

UNDEREMPLOYMENT STEMMING FROM HAPHAZARD URBANIZATION

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ABSTRACT

Since the times immemorial it is a tendency of human beings to look at the towns and cities for a superior career stature and well-paid occupations. The crowd pulling factors of these urban landscapes are strong economy, plenty of opportunities and a sophisticated lifestyle which the rural front doesn't offer. However, the reversal of trend i.e. people started to prefer the small towns or villages over the metro cities is throwing a new challenge to many stakeholders of the society including the administration. The job opportunities created by both service and manufacturing sectors at the urban arena are gradually losing the glory. The smaller towns, once overshadowed by their larger counterparts, are now emerging as attractive hubs for professionals and job seekers. In this paper the critical reasons are discussed viz. why people started choosing small cities offering small jobs and embracing the underemployment rather than going for better occupations with well pay at metros and cities. The eco system at urban front is an independent variable whereas the underemployment is considered as dependent variable. The paper discusses in detail 'why people are accepting underemployment' and 'how the rapid urbanization pushing personnel towards the underemployment' with the support of case studies. Here the parameter for deciding the underemployment is 'hours or days of work availability' and 'the utilization of skilled possessed by individuals' obviously affects the financial strength of the individual. The discussions in the paper highlights the lacunas in urbanization which is in fact creating the underemployment instead of better employment for those equipped with academics and skills. The observations showcased in the paper will be handy for the people to plan their careers in a strategic way. Simultaneously the game changing elements are revealed to the advantage of prospective entrepreneurs and established industry players.

Keywords: Urban, Underemployment, Economy, Growth, Wellbeing.

Introduction

Underemployment is a complex and complicated situation that affects individuals, employers, and even societies across the world. In detail underemployment refers to an undesirable condition where individuals work in jobs that do not utilize their skills, education, or experience to their full potential.

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Economists deliberate that underemployment can create a disorder both at macroeconomic and microeconomic equations. At the macro level, there is cyclical underemployment, reflecting an excess supply of labour hours, that arises during an economic downturn. At the micro level, underemployment occurs when one's hours are constrained to fewer hours than desired. Structural sources of underemployment reflect changes in the industry and occupation composition of jobs, technology, labour market institutions, population demographics, or trends in labour costs. Employers may create more part-time jobs or limit workers' weekly hours to avoid certain nonwage costs associated with full-time workers, such as health insurance. When such costs rise, employers are incentivized to hire more part-time rather than full-time workers, creating more precarious work or fluctuating, unstable work hours for their workforce.

Although in general it is suggested that about many personnel are underemployed with or without their knowledge, there are notable disparities again. This is majorly by virtue of educational and demographic characteristics, such as age, over aging, gender and economic status of parents or other key members of the family. These disparities can be traced largely to occupational and industry job segregation. Underemployment is observed among all segments viz. white collar, blue collar, youth, and often female workers too. However, there are some groups of workmen like retired seeking extended employment opportunities and differently abled who generally have higher underemployment and less access to have a desirable job.

The underemployment can manifest in various ways such as:

Over Qualification

Overqualification is holding a job that requires lower skills or education than the individual possesses. Being overqualified for a job, simply leads to agony and is a clear underemployment. The person underemployed here knows 'how to do' the job better than the people who are telling him 'how to do' it. He knows how to improve everything going on, yet he is powerless to do anything about it. He is constantly reminded that he is not as good as he thinks, even though he is. Every pay-check that comes questions his esteem, since he knows that he could be making more if only he hadn't settled for what he is doing now. Every interaction with the "superior" at the workplace is a painful reminder that he took something below his stature, and that he pays for it every single day that he walks in those doors and sit at the cubicle or stand the machine he works with. To summarise all this, he is the man who needs one or two hours to be productive and to do what others around him takes entire stretch of working hours of a day.

This kind of underemployment can happen due to Lack of job opportunities in their field. The reduced demand in industry for their skills.

