd.org/unemp/long-term-unemployment-rate.htm
      www.ilo.org

Table 2:   *Means of self-regulation, career adaptability, health, and attribution in the long-term unemployed compared with the short-term unemployed (Source: Own calculations based on our database).*

	less than 2 years		2 years and more		total	
	mean	SD	mean	SD	mean	SD
SSRQ_goal setting	40.33	5.08	38.89	7.45	40.28	5.17
SSRQ_impulse control	21.56	5.23	22.45	5.28	21.59	5.23
Career Adaptability-concern	4.00	0.69	3.89	0.83	4.00	0.69
Career Adaptability-control	4.43	0.61	4.32	0.58	4.43	0.61
Career Adaptability-curiosity	4.23	0.60	4.10	0.85	4.22	0.61
Career Adaptability-confidence	4.36	0.57	4.38	0.58	4.36	0.57
Attribution: important persons in the company	3.42	0.65	3.37	0.84	3.42	0.66
Attribution: my own convincing appearance	3.55	0.58	3.18	0.83	3.53	0.59
Attribution: professional networks	2.75	0.84	2.56	1.06	2.74	0.84
Attribution: good personal friends	2.46	0.84	2.42	1.10	2.46	0.85
Attribution: headhunter	2.01	0.86	1.64	0.77	2.00	0.86
Attribution: chance / happenstance	2.82	0.88	3.09	0.95	2.83	0.88
Physical health	4.38	0.70	4.11	0.92	4.37	0.71
Psychic health	4.20	0.82	3.84	1.08	4.19	0.83
Age	43.03	9.57	51.22	10.15	43.31	9.70

Table 3:   *Differences between long-term and short-term unemployed individuals, analysis of variance (Source: Own calculations based on our database).*

	Regression coefficient B	Standard error	Wald	Sign.	Exp(B)
Self-regulation goal setting	-0.013	0.046	0.075	0.785	0.988
Self-regulation impulse control	-0.008	0.045	0.035	0.852	0.992
Career Adaptability-concern	-0.035	0.346	0.010	0.919	0.965
Career Adaptability-control	-0.127	0.386	0.109	0.742	0.881
Career Adaptability-curiosity	-0.303	0.379	0.640	0.424	0.738
Career Adaptability-confidence	0.770	0.428	3.242	0.072	2.160
Attribution: important persons in the company	0.049	0.251	0.038	0.845	1.050
Attribution: my own convincing appearance	-0.625	0.262	5.715	0.017	0.535
Attribution: professional networks	-0.087	0.254	0.117	0.732	0.917
Attribution: good personal friends	0.027	0.247	0.012	0.912	1.028
Attribution: headhunter	-0.528	0.244	4.701	0.030	0.590
Attribution: by chance / happenstance	0.387	0.217	3.174	0.075	1.473
Physical health	-0.250	0.246	1.028	0.311	0.779
Psychic health	-0.185	0.219	0.708	0.400	0.831
Age	0.085	0.020	18.841	0.000	1.089

unemployed did not significantly differ in their gender and nationality distribution.

In the analysis of variance (Table 3), all scales of self-regulation and career adaptability do not show significant difference between persons who are more or less than 2 years unemployed. There are also no differences for physical and psychological health. Because the Levene's test was significant, the

Table 4:   Logistic regression for difference for short-term and long-term unemployment (Source: Own calculations based on our database).

	Regression coefficient B	Standard error	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)	Exp(B) lowest	Exp(B) highest
SRQ: Goalsetting	-0.014	0.047	0.085	0.770	0.986	0.900	1.081
SRQ: Impulse Control	-0.005	0.046	0.012	0.913	0.995	0.910	1.088
Sex	-0.491	0.370	1.762	0.184	0.612	0.296	1.264
Age	0.092	0.021	19.649	0.000	1.096	1.052	1.141
Scale Career Adaptability-concern	-0.062	0.349	0.032	0.859	0.940	0.475	1.861
Scale Career Adaptability-control	-0.103	0.386	0.071	0.789	0.902	0.424	1.921
Scale Career Adaptability-curiosity	-0.307	0.384	0.638	0.425	0.736	0.347	1.562
Scale Career Adaptability-confidence	0.751	0.432	3.017	0.082	2.119	0.908	4.943
Attribution job: important persons company	0.104	0.259	0.161	0.688	1.109	0.668	1.842
Attribution job: own appearance	-0.653	0.263	6.164	0.013	0.521	0.311	0.872
Attribution job: professional networks	-0.067	0.255	0.068	0.794	0.935	0.567	1.543
Attribution job: personal friends	0.011	0.246	0.002	0.964	1.011	0.624	1.639
Attribution job: headhunter	-0.500	0.244	4.195	0.041	0.607	0.376	0.979
Attribution job: chance	0.378	0.217	3.028	0.082	1.460	0.953	2.236
Physical health	-0.236	0.246	0.922	0.337	0.790	0.488	1.278
Psychic health	-0.172	0.221	0.604	0.437	0.842	0.546	1.299
Nationality	0.035	0.368	0.009	0.923	1.036	0.504	2.130
Konstante	-4.696	3.659	1.647	0.199	0.009		

