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Analysis of Overeducation in Entry-Level Jobs in the Context of the Education-Employment Relationship*

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to analyze the education-employment relationship in the context of education economics theories, based on the views of overeducated individuals who work in entry-level jobs and have graduated from associate, undergraduate and graduate degrees and have a higher level of education than their colleagues with the same status. The experiences of over-educated individuals were analyzed via content analysis by applying a semi-structured form, which was implemented by the researcher on 31 entry-level employees working in companies affiliated with the Ankara Chamber of Industry. Findings show that the causes of overeducation are economic deprivation, unemployment, field of education, educational expansion, firm structure, and labor market conditions. The recruitment criteria of employers are professional certificates, references, status difference, technical qualifications, personal characteristics, educational qualifications, and experience of individuals.

Keywords: Educational mismatch, overeducation, overskilling, education-employment relationship, theories of economics of education.

* The paper was produced from the PhD thesis completed at Ankara University Institute of Education Science prepared by the first author under the supervision of the second author.

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Giriş Düzeyi İşlerdeki Aşırı Eğitim Olgusunun Eğitim İstihdam İlişkisi Bağlamında Çözümlenmesi*

Makale Türü	Başvuru Tarihi	Kabul Tarihi
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Öz

Bu araştırmanın amacı, giriş düzeyi işlerde çalışan ve önlisans, lisans ve lisansüstü eğitim kademelerinden mezun olup aynı statüde çalıştıkları iş arkadaşlarına göre eğitim düzeyi daha yüksek olan aşırı eğitimli bireylerin görüşlerinden hareketle eğitim ekonomisi kuramları bağlamında eğitim-istihdam ilişkisini çözümlenmektir. Araştırmacı tarafından geliştirilen yarı yapılandırılmış veri toplama formunun Ankara Sanayi Odasına bağlı firmalarda çalışan 31 giriş düzeyi işlerdeki çalışana uygulanmasıyla veri toplanmış, aşırı eğitimli bireylerin deneyimleri içerik analiziyle çözümlenmiştir. Giriş düzeyi işlerdeki aşırı eğitimlilere göre aşırı eğitimin nedenleri, ekonomik yoksunluk ve işsizlik, eğitim alanı, eğitim genişlemesi, firma yapısıdır. Aşırı eğitimin iş yaşamlarına etkileri; kazanç kaybı, iş başarısı, kariyer beklentisi, iş yetkinliği, iş yükü, iş değişikliği talebi, iş doyumu, statü karmaşasıdır. İşverenlerin işe alma ölçütleri ise; statü farkı, mesleki sertifikalar, referans, kişisel özellikler, eğitimsel yeterlilikler ve tecrübedir.

A***nahtar Sözcükler:*** Eğitim uyuşmazlığı, aşırı eğitim, aşırı beceri, eğitim istihdam ilişkisi, eğitim ekonomisi kuramları.

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Introduction

While economic development became a political focus for countries after the Industrial Revolution, economists addressed this concept before the revolution, bringing an economic perspective to education (Çömlekçi, 1971). The relationship between education and work has been a subject of educational economics theories. The Human Capital Theory, which argues that education enhances the productivity and skills of the workforce, is the foundational theory in this field (Schults, 1961; Becker, 1962; Carnoy, 1995). This theory posits that investing in education increases individuals' lifetime earnings through education and training (Woodhall, 1995). According to the Screening Hypothesis, which examines the relationship between education and employment, employers use certifications and diplomas to gather information about job seekers (Layard and George Psacharopoulos, 1974; Riley, 1976; Woodhall, 1995). Blaug (1995) argues that employers develop a screening system that considers not only the education which individuals have received but also their personal characteristics during the hiring process.

The Queue Hypothesis put forward that individuals with higher education levels are preferred in job applications (Carnoy, 1995). According to the Dual Labor Market Theory, markets are not homogeneous. In this theory, markets using advanced production technologies, where well-educated individuals work, are defined as primary markets, whereas markets using backward production technologies, where employee education is not emphasized, are defined as secondary markets (Harrison and Sum, 1979; Aksoy, Aras, Çankaya, and Karakul, 2011). Authors who offer critical approaches to economics of education theories argue that evaluating one's job solely in the context of earning money leads to the loss of creativity which makes humans unique (Aksoy et al., 2011, 82).