- **Part-time or Temporary Work**

Working fewer hours or in temporary positions, despite desiring full-time or permanent employment is another way of manifestation of Underemployment. Today most organizations have made careful decisions about how they allocate funding to fringe and non-fringe benefits to their star performers, full time employees and men in part time roles. This mainly keeping in view the value for money and cost cutting aspects. So simply aspiring to be a full time professional or workman is not so easy. There are many people, who uses a part-time position as a springboard to full-time work. This demands for lot of output in their job coupled with patience and smartness.

One has to do the part time work to the upper limit of his capability. If he does not do this first and continuously, then he never gives a chance to the organization any reason to consider him for full-time work. The demand – supply principle pertaining to specific skillsets provokes corporate world to create the part time or temporary positions to rationalise the expenditure on human cost.

Mostly the economic conditions, nature of industry and corresponding fluctuations like seasonal, project-based assignments are the contributing factors here.

- **Job Mismatch**

When a person is working in a field or industry which is unrelated to his education, training, or the expertise it is said to be a job mismatch scenario. As most of the corporates now days are sales centric 'if an engineering graduate is asked to involve in sales' it is a clear case of job mismatch. Similarly, when the teaching professionals of a school had to work on getting admissions it is felt and observed a job mismatch. This kind of job mismatch often impacts the morale of person underemployed in the irrelevant role.

Job mismatch happens when job opportunities lack of in their field for working professionals at different levels. As and when technology shift happens there will be limited industry demand for their skills that pushes them into jobs with mismatching roles.

The underemployment pertaining job mismatch to can lead to serious skill obsolescence, which impacts the person in such a way that his skills or knowledge are no longer up to date with the requirements of their job. This happens as the skills are no longer relevant to the tasks, duties, or responsibilities of the current job he been handling for quite some time.

- **Skill Underutilization**

Skill underutilization happens when an employee's skills and talents are not fully used in their current role. This can lead to a number of negative consequences for both the employee and the organization such as Inefficient performance of individual performance of employee and the organisation. Underutilization can negatively impact revenue.

Morale and motivation are very crucial factors required at work. But when employees aren't fully using their skills, they may feel disconnected from their job and less motivated. Ultimately when employees' skills go unnoticed, it can lead to missed opportunities for both the employee and the organization.

A long-term underemployment due to skills underutilization can lead to consequences like frustration, demotivation and eventually limited career advancement opportunities in once's life time.

These types of underemployments can have significant consequences on individuals' careers, well-being, and overall job satisfaction.

Research Objectives

- The objective of this study is to highlight the aftereffects of haphazard urbanisation like Underemployment, economy slow down
- To offer a depth understanding of impact of underemployment on individuals, industry and nation.

Review of Literature

Significant studies held in the areas of underemployment. The literature covers aspers from basics of underemployment to consequences in long term. Few diversified studies are quoted here.

- **Underemployment: Definition, Causes, and Examples** Corporate Finance Institution, 2015

In this informative and well-structured article, the authors provide a comprehensive exploration of the concept of underemployment. Through a clear and concise presentation, they offer readers a thorough understanding of the definition, underlying causes, and real-world examples of underemployment.

"Underemployment: Definition, Causes, and Examples" is a valuable resource for anyone seeking to understand the dynamics of modern labour markets. Its clear exposition, comprehensive analysis, and illustrative examples make it accessible to a wide audience, from students and academics to policymakers and practitioners. By shedding light on this often-overlooked aspect of employment, the article contributes to a more informed dialogue about how to address the challenges of underemployment in today's economy.

- **Underemployment, Not Unemployment, is the Main Problem facing India: Niti Aayog** Three Years Action Agenda 2017-18 to 2019-20

In this thought-provoking analysis, the Niti Aayog presents a compelling argument that underemployment, rather than unemployment, is the primary challenge confronting India's labour market. Through a combination of empirical evidence, theoretical insights, and policy recommendations, the article offers valuable perspectives on the nuanced nature of employment issues in the country.

