

**Proceedings of the 8th National Conference on Private
Higher Education Institutions (PHEIs) in Ethiopia**

**Major Theme: Invigorating the Work on Access, Equity
and Quality of the Higher Education Sector in Ethiopia**

**Organized & Sponsored
By
St. Mary's University College**

**September 25, 2010
UN Conference Center
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

The Nature and Challenges of Youth Unemployment in Lideta Sub-City, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Shimelis Dejene Yegletu
College of Social Sciences and Law, Department of Psychology, Jimma University

Abstract

The study is aimed to investigate the nature and challenges of youth unemployment in Lideta Sub-city, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The participants include randomly selected youth life skills trainers and trainees. Extensive document analysis, participant observation, and interview were the major instruments employed to obtain the necessary data. Extreme poverty as obstacle to start education and business; psychological dependency on government employment along with lack of entrepreneurial skills; negative peer influence; often loose and negative society and youth relationship; lack of robust political communication with the government; and rural to urban migration were found to be the key factors behind youth unemployment. Moreover, poor to modest macroeconomic performance; low level of employment creation; and a rapid increase in the workforce were reported to be further exacerbating youth unemployment. On the other hand, some efforts such as provisions of various trainings on entrepreneurship, vocational life skills; accessibility of credit associations; enabling the youth to be active participants and beneficiaries in of whatever they are involved; and attempts for strong communication with high government officials were outlined to be appreciable measures taken to curb the problem of urban youth unemployment. Furthermore, enhanced education, information and health services; inadequacy of educated personnel; and culture of interdependence were stressed as among the key opportunities available for the youth. However, the study also uncovered that absence of adequate place to implement what they have been trained for absence of market connectedness; mismatch between skills requirements and education/training the youth; absence of follow –up (monitoring); absence of place to demonstrate what they have produced; and limited training field are explained as some of the central supplementary factors that could possibly incapacitate youth employment opportunities. The study concluded that though the government has made encouraging progress towards curbing the problems of youth unemployment, significant improvement remains to be made. That the unemployment situation is particularly rampant among the youth, which constitutes the largest population calls for an urgent intervention aimed at improving the fate of the unemployed. And this requires concerted effort among concerned stakeholders. Hair breeding, mash room production, poultry were highlighted as ecologically valid sectors to expand the limited training options.

BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

The energy, skills, and aspirations of young people are invaluable assets that no country can afford to squander, and helping them to realize their full potential by gaining access to employment is a precondition for poverty eradication, sustainable development, and lasting peace. Given the immense challenges the youth face to get a job, youth employment has now obtained growing prominence on development agenda after having been largely neglected in national development strategies in the past. Youth unemployment is a challenge that all countries in the world are facing regardless of their stage of socio-economic development; however, the socio-economic context has an important contribution on the nature and extent of the problem.

Ethiopia has an estimated population of 80 million of which 43% is below 15-years of age in 2007. Population growth rate is about 3%. About 99% of the Ethiopian society subscribes to religious denomination of one kind or another. Close to 85% of the inhabitants are engaged in agriculture and 84% lives in rural areas. About 44% of the total population lives below international poverty line (below US\$1 a day). Life expectancy at birth is only 48 years while the average of Sub-Saharan African countries is about 60. According to UNDP (2006), the GNP per capita is \$110 and 480 for Ethiopia and Sub-Saharan Africa, respectively. GDP by sector for agriculture, industry, services is (47.5%) 9.9% and 42.6% respectively in 2005 (42.6%). The combined gross enrolment ratio for the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education is 36% for Ethiopia, while the average for developing countries is 63%. Health provisions are not adequate to meet the needs of all people. HIV/AIDS, TB, Malaria, and other infectious diseases are considered to be the major killers (Habtamu, 2009).

In the world, there are about 1.2 billion young people between ages 15 and 24, 18% of which live in developing countries. In Africa alone, there are about 200 million young people comprising more than 20% of the population (Kellow et al., 2010). Total youth population in Ethiopia is about 21.16 million which constitutes nearly 30% of the total population (MOYS, 2006). The total population of Addis Ababa is 2,738,248 out of which 1,163,401 (1.2 million) are young; 517,656 are male and 645,745 are female. The youth population at Lideta Sub-City is 85,680 which constitutes 42.5% of the total population in the Sub-City. Next to Nigeria, Ethiopia accounts for the largest youth population in Sub-Saharan Africa and the lack of employment opportunities for Ethiopian young people is among the critical development challenges facing the country. Studies by Belay (2007) Habtamu (2009) Serneels 2004 Shimelis (2010); and reports of MOYS (2004) IOM (2008) MOYS (2006) uncovered that most of the youth are illiterate, married and rural dwellers.

In Ethiopia, the youth labor market is generally characterized by high level of unemployment. Such high level of youth unemployment is a problem that most countries face, developed and developing alike. The number of unemployed youth worldwide has reached 88 million of which 10 million live with HIV/AIDS (Kellow et al, 2010). The youth account for half of the unemployed population while only representing a quarter of the total population of working-age. In Ethiopia, the unemployment rate for urban youth is 37.5% as opposed to 7.2% for rural youth.

By defining a specific target, i.e. target 16, through the *Millennium Development Goals* concerning youth employment, the international community has recognised the seriousness of the situation. However, in spite of the dramatic economic, social and political consequences of youth unemployment problems on poverty, social cohesion, migration etc, there are only few studies conducted in the area.