Overeducation is one of the concepts which was used in theories of economics of education to explain an exceptional situation. Overeducation describes the education which individuals possessing more than required for their current job (Freeman, 1976, 4-5; Rumberger, 1981, 15; Sicherman, 1991, 101; Alba-Ramirez, 1993, 1). Overeducated individuals are those who have higher educational qualifications than necessary for their job. The phenomenon of overeducation indicates the underutilization of knowledge and skills acquired through education (Büchel, 2001, 460). Freeman (1976) conducted an economic analysis of overeducation, explaining that it occurs in the labor market because of the continuous increase in the number of graduates and the declining economic opportunities promised by university education.

Various studies have documented that a significant portion of university graduates possess more education than required in the labor market (Carroll and Tani, 2015, 631; Dolton and Vignoles, 2000; Frenette, 2004; Hartog 2000). "Overeducation" is costly, leading to reduced earnings (Alba-Ramirez, 1993), low job satisfaction, and low productivity (Tsang, Rumberger & Levin, 1991). Employers use the surplus education that individuals acquire by bearing its cost and investing time in schools (additional years to required duration of school years) as a tool to hire or promote candidates. The increase in the qualifications required by employers at the entry stage directs individuals to pursue more education than necessary to obtain the desired job or position. Entry-level jobs, being the most visible segment in labor markets, are used by employers as a tool to select temporary workers for higher-qualified positions (Aksoy, 1999). "Overeducated" individuals, who have received more education than required for their jobs and accept lower-level jobs to find employment, form the subject of this research problem. This research aims to analyze the education-employment relationship within the context of the economics of education theories based on the views of "overeducated" individuals, who, despite graduating from associate, undergraduate, and postgraduate levels work in entry-level jobs and possess higher educational levels than their colleagues in the same status.

1. What are the experiences of "overeducated" individuals working in entry-level jobs during the hiring process?
2. According to "overeducated" individuals working in entry-level jobs, to what extent do employers consider candidates' education-related variables during the hiring process?

What are the experiences and challenges encountered by "overeducated" individuals working in entry-level jobs?

Method

A qualitative research approach was chosen for this study. Qualitative research differs from quantitative research in its assumptions regarding the nature of reality (ontological), what and how the researcher knows (epistemological), the role of values in the research process (axiological), and the methods used in the research process (methodological) (Creswell, 2017). In Turkey, there are not detailed research and committed studies regarding the overeducation and there is lack of information of the views of the subjects face this situation in the context of economics of education. With a qualitative study, first hand and not constructed information details can be gathered.

Research Design

A phenomenology design was preferred since this study aims to analyze the relationship between education and employment based on individuals' experiences. Phenomenology allows those who experience a phenomenon to express their experiences and realities in their narratives (Sokolowski, 2000). Those features of the phenomenology also can be seen the rationale of the selection the qualitative research method.

Participants

Given that this research is based on the experiences of overeducated individuals, a purposive sampling technique was used to determine the study group. In qualitative research, the purposeful selection of the sample stems from the research aims along with the methodological requirements or limitations. This technique allows researchers to select suitable participants for the study (Creswell, 2017; Marvasti, 2004; Patton, 2002).

The population of this research consists of companies affiliated with the Ankara Chamber of Industry (ASO), which are listed in the "500 Largest Industrial Enterprises in Turkey" in 2019. Attempts were made to reach 28 industrial enterprises affiliated with ASO via email and feedback was received from employee and managers, of the human resources departments a part of 14 companies. Of these, three companies did not find the questions appropriate, two companies declined because of high workload, citing reasons such as "not being able to take workers off the production line," and one company declined because of high COVID-19 cases. The study group comprises seven industrial enterprises affiliated with the ASO that agreed to participate in the research. The enterprises are anonymized in this study. Table 1 presents the demographic information of the study population.

