

# Determinants of Youth Unemployment: The Case of Hawassa City

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**Abstract:** Ethiopia has the largest youth population in Sub-Saharan Africa. More than half of its population is under the age of 25, and 20% are between 15 and 24. From the total population of the Ethiopia, youth constitutes about 45 percent of the total population and 36.26 percent of which are urban population.

A high level of unemployment is one of major social, economic and political problems in Ethiopia especially in recent time. Besides lack of employment opportunities for young people are among the critical development challenges facing the country and a key barrier to national efforts toward the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Currently, the Ethiopian youth unemployment rate is one of the highest in the world. However, some sources indicate that urban youth unemployment figures in Ethiopia shows a declining trend, although the high figures represent a major challenge. Compared with rural youth unemployment, urban youth unemployment is more prevalent.

The objective of this study is to investigate the determinants of youth unemployment in Hawassa City. To this end the study conducted a cross-sectional study on a sample of 163 youth of Hawassa city using multistage sampling technique. The study also employed a probit model to identify determinants of youth unemployment Accordingly, the probit regression result revealed that five variables namely age of the youth, fathers' education of the youth, education of the youth, access to credit facilities and attitude towards job negatively and significantly affect unemployment.

The study thus concludes that education (both of the youth and the parents), credit facilities and a positive attitude matters most in helping the youth get employed.

**Key Words:** Unemployment, Youth, Probit, Hawassa city

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## I. Introduction

Youth is the time of life full of promise, aspiration and energy. The definition of youth differs from one country to another based on the laws governing such country. The United Nation (UN) has defined youth as persons in the age range of 15-24 years, while the World Health Organization (WHO) categorize youth as persons between the ages of 10 and 24 years inclusively. In the Ethiopian context, Youth comprises part of the society whose age are between 15-29 (Ministry of youth, Sport and Culture, 2004).

The ability of youth to engage in productive activities has both social and economic consequences for an economy (O'Higgins, 2017; UNDP, 2018). So that the youth employment increases economic growth; promotes political and social stability; positively affects progress toward the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and poverty reduction generally (Anyanwu and Erhijakpor, 2012).

Globally, Youth unemployment has nearly 70.9 million (15–24 years of age) and the youth unemployment rate was 13.1 per cent and it was highest in the Arab States, at 30.0 per cent in 2017 (ILO, 2017). By 2018, the global number of unemployed youth is expected to rise by another 134,000, to reach 71.1 million and youth unemployment rate is expected to remain at 13.1 per cent over the next couple of years; where a slight jump to 13.2 per cent is expected (ILO, 2017). In 2018, an estimated 172 million young people worldwide were unemployed and the number of people unemployed is projected to increase by 1 million per year to reach 174 million by 2020 as a result of the expanding labor force (ILO, 2019).

The United Nation (UN) defines the youth as person between 15-24 years', WHO, 10-24. In Ethiopia, according to the national youth policy, youth include part of society who are between 15-29 years (minister of woman, children's and Youth, 2004).

In Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), youth unemployment was reported as 11.1 percent in 2017 and expected to rise to 11.2 in 2018 but North Africa had an average of 28 per cent, which was the highest amongst the regions of the world (ILO, 2017). The high unemployment rate indicating that job opportunities are not expanding fast enough to keep pace with growth of the labor force, and young people do not have the education

and skills required meeting labor market demands (ILO, 2015b: 1). Ethiopia has the largest youth population in Sub-Saharan Africa. More than half of its population is under the age of 25, and 20% are between 15 and 24 (WB, 2013). A high level of unemployment is one of the major social, economic and political problems in Ethiopia special recent time. In addition to that the Ethiopian context, lack of employment opportunities for young people is among the critical development challenges facing by the country and a key barrier to national efforts toward the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (Talent Youth Association (TaYa) 2013).

From the total population of the Ethiopia youth constitutes about 45 percent of the total population and 36.26 percent of which are the total urban population (CSA, 2012). Currently, the Ethiopian youth unemployment rate is one of the highest in the world (Yusuf et al., 2010; Broussard and Tekleselassie, 2012). However, some sources (CSA, 2012) indicate that urban youth unemployment figures in Ethiopia show a declining trend, although the high figures represent a major challenge. Compared with rural youth unemployment, urban youth unemployment is more prevalent in urban areas (CSA, 2013).