Welch's test was applied for the health status analysis. One highly significant result was that the long-term unemployed are much older. Also, in the attribution items, there are some significant differences: the long-term unemployed believe less that their own appearance and head-hunters can be responsible for getting a job, and believe more that they will get a job by chance. Additional to Levene's test, it was significant, Welch's test was used for health status.

We performed a logistic regression to test our hypotheses. The results are: 96.9 % were classified as long-term or short-term unemployed. Nagelkerke R-Quadrates was .176, a moderate model fit. In the logistic regression (Table 4) three variables significantly predicted long- versus short-term unemployment: the most significant factor was age (p = .000); the attribution of own appearance as important in finding a job (p = .017); and least attribution of head-hunters (p = .030) as important in finding a job. No effects were found for self-regulation, career adaptability and health status.

4 Discussion

The current study shows that higher age is a significant risk factor for long-term unemployment. Neither health, gender nor nationality had an influence. Two astonishing results of the study are the attributions of success in the differentiation in the short-term and long-term unemployment: one being the own appearance and the other being the influence of a head-hunter. Only hypothesis 2 was confirmed, hypotheses 1, 4 and 5 were rejected, hypothesis 3 was partly confirmed, partly rejected. Overall, the results show that the long-term unemployed do not differ that much from the short-term unemployed.

(H1) Health status did not make a significant difference in both the analysis of variance and the logistic regression. It is not possible that age had suppressed the effect of health status because the correlations were low: physical health ($r = -.075$, $p = 0.009$) and psychological health ($r = 0.019$, $p = 0.514$). The effect of age in the analyses is extremely strong. There are several reasons for the missing association between health and unemployment duration: The average health of the sample was rather high – better than „good". Health status correlates positively with education level. The average age of our sample was with 43 years rather low. In Lallukka et al. (2019), mental disorders and disability were predictors of long-term unemployment. As good health is important for getting and keeping a job, as Ulich and Wülser (2018) show, the unemployed shall put an effort into doing all that is feasible for them to maintain good health. Also, the finding of Wagenaar et al. (2012) was that lower general health and higher emotional exhaustion at baseline predicted future unemployment among permanent employees. Various downward trajectories were also predicted by lower work-related well-being

(H2) In this study, the best predictor in differentiating long-term from short-term unemployment is age. The long-term unemployed were on average eight years older than the short-term unemployed. It is hard for older people to find a job. In particular, in the Swiss system, the fee for the pension fund is rising with every age group; the 25 to 34 years pay 7 %, and the 55 to 65 years pay 18 %.[2] In general, multiple studies show that young people are less expensive for the employer than older people. This is a very often-repeated result (f. e. Wagenaar et al. 2015). This result of this study depends on the branch: there is an age effect of branch, with $F = 3.266$ and $p < .001$. In our sample, people in the branch of entertainment were on average the youngest at 39.4 years. People from the real estate branch were the oldest with an average of 47.1 years. Compared with the duration of unemployment, the branch has a small effect: $chi2 = 27.53$; $p = .036$. Only two branches significantly deviate from the cell proportions assumed under independence: education and science. Unemployed individuals with approximately the average age (M = 43.7 years) had a high probability for long-term unemployment ($p < .01$), and in the branch of science people were slightly younger (M = 39.9 years), individuals had a lesser probability of unemployment ($p > .05$). These are the results of the variance analysis.

(H3) Concerning the attribution items, the long-term unemployed attribute success less to their own appearance and to head-hunters. There is a high correlation between using head-hunters for application and attributing success to head-hunters: Pearson correlation: .612; $p < .001$. Even though 37.2 % had a leading position and many are from prospering branches like ICT and financing, academics are striving for highly paid jobs. Therefore, they should use head-hunters more often than persons with a lesser degree. This result shows that long-term unemployed academics don't lose the ability to look after themselves.

