



*Full length Research Paper*

# Causes of unemployment among graduates of clothing and textile specialization at King Abdul-Aziz University

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the causes of unemployment among graduates of clothing and textile specialization at King Abdul-Aziz University from the graduates' perspective, and also aimed to investigate the effect of students' GPA on their perspectives. To achieve the purpose of the study, a questionnaire was distributed among graduate students to investigate their perspectives. The study sample consisted of 13 female students from clothing and textile specialization at King Abdul-Aziz University. Means and standard deviations and t-test were used to analyze the results. The results showed that there were statistically significant differences in the graduate students' perspectives on the causes of unemployment among graduates of clothing and textile specialization at King Abdul-Aziz University; it also showed statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha \geq 0.05$ ) in their perspectives due to their general point average (GPA).

**Key words:** Unemployment, Clothing and Textile Specialization

## INTRODUCTION

Home Economics is one of the vocational subjects taught in Education system and it is designed to promote health in the home and society (Obanya 2004). Lemchi (2001) defined Home Economics as the study of the relationship of people and aspects of their environment such as clothing, housing and finance. Okpala (2005) described Home Economics as a skill-oriented, decision-making subject, that equips learners with skills and knowledge which will help them to be self-employed and at the same time, contribute effectively to the socio-economic development of the family and society.

Clothing is one of the basic needs of man, which influences an individual's health, wellness and status (Arubayi 2003, Ukpore 2006). Clothing and Textiles is among the elective Home Economics subjects which students study at universities. Arubayi (2003) implied that the aim of Clothing and Textiles is to help learners acquire knowledge, skills and techniques for meeting personal and societal clothing needs.

In the new global economy, a country's successful participation in the global value chain for clothing is contingent on its ability to flexibly and reliably respond to customers' needs which requires local manufacturers to upgrade their design and marketing skills and demonstrate world class manufacturing capabilities (Barnes et al 2005). Amongst other factors, the USITC 2004 has identified skilled labor and management as a critical success factor which provides countries with an advantage; consequently, there is a serious need to develop skills in the clothing and textile industry (Morris et al 2007). The global trend has been for less skilled tasks to be moved to low-cost locations whilst higher value-added and higher-skilled tasks remain in developed countries. This is also accompanied by outsourcing to informal economy enterprises. In this context, increasing emphasis is given to the need for developing countries to upgrade their technical and production capabilities so as to compete on quality, design and delivery, rather than simply on price (Roberts and Thoburn 2002).

The link between universities and the world of work is weak or non-existent in many developing countries (Werfhorst, 2007). Baba, Shichijo and Sedita (2009), Bekkers and Freitas (2008), posit that, the link between universities and industries should yield a significant transformation in as far as TVE is concerned. As a result, there is need for a professional to continually learn throughout their career, with the intention of deepening their knowledge, skills, and staying abreast of developmental issues (Bekkers & Freitas, 2008). The skills and education system form a fundamental pillar for the success of an industrial policy. There is currently insufficient integration between industrial policy objectives and skills in the education system. There is therefore a need from much closer alignment between industrial policy and skills and education development, particularly with respect to sector strategies (DTI, 2009). The labor market is unable to absorb the existing university graduates while, paradoxically, there are not enough skills in the general labor force to stimulate the creation of firms in the technology fields to generate more jobs in these areas (Bekkers & Freitas, 2008).

### Significance of the Study

In coming years, employment change is expected to vary across the different components of the clothing and textile industries. Fabricated textile products—are projected to see slight employment gains. Taken as a whole, however, clothing and textile workers are expected to lose jobs at an even faster rate. Employment in these industries has been projected to decline by about 300,000 jobs over the 1994–2005 periods. Many reasons are behind this decline in employment most important is the immigrants workers

### Statement of the Problem

Clothing and textile specialization at King Abdul-Aziz University provide the students with an initial inspiration and opportunity to be self-employed. Various studies have been conducted on entrepreneurship but no study looked into the causes of business start-up or unemployment. The Clothing and Textile Industry suffered from a decline in employment in the Saudi market especially among females due to ethical and religious reasons. This study aims at investigating the perspectives of graduate students at Clothing and Textile specialization about the causes of unemployment. To help them establish their own business, have financial freedom, create jobs and become employer of labor in an environment of multi-facet challenges.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the causes of unemployment among graduates of clothing and textile specialization at King Abdul-Aziz University from the

graduates' perspective, and also aimed to investigate the effect of students' GPA on their perspectives.

