Urban Unemployment Patterns: Challenges, Coping Mechanisms and Self Employment Trends in Ethiopian Urban Centers

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Abstract: Currently, urban unemployment is alarming with drastic scenario. In this regard urban areas area highly affected by unemploymenst. For this problem several factors are assumed to be in charge. These factors themselves vary from place to place. Urban areas occupied by numerous residents. Those residents are mainly jobseekers. Urban unemployment touches enormous issues include difficulties related to joblessness, system of dealing with such difficulties, entrepreneurship or self employment tendencies and complexity of the patterns of urban unemployment problems. However, the challenges, coping mechanisms, self employment trends and patterns of urban unemployment issues were not well examined and analyzed. Therefore, in this research those gaps were considered and key findings were realized. This research utilized quantitative data source and quantitative research methods were employed. Statistical packages for social sciences (SPSS) version 20 software was utilized for both descriptive and inferential statistics. In fact, socio-demographic characteristics of respondents such as sex, educational categories and marital status were examined. Furthermore, variables, which potentially predict urban unemployment rate, were sufficiently quantified. Association and regression analysis was done for patterns of urban unemployment that help to identify determinants of urban unemployment. So this article was supposed to fill previous gaps concerning quantification of urban unemployment and its patterns.

Keywords: Urban Unemployment Patterns, Challenges, Coping Mechanisms, Self Employment Rate

1. Introduction

Nowadays, urban growth creates both opportunities and challenges for urban residents. Among urban problems unemployment is the critical urban issue. Different scholars define unemployment in their own terminology. [1] Bolton (2016) delineates that the unemployment rate is the number of persons who are unemployed as a percent of the total number of employed and unemployed persons (i.e., the labour force). Eventhough urban social evils are countless, the urban unemployment is predominant otherwise demanding issue. [2] Amenu et al. (2019) describes that unemployment is the most challenging economic problem facing the government. Indeed, the government is facing challenge but majority of jobless persons are more likely facing challenging. [3] In line with this Fitsum (2014) states that the phenomenon of unemployment is one of the major social problems of most urban centers of Ethiopia. Most of urban centers currently full of youth without job which is signaling the tragedy of urban development. There are several factors aggravate urban unemployment that need rigorous investigation. [4] In this regard, Muhdin (2016) shows that unemployment rate varies among regions, sex, marital status and education level. Thus, this research aims at uncovering those underlying causes of urban unemployment and associated challenges as well as coping mechanisms. Thus, this analysis of urban unemployment has several advantages for different stakeholders. The researcher expects that the findings of this research contributes for urban employment policy as integral input. It helps policy makers to consider several issues while adressing urban unemployment problems. Furthermore, this finding can help other scientific community members to use this information as a source and then can conduct further study. Finally, the
finding of this research contributes to the academic and training centers to adjust themselves within the labour market dynamics. The key motive behind this research is the existing research gap at national level. The previous researchers highly focus on case studies or confined to specific study areas. However, this research is dedicated to reveal the scenario of urban unemployment at national level. In this regard, this research is expected to fill the research gap that exists at national level. Urban unemployment rate demands accurate measurement that is why researcher decided to look at unemployment magnitude at national level. Of course, quantifying urban unemployment requires appropriate data and correct measurement which should be backed by logic and rigorous study as well as systematized empirical observation. For that reason, researcher took data from CSA inorder to conduct genuine research. Indeed, researcher found the raw data very relevant and it was gathered with full of caution. Furthermore, researcher concerned about urban unemployment problems because of its urgency and seriousness in Ethiopia. Therefore, its accomplishment was expected to impact the existing urban policy by providing practical and effective recommendations on urban unemployment problems. In nutshell, this research was supposed to address the following key research Objectives;

1. To describe the overall socio-demographic characteristics of respondents
2. To identify problems associated with urban unemployment
3. To examine challenge and coping mechanisms related to urban unemployment
4. To analyze patterns of variables associated with urban unemployment rates

2. Methods

The basic data for this urban unemployment analysis was the raw data or survey done by statistics agency on urban unemployment in 2018 which researcher found relevant research problem in present urban development context. Of course, researcher chose Quantitative research method that he believes it can help him to address the problem very well. For that reason, researcher took data from CSA by assuming this data is vital to understand the extent of the problem. In fact, the data checked for analysis and then he runs the SPSS version 20 software for analyzing the variables associated with urban unemployment problems. In view of that researcher employed both descriptive and inferential statistics. Accordingly, frequencies, percentages, tables, graphs, measure of association or gamma value, chi-square test and association analysis or regression analysis were utilized in this research in line with the research objectives.

