



**The Role of Private Higher Education Institutions in Reducing Urban Youth
Unemployment**

**by
Kassaye Tikuye**

**A paper presented at the Proceedings of the Second National Conference on
Private Higher Education in Ethiopia**

Organized and sponsored by St. Mary's College

**July 26, 2004,
Sheraton Addis,
Addis Ababa**

The Role of Private Higher Education Institutions in Reducing Urban Youth Unemployment

Kassaye Tikuye

Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs

Abstract

Due to poor economic condition coupled with rapid population growth, inadequate Government and family support and lack of access to resources, the Ethiopian Youth is confronted with massive unemployment problem. In fact, this chronic problem is aggravated by the mismatch between the type of education/training on one hand, and the labour market on the other. Although, the magnitude and extent of unemployment is not fully known according to CSA (1999), unemployment seems to be more of an urban problem, where the rate is five times higher than that of the rural areas. The incidence of unemployment also differs between sexes. In urban areas a significant proportion of unemployed female population (34.0%) was reported as compared to males (18.3%). The above pattern also holds true for the rural areas where 8.6% of female and 2.4% of male population were reported to be unemployed.

In connection to this reality, the educational and training program rendered by Private Higher Education Institutions (PHEIs) in the country has greater role to empower and enable the youth to be self-supportive, capable of contributing their share of responsibility for the betterment of the society and productive citizens. In view of this, the study aimed at showing the linkage between education and employment, and more importantly, the role of PHEIs in mitigating urban youth unemployment. To achieve the stated objectives, data were collected from primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected through structured interview with 100 randomly selected students from St. Mary's College and from 10 employer organizations that are selected purposively. The data were analyzed through descriptive statistics.

The preliminary findings of the study indicated that PHEIs in Ethiopia are playing great role in meeting the needs of educated manpower. They are also found to meet the educational needs of the youth, who are unable to join the public higher education institutions. The growth and expansion of PHEIs has also created employment opportunities for many young people looking for jobs.

Acronyms

AA	Addis Ababa
CSA	Central Statistical Authority
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ESDP	Education Sector Development Program

GOs	Governmental Organizations
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
LDC	Less Developing Countries
NLFS	National Labour Force Survey
PHEIs	Private Higher Education Institutions
SSOM	Secretarial Science and office Management
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
WBM	World Bank Mission

1. Background

1.1 Introduction

Youth is defined by the United Nations as all persons within the age range of 15-24 years, constitutes a special target group in Ethiopia's socio-economic development. As it constitutes important human resources of the country, the development of its socio-economic potentials serves as a corner stone of the country's sustainable development.

The way Ethiopia handles young people at present would be decisive in the future economic, social, political and cultural development of the country. This is, of course, not only due to its enormous size but also the energy, power and potentials of the youth to play a dynamic role in the construction of better society. In other words, the provision of quality education and training to the youth by the concerned parties namely the Government, the Private Sector including the Private Higher Education Institutions and the society at large has a direct bearing on the future of the nation. In connection to this reality, the Educational and training programme rendered by the Private Higher Education Institutions in the country has greater role to empower and enable the youth to be self-supportive, capable of contributing their own share of responsibility for the betterment of their society and productive, and fostering the development of their nation.

Unfortunately, for many reasons largely due to poor economic condition and coupled with rapid population growth, inadequate Government and family support and lack of access to resources, the Ethiopian youth is confronted with massive unemployment problem which is a big challenge to the country. In fact, this chronic problem is aggravated by the mismatch between education/training on one hand, and the labour market on the other. Unemployment problem, in turn, leads the youth to be affected by different anti-social problems like delinquency, prostitution, beggary, crime, and drug and alcohol addiction.

Obviously, the solution to the unemployment problem and related issues of the Ethiopian youth is beyond the capacity of the government, and demands huge amount of resources both locally and globally. Thus, the contribution and collaboration of the Private Higher Education Institutions (PHEIs) and other partners in the field of education/training and employment creation is indispensable.

It is in view of this that the researcher is interested to see the linkage between education and employment on one hand, and employment on the other with a particular reference to the role of PHEIs in reducing the problem of urban youth unemployment. Hence, the study is designed with the following specific objectives to:

1. identify the contribution of PHEIs in producing educated manpower particularly educated youth.
2. show the extent to which PHEIs educate/train youth that are potential employees or self-employed.
3. examine whether there is a missing link (if any) between PHEIs and employers.