### Questions of the Study

The researcher tried to answer the following question:

- 1- What are the causes of unemployment among the graduates of Clothes and Textile specialization at King Abdul-Aziz University?
- 2- Are there any statistically significant differences between the perspectives of graduates of Clothing and Textile specialization toward the causes of unemployment due to their GPA (low, high)?

### Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to all female students at Home Economics faculty at King Abdul-Aziz University, particularly clothing and textile specialization.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Researchers all over the world conducted studies about unemployment in the clothing and textile sector. In the study by National Treasury (2011) using the QLFS 2011Q3 data, people aged 16-64 years were divided into various age cohorts, and it is found that the narrow unemployment rate is the highest in the 18-24 years cohort (51.0%), followed by the 25-29 years cohort (33.8%). These two cohorts accounted for (55%) of the unemployed. Furthermore, unemployment intensity, derived as the unemployment rate weighted by the share of unemployed or labor force participants, was the highest in the 18-24 years cohort.

Burger and Woolard (2005) compared OHS 1995 with LFS 2002 March data to investigate the demographic and educational attainment characteristics of the broad labor force and unemployed, as well as the work activities of the employed. They only briefly looked at broad unemployment rates of age cohorts, and found that the unemployment rate was the highest in the 16-24 years cohort. Also, the unemployment rate increased in all cohorts between the two surveys, but the increase was much greater in the younger cohorts (16-24 years and 25-34 years).

The study by Dias and Posel (2006) used the OHS 1995 and LFS 2003 September data to examine the relationship between education and broad unemployment likelihood. The profit regressions on the broad labor force indicated that the probability of unemployment decreased across the older age cohorts, as compared with the reference category (16-20 years), and this happened in all four population groups.

Bhorat and Oosthuizen (2005) compared OHS 1995 with LFS 2002 September, and found that the increase of labor force was the greatest in the 25-34 years cohort between the two surveys (30.0%), followed by the 15-24

years cohort (25.2%). People in these two young age cohorts accounted for (53.7%) of labor force in 1995 but this share increased to 60.4% in 2002. Although employment increased in all cohorts between the two surveys, such increase was the lowest in the above mentioned two young cohorts, as their share of employed decreased from (45.3%) to (42.5%) between the two surveys. Unemployment rate increased in all age cohorts between 1995 and 2002, but the increase was the greatest in the two young cohorts. Finally, the discouraged work seekers were briefly looked at, and the 15-24 years cohort comprised 28.6% of discouraged work seekers in 1995 but this proportion increased to 33.8% in 2002.

Oosthuizen (2006) adopted the same approach as Bhorat and Oosthuizen (2005) when comparing OHS 1995 with LFS 2004 September, and derived very similar findings. In addition, Oosthuizen conducted multivariate analyses by running the profit and Heck probit regressions on labor force participation and employment likelihoods respectively. He found that the 15-24 years cohort remained the group with the lowest likelihood of participating in the labor market, followed by those aged 55-65 years. Also, those aged 35-54 years were associated with the greatest probability of employment.

Van der Westhuizen, Oosthuizen and Goga (2006) analyzed the OHS 1995 and LFS 2005 September data to investigate how each gender fares in the labor market. Females experienced a greater increase of labor force number and labor force participation rates in all age cohorts, despite the fact that these numbers and rates remained higher in males. Employment increased in all age cohorts in both genders between the two surveys, but the increase was most rapid in the 45-54 and 55-65 years cohorts. Furthermore, unemployment rates increased between the two surveys in all age cohorts for both genders, but the increase was greater for females, especially those in the two young cohorts (15-24 years and 25-34 years). Finally, the econometric analyses on the females indicated that both the labor force participation likelihood and employment likelihood were the lowest in the 15-24 years cohort, followed by the 25-34 years cohort.