In Ethiopia, the labor force is growing with an increasing proportion of youth and employment opportunity is inadequate to accommodate this high proportion of labor force specially the youth part in different sectors of the economy (Guarcello and Rosati, 2007 cited at Alemnew, 2014)

Unemployment in Ethiopia is more of a problem of urban youth than that of rural. According to Ethiopia labor force survey report, the unemployment rate urban youth at country level was 22.9 while it was 3.1 % in rural Areas (LFS, 2013)

Having knowledge to the high youth unemployment rate and its negative consequences, the government of Ethiopia formulated long-term economic development strategies including Agricultural Development Led Industrialization (ADLI 2005–2010) and the five-year Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP 2011–2015).

Full and productive employment and decent work for all is one of the targets in the first Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. Employment is people's main route out of poverty. As decent work for all is considered as a key driver of inclusive growth, employment with a focus on youth is a prominent topic within the post-2015 development agenda (Koehler, 2013).

However, today youth unemployment is a common agenda and a critical issue of all countries; particularly in developing countries. A lack of decent work, if experienced at an early age, threatens a person's future employment prospects and frequently leads to undesirable labor market outcomes over longer periods (ILO, 2012).

A long-term youth unemployment always results substantial crises in psychological, social and economic perspectives; the economic effects include: decrease in total output, dependence on family, increasing poverty, loss of human capital; the social effects include: social unrest, rising crime rates and violence, drug use and human trafficking, brain drain and the Psychological effects include: social isolation, loss of confidence and self-esteem, mental disorders, suicide attempts. All these lead to the erosion of a healthy society (Bolton and Oatley, 1987; Maqbool et al., 2013).

Despite the recent economic growth witnessed in Ethiopia, youth unemployment has shown a declining trend, but it remains high (Martha, 2012). The highest rate (23.3 percent) was observed in 2012. Then after two years, the rate had shown a declining trend and 22.8 percent was recorded in 2014. After a year, the rate rise to 22.9 percent in 2015. But the lowest unemployment rate 22 percent was recorded in 2016. By 2018, the youth unemployment rate in urban centers of the country was estimated to 25.3 percent (UEUS, 2018).

Thus the objective of this study is, thus, to investigate the determinants of youth unemployment in Hawassa city.

## **II. A Brief Literature Review**

The International Labor Organization (ILO) defines the unemployed as numbers of the economically active population who are without work but available for and seeking work including people who have lost their jobs and those who have voluntarily left work (WB, 2007).

In addition to that, the standard definition of unemployment of ILO is based on the following three criteria that must be satisfied simultaneously; (a) "Without work," (b) "currently available for work," and (c) "looking for work." Further, under completely relaxed definition, unemployment comprises of discouraged job seekers in addition to persons satisfying the standard definition. Discouraged job seekers are those who want a job but did not take any active step to search for work because they believe that they cannot find one. That is, the seeking work criterion is completely relaxed and unemployment is based on the "without work" and "availability" condition only (ibid).

The ILO estimate that the number of unemployed youth is on the rise again since 2011, after declining from the peak it reach at the time of the globe financing crisis. It is expected to reach 74.2 million young people by 2014 based on (ILO2010).

Unemployment is a problem for both developed and developing countries. However, the impact and intensity might differ. According to Rafik et al. (2010), unemployment has been the most consistent problem in

both advanced and poor countries. In 2009 for example, as indicated in the World Bank data base (2011), the general unemployment rate stood at 20.5% in Ethiopia, 23.5% in South Africa, 4.3% in China, 5% in Japan, 9.1% in France, 8.3% in Brazil and Sweden and 9.3% in the US. Recently, unemployment has increased due to the global economic crisis of 2007/08 which caused the collapse of aggregate output and led to job cuts.

According to Asalfew (2011), sex, migration, education, social network, job preferences and access to business advisor services significantly determine youth unemployment in Debre Birhan town, Ethiopia. However household income, fathers' education and marital status were found insignificant.

Another explanation may be that urban unemployment might be more serious than rural unemployment for example in creating political instability. For instance, the recent uprising in the Middle East especially in Egypt and Tunisia which toppled the respective regimes is motivated by major socioeconomic problems such as rising unemployment (Behr and Aaltola, 2011). It is also vital that the obstacles for productivity (which unemployment can be one) should be studied not only in the agricultural sector but also in the urban non-agricultural sector so as for both to contribute for growth and job creation. Unlike most African countries where poverty incidence differs and is relatively higher in rural than urban areas, it is almost similar both in urban and rural Ethiopia. Urban poverty stood at 37% and rural poverty at 45% in 2005 (World Bank, 2005). Growth, unemployment and job creation in urban areas therefore require equal attention for poverty alleviation.

