

ATTITUDE TOWARDS LIFE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT THROUGH BETTER OCCUPATION IN RURAL AREA

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ABSTRACT

Previous study argued that life quality is related to working environment quality. Relations between residents' age, education, marital status or gender are drivers for employment situation.

Material and method: Study addresses a random group of 333 persons. Research was performed through direct interviews held by pre trained field operators. The questions focused on people's attitude towards their present (un)employment status, actions they are ready to take in order to improve their situation, strengths they are counting on, weaknesses to cope with, opportunities and threats they identify in their environment.

Results and discussions: The study argue on lack of expectation among the majority of the group about chances to improve their job situation. Age and education are influencing both expectations and ready to action attitude. Gender variance indicate a potential discriminating environment. Willingness to find a job and certain changes they are ready to accept for this are distinctive characteristics for most of the respondents.

Conclusions: Rural population has to cope with a severe employment environment, which demands a high level of motivation and strong commitment to immediate action. The rural residents declare a low hope in state or local administration capacity to generate a positive change, although they are significantly depending on social welfare or other public sources of income. Interventions are required in increased self-esteem and better jobs seeking skills.

Keywords: SWOT, social expectations, gender discrimination, self-evaluation, Romania, Giurgiu County

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1. INTRODUCTION

The rural life perspective is varying from idyllic to depressing images. The idyll is something to which many aspire, perhaps as a vision of a good place to live or as a repository of values (M. Shucksmith, Journal of Rural Studies xxx, 2016, 1-10). One measure of subjective wellbeing life satisfaction varies between urban and rural areas in Scotland, after taking into account geographic variation in socioeconomic factors. Specifically, those in remote rural (but not accessible rural) areas reported greater life satisfaction than their urban counterparts. L (A. Gilbert et al. 2016).

In certain Greek rural areas, studies suggest that remaining in or returning to the rural milieu at this phase of the generalized crisis often hide instances of underemployment, social deprivation and proletarianization, insofar as people living in rural areas, both farmers and incomers, are not explicitly

supported by public policy-making. Due to economic and social differences between rural and urban areas, the lifestyle of individuals is affected. (T. Anthopoulou et al. 2017).

Important results are those showing the correlation between emotional traits and work satisfaction and its dimensions (AA Colomeischi, 2014). Quality of life emerges to be not only shaped by the realization of basic material needs such as being sufficiently nourished and adequately sheltered, but is also highly dependent on complex feelings, relations and social norms. The full exposition of wellbeing with its domains was organized into a framework constituting six different spheres of wellbeing: physical strength, inner wellbeing, household wellbeing, community relations, economic security and happiness G. Greco, et al. 2015).

In Western Germany, it was found that in the past 25 years, welfare has evened out at a higher level, but currently a trend towards

increasing economic disparity is discernible (A. Spellerberg et al. 2007). Studies conducted in China have shown rural poverty is three to nine times of urban poverty (J. Yang et al. 2016), but also family size preference and elderly care are unfavorable (J. Chen et al. 2016). The underdevelopment is dependent on unemployment and subsistence agriculture (B. Mitrica et al. 2016). T. Kuhmonen (T. Kuhmonen et al. 2016) have shown that Finnish youth have different answers to the desired lifestyle: urban-adjacent rural areas determine a cozy life, rural centers determine a small-scale life and remote rural areas determine a self-made life. Economic transition, regional industry collapse and changes in population structure, due to urban older population migration increased the pressure on quality life in certain rural area (J. Holmes et al. 2016).

Ten factors proved to be predicting re-employment success within 12 months in a sample of newly. Six of these predictors concern characteristics which negatively influence: higher age, not or insufficient understanding of the language, higher number of years worked in last occupation, feeling too ill to work, experiencing health problems and higher external unstable attribution. The other four predictors influence the chances of re-employment success positively: positive re-employment expectations, high score on job-search behavior (i.e. actively approaching possible employers), a high job-search intention, and higher general work ability (S. Brouwer et al. 2015).

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study used direct interviews with a random sample of 333 persons from 30 villages of Giurgiu County, interviewed face-to-face by 10 operators. The questionnaire covered both personal data and occupational data. Attitude towards persons' attitude towards their current occupational status and expectations on improving perspective were addressed. Study addresses a random group of 333 persons. Research was performed through direct

interviews held by pretrained field operators. The questions focused on people's attitude towards their present (un)employment status, actions they are ready to take in order to improve their situation, strengths they are counting on, weaknesses to cope with, opportunities and threats they identify in their environment.

