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# The nature, antecedents and consequences of underemployment

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## Abstract

Despite the growth of underemployment in the United States, relatively little theoretical or empirical attention has been paid to this phenomenon. This article presents a multidimensional conceptualization of underemployment in terms of education, work duties, field of employment, wages, and permanence of the job. The article then presents testable propositions on both the hypothesized antecedents of underemployment (e.g., economic factors, job characteristics, career history, job search strategies, and demographics) and on the hypothesized consequences of underemployment (e.g., job attitudes, overall psychological well-being, career attitudes, job behaviors, and marital, family, and social relationships). Directions for future theory development, research methodology, and institutional assistance programs for the underemployed are discussed as well.

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