

The Education Jobs Gap Revisited: Current Research on Underemployment and Work Alternatives

Sociology and Equity Studies in Education
Faculty Speaker Series
Wednesday, March 8, 1:30-2:30pm
in Room 12-274 (SESE)

D. W. LIVINGSTONE

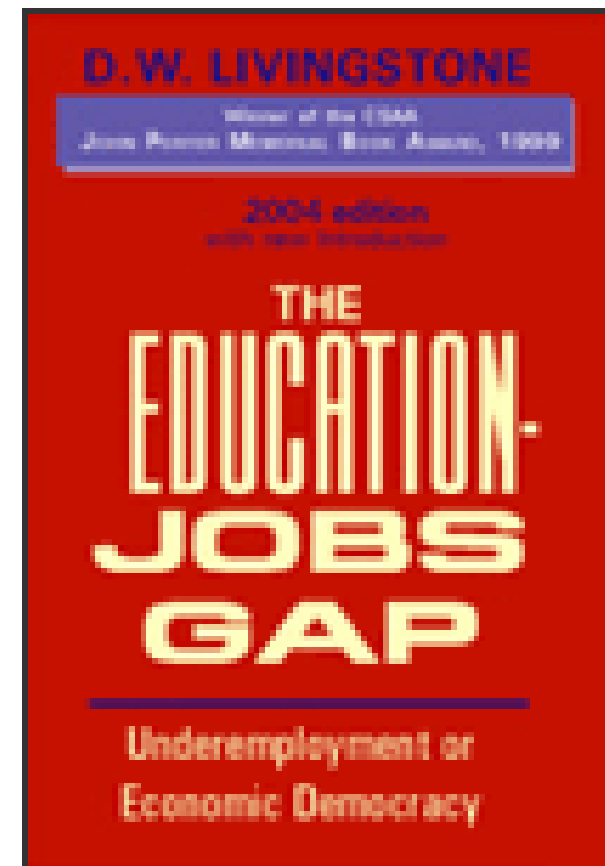
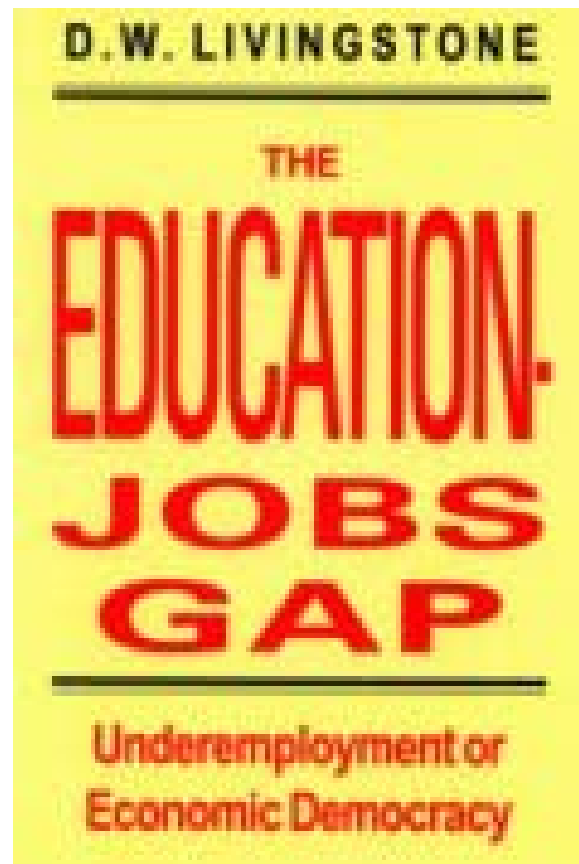
Professor in the Department of Sociology and Equity Studies in Education
Canada Research Chair In Lifelong Learning and Work
Head, Centre for the Study of Education and Work