1.2 Methodology

The study has used the following methods of research:

- o Documentary Research: literature review on available research papers, and other related documents previously done on the area; and
- o Structured interview with 100 students, and discussion with staff of St. Mary's College and 10 employer institutions. Sampling was done through purposive random sampling technique. In addition, personal observation was made.

2. Theoretical Background: Linkage between Education and Employment

2.1 Global and Regional Situation

According to the well-known economist Michael Todaro (1997), today many developing countries are plagued by a historically unique combination of massive population movement from rural to urban areas, stagnating in agricultural productivity, growing urban, rural unemployment and underemployment. Substantial unemployment in LDC economies is probably one of the most striking symptoms of their inadequate development.

In poor countries like Ethiopia, open unemployment, especially in urban areas is affecting 20%-30% of the labour force. The incidence of unemployment is much higher among the young people and increasingly so in the 15-24 age bracket, who have neither complementary resources nor opportunities to compete in the job market.

As the result of high rate of population growth, the African youth population has increased into a significant proportion of the African population over the years. This in turn, has increased the labour force in the continent.

According to a research paper prepared by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA, 2000) in the year 2000, the African labour force was about 16 million and expected to increase to some 25 million by the year 2015. This new labour force entrant will be youth grappling with unemployment, which typically affects them more than any other group in the population.

Although the youth constitute an important human resource in all countries of Africa and its potential, power and energy is a cornerstone to Africa's sustainable development. Measures taken so far towards solving the problems of youth have been insufficient and have had little impact on the problems and needs of African youth. This, in fact, requires placing more emphasis and resources on the development of the human resource, and an investment on human capital, to develop the skills, potentials and capabilities of people that Africa has, in order to compete with the rest of the world.

In general, education is an important tool to fight against poverty, unemployment and a host of other social problems and promote social development for a country like ours. It is an investment on human capital, to develop the skills, potentials and capabilities of people to foster sustainable social development. That is why the importance of employment to the country in general and the youth in particular cannot be understood in isolation from the type and quality of education provided to them by each country.

In this regard, it is essential to understand first the actual needs, wants and culture of the people, including the absorbing capacity of the economy in order to maintain the quality of education as well as its proper linkage with employment.

As it was stated by UNESCO (1991), employment enables the youth to meet their financial and material needs for themselves and their families. More importantly, it strengthens self-esteem, self-confidence and the sense of belongingness to contribute to society in a meaningful way. On the contrary, unemployment denies individuals the independent satisfaction of their needs. At national level, it has detrimental effects on the growth of the economy since the inadequate use of human resources prevents the realization of the economy's potential. Socially, unemployment chips away at people's dignity, self-confidence and self-respect. It also alienates them from society, breeding frustration and desperation that could result in crime and violence (UNESCO).

When we see the situation of African countries, the educational and training system, whether formal or non-formal it just could not prepare the youth for their role as dynamic agents of change and development. In our globalized and technological world, schools and teachers still could not impart relevant education and knowledge to their students who cannot meet both the economic and socio-cultural needs of their countries.

Available data indicate that there is a noticeable irrelevance in Africa's educational systems seen against the continent's development needs and priorities. Course offerings are still heavily oriented towards the liberal arts while courses like science, engineering, agriculture, medicine and management etc. which are crucial to Africa's socio-economic development, are still given low priority.

In spite of the skill shortages in the crucial areas of development, increasingly more and more young people enter the labour market with skills and qualifications that cannot be fully and effectively utilized (ECA, 2000). Their education and training do not meet the skill demands of the job market and the requirements of existing job opportunities. That is why, African states could not even attain their self-sufficiency in food production.

In order to reduce this mismatch between the supply and demand for skilled labour, strong commitment and action is needed on the part of all governments to reform their educational systems, programmes and strategies to respond to the labour market requirements and produce job creators rather than job seekers.

2.2 Urban Youth Unemployment in Ethiopia: Causes, Magnitude and Consequences of the Problem

Ethiopia, like all other poor countries of Africa, is a country of young people. According to the 1994 National Population Census, its population is estimated to be 60 million, out of which the youth is 20 percent. Similarly, the population of Addis Ababa is estimated about 3 million out of which the youth is 28.8 percent. This tells us that the youth is the major source of the labour force and plays a pivotal role in the development of the country. Thus, given proper education and training, the Ethiopian youth can make a difference in creating better society. Unfortunately, for a number of reasons, the Ethiopian Youth in general and the youth of Addis Ababa in particular are facing serious unemployment problem.

Although the magnitude and extent of the unemployment is not fully known, according to the result of the National Labour Force Survey (NL FSCA 1999) unemployment seems to be more of urban problem, where the rates for urban areas were 26.4% that is, five times higher than that of the rural areas (5.1%).