Table 1. *Demographic information about the study group*

No	Gender	Company Code	Position	No	Gender	Company Code	Position
1	Male	Iron	Lathe Technician	17	Male	Water	Driver
2	Female	Iron	Operator	18	Male	Fire	IT Staff
3	Male	Iron	Office Worker	19	Female	Fire	Lab Technician
4	Male	Boron	Technician	20	Male	Fire	Material Supervisor
5	Male	Boron	Electrical Chief	21	Male	Fire	Accountant
6	Male	Boron	R&D Office Worker	22	Male	Fire	Design Supervisor
7	Male	Boron	Cleaning Chief	23	Male	Fire	IT Staff
8	Male	Air	Quality Controller	24	Male	Fire	Technical Staff
9	Male	Air	Quality Controller	25	Male	Fire	Quality Controller
10	Male	Air	Paint Technician	26	Male	Steel	Crane Operator
11	Female	Air	Lab Technician	27	Male	Copper	Procurement Staff
12	Male	Air	Quality Controller	28	Male	Copper	Tank Operator
13	Male	Air	IT Staff	29	Male	Copper	Production Planner
14	Male	Water	Controller	30	Male	Copper	Procurement Staff
15	Male	Water	Material Organizer	31	Male	Copper	Technical Staff
16	Male	Water	Lathe Technician				

As seen in Table 1, the study group consists of 31 overeducated individuals from seven different industrial enterprises. Of the overeducated individuals working in entry-level jobs, nine have a master's degree, and 22 have a bachelor's degree. The data for the study were collected using a semi-structured

interview form developed by the researcher, titled "Analyzing the Relationship Between Education and Employment in the Context of Overeducation." The first part of the interview form includes personal information about the overeducated individuals, while the second part consists of questions addressing the research sub-goals.

In developing the interview form, expert opinions were sought from three measurement and evaluation experts and 15 field and language experts to ensure content validity. Based on the expert feedback, one question was removed from the first section, four redundant questions were removed from the second section, and five questions were revised to meet the qualitative inquiry criteria. Additionally, two pilot studies were conducted to ensure the comprehensibility of the interview form. The final semi-structured interview form was prepared based on expert opinions and pilot study results.

Research Instruments and Procedures

The semi-structured interview form titled "Analyzing the Relationship Between Education and Employment in the Context of Overeducation" was administered to individuals working in entry-level jobs who graduated from bachelor's or master's levels. The form was developed by the researcher with the views of expert panel and the validity were provided by their views. The reliability of the form and the study were provided while processing the research with the suitable conditions to interviews, recording. Additionally, at the data analysis stage to ensure qualitative data reliability, coding was repeated three times. In each coding process, recurring patterns, categories, and themes were maintained, and the analysis was reported.

After explaining the purpose, subject, and scope of the research to the participants, interviews were conducted with those who considered themselves overeducated. The "Direct Self-Assessment" method, known as a subjective evaluation as used by Duncan and Hoffman (1981), Hartog and Tsang (1987), and Sicherman (1991), was used to identify overeducated individuals. Even with their judge before than interviews were administered decided to the interviewees, the researcher evaluated the relationship and mismatch of their position and education regarding the overeducation concept. A total of 38 individuals were interviewed, and the views of 31 self-identified overeducated individuals were collected using the interview form. Before starting the interviews, brief information about the research were given to the the participants and their consent was obtained for audio recordings. The recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim by the researcher.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the interview form were analyzed using content analysis (Neuman, 2014) with the MAXQDA program. In qualitative analysis methods, the inductive process focuses on identifying relationships and regularities based on existing concrete situations rather than general theoretical judgments and explanations. According to Neuman, (2014, 658) qualitative researchers create new concepts, and concept formation is an inherent part of data analysis and one of the methods of extracting meaning from them. In this research, data were organized into more abstract units of information in an inductive manner, creating patterns, categories, and themes from "bottom to top." The codes were systematically classified by comparing them with the data, and the relationship between education and employment in the context of overeducation was analyzed.

Results

This section addresses the causes of overeducation, the criteria employers use to hire overeducated individuals, and the effects of overeducation which are aligned with the sub-goals of the research.

1.Causes of Overeducation

The situation where individuals possess more education than are required for their job stems not only from the individual's demand and value placed on education but also from certain external factors. The primary factors include economic deprivation and unemployment, the labor market, firm structure, the field of study from which the individual graduated, and the expansion of education (as shown in Figure 1).