OISE/University of Toronto

Basic Outline

1. Contending Theories of Education and Employment (Supply; Demand; Supply-Demand Interaction)
2. Basic Thesis
3. Multiple Dimensions of Underemployment (Talent Use Gap; Unemployment; Involuntary Temporary Employment; Credential Gap; Performance Gap; Subjective Underemployment)
4. Original Evidence, Critiques
5. Current Research Findings
6. Future Research and Policy Issues

Research on Underemployment and Work Alternatives



WALL SURVEY

Changing Nature of Work and Lifelong Learning



- Canadian Research Network established by SSHRC under Collaborative Research Initiatives on the “New Economy” www.wallnetwork.ca
- Includes 2004 national survey of 9,063 randomly selected respondents over 18 on many issues of working conditions and adult learning
- Study Builds on research completed by New Approaches to Lifelong Learning Research Network. www.nall.ca

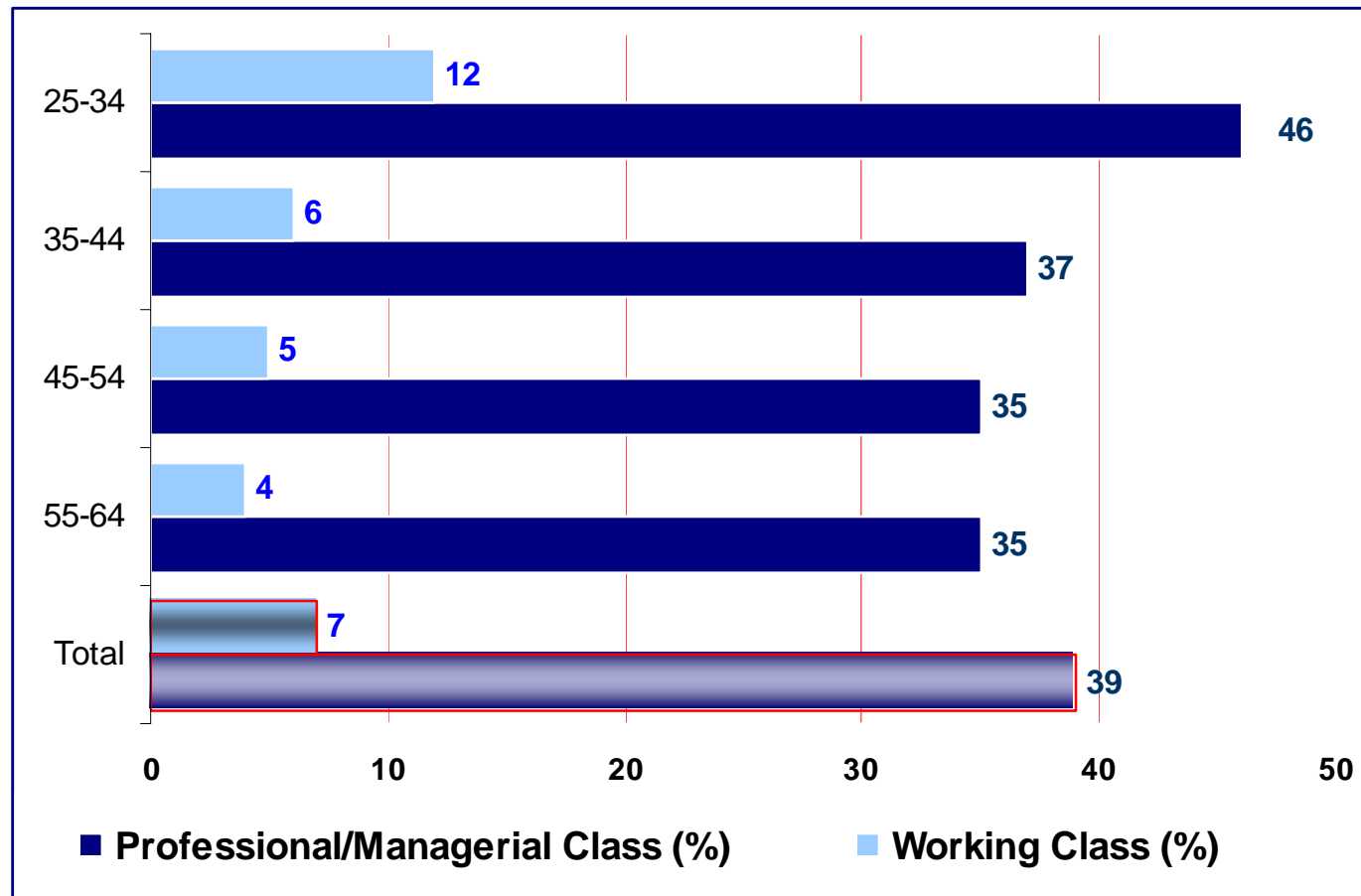
EJRM SURVEY

The 2004 Provincial Education-Job Requirements Matching Survey

- The Survey represents continuation of the study conducted by the Canadian Research Network established by SSHRC under Collaborative Research Initiatives on the “New Economy” www.wallnetwork.ca
- Includes 2004 Ontario survey of 1,709 randomly selected employed respondents over 18 on issues of education-job requirement matching
- This study is based on a sub-sample of employed respondents without managers roles with available data on education-job requirements matching and socioeconomic background. Five linked case studies have also been conducted.
- This study also builds on research completed by New Approaches to Lifelong Learning Research Network.