### **III. The study area**

Hawassa is a city in Ethiopia, on the shores of Lake Hawassa in the Great Rift Valley. It is located 285 km south of Addis Ababa via Debre Zeit, 130 km east of Sodo, and 75 km north of Dilla. The town serves as the capital of the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region, and is a special zone of this region. It lies on the Trans-African Highway 4Cairo-Cape Town, and has a latitude and longitude of 7°3'N 38°28'E. Coordinates: 7°3'N 38°28'E. Elevation: 1708 meters above sea level.

Hawassa was capital of the former Sidama Province from about 1978 until the province was abolished with the adoption of the 1995 Constitution. This city is home to Hawassa University (which includes an Agricultural College, a Main Campus and a Health Sciences College), Hawassa Adventist College, and a major market. The city is served by Hawassa Airport (ICAO code HALA, IATA AWA), opened in 1988. Postal service is provided by a main branch; electricity and telephone service are also available. Important local attractions include the St. Gabriel Church and the Hawassa Kenema Stadium, Lake Hawassa. Fishing is a major local industry.

Based on the 2007 Census conducted by the Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia, this zone has a total population of 258,808, of whom 133,123 are men and 125,685 women. While 157,879 or 61% are living in the city of Hawassa, the rest of population of this zone is living at surrounding rural kebeles. A total of 61,279 households were counted in this zone, which results in an average of 4.22 persons to a household, and 57,469 housing units. In 2016, a new Industrial Park was built in Hawassa to accommodate 60,000 jobs at a (1.3 km<sup>2</sup>) or 321 acre site.

The 1994 census reported this town had a total population of 69,169 of whom 35,029 were men and 34,140 were women. In Hawassa City, there are a total of 133; 48 government and 85 non-government schools and also more than 2,812 teachers in government and non-government schools. In the city there are 6 Hospitals, 52 Clinics, 14 Pharmacies and 152 other health facilities owned by government and non-governmental organizations giving services to Hawassa and nearby residents. Hawassa City has eight sub cities namely: Misrak sub city, Addis ketema sub city, Menehariyasub city, BahilAdarash sub city, Tabor sub city, Mehalketema Sub city, Haykdar sub city and Hawella-Tulla sub city.

### **IV. Sample size and sampling method**

In order to determine the sample size (n) required for the study, the researcher used the formula proposed by (Kothari, 1990). That is

$$n = \frac{pq(z_{\alpha/2})^2}{e^2}$$

Where: n is sample size, P is the proportion of urban youth unemployed at national level is the proportion of urban youth employed at national level is marginal error, and  $Z_{\alpha/2}$  = Confidence interval. According to Urban Employment Unemployment survey (UEUS, 2018); the proportion of urban youth unemployment at national was 25.3 percent. Thus if we use e at 5% and  $Z_{\alpha/2}$ , then the sample size n was estimated as:

$$n = \frac{(0.253)(0.747)(1.96)^2}{(0.05)^2} = 148$$

If consider 10% of contingency the final sample size will be **(0.1\*148) +148= 163**

A multi-stage sampling method is employed in order to select respondents who reside in the study area during the reference period.

In stage one Hawassa city is selected purposively, in stage two sub cities, namely Menehariya and Tabor sub cities are selected, purposively due to high concentration of unemployed youth and finally in the third stage Simple random sampling is employed to collect data from the youth while paying attention to the size of each sub city.

Both primary and secondary data are be used in conducting the study. The main source of the data for this study, however, is primary data of the cross sectional survey conducted on the youth of Hawassa city administration.

Secondary data on various aspects of unemployment is obtained from published and unpublished documents, records, evaluation reports, proceedings, journals, and strategy and policy documents and from department of women, children and youth and enterprises and industry development department of Hawassa city. This has been used to triangulate and substantiate the findings from the primary data.

The target population of this study is comprised of all youth of Hawassa city and the unit of analysis is the youth of Hawassa city. To this end questionnaire is used as a primary tool for collecting data from the sampled youth. The questionnaires have many close ended and some open ended items. Moreover, the questionnaires were prepared, commented and pilot tested to make sure that reliable and authentic data are collected. In order to triangulate and substantiate results the study had also analyzed relevant documents such as policy manuals, plans and programs records, current performance evaluation reports, proceedings, strategy documents and policy notes, and previous research outputs.

