

Full Length Research

Socio-Economic Impacts of Youth Unemployment in Ilu Ababor Zone; the Case of Selected Woredas

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The main objective of this study is to assess the socio-economic impacts of youth unemployment in Ilu Aba Bora zone of six selected woredas. In order to achieve this objective, the study employed descriptive research design and combination of quantitative and qualitative research approach. The study also used both primary and secondary sources of data in order to touch its objectives. Primary data was gathered through questionnaire, interview and focus group discussion while secondary data was gathered from books, journals, and articles written on the areas of unemployment. Data collected from different sources were analyzed and interpreted using descriptive statistics and qualitative technique. The finding of the study revealed crime, migration, dependency, degrading family income and increasing cost of consumption, erosion of social capital, low self-esteem, low social status and low living standard, conflict among family and community, physical and psychological problems like depression, suicide, feeling of in security, social exclusion, as the major socio-economic impacts of youth unemployment in the study area. In addition, the study also identified that community's low economic growth, working under poor working conditions, participating in illegal as a source of income, and poverty as other socio-economic impacts of youth unemployment in the study area. Based on the findings of the study, creating job opportunity, developing good governance practices, reviewing educational policy, enhancing entrepreneurship and inter organizational communication and conducting research are forwarded as the possible recommendations to minimize socio-economic impacts of youth unemployment in the study area.

Key words: Unemployment, youth unemployment, socio-economic impact

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INTRODUCTION

Youth unemployment is a new concept of global problems threatening whole humanity (Bimal Kanta, 2014). Unemployment among young people has becoming a major policy challenge for all nations in the world. In most Developing countries there is a high level

of unemployment and underemployment resulting critical socio-economic problems. In those countries, while the labour force grows with an increasing proportion of youth, employment growth is inadequate to absorb labour market entrants. This results substantial crises in

psychological, social and economic perspectives (Onwuka, 2015). Nazir et al (2009) as cited in Muhdin, showed that unemployment affects the socio-economic status of the family, leads to poor mental health, dependency and increases the magnitude of corruption, drug addiction, crimes and suicide in a society. For this reason, youth unemployment has been a major problem giving rise to other criminal tendencies in the youths and threatens the social-economic and peace and stability of the developing nations particularly Africa nations (Muhdin 2016).

According to the International Labour Organization, more than one-third of the world's youth are currently either seeking but unable to find work. Such kind of prolonged unemployment of youth can impair/affect their future employability chances and their access to quality jobs (Kieselbach, and Traiser, 2003). In connection to this, international labor organization (ILO) figures that, the Sub-Saharan Africa region has the highest rate of youth unemployment (18.4 %) next to Middle East and North Africa (21.3 %). Such kind of high unemployment indicates poverty which makes it difficult to make investments in education and health (Alemnew2014). The social aspects of the problem lie in the association of unemployment with social exclusion and a sense of hopelessness which result in many deaths and destruction of property. In addition, a range of academic studies have found that unemployment increases susceptibility to illness, mental stress, and helplessness, and loss of self-esteem leading to depression ((Zelalem 2014).

Like any other developing countries, youth unemployment is becoming a critical issue affecting society's socio-economic condition in Ethiopia (FDRE, 2004). To reduce the problems related with youth unemployment, different initiatives have been taken in the country. For instance, the country's development plans emphasize creating employment and income-earning opportunities in the modern sector, the informal sector, and on farms (Alemnew, 2014). In this case, unemployment and underemployment are targeted with special attention given to youth and women. In addition, the plan focused on job creation through private sector participation, with particular emphasis given to Micro and Small Enterprises, based on their potential to create employment opportunities. The plan also addressed improving the quality of education and integrating Technical and Vocational Education and Training with the job requirements of the economy, which were identified as key problems leading to rising unemployment particularly in urban areas (MoFED, 2010). Despite such initiative and improvements, unemployment is high and is one of the socio economic problems in the country in which Ilu Aba Bora zone is not an exception. Thus, this study is intended to assess socio-economic impacts of

youth unemployment Ilu Aba Bora zone.

