

# MANAGING GRADUATE UNEMPLOYMENT IN EMERGING ECONOMIES: CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE SKILLS MISMATCH AND OVERSUPPLY THESES

*Seth Oppong<sup>1</sup> & Paul R. Sachs<sup>2</sup>*

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## **Summary**

*Graduate unemployment and its management are challenges that leaders of the economy, managers and policy analysts grapple with on a daily basis. As a result, economic leaders and managers of economies have sought theoretical explanations to guide their management strategies of graduate unemployment. There are two competing theses to explain the problem: skills mismatch and skills oversupply. However, due to the seeming simplicity of basic tenets and policy implications of the skills mismatch thesis, many governments and laypersons have blamed graduate unemployment on it. This paper argues that policy solutions based entirely on skills mismatch may trigger another form of unemployment, oversupply of skilled graduates. Furthermore, oversupply of graduates is more likely to be the significant cause of graduate unemployment than skills mismatch. An effective policy, therefore, is one that takes into account interventions to stimulate demand for labor while at the same time manages the supply of skilled labor. Such an approach will provide more sustainable solutions to graduate unemployment. In addition, the potential contributions of psychologists in the efforts towards the management of graduate unemployment are also outlined.*

**Key words:** *Graduate unemployment, skills mismatch thesis, skills oversupply thesis, emerging economies, applied psychology.*

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<sup>1</sup> Seth Oppong, MPhil., PhD Candidate, Department of Psychology, University of Ghana, Legon, Sam Jonah School of Business, African University College of Communication, Accra, Ghana, Email: oppon.seth@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> Paul R. Sachs, PhD, MBA, Executive Director, NHS Human Services – Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA, USA, Email: PSachs@nhsonline.org

## 1. BACKGROUND

Education is an essential and critical element of economic transformation. For instance, Oppong (2013) documented evidence that demonstrates a strong relationship between higher education and economic growth both theoretically and empirically. Moreover, the relationship between higher education and economic growth is bi-directional.

Kovačević and Sisek (2007, p.139) reported that “the intellectual capital and investment in knowledge and education are the main factors of economic and social development, and of increasing competitive advantage.” Thus, they argued that the main resources for creating value in an economy are no longer soil, physical labor, equipment, tools and factories, but rather intellectual assets. Therefore, despite the bidirectional relationship between higher education and economic growth, it is understandable that governments would invest first in higher education with the hope that the expected output will be sustainable economic development and continued investment in education. (Oppong, 2013).

However, the 2008 global economic recession revealed that the expected impact of higher education on the economy may be more prominent under conditions of economic expansion than during economic contraction or financial crisis. During economic contraction, the economy does not grow enough to create jobs to match the rate of turning out graduates. The 2008 global financial crisis led to high unemployment in many nations across the globe.

For the purposes of this paper, graduate unemployment is described as the number or the proportion of degree holders (graduate and post-graduate) in a given economy who are capable and willing to work, but are unable to find jobs. Graduate unemployment is a challenge that most economies are facing under the current economic circumstances. For instance, in their study of the relationship between global financial crisis and unemployment in China, Zhou and Lin (2009) reported that nearly 6 million students were expected to graduate in 2009 but their unemployment rate was estimated to be greater than 30%. Given the economic crisis at the time, they expected that the problem would worsen. They projected that approximately 2 million graduates (many of whom are postgraduates, even doctoral graduates) would not find jobs.

The problem is not limited to China. The International Labour Organization (ILO, 2012, p.7) reported that nearly “75 million youth are unemployed around the world, an increase of more than 4 million since 2007” and attributed this outcome partly to the financial crisis. Ghana’s Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare (MOESW, 2012) reported that Ghana’s unemployment rate increased from 2.8% in 1984 to a high rate of 10.4% in 2000 before declining to 3.6 % in 2005/2006. However, in the post-2008 economic crisis period, Ghana’s graduate unemployment is estimated at 50.8% (UGAG, 2012).