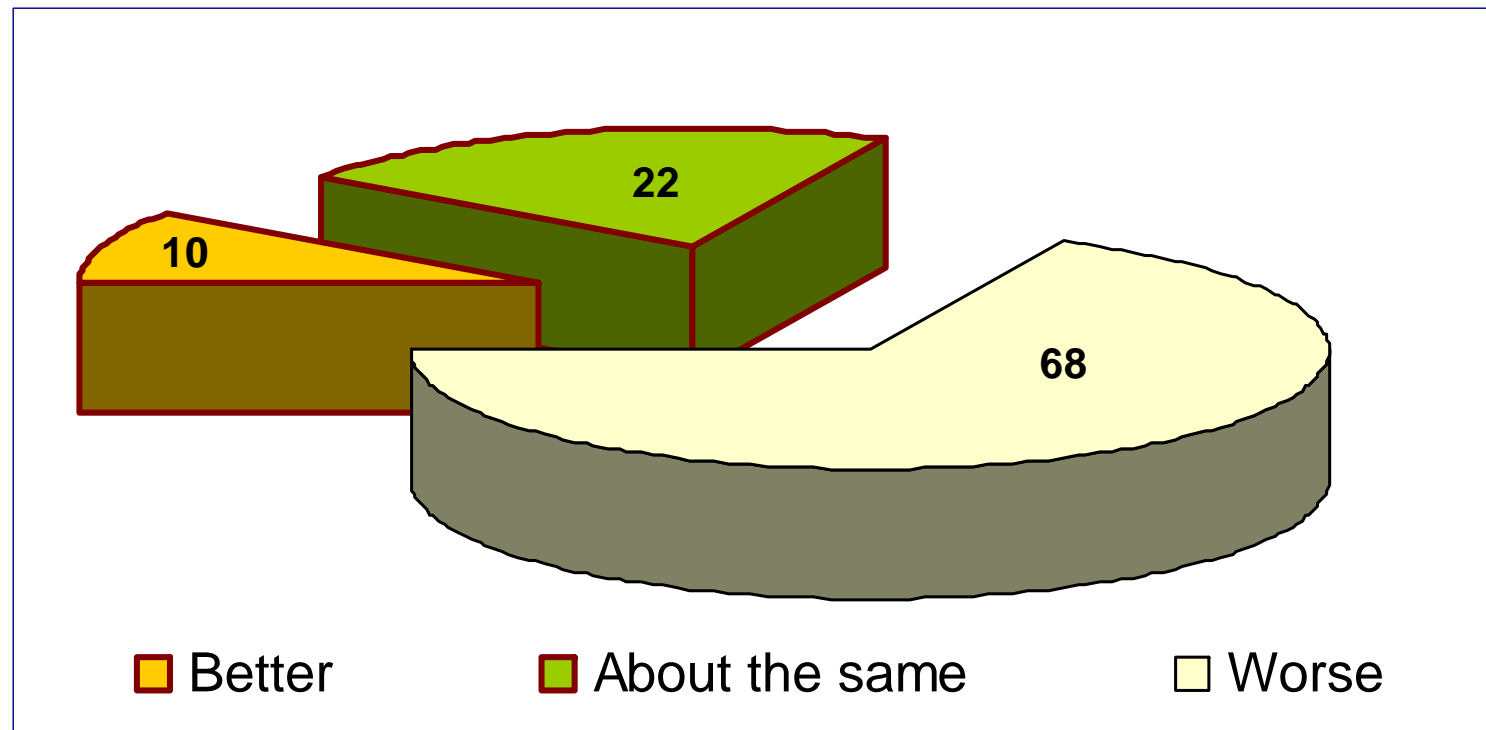
Current Research Findings

Chart 1 University Degree Completion by Age Group and Father's Class Position, Canada, 2004



Sources: WALL Survey, 2004.

Chart 2 Perceived chances for students from low-income families to get a post-secondary education (compared to students from upper-income families), Canada 2004.



Source: WALL Survey, 2004.

Table 1 Recent Official Employment Profiles, Canada, 1998-2004

	Working Age Pop. (Millions)	Labour Force (Millions)	Working (Millions)	Working/ Working Age (%)	Labour Force Partic. Rate (%)
1998	23.5	15.3	14	59.6	65.0
2004	25.5	17.2	15.95	62.7	67.6

Source: Statistics Canada, 2005. Population 15 and over.

Table 2 Recent Survey Indicators of Time-based Underemployment, Canada, 1998-2004

	1998 (%)	2004 (%)
Official Unemployment	8.3	7.2
Involuntary P/T Employment	5.2	3.6
Involuntary P/T Employment as % of all P/T	35	20

Source: Statistics Canada, 2005.

Table 3 Recent Survey Indicators of Skill-based Underemployment, Canada, 1998-2004

Credential Underemployment

	Underemployed (%)	Matched (%)	Underqualified (%)
1982-1996*	21	57	23
1998**	26	43	31
2004***	34	48	18

Sources: * Livingstone, 1998-1996 [Average for Ontario Only]; EJJ; ** NALL, 1998; *** WALL, 2004.

Table 4 Recent Survey Indicators of Skill-based Underemployment, Canada, 1998-2004 - Performance Underemployment

