

Understanding Unemployment among College Graduates

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Context and Motivation

- ❑ Educated unemployment (among tertiary level graduates) is high, and it is also increasing over time.
- ❑ According to LFS 2022, it has gone up from 11.2% in 2016/17 to 12% in 2022.
- ❑ Educated unemployment is more than twice the overall national unemployment according to LFS 2022.
- ❑ To enhance the employability of National University (NU) graduates, the Ministry of Education has implemented a project called the College Education Development Project (CEDP) among selected tertiary level colleges in Bangladesh.
- ❑ CEDP promotes institution-led activities through providing competitive grants and training.
- ❑ This presentation is based on the follow-up tracer study that was conducted in 2023.

Focus of the Tracer Study (TS) on Graduates

□ The study focuses on the following aspects:

- In-depth assessment of labor market outcomes and economic activities of graduates;
- Socio-economic background of current student, motivation, financing arrangements and perceptions on college education and market relevance;
- Teaching-learning environment in the colleges;
- Employers' views on NU graduates and tertiary level college education;
- Challenges the colleges faced and way forward.

Methodological Approach & Sampling

- ❑ Mixed method approach was used (i.e., combining quant-qual);
- ❑ Data were collected from FOUR category of respondents:
 - ✓ graduates,
 - ✓ students,
 - ✓ college principals, and
 - ✓ current employers of NU graduates.
- ❑ 4 sets of survey questionnaires were used to collect information.
- ❑ Qualitative approaches, such as, focus group discussion (FGD) with the teachers and the students; and key informant interviews (KII) with other relevant stakeholders were also carried out.

- ❑ Main target of this study was the graduates of NU-affiliated colleges in Bangladesh.
- ❑ About 608 honors and master's colleges are affiliated with NU:
 - 437 (72%) are non-government, and 171 (28%) are government colleges;
- ❑ 10% of colleges were selected for the survey.
- ❑ Sample size covers:
 - Colleges: 61 colleges (Government: 17, Non-government: 44)
 - Graduates: 1,340
 - Students: 670
 - Principals: 61
 - Employers: 100 (Public: 50; Private: 50)

Findings of the Study

Who Are The National University Students?

- ❑ Gender: 58% of the graduates are male and 42% are female;
- ❑ About 38% of the graduates hold a masters degree; and 62% hold an honors degree; and
- ❑ Academic results of the students are usually average.

% of graduates with CGPA obtained

Major	%	Average CGPA	Major	%	Average CGPA
Bachelor in Science	3.82	3.00	Masters in Science	31.05	3.10
Bachelor in Social Science (BSS)	14.28	2.91	Masters in Social Science (MSS)	11.76	2.98
Bachelor in Arts	37.62	2.85	Masters in Arts	32.00	2.93
Bachelor in Business Administration/Commerce	44.26	2.89	Masters in Business Administration/Commerce	25.17	3.17

- ❑ Average household income and expenditures are Tk. 36,109 and Tk. 25,871 respectively;
- ❑ **Most students belong to lower middle-income families (73%);**

