
Presenting a Model of Sociological Factors Affecting Employment on the Attitude towards Unemployment Status of the Children of Devotees in Bushehr Province

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Abstract

Purpose: The aim of the present research was to present a model of sociological factors affecting employment on the attitude towards unemployment status of children of devotees.

Methodology: This was an applied correlational cross-sectional study. The study population included 835 unemployed children of devotees of Bushehr province in 2020.

The sample size was estimated 332 people who were selected by multi-stage cluster random sampling method and based on Cochran's formula. The data were collected using demographic information form and a researcher-made questionnaires of sociological factors of employment and attitude towards unemployment and were analyzed using Pearson correlation coefficients and path analysis in SPSS and AMOS software.

Findings: The results showed that the model of sociological factors affecting employment the attitude towards unemployment status in the children of devotees had a good fit. Also, all six sociological factors, including increasing young population, social class, government measures, social environment, self-employment bank facilities, and religious and cultural backgrounds, had a direct and significant effect on the attitude towards unemployment status in the children of devotees ($P < 0.05$).

Conclusion: The results revealed that the authorities in charge of planning jobs for the children of devotees can provide appropriate conditions to improve the sociological factors affecting employment in order to improve their attitude towards unemployment status.

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1. Introduction

The unemployment problem or dilemma exists in developed and developing countries, and its rate in both societies is higher among young people than among adults. Besides, the unemployment rate is higher in rural areas (25.6%) compared to urban areas (16.1%) as well as in 15-24-year-old age group (37.7%) compared to 25-44-year-old age group (22.4%). Therefore, the challenge of youth unemployment has been introduced as the most important and vital economic development challenges of the 21st century (Savari Mombeni, Khosravipour, Baradaran & Yazdanpanah, 2019). One of the problems and dilemmas of many societies is now employment, the psychological adverse effects of which include increased stress and depression, decreased self-esteem and self-confidence, changes in expectations and demands, and decreased health and quality of life (Pritadrajati, Kusuma & Saxena, 2021). In addition to fulfilling some of the basic psychological needs of humans, employment can cultivate the soul and body, establish human interactions, feel valuable, and increase competence and self-esteem (Lepetit et al., 2020). Unemployment is a multifactorial phenomenon that, although the economic factor has a significant impact on it, many factors such as the culture of society and the attitude towards unemployment can also be effective on it (Fountoulakis et al., 2020). The attitude towards unemployment refers to all the factors and variables that are somehow involved in creating, promoting and developing motivations and tendencies to employment (Dos Santos & Taugourdeau et al., 2021). Attitude is a cognitive, emotional or psychological state that is based on readiness to provide appropriate or inappropriate responses under different situations (Nikolova & Nikolaev, 2021). Attitude towards employment is a cognitive, emotional or psychological state of willingness or unwillingness to employment (Constantinescu & Nguyen, 2018). Moreover, there are generally three types of attitudes towards employment which include positive, negative and neutral attitude. In a positive attitude towards employment, in contrast to a negative attitude, people have a great desire and a positive tendency to do work, but in a neutral attitude, people have neither a positive attitude nor a negative attitude, and they only think of work as a task or an activity that they do for receiving wages (Wang & Li, 2021). Although there was a negative attitude towards employment long time ago, in recent decades, demographic changes, increasing the age of the workforce and the more strong presence of women in the workplace have had a significant impact on employment norms and have turned employment into a valuable activity (Clark & Lepinteur, 2019). In developing countries, compared to developed countries, the level of occupational and success is much lower, and the reluctance to engage in economic activity and production, despair, inability, and pessimism about the future are much more prevalent, which are more common in young people and women (Rose, Adams, Whitehead, Wickham, O'Brien, Hawker & et al, 2020).