The incidence of unemployment also differs between sexes. In urban areas a significant proportion of unemployed female population (34.0%) was reported as compared to males (18.3 %). The above pattern also holds true for the rural areas where 8.6% of female and 2.4 % of male population were reported to be unemployed. The unemployment problem in Ethiopia has also age pattern. The same survey indicated that unemployed are predominantly young men and women. The unemployment rate starts comparatively at lower level in the age group 10-14 years (7.2%), then it increases up to age group 20-24 years/ (2.7%) and then it starts declining (Ibid).

However, in urban areas the female population has higher unemployment rate at the age group 20-24 years (45.8 %) and continues to decline consistently with increasing age. On other hand, male population has higher rate of unemployment at the age group of 15-19 years (37.7 %) and declines up to the age group 45-49 years and start to rise up there after. But it should be noted that, in all age groups whether in urban or rural areas female population show higher rate of unemployment than their male counterparts.

Generally speaking, urban unemployment rate was substantially higher than the rural areas in all regions. Higher unemployment rates were reported for urban areas of Addis Ababa (38.1%) and Dire Dawa Administration (35.5%) followed by Harari (29.1%), Afar (23.2%), Amhara (22.5%) and Gambella (21.1%). Relatively lower unemployment rate was shown for urban areas of Tigray (19.8%), Oromiya (19.0%), Benishangul (18.8%) and SNNP (18.1%).

During the last five years unemployment rate appears to follow an increasing trend. According to the 1994 Population and Housing Census result, unemployment rate in urban Ethiopia was 22.0%. This has increased by 4.4% and reached 26.4%, as reported in the 1999 National Labour Force Survey (NLFS). On the basis of this fact, we can argue that, the majority of Ethiopian youth, who are looking for jobs after completion of secondary and tertiary education, have very few opportunities for employment. This is mainly due to the narrow base and weak structure of the national economy coupled with long years of civil war, drought, environmental degradation and poor governance.

There are 27 million Ethiopians who are absolutely poor in urban and rural areas, among which the youth holds the greater proportion. The poor quality of education and skill training, the low rate of participation of the youth in different skill development trainings, and the lack of proper linkage between education and employment are some of the major limitations of the Ethiopian

education and training system that contributed to the unemployment problem of the youth in the country (World Bank Mission Report 1992).

The extremely narrow job market is contributing to the decline in academic achievement. The increasing tendency to break school rules, drop out, and display anti social behaviour are vivid manifestations of youth's growing dissatisfaction with an educational system that neither enlightens nor prepares them for employable jobs in the labour market and responsible adulthood. For young people with their particular vulnerability, finding a job is of crucial significance since they are leaving the educational system without being sure about the relevance of their acquired knowledge, including its applicability to the requirements of the labour market.

Moreover, due to the impact of globalization and the on going Structural Adjustment Programme in the country, along with the introduction of new technology and new techniques of labour management, employers are more interested in looking for and recruiting young people with appropriate marketable skills or qualifications such as information science, medicine, engineering, marketing, business education, banking, etc.

Today, it is true that, many efforts are being made by the government of Ethiopia to improve the coverage and quality of education, and many changes are observed in line with the on-going education and training reform program in the country. But still much more efforts and commitment are required from the government and its partners including the PHEIs to improve quality of education and prepare the young people for the world of work and integrate them into working life and the community.

2.3 The Contribution, Limitations and Challenges of the PHEIs

As the country is following market oriented economic development policy, both domestic and foreign investment is growing alarmingly. The private sector is encouraged to invest almost in all areas of the economy including the education and training sector. As indicated in the proceedings of the first national conference on private higher education in Ethiopia (2003), there are many practical reasons why a strong private sector in higher education is so important. Limited financial resources and capacity on the part of the government to offer all courses for all young people according to their needs is the one among other things. It can be also argued that the only way to ensure a truly independent and flexible educational system is through a strong private sector. Moreover, some research findings show that private colleges can respond to the changes taking place in the labour market than the public higher education institutions, since they are more dynamic and cost effective due to competition among themselves and with other partners.

Like in many countries of Africa, higher education was mainly the role and responsibility of the government of Ethiopia and many of the educational institutions were highly dominated by the government agencies. In other words, the burden of the ownership and running of these institutions rested on the shoulders of the government of Ethiopia.

Today, following the conducive environment created in the country, private colleges are mushrooming mainly in the city of Addis Ababa, and in some regional cities to complement the efforts of the government. And the graduates of these private colleges are believed to meet the demands of the skilled and qualified manpower in the economy. The following table shows the number of accredited PHEIs in the years 2003/2004.

