



A WEAK EDUCATION SYSTEM – A CHALLENGE FOR SOCIETY’S WELL-BEING

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Does education affect economic growth? This question is interesting for both scientists and political decision-makers. Generally, there is a certain consensus on this issue, based on accumulated knowledge. Everybody agrees that education has an effect not only on the success of a particular person but on the entire country’s economy. Education promotes the growth of labor productivity. The presented paper considers how does the positive correlation between education and the economic growth of the country studied and established by many universally recognized and well-known scholars works in Georgia.

Keywords: Education, Economic growth, Human capital, Employment, Education financing, Development.

Introduction

We live in a high-tech era. Humanity has been able to achieve incredibly high results during its development. The development of techniques and technologies has provided a high rate of global production. Highly developed technologies have allowed humanity not only to use nature in its own favor, but to create alternative sources of nature, new forms and means of communication.

Modern civilization often referred to as technogenic civilization, is based on scientific-technical achievements. Today humanity is able to study brain cells at the level of neurons, do a research on anti-cancer drugs, replace a bad gene with a good one, send an exoplanet hunter in space which monitors about 200 000 near stars expecting to find thousands of new planets, create a solar-powered plane, which can stop in the air for 25 days, not to mention that today there are automobiles which can be driven without a man, and artificial intelligence, which participates in debates with people and wins, conducts interviews, assists disabled people and so on. Modern science achievements help humanity not only to solve current tasks, but also they have the potential to influence the development of humanity in the long-term perspective.

The creators of the above-mentioned scientific-technical achievements are highly developed countries, the so-called the most innovative countries - South Korea, Sweden, Singapore, Germany, Switzerland, Japan, Finland, Denmark, France, Israel, the United States, Austria, Ireland, Belgium, Norway, and others who put the largest financial and human resources in scientific researches and a practical realization of results. The vector of economic development of these countries is directed towards the creation of a knowledge economy in which a person, his/her knowledge, skills, and abilities have a central place. The model of the knowledge economy is one of the main reasons for their socio-economic

development. The economy of knowledge as the highest stage of the post-industrial economy is the source of the growth of the country's economy and the level of public life (Tea Kasradze, Nino Zarnadze, 2019).

Developed countries are spending huge financial resources to strengthen human capital, since it is the main factor in creating new technologies, in developing manufacturing and in increasing their efficiency. Human capital plays a major role in the development of science, culture, health, safety and social sphere (Petr Wawrosz, Jiri Mihola, 2013).

Table 1 provides data on the expenditure of the 25 richest countries on education, research and development in terms of GDP.

Table 1.

Countries	R&D spending as % of GDP	R&D spending in PPP\$ million	R&D spending by sector of performance in million				No. of researches per million inheritance
			Business	Government	Universities	Privet non profit	
Korea	4.3	73,099.8	57,180.5	8,196.6	6,614.4	1,108.3	6,856
Japan	3.4	169,554.1	131,839.8	14,116.7	21,326.7	2,270.9	5,328
Finland	3.2	7,178.2	4,860.5	620,694.2k	1,641.9	55,114.0k	7,011
Israel	4.2	11,760.9	9,953.2	217,034.5k	1,468.4	122,323.0 k	8,250
Sweden	3.1	14,191.1	9,514.1	531,675.3k	4,111.2	34,146.6k	6877

Source: United Nations Development Programme & Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Knowledge Foundation, <http://knowledge4all.com/Scorecard2018.aspx?id=1042&language=en>

Table 1 clearly shows that developed countries put great resources in research and development. Different institutions of the society are involved in this process: state, business, and research institutes. It should be noted that there is a great demand for researches and scientific findings all over the world. So, in developed countries the number of people working in science, research and development is increasing from year to year.

While global spending on research and development has reached a record high of almost 1.7 trillion US\$ and about 10 countries account for 80% of spending, on the other hand, the 40% of the world population lives in poverty (Tea, Kasradze, 2013).¹:

- 767 million (10,7% of the population) live in extreme poverty. Their daily income is less than 1.90\$.
- 2,1 billion people live on less than 3,10 per day.
- One of three children suffers from chronic under nutrition. 45% of all worldwide are from causes related to under nutrition, or 3,1 million of children a year².

¹Global Issues - Social, Political, Economic and Environmental Issues That Affect Us All
<http://www.globalissues.org/article/26/poverty-facts-and-stats>

- Every single day, 1000 children under 5 die from illnesses like diarrhea, dysentery, and cholera caused by contaminated water and inadequate sanitation.
- More than 4 billion people in the world do not have access to the Internet.
- There are 124 million children and adolescents not in school.
- More than 250 million school children cannot read, even after several years of schooling.

It is clear that high- income countries spend more on education in comparison to low-income countries (Lam, 2018).

Every country now is more or less on the path to growth. But poor countries are growing very slowly. For example, if Zimbabwe continues its current growth rate, it will qualify as a rich country in 2722 (GDP 100,000 \$). Obviously, low-income countries are struggling with numerous problems on the path of education.