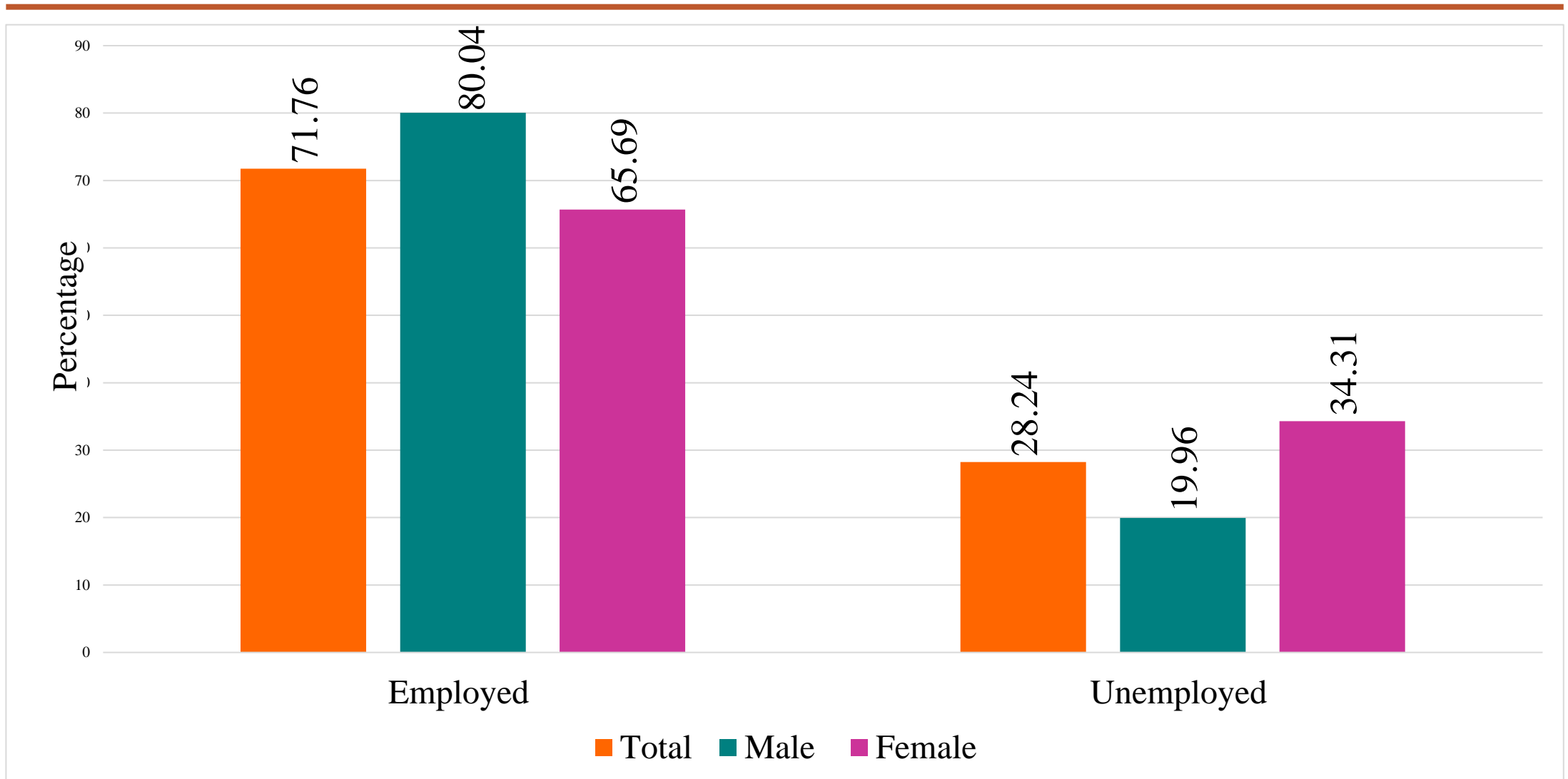
Graduates' Parental Background

Level of Education	Graduates (%) with Parent's Education		Graduates (%) with Parent's Occupation		
	Fathers' Education	Mothers' Education	Occupation	Fathers' Occupation	Mothers' Occupation
No education	15.1	26.4	Homemaker	-	97.61
Primary	25.1	41.7	Professional	4.12	0.54
SSC/Equivalent	26.0	24.8	Government employee	13.99	0.92
HSC/Equivalent	11.5	5.0	Private sector employee	13.60	0.39
Bachelor degree	13.3	1.6	Autonomous institution employee	2.10	0.08
Master's degree	8.5	0.4	Bank/Insurance institution employee	1.17	0.15
Others	0.5	0.2	NGO/Trust/Foundation employee	1.79	0.08
			Business	26.96	0.15
			Self Employed Activities	6.84	0.08
			Agriculture & agro-based occupations	29.45	-