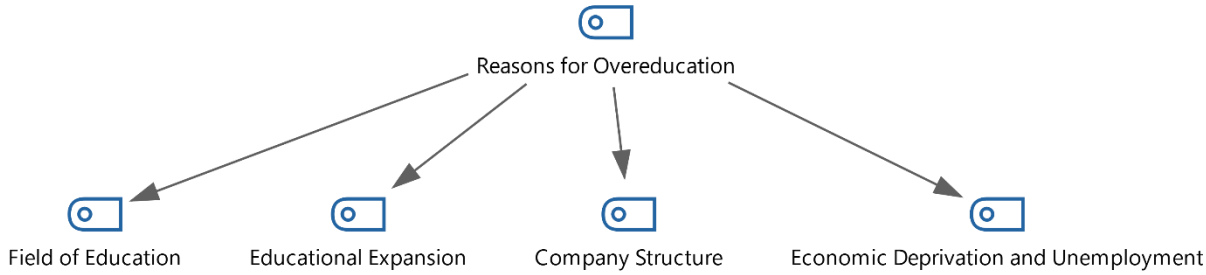

Figure 1. *Causes of overeducation*

Economic Deprivation and Unemployment: Overeducated individuals may accept jobs below their educational level due to the necessity of securing income and sustaining their lives despite high unemployment rates. This necessity is later coded as "desperation." Overeducated individuals express their situation as follows: "Currently, unemployment is very high in our country. People accept these jobs because they are unemployed" (Bor6). "It is entirely personal. After the pandemic... I accepted this job because I was unemployed. Out of necessity... Economic conditions forced me down this path" (Demir3).

Firm Structure: The size of a firm, its economic strength, the number of employees, and the firm's ability to sustain itself economically can contribute to a sense of security among overeducated employees. The job security provided by firms influences the decision of overeducated individuals to continue working. The views of overeducated individuals working in entry-level jobs regarding firm structure are as follows: "My loyalty to Copper is due to its corporate identity. I can say it's a sense of belonging" (Bakır27). "The institution is large. Bor is a corporate firm—one of the best in Ankara" (Bor4).

Field of Study: Overeducated individuals attribute their work situation in entry-level jobs to their chosen fields of study. They express that the imbalance between supply and demand for certain fields of study, due to not considering the supply-demand balance when determining quotas, leads to an excess in some job fields and a shortage in others. Initially, they were not aware of this imbalance regarding their field of study. "When I started using the software, I had expectations. I want to work on smart systems. However, 10 out of 70 people become software developers. It would have been better if only 20 people had gone there, and 10 had become software developers" (Hava13).

Expansion of Education: Overeducated individuals working in entry-level jobs indicate that an increase in the supply of educated individuals leads to a situation where more education is obtained than is required for the job. They predict that this situation will worsen in the future, with employers preferring those with higher education for entry-level jobs. "It changes over time. For example, previously, very few people pursued a doctorate, but now I look at our office, and everyone is starting a master's degree. They are trying to advance. Naturally, the hiring process for blue-collar workers also changes" (Bor6).

2. Employers' Hiring Criteria

According to the participants, employers' hiring criteria for entry-level jobs include status differences, professional certifications, references, personal characteristics, educational qualifications, and experience. However, it was also mentioned that discrimination is present in this process (as shown in Figure 2).