There are a number of factors that determine the level of education of the human (community): In this regard, it is important for a family to get educational materials, as well as the social status of parents, and the quality of their education, neighborhood and the environment in general in which the person is placed (Gulua, Ekaterine, 2017)

On the other hand, the problem is the readiness and potential of the educational system to offer public education of high quality. Studies show that despite the increased access to education and although the problems of illiteracy are solved in developing countries, the quality of education by the current institutions can not be reflected in the development of a country.

Education transportation methodology is a big problem in this regard, non-existence of a methodology, a lack of modern professional staff and a material-technical base. Despite the severity of the above problems, the most key problem is that there is no demand in the employment market for specialists who are highly skilled and have modern education. The correlation between education and economics is clear in this regard (Tea kasradze, Vakhtang Antia, Ekaterine Gulua, 2019).

Literature Review

The famous scientists in economics in education E. Hanushek and L. Woessmann think that the growth of human capital influences the socio-economic development of the country. According to their research, there is a significant positive association between quantitative measures of schooling and economic growth. Every year of schooling boosts the long-run growth by 0.58 percentage points. 1-2% increase in economic growth a year over 50 years will cause an increase in population revenues by 64% (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2010).

The education quality improvement causes the growth of employment, productivity, and payability, increases competitiveness and innovative activity motivates the socio-economic system for continuous renewal (Gulua, Ekaterine, 2018).

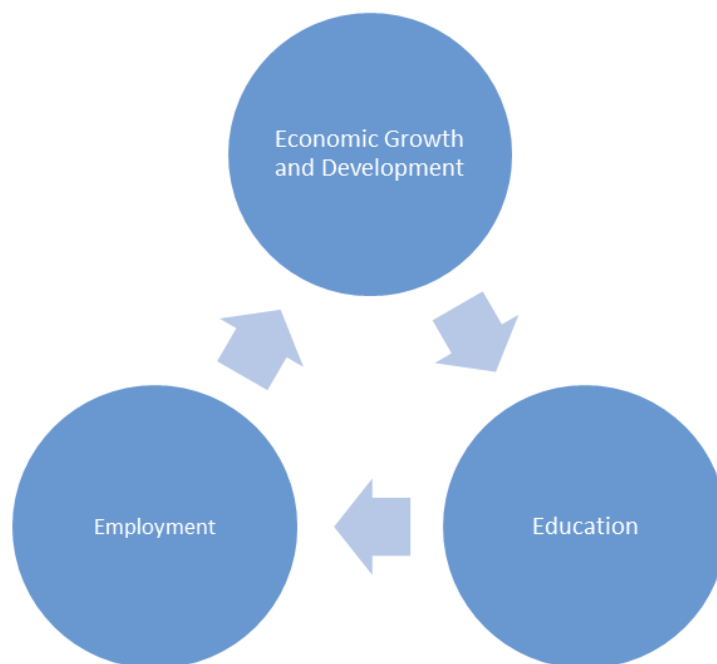
Increasing the level of profit of organizations and producers leads to an increase in the living standards of the population. As a result of the increase in revenue, they give more money back into the economy to meet various demands, which in turn reduces the level of inflation in the country, increases production and creates new jobs (Tea Kasradze, Nino Zarnadze, 2019).

We agree with different scholars that many factors are affecting economic growth and the welfare of society, from which of utmost importance are:

1. The number and quality of natural resources;
2. The number and quality of labor resources;
3. The amount of basic capital;
4. Technologies.

They are making production growth possible. Access to a large number of the best quality resources (including human), including technological potential, gives the possibility of growing the production of real products (Zarnadze Nino, 2018), (Kasradze Tea, 2014).

In our research, we try to prove the cause-effect links between education and economic growth on the example of Georgia. The education system has an important role in delivering quality labor resources that will positively affect economic growth and development. And economic growth is the precondition for raising the quality.



The pathway from economic to education goes through the labor market.

Does Education Affect Economic Growth?

This question is interesting for both scientists and political decision-makers. Generally, there is a certain consensus on this issue, based on accumulated knowledge. Everybody agrees that education has an effect not only on the success of a particular person but on the entire country's economy. Education promotes the growth of labor productivity. Educated workers learn using advanced technologies more easily, so they are more productive (Nelson & Phelps, 1966). Education can boost innovation potential, create new knowledge, new technologies that promote economic growth.

What do the outputs of the weak educational system mean? (Kasradze Tea; Zarnadze Nino, 2018)

1. This is a system that does not create modern, innovative and high-quality education.
2. This is a system that does not give the student the necessary skills and habits.
3. A weak educational system is not practicable and the education received in this system is hardly applicable in practice.
4. This system does not provide the ability and education to solve the current problems and is not long-term oriented.
5. A weak educational system is a system that does not develop learning skills.

The researchers listed several factors that determine the Index of Human Education (Ekaterine Gulua, 2019):

1. Financial means;
2. Material-technical base;

3. Social Environment, socio-cultural factors (social status and quality of their received education, neighborhood and the environment in general in which the person is placed);
4. Qualified Educational Institutions;
5. Qualified staff implementing educational programs;
6. The methodology of education;
7. And many more.