The operators offered some categories and left some free space for other responses. They were trained to clarify the answers as significantly different from settled categories.

Data were analyzed from descriptive perspective and variance were identified. The covariance discussion was detailed for significant results ($\sigma < 0.05$). Interpretation and analysis of the data was made using IBM SPSS 24 PS IMAGO 4.0 program and Microsoft Excel 2010 program. The variability was determined with ANOVA method.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The sampling group consists mainly of between jobs persons. They consider themselves waiting for a job or for more training (Fig.1).

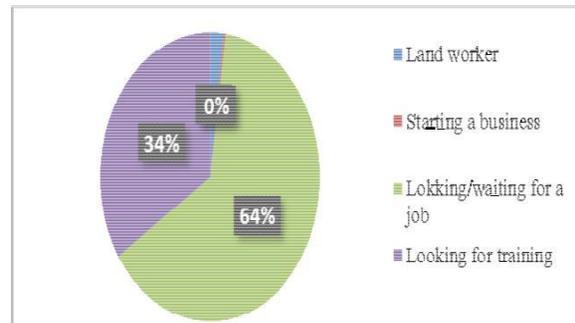


Figure 1. Present status of interviewed persons

The group has a low satisfaction about the income situation. Only 14% of the respondents find their financial situation as relatively sufficient or more, but only 0.3% (1 person) is satisfied with the income. Although almost 59% of respondents have a skeptical expectation to find a new job (Table 1), people do not easily admit the negative impact of unemployment on their life (7.8%). Authors consider this reluctance to answer a

consequence of the specific working environment, in which precedent study revealed over 40% of income from ‘other’ resources. When detailed these sources suggested gray economy.

People over 31 years old are more likely to admit the negative impact of unemployment in their life (Fig. 2), with lower than 8 grades graduation (Fig. 3).

More than 95% are interested in following training programs, yet many of the respondents are ready to accept even underqualified jobs if they cannot find one suited to their qualification (Fig. 4). Women are more likely to accept temporary jobs (41% compared to 24% of male respondents).

The respondents show low preference about the employer type (76.6. Women appears to be most indifferent on this aspect (Fig. 5).

Table 1. Chance to find a job on present economical context

	Frequency	Percent
I am sure I will find a job	33	9.9
Probably I will find a job	76	22.8
I am not so sure I will find a job	96	28.8
I don't think I will find a job	39	11.7
No opinion	17	5.1
Total valid	281	78.7
Missing System	72	21.6
Total	357	100.0