There are many causes for unemployment, one of which is the conditions of the labor market, which is related to the supply and demand of workforce. Therefore, it is very important and necessary to investigate the factors affecting unemployment for planning purposes (Vasquez & Weretka, 2021), and these factors can be brought up under the general psychological and sociological factor. The psychological factor emphasizes individual characteristics at work and the sociological factor emphasizes job supply and demand. The first point of view emphasizes the change of salary, maximizing the chance of finding a job, strengthening the motivation to search for work, informing the person about the possibility of unemployment, how to deal with and adapt to unemployment and the culture of work and entrepreneurship; however, the second point of view thinks about the social change and believes that unemployment is a problem, which should be solved through political and social measures (Tabatabaei, Hajian & Zandipoor, 2013). To the best knowledge of the researcher, six important sociological factors affecting employment include increasing young population, social class, government measures, social environment, self-employment bank facilities, and religious and cultural backgrounds. One of the problems of unemployment and its high rate is the increasing young population and the lack of job opportunities. Iran is a country with a very high number of young people, and the lack of suitable employment conditions has

led to an increase in their unemployment rate (Hamed, 2009). Regarding the social class, it can be stated that having a job is of particular importance for the individual and the family according to their social class. Having a job appropriate to the social class indicates personality growth and entering adulthood (Christiano, Eichenbaum & Trabandt, 2021). The government measures can play an effective role in reducing or increasing the unemployment rate. The unemployment rate, which is calculated through the ratio of the number of unemployed to the active population, is considered an important factor in social welfare (Nademi & Moftakhari, 2018). Also, social environment can play an effective role in unemployment. For example, despite the incompatible natural and climatic conditions and the lack of suitable conditions in some provinces, such as Yazd, there is no unemployment problem. In contrast, despite the presence of various climates and favorable natural conditions, including four seasons in some provinces, such as Kermanshah, it is in the category of provinces with the most unemployment rate (Hamed, 2009). Self-employment facility is one of the government's approaches for job creation. Since unemployment is one of the main issues of human society, it can be stated that one of the appropriate solutions to reduce it is to use self-employment programs and plans or bank facilities. Since one of the factors that economists always emphasize on its role in reducing unemployment is fund and facility (Ghorbani & Hassani, 2018). Another sociological factor affecting unemployment is religious and cultural backgrounds, which are directly related to unemployment (Rezazadeh, Jafarinia & Gargin, 2020).

The results of previous studies on the effect of sociological factors affecting employment on the attitude towards unemployment status are reported below.

Pouratashi & Zamani (2021) concluded that the positive sociological effects of employment include four categories: personal and psychological, economic, knowledge and insight, and cultural and social. Khayati, Movahedi, Hejazi & Karimi (2020) stated that social psychological factors affecting employment included cultural norms and beliefs, trust and social security, social participation, revision of government policies, social cohesion, social-economic consequences, modification of ideas and beliefs, social interactions, social-cultural consequences, practical training and awareness-raising, social restrictions and social-political consequences. Rezazadeh et al. (2020) concluded that cultural, religious and social backgrounds had a significant impact on employment and unemployment. Etuknwa, Daniels & Eib (2019) concluded that factors such as the support of managers or supervisors and colleagues, positive attitude to employment, self-efficacy, young age and high education played an effective role in sustainable return to work. Tabatabaei et al. (2018) concluded in a research that Tehrani graduates are more employed than graduates of other cities and 71.2% of them were working in jobs related to their field of study. They also found no significant difference between the attitude of employed and unemployed graduates towards economic and social factors, while the employed graduates had a more positive attitude towards psychological and cultural factors than unemployed graduates. Remeikiene, Startiene & Vasauskaite (2011) concluded that psychological-sociological factors had a significant impact on self-employment. Akbari, Movahedi & Koochakian (2010) concluded in a research that factors such as student's specialized abilities, connection between universities with career centers, available job opportunities, education satisfaction, government employment policies, existing bank facilities and interest in jobs related to agricultural fields had the greatest impact on the attitude towards employment, respectively. Hamed et al. (2009) concluded that there is a significant positive correlation between related social factors (including family satisfaction, life satisfaction and attitude towards people and the future of the city) with young people's attitude to employment and were able to significantly explain it.