3. Results and Discussion

Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Sex

The description of sex of respondents has been identified and the detail of this finding as organized in table 1 indicates that 46.9% of the respondents were male and 53.1% of respondents were females. This may possibly depict that the given population is female dominated. The more female number can suggest that females are more likely to confine at urban centers and they are also the most vulnerable group in terms of unemployment. [5] In line with this Fitsum (2014) states that female are especially disadvantaged in the labor market and typically face worse outcomes with higher levels of unemployment and a greater concentration in the informal sector. But, Fitsum did not reason out why females are more disadvantaged in urban unemployment. In addition, women are subject to higher risk of unemployment when compared with men (Bicakova, 2010) [6]. Furthermore, Bicakova writes that females are more likely suffer from urban unemployment but he refrain from justifying his argument. Females are more in number in urban than males. In fact, females are more likely to pursue adapt strategy via moving away from home.

Table 11. Distribution of sex of respondents.

| Sex    | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Male   | 32733     | 46.9    | 46.9          | 46.9               |
| Female | 37017     | 53.1    | 53.1          | 100.0              |
| Total  | 69750     | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Computed from CSA survey, 2018

Literacy status

Educational status of the respondents has been uncovered that more or less respondents are literate. See table 2 that confirms the number of educated people are more than illiterate (16.2%) of the sample while the majority of respondents (72.3%) found to be educated. Thus, the urban unemployment becomes predominantly outweighed by educated. [7] In line with this Poschke (2018) found that self employment rate and their unemployment rates patterns differ by education group. But, Poschke does not tell us which social group is more likely engage self employment and what is the impact of education on self employment positive impact or it has negative implication need to be debated with rigorous premises. The untrained more likely engage in minor an activity that does not require profession and illiterate do everything supposed to generate income regardless of job status.
Table 22. Distribution of literacy status of respondents.

| Literacy | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Yes | 50457     | 72.3    | 81.7          | 81.7               |
| No       | 11328     | 16.2    | 18.3          | 100.0              |
| Total    | 61785     | 88.6    | 100.0         |                    |
| Missing  | 7965      | 11.4    |               |                    |

Source: Computed from Survey by CSA, 2018

Marital Status

Marital status of the respondents has been uncovered that more or less respondents from urban unemployed are never married. See graph 1 that substantiates the number of never married people are 46.73% of the sample while the married respondents consists of 40.96% and the remaining found to be divorced, widowed, separate and live together. Thus, the single individuals become easy to be prone to the problems of the urban unemployment. [8] In this regard Broussard, C, Anne et al. (2012) asserts singles are more likely vulnerable than their counterparts by suffering from downsides of unemployment. Singles are the most likely to be unemployed and less likely to be employers (Earle et al, 2000) [9, 10] On the other hand, Amenu et al. (2019) shows that those who had married youth have a low level unemployment rate as compared to unmarried. The married more likely survive from downsides of urban unemployment by assistance from spouses. Married women obtained their status through their men’s job (Meer, 2014) [11]. Furthermore, young unemployment is even worse than the overall unemployment rate (Ayres, 2013) [12]. From Broussard et al., Earle et al., Amenu et al., Meer and Ayres it is concluded that singles are more disadvantaged in urban unemployment when compared with married groups. However, the reasons and constraints for singles and married individuals need to be investigated with critical argument. If the disparity is from natural or artificial the necessary intervention should be made for unmarried to rehabilitate them. Married groups have comparative advantage when evaluated from social support. The couples of married can help the jobless then they can survive at least psychologically resist the unemployment difficulties. The singles do not have such privilege so they face different social and physiological troublesome. For this reason, many singles particularly females prefer to marry in order to escape unemployment related multiple difficulties. This is believed to free them from burdens and stress happen due to dependency on their family after graduation. This is not ultimate goal for these singles but as transitional strategy.