Borjas (2005) describes four ways in which workers may end up unemployed:

- Job losers (workers who lose their jobs due to layoffs or plant closing)
- Job leavers

- Reentrants (job seekers who unsuccessfully try to reenter the labor market after spending some time in the non-market sector)
- New entrants (new job seekers including recent university graduates)

Overall, new entrants and job losers constitute the major portion of graduate unemployment. However, in emerging economies, new entrants alone are the most common source of graduate unemployment. For instance, in Ghana, Unemployed Graduates Association of Ghana (UGAG) has been formed to tackle the continuous increase in unemployment of school leavers, especially university and polytechnic graduates in Ghana. Between 30th August and 5th September, 2012, UGAG estimated, as noted above, that the unemployment rate for over 88,000 graduates from universities, polytechnics and other tertiary institutions was 50.8% (UGAG, 2012).

Similarly, it is estimated that “as many as 50% of graduates who leave Ghanaian universities and polytechnics will not find jobs for two years after their national service, and 20% of them will not find jobs for three years” (Aryeetey, 2011, cited in Owusu-Ansah and Poku, 2013, p. 212). Thus, the focus of this paper is on graduate unemployment largely due to new entrants.

To explain the occurrence and profess solutions to graduate unemployment, two principal theses have been advocated, namely: *skills mismatch* (structural unemployment) and *skills oversupply* (cyclical unemployment) (Oppong, 2013). Hu (2013) and Memon (2010) argued that skills mismatch rather than oversupply of university graduates accounts for unemployment in China and the UK respectively. The ILO (2012) has made similar argument in explaining graduate unemployment.

In a similar vein, Oluyomi and Adedeji (2012) advanced the view that graduate unemployment in Nigeria was due to skill mismatch among Nigerian university graduates. They estimated that nearly 60.6% of Nigerian graduates did not possess the skills required by employers. Similarly, Boateng and Ofori-Sarpong (2002), on the basis of the skill mismatch thesis, estimated the demand and supply of skilled workers in Ghana. In the case of Ghana, skills mismatch has been blamed for high graduate unemployment (Boateng & Ofori-Sarpong, 2002; Owusu-Ansah & Poku, 2012; Oppong, 2013).

On the other hand, Bowman (2010) has blamed oversupply of graduates as responsible for graduate unemployment. He argues that a policy remedy is for the UK government to restrict the supply of university graduates. Similarly, Center for College Affordability and Productivity (CCAP, 2010) has also argued that American colleges are turning out graduates at a rate greater than the rate at which the labor markets are creating jobs for such graduates. A policy which restricts the supply of graduates may not be politically tenable and is also short-sighted for emerging economies.

In the ensuing paragraphs, both the skills mismatch and skills oversupply theses are analyzed. Based on this analysis, new proposals for addressing graduate unemployment are suggested. The new proposals are recommended particularly for Ghana, a lower middle-income country along the west coast of Africa, though they may be relevant for policy makers of other developing or emerging economies.

## 2. CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE SKILLS MISMATCH THESIS

The crux of the skills mismatch thesis is that graduate unemployment is due to a gap between skills demanded by employers and skills supplied or possessed by graduates (Borjas, 2005; Hu, 2010; Memon, 2010; Oluyomi & Adedeji, 2012; Oppong, 2013). As a result, employers are only able to hire those who possess the skills they need, leaving the other graduates still in search of jobs. It can be deduced that graduate unemployment results whenever the number of skilled graduates supplied is higher than the number of skilled graduates needed by employers in a given economy. Thus, when graduate unemployment is due to skills mismatch, employers are expected to experience shortage of skilled employees.

A policy implication that flows from this thesis is that governments should provide training programs that would equip such displaced workers with the types of skills required by employers (Borjas, 2005). Others suggest that higher education institutions should develop curricula that would equip graduates with skills needed in the labor market thus creating more marketable educational programs (Oppong, 2013).