For the fulfillment of this objective, descriptive research design was employed. Both quantitative and qualitative research approaches were also used (Kothari 2004). Regarding with Sampling Techniques and Sample Size six woredas from Ilu Aba Bora zone (Darimu, Nono Salle, Yayo, BiloNopha, Bure and Mettu woreda) were selected by using simple random sampling in the form of lottery method. In this case, 505 respondents were selected from 10348 total households by using systematic sampling method. For this study data for this study was collected from primary and secondary sources through questionnaires, in-depth interview, focus group discussions and document analysis. The collected data was analyzed using SPSS (version20 software) and through narration and description.

Social Impacts of Youth Unemployment in Ilu Aba Bor zone

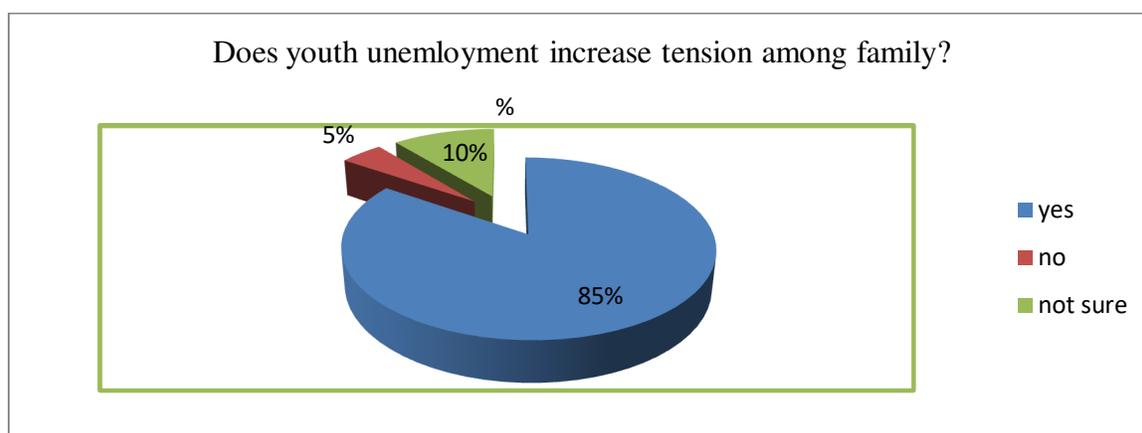
The table 1 shows that, 97% of the respondents replied yes, 1% replied no and the rest 2% of them said not sure whether youth unemployment leads to criminal activity. From those who respond "yes", 45% and 49.7 % of them replied robbery and stealing as the type of crimes committed in the area by unemployed youths. Besides, 4.3%, 0.6% and 0.4% of the respondent replied arson, rape and abduction as the type of crime that has been committed by unemployed youths in the study area. In addition to the above data, most key informants replied that unemployed youths have been committing crimes like theft, hijacking and burglary to cop up their financial needs.

As one can see from the figure 1, 85% of the respondents replied "Yes" and only 5% of them responded "No" to the question, is youth unemployment increase tension among family? The rest 10% of the respondents responded as they were "not sure" whether youth unemployment increases tension among family. From this, it is clear that the highest percentage of respondents confirm as youth unemployment causes tensions among family. In addition to the above survey, focus group discussants and key informants confirmed as youth unemployment results in tensions among family. *Specifically one of the key informants told that, the presence of unemployed youth in the family results in disrespect for each other and ignorance of taking responsibility in the family life.* In connection to the above, key respondents and focus group discussants were asked the question, "how youth unemployment increase tension among family?" For this almost all of the respondents told, reducing the saving of the family and leading to unnecessary debts, and increasing the cost of consumption. In addition one of the key respondents said when disagreement among family due to unemployed

Table 1. respondents' opinion on unemployment and criminal activities

Item	Response	Frequency	Percent
Do you think that unemployment leads youths to participate on criminal activities?	yes	489	97
	no	6	1
	not sure	10	2
	Total	505	100
If your response is "yes" what kind of crimes are being committed?	robbery	220	45
	arson	21	4.3
	Stealing	243	49.7
	Rape	3	0.6
	abduction	2	0.4
	Total	489	100

Source: researchers' survey 2017



Source: researchers' survey 2017

Figure 1. respondents' response youth unemployment and increasing tension among family

person, marriage relation can be destroyed.