In 1900, Spain and Finland were very similar: they were underdeveloped, largely agricultural countries with a low level of literacy (scarcely 40% of the population) and a similar income per capita. 50 years on, Finland’s income per capita doubled Spain’s, all Finns were literate and secondary education had started to spread to all social classes in the country. Meanwhile, in Spain, illiteracy was still widespread and secondary education a rarity. Almost 70 years later, and in spite of Spain’s huge economic development and improvements in terms of education, Finland’s income per capita is still higher than Spain’s. And so is its level of education. Therefore, were Finland’s educational improvements the key to its success? This must certainly be partly the case (Canals, 2017).

How does the positive correlation between education and the economic growth of the country studied and established by many universally recognized and well-known scholars works in Georgia? Is the rise in education expenditure a prerequisite for social and economic growth, which in turn contributes to the development of all aspects of the society and the reduction of social inequality?

The ratio of the money spent by governments to GDP is one of the good (but not precise) measurements of how important they think is to support education for improving the socio-economic development of the country and the welfare of society. This indicator combines the government’s expenditure on the state sector of education as well as the private sector and includes not only the expenses spent on teaching but also on financing students’ and pupils’ support services and researches (Kasradze Tea, 2018).

Table 2 provides the data of the Ministry of Finance in 2002 - 2017 about the amount of money spent on education from the state budget as well as the consolidated budget of Georgia

Table 2. Consolidated and state budget spending of Georgia on education

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
1*	151	164	286	289	414	458	554	580	612	656	758	826	933	1074	1288	1457
2*	37	41	65	78	348	384	421	460	504	565	653	683	740	834	1025	1173
1* 2002-2017 Consolidated (state and local) budget spending of Georgia on education (million GEL)																
2* 2002-2017 State budget spending of Georgia on education (million GEL)																

Source: Ministry of Finance of Georgia
<https://www.mof.ge/images/File/2002-2017biujeti/2002-2017wlis%20xarjebi.xls>

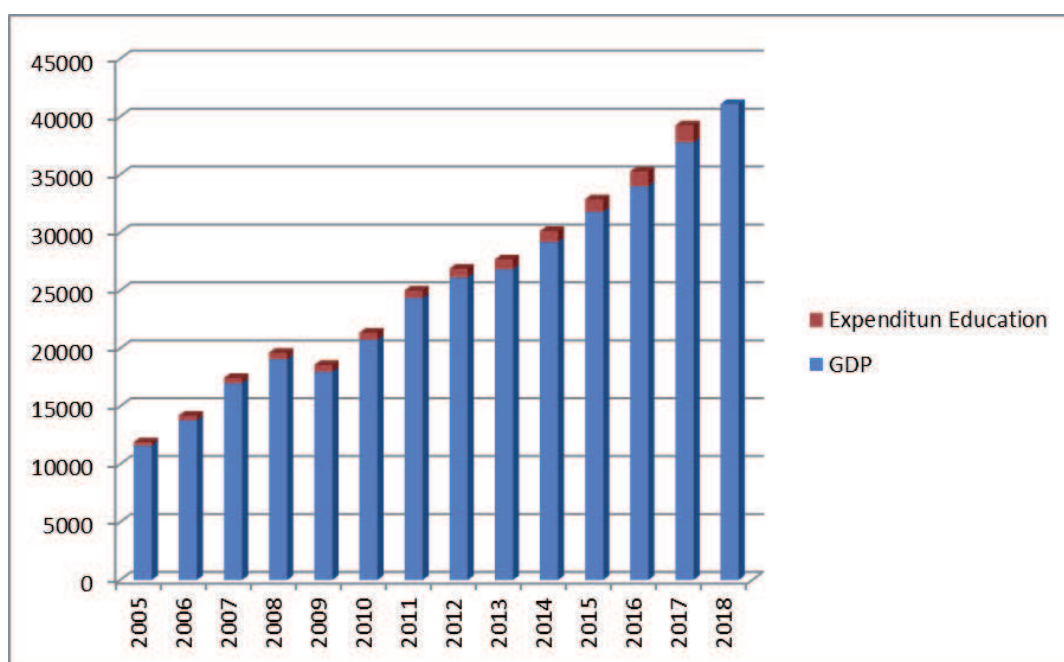
As shown from the table, the amount of money spent on education by the government has an irreversibly increasing character and the amount spent from the consolidated budget has increased almost 10 times in nominal value in 2017 in comparison with the year of 2002. It is also interesting that in 2017 the expenditure on education from Georgia’s consolidated budget was 12,7% of total expenditure. It is only behind the expenditure spent on social protection and economic activity (**Table 3.**)

Table 3. 2002-2017 Consolidated (state and local) budget spending of Georgia on education (million GEL)