	Underemployed (%)	Matched (%)	Underqualified (%)
1998**	28	52	20
2004***	31	50	19

Sources: ** NALL, 1998; WALL, 2004.

Table 5 Recent Survey Indicators of Skill-based Underemployment, Canada, 1998-2004 - Subjective Underemployment

	Underemployed (%)	Matched (%)	Underqualified (%)
1982-1996*	23	71	4
1998**	20	75	5
2004***	27	66	7

Sources: * Livingstone, 1998-1996 [Average for Ontario Only]; EJG; ** NALL, 1998; *** WALL, 2004.

Subjective Underemployment (EJRM Case Studies)

Info Tech Worker (Software Design) (C01-398):

"I'm debating between adequately qualified and somewhat overqualified.... it is such intangible skills that I have picked up that I use in this job. I am trying to decide, did I learn those in my formal education, is that where they came from, or just from having picked them up as I worked over the years? ...[Feeling a little over-qualified, it's mainly because I haven't been using my technical skills. To combat that, I also reach outside my core job. I work on an open source project (in aspect-oriented programming) where I get to write code. Also, this new role leading the technical interest group in this area should help with that too, as I plan to have some hands-on activities. My manager has been supportive of all these activities. A plus of this job is that there are many opportunities to do things outside the main scope of the job according to your interests."

