

# VOLUNTARY UNEMPLOYMENT

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## Abstract

Voluntary unemployment is a situation in which someone chooses to not work, either because they will not take a job with low pay, or they are satisfied with the amount they receive from the government in benefits while not working. Voluntary unemployment refers to voluntary nonworking. It is the result of the decision not to join the working life as a result of behaviours such as not seeking or give up looking for a job or discouraged. The purpose of this study is to discuss voluntary unemployment at the theoretical level. The economic bases of voluntary unemployment in the study has examined within the framework of classical, neoclassical, Keynesian and Marxist economics conducted by descriptive analysis approach literature review and interpretation method. Then, the causes and consequences of voluntary unemployment are mentioned. The causes of voluntary unemployment are examined in two categories, both personally and structurally. The personal reasons for the voluntary unemployment are determined as; Reasons for human misadventure, reluctance to look for a job or job search, refusal to work, leisure time preference, income effect, unrealistic expectations, delay in compliance with the qualifications required by the market. Structural causes of unemployment are explained under the heading of market structure, lack of awareness of vacancies, high income tax policies, socio-cultural structure and gender. It has been pointed out that voluntary unemployment, which is considered as some kind of inefficiency, produce results such as low production, low profit, time wastage, low growth and low progress. In addition, economic, sociological and psychological consequences of voluntary unemployment have been evaluated. As a result of the study, it was emphasized that voluntary unemployment is an inertia that must be struggled structurally and that precautions should be taken in order to remove young people from voluntary unemployment.

**Key Words:** Voluntary unemployment, leisure time, working decision, labour supply

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## **Introduction**

One of the natural consequences of the industrial age is that the working relationship becomes the focus of life. In this age where work is perceived as a part of being human, as an obligation, the decision not to work as a choice has become almost impossible. Those who are not working are usually positioned at the two extreme poles, they are either seen and envied by the elite (rich) strata, or they are seen as unlucky and need help because they cannot find a job. The age of utopian philosophical romanticism, where work was condemned, has passed even for the segment suitable for this behavioral pattern, and a massive transformation has undoubtedly occurred in the direction of determining the positions in the society according to the work done, the institutions they work for or the wages received.

Work; Since it is closely related to concepts such as economic growth, production, and productivity, not working is seen as a socio-economic problem rather than an individual preference / lifestyle. For this reason, the works produced or the policies carried out on unemployment mostly focused on those who wanted to work but could not find a job although they were looking for a job. When the expectations of the society from work, production or social peace are evaluated, it can be said that this perception is in a correct position. To put it more clearly, unemployment is a problem that needs to be tackled and kept under control. The idea that laziness is a right in today's society has been consumed by the sweet dream of the philosophy that praises idleness.

Governments continue to fight unemployment as part of both economic and social structure. In this context, efforts are made to eliminate the negative effects of unemployment with short-term supports and to ensure that people stand on their own feet as soon as possible in order to solve the problems encountered due to insufficient income from time to time. Social aids, as the most concrete indicators of these supports, are frictional supports designed to ensure the continuity of social welfare.

Easier non-employment conditions increase reluctance towards paid and regular work and even looking for a job. Apart from the economic aspect of the study, considering the psychological and sociological effects of the

study, the negative effects of the time spent not working can be seen more clearly. The loss of self-confidence and the aging or dulling of qualifications make it difficult to bring people who do not work back to economic life. In this case, unemployment only produces "voluntary unemployment" this time.

Voluntary unemployment refers to the state of not working voluntarily. It is the result of the decision not to participate in the working life as a result of behaviors such as not looking for a job, giving up looking, and losing hope.

The most important factor in the occurrence of voluntary unemployment is the tolerance shown to preference not to work. This power is usually influenced by income, qualifications and experience, as well as unrealistic expectations, work style preferences or reasons arising from human temperament.

In classical economics, unemployment is essentially either temporary or voluntary. However, today, the concept of unemployment has been understood as a predominantly involuntary situation since Keynes and its post. In the Neo-Classical Labor Economy, unemployment is considered as non-willful, and voluntary unemployment is excluded from the definition and scope of unemployment and cannot find a place in the concept defined and diversified in the main parameters of "open" and "hidden" unemployment. In Marxist economics, voluntary unemployment is essentially perceived as inefficiency, and somehow contributing to the production process forms the basis of the system. However, what differs from capitalism is that the distribution takes place in favor of labor.

This study aims to explain the concept of "voluntary unemployment" at theoretical level, which is accepted as the basis of unemployment in classical economics but is not reflected in official unemployment statistics today. In the study using literature review and interpretation method, within the framework of descriptive analysis approach conducted with the help of questions such as "what" and "how", voluntary unemployment and unemployment were examined in detail.

In the first part of the study structured in four sections, the concept of

voluntary unemployment is included, and in the second part, the theoretical structure that allows detailed explanations of the concept is presented. The third chapter is devoted to the causes of voluntary unemployment. In the last part, there is an evaluation of the consequences of voluntary unemployment.

### **1. The Concept of Voluntary Unemployment**

Voluntary unemployment in the Cambridge economic dictionary defined as "the person does not want to work in a low-wage job or chooses not to work because of the satisfactory level of state aid provided to him unless he does not work" (Cambridge Dictionary).

Voluntary unemployment can be caused by reasons such as high tax rates, insufficient awareness of vacant jobs, socio-economic factors, market structure, government interventions and technological progress. People may not want to work voluntarily due to the income effect, delays in adapting to the qualifications required by the market, unrealistic expectations, short-term preferences or reasons arising from human temperament. In this case, it is possible to define voluntary unemployment as a state of refusal to work as a result of not looking for a job or acting reluctantly in job search.

One of the most important factors causing voluntary unemployment is the long duration of job search activity. Although it varies from country to country, according to OECD, ILO or World Bank (WB) standards, three types of classification stand out according to the duration of the job search. These can be expressed as short, long and very long term job search activities. Short term job seeking activity is accepted as up to six months (OECD), less than twenty-seven weeks (USA) or less than one year (Sweden, Netherlands). Long-term job search activity usually means longer than one year (ILO, OECD, WB). However, in the USA, periods longer than twenty-seven weeks are accepted. Very long job search activity usually means more than twenty-four months (two years) (OECD / EUROSTAT). TURKSTAT defines job seekers as long-term unemployed for more than a year (Çağlar, Kumaş and Moralı, 2015: 71-72). When the time of job search gets longer, the tendency to give up job search activity will increase. In this case, the preference not to work appears as voluntary unemployment.

In order to look at the concept of voluntary unemployment from a broad perspective, it is necessary to explain in terms of different economics schools. Recognizing the schools of economics, which are often classified in a confusion, should be considered as part of the effort to classify schools in a macro sense and to grasp the voluntary unemployment theory. In this context, it is useful to examine the theoretical foundations of the concept of “voluntary unemployment” before economics schools, following a briefly overview of mainstream economics schools.

### **1.1. An Overview of Mainstream Schools of Economics**

Classifications of economics schools / approaches are mostly based on the construction, criticism and rejection of the capitalist structure. The natural order, which is the extensions of the physiocratic mercantilist era, and then classical economics, in which the utilitarian philosophy is embodied, lies at the basis of the construction process. Classical economics, which claims that natural equilibrium is also in economic life, argues that markets should be free as well as the individual and cooperation should be established in ensuring social welfare. Names such as A.Smith, J.B.Say, D.Ricardo, J.S. Mill are among the most recognizable classical economists.