It is also argued that the graduates themselves are to blame for unemployment due to their pursuing non-marketable courses of study while in the university. If so there should be career counselling that guides students in the choice of programs of study at the university level (Oppong, 2013). Similarly, it can be deduced from this thesis that government social policy should aim at identifying the manpower/human resource (HR) needs of the economy and support training of graduates to fulfill these needs. Thus, the number of graduates trained in any given program of study should be determined by HR needs of the economy.

The skills mismatch thesis is simple and offers solutions that are logically derived from it. However, this thesis has its shortcomings. Oppong (2013) has criticized the skills mismatch thesis for being a possible precondition for the skills oversupply thesis or cyclical unemployment:

... if by pursuing the “hot” subjects is the solution to structural unemployment, then that same solution will become the cause of cyclical unemployment. An illustration with Ghana’s banking sector will suffice. With the influx of foreign direct investment into the banking sector, many universities responded by developing and implementing customer-driven curricula for banking and finance. Once the banking sector reaches its maturity, there will be no or little further investment leading to lack of capacity to absorb new graduates with banking and finance qualification; this will create an oversupply of graduates with such competence and will eventually lead to cyclical unemployment. In fact, this is already happening as the absorption rate of banking and finance students has declined steadily over the past five years (Oppong, 2013, p. 99).

Another way to examine the mismatch thesis is to compare the demand for labor and supply of labor. For instance, Ghanaian universities and the other tertiary institutions turn out 68,000 - 70,000 graduates annually (Business & Finance, 2011; Hardi, 2012). However, according to the 2009 report by the Youth Employment Network (YEN)

and International Youth Foundation (IYF), the projected demand for labor in Ghana's private sector in 2013 was estimated to be 31,469 (estimated workforce size of 19,340 and new vacancies to be created estimated at 12,129). A gap analysis suggests that between 36,531 and 38,531 graduates will be unemployed because they are in excess of what the labor market can absorb. These unemployment numbers may even be an underestimate given that many new vacancies estimated above did not require a university degree. It is important to note that public sector jobs were not included and this may reduce expected unemployment numbers. However, public sector employment was frozen within the same period in Ghana (Mubarak, 2009; Graphic Online, 2011, Ghana News Agency, 2014).

Despite this apparent shortfall, even with labor supply and job availability growing at the current rate there will not be enough jobs for graduates over a five-year period. Therefore, it is inaccurate to say that graduate unemployment is due to a skill-mismatch. In fact, there are simply not enough jobs even for those with the requisite skills.

Ghana is an emerging economy and given its recent economic growth rates job opportunities may grow at a faster pace than in an established economy. Therefore, the skills mismatch thesis is even weaker in its ability to explain the labor market situation. Even if all the graduates possess the required skills there are not enough jobs for all of them. Thus fixing the skills mismatch problem will only lead to skills oversupply.

Another limitation associated with the skills mismatch thesis is the assumption that the economy will grow to absorb the supply of the skilled graduates required. However, the illustration by Oppong (2013) above provides evidence that in reality the economy does not necessarily expand infinitely to absorb the number of skilled graduates it needs. Center for College Affordability and Productivity (CCAP, 2010) made a similar argument that the rate of graduate supply does not match the rate of growth of the American economy. Thus, any policy implication derived from this thesis must also include interventions to stimulate demand for the skilled graduates. Anything short of this stimulus will perpetuate the mismatch between supply of trained graduates and the demand for them.

Others suggest that the university curricula should prepare the graduate for self-employment (Owusu-Ansah & Poku, 2012). Those who believe in such policy blame the graduates for not doing enough to help themselves out of the current plight (Oppong, 2013). In fact, however, many of the graduates do not have the basic requirements for starting their own business, namely: social capital (contacts), human capital (experience and knowledge), financial capital (funding), and psychological capital (resilience). Similarly, Wadhwa, Aggarwal, Holly and Salkever (2009) reported that the average and median age of US company founders when they started their current companies was 40 years. Again, Wadhwa et al (2009) reported US entrepreneurs tend to come from middle-class or upper-lower-class backgrounds, and were better educated and more entrepreneurial than their parents. It can be derived from Wadhwa et al's (2009) finding that having middle-class or upper-lower-class backgrounds and better education imply having contacts, experience and knowledge, and capital.