Kingdom and Knight (2004) focused on the broad definition of the labor force by comparing OHS 1995 with LFS 2003 September. The unemployment rate as well as the increase of this rate between the two surveys was the greatest in the 16-20 years and 21-25 years cohorts. They also conducted profit regressions to determine the characteristics of broad unemployed whose duration of unemployed exceeded three years, and found that the likelihood of long-term unemployment was the lowest in the two aforementioned younger cohorts.

In contrast, Bhorat (2009) primarily examined the causes and determinants of unemployment, but he used OHS 1995 and LFS 2005 September to briefly examine the characteristics of the broad unemployed, and the results of the profit regressions showed that employment

likelihood increased across the older age cohorts, compared with the reference group (15-24 years). However, the positive marginal effect increased in the 45-54 and 55-65 years cohorts, but became smaller in the 35-44 years cohort in 2005.

Yu (2008) adopted the same as approach as the three DPRU studies above, except that all 1995- 1999 OHSs and 2000-2006 LFSs were used to derive labor market trends under the broad definition over the 12-year period. Although the increase of labor force participation rate was the greatest in the 15-24 years cohort, this rate remained the lowest when compared with the rates of other cohorts. In contrast, employment increased in all cohorts throughout the years, but the increase was the lowest in the younger age cohorts. This implies the extent of increase of youth employment was not rapid enough to absorb the net labor force entrants, thereby causing the number of unemployed and unemployment rates in the younger age cohorts to increase between 1995 and 2006. For instance, the broad unemployment rates of the 15-24 years and 25- 34 years cohorts increased by 10.6 percentage points (from 53.1% in 1995 to 63.7% in 2006) and 6.2 percentage points (from 34.1% to 40.3% between 1995 and 2006) respectively; people aged 15-34 years accounted for 70% of unemployed in 1995 but this share increased to about 75% in 2006.

## DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### Population of the Study

The population of the study consisted of all graduate students of Clothing and Textile specialization at King Abdul-Aziz University.

### Sample of the Study

The sample of the study consisted of 13 graduates from Clothing and Textile specialization at King Abdul-Aziz University; a questionnaire was distributed among them.

### Instrument of the Study

A questionnaire was distributed among the graduates from Clothing and Textile specialization at King Abdul-Aziz University and this questionnaire was designed by the researcher herself, it consisted of 25 items. GPA of the students' variable was included.

### Reliability of the Instrument

To ensure the questionnaire reliability, the researcher applied it to a pilot sample of (3) students excluded of the study sample in the same university with a two-week period between the first and second time it was distributed. The reliability of the questionnaire was calculated

using correlation coefficient and it was found 0.87 which is suitable to conduct such a study.

### Procedures of the Study

A questionnaire about graduates' perspectives about the causes of unemployment among graduates of Clothing and Textile specialization was given to 13 graduates. After that the researcher collected the questionnaires and collected data, and then this data was analyzed statistically.

### Statistical Analysis

The results were analyzed for each item in the questionnaire using suitable statistical methods such as mean and standard deviation.

### FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to investigate the causes of unemployment among graduates of clothing and textile specialization at King Abdul-Aziz University from the graduates' perspective, and also aimed to investigate the effect of students' GPA on their perspectives. To achieve the purpose of the study, a questionnaire was distributed among the graduates to investigate their perspectives.

A questionnaire was distributed among 13 graduates from Clothing and Textile specialization at King Abdul-Aziz University. Means and standard deviations and T-test were used to analyze the results.

**To answer the first question:** What are the causes of unemployment among the graduates of Clothes and Textile specialization at King Abdul-Aziz University? A questionnaire was distributed among them and means and standard deviation were calculated. Results were shown in [Table 1](#)

**Table 1:** Graduate students' perspectives about the causes of unemployment among graduates of clothing and textile specialization