In addition, Focus group discussants and key informants confirmed the above raised problems of youth unemployment on family. Specifically one of the key informants told that, the presence of unemployed youth in the family results in disrespect for each other and ignorance of taking responsibility in the family life.

As the survey (Table 2) shows from the total respondent 95.2%, and 1.8% of them replied 'Yes' and 'No' respectively. Only 3% of the respondents answered as they were not sure on the issue under discussion. from the respondents who respond 'Yes' on the above question, 28.9%, 27.3% and 22.8% of them respond as smoking cigarettes, drinking alcohol and prostitution (particularly for female youths) as the major causes of health problems. The rest, 9.4% and 11.6% of the respondents respond chewing chat and drug abuse

causes of health problem on unemployed youth.

In addition, key informants and focus group discussants also confirmed that unemployed youths involved in different activities like prostitution, drinking alcohols, using illegal drugs like hashish which may in-turn put them in health problem during their unemployment. Due to this, unemployed youths become victims of mental illness, suicide, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases and depression.

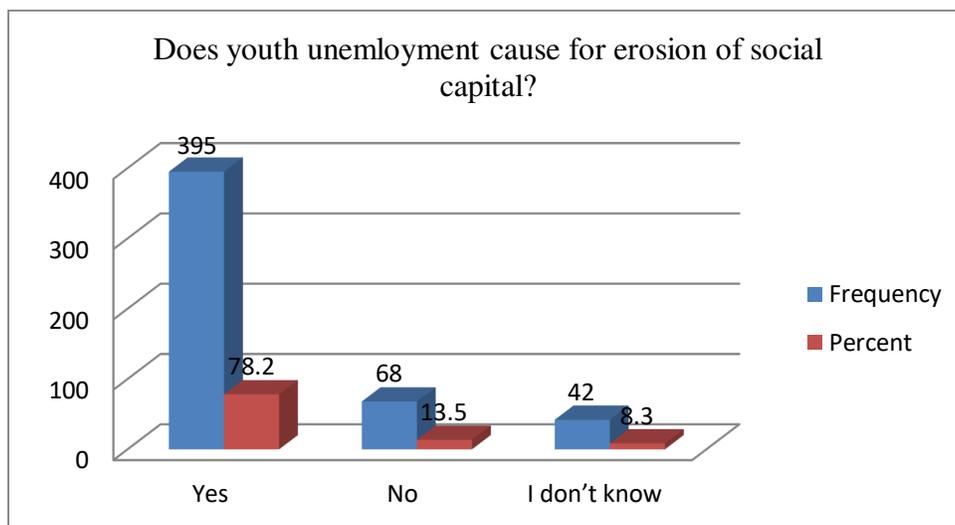
As shown on the figure 2 78.2% of the respondents replied 'Yes' and 13.5% of them replied No, it does not. The rest 8.3% of the respondents answered as they were not sure on the issue under question. Based on this data, we can conclude that, youth unemployment is the cause of erosion of social capital in the study area. Furthermore, focus group discussants also explained that lack of Social capital affects unemployed youths' well-being and opportunities by making them to feel alienated from society.

As shown on the figure 3, 88.2% of respondents replied

Table 2. respondents' response on youth unemployment health and related problems

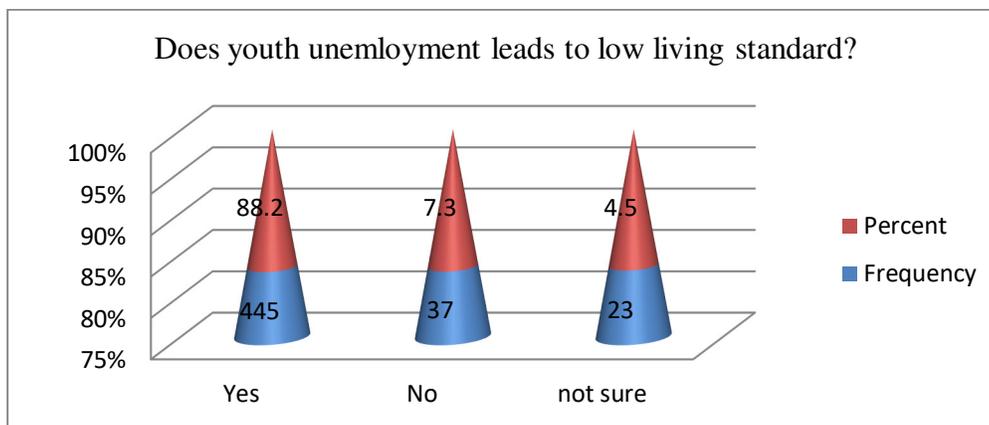
Item	Response	Frequency	Percent
Do you think that unemployment can cause health problem on unemployed youth?	Yes	481	95.2
	No	9	1.8
	Not sure	15	3
	Total	505	100
If your answer is yes, in what ways?	alcoholism	131	27.3
	drug abuse	56	11.6
	smoking cigarettes	139	28.9
	chewing chat	45	9.4
	prostitution	110	22.8
	Total	481	100