On the other hand, Ethiopia envisions being part of the middle-income countries within the next 20 years through expansion of current development efforts, enhanced democratisation, ensuring sustainable peace, and good governance. And this becomes a reality if and only if the youth is at the forefront and takes part in the over all development efforts. It is a well-established fact that improving the economic position of the youth constitutes an integral part of the fight against poverty. On the other hand, youth unemployment is a hot issue in the political agenda of both developed and developing countries. In spite of this common feature, existing empirical evidence and research shows that the nature of the problem is quite different in these two groups of countries.

The specific factors affecting youth employment in Ethiopia have received little research attention. Moreover, it would not be a gross over generalization to suggest that most government officials, NGOs, parents, communities have given the issue of youth unemployment less attention in this country. Hence, this study attempted to bring the issue of youth unemployment to the limelight by focusing on its nature, challenges, and determinants.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To examine the nature, challenges and determinants of youth unemployment at Lideta Sub-City, and provide ecologically valid recommendations.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

As measures to help young people make a transition into the labour market and obtain work, policy makers are hampered by lack of information on what their options are, what works in different situations, and what has been tried and failed?

LITERATURE

Clearing the Cloud: What is employment? How is unemployment related to underemployment?

There might be various definitions for the terms employment, unemployment, and under employment. In this paper, definitions from MOLSA (2010) were adopted. Employment to population ratio is the proportion of a country's working age population that is employed. The unemployed consist of all persons who during the reference period, were not working but who were seeking work for pay or profit, those available for work including those who never worked before. Unemployment rate is the proportion of the labour force that does not have a job and is actively looking for work.

Certain Myths about Unemployment

Unemployment is a profound reality, which affects the lives of millions of people. Some economists are legitimately concerned, as they are unable to predict accurately the statistical estimate of these parameters.

According to Brown and Roberts on (1992:220) the following are among the major myths about unemployment:

- ✓ A certain percentage of persons who are unemployed are necessary in society in order for the economy to flourish.
- ✓ It is an important value for all persons to be working and contributing to society and its quality of life.
- ✓ All persons who are unemployed are profoundly affected by this reality.
- ✓ It is the persons fault if he or she is unemployed.
- ✓ Issues of unemployment seem to be running rampant with no end in sight, and there is no much we can do about it; hence, it does not do not seem to be "curable."

Box 1: Where do employment data come from?

1. Household Surveys

Data used to measure unemployment, employment and underemployment are drawn from household surveys or population censuses.

2. Living Standards Measurement Surveys (LSMS).

Promoted by the World Bank, they collect data on many dimensions of household well-being including consumption, income, savings, employment, health, education, fertility, nutrition, housing, and migration.

3. Labour Force Surveys (LFS).

These surveys are standard household-based surveys of work-related statistics and should constitute as such the main source of employment data. However, they have been conducted on a very irregular basis and with substantial lags in many developing countries. Less than 10 African countries have conducted one LFS since 1990 (CDPR, 2005).

The World Bank is putting a lot of efforts to collect and harmonise micro-datasets on SSA through its Survey based Harmonised Indicators Project (SHIP). The SHIP will provide comparable and comprehensive socioeconomic indicators for African countries.

Box 3: Why are youth unemployment rates higher than adult unemployment rates?

According to ILO (2006), there are many likely explanations. For the case of south-east Europe, see Kolev and Saget, (2005)

I. The last-in, first-out explanation.

Youth are more vulnerable than adults in difficult economic times. They are likely to have less work experience than adults.

II. The lack of job search experience explanation.

A young person often lacks both labour market information and job search experience.

III. The “shopping around” explanation.

Another possibility is that youth might take longer to “shop around” for the right job, meaning they might wait longer to find work that suits their requirements.

The costs of youth unemployment

I. Individual costs of unemployment

Generally, the hardest hit from the consequences of unemployment is the individual himself or herself. Such repercussions could be seen from four interdependent approaches: physiological, psychological, interpersonal, and economic consequences.

1. Physiological perspective: Somatic stress related health illnesses such as chest pains, shortness of breath, headache, dizziness, fatigue, sleeplessness and elevated blood serum cholesterol (generally associated with heart disease) affect the unemployed.

2. Economic consequences: The unemployed bear the cost of lost earnings that would have come through employment of some sort.

3. Psychological consequences: feeling of loss, guilt, poor self-esteem, grief, reactions, a loss of personal identity, worry and uncertainty about the future, a loss of purpose, and acute and chronic depression, blaming syndrome, and self-degradation are a few examples. Furthermore, Brown and Robertson (1992: 226) argued that there have been some theoretical and empirical justifications for delineating specific and sequenced stages that a person who is unemployed goes through comparable to the stages of grief and loss. These stages generally include: **The reactions of initial shocks, optimism, pessimism and finally, fatalism.**

II. Societal costs of unemployment

Unemployment generally affects family dynamics and functioning in many ways. It upsets family homeostasis and their finance; aggravates the precipitation of role conflicts and withdrawal of the members.

III. Country level

High level of youth unemployment means that the government loses tax and other revenue that it would have raised had more people been working. The cost of crime prevention, and most importantly, the cost of doing business have gone up in many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. This sends the wrong signal for potential external resources and stifles foreign direct investment.

Nature of youth unemployment: Comparative analysis of the developed and developing world

An overview of experiences from developed world

1. The first argument says, over the period of economic expansion, youth unemployment tends to fall, while during the period of economic contraction youth unemployment tends to increase. This cyclical feature of youth unemployment may not be that apparent in the case of developing countries where the demand side problem is rather structural and an intricate part of the vicious circle of poverty.