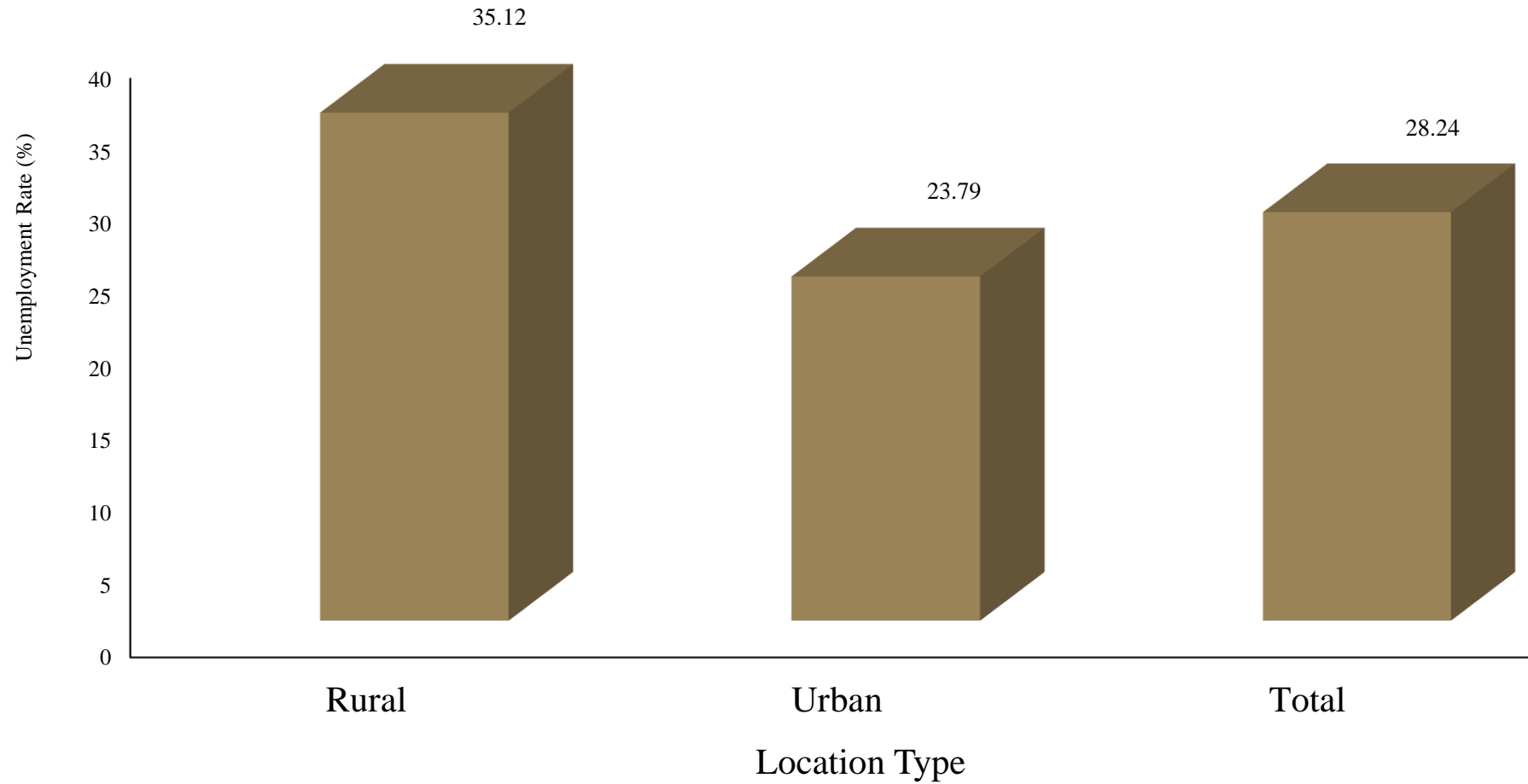
Types of Employment/Unemployment among NU Graduates

Status of graduates	Follow-up tracer study (2023) (%)
Salaried employed	42.29
Self-employed	16.24
Unemployed	28.24
Part-time work and study	13.22