Source: researchers' survey 2017



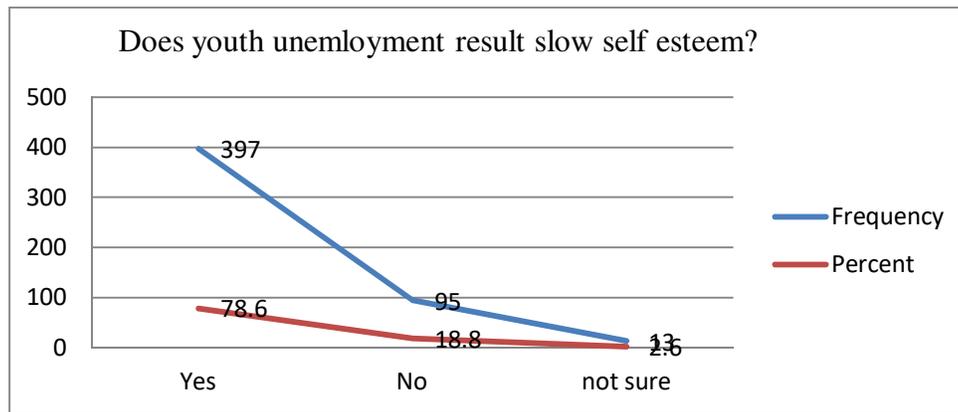
Source: researchers' survey 2017

Figure 2. respondents' opinion on youth unemployment and erosion of Social Capital



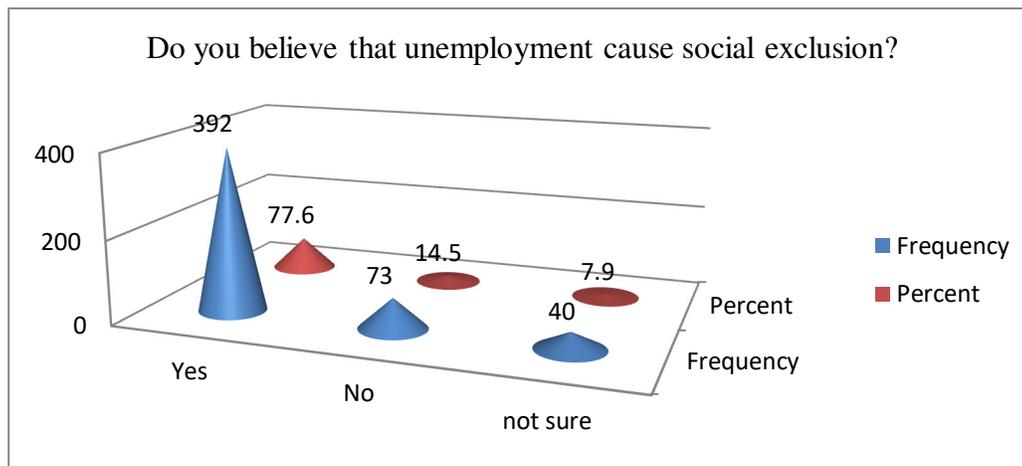
Source: researchers' survey 2017

Figure 3. respondents' response on youth unemployment and Low living standards



Source: researchers' survey 2017

Figure 4. respondents' idea on youth unemployment and Low self-esteem



Source: researchers' survey 2017

Figure 5. respondents' opinion on unemployment and prevalence of Social exclusion

'Yes' and 7.3% 'No' on unemployment impacts on living standards. The rest 4.5% responded as they were not clear with the issue under question. Based on the above data, it is possible to conclude that youth unemployment results low living standard.