2. The second assertion is that in the context of the western labour market, the increase in the labour force participation of adult female and increase in immigration have been blamed for some of the increase in youth unemployment in recent decades. In the context of developing countries, on the other hand, it is the competition from within the youth that is the most important factor. Most of the developing world is characterised by an unprecedented rate of population growth. Such population structure, in turn, has led to the labour market situation in these countries where there is excessive labour supply that far exceeds the increase in the available job opportunities.

3. The third contention holds that while in developed countries the youth's difficulties to get a job are related to lack of minimum professional skills required in the context of sophisticated production environments, in the case of developing countries, unemployment is generally found to rise with education levels. In the absence of unemployment insurance, only those with family (economic, social, and demographic) resources can afford to wait in order to find a good match between their level of qualification and their occupations in the labour market. Conversely, most unqualified workers cannot afford to be unemployed and end up in the informal sector where productivity and revenues are low.

What are most important contributing factors to this high level of urban youth unemployment in developing countries?

I. Demand side problems: Low level of aggregate demand increases the level of unemployment in general and youth unemployment in particular.

II. Supply side problems: The second and probably most important factor that explains youth unemployment in developing countries such as Ethiopia has to do with supply side problems. Increased number of work force: A rapidly expanding workforce either due to high level of population growth or increases in the labour supply of some segments of society, increase unemployment in general and youth unemployment in particular leading to high degree of competition from either within itself or from other groups of society.

Mismatch of education and training skills with the requirements of the labour market. This is particularly important in view of the fact that the unemployed youth in the urban areas of most developing countries seem to have gone through the best education and training that these countries can afford to provide.

Rural-urban migration:

In the context of the urban labour market of developing countries, one factor that has long been identified as an important reason explaining urban unemployment is rural-urban migration.

III. Problems that emanate from the very characteristics of the youth itself

High turnover and voluntary quit: Employers faced with a slump in demand would find it easy to layoff the inexperienced youth first. This is because the youth is the least expensive to replace when demand conditions recover.

African experiences

The youth currently represents 21 percent of the African population compared to about 18-19 percent for other developing regions (Asia and Latin America) and 14 percent in Europe. The situation is likely to keep deteriorating as the total number of youth is expected to keep increasing rapidly in the next ten years. In 2005, the labour force participation rate of young males was 73.7% one of the highest in the world (ILO, 2006; United Nations, 2007). Youth make up 36.9% of the working age population, 59.5% of the total unemployed, which is much higher than the world's average for 2005 (43.7%), reflecting serious labour demand deficiencies in the region (ILO, 2006). The share of unemployed youth among the total unemployed can be as high as 83% in Uganda, 68% in Zimbabwe and 56% in Burkina Faso (World Bank, 2009).

The absence of regular data collection on employment and unemployment in many developing countries makes it impossible to estimate unemployment rates reliably. Apart from these, the lack of comprehensive, integrated, and centralized databases on youth labour market and poverty outcomes in Africa remains a major barrier for analysing employment-linked poverty outcomes in the region.

What are the consequences of youth unemployment in Africa?

The situation of the youth on African labour markets has many economic, social, and political consequences. The welfare of the youth is negatively affected in a broad sense; vulnerability to negative shocks increases their probability of becoming or staying poor; delayed social integration (access to the first job, marriage, and residential autonomy) and modification of their demographic behaviour increases; disruptive social behaviour becomes prevalent; youth

gangs typically satisfy their economic and social needs through violence and participation in armed conflicts; facing poor job prospects, young men and women see migration overseas as the best way to have a better life, and regularly save money to emigrate legally or illegally abroad.

Characteristics and sources of youth unemployment in Ethiopia

1. Economic related:

Poor economic performance

Low economic growth, which is manifested in low economic activity and low investment, entails low overall job creation.

Lack of entrepreneurship:

Ethiopia's labour market is comprised of large informal economy and this informal sector is predominantly an employment of last resort rather than a preference by entrepreneurs.

2. Education related:

Low level of education:

In Ethiopia, a large number of individuals enter the labour market below the age of 15 with little or no formal education. Illiteracy is a major factor contributing to underemployment and employment in the informal sector.

Skills Mismatch:

Mismatch of education and training skills with the requirements of the labour market is another important reason for the high level of unemployment.

3. Population related:

High population growth:

The rate of population growth is another factor aggravating scarcity of job-opportunities.

High rural-urban migration:

Unemployment is most severe in urban areas of Ethiopia due to rural –urban migration.

General Situation of Ethiopian youth: Some historical background

The Imperial Era

As outlined in MOYS (2004) young students, especially since the 1960s have become pioneers in actively and widely mobilizing the community to struggle for their cause. Ethiopian young students, young workers, and young farmers have played important roles in the country's political, economic, social and cultural development efforts. They have conducted bitter struggles to bring about drastic positive change in the country by raising the land tenure question, stressing the removal of the decadent political systems, and other popular issues. Many youth sacrificed their lives for these noble causes.

The military regime:

During the military regime between 1974-91, a strong mass organization of youth was established; namely, the Revolutionary Ethiopian Youth Association (REYA). The Association ran several programmes including a literacy campaign, social services such as first aid, dissemination of primary health information, as well as assistance in the rebuilding of homes for old people and persons with disabilities. In addition, the planting of trees,

construction of parks, roads, and bridges; agricultural work at co-operatives, and state farms; recreational activities such as musical groups and sports teams; literacy campaign and rural – works, and labour intensive approaches were pursued in executing public works. Weaknesses include, among others that the program was small scale and reached out-of-school youth; the participation of girls was limited it was highly politicized; it was unable to play an advocacy role for the interest of the youth and others.