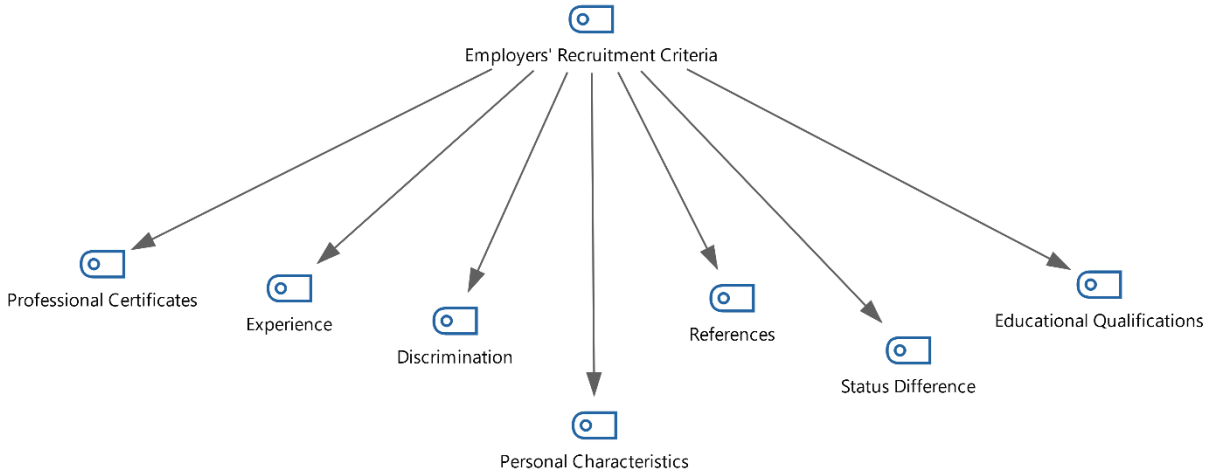

Figure 2. *Employers' hiring criteria*

Educational Qualifications: Some participants indicated that employers primarily focused on their education levels when hiring. They noted that their education levels helped them stand out from other candidates and increased their chances of being hired. "There has to be a difference between a high school graduate and a university graduate. The employer knew I was going to graduate when he hired me. He asked me questions, and since my degree was related to the job, he hired me" (Çelik26).

Status Differences: According to the participants, there are cases where employers do not consider educational levels, particularly during applications for "blue-collar" jobs.

Personal Characteristics: Participants believed that personal characteristics, in addition to educational backgrounds, play a significant role in the hiring process. Some overeducated individuals working in entry-level jobs expressed the following sentiment: "They probably tried to measure my work discipline. They looked at how adaptable I was. I was hired because I was adaptable" (Demir3). "I think my tendency to work in teams and my ability to express myself influenced my being hired" (Ateş23).

Professional Certifications: Overeducated individuals noted that employers place significant value on professional qualifications, sometimes even more than on their degree education. "I think they evaluate all the additional training, projects, and certifications you have" (Hava9).

References: Some overeducated individuals, particularly those working in defense industry companies, mentioned that they were hired based on references. They believe this is crucial for reliability. "References were more influential in my hiring. They knew I was reliable and hardworking because they had inquiried" (Demir2).

Experience: Overeducated individuals working in entry-level jobs reported that employers also consider their experience, having relevant experience increases their chances of being hired.

Discrimination: Overeducated individuals who worked in entry-level jobs also expressed encountering various forms of discrimination during hiring and employment. Some participants noted that employers' trust in candidates they hire often stems from favoritism, which they have normalized: "It's not about the level of education, but about connections. Eight of us came together in together. Everyone knows someone inside. So, everyone knows each other. Father-son, brother-brother working together" (Ateş24).

3. Effects of Overeducation

Overeducated individuals reported various issues compared to their less-educated colleagues, including loss of earnings, job performance and satisfaction, career expectations, excessive workload, demand for job changes, and status confusion.