The given figure 4 reveals, 78.6% of respondents replied 'Yes', and 18.8% of the respondents reply 'No'. The rest 2.6% of the respondents reply as they are not sure whether unemployment youth resulted in low living standards.

In relation to the above issue, key informants from unemployed youths in the study area suggested that, "...If you don't work you cannot have anything of your own, you always rely on your family and friend who may look down on you because of your dependency on their shoulder. Your families and friends don't count on you; you feel that you are not important to anybody. This makes a person to feel and take his life as bad chance

and develop poor self image about one's own self".

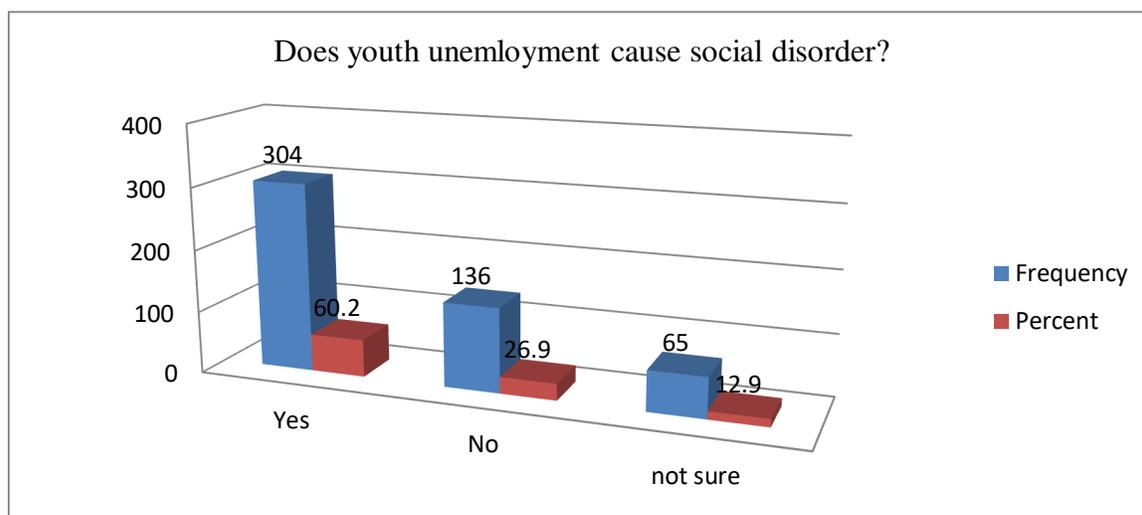
As it is shown on the figure 5, the highest percentage of respondents (77.6%) replied as being unemployed to a certain job is the reason for social exclusion, and 14.5% said the opposite. The rest 7.9% replied as they were not sure about the issue. As the data gained from the key informants suggest, youth unemployment makes unemployed youths to be alone or with other unemployed peer rather being with other person who have job. Here the respondents said the main reason making unemployed youth to be excluded is their economic incapability resulted from their joblessness". In addition, focus group discussants suggested that youths without employment feel inferior while they are with individuals having job and thus fear of this inferiority force them to be excluded from other parts of the society including family member.

As it is shown on the table 3, the highest percentage of

Table 3. respondents' idea on unemployed youths and deviant norms

Item	Response	Frequency	Percent
Does unemployment leads youths to deviant norms in your area?	Yes	438	86.7
	No	43	8.5
	Not sure	24	4.8
	Total	505	100
If your response is 'Yes', what kinds of deviant norms?	prostitution	213	48.6
	stealing	151	34.5
	lack of respect for other people	74	16.9
	Total	438	100