Name	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
General public services	392,2	461,1	480,1	524,1	680,8	544,0	1510,1	1744,6	910,6	900,7	939,0	925,0	990,8	1086,6	1173,3	1228,3
Defense	48,8	61,2	160,4	396,0	722,2	1502,9	1552,0	871,7	675,8	720,6	717,9	636,6	646,5	660,9	729,2	697,9
Public order and safety	85,8	113,6	272,2	286,6	382,7	725,3	1010,6	882,6	865,7	880,5	909,4	907,3	955,1	1010,2	1010,9	1052,3
Economic affairs	59,5	87,1	179,9	388,8	474,8	974,3	847,7	1043,6	1100,7	1135,6	1543,2	1262,1	1330,5	1337,3	1546,8	2071,6
Environmental protection	X	X	X	X	X	75,4	87,9	114,9	124,0	110,8	88,5	134,2	162,9	133,2	143,4	144,6
Housing and community amenities	56,8	60,0	140,7	262,7	448,5	497,3	534,9	349,7	544,2	697,0	494,5	319,8	323,1	410,6	461,6	455,1
Health	59,8	29,5	95,4	204,2	225,8	256,3	313,1	363,8	454,8	398,8	416,1	524,7	694,0	905,9	1046,0	1136,3
Recreation, culture and religion	48,1	49,7	85,7	107,6	139,1	177,2	202,1	239,5	312,2	409,6	395,6	329,2	392,6	573,4	468,7	469,7
Education	150,6	164,1	286,3	288,7	413,8	458,2	553,8	579,6	611,7	656,4	757,7	825,5	933,0	1074,0	1287,9	1457,0
Social protection	299,7	342,5	477,9	627,5	690,1	640,2	323,0	459,8	1421,4	1551,8	1732,3	1999,2	2384,8	2467,3	2654,3	2761,8
Total expenditure*	1201,2	1368,8	2178,6	3086,2	4177,8	5851,1	6935,2	6649,8	7021,1	7461,8	7994,2	7863,6	8813,3	9659,4	10522,1	11474,6

Source: Ministry of Finance of Georgia, <https://www.mof.ge/4885>

Diagram 1 shows the growing tendency of GDP and education expenditures in 2005-2017 (in million GEL)



But one is the tendency and the second is the result of this tendency.

Why is the Georgian educational system weak?

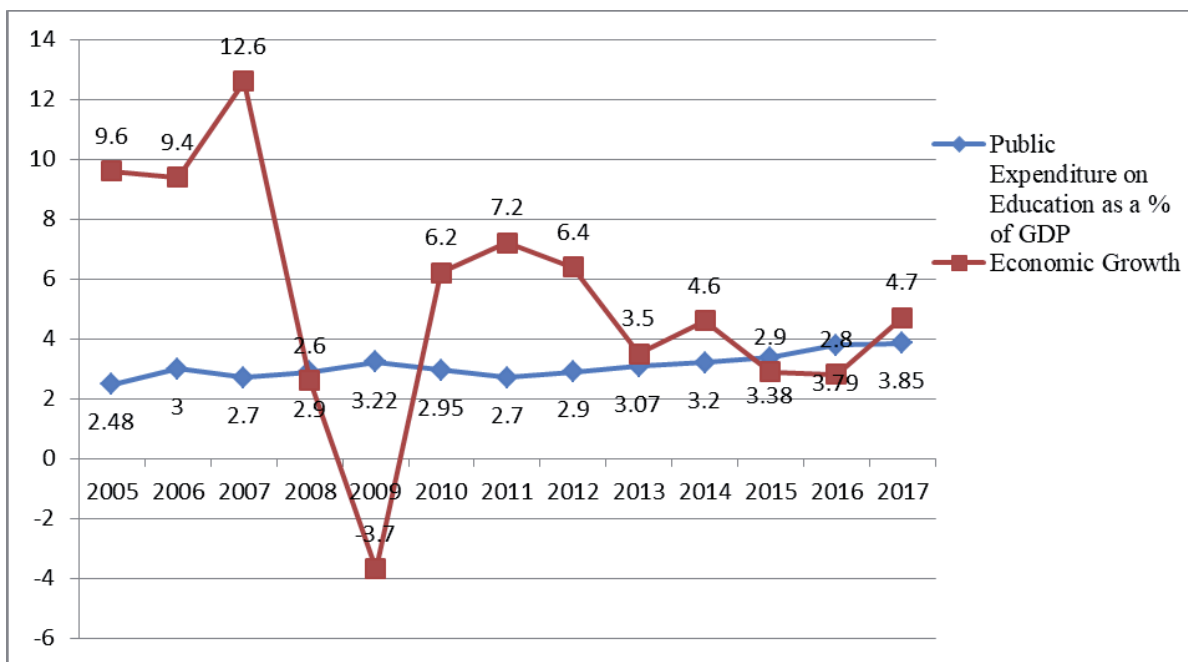
- Development of the educational system does not come in line with the socio-economic strategy
- The educational system is focused on satisfying local market demands in the short term
- Transformational period was difficult from the post-soviet space (Getting a scientific degree in the Soviet Union was very difficult and, therefore, people with the degree were elderly people who were not able to acquire modern learning methods and young people did not have enough knowledge of a foreign language, information technologies and, consequently, there was a failure)
- There is a lack of modern professional staff: today there is a trend that if you are a practitioner, you are cool but really they do not have sufficient theoretical knowledge and what's more pedagogical skills, thus the learning process is distorted.
- Educational institutions cannot function properly: kindergartens, schools, colleges, institutes, and other educational institutions (Kasradze Tea; Zarnadze Nino, 2018).