### V. Model specification

Discrete regression models are models in which the dependent variable assumes discrete values. Econometricians have developed a model that best captures the behavior of a discrete dependent variable. For the simple discrete dependent variable, econometric literatures have the three most commonly used approaches to estimating such models are the linear Probability model, the Logit model and the probit model. The linear probability model has an obvious limitation in that the estimated probability values can lie outside the normal 0 to 1 range and it also assumes that the marginal or incremental effect of explanatory variables remains constant. Thus this model is discarded from the set of alternative models. The Logit and Probit models are the convenient functional forms for models with binary dependent variable. The choice between the two is one of mathematical convenience. The study, however, employed the probit model. (Gujarati, 2007; Wooldridge, 2009).

The probit model is generated by a simple latent model of the form shown below

$$y_i^* = X' \beta + \epsilon \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

$$y_i = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } y_i^* > 0 \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} \dots \dots \dots (2)$$

Where

$y_i^*$  is the latent variable or unobserved variable;  $y_i$  is the  $i^{th}$  youth and its value is 1 if she/he is unemployed and 0 otherwise;  $X'$  is a vector of explanatory variables;  $\beta$  is a vector of parameters to be estimated and  $\epsilon$  is the error term which is normally distributed with mean 0 and variance  $\delta^2$

With the assumption of normal distribution function, the model to estimate the probability of observing a youth who is unemployed can be stated as:

$$P(y_i = 1|X) = \Phi(X' \beta) = \int_{-\infty}^{x' \beta} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi}} \exp\left(-\frac{z^2}{2}\right) dz \dots \dots \dots (3)$$

Where p is the probability that the  $i^{th}$  youth who is unemployed and 0 otherwise. The specific probit model for the unemployment can be defined as:

$$y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 AGEY + \beta_2 SEXY + \beta_3 FEDU + \beta_4 YEDU + \beta_7 MYAS + \beta_8 CORP + \beta_9 ACRT + \beta_{10} ATTD + \beta_{11} MIST + \epsilon_i \dots \dots \dots (4)$$

Where AGEY age of the youth, SEXY represents sex of the youth, FEDU is Fathers 'education YEDU is education of the youth MYAS is membership to youth association, CORP is corruption , ACRT is access to credit services, ATTD is attitude toward job , and MIST is migration status

### VI. Variable specification and hypothesis

The description of these explanatory variables, their measurement and expected sing of their relationship with the dependent variable is presented in the table below.

**Table 1: Independent variables and expected sign**

Independent variables	Description of variables	Type	Measurement	Expected sign
AGEY	Age of the youth	Continuous	Years	-
SEXY	Sex of the youth	Dummy	1=Male 0=Female	-
FEDU	Fathers' education	Continuous	Years of schooling	-
YEDU	Youth Education	Continuous	Years of schooling	-
MYAS	Membership of the youth to associations	Dummy	1 if member, 0 otherwise	-
CORP	Corruption	Dummy	1 if there is corruption, 0 otherwise	+
ACRT	Access to credit	Dummy	1 if there is access, 0 otherwise	-
ATTD	Attitude towards job	Dummy	1 if positive attitude, 0 otherwise	-
MIST	Migration status	Dummy	1 if non migrant, 0 otherwise	-

## VII. Result And Discussion

Table 2 below depicts the regression result of the probit model of unemployment. Accordingly, therefore, it is revealed that the likelihood ratio chi-square of 53.74 with a p-value of 0.0000 implies that the regression model (i.e. the probit model) as a whole is statistically significant and hence explanatory variables put together do explain the variation in the dependent variable (un employment).

**Table 2: Estimation result of the probit model of unemployment**

Dependent variable				
Independent variables	Coefficients	Stand error	Z-stat	P value
AGEY	-.0742006	.0431648	-1.72	0.086 ***
SEXY	-1.266464	1.462767	-0.87	0.387
FEDU	-2.44779	.8966559	-2.73	0.006 *
YEDU	-.1420358	.0752488	-1.89	0.059 ***
MYAS	-.2731438	.2371962	-1.15	0.250
CORP	2.536042	2.21777	1.14	0.253
ACRT	-2.752661	.8431258	-3.26	0.001*
ATTD	-.2011373	.0947554	-2.12	0.034*
MIST	-.1755561	.8019519	-0.22	0.827
<b>Constant</b>	-12.84519	3.833469	-3.35	0.001
Number of observation = 163				
LR chi2(9)=53.74				
Prob > chi2=0.000				
Log likelihood = -26.547984				