Source: Computed from CSA survey, 2018

Figure 1. Description of marital status of respondents.
4. Problems Associate with Urban Unemployment

4.1. Reasons Not to Start Businesses

The respondents’ business engagement scenario from graph 2 depicts that 54.81% of the sample respondents reported that their reason not to engage in business is shortage of finance and 14.91% of them reported that their reason not to start businesses are lack of work places and finance. Earle et al (2000) states that financial constraints are more important determinant of self-employment. The remaining respondents told that they had problem of training, lack of land/place of work, lack of licenses, shortage of equipment, lack of information and lack of support from family. This demonstrates that the motivation of job seekers to start businesses is to some extent good if the preconditions are available. It seems that absence of finance and work place constrained them and expose them to suffer from problems of joblessness. As regard to constraints to self employment, shortage of finance and lack of work place are the major challenges in this regard (Muhdin, 2016) [14]. They also lack information and business skill as well as support from their relatives. In this regard, Job seekers, who work cooperatively with relatively richer households that can afford all necessary preconditions, are more likely engage in business or self-employment. On the other hand, the jobseeker that lacked the above privileges used to pursue wandering. Intervention should be taken to check the fairness of markets in order to make sure that disadvantaged urban groups become beneficiaries (Debele, 2019, pp. 259) [15]. In addition, John et al (2006) reports that urban poverty cause urban unemployment rate [16]. Poverty can cause unemployment but within poverty unfair resource distribution can aggravate unemployment. This in turn can provoke urban social evils and lead to social crisis.

![Figure 22. Description of problems related to starting business.](image)

Source: Computed from CSA survey, 2018

4.2. Reasons Not to Find Employment

Statistical evidences as it can be seen from graph 3 illustrates that around more than half of the sample households (55.61%) reported that their reasons not to find employment was lack of job opportunity and the remaining respondents responded that they had no training, absence of professions related to work, lack of experience, absence of vacancies, new systems of work, searching better work, dislike distance working place, dislike low payments, inconvenience of time and the like. This illustrates that the
absence of job opportunity was main reasons not to employments. The job opportunity does not become available as urban growth increases as imagined (Debele, 2017) [17]. In urban centers there are paradoxes that observed associates with development. The urban development by itself expected to bring new opportunities but in contrast the urban centers become centers of social evils such as unemployment, homelessness and poor quality social services. [18] In line with this (Poschke, 2018) mentioned that reasons for unemployment are high and job finding is low in Ethiopia. This confirms that in urban centers most of youth are job seekers but insignificant number of job seekers may find job. This creates curses in urban centers particularly in developing countries like Ethiopia the problem is very demanding.

5. Challenges of Urban Unemployment and Coping Mechanisms

5.1. Major Challenges Related to Joblessness

It is possible to observe from graph 4 that decreased household or personal income was main challenge which share 43.52% of the challenges related to joblessness whereas 21.23% of respondents replied that the inability to cover household expenses and the remaining reported that inability to send their children to school, family dissolution, getting stress, hopelessness, exposed to different addictions, hunger and lack of clothing, isolated from social participation, wandering for jobs, etc. [19] In line with this Shita, et al (2018) stated that main reason of urban unemployment is shortage of vacancies. In fact, there are inadequate vacancies but also there are structural and personal challenges to access the posted vacancies. In urban centers vacancies are not open for all. Even if open the secret behind its openness is not for inviting potential job seekers rather in order to pretend the norm of transparency. These challenges of urban unemployment were the effects of the economically imposed pressures up on the urban jobless that aim at dehumanizing

![Graph](image-url)
the job seekers just to deny their potential and human dignity via labor exploitation and market monopolization by economic power elites. [20] Amenu et al. (2019) found that in developing countries, youth face not only the challenge of obtaining productive employment, but also obtaining safe and acceptable work. Nowadays in Ethiopian urban centers youth are employed in industries where their safety and security is very endangered. The safety of youth in industry not considered as critical issue because if the youth complain they will be expelled or removed from the organization as a result many youth prefer keeping silence while their body is injured. Despite the tremendous homogeneity existed in the jobless, few of the jobless used to adjust themselves via different mechanisms like dependence on their family assistance.