The current regime

With the advent of a new government in 1991, the uncertainty created by political change was not conducive to youth organizations. Gradually, the youth have organized themselves under various umbrellas. Most of the Regional States have Regional Youth Associations. Recently, these Regional Associations have come together to discuss ways of establishing a National Youth Association. These Regional Associations and other youth organizations are involved in different activities including prevention and control of HIV/AIDS education, afforestation, neighbourhood cleaning and greening participation in sports, art and culture; commitments in development programs during summer vacation (the case of college & university students few years back), and employment generation schemes. Generally, the youth are participating and benefiting from creating jobs, environmental development and protection, social and economic development, democratization, and building good governance etc.

Furthermore, currently, a number of important developments were registered in the promotion of youth issues. For instance, in 2001 the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture was established. Similarly, Ethiopian National Youth Policy was developed in the year 2004. Following this, Ethiopian Youth Development Package was produced in (2006). All aim at to consolidating and enriching the participation of the youth and the whole society and urgently bringing about practical results.

Method

The research design of this study was descriptive in nature. The study tried to identify the various hot issues surrounding Ethiopian youth unemployment in general and urban youth unemployment in particular. Key concepts included the nature, determinants, opportunities and challenges of youth unemployment at Lideta Sub-City, Addis Aabab, Ethiopia.

Sampling: Area and participant

The current study covered the nature, challenges and opportunities of youth unemployment at Lideta Sub-City. The research was delimited to this Sub-City because of time and money constraints. Moreover, since the number of practicing trainers is very limited, all trainers (100%) were purposively selected as research participants based on their interest and willingness. Finally, 14 trainees from those participating in life skills training were randomly selected.

Instruments

Extensive document analysis, participant observation and interview were the major instruments employed to secure the necessary data. By using such a mix of approaches, the study attempted to shed some light on the problem of youth unemployment, and strives to come up with some suggestions that will hopefully be of some use from the viewpoint of policymaking. To secure the soundness and trustworthiness of findings, through out the whole process emerging patterns were “triangulated” at the level of data (observational vs.

interview data), sources (primary vs. secondary) and methods (document analysis vs. interviews).

The observation focused on different challenges of trainings. The observation was of a participatory one where informed consent was obtained from both trainers and trainees. The observation was carried out at two different periods where participants were selected purposively based on their interest and willingness to participate.

The unstructured interview focused on responses that might be difficult to elicit through participant observation. For the in-depth interview, an interview guide with themes that corresponded with the research foci was developed. The guide was continuously and critically examined with regard to language incompatibilities, inappropriateness, and other possible pitfalls. Before in-depth interviews took place, interviewees were paid social visit at least for a week in order to establish trust and to provide information about the interview.

The interview lasted for a maximum of an hour minutes. One trainer and three trainees were selected purposively based on their interest and willingness. Four of the in-depth interviewees spoke English; however, for more clarification Amharic was used when necessary. Detailed notes were also taken simultaneously. Within three days the notes were transcribed into a computer and checked by the researcher for any possible mistakes.

Finally, various relevant documents were analyzed. Such documents include Youth National Policy, Youth Development Package, Youth Dialogue with the PM. Moreover, documents such as BPR, Evaluation of Outcomes of different programs, Sub-City's one year long report, and various national and international research results were used.

Data collection procedures

Prior to the commencement of data collection an official permit letter addressed to the Central Executive Officer was secured. Next, the researcher met with the head of department and explained about the purpose of the study, and presenting the letter solicited the co-operation of the department.

During the administration of the instruments, participants were briefed about the purpose of the study and the confidentiality of the information they provide. Moreover, they were informed that whatsoever information they provide would be used only for research purpose. Then, participants were enlightened to provide reliable information to enable the study hit its target.

Data analysis procedures

Information gathered were analyzed through interpretative methods. That is,

- Response was recorded to each question in a table.
- Illustrative quotes were written word for word using quotation marks.
- Summary of the key points were written after repeated reading.

In accordance with the qualitative approach chosen as part of the data collection instrument for the study, data collected from various sources and approaches (interview, participant observation and document analysis) were presented together in a descriptive and narrative form. However, the presentation is limited to four categories of discursive perspectives on youth unemployment concerns: (1) achievements so far, (2) existing challenges, (3) available opportunities and (4) sound recommendations.

Ethical considerations

In conducting this study, the following ethical considerations and safety measures were taken:

Ethical clearance: Ethical clearance was obtained from Jimma University.

Informed consent: after the purpose and importance of the study is explained for the participants of the study, informed consent was obtained from each respondent

Privacy and confidentiality: the privacy of the subjects was kept and they were informed that whatever information they provide would be kept confidential. Moreover, they were informed about the benefits and risks of the research. Compensation and information dissemination: This was also taken care of.

Findings

Why is youth unemployment a serious concern in our country in general and Lideta Sub-City in particular?