Neoclassical economics, which is a relative continuation of the classical economics doctrine, but proposes to make some interventions to eliminate the failure in the market economy by highlighting the deficiencies of classical economics, is also included in the construction process of capitalism. The neoclassical approach also acts as a bridge to critical approaches with a perception undertaking the restoration of classical economics. The most well-known schools of neoclassical economics approach, which generally explain facts with mathematical approaches; Lausanne (Walras, Pareto), Austria (Hayek), Stockholm (Myrdal) and Cambridge (Marshall, Pigou).

Keynes, the representative of demand-side economics, expressing the rationale of intervention in the markets as increasing effective demand, was able to reach the capacity of being a separate school by separating from the neo-classical teaching with classical economics criticism. Keynes looks at market issues from a macroeconomic perspective.

The "supply-side economics school" (the most well-known theory is Haldun/Lafer Curve), which criticizes Keynes' views on classical economics teaching, refers to the modernized form of classical economics. The Libertarian School of Economics represents the extreme of the supply-side economy's anti-intervention stance. It is also seen that these economics school thinkers, who argue that intervention is completely unfounded and that individual freedoms should not be restricted under any circumstances, sometimes have violent debates on the function and functions of the state (D.Firedman, Rothbard, Nozick, Rand et al.).

While economists such as Hicks, Hansen, and Samuelson, who synthesized Keynes economics that contain macro-economic propositions with neo-classical economics, represent the neo-classical Keynesian school of intermediate values, Horrod argues that these ideas are approaches that destroy Keynes's original ideas and works on the dynamization of original ideas, Economists like Domar, Robinson, Kaldor also represent the post-keynesian (fundamentalist) school of economics. The economic atmosphere created by Keynes has contributed to the formation of many schools with effective studies today. Chicago School (Friedman), which claims that Keynesian interventionist fiscal policies are not correct and that economic balance can only be achieved with monetaric approach, is one of them. Virginia School of Political Economy (Buchanan), which reestablishes the chain of relationships between market intervention, political preferences and economic structure, is among these schools (Buchanan & Tullock, 1962).

Economic approaches based on the intolerant/clear criticism of capitalism generally unite under the umbrella of Marxian economics. Marxist economics supposed to be essentially based on a cemented conception; surplus value is structured on class and mode of production (the interaction between production relations and forces of production). This structure expands in the process starting with the political economy criticism of Marx and Engels. "Capital accumulation" emphasized in *Capital*, edited by Engels and whose importance became more evident in this process, is Marx's "Surplus Value" Theory, edited by Kautsky; Concepts such as "theory of value" mathematically expressed by Perron Frobenius as the positive eigenvector of the positive matrix of economics or "creative

destruction" whose recognition has been increased / provided by Schumpeter are among the expanded jargon of Marxist economics (Bourgeoisie, Welsh / Abstract Labor. For analysis of basic Marxist jargons such as fetishism, see Sutherland, 2008). It is even stated that the term "Classical Economist" was used by Marx for the first time, including Ricardo, James Mill and those who lived before these economists, the founders of the theory known as Ricardian economics (for an explanatory approach). see Keynes, General Theory explanation chapter, 2008: 13). Although it is sometimes said that classical economic views are the summary of the ideas put forward by the 19th century French economist J.B.Say, it is understood that all the economists between Adam Smith and Marx were defined as classical economists.

When all these schools of economics, which are intertwined and affected by cumulative knowledge, are compared, it can be said that economic approaches are clustered as non-intervention in the market, controlled intervention in the market and completely opposed to the market structure. The classical school represents the approaches that state that intervention in the market is not legitimate and that the natural order must be strictly preserved, the neoclassical school that justifies the "limited" intervention with various means to bring the market into balance, and the Marxian school represents the approaches towards the complete elimination of the market mechanism (capitalism). However, since Keynesian economics left the neoclassical school in terms of intervention tools and logic, this school is titled separately. The "limited" interventions in neoclassical economics aim to regulate and balance individual desires and individual market actions at the micro level. In neoclassical economics, the economy moves from micro to macro, and it is assumed that the behavior of individuals affects the overall economy. Although it uses controlled intervention tools, neoclassical economics is often evaluated on a similar plane to classical economics. However, in Keynesian economics, it is stated that the economy moves from macro to micro and macroeconomic objects such as gross national product, national income, unemployment and consumer price index affect individual behavior (Wolff and Resnick, 2016: 65). The Keynesian and the following post-Keynesian school have a great importance in shaping today's economic environment. As a result, the two most important factors emerging in economics today are "employment" and "price stability" are the net classification of Keynes economics:

(Employment, Interest + Money = General Theory of Price Stability).

### **1.1.1. Voluntary Unemployment in Classical and Neoclassical Economics**

The basic logic of classical economics is to release productivity / efficiency that feudalism constrains and captures (Wolff and Resnick, 2016: 367). It is assumed that individual preferences and rationality have the power to construct and direct the market. Working in classical economics is a modern concept in which the human freedom field can be created within the production processes. In order to be liberated in economic life, individual production potential should be used and studied (Budd, 2011: 68). In the world that has been re-meaningful with capitalism, working is not a part of life but a lifestyle itself (Gorz, 2007: 29-31). Therefore, "not working" in classical economics means not accepting the way of life in which the world evolved.

Classical economics argues that the market should be built on its own balance. Practices such as strong unions negotiating for wages above equilibrium, laws setting a minimum wage limit for workers, when prices fall (deflation), workers and firms often avoid nominal wage cuts for psychological cost (sticky wages / negative wage elasticities) disrupt the natural functioning of the market and creates unemployment (Solow, 1980: 4-10).

In classical economics, producers should be aware of the possibility that they will lose money in the last units they produce if they produce "too much", but they should also know that they can always sell as much as they want. For example, if we consider a society where there is only one labor market and all jobs are equally well paid, labor that is more expensive than product prices reduce the likelihood of profitable production. Higher wage rates naturally mean lower labor demand (and, of course, unemployment). In classical economics, the supply of labor is a thousand-function of the real wage rate (Holte, 1988: 16).

According to classical economics, it is the result of a voluntary choice in all conditions except for unemployment and bad luck. Lucas argues that as long as there are alternative activities in the current economy, unemployment should always be voluntary. "All unemployment also has unofficial elements, because nobody prefers bad luck to good. However, there are voluntary elements in all unemployment because even if one's working



conditions are bad, another person can always choose to settle for that job”(Lucas, 1978: 259).

In classical economic theory, the labor market is divided into two. These are called primary and secondary labor markets. The primary labor market is the stable market with the best of the jobs available. There are skilled labor, higher quality jobs, higher wages and improved social security rights. The secondary labor market, on the other hand, is a low stable market with poor wages and working conditions. However, labor gaps are filled more quickly due to the low qualification requirements (Uyanık, 1999). Most people want to work in the primary labor market.<sup>1</sup>

The level of wages in both labor markets will fluctuate according to labor supply and demand. Of course, there will be improvements and deterioration in working conditions as well as wages. People want to take part in this market, albeit difficult, by following the wages and working conditions that have been formed as a result of fluctuations in the primary labor market for a better and comfortable life. However, they cannot achieve this because they do not have sufficient qualifications. The secondary labor market provides employment opportunities, although it provides lower advantages. In this market, despite various fluctuations, low wages and working conditions, they can be employed within the framework of their own realities (Wachter, 1974: 638). The effect of expectations on the decision to work carries unemployment voluntarily. The decision not to work in order to meet expectations, rather than working in vacancies in the primary and secondary labor market, is a voluntary choice. Therefore, classical economics regards unemployment as “voluntary unemployment”.