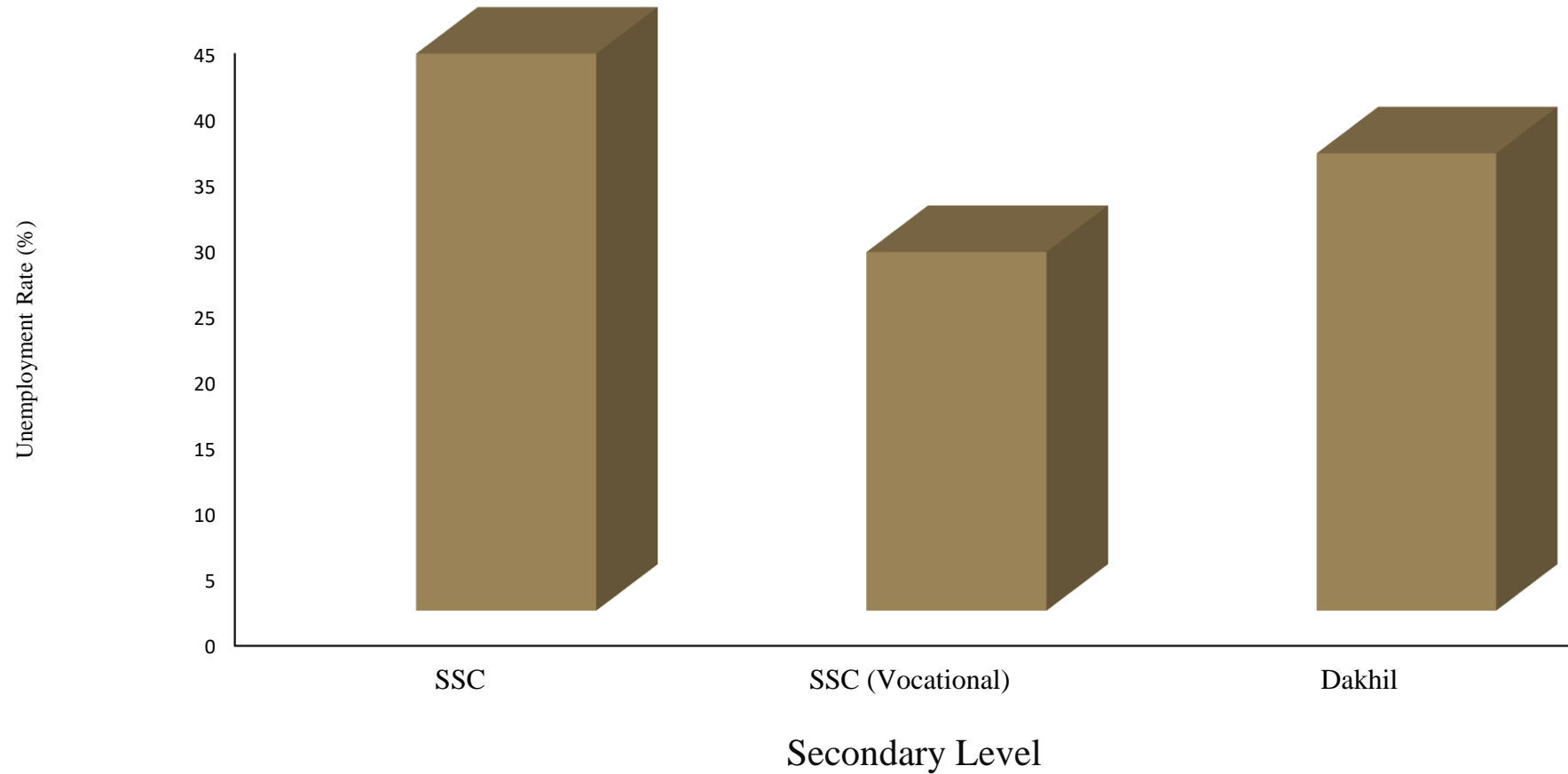
Educated Unemployment by Gender



Educated Unemployment by Location/Area

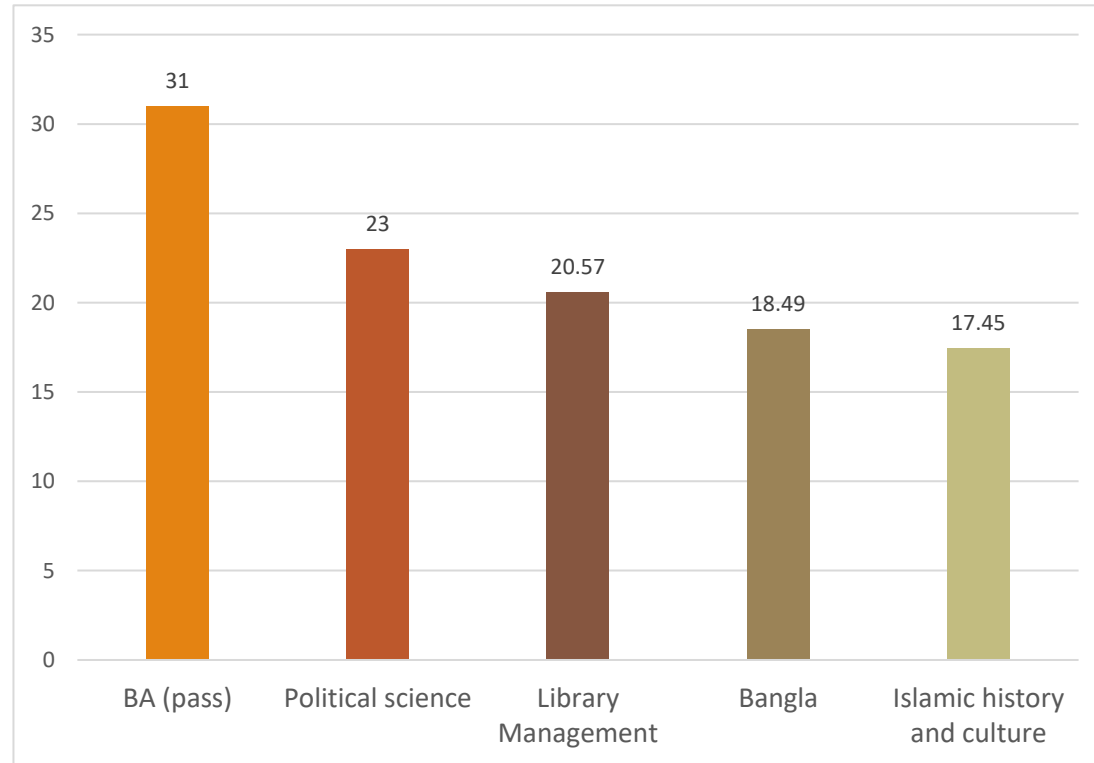


Educated Unemployment by Type of Secondary Degree

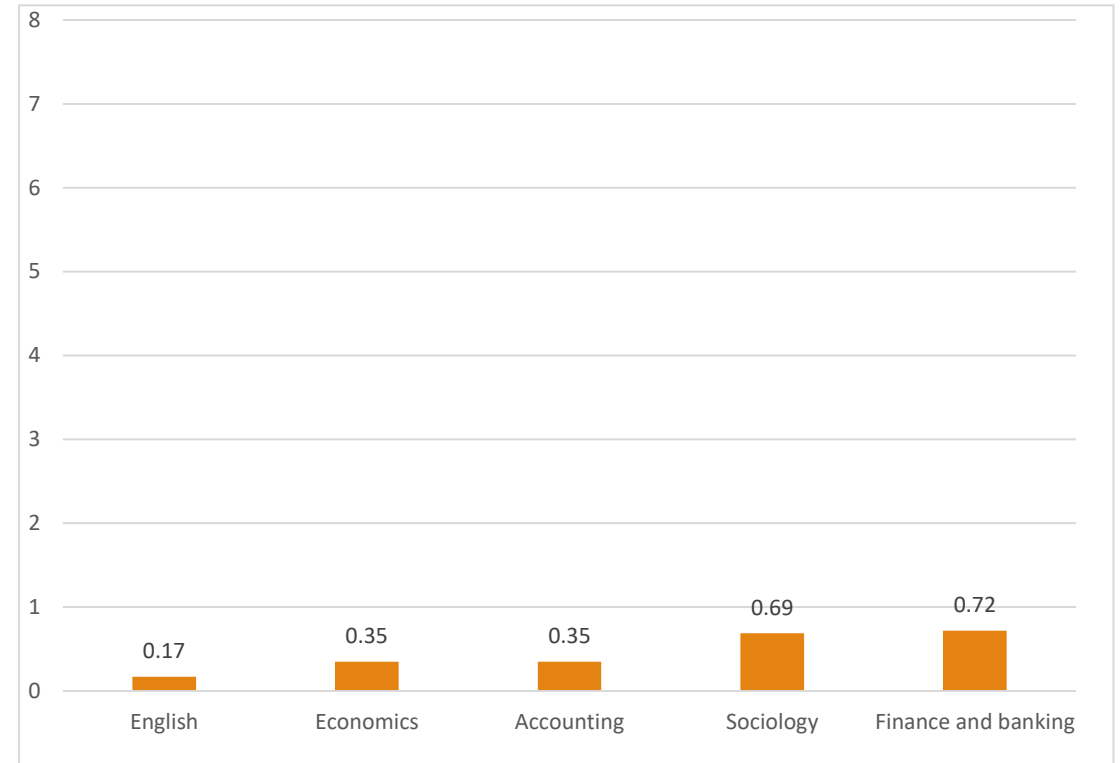


Rates of Unemployment by Subjects Studied

Subjects having highest % of unemployed graduates