Similar findings have been documented in emerging economies like Ghana. Aryeetey and Ahene (2005), studying a sample of 200 Ghanaian firms established between 1950 and 2004, reported that only 66 (33%) of the business owners were between 20 and

39 years old, with the majority aged 40 years and above. Interestingly, those aged between 20 and 29 represented only 8.5% of the sample and only 25.76% of those aged between 20 and 39 while those aged between 30 and 39 constituted only 24.5% of the sample.

When the age of the business owners is considered in relations to the size of their firms, another interesting picture emerges. While only 4.55% of those aged between 30 and 39 and 54.55% of those aged between 40 and 49 owned firms that employed between 20 and 30 workers, only 17.33% of those in their 40s and 52% of those in the 30s owned firms that employed between 1 and 5 workers. These findings, indeed, corroborate Wadhwa et al's (2009) findings that most entrepreneurs start their first business when they are 40 years.

However, at the 62nd Annual New Year School of the University of Ghana, Prof. Kwasi Yankah, the then Pro-Vice Chancellor of the university, reported that students now enter the university at 17 or 18 and complete their studies at 21 on average (University of Ghana, 2011). This is notwithstanding the fact that many social media entrepreneurs are under 40 years old (Wadhwa et al, 2009).

Aryeetey and Ahene (2005) further reported that 65.5% of their sample had at least a senior high school education; they also documented that whereas only 25% of the sample established their firms after the completion of their post-secondary education and 70.5% of the sample were either salaried workers, apprentices or participated in other forms of employment. They also reported that 99% used their personal savings and borrowings from friends and relatives to start their businesses. In the light of this evidence, can we expect 21-year graduates fresh from the universities to engage in meaningful self-employment without adequate support?

Wadhwa et al's (2009) and Aryeetey and Ahene's (2005) findings corroborate the position of this paper that social capital (contacts), human capital (experience and knowledge), financial capital (funding), and psychological capital (resilience) are key to successful self-employment. This means that the calls by policy makers and government officials in emerging economies like Ghana that self-employment by graduates is a viable policy is fallacious and worse than that a contributor to perpetual social exclusion of graduates with lower socio-economic status. Given the nature of the marketplace and the current business, regulatory and information infrastructure of a developing economy, it is middle-aged rather than young graduates who are best candidates for self-employment incentives.

### **3. CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE SKILLS OVERSUPPLY THESIS**

The basic tenet of the skills oversupply thesis is that graduate unemployment arises out of having excess skilled labor that the economy cannot absorb (Borjas, 2005; Bowman, 2010; CCAP, 2010; Oppong, 2013). Stated otherwise, unemployment occurs whenever the number of employees required by employers is less than the number of graduates supplied or turned out by the higher education institutions. This thesis suggests that when graduate unemployment is due to skills oversupply, job seekers experience shortage of job openings while most employers are able to fill their job vacancies.

It is important to note that this thesis assumes that markets for goods and services can expand infinitely.

Possible policy implications have been previously outlined. For instance, Oppong (2013, p.99) argued that:

Traditionally, the approach for tackling unemployment has always blamed the supply side of labour (graduates and tertiary institutions), thereby blaming the victims (graduates) for their plight. If unemployment is due to non-expanding economy, then a possible solution may lie in simultaneously stimulating the demand for labour through investor-friendly policies, stimulating local consumption through reduced income tax (leading to increased disposal income), and encouraging regionalization and/or internationalization of Ghanaian organizations.

Oppong (2013) further suggests that the regionalization policy (for example, increased export to and establishment of subsidiaries or agencies of Ghanaian firms in the sub-region and the African continent) will absorb the excess supply of graduates while this absorption will continue to stimulate domestic production. He argues that the high demand for goods and services through both domestic and external (but largely African) markets will then trigger demand for labor. Increased demand will support increased production of commodities and employees to manufacture these commodities to meet the increased demand (Oppong, 2013).