"Underemployment, Not Unemployment, is the Main Problem Facing India: Niti Aayog" is a timely and insightful contribution to the debate on employment policy in India. Its analytical rigor, contextual depth, and actionable recommendations make it essential reading for policymakers, economists, academics, and anyone concerned with promoting inclusive and sustainable development in the country.

- **Analysis of Perception of Students on Causes of Underemployment and Underemployment Among Educated Masses in India**, Abhishek Kumar Gupta, Bharat Kumar Meher, G.L.Puntambekar (2020) Journal of Xi'an University of Architecture & Technology Volume XII, Issue IV

In this insightful study, the authors delve into the perceptions of students regarding the causes of unemployment and underemployment among the educated population in India. Through a combination of qualitative interviews, surveys, and analysis, the article provides valuable insights into the factors contributing to these pressing issues from the perspective of those directly impacted by them.

"Analysis of Perception of Students on Causes of Unemployment and Underemployment Among Educated Masses in India" is a valuable contribution to the literature on employment challenges in India. Its human-centred approach, contextual depth, and actionable recommendations make it essential reading for policymakers, educators, researchers, and anyone concerned with promoting inclusive and sustainable development in the country.

- **The Problems of Underemployment Among Youngsters** Annlet, G. (2021). Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science, Quest Journals., Volume 9 ~ Issue 5

In this insightful exploration of a pressing contemporary issue, the authors delve into the complexities surrounding underemployment among young people. Through a combination of empirical evidence, expert analysis, and real-world examples, the article sheds light on the multifaceted challenges faced by this demographic.

One of the strengths of the article is its comprehensive examination of the root causes of underemployment among youngsters. It goes beyond surface-level explanations to uncover the structural, economic, and social factors that contribute to this phenomenon. By contextualizing underemployment within broader trends such as globalization, technological change, and shifting labour market dynamics, the authors provide a nuanced understanding of the issue.

- **An Analysis of Underemployment Among Young Graduates: The Case of a Higher Education Institution in South Africa** Daniel Francois Meyer, Precious Mncayi, *Economies* 2021, 9(4), 196

In this insightful study, the authors provide a thorough examination of the underemployment phenomenon among young graduates, focusing specifically on a higher education institution in South Africa. Through rigorous research methods and a nuanced analysis, the article offers valuable insights into the factors contributing to underemployment and its implications for the transition from education to employment in the South African context.

Research Methodology

The study is done with the Case study research design, in-depth examination of a few cases is done to gain detailed insights of the underemployment due to haphazard urbanisation. Chosen the cases based on the relevance to the study, accessibility and has diversity.

The paper concentrated on more than a few studies on Underemployment and the consequences at different levels, covering economic, social and associated aspects. To understand the objectives mentioned above the required secondary data is obtained from publications of individuals and institutions from both academic and corporate domain. The studies, books, journals, newspapers, publications, and blogs/websites helped to add value to the study.

Urbanization Vs Haphazard Urbanization

Urbanization refers to the process by which an increasing proportion of a population lives in urban areas, resulting in the growth and expansion of cities and towns. Urbanization is typically driven by factors like economic opportunities, infrastructure development, improved access to services like advanced education, sophisticated healthcare and modernization. This process can lead to enhanced living standards, greater economic productivity, and innovation, but it also brings challenges like overcrowding, pollution, and strain on resources and services. urbanization can support sustainable, organized city growth.

Haphazard Urbanization is an unplanned, rapid, and often chaotic growth of urban areas. Unlike planned urbanization, where development follows strategic plans and regulations, haphazard urbanization lacks coordination, which can lead to various socio-economic and environmental issues.

Haphazard urbanization results in challenges that impact quality of life, infrastructure, and environmental sustainability. Common problems associated with haphazard urbanization include:

- Lack of Infrastructure that refers to roads, sewage systems, and utilities may be inadequate or non-existent.
- Environmental degradation leads to deforestation, loss of green spaces, and pollution are commonly seen as threat to environment.
- People are prone to health risks due to poor sanitation, overcrowded living conditions and insufficient mechanism to address the issues.
- Traffic congestion is the most common in all major cities caused from improper urban planning, roads become overwhelmed, leading to severe congestion and pollution.
- Inequity and Informal Settlements: The urban poor are often forced into informal or slum settlements lacking basic services.