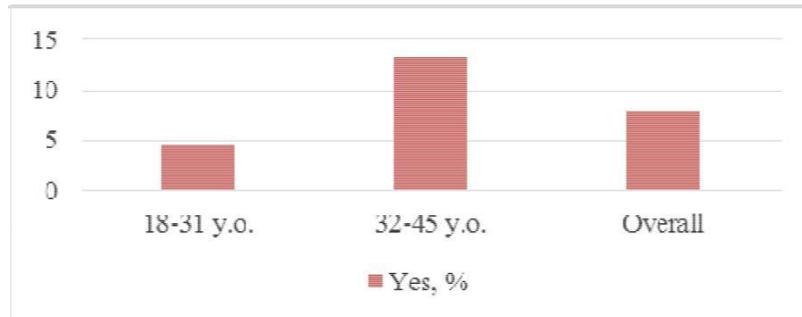


Figure 2. Level of acceptance of unemployment impact – gender variation

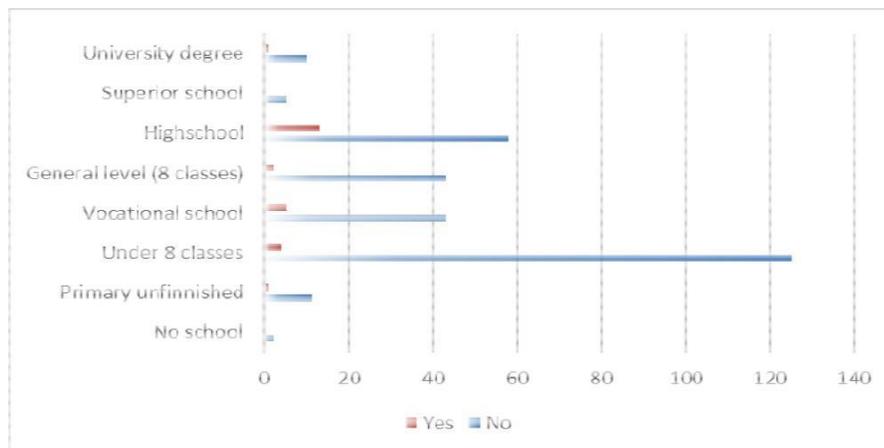


Figure 3. Level of acceptance of unemployment impact – education level variation

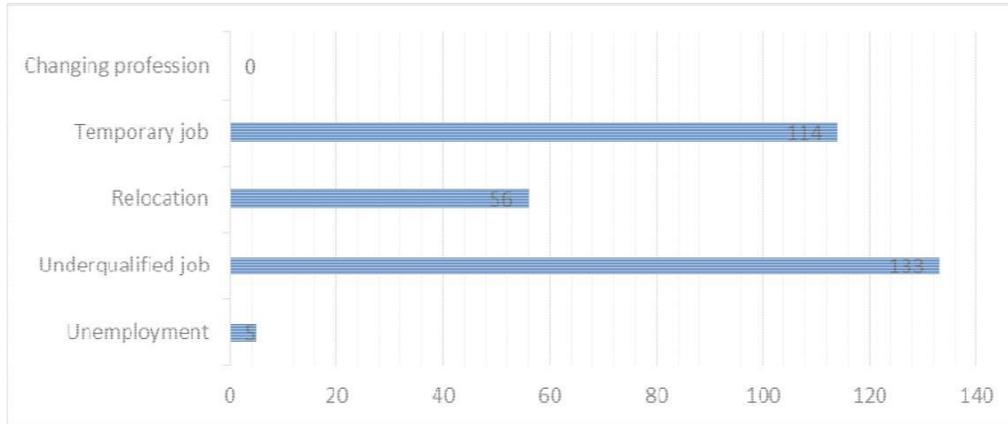


Figure 4. Alternative solutions to best job

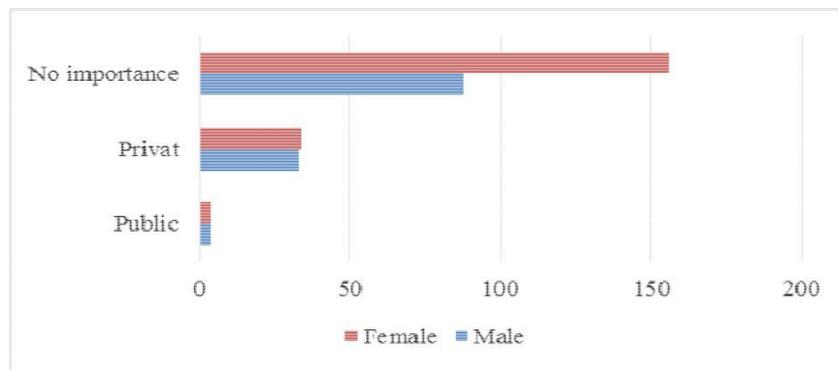


Figure 5. Preferred employer - variation on gender basis

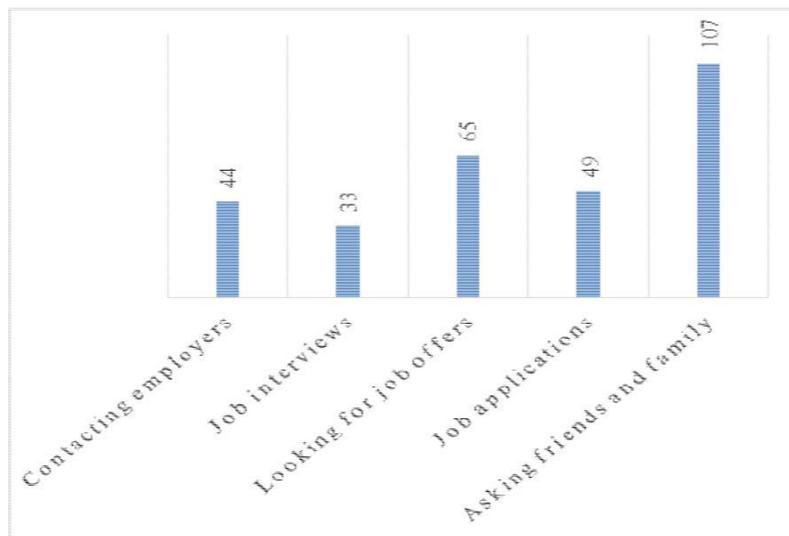


Figure 6. Actions in searching for a job

Most of respondents indicated as present action in search for job that they are asking among friends or relatives. Job applications or direct contact of employers are other actions (Fig. 6). According to education level, direct contact of employers is preferred mostly by high school

graduates (71%), while the upper educated persons are likely to prefer application system and participate to interviews (Fig. 7).