Interview with key informants and document analysis came up with the following lists:

- Youth makes up a significant proportion of the population in Ethiopia. However, Ethiopia has far too little resource to devote towards ensuring youth education, and job creation.
- For so long the young have been discriminated and were not able to share the resources of this country.
- Ethiopia seems to invest though limited resources on the youth. Nevertheless, this investment did not have significant effect as the youth were not in a position to support themselves, and the society.
- The youth being one of the scarce resources (considering the responsibilities may assume) that these countries are endowed with, failure to channel this resource properly may mean a further entrapment in the vicious circle of poverty and a bleak future in terms of economic development and growth.
- High level of youth unemployment and the sense of desperation it creates have been linked to social problems that threat investment in human capital that is likely to raise future earnings commensurate with higher levels of productivity that such investment brings.
- Young people in Ethiopia are more likely to be employed in jobs of low quality, are underemployed, (working long hours for low wages and are engaged in dangerous work accepting only short term and/or informal employment arrangements.
- In spite of the pressing youth employment challenge, youth issues were given only limited attention in the development policies of the country.

What is the nature of youth unemployment? / What determines youth unemployment in Ethiopia in general and Lideta Sub-City in particular? Results from interview, analysis of relevant documents, personal observations and findings of empirical studies came up with the following results.

1. Investment and industry:

Participants of the current research reported that there are limited number of industries (especially large-scale industries) which can accommodate increasing number of youth

population. For instance, we can mention the absence of large agricultural farms (either state owned or private). Participants bitterly expressed their feelings that many of the investors wrongly focused on gold mining, cement production, hotels and metals; they should have focused on large farms that could produce food items that could ensure the country's food self –sufficiency. Furthermore, a minority of young men would like to start their own businesses but are constrained to do so. This indicates that credit constraints are among the causes of unemployment although further research is needed to establish this.

2. Individual characteristics:

Psychologically, many youth wait for readymade jobs, lack saving skills and aspire to be employed in the public sector instead of employing themselves; few ask the employer directly (lack assertiveness) (Shimelis, 2010).

3. Socio-cultural factors: In this country, the youth have been victims of different psychologically discouraging sayings. An interview with key informant enlightens us the following Amharic proverbs:

•••••
•••••
••••••
•••••••
•••••••
•••••••
••••••••
•••••••••
••••••••••
••••••••••
••••••••••
••••••••••

These sayings have long lasting negative impacts on the youth. It makes them give up hope in everything they are doing, and encourages them to be more and more dependent on others and mere luck rather than their own talent.

4. Household background: Inadequate family income prevents a family from sending their children for education; mothers and fathers education and work can be taken as another contributing factor. Large family size where children are considered as assests or gifts of God can be a third factor in addition to lack of saving skills.

Moreover, document analysis of MOYS (2002) provides the following general statements behind youth unemployment: The country has been and still is backward it has been and still is in poverty; lack of attention from the previous and the current regimes; lack of initiation, motivation, and participation on the part of the youth; and benefiting from political decisions. Generally, the war with Eritrea, the 2001 drought, weather conditions, limited market accessibility, low availability of investment, capital, risk absorption capacity and financial management skills, the absence of the participation of the youth in decision-making and implementation of policies that affect them have all contributed negatively to youth unemployment. Economic poverty where families were not able to send their children to schools lack of adequate entrepreneur skills, negative peer influence that result in during abuse, time wastage, discouragement from friends on each positive attempt of friends on. Loose societal and youth relationship also contribute to youth unemployment directly or indirectly. Ethiopian society often considers the youth as “juvenile delinquents.” This prevents them from participating in different development activities and forces them to be highly involved in drug abuse (Shimelis, 2010). Lack of strong political communication

between the youth and the government, especially during the past years, and migration to urban cities could be mentioned as some of the major factors behind the drama of youth unemployment.

What media do the youth often follow to look for a job? friends, relatives, church, ethnic associations were reported to have been sources of information to look for a job. For instance, an international NGO, named World Vision will seeks employees who are only protestant in their religion Government employment agencies advertisements on TV, radio, news papers, internet, etc), and asking a prospective employer were reported to be other sources.

Every day experience, personal observations and findings of studies reveal that the following are among the major sources of support to unemployed youth.

Parental help is one. Households reduce their savings and consumption to cope with unemployment small occasional jobs; help from friends, spouse, own savings or loan from relatives are a few. In fact, here the collectivists' culture of interdependence plays a significant role. Stealing even if it is immoral and illegal; begging though it is immoral; support from the government and NGOs however inadequate can be mentioned as alternative sources of income for the unemployed youth.

Document analysis from MOLSA (2010) indicated that the following are the major sources in the country that the youth could visit to get a job: the public sector, the private sector, wage employment, self-employment, casual work the and the informal private sector.

How do you see the importance of life skills training in relation to the overall development of the youth and particularly to employment and unemployment related issues?

“In Ethiopia, the public sector is expected to contract instead of expanding. Hence, young men should not overestimate their chances of getting a public job. Rather, they are strongly advised to create their own jobs and be self-employed. Life skills training benefits youth a lot in this regard. It enables them to be prudent in decision-making skills, critically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of everyday choices of life. For example, if a certain lady has already decided to leave for the Middle East as a migrant worker, then through psychosocial skills training, she would get the chance to rethink over her earlier beliefs, attitudes, wishes, decisions and revise them appropriately to the extent of redeciding not to leave her own country. Moreover, it would also enable her to take a calculated risk.”

An interview with another key informant could further substantiate the above finding:

“If we look at the most frequented media by the youth as sources of the job vacancy, as to me, we find social networks and consulting advertisements. It becomes clear then that the unemployed in this country focus too much on advertisements and social networks, but do little to approach the employer directly. This indicates that they do not have much assertive behavior. Therefore, the psychosocial skills trainings which emphasize on self esteem and confidence building of the youth would possibly enhance their being assertive and lessens their submissiveness or aggressiveness.”