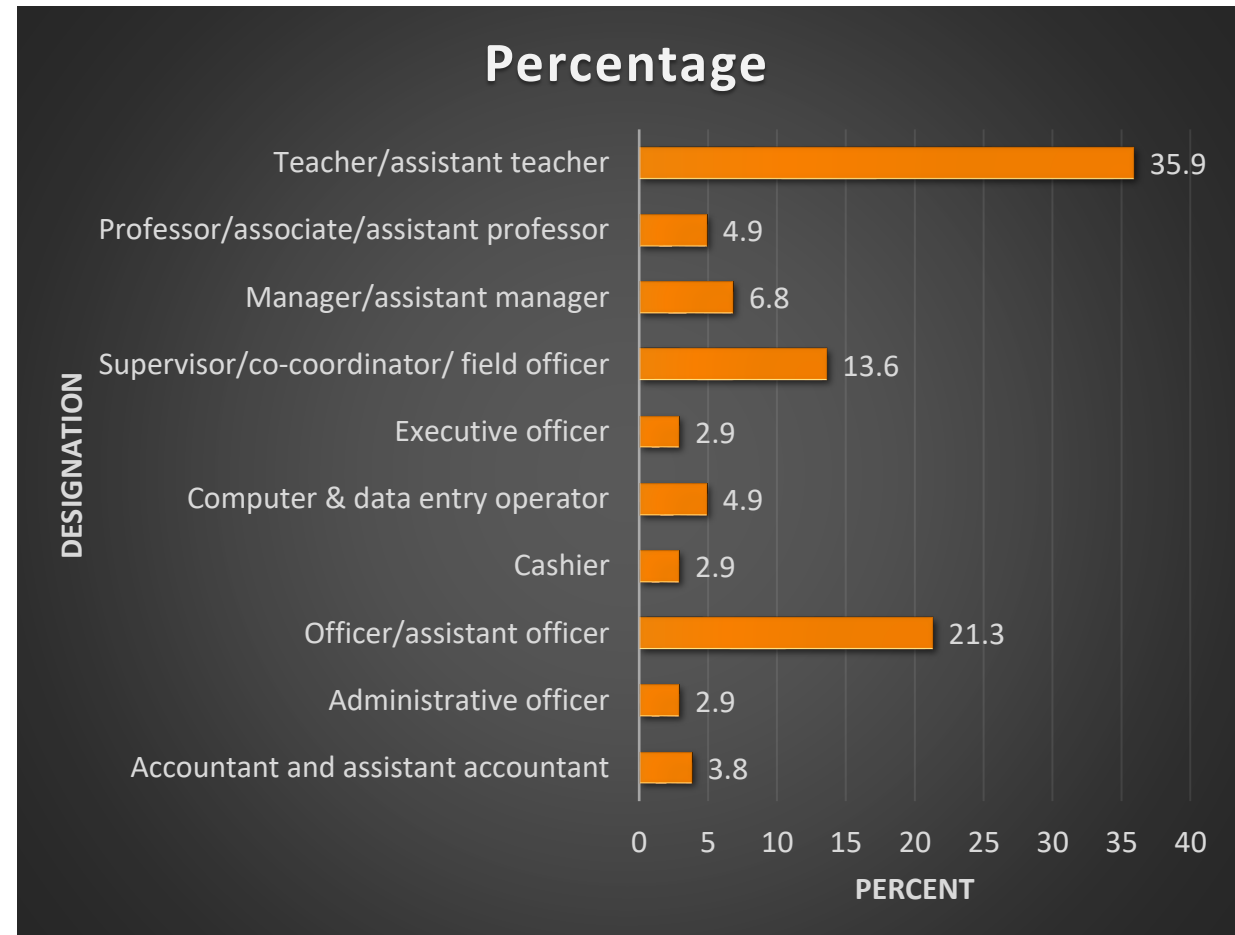


Subjects having lowest % of unemployed graduates



Types of Work the Graduates are Involved in and Employers' Opinion about Their Skills Level and Performance

- ❑ A large proportion of the NU Graduates are working as teachers or assistant teachers (36%).
- ❑ According to the employers, ICT (90%), English Language (90%), Communication (78%), Problem-solving (75%), and Teamwork (61%) are the most important areas that they would like to see among the graduates they employ.
- ❑ Employers value soft skills in addition to academic qualifications and would also like the colleges to strengthen training in ICT, communication, and language skills.