In classical economics literature, unemployment debates focus on frictional (temporary-incidental) and voluntary unemployment. Of course, these two types of unemployment that classical economics have identified in the theory of unemployment cannot be evaluated independently from each

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<sup>1</sup> Assuming that the total workforce equals  $L$ , and the workforce employed in the primary labor market, which has good working conditions due to the positive wage pressure of the unions or other reasons, is  $N_1$ . Let us consider those employed in the secondary labor market as  $N_2$  because they do not have the necessary and sufficient conditions. Then employment will be  $(E) = N_1 + N_2$ . Secondary sector employment will be  $N_2 = E - N_1$ . If we assume unemployment as  $U$ , the total labor force will be  $(L) = N_1 + N_2 + U$ , in this case the unemployment level will be  $U = L - (N_1 + N_2)$ .

other. As a matter of fact, in the frictional unemployment process, the period of job search can be extended by the job seeker for personal / arbitrary reasons. In this case, frictional unemployment is intertwined with voluntary unemployment.

Pigou's "Unemployment Theory" is one of the basic works that define the unemployment perception of classical Economics in an understandable way. In the classical tradition, also called the Orthodox school, Pigou links employment volume to two basic factors. The first of these; The actual rates of guaranteed wages for workers, second, the form of the real demand function of the workforce (Pigou, 1968: 90). It is understood from the Pigou theory that the level of "employment" can only be increased in four ways. (i) Organizing the enterprise organization in a way to reduce frictional (temporary-random) unemployment or making estimates accurately, (ii) reducing the marginal effort of labor, expressed as real wages, which can increase the volume of labor ready to work in order to decrease voluntary unemployment, (iii) increasing efficiency in the production of goods affecting the utility of nominal wages (increasing the marginal physical productivity of labor in the consumer goods industries with the Keynes explanation) and (iv) an increase in the prices of non-wage goods relative to the prices of wage goods in the expenditure of classes with income other than wage income (Pigou, 1968, 90; Keynes, 2008: 17).

Thus, according to Pigou's theory, unemployment results from (i) predicting the workforce that will be needed and arranging the organization accordingly, (ii) not regulating real and subjective factors that support work in favor of the employee, (iii) low productivity, and (iv) market conditions. If these conditions are suitable, unemployment is a matter of ready-to-work labor volume, real wage level and marginal effort of the labor force. Apart from structural problems, associating unemployment with marginal effort consisting of real and subjective factors highlights unemployment as a "voluntary" choice in classical economics.

Although the neo-classical unemployment theory contains propositions close to the classical unemployment theory, it sometimes includes important restorations as intermediate values. The idea that voluntary unemployment is the choice of the individual evolves into the structure of the market in the neo-classical view. In Walras' approach, if the balance point is defined by the upper (right) limit point (current amount), it will be

full employment. If the balance point is below the upper point (to the left of the right border point) then voluntary unemployment will occur. The magnitude of voluntary unemployment is the difference between boundaries and balances. More specifically, Walras states that voluntary unemployment occurs when the level of wages needed for living conditions is higher than the market equilibrium wage. According to Walras, leisure use is mostly determined by individuals before entering the labor market, but when the labor market is entered, voluntary unemployment is no longer dependent on the decision of the individuals, but is created by market forces (Davar, 2016: 612).

In current versions of neo-classical economics, there are clear suggestions that unemployment should be voluntary. Wage level (especially in the framework of effective wage models) reveals unemployment as a choice, not a necessity. Although the diversification of markets requires a number of different analyzes from the classical economic perception period, in reality, as long as there is a competitive labor force in any part of the economy, all unemployment must be voluntary (Shapiro and Stiglitz, 1985: 1215).

### **1.1.2. Voluntary Unemployment in Keynesian Economics**

Keynes states that classical economics is based on capital accumulation and labor supply. Accordingly, the wage equals the marginal productivity of the worker, and in the case of employment of a given workforce, the benefit of the wage is equal to the Marginal Effort (Productivity/efficiency Limit) of the amount of employment.

In classical economics, "employment" is subject to three limits. First; is the Keynesian Boundary, which will be discussed in more detail in the following section. It is built on the basic logic that producers are not interested in producing unsold goods. This creates a limit for the size of production and employment. The second is the "neoclassical limit". It states that producers will not be concerned with production where costs are greater than gross income, which will create a limit for labor demand and hence employment. Thirdly; employment cannot be greater than the labor supply. This limit is called the "supply limit" (Holte, 1988: 17). In classical economics these three limits are considered nearly equal. However, where these limits differ, it is the smallest limit that determines the size of

employment (the smaller the barriers to employment, the greater the employment). If the supply limit is higher than at least one of the other limits then unemployment occurs. In the relevant context, it is possible to frame the employment-unemployment relationship with three basic limits:

If the Keynesian limit is lower than the other limits, then Keynesian unemployment occurs.

If the neoclassical limit is lower than the other limits then classical unemployment occurs.

If the Keynesian and neoclassical limits are equal and both are lower than the supply limit, then Classical / Neoclassical Keynesian unemployment occurs (Holte, 1988: 17f).

Wage equal to Worker's Marginal Productivity; It means that the wage of the employee is equal to the value of the revenue to be lost if the workforce is reduced by one unit. Of course, other costs that have been prevented as a result of such a decrease in revenue are excluded from this cost. The equality mentioned here can only be disrupted if there is no perfect competition and free market within certain principles. Equality of the Benefit of the Wage and the Employment Amount to the Marginal Effort; It expresses that the real wage of an employed person is the base wage that forms the basis for the participation of all the amount of labor actually employed in the labor market. That is, for each of the independent labor units, this equality can again be disrupted if perfect competition and market conditions do not occur. The Marginal Effort mentioned here means; Any reason that pushes a person or group to give up work rather than accept a wage that will benefit them less than a certain minimum limit. This kind of unemployment is called frictional (temporary-incidental).

Frictional unemployment; It is unemployment arising from the lack of continuous demand or the temporary gaps between the employment amounts due to reasons arising from miscalculations, or the necessity of spending a certain time in the process of changing the job (Keynes, 1973:6). So much so that even in an economy that is not stagnant under all conditions (full employment), it is inevitable that some of the employment resources will remain idle and such unemployment will occur (Mankiw, 2009: 320).

Also, if the labor force freely or forcefully rejects the share of production (work) corresponding to its marginal productivity from legal or social customs, collective wage commitment (being with the income parent, spouse, etc.), delay in adapting to changes, and ultimately arising from the stubbornness of human temperament. there is talk of an emerging unemployment. This unemployment is called Voluntary unemployment (Keynes, 1973: 6).