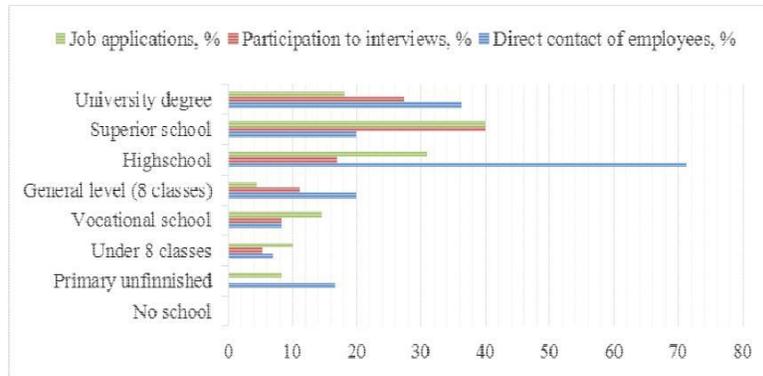


Figure 7. Job searching actions preferences upon educational level

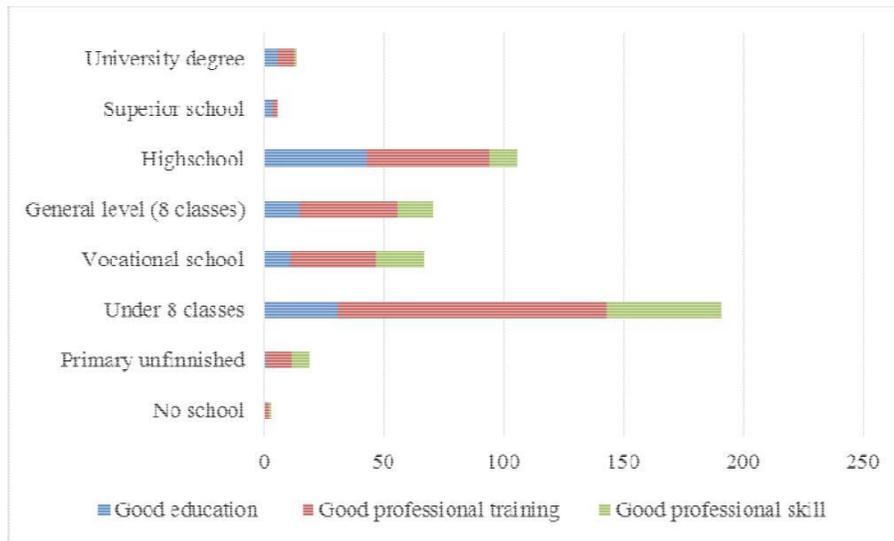


Figure 8. Strengths assessment upon education level

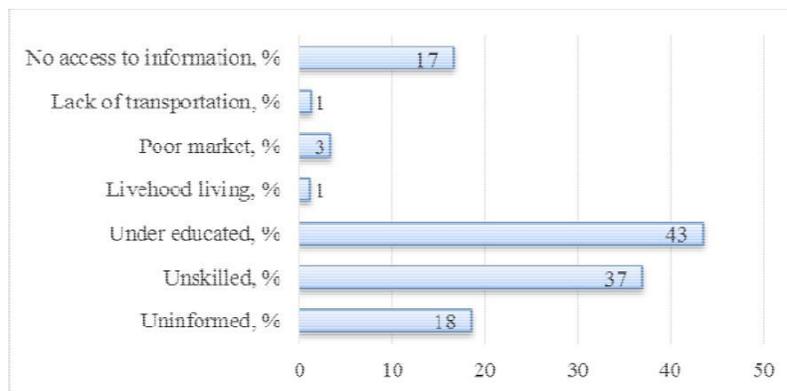


Figure 9. Threats and weaknesses assessment upon education level

Self-assessment (SWOT analysis)

Working skills (38%) and education (39%) are most nominated strengths, followed by good professional training level (23%). Agro potential as opportunity was the only one indicated by respondents (8%). Men are more likely to count on their professional skills (43%

compared to 23% of female respondents). Under 8 class's graduates are counting mainly on their professional skills, while high school graduates count on their professional training level and universities graduates on both their education and professional trading level (Fig. 8).