Studies show that unemployment is one of the most important issues facing today's societies and can be associated with various negative social, economic, political and cultural consequences. One of the most important factors that can affect the attitude towards unemployment is the sociological factors affecting employment. Although there have been researches on the sociological factors affecting employment, there has been no research that has presented a model of the sociological factors on the attitude towards the unemployment status.

Also, previous researches were mainly conducted on students and women, but not the children of devotees. Therefore, the current research was conducted with the aim of presenting a model of sociological factors affecting employment on the attitude towards unemployment status in the children of devotees.

2. Methodology

This was applied and correlational cross-sectional study. The study population included 835 children of devotees of Bushehr in 2020. According to Cochran's formula, the sample size was estimated 332 people who were selected by multi-stage cluster random sampling method. In this sampling method, first, three cities were randomly selected from different cities of the province, and then a number of regions were selected from each city, and all the unemployed children of devotees were selected as samples. Inclusion criteria included being 21-40 years old, having at least a diploma, having physical health, being unemployed, willingness to participate in the study, no addiction and consumption of psychiatric drugs, and living with the family. Exclusion criteria also included refusing to complete the data collection instruments and not responding to more than 10% of the items.

The research proposal was first approved, and the researcher referred to the Directorate General of Devotees Foundation and Devotees Affairs of Bushehr province and the list of devotees and the number of their children was prepared. When the statistics of unemployed children were prepared by the employment and entrepreneurship department of the relevant department, sampling was performed by referring to their places of residence. After stating the importance and necessity of the research and the role of the current research in increasing the awareness of the authorities and making more efforts to improve the conditions, they were persuaded to participate in the research. They were also assured about observance of ethical considerations, including confidentiality of personal information. Finally, they were asked to answer honestly to the research instruments described below.

Demographic information form: This form includes questions on gender, age, place of birth, level of education, marital and native status.

Researcher-made questionnaire of sociological factors of employment: Sociological factors of employment were investigated using this 14-item questions as follows: increasing the young population (2 questions), social class (3 questions), government measures (2 questions), social environment (2 questions), self-employment bank facilities (2 questions) and religious and cultural backgrounds (3 questions). The questions were scored based on a five-point Likert scale from very low (1), low (2), moderate (3), high (4) and very high (5). The possible score range is 1 and 5, and a score closer to five indicated more young population and more desirability (the remaining five factors). The content validity of the six sociological factors affecting employment was confirmed by ten experts and their reliability was calculated in the range 0.74 to 0.91 using Cronbach's alpha method.

Attitudes towards unemployment questionnaire: Attitudes towards unemployment was investigated using four questions. The questions were scored based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from very low (1), low (2), moderate (3), high (4), and very high (5). The unemployment attitude score was calculated based on the the average score of four questions and the possible score range was 1 and 5, and a higher score indicated a more negative attitude towards unemployment. The content validity of unemployment attitude questions was confirmed by ten 10 experts and its reliability was obtained by Cronbach's alpha method ($\alpha=0.86$).

The collected data were analyzed by Pearson correlation coefficients and path analysis in SPSS and AMOS software.

3. Findings

The demographic information of the children of devotees of Bushehr province, including gender, age, place of birth, level of education, marital status, and native status, is reported in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic information of devotees' children

Variable	Domains	Number	Percentage	Variable	Domains	Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	202	60.84	Level of education	Diploma	21	6.33
	Female	130	39.16		Associate degree	119	35.84
Age (years)	25-21	68	20.48		MA.	173	52.11
	30-26	218	65.66		Above bachelor's degree	19	5.72
	31-35	29	8.73	Marital status	Married	180	54.22
40-36	17	5.12	Single		152	45.78	
Place of birth	City	217	65.36	Native status	Native	136	40.96
	Village	115	34.64		Non-native	196	59.04