In many types of research of international organizations, we read that education in Georgia is formal, the real qualification level of the workforce does not meet the existing requirements. The low rating of Georgia (93rd place) indicates an incompatibility between qualifications and job requirements, in the section of the Higher Education and Retraining Section of Global Competitiveness Index of World Economic Forum (Tea kasradze, Vakhtang Antia, Ekaterine Gulua, 2019). According to the skillset of graduates, Georgia is in the 123rd place, according to digital skills among population it is in 101st place, according to the ease of finding skilled employees it is on the 111st position, according to the critical thinking teaching, it is in the 92nd place, according to the diversity of workforce it is in the 116th place (Klaus Schwab, Xavier Sala-i-Martin, Richard Samans, 2017-2018)

According to the Global Talent Competitiveness Index, Georgia is in the 76th place out of 119 countries in 2019, 4 places down compared to 2018, it was in the 72nd place, according to the Talent Involvement it is in the 52nd place, on the 92nd position in terms of attracting talents, according to the growth of talents it is in the 107th place, in terms of maintaining talents it is in the 61st place, according to talents with Vocational and Technical Skills (or VT skills) it is in the 80th place and according to Global Knowledge Skills (or GK skills) it is in the 56th place. According to the detailed data from the same index, Georgia is in the 60th place on the basis of higher education; According to the expenses incurred on higher education – in the 93rd place (Bruno Lanvin, Felipe Monteiro, 2019). The same is shown by the low rating of Georgia (87th position among 137 countries, 4.0 points from maximum 7 points) in the section of Higher Education and Trainings of Global Competitiveness Index of 2017-2018 World Economic Forum.

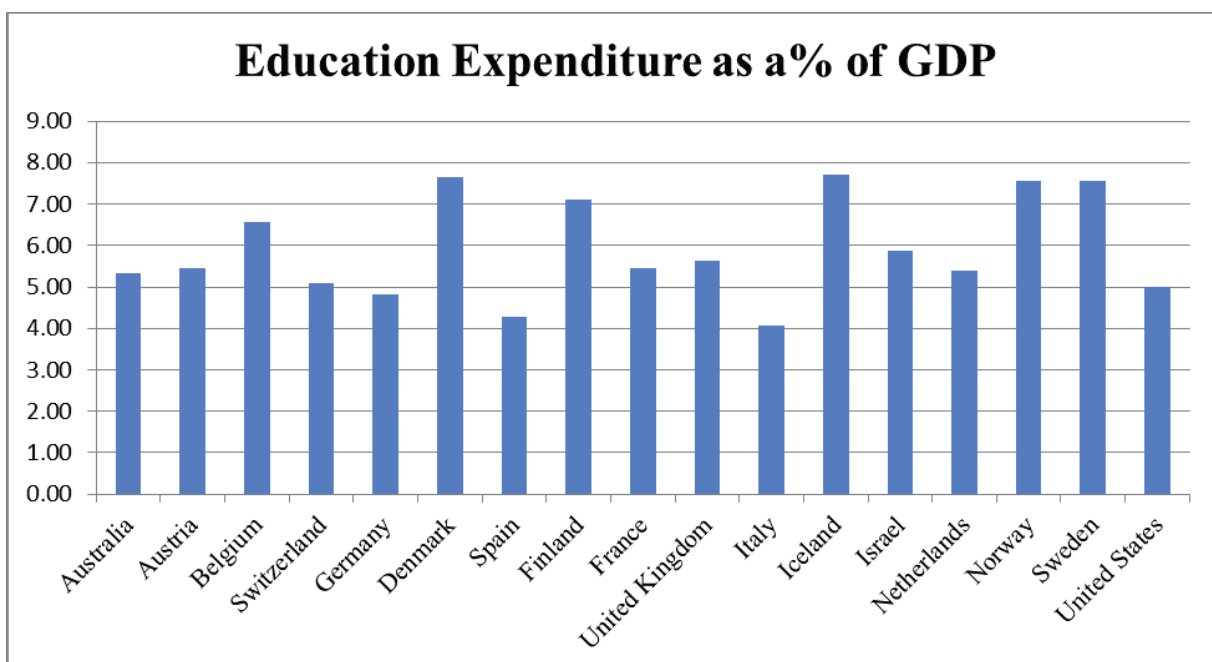
This situation is reflected in the employment level. The total number of the economically active population in 2017 is 1983.1 thousand people, 276.4 thousand people are unemployed; the unemployment rate is 13.93%. The dynamics of this indicator is declining, however, it should be noted that this indicator does not give the possibility to see the real condition due to the shortcomings of its counting method and the level of unemployment is even higher (Kasradze, Tea, 2018).

Naturally, the question arises, if we are increasing the education funding from year to year, then what are the reasons for the above-mentioned bad data? For the analysis, if we transform the data of the amount of money into the percentage, we will find that the situation is not so good.