Box 1: For what categories of youth do, such trainings are provided.

Trainings are offered to the youth from different groups especially to those from different associations/clubs.

- youth associations, youth forums, youth leagues
- various clubs found in the Sub-City such as Nebabit and Fantastic
- four national organizations (Amhara, Tigray, Oromo, Dehub, Gurage, youth centers.)
- youth federation
- youth on the Street

However, since every activity is given political meaning, priority is given for those youth who are politically affiliated groups or those who are in the lead.

Box 3: Last one year major achievements of the Sub-City

What are the major achievements in relation to youth development at Lideta sub-city?

Both document analysis and FGD participants came up with the following lists:

- Establishment of Youth and Sports Bureau that works around issues of youth
- Developed a program on youth development package
- Start up of micro and small enterprise
- Start up of urban agriculture
- Provision of various trainings such as entrepreneurship skills, life skills and vocational skills (textile, wood and metal work, construction industry, urban agriculture, poultry, sheep production, cabbage production, cobblestone, sera shed) project; youth development package

Questions raised/ Deficits/Gaps observed /incapacitating factors

Finance and administration related	Psychosocial and cultural
Absence of space to produce various items.	Backward psychosocial and socio-cultural factors such as considering youth as <i>'jebdegnoch' or adventurers.</i>
Absence of market connectedness to demonstrate and sale.	Irrational labeling of jobs as <i>"bad" and "good"</i> ; bad jobs are associated with low social status.
Lack of prompt service to get money from the small enterprises;	Current training related
Lack of funds to start their own business.	Trainings being not based on need assessment/ not in line with the interests of the youth.
Limited youth centers.	Trainings are delivered in limited areas and are not expanding.
Not expanding urban agriculture.	Absence of adequate follow-up and monitoring.
Lack of courage to report on something not done.	Mismatch between skills requirements and education/trainings.
Less attention to the youth who are not politically affiliated such as youth on the streets and from various clubs; threat for national integration.	Repetition of trainings, especially on youth development package.
	Corruption in selecting trainees for participation when there is per diem.

Currently working partners include among others:

NGOs: Beza Lewogen College, St. Mary's University College and Ethiopian Women Development Fund.

Governmental: Lideta Sub-City's TVET Micro and Small Enterprise; Tegbare Ed;
Recommended order of trainings:

- A. First in the list life skills because the youth have to know about themselves, others and the environment. They have to know their strengths, weaknesses others strengths and weaknesses; the opportunities available, and challenges in the environment etc. Generally speaking it is crucial that they know how to deal with overall life problems and become successful in life.
- B. Entrepreneurship skills should come second.
- C. How to design a project follows and finally
- D. Vocational trainings

What potential employment related opportunities are there for employment for current Ethiopian youth in general and the youth in Lideta Sub-City in particular?

The present youth are vulnerable to different risks and yet are simultaneously presented with some opportunities. In this regard, Shimelis (2010), and FGD discussants listed the following:

BOX 1: Some employment related opportunities for current youth

1. **Relative peace and democracy in this country.**
2. **Relative economic development.**
3. **Relative by better educational opportunity.** It is unquestionable that the present youth are exposed to better educational opportunities, as opposed to the previous generation.
4. **Relative by better access to information.** The increased services of telephone, electronic media, print-media, and others enabled the present youth to have better information knowledge about his /her locality, the country, and the whole world. This in one way or the other created golden opportunities for the youth to access information about jobs from different sources, announcements on different public and private media and news papers and enhanced self-employment and entrepreneurship skills.
5. **The relative culture of interdependence.** Like some African and other developing countries, Ethiopians are famous for this cultural manifestation. Therefore, the present youth can take this as main opportunity to get help. Many families live a collective and supportive kind of life. It is vivid that many sacrifice themselves for their brothers, sisters, relatives and pay to educate them delaying their own marriages.
6. **Inadequacy of educated people.** Even if this could be considered as a problem for the country as a whole, yet it is a great opportunity for the youth. Clever and industrious youth in this country have a much better job opportunity than any other group of people as we have observed so far.
7. **Promotion of self-employment.** On a more optimistic note, the promotion of self-employment by the current government may have a far-reaching positive outcome. The accepted wisdom is that the development of new firms usually start with self-employment, and this may turn out to be particularly essential to capital-constrained developing economies such as Ethiopia.
8. **The relative increase in access to health services.** Now days, the country's health service has shown great improvement and it is possible to say that the youth is one beneficiary of this.

What possible risks are there for the current youth that could perhaps deter them from employment?