Item N.	Mean	Std. Deviation
Item 1	4.61	.698
Item 2	4.49	.715
Item 3	4.42	.805
Item 4	4.49	.858
Item 5	4.33	.848
Item 6	4.32	.767
Item 7	4.59	.693
Item 8	4.99	1.000
Item 9	4.18	.907
Item 10	4.43	.877
Item 11	3.50	.732
Item 12	4.23	.884
Item 13	4.47	.905
Item 14	4.46	.880
Item 15	4.30	.837
Item 16	4.41	.806
Item 17	4.65	.679
Item 18	4.39	.879
Item 19	4.54	.741
Item 20	4.44	.784
Item 21	4.33	.945
Item 22	4.47	.759
Item 23	4.52	.755
Item 24	4.54	.672
Item 25	4.42	.812
QALL	4.42	.584

Table 1 show that there are statistically significant differences in graduates' perspectives about the causes of unemployment among clothing and textile graduates. It shows the results of the questionnaire which was distributed among (13) graduates about the causes of unemployment among clothing and textile graduates. Means and standard deviations were calculated and results show that item 17 got the highest mean which was (4.65); item 8 comes next with a mean of (3.99).

Standard deviation for question 17 was (0.679) which is higher than ( $\alpha \leq 0, 05$ ) so it means that it is statistically

significant. Standard deviation for question 8 was nearly the same; it was (1.000) which is also statistically significant.

**To answer the second question:** Are there any statistically significant differences between the perspectives of graduates of Clothing and Textile specialization toward the causes of unemployment due to their GPA (low, high)? Means and standard deviations were computed and Table 2 shows the results.

Table 2: Means, standard deviations and t-test according to GPA variable

GPA	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Low	4	4.24	.853	-2.299	168	.023
High	9	4.49	.482			

Table 2 shows there are statistically significant differences due to GPA variable. It shows the results of the questionnaire which was distributed among (13) graduate students on their perspectives about causes of unemployment among clothing and textile specialization. Means and standard deviations were calculated and results show that students with high GPA got a higher mean than students of Low GPA which was (4.49, and

4.24) respectively; this indicates that GPA of the students have an effect on students' perspective.

Standard deviation for students of high GPA was (0.482) which is higher than ( $\alpha \leq 0, 05$ ) so it means that it is statistically significant. Standard deviation for students with low GPA was higher; it was (0.853) which is also not statistically significant. So, Table 2 shows there are statistically significant differences due to GPA variable in favour of students with high GPA.

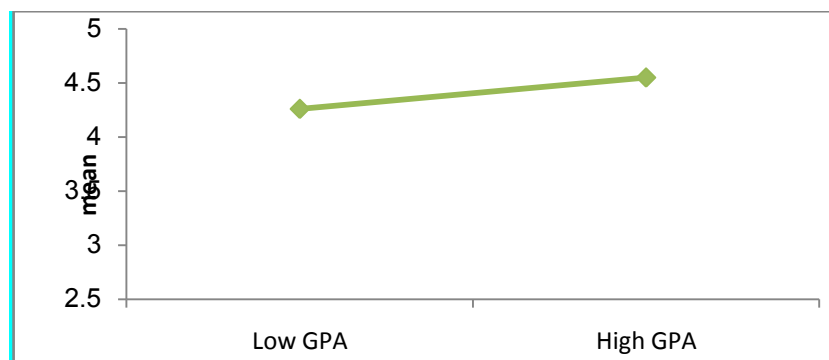


Diagram 1: Means, standard deviations and t-test according to GPA variable

Diagram 1: show that students with high GPA got positive perspective about the causes of unemployment among graduates of clothing and textile specialization than students with low GPA.

### CONCLUSION

This paper first reviewed the causes of unemployment among clothing and textile graduates and the recent studies that examined the labor market trends in many

parts of the world. Almost all these studies only briefly looked at the youths, and the discouraged work seekers were hardly compared with the narrow unemployed.

Also, the discouraged work seekers were derived very differently since the introduction of the labor market status derivation methodology in the QLFSs. Hence, a revised QLFS methodology was applied on all LFSs and QLFSs to derive comparable labor market estimates, and after the application of a consistent labor market status derivation in all surveys, it was found that youths still accounted for a higher proportion of discouraged work

seekers and narrow unemployed than the adults, and the unemployment rate was the highest amongst youths. Also, youth narrow unemployed and discouraged work seekers differ in their characteristics.

In fact, unemployment is a great problem that faces graduates not only in home economics and clothing and textile but in all fields.

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