The number and percentage of demographic information of the children of devotees of Bushehr province can be observed in Table 1. The mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis of the sociological factors affecting employment and attitude towards unemployment among the devotees' children of Bushehr Province are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis of sociological factors affecting employment and attitude towards unemployment among the children of devotees

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Increasing young population	3.95	0.67	0.25	0.47
Social class	4.11	0.85	0.31	0.18
Government measures	4.19	0.74	0.68	0.42
Social environment	4.10	0.73	0.19	0.39
Self-employment bank facilities	3.78	0.81	0.75	0.61
Religious and cultural backgrounds	3.32	0.67	0.44	0.67
Attitude towards unemployment	3.98	0.57	0.12-	0.39-

The descriptive indices of sociological factors affecting employment and attitude towards the unemployment status of the children of devotees of Bushehr province can be observed in Table 2. Considering skewness and kurtosis values (range= -1 to +1), the normality assumption cannot be rejected for all of them. Coefficients of the correlation between sociological factors affecting employment with

attitudes towards unemployment status of the children of devotees of Bushehr province are reported in Table 3.

Table 3. Correlation coefficients of sociological factors affecting employment with the attitude towards the unemployment status in the children of devotees

Predictor variables/ criterion variable	Attitude towards unemployment	Significance	Result
Increasing young population	0.24	0.05<	Not rejected
Social class	0.52	0.05<	Not rejected
Government measures	0.42	0.05<	Not rejected
Social environment	0.35	0.05<	Not rejected
Self-employment bank facilities	0.50	0.05<	Not rejected
Religious and cultural backgrounds	0.45	0.05<	Not rejected

The coefficients of the correlation between sociological factors affecting employment with the attitude towards the unemployment status of the children of devotees in Bushehr province can be observed in Table 3. According to the correlation coefficients, there was a significant positive correlation between six sociological factors affecting employment, including increasing young population, social class, government measures, social environment, self-employment bank facilities and religious and cultural backgrounds with the attitude towards the unemployment in the children of devotees of Bushehr province ($P < 0.05$). Since a higher score in the unemployment attitude questionnaire indicates a more negative attitude towards unemployment status, therefore, with the increase of each of the six sociological factors affecting employment, levels of negative attitude towards unemployment decrease. The model of the effect of sociological factors affecting employment on the attitude towards the unemployment status in the children of the devotees of Bushehr province along with the standard paths coefficients are reported in Figure 1.