**Source: own survey and calculation 2019.**

\*, \*\*, \*\*\* significant at 1%, 5% and 10 % respectively

In the definition of variable and hypothesis of expected sign, the study in table 1, has already identified that several variables are deemed to affect youth unemployment. These are (AGEY) age of the youth, (SEXY) sex of the youth, (FEDU) is Fathers' education, (YEDU) is education of the youth, (MYAS) is membership to association of the youth, (CORP) is corruption, (ACRT) is access to credit services, (ATTD) is attitude toward job, and (MIST) is migration status.

We used these set of independent variables to fit into the probit model of unemployment. Accordingly the probit regression of un employment results in Table 2 above depicts from the total of nine variables, five of them were found to be significant at different level of significance. These are (AGEY) age of the youth, (FEDU) is Fathers' education, (YEDU) is education of the youth, (ACRT) is access to credit services and (ATTD) attitude of the youth towards job. The rest, though not significant are of the expected sign.

The result of table 2 depicts only the direction of relationship between un employment and its determinants. In order to interpret the quantitative implications of the determinants of unemployment, we need to compute the partial effects, using marginal effects for continuous explanatory variables and average effects for binary explanatory variable.

The partial derivatives (marginal effects) of the variables on the probability of un employment is displayed in the table 3 below

**Table 3: Partial effect for probit model of Unemployment**

Dependent variable : Un employment				
Independent variables	Coefficients	Stand error	Z-stat	P value
AGEY	-0.8561802	.17114	-5.00	0.000*
SEXY	-0.2693258	.2946	-0.91	0.361
FEDU	-0.2080122	.2080122	-1.79	0.074***
YEDU	-0.1259161	.0617835	-2.04	0.042 **
MYAS	-0.0918418	.09443	-0.97	0.331
CORP	0.8527181	1.23469	0.69	0.490
ACRT	-0.8285287	.12818	-6.46	0.000 *
ATTD	-0.809146	.33347	-2.43	0.015 **
MIST	-0.0579772	.25222	-0.23	0.818

Source: own survey and calculation 2019.

\*, \*\*, \*\*\* significant at 1%, 5% and 10 % respectively

Table 3 above showed that the coefficient of the partial effect of age of the youth (AGEY) is negative and significant at one percent level of significance.

This implies older youth have increased probability of being employed than the younger youth. This can be partly explained by the fact that with an increase in age there is much chance of increase in education, experience and access to more job opportunity and the like. The table above depicts that as youth age increases by one year the likely hood of being an employed decreases by 85 % keeping all other factors constant.

Fathers' education has a positive impact in getting their children employed. Institutively speaking an educated father will pave every way for his children to get the chance of education which intern help them to secure probability of being employed. The result of table 3 is in close conformity with this theory or intuition. An increase of fathers' education by one years of schooling, decreases probability of youth unemployment by 21 % keeping all variables constant and this is significant at ten percent level of significance.

It is well known that education enhances the skill and capacity of the youth. This intern increases their chance of employment. Table 3 above depicts that unemployment and education of the youth are negatively related. Accordingly an increase in youth education by one year of schooling decreases probability of unemployment by thirteen percent keeping, all other factors are constant. And this negative relationship is significant at five percent of significance.

Increasing the availability of credit facility to the youth reduces un employment and increases the efficiency and volume of business enterprises which in turn creates more job opportunity and a decreases the chance of an employment. The result of table 3 proves this theory. Accordingly an average youth who have access to credit facility is 83 percent more probable to be employed than other wise. This empirical result is significant at one percent level of significance.

Job preference or positive attitude toward a given job significantly determines un employment and its duration. Youth who have a very good working culture and a positive attitude for job without discriminating the type and status of a job are more probable to get employed than other wise. This has been evidenced by the empirical result of table 3above. Accordingly an average youth who has positive attitude towards givenjob has the chance of being employed by 81% keeping other factors constant. This relationship is significant at five percent level of significance

### VIII. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the probit regression result above, the study thus concludes that education level of the parent (father), education level of the youth, credit facilities made available for the youth through microfinance and other financial institutions and a positive attitude towards a given job are statistically significant and quantitatively large determinants of youth unemployment in the study area.

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