Source: researchers' survey 2017



Source: researchers' survey 2017

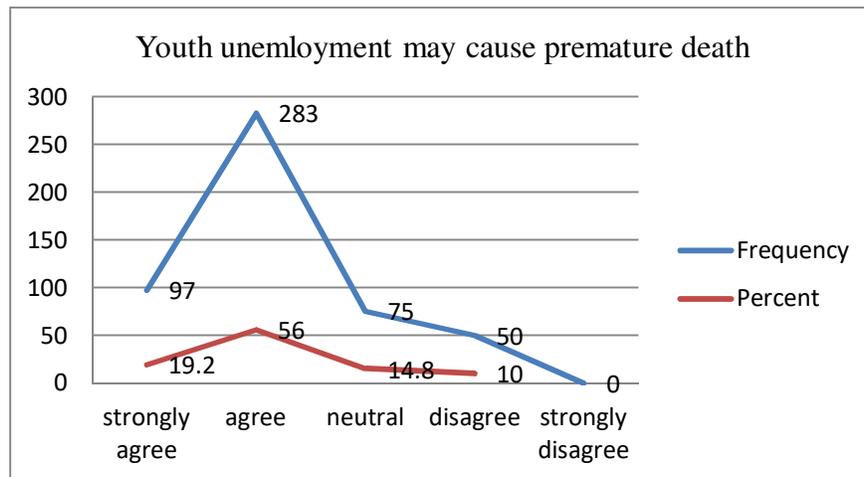
Figure 6. respondents' opinion on youth unemployment and social disorder

the respondents (86.7%) indicate as unemployment leads to deviant norms and behaviors. Contrary to this, 8.5% of the respondents answered the opposite. The rest 4.8% replied as they were not sure unemployment leads to deviant norms in the study area. In connection to this, the respondents were asked the kind of deviant norms are committed and 48.6% of the respondents said prostitution, 34.5% stealing, and 16.9% lack of respect for other people. From this data it is possible infer that even though the degree of the problem differs, the above mentioned deviant norms are resulted from unemployed youths in the study area.

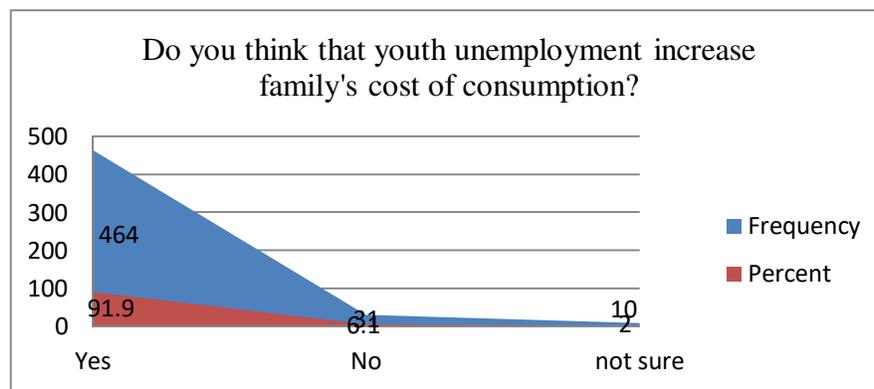
As focus group discussants suggested the unemployed youth commit unacceptable activities in the society. Once graduated, they are enforced to participate in illegal activities like stealing and prostitution for their livelihood. They added as lack of job is the primary cause for

erosion of self respect leading youths to develop deviant behavior in the society. Furthermore, key informants from selected offices suggested as young graduated women participate in commercial sex to generate income for their survival even though they know it is abhorrent in front of the community.

As indicated on the figure 6, 60.2% of the respondents respond Yes, and 26.9% 'No'. The rest 12.9% the respondents replied as they were not sure whether youth unemployment cause social disorder or not. From this one can easily understand youth unemployment is the primary cause of social disorder and instability in local area since the highest number of respondents approved it. In addition majority of key informants from selected offices explained that youth unemployment results many social problems strikes and demonstrations in the form political opposition which make the local community feel



Source: researchers' survey 2017
Figure 7: respondents' opinion on youth unemployment and living standard



Source: researchers' survey 2017
Figure 8. respondents' opinion on youth unemployment and cost of consumption

insecure. In connection with this idea, majority of the focus group discussants agreed up on problems resulted from youth unemployment on surrounding population. They raise strike and disturbance in the form of peaceful demonstration, in that they are expressing as the government should create job opportunity. At that time for bringing peace and stability in the area government dispose/release many military personnel and we feel insecure because of this military control”.