Importantly, Oppong expressed the caveat that for the industry to be stimulated it should 1) be labor-intensive (mechanized agriculture, assembly line jobs, textile, education and other services, etc.), 2) be Ghanaian-owned, 3) inflation should be controlled, and 4) Ghanaian managers should plough back their profits to the country instead of saving money with Euro-American banks (Oppong, 2013). However, it is worth noting that stimulating demand for skilled graduates has not been an easy one, given the limited success with which countries have addressed the economic crisis so far.

Apart from Ghana, Bowman (2010) argued that if the UK government had not skewed market incentives for school-leavers by subsidizing university education, there would not be a situation in which one out of eleven graduates are unemployed in the UK. Though Bowman (2010) did not provide any specific policy direction based on his findings, it appears he would favor a reduced subsidy from the UK government for university education, thereby limiting access to higher education. As noted earlier in this paper, such a policy is short-sighted in developing nations. For instance, it seems to suggest that the poor should be denied access to higher education, a situation that will deny society access to some of its best talents. It also presumes that the only goal of higher education is to develop a specific job skill. In fact, higher education also develops more generalizable skills including communication, platform skills and critical thinking all of which are important in a variety of work settings.

Despite the limitations of the skills oversupply thesis, graduate unemployment in emerging economies appears more likely the result of fewer available jobs than to any mismatch between skills possessed by graduates and those required in the labor market. It is evident that even when the skills mismatch is corrected, there are still not enough jobs for every graduate.

## 4. REVISED POLICY PROPOSALS

Against the above analysis, it is suggested that any expanding economy that does not invest in creating a labor force to supply the needed skills is likely to create its own employment crisis (skills mismatch or structural unemployment). Therefore, policies should emphasize stimulating the demand for labor without losing sight of managing the supply of labor. Taking this two pronged approach will minimize the change that fixing one problem perpetuates another problem thereby creating a vicious cycle. These policy options are as follows:

### Stimulating Demand

- Encouragement of entrepreneurial activities among the middle-aged
- Investor-friendly policies to create a conducive environment for doing business
- Accountable and transparent corporate and national governance
- Re-evaluation of corporate and personal income tax guidelines to stimulate and support employment.
- Internationalization of firms
- Establishment of effective venture capitals
- Governments should encourage change in the structure of ownership of business from sole-proprietorship to partnership and limited liabilities.

### Managing Supply

- Career counselling
- Higher education institutions should offer marketable courses
- Pedagogical changes to focus on skill acquisition in addition to knowledge acquisition
- Governments should offer skills training to the unemployed
- Labor market data to guide admissions at the higher education institutions
- Employers should be encouraged to invest in HRD activities

The integrated policy options outlined should be corroborated by sound empirical study of the nature of unemployment within the country consistent with the structuration theory (Giddens, 1984; Turner, 1986, Lasmal, 2012). Structuration theory, according to Giddens's (1984), holds that there is a complex interrelationship between human agency (human capacity) and structure (social institutions) which influence human actions and social outcomes. As a result, the revised policy proposals address human capacity issues and institutional issues. These policy options are not meant to be exhaustive, but rather illustrative.

### *Stimulating Demand for Labor*

As suggested earlier, emerging economies should formulate policies that emphasize stimulating demand for labor in the private sector. Based on the theoretical and empirical literature, this paper recommends that the middle-aged or persons aged 40 years and above within the economy should be encouraged to engage in entrepreneurial activities. This goal can be achieved through social engineering via positive media portrayals of self-employment as a respectable and honored contribution to society. Furthermore, it is important that government should also formulate policies that both encourage and attract such persons to start out their businesses.

Related to the above is the formulation of investor-friendly policies generally to attract foreign direct investments and the middle-aged within the economy to start their own businesses (Oppong, 2013). The goal of such policies is to create an investor-friendly business environment which will enable existing businesses to grow and attract new ones. Associated with the investor-friendly policy is the establishment of venture capitals to support domestic firms and selected foreign ones. For instance, such a venture capital fund has been established in Ghana to support firms. Furthermore, encouraging entrepreneurs to change the ownership structure of their firms to limited liability companies and publicly listed companies will ensure expansion of such companies which can help absorb more labor than such companies are able to do currently. Investments of these kinds can ensure that the economy grows to absorb any excess labor in the country.