According to Shimelis (2010), at present the, youth in Ethiopia are vulnerable to various risks of development. Some preliminary studies conducted in the area reveal that the types and magnitude of risks varies from person to person. We can see them as male and female youth challenges; rural and urban youth problems; the physically disabled youth and those who are not. Several factors are to blame for this sad state of affairs. For the purpose of the current research, let us see the common risks. Interview with key informants and document analysis came up with the following lists:

1. **Unemployment problem:** Especially those who have completed their secondary education but are unable to join higher education institutions are more vulnerable to unemployment. This problem heavily affects urban and female youth.
2. **Psychosocial and Socio-cultural Impacts:** History, everyday experience, and findings from different studies reveal that Ethiopian youth were vulnerable to several socio-cultural impacts. For instance, youth in Ethiopia have been misunderstood for so long as ‘*Jebdegnoch*’ or “adventurers.” Moreover, they were victims of the often unfair and pessimistic comparison between the past and the current generation, such as persons who cannot make a difference was made.
 - A. **Harmful Traditional Practices:** Early marriage, abduction, rape, especially on women who live in the countryside. They were labelled as persons.
 - B. Resolving problems with discussions is considered to be a feminine character. And big problem.
 - C. **Rapidly growing population** Many families still consider children as assets or gifts of God/Allah both by educated and uneducated groups.
 - D. Problems related to **parenting styles**. Till today, authoritarian, undemocratic, neglectful or indulgent parenting is common in Ethiopia.
 - E. **Lack of proverbs or sayings on entrepreneurships:** There is lack of psychosocial care and support in relation to assertiveness, time management, prioritization as gratification of needs and self-actualization.
 - F. **The bad tradition of “self censorship”/ ‘Yilugnta’** leads the youth to do things differently for the inspire of their beliefs. It forces the youth to accept peer pressure for granted. These bad traditional practices not only violate individual human rights but they also are the main signals behind the absence democratic values in the country.
3. **HIV/AIDS:** Many youth in one way or the other are vulnerable to it. Some of them are living with the virus. Some others, since they lost their parents because of the virus, were forced to lead street life. In other cases the youth are forced to become parents for their little sisters and brothers at a tender age.
4. **Weak economic performance:** A less than satisfactory performance in economic growth over the years, among others, could also be blamed for this situation.
5. **Environmental pollution,** Bad traditional attitudes and practices about personal hygien, problems of defecation and disposal of wastes are common.
6. **Exposure to negative peer pressures:** of different nature such as addiction to different substances such as chat, cigarette, cannabis and involvement in criminal acts highly affect young people of this.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the current study, the following concluding remark was made.

The study concluded that though the government and other stakeholders have made encouraging progress towards curbing the problems of youth unemployment, significant improvement remain to be made.

Based on the study results, the following recommendations were made:

In addition to the available vocational trainings, and retraining, hare breeding, mushroom production, electricity, poultry were highlighted as ecologically valid sectors to expand the limited training options. An intervention of this sort, improves human capital and their competitiveness in the job market. Such intervention has, in practice, been observed to improve the lot of at least some of the youth in the developed world. Given the sheer size of the youth and the resource requirement in running such programs, the applicability of an intervention of this nature in the poorest of countries is highly doubtful however.

The educational system should produce matured, competent, qualified and job creating youth. In this regard the policy of rapid expansion in education and training opportunities, that is mostly supply driven and not in line with the skill needs of these economies, has to be checked. Expansion in education and training opportunities, over looking quality problems, is an achievement in its own merit as it increases general human capital and meets the basic rights of children and the young. Nonetheless, uncoordinated and supply driven expansion in education and training may amount to the creation of an army of dissatisfied youth in the end. The creation of an enabling environment, which aids the development of a vibrant private sector should also be an integral part of the fight against youth unemployment. Encouraging the private sector not only creates more employment but it would also ease the burden on the state whose role should be limited to the co-ordination of the skills requirements of the labour market (the private sector) and the development of such skills through education and training. activity in microfinance).

Other types of interventions that can be made include the encouragement of entrepreneurship and self-employment. In an environment where there is a weak private sector and where the capacity of the state in terms of creating employment is limited, entrepreneurship and self-employment should be viewed as alternative ways of employment creation. In this regard, the creation of schemes that provide potential youth entrepreneurs with vital labour market information and that desperately need finance (credit) might be worth considering.

One important missing factor in relation to the labour market of countries like Ethiopia is a system of labour market information that is vital to the state, the private sector, and the society at large. Given this, the establishment of a scheme that provides such crucial information would be important.

Integrating vulnerable groups (women and young people) who experience relatively greater difficulties in securing productive employment than adult men, need to be given attention so that they will be able to overcome the specific barriers they face (cultural attitudes, traditional division of labour, difficulties in the schools etc). Strengthening Technical, Vocational Education Training (TVET) and ensuring that it develops in line with market needs and targeting women, particularly in the informal sector, are two important priorities in this area.

The Ethiopian community in general and parents in particular are highly advised to refrain themselves from using discouraging proverbs and sayings and instead focus on the positive and encouraging, ones such as “I am different, so I can make a difference,! I can do it! etc.”

Employing and inculcating the above sayings could possibly increase the youth's self-esteem and enhance his or her self-confidence thereby making them be self-reliant and actualize their potentialities.

It is highly suggested that the youth should understand their misunderstandings. They need to know the realities in their country, accept it and finally be ready for change and transformation. This means that the youth should stop labelling jobs as good and bad, and take what is available since the other comes later. Moreover, youth should be very wise to learn from the mistakes of their peers identify the risks surrounding them and at the same time cease the hidden golden opportunities and capitalize on them.

The task of fighting youth unemployment in Ethiopia is not an easy one. The government alone cannot carry out such a task. Hence, concerted effort from all the major actors is absolutely vital. The state should be at the forefront of the fight by creating an enabling environment and by carrying out the much-needed task of coordination. The private sector, NGOs, the donor community, and other important actors (parents, schools, colleges/universities, various sectoral ministers (MOLSA, MOYS, MOE etc.); local and international (IOL, IOM), NGO) should be there to complement such efforts.