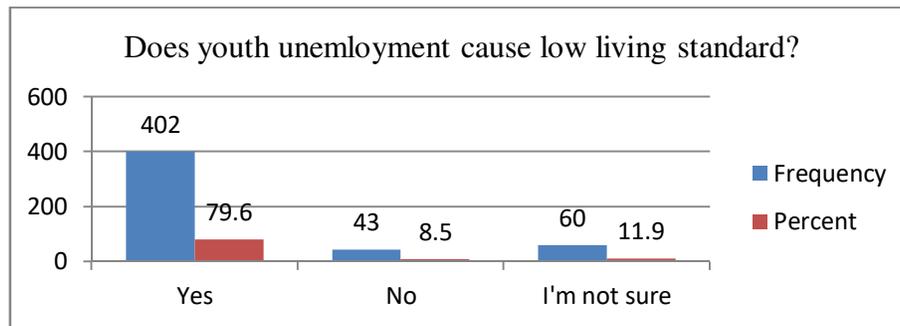
Prevalence of premature death

As it is presented on the figure 7, 19.2% and 56% of the respondents choose strongly agree and agree respectively on the issue of whether youth unemployment may cause premature death. Besides, 14.8% and 10% respond as neutral and disagree on the issue under consideration respectively. From this it is possible to

imply that the greater percentage of respondents (90%) have understood as youth unemployment cause premature death. In addition, the data gained from, key informants indicated that, most young people graduated college or university are victims of premature death due to alcoholic drinks, prostitution and drug abuse. thus it is possible to conclude that people without employment are likely to experience a high risk of premature death as a result of lack of income to address their health needs”.

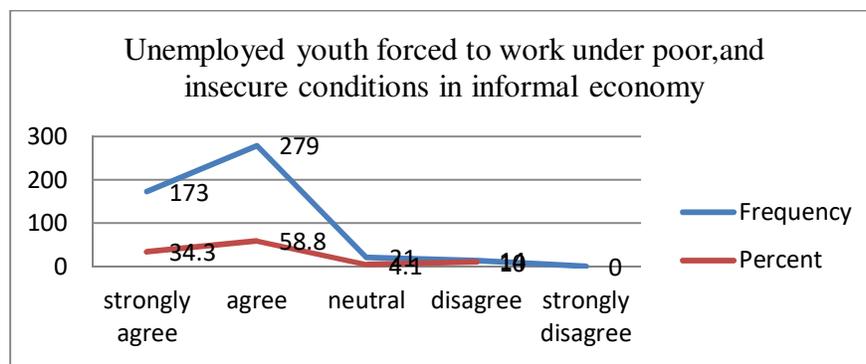
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As indicated on the figure 8, high percentage (91.9%) of the respondents replied ‘Yes, 6.1% replied ‘No’ and only 2% replied not sure. In connection to this focus group discussants suggested that most of unemployed youths have no means of income for their day to day



Source: researchers' survey 2017

Figure 9. respondents' response on youth unemployment and living standards



Source: researchers' survey 2017

Figure 10. respondents' opinion on unemployment and working conditions

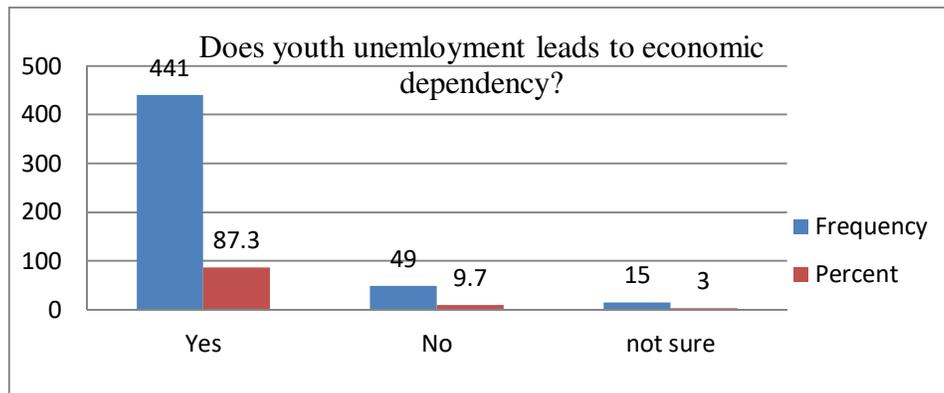
expense and remain dependent on their families. The family continues to support their young ones as much as they can until they are able to secure any means of survival. Families do this because there is no any other means such as social security or other unemployment benefits. furthermore the key informants told that, in the family the older son or daughter who already had a job may share the burden of supporting the younger ones in their course of transition from school to work. From this one can conclude youth unemployment increase cost of consumption on family.