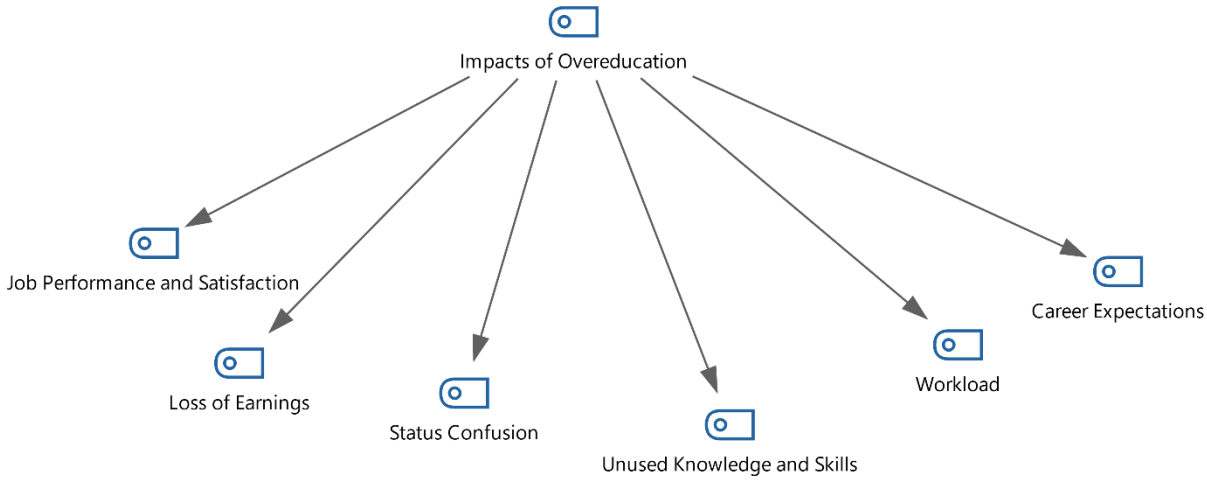

Figure 3. *Effects of overeducation*

Loss of Earnings: Many of the overeducated individuals interviewed indicated that they experienced a loss of earnings compared with their colleagues with similar educational levels. Despite having higher education levels, they stated that they received the same pay as their coworkers, which they felt was unfair. "I am currently one of the lowest-paid technicians" (Ateş24). "I am a university graduate, and I am working in the same unit as those who did not even finish middle school. They earn more than I do" (Su14). "I get the same salary as a high school graduate" (Demir2).

Job Performance and Satisfaction: Overeducated individuals reported being more successful and satisfied in their jobs than their colleagues at the same position think that their success emerge from the attitudes, behaviors, and remarks of their superiors. "Yes, fortunately, I am a well-appreciated employee in my field" (Hava11). Technicians working in jobs typically held by white-collar workers have higher job satisfaction. "Creating and doing something makes me happy. The job I am doing now is more enjoyable than working in the service sector because you can produce something tangible". (Demir1).

Unused Knowledge and Skills: Overeducated individuals in entry-level jobs stated that they have more knowledge and skills than their colleagues but are unable to use them. Some of those who reported not being able to use their knowledge and skills had educational mismatches. Overeducated individuals who cannot utilize their knowledge and skills generally reported low job satisfaction: "The education you received, the profession you learned, and the courses you took are unrelated to your current job, which is problematic." Because you receive so much education, but you don't utilize it".(Çelik26).

Career Expectations: Overeducated individuals working in entry-level jobs hoped to advance in their careers because they worked for large and prominent companies in Turkey. Newly hired overeducated individuals have high expectations for career advancement. "I aim to advance in my career rather than gaining experience. Hopefully, someone will notice" (Hava9). "Because I am a university graduate, maybe they have a long-term plan in mind. If I can prove myself, I might have a chance to move up to a higher level" (Su16).

Workload: Overeducated individuals expressed that their superiors appreciated them for their job success, which in turn increased their workload. Despite having the same status and earnings as their colleagues, they had a heavier workload that did not make them feel privileged. "You are actually in a technician position, but you are doing the job that an industrial engineer should be doing. I think I am doing more than an engineer". (Ateş21)

Status Confusion: Overeducated individuals who work in entry-level jobs are sometimes assigned to areas where white-collar employees work without changes in their rights, status, or earnings. This situation makes them feel somewhat advanced in their status due to their qualifications and job competencies, which brings them partial happiness. Their statements regarding status confusion include: "Even though I do not have the same rights as them (white-collar employees), working here gives me

pleasure. The working environment there (where blue-collar workers are) is more challenging than here. I am aware of that. When I see that, I say, 'thank goodness' and 'I am grateful'" (Bor6).

Demand for job change: Individuals experiencing horizontal mismatches expressed a desire to change jobs when they find better opportunities. Most of the overeducated individuals interviewed mentioned that they wanted to change jobs and work in positions more suited to their education. However, they were unable to fulfill these desires due to the size of the company they work for and the influence of the labor market.

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

In the analyses of themes generated from interviews with overeducated individuals working in entry-level jobs, the results regarding employers' hiring criteria, the causes of overeducation, and the effects of overeducation on their working lives were identified.

Causes of Overeducation. In interviews with overeducated individuals working in entry-level jobs, the themes of overeducation included economic deprivation and unemployment, the field of study, the expansion of education, and firm structure. According to human capital theory, individuals with lower education levels are more likely to be unemployeder than those with higher education levels. The theory suggests that the inability of the education system to respond quickly to changes in the labor market is among the reasons for unemployment (Kurnaz and Özaydın, 2020). Graduates are more likely to experience overeducation during periods of high unemployment (Gottschalk and Hansen, 2003). Economic deprivation and unemployment, supported by literature, are seen as the main reasons for overeducation, leading individuals to accept jobs below their education level to avoid unemployment. Economics of education theories struggle to explain why educated individuals remain unemployed, why living standards decline despite increased educational attainment, and there are contradictions in their propositions that education guarantees economic growth (Sweetland, 1996, 356). Bourdieu (2005) explained this situation by stating that capital is considered only for its economic function, which fails to analyze the structure and function of the social world. Therefore, individuals' social and structural context influences their unemployment and economic deprivation.