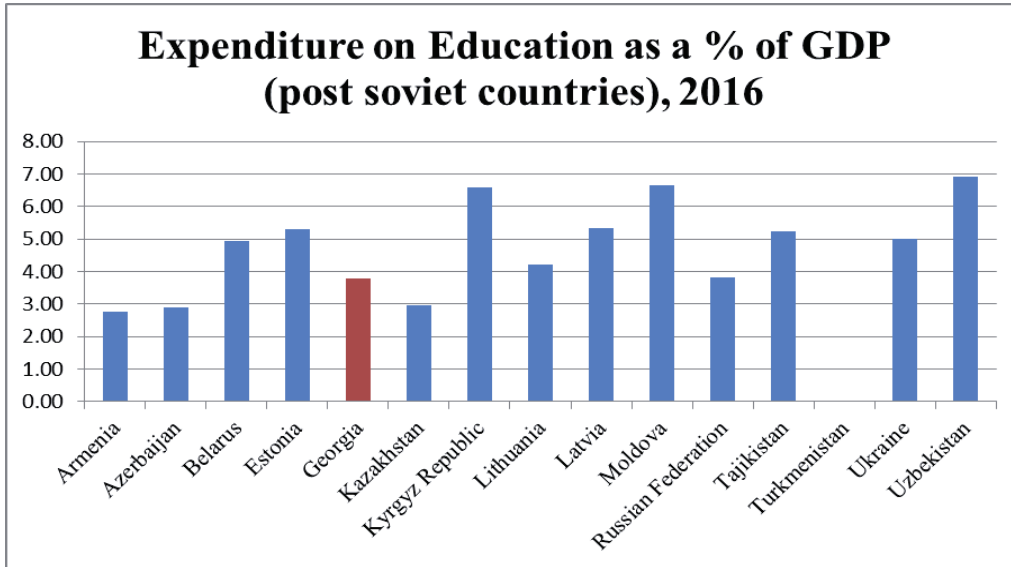
Source: National Statistics Office of Georgia <https://www.geostat.ge/en/single-categories/113/gross-domestic-product-of-georgia>

We will have more reasons to worry if we see the World Bank’s data. In 2016, on average 5% of GDP was used for education. While developed countries spent 6% of GDP in 2016. From the presented developed countries Spain and Italy spend the least on education.



Source: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/se.xpd.totl.gd.zs>

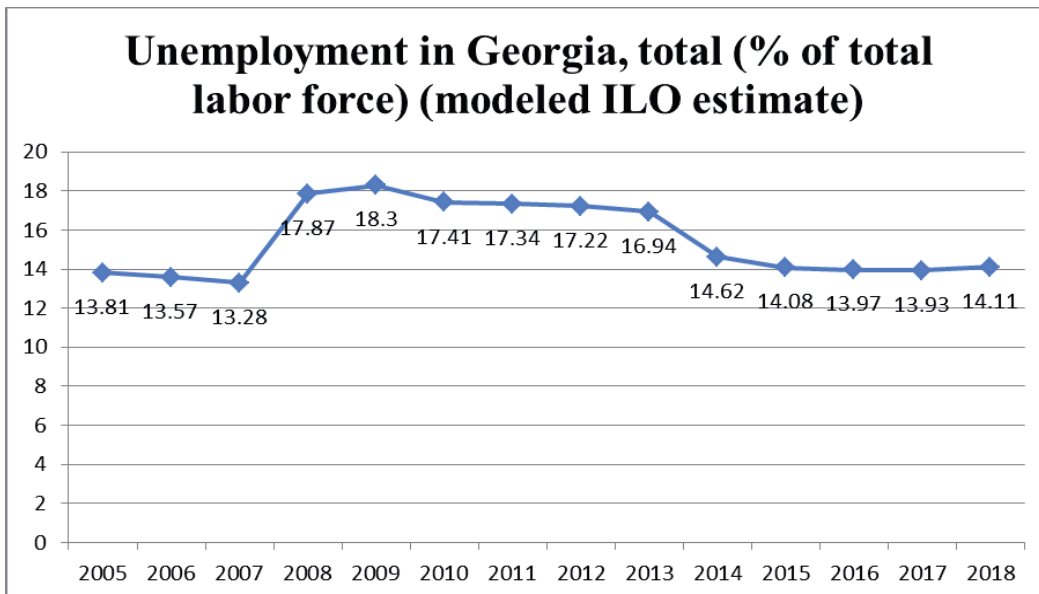
Unfortunately, we do not have the good condition compared with even former Soviet countries. According to the World Bank data, only Armenia, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan have spent less than Georgia on education, while the rest of the countries are not behind the developed countries.