Increased production or service delivery without corresponding increase in consumption will only shrink the economy in the end. As a result, tackling the canker of unemployment will also require stimulating demand for goods and services produced within the domestic economy; this can be achieved through adjusting the income tax and managing inflation (Oppong, 2013). Further consumption can be stimulated through encouraging domestic firms to do business in international markets; this will ensure that excess supply of goods and services will be absorbed to incentivize further production within the economy which will continue to stimulate demand for labor. Thus, the internationalization policy option compels corporate leaders to think of their entire continents or even the entire world as their marketplace rather than small countries, regardless of how big it may seem. It is worth noting that the benefits of these policy options will be realized only when there is good governance and respect for the rule of law.

### *Managing Supply of Skilled Graduates*

In managing the supply side of the unemployment equation, career counselling is key. While in school, students should receive career guidance and counselling to educate them about sectors of the economy which are expected to grow and the rate of such growth. The goal of counseling is to assist them in selecting suitable programs of study. Counseling should be supported by labor market data and related skills in order to guide students to pursue their dream careers while being mindful of the marketability of their chosen courses of study.

Higher education institutions must also be encouraged to offer courses of study and manage student admission guided by sound labor market data. In this way, higher education institutions will equip graduates with skills that are needed based on both current and future manpower needs of a given economy (Boateng & Ofori-Sarpong, 2002; Oppong, 2013). Doing so will improve the educational institutions' performance thereby attracting more students and high quality faculty. However, it needs to be emphasized that universities are not training centers that prepare persons for specific occupations (Oppong, 2013). As a result, skills acquisition at the university should focus on generic skills that employers expect job seekers to possess. For instance, Boateng and Ofori-Sarpong (2002) identified communication skills, analytical skills, personal attributes, and computing skills. Thus, universities can focus on inculcating in the students these and other relevant generic skills and leave job-specific or occupation-specific skills acquisition to employers.

Higher education institutions should be in the forefront of promoting evidence based pedagogical approaches that focus on skills acquisition rather than simply on knowledge acquisition. Thus, teaching methods (including compulsory industrial attachment), teaching and learning materials, and assessment practices should all be modified to create conditions for students to develop skills. Again, governments should also develop training centers at the existing higher education institutions to inject the unemployed with the needed skills.

At the same time, training does not just occur in the educational institution. On the job training is a key part of a person's adaptation to a given work environment. Therefore, employers should invest in their human resources or employees through their orientation and training programs within the workplace. What is striking is the fact that many of those who complain about recent graduates not possessing the skills needed were among those who benefited from employer-initiated training that raised them to their current level of proficiency (Oppong, 2013).

There are some who will argue that the economic policy recommendations offered in this paper are misguided or simplistic given that the authors are psychologists. To this comment, the authors note that one of two recipients of the 2002 Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences was a psychologist, Daniel Kahneman, PhD, for his brilliant and enduring work on biases in decision making (Maccoun, 2002; Smith, 2002; Xhelili-Krasniqi & Shiroka-Pula, 2012; Winerman, 2012; Wilson, 2013). The other psychologist, Amos Tversky, PhD, who conducted the research that won the prize, died in 1996 (Maccoun, 2002; Smith, 2002; Winerman, 2012; Wilson, 2013). Though the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences does not award prizes posthumously, Tversky was acknowledged in the announcement (Maccoun, 2002; Smith, 2002; Wilson, 2013).

Social scientists of all fields examine the complexities of human behavior and the interaction between human behavior and the environment. Thus, the focus of this paper and the recommendations offered are not at all misguided. In fact, Inman (2014, para. 1) reports that "Economics students from 19 countries have joined forces to call for an overhaul of the way their subject is taught, saying the dominance of narrow free-market theories ... harms the world's ability to confront challenges". Further, the incoming chief economist of the Bank of England, Andy Haldane, is reported to have also ad-

vanced the view that “economists had forgotten the links between their subject and other social science disciplines, which can give a broader and more accurate picture of how an economy works” (Inman, 2014, para. 7). Thus, if the recommendations are found to be wanting, the authors encourage their colleagues to submit the recommendations to further empirical test and improve on them.