In Keynes economics, unemployment is essentially unwilling. What made Keynes away from the unemployment scope of classical economics and made him see unemployment as an informal issue was the fact that people could not find jobs in both markets (primary and secondary) in the period following the great depression of 1929. In his 1936 book, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*, Keynes drew attention to the inadequacy of classical economics in the classification of unemployment and stated that unemployment is not only a voluntary issue and is mostly caused by a lack of effective demand. Keynes acknowledges that it is generally not possible for the public to find as many jobs as they want at the current wage level, further arguing that although some people have given their consent to accept jobs at the nominal wage level, they still cannot find a job. This situation creates a different unemployment apart from the frictional and voluntary unemployment expressed in classical economics. According to Keynes, this type of unemployment, which is called involuntary; In the event that the prices of consumer goods used by workers increase slightly relative to nominal wages, both the total labor supply ready to work within the current nominal wage conditions and the total labor demand made under the same conditions are more than the actual amount of work. (Keynes, Reprinted 1976: 15). With a more understandable regulation, this theoretical index of unemployment can be expressed as the state of not being able to find a job despite the fact that a job is sought at the current wage level and working conditions and will be accepted when found (Keynes, 1973). This definition is accepted as the definition of open unemployment today.

As it is understood from Keynes's explanations, voluntary unemployment; It occurs due to legal or social customs, refusal to work, collective wage dependence, delays in adapting to changes and reasons arising from human temperament. However, individual income ownership, unrealistic

expectations, short-term working preferences, social assistance etc. It should be accepted that the reasons cause reluctance in job search and cause voluntary unemployment.

### **1.1.3. Voluntary Unemployment in Marxist Economics**

In Marxist economics based on the labor theory of value, unemployment basically consists of two reasons. The first is the idle labor force that arose with mechanization in production. Technology creates unemployment. The other is that low-skilled workforce has difficulty finding employment due to the capitalist's increasing demand for skilled labor depending on the number of unemployed. Wages decrease as the number of job-seeking workforce increases, so qualified people are willing to start at lower wage levels. In this case, if the unqualified workforce accepts the low wage level, the chance of finding a job decreases. These explanations are understood that unemployment in Marxist economics is a natural consequence of the inherent contradiction of capitalism (Ataman, 1998: 62).

In Marxist economics, it is seen that both types of unemployment are actually involuntary. The spiral of unemployment arising from the structure of capitalism is an involuntary situation for working people. In the Marxist doctrine, capitalist unemployment results from insufficient accumulation of capital and lack of full productivity in production. However, even if there is no full efficiency in production, profitability is continuous in capitalism. The employer always wants to get more surplus value. When the marginal productivity of the worker is zero, the production of surplus value stops, the employer does not demand new workers and unemployment starts. In this case, unemployment is not a matter of preference for the unemployed, but the result of the process preferred by the capitalist. Voluntary unemployment can only occur for those who are not allowed by the capitalist market.

Apart from the criticism of capitalism, labor is valuable in the core value of Marxist economics by its very existence. Not working is not a matter of preference. Since a person who is voluntarily unemployed cannot get a share from production, he will not have a chance to live. However, those who do not have the physical and mental power to work may be unemployed voluntarily. All healthy people should contribute to the production process. In this sense, there is a great similarity between the Marxist working process and the capitalist working process. The point

where the two economic streams differ is not the decision of whether to work or not, but the question of profit sharing as a result of the study. It is a natural process for the capitalist to appropriate the surplus value obtained in one. Because the capitalist takes the risk of enterprise as a sector providing capital. In the other, the worker who makes the production must take a share from the profit obtained from the production as much as he deserves. Because the value of a good is determined by the amount of labor spent on that good. As it can be understood from here, both economic currents perceive voluntary unemployment as inefficiency. For this reason, it is alleged that Marx told his son-in-law Lafargue, who claimed that non-working or laziness was a right and published a work entitled *The Right to Laziness*, "if you are a Marxist, I am not a Marxist" because he has such ideas<sup>2</sup>.

## **2. Causes of Voluntary Unemployment**

The choice to work under voluntary unemployment is due to certain reasons. Although most of them are personal reasons, structural reasons also affect this preference. Reasons stemming from human temperament, not looking for a job or being reluctant to seek a job, refusal to work, short-term preferences, income effect and unrealistic expectations can be listed under personal reasons.

Variables such as market structure, not being sufficiently informed about vacant jobs, long-term job search activity, delays in adapting to the qualifications required by the market, high income tax policies and socio-cultural structure can be explained among structural reasons.

### **2.1. Personal Causes of Voluntary Unemployment**

The personal causes of voluntary unemployment are often related to the psychological implications of life choices or economic power. Some people find it pointless to work as a temperament. In this case, not working may turn into a lifestyle as a preference. Some people find work to be inconvenient, even though they do not find it pointless, and even though

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<sup>2</sup> For the English version of Friedrich Engels' letters to Eduard Bernstein and Lafargue in 1882, see.  
[https://marxists.catbull.com/archive/marx/works/1882/letters/82\\_08\\_09.htm](https://marxists.catbull.com/archive/marx/works/1882/letters/82_08_09.htm) and  
[https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1889/letters/89\\_05\\_11.htm](https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1889/letters/89_05_11.htm)

they are looking for a job, they do not actually look for work or behave reluctantly. Some take a more radical stand and refuse to work altogether. Of course, this refusal cannot be posited as an absolute pattern of behavior. In case of need, efforts may be made to obtain the income necessary for living with short-term work. However, it should be accepted that those with alternative income have higher resistance to not work. Moreover, it is possible for those with alternative income to have unrealistic wage expectations. All these data make it possible to define voluntary unemployment as a subjective unemployment.

### **2.1.1. Causes Arising from Human Temperament**

Human behaviors differ from each other within the framework of various factors. While some people do not like to work, others do. While laziness is a bad habit for some, it is a way of life for others. For some, working is a part of social status (Sen, 1975: for others it is a sign of enslavement (Güler, 2015: 26 et al.).

The most basic theory for the diversity of human behavior is Douglas McGregor's X and Y theory. Theory of X; It predicts that individuals do not like to work and will avoid working when they find the opportunity. Therefore, if an individual is desired to be employed, he must be scared, directed and threatened when necessary. According to theory X, a normal person avoids responsibility. The aim is to find the most secure and high-income job (McGregor, 2006: 43). Y theory; It predicts that the physical and mental work of people by working is as natural as their play and rest needs. According to theory Y, a normal person wants to learn and bear responsibility. Working is an activity performed voluntarily (McGregor, 2006: 59). It is understood that the reasons arising from human temperament leading to voluntary unemployment are valid for individuals defined within the scope of Mc Greor's X theory.

In addition to this theory, there is also Reddin's theory of Z. The theory predicts that people will be motivated according to the situation they are in and that they will do this not internally or externally but only with logic (Reddin, 1970: 16). Therefore, voluntary unemployment is the product of a logical process according to this theory. People who have adopted laziness or idleness as a way of life confirm this theory. It is possible to capture the essence of this theory in philosophical literary works such as Bertrand



Russel's "Praise of Idleness" and Poul Lafergue's "The Right to be Lazy", which emphasize the holiness of laziness.