Source: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/se.xpd.totl.gd.zs>

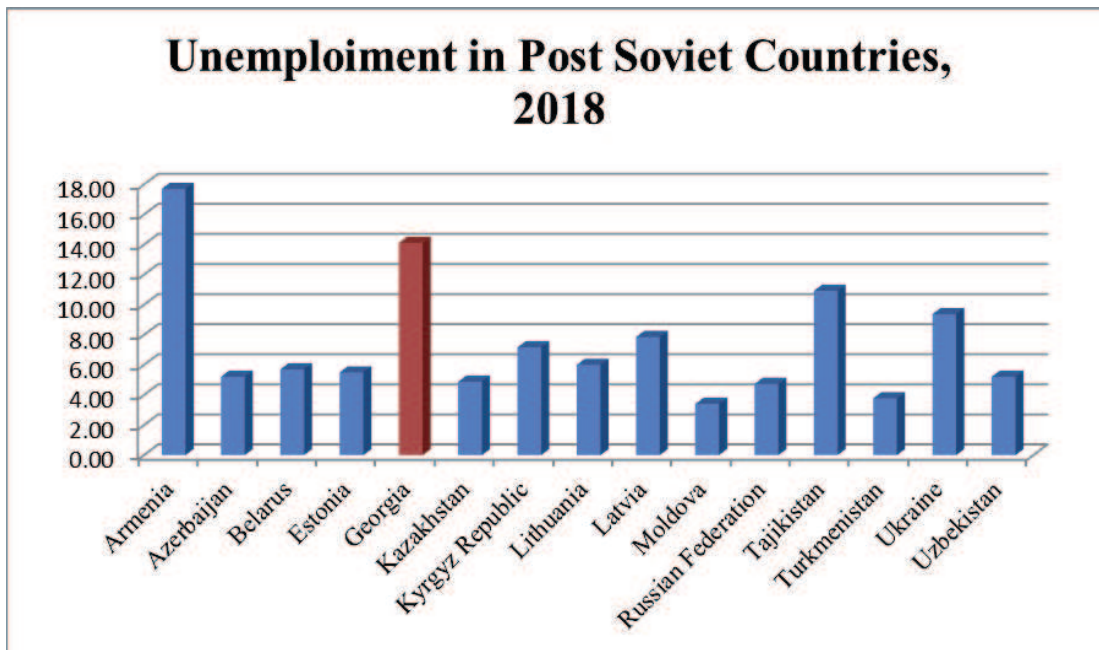
The economic growth index itself has been deteriorating noticeably since 2012. It was mainly characterized by a fall in trend. The situation has improved in the last few years, but the indicator of economic growth is still far from the indicator of 2011, saying nothing about 2007 index when the highest rate - 12.6% growth was observed in the history of independent Georgia.

Here we present the dynamics of employment indicator in Georgia in 2005-2018. Unfortunately, in this regard the picture is serious. In 2008-2013 the situation improved after radically deteriorated situation and in 2018 we reached the 2005 mark.



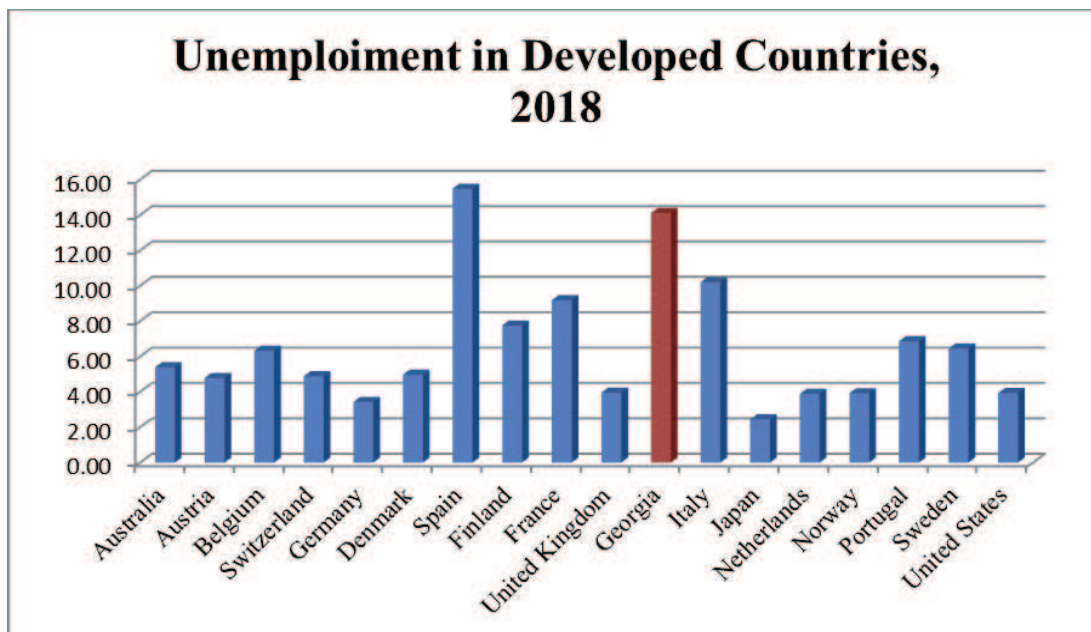
Source: International Labor Organization <https://www.ilo.org>

It is interesting to consider this indicator on the background of analogical indicators of the former Soviet countries. Unfortunately, among those countries that spend less than 5% of GDP on education, Georgia had the highest rate of unemployment in 2018 and in this regard we fell behind only Armenia.