Subjective Underemployment (EJRM Case Studies)

Info Tech Worker (Power plant engineer) (C07W-172)

"I think I am over-qualified. I went to school for six years and I did a Bachelor of Engineering degree that gave me the qualifications to design a power plant. And right now I am a liaison between development and project management. I am a project management flunky.... I don't feel bad about it because the position I am in now I look at it as a step to get somewhere else. I have just started the transition from development.... But for where I want to go, and when I get there, I will be qualified - I'll be overqualified."

Subjective Underemployment (EJRM Case Studies)

Info Tech Worker (Software Designer) (C05W-345)

R: In terms of the pure schooling, yes. Because there are not, I am one of the few PhDs....Doing a PhD will make you feel over qualified for many jobs, since few positions absolutely require one (academia, research departments in some companies, etc...). However, I wouldn't say it is a waste of time, since one can still learn from it a number of research, self-teaching, organizational skills which can be reused anywhere."

Info Tech Worker (Programmer) (CC20W-516)

"I'm qualified but I don't think I'm overqualified and there's always new things to learn and English is my second language so I never think I am overqualified for the job.

Subjective Underemployment (EJRM Case Studies)

Info Tech Worker() (C21W-615)

“[S]chooling doesn’t really help, what I learned at school has nothing to do with my job....I think I am a quick learner. I think everybody has potential, the potential depends on what kind of job you give me. Even if you give me a hard, difficult job to do I will still can handle it but if you give me an average job, I....”

Secondary School Teacher (T16092004-219)

“I feel overqualified in the sense of having a broad range of graduate training that never seems to be recognized or valued by the employer. Despite being in education, there’s no real incentive for teachers to do further study. I’ve received some pointed comments from colleagues who question why I would want to do something as silly as grad work. There’s a real anti-intellectualism we need to be careful of.”

**Table 6 Perceived Skill Increase in Job
in Past 5 Years, Canada, 2004**

	Perceived Skill Change (%)
Increased	55
Stayed the same	42
Decreased	3

Source: WALL Survey, 2004.

["In the last five years, has the level of skill required to perform your job increased, stayed about the same or decreased?" * Question not asked in 1998 NALL Survey].