An important finding of the study was that the unemployed attributed success in finding jobs to their own appearance and not to friends or networks. The attribution to own appearance was lower in long-term than in short-term unemployed, except important persons in the company. In the age of social media, the optimisation and objectification of the self in the sense of self-branding (Khamis, Ang & Welling, 2016) is important. Tietje and Cresap (2005) show that attractive people have better chances in the job market. However, it suggests that in Spain, performance plays a greater role over appearance for academics. Granleese and Sayer (2006) report that physical attractiveness and appearance are considered relevant to the workplace in higher education. Non-academics perceive academics as being career-driven by their lack of attractiveness and / or poor appearance. More male academics perceive female academics as unattractive and dressing down in appearance. Young female academics play down their „looks", as they perceive these be a disadvantage in their careers. Male academics do not report such considerations. Liu et al. (2019) report that, after controlling for gender, ethnicity, publication history, work experience, and the quality of alma mater, more attractive professors obtain better first-school placements post-PhD and are granted tenure in a shorter period of time. These findings are broadly consistent with behavioural theory that predicts that facial attractiveness irrationally affects the perception of performance characteristics.

The long-term unemployed have lower self-confidence and therefore rate their attractiveness lower.

Human resources recruit potential employees online through different channels. Existing research indicates that self-branding in the knowledge economy is a key promotional device for the pursuit of self-realisation in a context reifying entrepreneurialism (Gandini, 2016). However, only a small percentage of the sample was self-employed, where self-branding is of greater importance. Also analysing long-term and short-term unemployed separately, no significant difference in attractiveness attribution could be found between genders. with F = 2.298, p = .122.

This result doesn't change when the long-term and short-term unemployed are compared.

(H4) There were no differences in career adaptability concerning the duration of unemployment.

(H5) There were no differences in self-regulation concerning the duration of unemployment. There are several explanations: Studying at a university is much freer and autonomous than an apprenticeship or a school. To successfully finish higher education, students must have a strong self-regulation. Concerning the application behaviour, there are strong restrictions of the PES, people do not have much choice; they either follow the guidelines or lose a lot of money caused by penalties (Arni et al., 2009). Self-regulation is positively associated with academic success (Duckworth & Carlson, 2013). The average of goal setting was comparable to the values of Neal and Carey (2005), but the impulse control was much lower, at nearly half the value. If you have been unemployed for as long as the long-term unemployed are, you can tend to procrastinate, a proxy for low impulse control. Even though there is a negative relationship between academic performance and procrastination (Kim & Seo, 2015), one can assume that students procrastinate more than apprentices because the achievements have a longer time span and they must plan the day by themself; moreover, it is easier to skip lectures. That the goal direction is high shows that those people have not given up themselves.

This also corresponds to the missing differences in career adaptability. The averages are rather high, perhaps a ceiling effect. Most studies on career adaptability were carried out with tertiary education because a career is generally associated for the better educated than the low educated, but Schellenberg et al. (2016) showed the opposite. And this is because low-skilled workers plan their careers very carefully. Duarte et al. (2012) and Johnston et al. (2016) report that unemployed people had higher levels of career adaptability, especially those who were professionally active. Empirical evidence shows that adaptability is a resource that unemployed people can activate in response to the professional environment. We assume that the lack of differences between long-term and short-term unemployment has to do with the fact that the academics who have been unemployed for a long time and who have invested a lot in their education know what they are entitled to. They have the ability to train and educate themselves further. They don't give up so easily (DiMaggio et al. 2020).

Limitations

This survey focuses intentionally on academics and was held in only one canton, but the most economically strongest of Switzerland. Only 45 people were in the group of the long-term unemployed. Analyses conducted by including more people in this group did not lead to different results.

Concerning the low response rate, one reason for this was that it was not possible to send a reminder. Furthermore, due to various delays, the survey could only be carried out shortly before Christmas. The AWA[3] cites other reasons for the very high number of rejections: weariness of participating in surveys; academics attach a greater importance to data protection, and they might be more sensitive to surveys.

We could only conduct a cross-sectional design, and we are aware of which precludes any causal inference. In this case it is absolutely clear that long term unemployed people feel more unattractive the longer the unemployment lasts. They have a lower self-esteem, higher depression, more procrastination, they get less feedback because of smaller networks. Hoang and Knabe (2021) found no differences in personal care between employed and unemployed people.