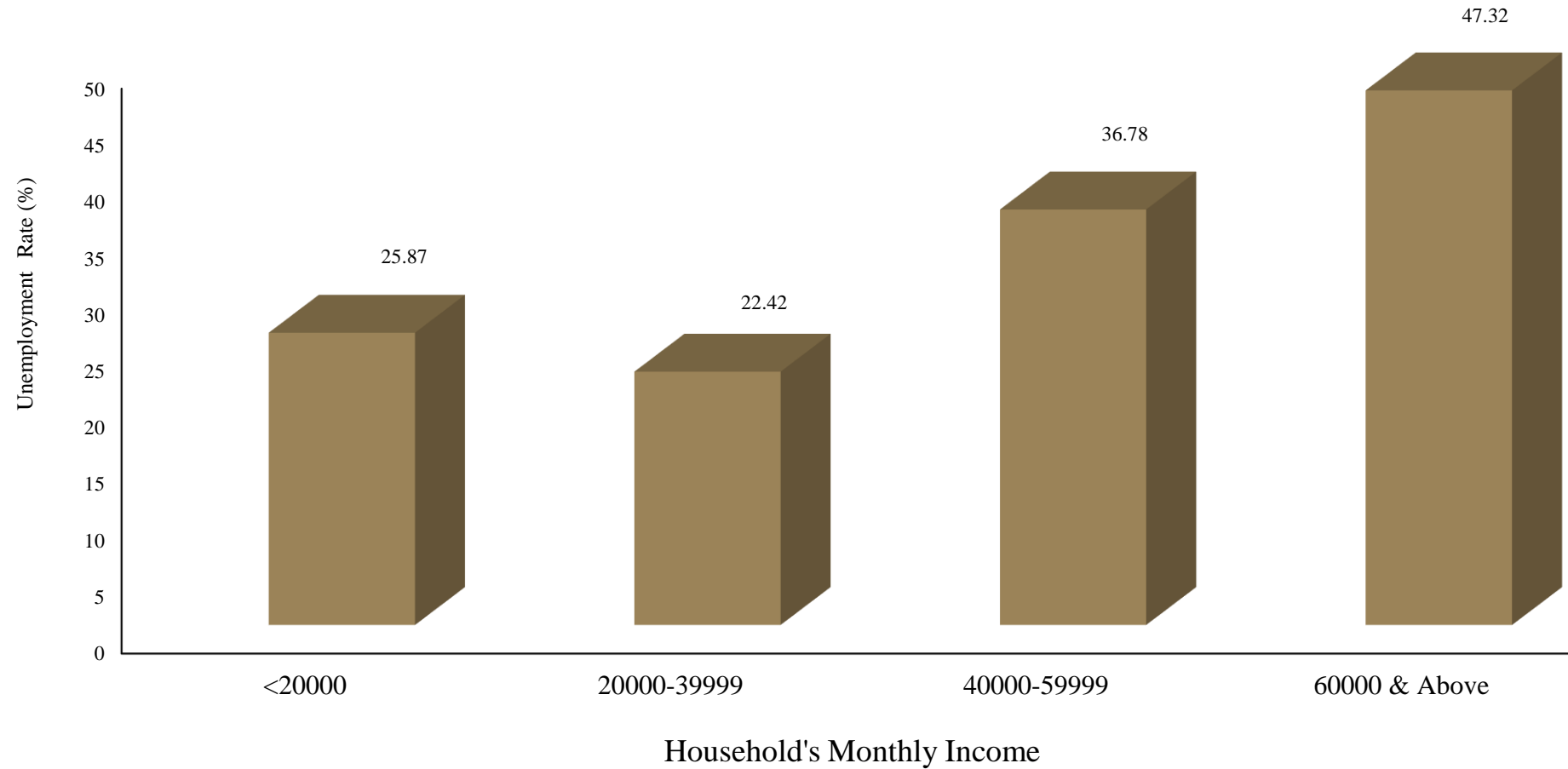
Educated Unemployment by Parents' Education

(%) with Parent's Education			
Level of Education	Fathers' Education	Mothers' Education	
No education	31.72	30.65	
Primary	31.66	25.15	
SSC/Equivalent	26.99	29.45	
HSC/Equivalent	28.68	37.70	
Bachelor degree	25.48	25.00	
Master's degree	24.22	20.00	

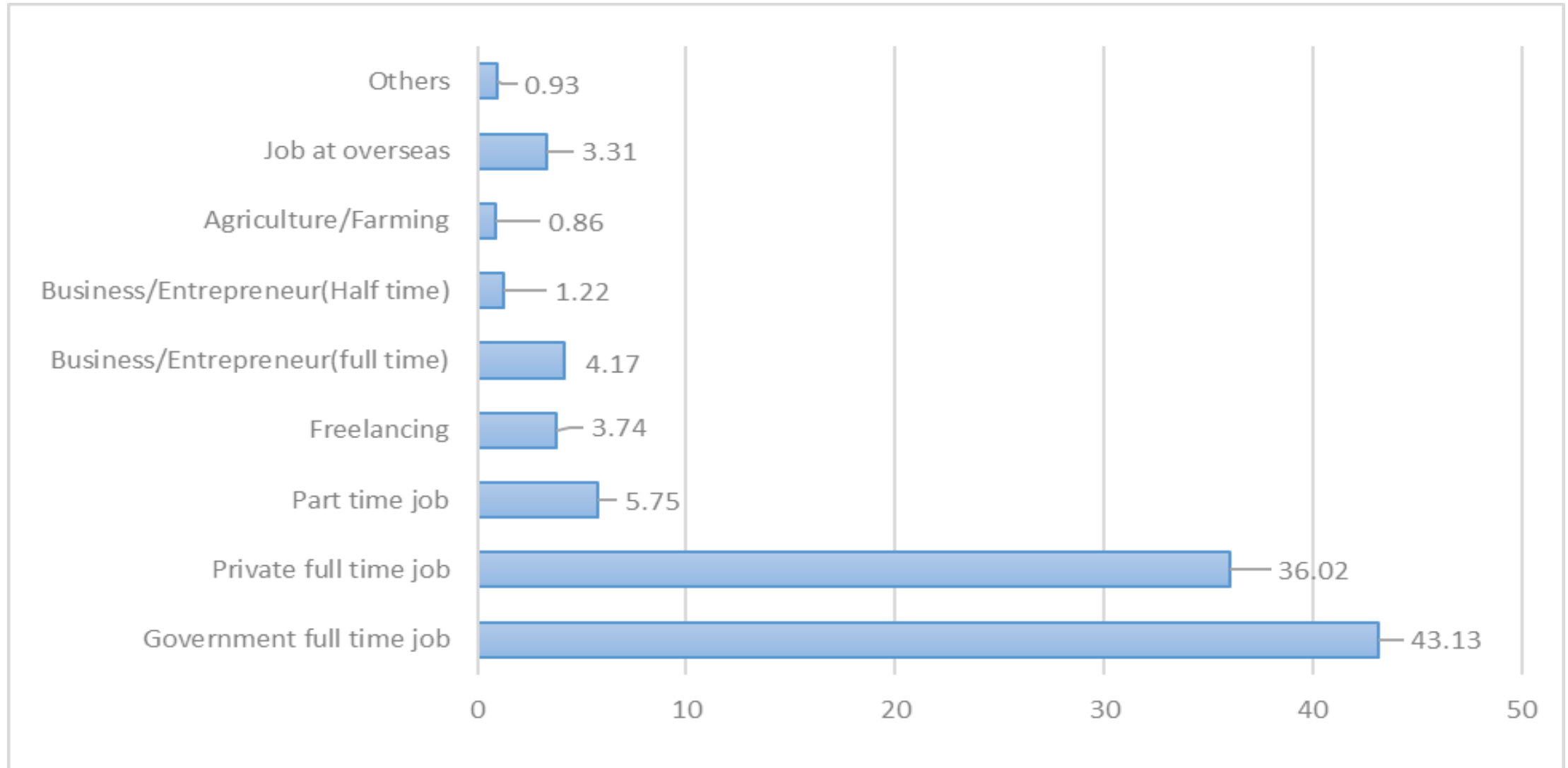
Educated Unemployment by Parents' Occupation