According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe's (2015, 25) Quality of Employment Indicators Report, it is important for employees to work permanently, regularly, and for a long time without the fear of losing their job at any time, which is crucial for employment quality. Institutions play a potentially driving role in the education-employment relationship within the labor market, leading to overeducation (Davia, McGuinness & O'Connell, 2017). Because the companies interviewed are among Turkey's largest 500 companies and have strong institutional structures, individuals prioritize economic stability by accepting overeducation and have not risked leaving their firms. If the additional education received by individuals does not proportionally affect their production, the social return on education becomes zero (ineffective) (Ünal, 1996, 144). Good jobs in the labor market are "scarce," and creating limited employment opportunities for the workforce. Consequently, some highly educated individuals will settle for jobs that can be performed with lower educational qualifications. In this case, the social return on excess education will be zero.

In Türkiye, the demand for higher education is increasing because of labor market conditions. The policy of raising individuals' educational levels is based on the assumption that an unmet demand exists in the labor market or that more educated workers will develop the production techniques they will use (McGuinness, 2006).

Employers' hiring criteria: According to overeducated individuals working in entry-level jobs, employers' hiring criteria include status differences, professional certifications, references, personal characteristics, educational qualifications, and experience. Overeducated individuals believe that employers consider status differences when hiring. Primary labor markets involve creative jobs that require initiative, whereas secondary labor markets involve unskilled labor that requires little experience (McNabb, 1987, 159). The rigid division of the labor market, supported by socio-economic mechanisms outside the workplace qualification plane, indicates the existence of two impermeable sections between the two markets (Uyanık, 1999, 2). According to the Queue Hypothesis, employers' expectations vary depending on the type of job (Aksoy et al., 2011). Overeducated individuals, in line with Aksoy's (1999),

indicate that employers consider educational qualifications differently depending on the status of the job. Therefore, employers act according to the conditions of the dual labor market.

Employers use "educational qualifications" as a tool to gather information about candidates, get to know individuals, and understand their future job performance. The process by which employers obtain a certain information about individuals' education can be explained by the information asymmetry of the Screening Hypothesis (Spence, 1973). According to the Queue Hypothesis, the trainability level affects the cost of on-the-job training. This training provide to increase the individual's productivity in the job (Carnoy, 1983, 1995; Aksoy et al., 2011, 173). Therefore, according to the Queue Hypothesis, employers prefer to hire highly educated individuals because of their easier adaptability to changes in the labor market and lower training costs (Smith, 1986, 95; Quintini, 2011, 9). Aksoy's (1999) research on the education-employment relationship in the US labor market indicates that education is not considered a selection criterion for entry-level jobs. The degree and academic success of an individual at school are not characteristics that employers consider when hiring entry-level jobs. However, employers use educational qualifications to transition from entry-level to higher-level positions (Aksoy, 1999). The views of overeducated individuals align with the propositions of the Screening and Queue Hypotheses, claiming that employers evaluate the education of employees for hiring and trainability.

According to the Screening Hypothesis, employers value diplomas and certificates (Whitehead, 1981, 48). Therefore, education is used as a tool to reduce costs when selecting employable and trainable individuals. Hesapçıoğlu (1994, 438) notes that diplomas, certificates, and documents are considered indicators of marginal productivity. The fact that the professional certifications requested by employers at the entry stage are not used in the job indicates the dysfunctionality of these documents.