Generally, issues of youth unemployment or underemployment demand heavy investment if we wish to pull out the country from extreme poverty and backwardness; to ensure sustainable development; expand democratization and social services; to secure peace, and bring tolerance; to realize the renaissance of this country.

REFERENCES

የ ወጣቶችና ስፖርት ሚኒስቴር 2009, የ አዲስ አበባ ከተማ አስተዳደር የ ወጣቶች እድገት ፓኬጅ
የ ወጣቶችና ስፖርት ሚኒስቴር 2010a, ሶስተኛው የ አገር አቀፍ የ ኢትዮጵያ ወጣቶች የተሳትፎና
የንቅናቄ ኮንፈረንስ : ፡ በ ወጣቶችና ስፖርት ሚኒስቴር የተዘጋጀ ልዩ እትም : ፡
የ ወጣቶችና ስፖርት ሚኒስቴር 2010b, የ ኢትዮጵያ ወጣቶች የ እድገት ፓኬጅ አተገባበር : የተገኙ
ዉጤቶች : ያጋጠሙባቸዋል : የ መፍትሔ ሀሳቦች : ፡
የ ኢ.ፌ.ዲ.ሪ : የ ዉጭ ጉዳይ ሚኒስቴር እና የ ሰራተኛና ማህበራዊ ጉዳይ ሚኒስቴር 2010, ዜጎችን
በህገወጥ መንገድ ከህገር የማስወጣት ወንጀል : ፡ ህገወጥ የሰዎች ዝግግር እና ህገወጥ
የድንበር ማቋረጥ በ ኢትዮጵያ ያስከተለዉን ችግር ፤ የ ችግሩን መንስዎችንና
መፍትሔዎቻቸዉን ይዳስሳል : ፡
Asmamaw Enquobahrie 2004, Understanding Poverty: The Ethiopian Context (A Paper presented at
The Gambia AAPAM Roundtable Conference, Banjul, The Gambia, April 19 - 23,
Belay Tefera 2007, Raising AIDS Orphaned Children in Ethiopia: Practices of Care and Support,
Challenges, and Fututre Directions In Proceedings of the Sixth National Conference. Caring
for Orphaned and Vulnerable Children in Ethiopia. Addis Ababa Univerity. 2007 PP, 60-
112. Ethiopian Psychologists Association.
Berhanu Denu, Abraham Tekeste, and Hannah van der Deijl 2005/7, Characteristics and Determinants
of Youth Unemployment, Underemployment, and inadequate Employment in Ethiopia.
Employment Strategy Papers. Employment Policies Unit Employment Strategy
Department.
Brown, I.R.; & Robertson, E.S. (1992). Rehabilitation Counseling. Approaches in the Field of
Counseling.
Curtain, R. (2004) Indicators and measures of youth unemployment: Major limitations and
alternatives. National Institute for Governance University of Canberra, Australia.

- Desta Solomon 2010, Desk Review of Studies Conducted on Women Entrepreneurs in Ethiopia. Produced and Distributed by the Addis Aababa Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Associations.
- Ethiopian Youth Development Package 2006, Ministry of Youth, Sports, and Culture. Addis Ababa. Ethiopia.
- Federal Negarit Gazeta 2009, A proclamation to Provide for Employment Exchange Services. Proclamation No. 632/2009.
- GTZ 2009, Study on Trafficking in Women in East Africa. A Situational Analysis including current NGO and Governmental activities, as well as future opportunities, to address trafficking in women and girls in Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and Nigeria.
- Habtamu Wondimu 2009, Challenges of Access to and Equity in Higher Education in Ethiopia. A comparative Perspective on Affirmative Action. In Proceedings of the Second Annual Research Conference on Higher Education , Research and Governance in Capacity Building In Ethiopia ,18-19 July, 2009, PP. 1-25, Alpha University College. Addis Aaba, Ethiopia.
- ILO. (2003). Key Indicators of the Labour Market.
- Institute of Research for Development 2007, Youth, and Labour Markets in Africa. A Critical Review of Literature. Facts and Figures: What do we know (and do not know) about Youth Employment in Africa.
- IOM. (2008). Country of Origin Information Sheet Ethiopia.
- MOLSA 2010, The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. Labour Market Information Bulletin. Employment Service Promotion Directorate.
- MOYS 2004, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. National Youth Policy. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Kellow, N.; Ayele Gezahegn; and Hayat Yusuf 2010, Eabling the Private Sector to Contribute to the Reduction of Urban Youth Unemployment in Ethiopia. Produced and distributed by the Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Associations.
- Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Unit Africa Region, 2007. Ethiopia. Urban Labour Markets in Ethiopia: Challenges and Prospects. Vol, I: Synthesis Report. Report No. 38665.
- Serneels, P. 2004, The Nature of Unemployment in Urban Ethiopia. Center for the Study of African Economies, Oxford University.
- Shimelis Dejene 2005, Affirmative Action and Female Students Overall Development. Jimma University.
- _____2009, Religiosity, Gender Versus Value Priorities, (The Case of Sawula Senior Secondary School students, Gamo Gofa Zone (SNNPR), Ethiopia). Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology Vol. 35, Special Issue, 135-130.
- _____2010, National Life Skills for Ethiopian Youth. Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Tansel, A.; and Tasci, M.H.2010, Hazard Analysis of Unemployment Duration by Gender in a Developing Country: The Case of Turkey. Institute for the Study of Labour.
- UNDP 2006, Human Development Report.
- World Bank 2009, African Developemnt Indicators.Youth, and Employment in Africa. The Potential, the Problem, the Promise.