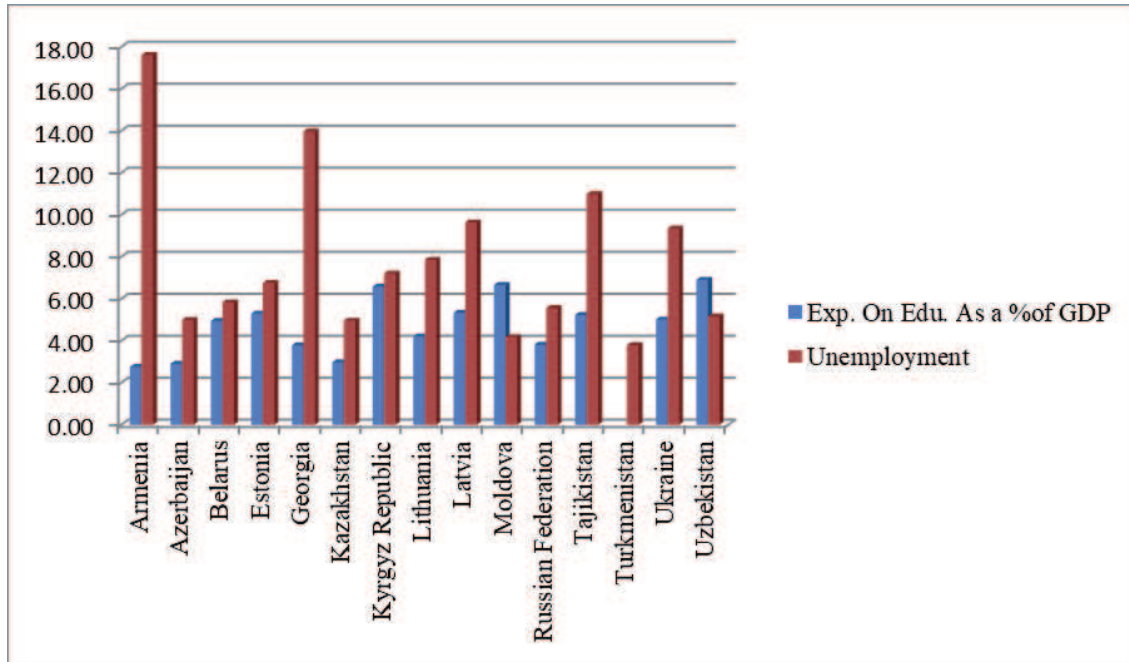
Source: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL.ZS>

As for the developed countries that spend more than 5% of GDP on education, Spain and Italy have the highest rate and as seen above, from the developed countries these countries are spending less than 5% of GDP on education.



Source: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL.ZS>

The next diagram gives a chance to compare the unemployment rate and the GDP share spent on education.



Source: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL.ZS>

We have agreed that there is a positive correlation link between education financing and employment but there are also exceptions, such as Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Russia. Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan spend less share of GDP on education than Georgia, while Russia spends slightly more, though unemployment rates are much lower in these countries. It is difficult to name the exact reason for this, but we think that the first of the above-mentioned factors providing the economic growth - the amount and quality of natural resources and the extraction and processing industries related to these resources play a major role.

This is evident also in the example of Georgia. Low funding for education - the high unemployment rate is a general picture. However, the fact that the financing is not high, but as we have seen in the dynamics it has become increasingly nonreversible, though it has not been reflected in the improvement of the employment indicator. Moreover, along with the increase in financing, the unemployment rate continued to grow. The reason is the weakness and mismanagement of the educational system due to which it cannot provide high-quality education even in case of financing (Kasradze Tea, 2016), (Kasradze Tea; Zarnadze Nino, 2018).

Since the financing education system from year to year does not automatically mean improving the quality of education. It is important to correctly implement and manage the reform strategy and tactics, the optimal distribution of financing in order the results to be maximally efficient.

Findings and Conclusions

1. Increasing the quality of education contributes to the economic growth of the country and the welfare of society. Using the research data economists in education Hanushek and Kimko find a statistically and economically significant positive effect of the quality of education on economic growth (Eric A. Hanushek, Dennis D. Kimko, 2000). According to scientists' calculation:

- In the aftermath of the war, 15-30% of income per capita in the United States was increased by raising the level of education of the workforce.
 - Education financing growth by 1% leads to the growth of GDP by 0.35%.
2. The return of raising education quality depends on many factors and, therefore, has different dynamics in different countries. Extensive evidence on knowledge development and cognitive skills indicates that a variety of factors - family, peers, and others have a direct and powerful influence. These are not factors to ignore while analyzing the correlation between education quality and economic growth.
 3. When we try to revive the education system, solving all the existing problems is important: education coverage, access to education, illiteracy problem. Still, the problem of primary importance is a problem of the quality of education. Evaluating the quality of education on the basis of the schooling years does not give us the right picture: today there is a great difference between the education acquired in one year in Finland and Peru. So, the quality of education matters significantly for economic growth. It should be noted that increasing economic growth by 1-2% a year will increase the population's income by 64% in 50 years.
 4. Improvement of the quality of the education system means strengthening educational institutions, introducing new methods and traditions. In developing countries financial resources should be used for professional staff training-qualification upgrading in accordance with the international standard, for re-equipping the material-technical base, creating additional educational institutions. Funding should be targeted and knowledge-oriented. It is important to diversify professions and jobs in developing countries to meet the demands of the international labor market in the future.
 5. Despite the reforms carried out in Georgia, the educational system still needs changes. Some issues are necessary to be solved, such as the renovation of the material-technical base, raising knowledge of human resources, raising the quality at all levels of the education system and orienting a knowledge seeker not only on domestic but on the world market. Changes are required for the education financing system by the state. It should be focused on the knowledge and achievements of a financing seeker (Tea kasradze, Vakhtang Antia, Ekaterine Gulua, 2019). It is necessary to develop a long-term educational strategy that will be linked to the socio-economic strategy of the country and provide the labor market with qualified workers in the future.

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