5.2. Mechanisms to Support Oneself

The data from graph5 clearly indicates that the majority of respondents or 84.37% reported that their mechanisms to support themselves via family supports whereas only 2.5% respondents expressed their opinion that they have casual work and the remaining said support from relatives and friends, saving, remittance, begging, etc as their coping mechanisms to support themselves. Relatively job seekers living with the family home have more probability to save their economic expenditure due to better living cost. The job seekers can save money thereby minimizing the economic vulnerability. Furthermore, they can promote their productivity and engage in the businesses thereby advancing their economic gain. [21] In line with this Lorenzini, J and Giugni, M (2010) stressed that family support reduces financial difficulties and provides assistance in finding a job. Such privileges strengthen their economic capacity so that it enables job seeker to be self sufficient at least in food. On the contrary, the job seekers living remote from family area lack adequate money otherwise no money to survive. This weakens their economic capacity in order not to progress. Thus, such job seekers always look out for basic needs and other demands. Moreover, they are unable to adapt the goods’ price inflation since they are incapable to meet economic affordability. As a result, the majority of the job seekers are obliged to be economically marginalized and become unproductive citizens. This disparity not only within families

![Figure 44. Description of challenges associated with joblessness.](image-url)
of job seekers but also within regional and urban centers. There are regional states that pay adequate attention to unemployment whereas some regional states are reluctant in solving jobless situation.

6. Testing Patterns Between Variables and Estimations

6.1. Cross Tabulation of Urban Self-unemployment Rate by Gender of Respondents

The measure of association was executed in table 3 on the next page to determine the association between the reasons not to start business or lack of self-employment and gender difference. Thus,

\( H_0 = 0 \), There is no association between reasons of self-unemployment and gender difference

\( H_1 \neq 0 \), There are relationships between reasons of self-unemployment and gender difference

In view of that the hypothesis of independence (null) is disproved since chi-square is greater than value at eleven degree of freedom \( (30.680 > 19.675) \), gamma value is 0.045 and significance value \( (p\text{-value}) \) is 0.000 which is less than alpha \( (0.000 < 0.05) \) and phi coefficient is 0.115. This indicates that the chi-square statistic of association is significant at the 5% level. That means, it is a sufficient evidence to accept alternative hypothesis and infer the self-unemployment and gender difference have associations.

In addition to this, it can be clearly seen from table 3 (next page) that 75.3% or greater number of females associated with shortages of finance and lack of working place which is key indicators of self-employment barriers and only 24.7% of males’ self-unemployment impacted by business barriers. This figure clearly indicates that the number of females is greater than males by having more problems to start businesses. Females are more likely to face challenges to start businesses. This may be due to female’s lack of daring to encounter bureaucratic constraints while finding funding. They are less assertive compared with males. Females also prefer marriage instead of insisting on self-employment. On the other hand, females are less likely to search for jobs which requires.
bureaucratic negotiation and bargaining. But, if such challenges removed and financial opportunity and other preconditions are available than females’ aspiration also increase to engage in business and make a difference. [23] Amenu et al. (2019) shows that females have a low level unemployment rate as compared to male youth. [24] However, ECLAC (2019) indicates that the long-term trend of women’s rising participation in labour markets has continued, while men’s participation rate is declining, mainly owing to young men spending more time in education and to population ageing. In line with this finding Statistically speaking, one unit increase in females’ aspiration to engage in business causes an increment of urban self-employment by 11.5% (from symmetric measure, phi coefficient) other factors remain constant. In other word, one unit supply in business opportunity rises the demand of business by females. [25] In line with this Vipond (1984) stated that personal characteristic of job seekers such as sex considered as main determinants of urban unemployment rate. Certain variations in female self unemployment results in changes of overall urban self-employment. This indicates that urban self unemployment rate differs by gender difference. The formal labour market associates with governmental entrant recruitment fail to absorb huge human resources which are outside the work industry. Therefore, the labour market should be transformed from other employment to self employment in order to make the labour market dynamics and new labour market entrants consistent with each other.