It is also necessary to mention Argyris's theory of immaturity-immaturity. It is possible to explain the reasons that cause voluntary unemployment and arise from human temperament with this theory. Theory; He suggests that an immature person has characteristics such as being passive, dependent on the other, short-sighted, limited thinking ability, and ape-like appetite. These people can easily leave their jobs, be absent or quit working. The problem is not that the employee does not have the skills necessary for high performance, but that he is unwilling to work in that job. Mature people behave exactly the opposite (Argyris, 1983: 20). According to the Argyris theory, it is normal for immature people to choose voluntary unemployment. To put it differently, voluntary unemployment is not a mature behavior. This theory contains similar determinations with Mc Gregor's X and Y theory.

### **2.1.2. Not Looking for or Reluctant to Look for A Job**

Sometimes long-term job search activity discourages people and causes them to stop looking for a job. In order for a person to be considered unemployed (or to be included in the unemployment statistics), he must be actively engaged in job search activity (using one of the job search channels). However, if the expectations are not met or the job is not found suitable for education, the job search activity turns into reluctant behavior and may even end completely after a while. In this case, "voluntary unemployment" will occur.

If unemployment appears to be structurally voluntary, then it will not work to lay off (or retire) existing employment to create new jobs. In such cases, it is necessary to determine the reasons for the reluctance to look for a job and to create suitable conditions for the workforce supply to work. For this, measures such as increasing the level of benefit that will occur as a result of the study, lowering the initial rate of income tax, establishing a minimum income assurance system for working families or providing childcare assistance for single parents can be taken (Ed. Ekon: Voluntary and Involuntary Unemployment).

### 2.1.3. Refusing to Work

Refusing to work is an extension of the belief that one can survive without working. Denial may be caused by the human temperament described above or the income effect described in two subtitles.

Refusing to work means that personal contribution to production disappears. Moreover, the thought that life can continue without working may have a supportive effect on the risk of social exclusion, as well as the potential for crime.

The concept of refusal to work described here includes the decision not to work in the context of voluntary unemployment. Otherwise, refusal to work in jobs that threaten occupational health and safety or that are unethical cannot be shown as the reason for willful unemployment (6331/13, 4857/25, ILO Convention No. 119). On the other hand, there are situations where people are encouraged or even threatened to continue working under very difficult conditions. Especially at the beginning of the industrial revolution, there are many works depicting that "work" is carried out under both sociological and theological inculcation. In Thompson's *Formation of the British Working Class*, there is a frightening scene in which children aged 6-7, who went to work at 5 in the morning, died of exhaustion and hunger while crossing the train road (Thompson, 2015: 407). Likewise, his work on the *Way of Hajj*, which builds the social support of the production processes of Capitalism with the spiritual mechanism that sanctifies work, seems to have convinced the whole society that the penalty for non-working will be paid in the afterlife (Bunyan, 1932). However, this effort still continues today. It is possible to come across Christian theological works, which are a capitalist propaganda tool that emphasize the necessity of working under humanitarian conditions or not, and express that such a working state is obligatory by religion. In Sproul's *The Sin of Laziness* section of *Pleasing God*, "... Sometimes we groan under the burden of this curse (work), but bushes and sweat are not excuses for us to do this work. The word job comes from the Latin word 'vocare' which means 'to call'. Our job is a call, a call from God. Ignoring our job means avoiding our responsibilities. We have to work" summarize the costs of refusing to work with subtle allusions (Sproul, 1999).

Understanding that laziness brings poverty, and refusal to work is to refuse to fulfill one of humanity's most fundamental responsibilities is one thing,

another to waste yourself to work in inhumane conditions. Voluntary unemployment occurs only when appropriate conditions are provided, but refuses to work without reasonable grounds.

#### **2.1.4. Leisure Choice**

Preferences between leisure time and income variables are explained with the help of indifference curve in labor economics literature. This structure simply states that sometimes working for longer periods and earning more income, sometimes working for less time and gaining more leisure time is at the same level of benefit.

If we have to work less for more free time and therefore earn less income, how can the utility of choice be equal to oppose leisure or vice versa? Let's explain this with a short example. Suppose you have a child or care-giver at home and no one but you to care for. If you choose to work for higher income and spend the time you devote to care, you will likely have to give a large part of your income to the caregiver. In this case, more income from working harder will not be of much use. If you can find a short-term job, you can enter working life and engage in an economic activity, even if you earn less income. You will also have the chance to accompany people in need of care as you have enough free time. However, when you cannot find a short-term job, you will have to voluntarily withdraw from the labor market in order to continue care. In such cases, voluntary unemployment occurs.

#### **2.1.5. Income Effect**

Ownership of non-wage income may reduce working hours and increase leisure time, as well as completely abandon the decision to work. The effect of change in non-wage income on working time is called "income effect" (Borjas, 2015: 41-42). If the working time is increased for extra earnings when the wage increases, this is called the "substitution effect".

The income effect is an important factor in the decision to work. Incomes such as rent, interest, inheritance, active family support, social security entitlement or social assistance affect the individual's decision to work. Studies show that the reluctance to work is closely related to the amount and duration of income (Smith, 1975; 6-18f.).

In the Neo-Classical approach, the fact that the market wage level is not at

a level to meet the needs / expectations of the individual negatively affects the decision to work. The level of fee that makes the individual indifferent between working and not working is called the "reservation fee". If the market fee is formed under the reservation fee, the individual may be reluctant to work. In a different expression, the harmony of the market wage that the employers are willing to pay for work and the reservation wage level that the employee is willing to start affects the decision to work (Borjas, 2015: 47-48). If the market fees appear below the reservation fees, then "voluntary unemployment" may occur. The effect of wage on an individual's decision to participate in the labor force or to determine working hours is called "labor supply flexibility". Flexibility refers to the percentage change in working hours against a 1% change in wage level. If the labor supply elasticity is below 1, the labor supply curve is rubber and the change observed in working hours is relatively small depending on the change in wage level. People tend to work at all wage levels, and the level of market wages is relatively less likely to trigger voluntary unemployment. If the elasticity is above 1, the labor supply curve is elastic and the change in wages strongly affects working hours. In this case, the level of market wages can trigger a high level of voluntary unemployment. Therefore, as the labor supply elasticity increases, the probability of voluntary unemployment increases.

The most prominent income effect leading to voluntary unemployment is the collective income loyalty resulting from active family support. Employment of one or more individuals in the household may cause voluntary unemployment for individuals who share family income and are of working age. Moreover, if the employees in the family support this situation or if the income of the employees is sufficient to support the family, the voluntary unemployment preference may continue for a very long time. Those who are not currently looking for a job despite being unemployed, who are in the active population and are excluded from the labor force, who are educated (students) and housewives can be considered within this scope. This segment is mostly unemployed due to their collective income commitment.

Individuals who are in the active population and constitute the institutional population excluded from the workforce (those in prison, asylum, nursing homes, etc.) cannot be classified as voluntary unemployed because they cannot make their decision to work according to their own preferences.

When the individual who wants to work cannot find a job according to his / her criteria despite looking for a job, instead of accepting a job with lower criteria due to collective wage commitment or alternative income ownership, he / she may gradually give up looking for a job. This refers to the "discouraged" worker effect. These individuals, who have a minimum income level that can keep them alive, are not included in the labor force as they give up looking for a job (Biçerli, 2000: 50), but these individuals are considered unemployed voluntarily.