Conclusion

The objective of this article was to investigate how short-term and long-term unemployed differ in a range of factors.

In the present study, self-regulation, career adaptability, and health were not associated with the duration of unemployment. This may be because people with a university degree already have high scores in these areas. It was unexpected to find that neither gender nor nationality had an influence on the duration of unemployment. According to our results, the group of elder unemployed academics had very low patterns of attribution and should be treated as a special focus group. This can be balanced by the employment services (PES) by providing cognitive trainings to foster self-esteem and self-confidence.

---

[3]   www.awa.zh.ch

The long-term unemployed academics assume that head-hunters are less responsible for successfully finding jobs even though we know from our own experience in counselling unemployed people that head-hunters are specialised in dealing with higher educational profiles. This group of the long-term unemployed should undergo training to highlight their strengths and skills and thus remain attractive to employers.

It is absolutely necessary for the Public Employment Services (PES) to focus on the long-term unemployed and find re-employment for them according to their skills and work experience so that negative consequences can be circumvented. The society must look for ways and means to employ these people, especially in the face of challenges such as digitalisation and the covid-19 crisis, as it is in the current years 2020-2021.

Although further empirical research is needed, our findings suggest that a new real political paradigm is needed to tackle long-term unemployment.

Acknowledgments

Conflict of interest

Both authors work at Networking for Jobs. The results of this study have no influence on her work. To reduce potential conflicts of interest, an external scientific advisory board was built. In addition, an objective analysis of the literature and empirical data had top priority.

Funding

References

Abraham, K. G., Haltiwanger, J. C., Sandusky, K. & Spletzer, J. (2016). The consequences of long-term unemployment: Evidence from linked survey and administrative data. *NBER Working Paper*, *No. 22665*, *JEL No. E24, J64*.

Arni, P., Lalive, R. & van Ours, J. (2009). How effective are unemployment benefit sanctions? Looking Beyond Unemployment Exit. *IZA DP*, *4509*.

Bendassolli, P. F., Gondim, S. M. G. & Coelho-Lima, F. (2015). Attributions of causes for unemployment by unemployed workers. *Análise Psicológica*, *33* (2), 165-176.

Berger, E. M., Hermes, H., Koenig, G., Schmidt, F. & Schunk, D. (2019). Self-regulation training and job search behavior: A natural field experiment within an active labor market program. *NHH Dept. of Economics Discussion*, *13/2019*, Available at SSRN. https://ssrn.com/abstract=3406717 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3406717

Brand, J. E. (2015). The far-reaching impact of job loss and unemployment. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *41*, 359-375. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-071913-043237

Bundesamt für Statistik (2018). *Schweizerische Gesundheitsbefragung 2017* (Übersicht). Neuchatel: Bundesamt für Statistik. https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/de/home/statistiken/gesundheit.assetdetail.6426300.html

Di Maggio I., Ginevra M. C., Santilli S., Nota L. & Soresi S. (2020). The Role of Career Adaptability, the Tendency to Consider Systemic Challenges to Attain a Sustainable Development, and Hope to Improve Investments in Higher Education. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *11* https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01926

Duarte, M. E., Soares, M. C., Fraga, S., Rafael, M., Lima, M. R., Paredes, I., Agostino, R. & Djaló, A. (2012). Career Adapt-Abilities Scale–Portugal Form: Psychometric properties and relationships to employment status. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *80*, 725-729. doi:10.1016/j.jvb.2012.01.019

Duckworth, A. L., & Carlson, S. M. (2013). Self-regulation and school success. In B. W. Sokol, F. M. E. Grouzet & U. Müller (Eds.), *Self-regulation and autonomy: Social and developmental dimensions of human conduct*, (pp. 208-230). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Feather, N. T. & Davenport, P. R. (1981). Unemployment and depressive affect: A motivational and attributional analysis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *41* (3), 422-436. https://doi.org/10.1037//0022-3514.41.3.422

Ferreira, J. A., Reitzle, M., Lee, B. Freitas, R. A., Santos, E. R., Alcoforado, L. & Vondracek, F. W. (2015). Configurations of unemployment, reemployment, and psychological well-being: A longitudinal study of unemployed individuals in Portugal. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *91*, 54-64. doi:10.1016/j.jvb.2015.09.004

Gandini, A. (2016). Digital work: Self-branding and social capital in the freelance knowledge economy. *Marketing Theory*, *16* (1), 123-141. https://doi.org/10.1177/1470593115607942