Factor	Urbanization	Haphazard Urbanization
Manifestation	Planned growth of cities and towns, with a focus on infrastructure, and services	Rapid, unplanned city expansion without adequate infrastructure or regulation.
Planning and Regulation	Follows organized plans, zoning laws, and regulations to ensure sustainable growth.	Lacks planning and regulation, leading to chaotic development, poor upkeep
Infrastructure	Provides adequate infrastructure like roads, water, electricity, waste management	Infrastructure is often insufficient, leading to poor sanitation, traffic congestion, and lack of clean water.
Living Conditions	Better access to services like healthcare, education, and public spaces.	Limited access to services, leads to overcrowding and unsafe living conditions.
Environmental Impact	Environmental impact is managed through planning, with green spaces and pollution control.	Environmental degrades, including pollution, loss of green spaces, and habitat destruction.
Economic Opportunities	Attracts investment and creates job opportunities in a structured way.	Economic activities become informal, irregular leading to volatility and inequality.
Social Equity	Aims for balanced development, reducing disparities between among different sections	Often results in social inequity, with informal settlements and slums lacking basic services.
Traffic and Transportation	Planned transport networks reduce congestion and support public transit options.	Unplanned growth causes traffic congestion, with limited or no public transport options.
Law & Order	Under control and handles any undesirable happenings	Mostly fails to ensure peaceful eco system

Underemployment Due to Haphazard Urbanization

Urbanization, particularly when it occurs in a haphazard manner, has profound implications for labour markets, often leading to significant underemployment. Underemployment, defined as a situation where individuals are working in jobs that do not utilize their skills or provide sufficient hours, is a critical issue exacerbated by rapid urbanization. This phenomenon is particularly evident in developing countries, where urban centres attract large numbers of migrants seeking better opportunities, only to find themselves in precarious employment situations. But urban immigrants mostly encounter challenges in securing formal sector jobs, leading to a reliance on informal employment and resulting in underemployment.

The dynamics of urbanization often lead to the formation of slums and informal settlements, where underemployment becomes a pervasive issue. The unmanaged urbanization can result in slum growth, where many residents are trapped in low-paying, unstable jobs. The lack of adequate

infrastructure and services in rapidly urbanizing areas further compounds these issues and urban sprawl often leads to inadequate planning and resource allocation, exacerbating the challenges faced by new urban residents.

The rapid pace of urbanization also leads to significant demographic shifts, with younger populations migrating to urban areas in search of better opportunities. The structure of employment in urban areas can lead to disparities in underemployment rates between urban and rural populations, particularly affecting youth. This demographic trend is further complicated by the fact that many young migrants are often overqualified for the jobs they secure, resulting in a mismatch between skills and employment opportunities.

In addition to the economic implications, the social fabric of urban areas is also affected by haphazard urbanization. The lack of social safety nets and support systems in these areas often leaves residents without the means to improve their employment situations, perpetuating cycles of poverty and underemployment.

The environmental consequences of rapid urbanization cannot be overlooked either. As urban areas expand, they often encroach upon agricultural land and natural habitats, leading to a loss of ecosystem services that are vital for sustainable development. Such changes not only impact food security but also contribute to the economic pressures faced by rural populations, driving further migration to urban zones and exacerbating underemployment.

Furthermore, the planning and management of urban growth are critical in addressing the challenges associated with underemployment. Effective urban planning can mitigate the adverse effects of haphazard urbanization by ensuring that infrastructure and services are aligned with the needs of the population.

Impact of Underemployment

Unlike unemployment the underemployment will have a long-term negative impact and yet in an invisible manner.