There may also be individuals who voluntarily do not seek work at their own expense, even if they do not depend on / have permanent collective income. Although they are technically included in the labor force, they are temporarily out of the labor market with this attitude. Since the time spent voluntarily unemployed is proportional to the amount of savings, they will start looking for a job again after a while. This interim unemployment is generally frictional unemployment. Frictional unemployment may be voluntary, and unemployment may turn into frictional unemployment with the start of looking for a job during a period of voluntary unemployment. Here, once again, the proximity of voluntary unemployment and frictional unemployment arises.

Although some researches show that there are effects of family responsibilities and labor market structure (such as flexibility) rather than income effect (Croda, et al., 2011: 5-17), voluntary unemployment among women is not possible to be independent from income effect. Increasing domestic income levels cause increase in women's labor supply flexibility and reservation wages. This situation results in women's reluctance to participate in the labor market and an increase in voluntary unemployment. However, it should be emphasized that the consequences of the income effect causing voluntary unemployment among women are affected by the economic development of the countries or the condition of the region (rural / urban). For example, while the income effect is high in the voluntary unemployment preference of women living in urban areas, it is seen that this effect is low in rural areas (Kılıç & Öztürk, 2014: 124).

Another important income generation that triggers voluntary unemployment is social assistance. There are many studies showing that social assistance negatively affects the labor supply (Haan & Prowse, 2015; Gökbunar, Özdemir, & Uğur, 2008, Hvinden, 1999; Ditch, 1999 Snower,

1993). There are also many studies showing that social assistance (Sarısoy & Koç, 2010), which can reduce poverty rates in the temporary period, loses its effectiveness in the long term and leads to poverty spiral (Habibov & Fan, 2006; Devereux, 2002; Braitwaite, Grootaert, & Milanovic, 2000; Kenworthy, 1999). The amount and duration of social benefits are important in the decision to work. As the amount and duration of aid increases, there is a decrease in the will to work and an increase in voluntary unemployment, while the job search activity intensifies in the opposite case. The effects on employment of public attention in Turkey is that social assistance specialists. Studies on this subject refer to the effect of aid amount and duration with a similar approach (Keskin, 2013: 52; Taşaltın, 2013: 57; Akkaya and Kaya, 2013: 60; Şeker and Hacımahmutoğlu, 2013: 70; Yener, 2013: 78).

As the gap between social benefits and the minimum wage closes, it has been revealed as a real situation that there is a visible decrease in the desire to work (For the statement of the 64th government prime minister on the subject, see. <http://t24.com.tr/haber/davutoglundan-sosyal-yardim-elistirisi-> we did it right-but-a little-too much, 314034). Although not supported by a comprehensive statistical data, there are also studies showing that those who earn income through social assistance can shift to unregistered employment in order not to cut their aid (Şener, 2010: 20; Aslan, 2014: 24). In this case, we come across a group that appears to be voluntarily unemployed who actually work but expresses that they do not work voluntarily in the surveys. However, it would not be correct to regard this group as voluntary unemployed.

Social policy discussions have recently focused on the effectiveness of cash income supports within the scope of citizenship income. By citizenship income, it is meant a social policy implementation that includes regular cash transfers to all members of the society regardless of their position in working life (Standing, 2007: 334). The cash supports foreseen in this system, which is put forward as a policy of fighting against poverty, should be well balanced and applied at a level that will not "encourage laziness" and refuse to work. (Buğra and Sınmazdemir, 2016: 10). The aim here is a problem with the right to life for employees below the minimum wage. Otherwise, the rejection of a job with social security with minimum wage is one of the issues that the system avoids. Moreover, conditional /

unconditional cash supports of citizenship income also aim to bring the labor market to more suitable working conditions by removing the financial impossibilities that prevent individuals from accepting jobs below minimum wages and without social security (Buğra and Sınmazdemir, 2016: 34). It does not seem possible that the citizenship income effect causes voluntary unemployment within the framework of the above conditions.

Some people, on the other hand, have the knowledge, ability and capacity to earn an income without being subject to standard working relationships due to their own abilities without the need for external support. Especially if these people who can survive by using the advantages of the modern financial market are actually doing an economic activity (stock trading), if they operate outside the standard working process without being affiliated with an institution, they may appear structurally and statistically unemployed. However, this segment is not actually voluntarily unemployed.

Finally, we can say that the amount and duration of unemployment insurance payments, which is a passive labor market policy practice, gain importance within the scope of voluntary unemployment. Discussions about the need for short-term unemployment insurance payments or to be linked to various vocational training can be evaluated in this context.

#### **2.1.6. Unrealistic Expectations**

In addition, some people may have unrealistic expectations directly. If there is no causal link between the qualifications he / she has and the job requested and the wage, the person can voluntarily opt out of unemployment. However, the absence of a causal relationship between the qualifications possessed and the work done does not necessarily cause voluntary unemployment.

If the person chooses to work even if there is a qualification mismatch, if he is looking for a job in order to get a job suitable for his qualification and is able to start working within two weeks when he finds it, there is underemployment within the scope of “underemployment”.

The fact that very few people in some professions earn astronomical amounts of income causes them to dominate their fields. For this reason, many people think that these professions have high wage income. When

they turn to the same or similar professions, they expect excessive wages. This situation is called the "superstar phenomenon" (Borjas, Labor Economics). In such cases, voluntary unemployment will occur if people choose not to work because their high wage expectations are not met.

### **2.1.7. Delays in Adapting to The Qualifications Required by The Market**

Working life is constantly changing due to the dynamism of the economic structure and the usual conditions of life. Especially the intensive use of information and communication technologies, computer-based mechanization, new production and marketing techniques and above all, globalization can be considered as the basic elements of change.

Failure to adapt to changes in working life may cause individuals to be unemployed or even excluded from the labor market. As a matter of fact, those who cannot adapt to the changes leave the labor market as "discouraged workers" if they fail to get results from their job search and give up looking for a job. This situation may cause voluntary unemployment.

The way to adapt to the changing conditions of working life is through education. The Turkish National Education system consists of two main sections, Formal and Non-Formal Education. Formal Education; It includes pre-primary education, primary education, secondary education and higher education institutions. Non-Formal Education; It covers all educational activities organized alongside or outside formal education (ME Act. Art.18). In order to adapt to the changes, it is necessary to take formal and non-formal education together, and to have customized information including current developments.

There is a direct proportion between education level and wage expectation. However, when structural problems occur in the labor market, the wage balance between education and employment may be disturbed. In such a case, people with a high level of education may not want to work at the wage level offered to them and the risk of voluntary unemployment may arise. Although there is the possibility of such a tendency within the scope of voluntary unemployment, it is also possible to act with the motive to get value for the time and money spent on the development of human capital or to enter a job and earn income under any condition in the period when the



markets are in a structural crisis. In this case the educated may be encountered as a result of the increase in job search activities uneducated each section (of all levels of education in job search activities for the 2013 period in Turkey is a survey of that increase compared to 2009 (ages, Fabric and Morali, 2015: 81- 82).