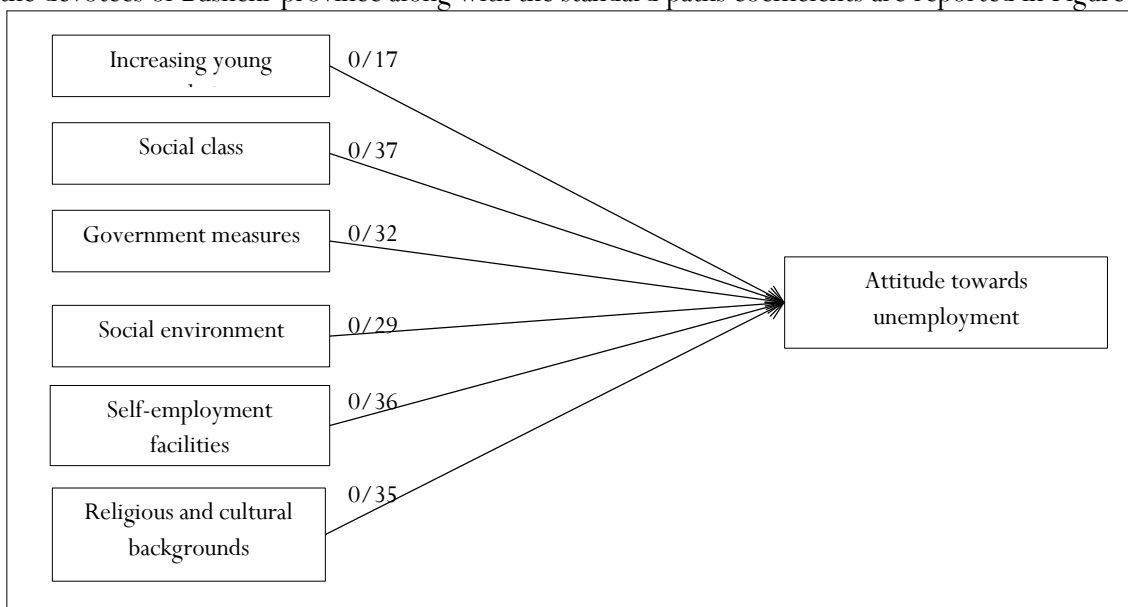


Figure 1. The model of effect of sociological employment factors affecting the attitude towards unemployment status in the children of devotees

the model of sociological employment factors affecting the attitude towards unemployment status among the children of devotees of Bushehr province as well as the standard paths coefficients can be observed in Figure 1. The appropriate fit of the above model is confirmed considering $\chi^2/df < 3$, RMSEA < 0.80 and GFI, AGFI, CFI and IFI > 0.90. The direct effects of the model of sociological employment factors affecting the attitude towards the unemployment status among children of Bushehr devotees are reported in Table 4.

Table 4. The effects of the model of sociological factors affecting employment on the attitude towards the unemployment status among children of devotees

Effects	Standard coefficients	Significance	Result
The effect of increasing young population on the unemployment attitude among children of devotees	0.17	0.05 <	Rejected
The effect of social class on the unemployment attitude among children of devotees	0.37	0.05 <	Rejected
The effect of the government measures on the unemployment attitude among children of devotees	0.32	0.05 <	Rejected
The effect of the social environment on the attitude towards the unemployment status in children of devotees	0.29	0.05 <	Rejected
The effect of self-employment bank facilities on the unemployment attitude among children of devotees	0.36	0.05 <	Rejected
The effect of religious and cultural backgrounds on the unemployment attitude among children of devotees	0.35	0.05 <	Rejected

The effect of the paths of the model of sociological factors affecting employment on the attitude towards the unemployment status of the children of devotees of Bushehr province can be observed in Table 4. According to the standard coefficients, the six sociological factors affecting employment, including increasing young population, social class, government measures, social environment, self-employment bank facilities and religious and cultural backgrounds had a direct and significant effect on the unemployment attitude of children of devotees of Bushehr province ($P < 0.05$).

4. Discussion

Unemployment is one of the current problems of developed and developing societies, and unemployment attitude can play an effective role in the unemployment rate. Therefore, the aim of the present research was to present a model of sociological factors affecting employment on the attitude towards the unemployment status in children of devotees.

The results of the current research showed that the six sociological factors affecting employment, including increasing young population, social class, government measures, social environment, self-employment bank facilities, and religious and cultural backgrounds, had a direct and significant effect on the attitude towards the unemployment status in children of devotees. Since a higher score in the unemployment attitude questionnaire indicates a more negative attitude towards unemployment, therefore, an increase in each of such six sociological factors leads to a decrease in negative attitude towards unemployment. There have been scattered researches on the sociological factors affecting employment and unemployment, and few studies have investigated its effect on the attitude towards unemployment, but it can be stated that the results of the current research are consistent with the results of the researches by Pouratashi & Zamani (2021) suggesting the individual, psychological, and economic, knowledge and insight and cultural and social categories as positive sociological effects of employment, Khayati et al. (2020) suggesting cultural norms and beliefs, trust and social security, social participation, revision of government policies, social cohesion, economic-social consequences, modification of opinions and social beliefs, social interactions, cultural-social consequences, practical and awareness-raising training, social restrictions and political-social consequences as social psychological factors affecting employment, Rezazadeh et al. (2020) suggesting the impact of cultural, religious and social backgrounds on employment and unemployment status, Etuknwa et al. (2019) suggesting the role of support factors of managers or supervisors and colleagues, positive employment attitude, self-efficacy, young age and high education in sustainable return to work, Tabatabaei et al. (2018) suggesting more positive attitude of employed graduates to psychological and cultural factors than unemployed graduates, Remeikiene et al. (2011) suggesting the significant impact of psychological-sociological factors on self-employment, Akbari et al. (2010) suggesting the impact of factors such as the student's specialized capabilities, connection between the university and career centers, available job opportunities, satisfaction with of level of knowledge during education, government employment policies, existing bank facilities and interest in jobs on the employment attitude and Hamed et al. (2009) suggesting positive and significant correlation between related social factors (including satisfaction with family, satisfaction with life and attitude towards people and the future of the city) with the employment attitude of young people.