Impact on Individuals

- **Financial strain:** Underemployment leads to lower income, making it difficult for individuals to meet basic expenses, save money, or spend on education or housing. This financial instability leads to debt and restricts financial growth.
- **Career stagnation:** Working in a role that doesn't match one's skills or qualifications can limit their overall earnings in life time. As the lack of skill utilization or advancement opportunities can prevent workers from gaining relevant experience, affecting future job prospects.
- **Condensed life time earnings:** A prolonged underemployment impacts an individual's earning chances in his life, this impacts major commitments like settlement of children on career and personal front.
- **Reduced motivation and job dissatisfaction:** When skills are underutilized, individuals may lose motivation, leading to decreased job satisfaction and productivity. This can create a cycle where underemployed individuals become disengaged.
- **Health challenges:** Financial and emotional strain from underemployment leads to poor health. Chronic stress associated with job insecurity and financial instability can increase the risk of health issues such as hypertension, cardiovascular problems, and weakened immunity.
- **Mental health:** Underemployment is associated with stress, anxiety, and depression. Feeling undervalued can lead to frustration and low self-esteem, which eventually impacts personal and professional relationships.
- **Social implications:** Individuals clutched by underemployment find it difficult to engage in social activities due to limited financial resources or low self-esteem, leading to isolation. This can impact their social life, networks, and support systems, further exacerbating the sense of dissatisfaction.

Few Case Studies Presented here



Mr Praveen is a B.Tech graduate with plenty of job options, if he moves to the nearest metro city Hyderabad. Yet, he prefers to take computer work at his native village which is 70km away from city. He says though in city he can get an instant better package the village offers him ample free time to prepare for a bigger/superior public sector job. Secondly Praveen justifies his choice as it amplifies not only his fund flow but avoids extra expenditure of living at city.



Mrs. K Sabitha is B. Com and works in the Finance team. Her company posted her in their Hyderabad office with a decent pay package. Yet she wishes to move to her small-town Guntur for a traditional and simpler way of living, where she expects peaceful and relaxed life. Affordability of medical and educational services is one more reason that attracts her to town. While the less pollution, more greenery are external motivations the sense of belongingness and feel security are innate pull factors towards town even for a lower salary.



Dr Trivikram Mulkutla is a highly qualified academician i.e. MCA, M. Tech PhD in information technology and M.A. in English resides in Mahbubnagar, which is one hour reach from greater Hyderabad metro. The pollution, cost of living and fraud are the un-welcoming factors due to which avoids working at Hyderabad even against the superior remuneration. Dr Trivikram finds the apartment culture isolated and security threat whereas the social coherence and recognition are retaining factors at the town. The crucks is social, health, job and economic security are very less in Hyderabad

Impact on Industry

Underemployment at the industry level affect productivity, goodwill and overall business performance of organisations involved in production, service or even charity.

- **Reduced Productivity:** When underemployed, underutilized workers are in place it leads to lower productivity. This results in low productivity, as individuals capable of giving high output are utilized with limitation.
- **Higher Turnover Rates:** Underemployed workers are often dissatisfied with their roles and may seek better opportunities elsewhere. This turnover can increase hiring and training costs and disrupt team dynamics, affecting overall organizational stability.

- **Decreased Employee Engagement:** Employees who feel undervalued or lack challenging work are less likely to be engaged. This disengagement can lead to lower morale, reduced commitment, and minimal innovation, impacting the company's market share.
- **Talent Wastage:** Underemployment means that employees' skills, training, and education aren't being fully utilized. This represents a loss for organizations, as they are not leveraging their talent pool effectively, this is a deficit of 'value for money'.
- **Lower Quality of Work:** When employees are underemployed, their low motivation or frustration impacts the quality of their work. Additionally, repetitive and less challenging tasks reduces workers' attention to detail, affecting overall output quality.
- **Negative Organizational Reputation:** Organizations with high levels of underemployment gains a negative employer brand for undervaluing employee skills. This can make it harder to attract top talent, as prospective employees might prefer employers known for providing growth opportunities.
- **Decreased Innovation:** An organization with huge underemployed workers struggles to innovate. Innovation often requires employees who feel motivated, challenged, and engaged, conditions that underemployment never provides.