Granleese, J. & Sayer, G. (2006). Gendered ageism and „lookism": A triple jeopardy for female academics. *Women in Management Review*. doi:10.1108/09649420610683480

Herber, G. C., Ruijsbroek, A., Koopmanschap, M., Proper, K., van der Lucht, F., Boshuizen, H., Polder, J. & Uiters, E. (2019). Single transitions and persistence of unemployment are associated with poor health outcomes. *BMC public health*, *19* (1), 740. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-019-7059-8

Hesketh, B. (1984). Attribution theory and unemployment: Kelley's covariation model, self-esteem, and locus of control. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *24* (1), 94-109. doi:10.1016/0001-8791(84)90069-1

Hoang T. T. A. & Knabe, A. (2021). Time Use, Unemployment, and Well-Being: An Empirical Analysis Using British time-use data. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *22*, 2525-2548. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-020-00320-x

Johnston, C. S., Maggiori, C. & Rossier, J. (2016). Professional trajectories, individual characteristics, and staying satisfied and healthy. *Journal of Career Development*, *43*, 81-98. doi:10.1177/0894845315584161

Khamis, S., Ang, L. & Welling, R. (2016). Self-branding, 'micro-celebrity' and the rise of social media influencers. *Celebrity Studies*, *8* (2), 191-208. doi:10.1080/19392397.2016.1218292

Kim, T. J. & von dem Knesebeck, O. (2015). Is an insecure job better for health than having no job at all? A systematic review of studies investigating the health-related risks of both job insecurity and unemployment. *BMC public health*, *15*, 985. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-015-2313-1

Kim, T. J. & von dem Knesebeck, O. (2016). Perceived job insecurity, unemployment and depressive symptoms: A systematic review and meta-analysis of prospective observational studies. *International archives of occupational and environmental health*, *89* (4), 561-573.

Kim, K. R. & Seo, E. H. (2015). The relationship between procrastination and academic performance: A meta-analysis. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *82*, 26-33. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2015.02.038

Klehe, U.-C., Zikic, J., van Vianen, A. E. M., & de Pater, I. E. (2011). Career adaptability, turnover and loyalty during organizational downsizing. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *79*, 217-229. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2011.01.004

Koen, J., Klehe, U. C., van Vianen, A. E. M., Zikic, J. & Nauta, A. (2010). Job-search strategies and reemployment quality: The impact of career adaptability. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *77* (1), 126-139. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2010.02.004

Konstam, V., Celen-Demirtas, S., Tomek, S. & Sweeney, K. (2015). Career adaptability and subjective well-being in unemployed emerging adults: A promising and cautionary tale. *Journal of Career Development*, *42* (6), 463-477. https://doi.org/10.1177/0894845315575151

Kroft, K., Lange, F. & Notowidigdo, M. J. (2013). Duration dependence and labour market conditions: Evidence from a field experiment. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *128* (3), 1123-1167. doi:10.1093/qje/qjt015.

Kroll, L. E. & Lampert, T. (2011). Unemployment, social support and health problems: Results of the GEDA study in Germany, 2009. *Deutsches Arzteblatt International*, *108* (4), 47-52. https://doi.org/10.3238/arztebl.2011.0047

Kwon, K., Park, J. B., Lee, K. J. & Cho, Y. S. (2016). Association between employment status and self-rated health: Korean working conditions survey. *Annals of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, *28* (1), 43. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40557-016-0126-z

Lallukka, T., Kerkelä, M., Ristikari, T., Merikukka, M., Hiilamo, H., Virtanen, M., Øverland, S., Gissler, M. & Halonen, J. I. (2019). Determinants of long-term unemployment in early adulthood: A Finnish birth cohort study. *SSM – Population Health*, *8*, 100410. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssmph.2019.100410

Liu, Y., Lu, H. & Veenstra, K. J. (2019). Beauty and academic career. Rotman School of Management Working Paper No. 3092844, Singapore Management University School of Accountancy Research Paper No. 2019-105, Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=3092844 or https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3092844

Luo, J., Qu, Z., Rockett, I. & Zhang, X. (2010). Employment status and self-rated health in North-Western China. *Public Health*, *124* (3), 174-179.

McGee, A. D. (2015). How the perception of control influences unemployed job search. *ILR Review*, *68* (1), 184-211. https://doi.org/10.1177/0019793914556245

Maggiori, C., Johnston, C.S., Krings, F., Massoudi, K. & Rossier, J. (2013). The role of career adaptability and work conditions on general & professional well-being. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *83* (3), 437-449.