The tendency towards professions that are popular for a certain period and offer high wages increases. However, those who want to practice this profession (especially young people) have to endure a certain training period in order to gain the necessary qualifications. Since the profession is popular and wages are high, before the new group is reached, people who have the qualifications required for that profession in the market begin to create labor supply inflation. Due to the surplus of labor supply, the law of scarcity in economics (due to the value of something) works and wages in that profession tend to fall. When new graduates are trained, that profession can no longer offer higher wage levels as before. In this case, a new profession appears and this time the same process begins for him. This spiral is called "cobweb theory". New graduates get stuck in this network and are disappointed when they can't find the wage levels they've conditioned themselves from the start. He resists working until he has to and remains unemployed at will. However, after a while, the resistances are broken and the lucky ones, except for a small segment, accept a wage level lower than their expectations and join the employment.

Voluntary unemployment of those who, for various reasons, are delayed in adapting to the qualifications required by the market and who have lost their jobs due to this, is closely related to the time they spend in their working life and their income. People who have spent longer periods of time in working life and earned higher income are more likely to accept lower-level jobs in the frictional period (may also be the secondary labor market), while their tendency to work is higher, while those who have spent less time in working life with low wages are more likely to have voluntary unemployment.

## **2.2. Structural Causes of Voluntary Unemployment**

Although voluntary unemployment is generally seen due to personal reasons, sometimes structural reasons are among the factors that trigger the preference of individuals to not work. Variables such as market structure,

insufficient awareness of vacant jobs in poorly regulated labor markets, high income tax policies, and socio-cultural structure, especially for women, are among the structural causes of voluntary unemployment.

### **2.2.1. Market Structure**

Unemployment arising due to the general structure of the economy is called “structural unemployment”. However, this type of unemployment is examined under the scope of voluntary unemployment. Because those who are unemployed due to structural reasons continue their job search activities but cannot find a job because the market opportunities are not sufficient. In this case, unemployment can be recorded under open unemployment and reflected in the statistics. However, if the job seeking activity is stopped due to adverse conditions of the market, structural problems that cause unemployment at will may turn into voluntary unemployment. Of course, it is not easy to stop the job search activity and use the preference not to work due to structural problems.

### **2.2.2. Not Being Sufficiently Aware of Vacancies**

A healthy labor market can be evaluated in terms of having symmetrical as well as asymmetric information sharing infrastructure. To be able to be easily aware of vacancies, first of all, vacancies should be recorded simultaneously and then shared effectively. Today, this sharing is mostly done on the internet. The labor market information network EURES, which aims to facilitate communication between job seekers and proposers within the framework of the European Union, is a strong example of a system of being aware of vacant jobs carried out on the internet. EURES was established in 1993 under the coordination of the European Commission and was structured within the framework of the Coordination Offices (EURESco) under a European Higher Strategy Group and Working Committee. Operating with 100 thousand employees in approximately 5 thousand offices in a total of 31 countries (32 including the UK), including the member countries of the European Union, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland, this structure expands to lower levels as national and regional / local. The current needs of job seekers and employers are simultaneously reflected in the EURES system, which works in integration with public employment services (PES-our İŞ-KUR) established at national level (Özdemir, 2011:14). Turkey's labor market information infrastructure,

although at a level to adapt to this kind of system, EURES is not included due to become EU members.

Not being aware of vacant jobs depends on the adequacy of the information infrastructure as well as on the possibilities of access to this structure. Although this problem seems to be overcome with the increasing internet membership and smartphone ownership today, the limited access possibilities in countries with structural problems reduce the chance of being aware of vacant jobs. In such cases, the prolonged job search activity discourages the hope of finding a job and causes unemployment to gradually turn into voluntary unemployment. It should be reiterated here that the transferred process has been considered as one of the possibilities that may cause voluntary unemployment and should not be evaluated as absolute.

### **2.2.3. High Income Tax Policies**

The effect of tax rates on growth, investment and labor markets has been among the topics worth researching almost every period. Although increases in tax rates increase income in the short run, it feeds the informal economy in the long run. For this reason, taxes, which are the most important source of income for the state, should be kept in a certain balance for peace and peace and a healthy economy.

Crisis periods are generally tried to be overcome with the revenue increases expected as a result of increasing tax rates. Increasing income tax rates for the 1994 and 1999 crisis in Turkey-enhancing policies were pursued. It can be said that these are partially successful. For example, the crisis of 99 was predicted in 1998 and it was decided to make regular increases in tax rates to increase revenues. The average tax burden, which was 17.2% in 1998, rose to 18.9% in 1999 and 21.1% in 2000. Thus, budget revenues increased from 18.9 quadrillion in 1999 to 33.4 quadrillion in 2000 with an increase of 76.6% (Aydm, 2013: 148). There are also studies claiming the opposite. For example, in Turkey, the corporation tax rate from 30%

As a result of a research on how much a decrease in income would be if it was reduced to 20%, it pointed to an increase in income contrary to what was expected. In this research conducted in 2008, it was determined that a 10% decrease in the corporate tax rate would cause a 25% increase in the corporate tax income of the state (TOBB, 2008).

There is sometimes a correct and sometimes an inverse proportion between taxes and unemployment. For example, despite the increase in taxes, it is observed that unemployment decreased by 1.6% in the second quarter of 2000 compared to the previous same period (However, it is necessary to take into account the multiplier effects of the projects put into effect by İŞKUR as a result of the 1999 earthquake and employing approximately 5 thousand earthquake victims). Although there are extraordinary situations, the policies of this period are an important example as a real situation that unemployment may decrease despite the increase in the tax burden.

However, it cannot be said that the same result was achieved for the 2001 crisis in which a similar policy was applied. Institutions and temporary tax rates have been increased, and as a result, in the third quarter of 2001, unemployment rose from 5.6% to 8% compared to the previous period. In the 2009 crisis, although periodic successes were achieved in the unemployment rates inherited from the previous period, it is seen that the unemployment rate climbed up to 16%. Moreover, due to this increased tax burden since 2001, Turkey regular 43% employment tax burden in the OECD countries has risen to first place. However, with the regulations made after 2010, significant decreases started to be recorded in the general tax burden in order to attract foreign direct investments. For example, the average OECD load tax burden in Turkey in 2013 was below 34,2'lik tax rate% (29.3%). In the same period, the rate of unemployment was 9.7%; Non-agricultural unemployment rate has decreased to 12% (TURKSTAT, Household Labor Force Survey, 6 March 2014, p.16015).

Finally, using the data of 81 provinces between 2008 and 2013, a panel data analysis was conducted and it was revealed that the increase in unemployment rates has a decreasing effect on taxes, which are the main public finances (Hotunluoğlu and Arslaner, 2016: 1643).

Another effect of tax on the decision to work is the "spite effect" of taxation and the dissatisfaction of people with taxation. Due to this effect, people may tend to reduce their working hours gradually (Balseven, 2003: 221). In fact, the preference not to work may increase when tax rates begin to drastically lower income levels. All these studies reveal a clear relationship between tax and unemployment. When tax rates exceed the level of tolerance (or when some individuals begin to feel that way), higher tax rates can lead to voluntary unemployment.