### Table 33. Cross tabulation of urban self-unemployment * sex of respondents.

| Problem Faced to start your business | Male | Female | Total |
|-------------------------------------|------|--------|-------|
| I have no problem                   | 14   | 73     | 87    |
| Shortage of finance                 | 343  | 933    | 1276  |
| Lack of training                    | 35   | 99     | 134   |
| Problems of working place/land      | 39   | 193    | 232   |
| Lack of finance and training        | 25   | 57     | 82    |
| Lack of working place & finance     | 69   | 278    | 347   |
| Lack/absence of License            | 6    | 10     | 16    |
| Shortage/absence of equipment       | 2    | 9      | 11    |
| Lack of information                 | 5    | 15     | 20    |
| Lack of support from Household      | 1    | 17     | 18    |
| Don't know                          | 6    | 8      | 14    |
| Other /Specify/                     | 29   | 62     | 91    |
| Total                               | 574  | 1754   | 2328  |

### Chi-Square Tests

| Value          | Degree of freedom | Asymptote Significance (2-sided) |
|----------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 30.680*         | 11                               |
| Likelihood Ratio    | 32.387           | 11                               |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | .046  | 1                               |
| N of Valid Cases    | 2328             |                                  |

### Symmetric Measures

| Value          | Asymptote Standard deviation Error | Approximate | Approx. Significance |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|---------------------|
| Nominal by Nominal Phi | .115                             | .001        | .001                |
| Cramer's V         | .115                             | .001        | .001                |
| Contingency Coefficient | .114                            |             | .001                |
| Ordinal by Ordinal Gamma | .045                            | .039        | 1.160               | .246                |
| N of Valid Cases    | 2328                             |             |                     |

Source: computed from CSA survey, 2018

### 6.2. Urban Unemployment Rate by Literacy Rate

The degree of unemployment rate can be influenced by several factors. One of the patterns upset unemployment rate is the literacy rate. So, my research question: Is there differences of literate and illiterate on urban unemployment rate or does unemployment rates differ by literacy rate

Ho=0, There is differences between literate and illiterate
Ho≠0, There is no difference between literate and illiterate

The measures of association or independence were executed in table 4 (next page) to determine the association between the extent of urban unemployment and literacystatus. Accordingly, hypothesis of independence (Ho≠0) rejected since chi-square is greater than critical value at fourteen degree of freedom (73.380>23.685), gamma value is 0.08 which is differ from zero and significance value or p-value is 0.010 which is less than alpha (0.010 < 0.05) and phi coefficient is 0.127. This indicates chi-square statistic of association is significant at the 5% level. This shows reasons not to found employment and literacy difference of respondents are significantly associated that further shows unemployment rate and literacy rate are not independent to each other that results in rejecting alternatives hypothesis. This asserts literate group more likely associates with urban unemployment and illiterates are less likely suffer from urban unemployment. Literate group most often wanders for vacancy in steady of doing small businesses. [26] In line with this A. S, Bakare (2011) reported that education and
training system which de-emphasizes self employment can provoke unemployment. [27] In addition, Amenu et al. (2019) reveals that youth who have certificate and above education level has low opportunity in obtaining jobs. But, illiterate group does engage in every activity disregarding job status. Furthermore, Literate group search for field related job and degree level payment. In fact, the number of literate is also greater in urban that are substantively significant numbers. Furthermore, Literate usually ashamed of doing minor or so called silly works such as shoe shine, small businesses, loading items, driving, domestic works and et cetera which usually done by illiterates. [28] In line with this (A D Tombolotutu et al, 2018) reports upgrading informal can reduce poverty and unemployment rate. [29] However, Young (2012) found that literate is less likely unemployed compared to illiterate or uneducated whereas US department of commerce (2018) [30] found unemployment and educational level has strong relationship. From this research it was discovered that literacy and urban unemployment rate increase concomitantly. Statistically speaking, one unit increase in literacy rate can cause 12.7% (from symmetric measures, phi coefficient) increase in urban unemployment rates other factors remain constant.