Maggiori, C., Rossier, J. & Savickas, M. L. (2015). Career Adapt-Abilities Scale Short Form (CAAS-SF): Construction and validation. *Journal of Career Assessment*, *25*, 312-325. https://doi.org/10.1177/1069072714565856

Monteiro, S., Taveira, M.d.C. & Almeida, L. (2019). Career adaptability and university-to-work transition: Effects on graduates' employment status, *Education + Training*, *61*, 1187-1199. https://doi.org/10.1108/ET-10-2018-0206

Neal, D. J. & Carey, K. B. (2005). A follow-up psychometric analysis of the self-regulation questionnaire. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors: Journal of the Society of Psychologists in Addictive Behaviors*, *19* (4), 414-422. http://doi.org/10.1037/0893-164X.19.4.414

Noordzij, G., van Hooft, E., van Mierlo, H., van Dam, A. & Born, M. P. (2012). The effects of a learning-goal orientation training on self-regulation: A field experiment among unemployed job seekers. *Personnel Psychology*, *66* (3), 723-755.

Norström, F., Virtanen, P., Hammarström, A., Gustafsson, P. E. & Janlert, U. (2014). How does unemployment affect self-assessed health? A systematic review focusing on subgroup effects. *BMC Public Health*, *14* (1). 1310. https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2458-14-1310

Rothstein, D. S. (2016). *An analysis of long-term unemployment*. Monthly Labor Review, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, July 2016. https://doi.org/10.21916/mlr.2016.32

Savickas, M. L. & Porfeli, E. J. (2012). Career Adapt-Abilities Scale: Construction, reliability, and measurement equivalence across 13 countries. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *80*, 661-673. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2012.01.011

Schellenberg, C., Hättich, A., Schmaeh, N. & Häfeli, K. (2016). Die Matura als der Weg zum beruflichen Erfolg. Ein Vergleich mit der Berufsbildung. In J. Kramer, M. Neumann & U. Trautwein (Eds.), *Abitur und Matura im Wandel*. Edition ZfE, (S. 253-285). Wiesbaden: Springer VS.

Skärlund, M., Åhs, A. & Westerling, R. (2012). Health-related and social factors predicting non-reemployment amongst newly unemployed. *BMC public health*, *12*, 893. https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2458-12-893

Stolove, C. A., Galatzer-Levy, I. R. & Bonanno, G. A. (2017). Emergence of depression following job loss prospectively predicts lower rates of re-employment. *Psychiatry Research*, *253*, 79-83. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2017.03.036

Tietje, L. & Cresap, S. (2005). Is lookism unjust? The ethics of aesthetics and public policy implications. *Journal of Libertarian Studies*, *19* (2), 31-50.

Turban, D. B., Stevens, C. K. & Lee, F. K. (2009). Effects of conscientiousness and extraversion on new labor market entrants' job search: The mediating role of metacognitive activities and positive emotions. *Personnel Psychology*, *62* (3), 553-573. https://doi.org/10.1111/J.1744-6570.2009.01148.X

Ulich, E., (2011). *Arbeitspsychologie* (7. Auflage). Stuttgart: Schäffer-Poeschel Verlag. ISBN: 978-3-7910-3049-4.

Ulich, E. & Wülser, M. (2018). *Gesundheitsmanagement in Unternehmen. Arbeitspsychologische Perspektiven* (7., überarb. u. erw. Aufl.). Wiesbaden: Springer Gabler Verlag.

Wagenaar, A. F., Kompier, M. A., Houtman, I. L., van den Bossche, S. N. & Taris, T. W. (2012). Employment contracts and health selection: Unhealthy employees out and healthy employees in? *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, *54* (10), 1192-1200. https://doi.org/10.1097/JOM.0b013e3182717633

Wagenaar, A. F., Kompier, M. A., Houtman, I. L., van den Bossche, S. N. & Taris, T. W. (2015). Who gets fired, who gets re-hired: The role of workers' contract, age, health, work ability, performance, work satisfaction and employee investments. *International Archives of Occupational and Environmental health*, *88* (3), 321-334. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00420-014-0961-6

Correspondence to:
Roxana Paz, MA
Networking for Jobs
Militärstraße 76
CH-8004 Zürich
info@networking-for-jobs.ch

Dr. Achim Hättich
Networking for Jobs
Militärstraße 76
CH-8004 Zürich
info@networking-for-jobs.ch