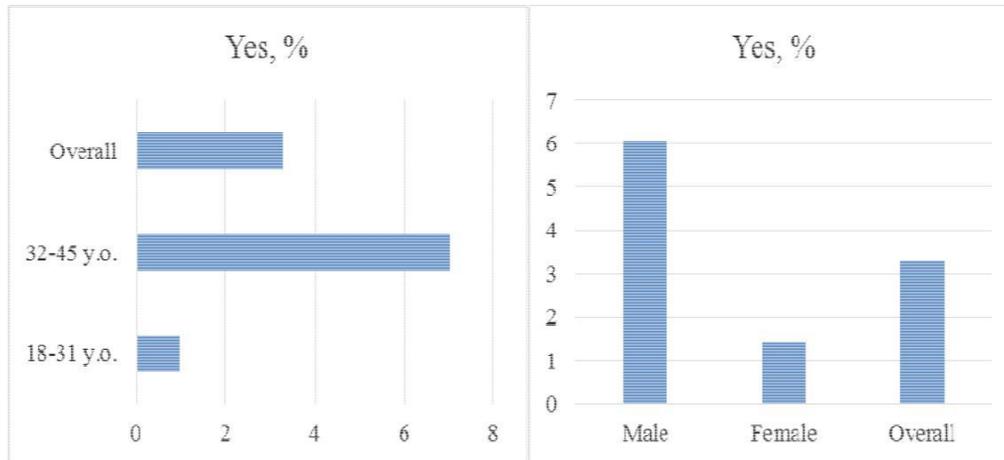


Figure 10. Poor market impact threat upon age and gender

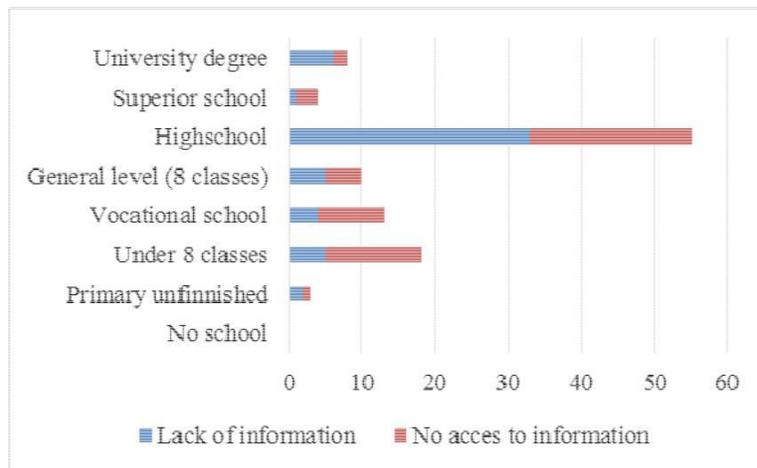


Figure 11. Information related impacts upon educational level

Main weaknesses indicated are insufficient education, 43% or lack of skills, 37%.

55 respondents indicated as threat low or no access to information, 11 pointed on poor market, while only 4 indicated lacks in transportation system (Fig. 9).

The poor market impact is likely more significant for persons over 31 years old (9 % of the group), over 9 times more compared to 18-31 years old age group, as well as men are more sensitive to it (Fig. 10).

Education level is influencing perception on information related items, weakness or threat. High school and university graduates are more sensitive to need for higher level of information assimilated, while lower graduates are more preoccupied on having more access facilities to information in their community (Fig. 11).

4. CONCLUSIONS

The study was conducted among a random rural population group from Giurgiu County. The age range was between 18 and 45 years old.

Attitude and expectations towards personal occupational status and self-assessment data were collected. Data showed a pessimistic expectation on finding a new or better job in the present economic situation among 59% of respondents.

People over 32 years old seem to be more sensitive on their unemployment situation and on the poor market threat impact on their chances to improve their occupational status.

Men are counting more on their professional skills, but they are more sensitive on poor

market threat, while women are more aware on their weakness generated by lack of skills. Education seem to have a significant influence on the perception on occupational status, actions taken for finding a job or SWOT self-assessment.

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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