From figure 9 the greater percent (79.6%) of the respondents respond 'Yes' and 8.5% of the respondents replied 'No'. The rest 11.9% of the respondents responded as they are not sure on the issue under discussion. On this issue, focus group discussants explained that *...youth unemployment and low living standard are directly related with each other. Where there is high unemployment low living standard is inevitable since youths particularly educated youths are the primary actors in improving the life of the people. Here once the economy failed to create job opportunity for educated youths, it is inevitable for people to live with low living standard.* From this it is possible to conclude that, youth unemployment results in low living standard in general

and in the study area in particular.

As it can be observed from the figure 10, 34.3% of the respondents said 'strongly agree', 58.8% of them replied 'agree'. The left 4.1% and 2.8% of the respondents replied as they are neutral and disagree on the issue that unemployed youth are forced to work under poor and insecure conditions respectively. As the key informants from unemployed youth told, since they failed to be employed in formal sector they are forced to participate in informal economy which has low wage, and poor working condition. In addition focus group discussants also suggested that, *due to lack of formal employment, our children are forced to work as daily laborer after completing their education". Furthermore, key informants from selected offices indicated that, graduate expectation of smooth and rapid transition from school to work, attitudes towards work and low initiative keep youth away from being proactive in starting their own business.* based on the above survey, one can conclude that unemployed youths are working and living in poor and insecure working conditions in the study area.

As the figure 11 illustrates, the highest proportion (87.3%) of the respondents answered 'Yes' and conversely 9.7% of them respond 'No'. The rest 3% of the respondents respond as they were not sure on the issue



Source: researchers' survey 2017

Figure 11. respondents' idea on youth unemployment and Economic Dependency

under question. In relation to this, one of the key informants has said *...the one which we all cannot deny is that unemployed youths have basic needs as to other humans. These basic needs must be enjoyed whether the person has source of income or not as far they are necessary for human life. Thus if the person has no job as a source of income, it is inevitable to depend on other person willingly or unwillingly....* From the above data it is possible to conclude that unemployment makes unemployed youths to be economically dependent on family and relatives in the study area.

CONCLUSION

According to the findings of the study, Crime and criminal activities, increased tensions among family, increased health related problems, Degrading Social Capital, and Low living standards were identified as the major social impacts of youth unemployment in the study area. In addition, Low self-esteem and poor self image, Prevalence of Social exclusion and related problems, Developing deviant norms and values, increasing social disorder, and Prevalence of premature death were also indicated as social impacts of youth unemployment in the study area.

Moreover, the study has identified low economic growth, lowering the saving and consumption level of households, poor and precarious working conditions, dependency on other person's income and poverty as the major economic impacts of youth unemployment in the study area. Generally, from the above discussed issues one can understand as the social and economic impacts of graduated youths are interdependent and cannot clearly addressed alone. This is to mean that the economic problem of youth unemployment can cause social problem and in same manner the social problem due to unemployment can bring economic problem

directly or indirectly.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✚ Creating job opportunity is the most important aspect to alleviate or at least to minimize the impacts of youth unemployment. The government organs at different level should have to create adequate jobs by attracting labor intensive foreign investment that can create more jobs for educated youths. In addition, the government should strengthen good governance practices to solve the socio-economic impacts resulted from youth unemployment.
- ✚ To reduce the skill mismatch problem the government need to review the educational policy so as to avoid inconsistency between labor market and area of specialization. This can be carried out by ministry of education in collaboration with different higher educational institutions in proving quality education and creating competent educators.
- ✚ The government in collaboration with public universities should have take Action in enhancing the entrepreneurship skill of the student by giving entrepreneurship as one subject in all educational institution and, arrange credit facilities for educated unemployed to create their own business.
- ✚ Different governmental or nongovernmental organization should communicate and conduct research on the causes, consequences and how to overcome the problem. In this sense, Mettu University as a public institution should cooperate with the government offices to minimize problems of youth unemployment in the study area.

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