The fact remains that effective and informed management of education and labor policies are critical for the development of economically emerging nations and for economically well-established nations. Given the increasing pace of change in the world, current college students are told that the occupation and career that they ultimately work in may not even yet be invented. Even for existing occupations, the practice of that occupation is likely to be vastly different in the decades ahead than it is now. Thus, it is critically important that educational policy and labor policy be closely linked. Better to do so in a planned way than leave the linkage to chance.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This paper reviewed the extant theoretical and empirical literature in respect of graduate unemployment. Specifically, the two main competing theses of skills mismatch and skills oversupply were explored. On the basis of the reviewed literature, it can be concluded that deriving policy options from only one of the two perspectives may be a fiasco in the long-run. In spite of that, policy emphasis should be on increasing job availability to match the increasing number of graduates in search of jobs. Thus, it is concluded that governments and other social development partners should re-examine their perspectives on graduate unemployment and its management in the light of the analysis presented above. Attempt was also made to outline the contributions psychologists can make towards the management of graduate unemployment in every economy.

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## UPRAVLJANJE NEZAPOSLENOŠĆU VISOKOOBRAZOVANIH OSOBA U GOSPODARSTVIMA U NASTAJANJU: KRITIČKA ANALIZA TEZA O NESRAZMJERU VJEŠTINA I NJIHOVOJ PREVELIKOJ PONUDI

Seth Oppong<sup>3</sup> & Paul R. Sachs<sup>4</sup>

### Sažetak

*Nezaposlenost visokoobrazovanih osoba i njezino upravljanje izazovi su s kojima se ekonomski vođe, menadžeri i analitičari politika svakodnevno suočavaju. Stoga se traže teoretska objašnjenja koja bi služila kao smjernice za strategije upravljanja nezaposlenošću visokoobrazovanih osoba. Postoje dvije suprotstavljene teze kojima se objašnjava problem: nesrazmjer vještina i njezina prevelika ponuda. Međutim, zbog prividne jednostavnosti osnovnih načela i implikacija teze o nesrazmjeru vještina, mnoge vlade i laici upravo nju postavljaju kao razlog za nezaposlenost visokoobrazovanih osoba. Ovaj rad predlaže da rješenja za politike koja se isključivo temelje na tezi o nesrazmjeru vještina mogu dovesti do drugog oblika nezaposlenosti, a to je prevelika ponuda kvalificiranih visokoobrazovanih osoba. Nadalje, prevelika ponuda visokoobrazovanih osoba vjerojatniji je razlog nezaposlenosti visokoobrazovanih osoba od nesrazmjera vještina. Djelotvorna politika je stoga ona koja uzima u obzir intervencije kojima se stimulira potražnja za radnom snagom, dok se istovremeno upravlja ponudom kvalificirane radne snage. Takav pristup pruža održiva rješenja za nezaposlenost visokoobrazovanih osoba. Uz navedeno, daje se obris doprinosa psihologa u odnosu na upravljanje nezaposlenošću visokoobrazovanih osoba.*

**Ključne riječi:** nezaposlenost visokoobrazovanih osoba, teza o nesrazmjeru vještina, teza o prevelikoj ponudi vještina, gospodarstva u nastajanju, primijenjena psihologija.

**JEL klasifikacija:** J64

<sup>3</sup> Seth Oppong, MPhil., doktorand, Department of Psychology, University of Ghana, Legon, Sam Jonah School of Business, African University College of Communication, Accra, Ghana, Email: oppon.seth@gmail.com

<sup>4</sup> Paul R. Sachs, PhD, MBA, izvršni direktor, NHS Human Services – Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA, USA, Email: PSachs@nhsonline.org