In the literature there are claims that informal job search methods, such as personal contacts, provide more detailed and reliable information between applicants and employers than formal search methods and are thus healthier. This approach reduces uncertainty in the hiring process, facilitating more qualified job matches if the basic suitability standard for the job is met (Carroll and Tani, 2015, 632). The use of references by overeducated individuals when seeking jobs can be explained by Bourdieu's (2005) concepts of social (titles of nobility, useful networks of relationships) and symbolic (prestige and recognition) capital. Participants working in the defense industry also noted the effectiveness of the element of trust and the influence of those who referred to them. Overeducated individuals working in entry-level jobs mentioned that employers were interested in their previous work experience. According to Sicherman and Galor (1991), due to the lack of experience among overeducated individuals who have entered the workforce for the first time, educational qualifications substitute for work experience.

Factors stemming from educational inequality also influence hiring criteria. Bourdieu and Passeron (2014) indicated that most working-class children cannot obtain useful diplomas from the educational field because of limited economic and cultural resources and cannot enter schools that facilitate quality employment. Even if they achieve diplomas, they lag behind in the competitive phase of transitioning to upward mobility. Bourdieu (1984) found in his research in France that some types of education are expensive, and without financial accumulation, it is impossible to enter certain professions, highlighting inequality in the distribution of job opportunities provided by different types of education.

Effects of Overeducation Overeducated individuals indicated that having more education than their job required affects their work life in terms of earnings loss, job performance and satisfaction, career expectations, workload, job change demand, and status confusion. The existence of overeducation contradicts human capital theory, especially regarding the education-income relationship. According to the Human Capital Theory and the Screening Hypothesis, higher education levels bring higher costs, but the cost of education is lower than the cost of increasing productivity. According to these two theories, overeducation is a temporary phenomenon, and those with higher education levels eventually change jobs and start earning higher wages. On the other hand, overeducated employees tend to change jobs frequently, and those who do not stay long with the same employer are not expected to see significant income increases (Mendes, Santos & Kiker, 2000). From the perspective of overeducated individuals, earnings losses are persistent, making overeducation a permanent

phenomenon. The Queue Hypothesis considers qualification mismatch as a permanent phenomenon in the labor market, asserting that having more education than is required for a job does not bring higher earnings (Quintini, 2011, 9). One of the results of this research is that the excess education received by overeducated individuals does not affect their earnings and leads to earning losses. This finding does not support human capital theory, which posits that earnings increase as individuals' education levels rise.

Spence (1973) suggested that education and learning indicate high productivity and that firms use education to predict employee potential productivity and differentiate between them. The finding that overeducated individuals increase their job performance supports the Screening and Queue Hypotheses, which are aligned with the views of overeducated individuals who work in entry-level jobs. Overeducated individuals generally report low job satisfaction. The literature indicates a negative relationship between overeducation and job satisfaction (Hersch, 1991; Tsang, Rumberger, and Levin, 1991). Therefore, the participants' views on low job satisfaction are consistent with findings in the field.

Becker (1992) stated that in cases of education-job mismatch, firms will seek to fully utilize the skills of the workforce by adapting their production processes to any changes in labor supply. It may be thought that employing overeducated individuals in white-collar positions is intended to increase work productivity. However, the fact that overeducated individuals are not promoted to higher-status jobs despite their ability to perform can be explained by dual labor market theory. As Bowles and Gintis (1975) noted, capital owners' motivation in production is typically to use "the maximum labor at the lowest wage," which explains why overeducated individuals are employed in white-collar positions without any changes to their personal rights and wages.

Participants indicated that they could not use the knowledge, skills, and experiences they acquired through education because of their positions. According to Human Capital Theory, employers utilize all the qualifications and skills of the workforce. Ultimately, in the case of overeducation, where workers' qualifications and skills are underutilized in the labor market, investments made through education might experience potential value loss (Desjardins and Rubenson, 2011, p. 18). This situation is also inconsistent with Human Capital Theory. Overeducated employees continue to work in firms without fully utilizing their potential, leading to a less productive equilibrium in the labor market (McGuinness, Pouliakas, & Redmond, 2018, p. 6).

Participants stated that their high job performance relative to their colleagues and the speed with which they completed tasks assigned by their managers increased their workload. Bowles and Gintis (1975) suggested that, in the context of surplus value theory, employers or firms benefit more from high employee performance. Participants also perceived their excessive workload compared to their colleagues as a disadvantage, perceiving that being overeducated benefited their workplaces rather than themselves.

Supporting a developmental trend that considers these imbalances arising from the power and knowledge asymmetry between educational and market institutions could help these institutions play their expected roles fairer and effectively.

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