When interpreting and explaining the direct and significant effect of six sociological factors affecting employment, including increasing young population, social class, government measures, social environment, self-employment bank facilities, and religious and cultural backgrounds on the attitude towards the unemployment status in children of devotees, it can be stated that lack of increase in job opportunities commensurate with the increase in the young population, has caused people to reduce and adjust their job expectations to some extent, therefore, the higher growth in young population leads to a more negative attitude towards unemployment in this population. Another factor is the social class. It indicates that the a higher and more favorable social class situation leads to a more negative attitude towards unemployment and thus more efforts to find a job. Another effective sociological factor is the government measures and shows that an increase in government employment measures leads to more negative attitude towards unemployment among young people. Undoubtedly, if government takes more measures and creates more jobs, people can find their favorite job more easily. Therefore, it is logical that with the increase of government measures, the negative unemployment attitude of the children of devotees will also increase. Also, the rich social environment with various workshops and factories make the job seekers make less effort to find jobs and get employed in a suitable job much faster. Living in a favorable social

environment in terms of employment opportunities is one of the wishes of all young people and their families, and the more favorable and wider the social environment is in terms of job characteristics, the lower the number of unemployed people and the more negative attitude towards unemployment among the young population in those environments will be. One of the government measures to reduce unemployment and create many jobs is to provide self-employment bank facilities, and the amount and payment of them can play an effective role in creating jobs. Undoubtedly, the more appropriate is the payment conditions, the more willing people are to receive the relevant bank facilities and create more jobs for themselves or even for one or more other people. Therefore, it is logical to reduce unemployment attitude by increasing amount of self-employment bank facilities. Moreover, religious and cultural backgrounds are another effective factor on the attitude towards unemployment. Having a rich religious and cultural background causes people to moderate and rationalize their needs and desires as much as possible and to have a tendency towards lower level jobs. Therefore, this characteristic encourages more efforts and desire among people, including the children of devotees, to seek their job and choose a job from among the available options. Therefore, strengthening religious and cultural backgrounds can increase the negative unemployment attitude.

The present research was conducted on the children of devotees of Bushehr province and its results cannot be generalized to the children of devotees of other provinces. Another limitation of the current study was disregard of gender or other demographic variables, for example, level of education. Therefore, it is suggested that the present research should be conducted on the children of devotees of other provinces and the results should be analyzed separately on male and female children, or even the basis of bachelor's degree or lower and beyond it. It is also suggested to investigate the effect of other effective employment factors on the unemployment attitude, for example, psychological or individual factors affecting employment. Undoubtedly, further research on different angles of unemployment attitude can play an effective role in reducing unemployment. According to the results of the present study, it is suggested that authorities of the above foundation provide the appropriate conditions to improve the sociological factors affecting employment in order to improve attitude towards employment of the children of devotees. For this purpose, families and policy makers can provide the appropriate conditions to improve social class, social environment and religious and cultural backgrounds, and the government can also increase its measures and self-employment bank facilities.

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