#### 2.2.4. Socio-Cultural Structure and Gender

Perhaps the clearest area where the relationship between the socio-cultural structure and voluntary unemployment can be established is the attitude of women towards their work preferences. Labor force participation rates are lower among women than men, often due to the domestic production process or responsibilities such as childcare. Marital status of women can be counted among the main causes of voluntary unemployment. Married women are more likely to be unemployed than single, widowed or divorced women. In a study conducted in Anatolia, where women are more voluntarily unemployed due to the socio-cultural structure, it was found that economic reasons have priority in the decision to work (79.5%), but they decide to work more (90.6%). In the study, it is stated that only 0.7% of their spouses contribute to the decision to work for women. The rate of women who decide to work with mother and father encouragement is 8.7% (Özçatal, 2011: 28). When these data are read from a different perspective, it can be evaluated that only 0.7% of the spouses and only 8.7% of the parents encourage women / girls to work, and the remaining part is likely to react negatively to women's participation in working life. . In this context, it can be determined that socio-culturally, it is natural for women to be unemployed in societies where the patriarchal structure is dominant.

In Turkey, women's participation in working life preferences themselves feel more useful, as individuals and be able to show the presence of adults participating in the study considered to be the result of the perception of life as an individual right. As the education level rises, the rate of participation in working life increases, especially among young women (Küçükali, 2014: 16). A negative, albeit low, relationship was found between the level of religious orientation and the attitude towards women's work. However, it is seen that as the education level increases, the positive attitude towards working women increases (Kuzgun and Sevim, 2004: 24). This situation reveals that the higher the education level, the lower the risk of voluntary unemployment among women.

There are also studies showing that women have a shorter job seeking period than men, even though they are likely to be unemployed voluntarily. In a graduate study using İŞKUR (Turkish PES) data on 471,368 people applying for unemployment benefits in the 2009-2011 period, it was calculated that the duration of finding a job for a man who has been

unemployed for 12 months is 1.11 times shorter than women (Bulut, 2011: 90). In another study examining the relationship between job seeking time and gender, it was concluded that women are more disadvantageous than men in all job search periods (short or long) (Çağlar, Kumaş, & Moralı, 2015: 85-86).

### **3. Consequences of Voluntary Unemployment**

Voluntary unemployment can be thought of as a form of inefficiency. So the consequences of inefficiency can also be determined as the results of voluntary unemployment. Inefficiency; Voluntary unemployment will also lead to similar consequences, as it results in low production, low profitability, waste of time, low development and low progress.

Rational activities equipped with the right strategies are necessary for the growth of a person, for the growth of a company or for the development of a region or country. It is not possible for any structure that is idle to develop and progress. According to the general entropy rule, everything evolves from order to disorder, from good to bad, back to old. In this case, it is not correct to assume that everything will be better by simply waiting without any effort. The situation in the labor markets is also subject to a general entropic process. Individuals who are not engaged in economic activity gradually become a burden to society. Various active employment policies are implemented in order to include people in this situation into the workforce. Increasing labor force participation rate is as important as increasing employment. If individuals decide not to work and choose not to participate in the workforce, then the economy remains below its potential and under-production enters a spiral of inadequate investment and low employment. Since the increase in unemployment rate will lower the market reservation fee, the advantages for joining the labor force gradually decrease. In such a case, there will be both stagnation and price increase in the market, which is called stagflation. Consequently, the decision not to work voluntarily (voluntary unemployment) can cause hard-to-compensate damages by putting the economy in an impasse.

Voluntary unemployment also negatively affects standard vocational training programs. Trying to gain a profession for those who choose not to work voluntarily is often a futile effort. Education is on demand and does not efficiently benefit those who don't. Special practices (sometimes

including psychological support) should be designed in addition to standard vocational training programs to ensure that the group that chooses voluntary unemployment can re-participate in the workforce. Therefore, voluntary unemployment may cause changes in the curricula of standard vocational education programs.

Voluntary unemployed people may believe in the unnecessary behavior of the society's customs, traditions or customs. It is quite natural that some behavioral patterns from the past seem unreasonable to those who are individually inefficient and who have accepted not working as a lifestyle. In such cases, a rapid change or even collapse can be observed in the social structure. Voluntary unemployment can cause significant damage to the basic moral structure of society.

Voluntary unemployment can also cause an increase in crime rates in society. Although there is not a high level of positive relationship between unemployment and crime rates, it is known that there is a positive interaction. Voluntary unemployed people, who have the needs they need for a certain period of time, can turn to illegal ways when they can not meet their needs. In this case, it is also possible to observe increases in crime rates.

Voluntary unemployment can also negatively affect the psychology of individuals. Individuals who live inefficiently and aimlessly may shift to behaviors or extremes that are not accepted as normal by society after a while. Individuals who lose their life balance are not expected to be beneficial to themselves and their environment. For this reason, family structures are also destroyed and negativities may occur in the social order.

## **Conclusion**

Voluntary unemployment refers to the unemployment due to not seeking a job. In classical economics, unemployment is total voluntary. Although various restorations have been made in neoclassical economics, unemployment is expected to be voluntary in a competitive market. On the other hand, Keynesian economics perceives unemployment as an involuntary necessity arising from market conditions. A similar approach exists in Marxist economics. Unemployment is the result of the capitalist's ambition to capture surplus value and technology is also the result of a

poorly organized market. But cementically, in Marxism, unemployment is perceived and unwelcome as inefficiency and non-contributing to production. It has been stated by Marx that romantic socialist works such as *The Right to be Lazy* do not reflect the economic ideology of Marx (In the later periods -30s- *The Praise of Idleness* contains similar approaches).

Although voluntary unemployment refers to the state of not working voluntarily, there is no absolute inertia in modern society. The forms of economic activity outside the traditional working relationship may not make it possible to consider the voluntarily unemployed, who are not reflected in official statistics, as unemployed in reality. Individuals who continue their economic activities with very different flexible working styles may appear voluntarily unemployed because they do not comply with the criteria used in statistical calculations or are not registered in a social security system. If these individuals continue their economic activities in some way, they may not be considered unemployed even if they are officially seen as unemployed (or voluntarily unemployed). It is understood here that unemployment or unemployment measures should be redefined in the structure of modern society.

Individuals who do not actually engage in any economic activity and prefer to be unemployed voluntarily are not seen as beneficial for the society as they do not participate in production activities and are inefficient, although these decisions stem from the market structure. In accordance with the expression "the state struggles with idleness", which was also included in the 1961 Constitution, but later abolished, voluntary unemployment should be accepted as a pattern of behavior that should be fought for the development of the economy and the progress of the country.

The improvement is the result of an efficient production process. For this reason, it will be possible to find a solution to the increasing voluntary unemployment problem with measures such as taking into account and eliminating the personal factors that lead to voluntary unemployment, assuming that the labor markets will automatically come to balance and not being completely released, and arranging the unplanned arbitrary production especially in the field of education according to need. In this way, it will be possible to prevent the various cash and in-kind aids provided to people who do not work for different reasons, from disturbing the conscience of the society, and to help individuals, disabled people or



the elderly who really need it, in a heartfelt manner and in accordance with the tradition of the Turkish society.

Finally, it should be emphasized that voluntary unemployment among young people is very dangerous. Young people form the basis of both physical and intellectual capital for the development of a country. In this context, the market structure and conditions that trigger voluntary unemployment must be well examined and regulated. Otherwise, the voluntary army of unemployed, which is gradually accumulating, creates new generations who believe that they can live with low productivity, and this situation causes the production, education and society to become inferior and the country to enter the spiral of total underdevelopment.

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