Occupation	Fathers' Occupation	Mothers' Occupation
Homemaker	-	27.83
Professional (Doctor, Lawyer, Engineer, etc.)	27.50	42.86
Government employee	35.84	58.33
Private sector employee	30.00	40.00
Bank/Insurance institution employee	15.38	0.00
NGO/Trust/Foundation employee	35.00	0.00
Business (Large, Medium, Micro and Cottage)	23.15	0.00
Self Employed Activities	27.85	0.00
Agriculture and agro-based occupations	26.07	0.00

Educated Unemployment by Monthly Household Income



Job Aspiration of Unemployed Graduates



Aspiration of the Graduates

Graduates' perception about their future

Graduates' perception about their life compared to their parents

How optimistic are you about the future?	Response (%)
Not optimistic at all	3.3
Somewhat optimistic	15.1
Careless about the future	4.7
Optimistic/Hopeful	43.4
Very optimistic	33.5

How do you think your life will be compared to your parents?	Response (%)
Very good	27.9
Good	61.2
Remain the same	5.8
Bad	3.3
Very bad	1.9

Challenges the Colleges Face

- ❑ **Attendance of students in the NU affiliated colleges is very poor.**
- ❑ Adverse teacher-student ratio.
- ❑ **Lack of incentives for the teachers also.**
- ❑ Lack of regular training for the teachers.
- ❑ Bangla is widely used in lectures, exams and communications; while this should not be a problem, but it doesn't fully align with the expectations of the employers.
- ❑ **Lack of provisions to provide technical, soft and socio-emotional skills to the students.**
- ❑ **Many subjects the colleges offer have very low demand in the job market** (General History, Islamic History, Political Science, Philosophy, etc. are a few example among them).
- ❑ **Collaboration with the industry is virtually non-existent.**
- ❑ Other problems include lack of internship programs, absence of alumni association, absence of career counseling services, absence of job-fair arrangement, lack of short course, and compulsory language and technical courses, etc.

Implications for Policy

- Strengthening teaching capacity:
 - Recruiting required number of qualified teacher
 - Providing them with regular training (both subject-based and pedagogical)
 - **Providing them with adequate incentive**
- Improving teaching-learning environment in the colleges:
 - Improving physical facilities with modern equipment (multi-media classrooms, ICT lab, etc.)
 - **Ensuring quality teaching and learning**
 - Improving/revising exams/students evaluation system
 - **Introducing feedback system on the quality of teaching**
- **Introducing market-based learning facilities and extra-curricular and soft-skill activities** (various clubs, etc.)
- Providing students with the opportunities to gain practical exposure to their field of study through presentations, teamwork, research and internships.
- **Establishing direct links with the prospective employers/industries** (i.e., internships, career counselling, job fairs, etc.)
- **Strengthening monitoring and evaluation; and conducting periodic graduate tracking.**

Thanks for your kind attention!!