Additionally, the data in table 4 indicate that more than threefourth (88%) of literate associated with urban unemployment rate and only 20% of illiterate associates with urban unemployment. This implies that in urban unemployment literate individuals more likely suffer from problems related to joblessness. In this regard, the illiterate in the urban engage in minor activities and they are also minorities in urban due to high literacy rate. Educational trends in Ethiopia with incremental graduates recently impact the existing employment scenario. This scenario more affect urban population because majority of the youth who graduates from universities and colleges searching for jobs in urban centers. The unavailability of jobs in rural areas push youth from rural and enforce the youth to migrate to urban as livelihood strategy. However, the urban centers are not in right position to absorb enormous jobless or job seekers searching jobs in urban.

| What was the Main Reason for not found Employment? | Urban unemployment rate | Can You Read and Write? Literacy rate condition | Total |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------|
| No work was found related to in my profession | Yes 192                | No 7                                          | 199   |
| Lack of job opportunity                       | Yes 2207               | No 305                                        | 2512  |
| Lack of training                              | Yes 335                | No 66                                         | 401   |
| Lack of experience                            | Yes 341                | No 26                                         | 367   |
| Lack of vacancy advertisement                 | Yes 157                | No 3                                          | 160   |
| Introduction of modern system of work          | Yes 16                 | No 1                                          | 17    |
| In search for better job opportunity          | Yes 101                | No 10                                         | 111   |
| Not to work at distant place                  | Yes 56                 | No 17                                         | 73    |
| To alter the usual place of work              | Yes 17                 | No 2                                          | 19    |
| Low payment/salary                            | Yes 36                 | No 9                                          | 45    |
| Slack period                                  | Yes 116                | No 30                                         | 146   |
| Off season                                    | Yes 34                 | No 8                                          | 42    |
| Inconvenience of working time                 | Yes 48                 | No 4                                          | 52    |
| Unable to speak local languages               | Yes 31                 | No 5                                          | 36    |
| Others / specify                              | Yes 288                | No 49                                         | 337   |
| Total                                         |                       |                                               | 4517  |

Chi-Square Tests

| Value      | Degree of freedom | Asymptote Significance (2-sided) |
|------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 73.380^  | 14 | .000  |
| Likelihood Ratio     | 82.454      | 14 | .000  |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 7.427  | 1  | .006  |
| N of Valid Cases     | 4517        |     |       |

Symmetric Measures

| Value      | Asymptote Standard deviation | Approximate | Approx. Significance. |
|------------|-----------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Phi        | .127                        |             | .000                  |
| Cramer's V | .127                        |             | .000                  |
| Contingency Coefficient | .126      |             | .000                  |
| Gamma      | .083                        | .035        | 2.311                 | .021  |
| N of Valid Cases | 4517    |             |                       |

Source: Computed from CSA survey, 2018

7. Conclusion

In this quantitative research researcher employed both descriptive and inferential statistics and proved that both of them play pivotal roles in quantifying and analyzing urban unemployment problems. In view of that from the above study it is discovered that urban unemployment is predominantly associated with numbers of females, literate group and unmarried group. Furthermore, it was revealed that urban job seekers suffer
from urban unemployment problems in pursuing starting business or self-employment and finding employment. In fact, jobless individuals encounter several challenges in urban and they use different coping mechanisms to support themselves. The patterns among variables associated with urban unemployment tested and it was proved that reasons not to start businesses and gender differences are related. Similarly, Reasons not to found employment are associated with literacy status of respondents. In this regard, the self-employments or entrepreneurship propensity was tested that differed by gender differences. In addition, literacy rate proved that it is predictor of urban unemployment rate in which it inferred that as literacy rate increases by certain degree cause increases in urban unemployment rate other factors remain constant.

8. Recommendation

Based on the above finding the following points are suggested for urban policy makers. Creating job opportunities to job seekers in order to mitigate urban unemployment rate. Tackling financial barriers to facilitate self employment. Emphasizing on entrepreneurship issues just to encourage private businesses. Giving priority for females since they are the largest proportion of job seekers thereby reduces urban unemployment. Giving adequate attention to educated who are the most predominant urban jobless that need to be considered so as to mitigate urban unemployment rate.

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