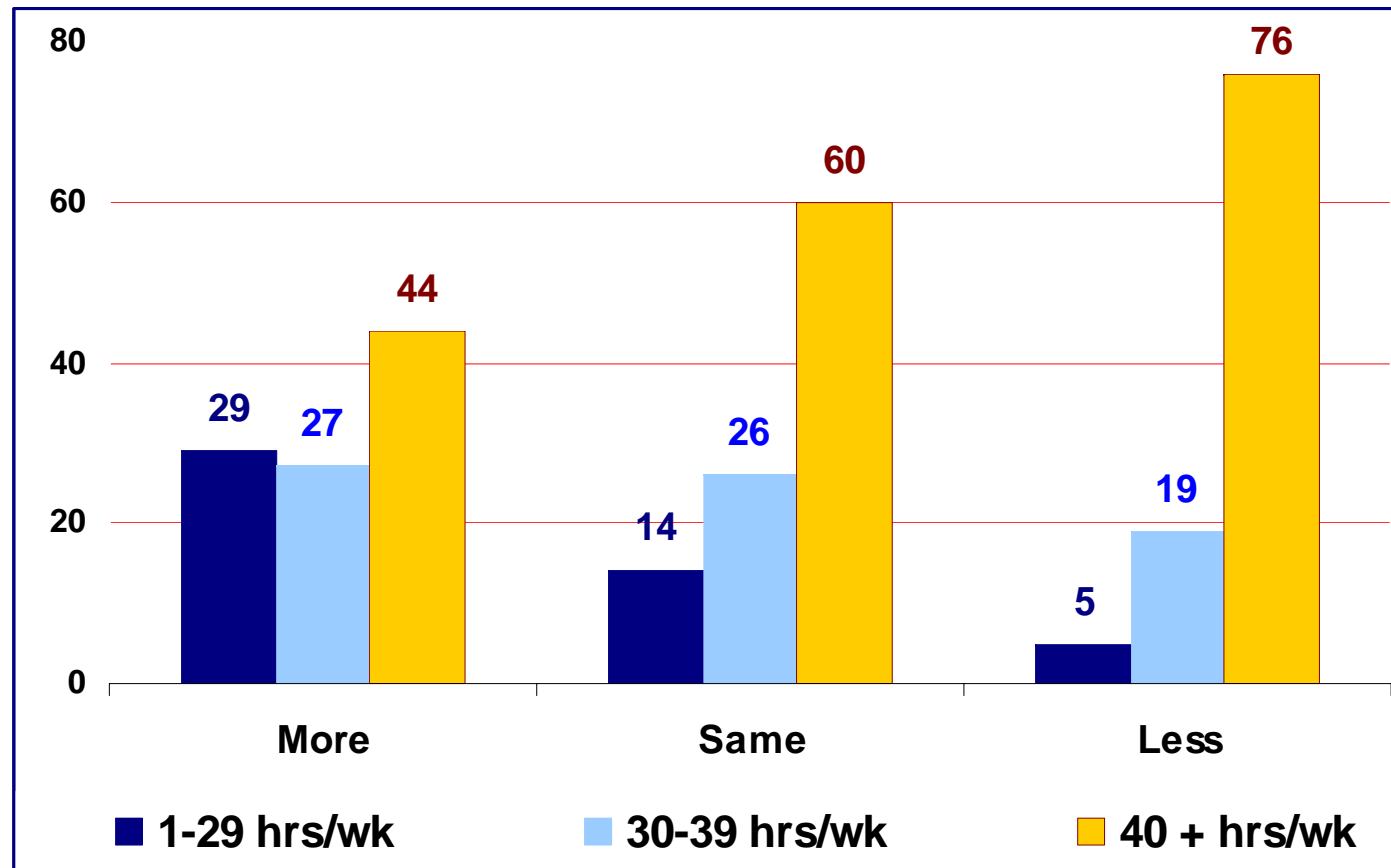
Economic Alternatives

Table 7 Economic Alternatives

	Shareholder Capitalism	Stakeholder Capitalism	Economic Democracy
Ownership	People's Capitalism	Profit sharing	Socialized Market
Labour Process	Re- engineering	Co- determination	Self- Management
Work Redistribution	Flexible labour force	Reduced Workweek	Full Employment
New Forms of work	Workfare	Guaranteed Income	Green work

[Source: Livingstone, 1999].

Chart 3A Current and Preferred Hours of Work, Canada, 2004.



Source: WALL Survey, 2004.

Shorter Workweek (EJRM Case Studies)

Office Worker (w052004-890)

"I definitely like a shorter normal workweek because I think that people need to be with their families. I think that the Europeans have shown that people can have more hours outside of work and still be able to contribute to their full potential or more in those hours that they were there [than] with 2 weeks vacation and 2 days off a week.

Do you feel that this should be with wages unchanged? **Wages unchanged, more time off, give people a better work place balance instead of them finding it grueling as some of my colleagues do and even sometimes myself."**

Education Over-Focus (EJRM Case Studies)

Office Worker (O24w012005-805)

"I wish that in the workforce they would put less importance on education. I know that for people like me that can do the job but will never get the chance because I don't have the education. I know it's hard because they want to promote education but I just think that they should be more open to people who don't necessarily have the education."

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Contact

D. W. LIVINGSTONE

Canada Research Chair In Lifelong Learning and Work
Head Centre for the Study of Education and Work

dlivingstone@oise.utoronto.ca

**Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
of the University of Toronto**