Impact at National Level

Underemployment at the national level has significant economic, social, and political impacts, which can affect a country's growth, stability, and global standing.

- **Reduced Economic Growth:** Underemployment limits national productivity and economic growth. When a large portion of the workforce is underutilized, the economy operates below its potential, slowing GDP growth and weakening the country's economic performance.
- **Lower Tax Revenue:** Lower incomes among the underemployed class reduces different tax contributions, leading to lower revenue. This reduction impacts developing essential services like healthcare, education, and infrastructure, limiting the nation's ability to invest for future.
- **Increased Public Spending on Welfare:** Underemployed individuals often rely on social welfare programs for financial assistance. This increased demand on welfare can strain national budgets, leading to higher public debt or cutbacks in other areas, impacting overall economic stability.
- **Rising Inequalities and Poverty:** Underemployment contributes to income inequality, as those working below their skill level or desired hours earn less than they would in full employment. This income gap can lead to an increase in poverty levels, limiting access to resources and opportunities, creating social disparities.
- **Brain Drain:** Skilled and educated individuals may seek opportunities abroad if they cannot find suitable employment domestically, resulting in a "brain drain." This outflow of talent limits a nation's innovation, competitiveness, and ability to develop key sectors, such as technology and healthcare.
- **Social Unrest:** Persistent underemployment leads to frustration and discontent among employee, particularly young or government employees who feel their age is wasted. This can lead to social unrest, political protests, or a lack of trust in governmental policies, challenging stability of governments.
- **Limited Global Competitiveness:** Nations with high rates of underemployment struggle to compete in the global market, as they cannot fully leverage their workforce's potential. This lack of competitiveness affects foreign investment, trade balances, and the ability to attract international business partnerships.
- **Cycle of Poverty:** High levels of underemployment create barriers to upward economic mobility, as individuals are unable to save or invest in education and skill development. This intra-generational cycle of poverty, impacting future generations and limiting overall national development.



Impact of Underemployment at Different Levels

Observations

Underemployment is such a malaise that everybody will experience for at least for some period in their life. The soon one can realize, sooner they can try to come out of the clutches of underemployment, applying an apt solution.

Particularly controlling underemployment caused by haphazard urbanization requires a multi-faceted approach that targets both the root causes of underemployment and the issues associated with rapid, disorganized urban growth.

These strategies aim to create a balanced job distribution, improve job quality, and increase access to employment opportunities, ultimately reducing underemployment in urban areas. Effective implementation requires collaboration among government agencies, private sector stakeholders, and community organizations.

Suggestions

Better infrastructure planning and zoning policies to be in place to facilitate business growth and job access. Education and skill development programs targeting high-demand skills, vocational training, and continuous learning must be imparted. Promoting Small and Medium Enterprises through financial incentives, microfinance, and simplified regulations is another way to control the underemployment due to haphazard underemployment. In the newly developed industrial corridors encouraging formalization of informal employment through tax incentives, social protection programs, and simplified registration eradicates underemployment to a great extent.

Transport systems are life lines of any civilization and investing in public transport connects news horizons of development. Encouraging new markets for affordable living at low-income neighbourhoods with employment hubs is another way to ease the life of migrants. Fostering public-private partnerships for skill gap identification, training, and infrastructure development gives a big leap to the underemployed. Enhancing data collection pertaining to underemployment and policy monitoring through labour market assessments, urbanization impact studies, and policy feedback mechanisms will be a good feeding to governance.

Conclusion

Underemployment is a pervasive and complex issue affecting individuals, economies, and societies worldwide. This paper has examined the conceptual framework, causes, consequences, and policy implications of underemployment.

Underemployment has significant economic, social, and psychological consequences. Effective policy interventions, such as infrastructure planning, SME support, and public-private partnerships, can improve job stature. Data-driven decision-making is crucial.

Addressing underemployment requires comprehensive efforts, new age solutions, and commitment from all stakeholders. By understanding the complexities of underemployment and implementing evidence-based strategies, we can create more inclusive, productive, and fulfilling labour markets.

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