



Educating the Young Unemployed with/without College Degrees in an Era of Crisis: The case Study of Cyprus

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Abstract

Unemployment of young people, is at an escalating phase in most parts of the world. An article in Business Week (2009) discussed the hazards of long term unemployment at the beginning of someone's career. According to Eurostat data 2010Q1 the youth (under 25 years old) unemployment in Cyprus in June 2010 was at 19.7 ; and according to the same source, the unemployment rate for the 27 EU countries in June 2010Q1 was 20.3.

Numerous schemes are globally being put forward amid a worsening job market, in an effort to increase the employment prospects for those leaving education. One such scheme is further educating unemployed college graduates as well as high school graduates. This is one of the numerous measures taken by some countries in order to rescue the young unemployed.

This educational rescue measure was implemented in the Cypriot society through the financial assistance of the European Social Fund in collaboration with the Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus (HRDA), the Ministry of Labor & Social Insurance, and the Cyprus Productivity Center, aimed at further educating this large pool of unemployed.

The present study aimed at examining the effectiveness of the educational programs in terms of: (1) educational enhancement, and (2) increase employability of the unemployed (both university and high school graduates) participants. The total number of seminars, island wide was 12 for the college graduates and have 2 for the group of high school graduates.

Participants were 450, the program was composed of a total of 100 hours for the college unemployed and 30 hours for the high school graduates. The participants were given an hourly subsidy. Qualitative as well as quantitative research methodologies were used. Semi structured interviews were conducted and a survey instrument composed of seventeen, 5 points likert-type scale statements, were administered to all participants to examine the levels of quality of the program and its impact on their increase possibilities of employability.