Table 1: Distribution of Accredited PHEIs by Region.

Region	No. of PHEIs 2003	%	No. of PHEIs 2004	%
Addis Ababa	11	47.83	19	63.3
Nazareth	2	8.70	2	6.6
Awassa	1	4.35	2	6.6
Diredwa	2	8.70	2	6.6
Mekele	2	8.70	2	6.6
Harar	2	8.70	2	6.6
Nekemt	1	4.35	1	3.3
Kuyera	1	4.35	-	-
Total	20	100	30	100

The table above clearly indicates that there is high concentration of PHEIs mainly in city of Addis Ababa and some of them have branches in few regional towns of the country. On the other hand, the number of PHEIs has increased tremendously from 20 PHEIs in 2003 to 30 PHEIs in 2004. This will also increase the number of students and the type of courses provided to the clients. The table below indicates Ethiopian PHEIs by the types of courses they offer.

Table 2. Ethiopian PHEIs by Type of Courses offered

Type of courses	No. of PHEIs	Percentages
Accounting	26	86.6
Secretarial Science	16	53.3
Business Management	15	50.0
Computer Science	13	43.3
Marketing Management	11	36.6
Management	11	36.6
Auto-mechanics	2	6.6
Medicine	2	6.6
Economics	1	3.3
Agriculture	0	0.0

As indicated above, in terms of the fields of studies, the PHEIs focus on courses which are inexpensive such as Accounting, Secretarial Science and Office Management (SSOM),

Management, Computer Science, etc. give less emphasis to courses such as Auto-mechanics, Medicine, Agriculture which are highly demanded by the labour market to promote rapid development in the country. For instance 26 PHEIs provide Accounting out of the total PHEIs (30). The same applies to SSOM, provided by 15 PHEIs out of the 30 PHEIs.

Regarding the enrolment rate, the Report cited above displays that it has grown from 11, 175 in 2000/01 to 29,237 in 2001/02. The information gathered from the Ministry of Education also indicates that PHEIs account for 18 percent of student enrolment in higher education institutions. This figure could have been much higher if the intake of unaccredited institutions had been considered.

The information cited above also indicates that, in terms of Diploma graduates, PHEIs in Ethiopia have also significant contribution. That is out of 19,564 total number of Diploma graduates in 2001/02, 6,867 /43.5/ were from private institutions. Thus, for a poor country like ours, where the private sector is not developed, this contribution could not be underestimated.

3. Findings of the Study

3.1 Discussion with Ministry of Education (MOE) Officials

According to the discussion held with the concerned department of the Ministry of Education (MOE), the private Higher Education Institutions have significant contributions. Their contribution to the supply of colleges are relatively playing their role in providing educated manpower to the needs of the economy. They also provide an alternative for those who completed grade 12 but are unable to join the public higher educational institutions and are trying to fill the gap created by limited capacity of the public higher institutions. In this regard, the PHEIs have positive attitude from the public.

In order to overcome their limitations, promote their positive contributions and maintain their strength, PHEIs should undertake national study or assessment on issues related to PHEIs in the country. This may include how many young people graduated, in what field of studies, how many of them got employment opportunities either in the form of wage employment or self-employment, which sectors of the economy are in favour of employing their graduates, which type of courses are more demandable, with what amount, etc. so that they can contribute more and complement the efforts of the government to fight against poverty and unemployment.

To sum up, although, the Ministry does not supervise and support them both technically and professionally due to its limited capacity/power, PHEIs should focus on more diversified field of

studies on the basis of research findings to be more competitive in our free market economic system.

3.2 Discussion with Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA) and Financial Institutions

In the Ministry, there are about 22 Secretaries, out of whom 11 of them are currently attending their higher education in different PHEIs in the same field through extension programme. This is now common in other governmental and non-governmental institutions.

The researcher also contacted and made an interview with about 10 financial institutions operating in the city of Addis, out of which 70% of them responded to the questionnaire distributed to them. The following data collected may reflect the contribution of PHEIs in the reduction of unemployment problem in the country.

Table 3: Employed young people graduated from PHEIs by type of Employer Organizations

Ser. No.	Employer	M	F	Total	%
1	NIB Bank	51	29	80	33.4
2	Awash Bank	30	37	67	28.0
3	Wegagen Bank	35	15	50	20.9
4	United Insurance	3	15	18	7.5
5	Abyssinia Bank	10	3	13	5.4
6	United Bank	2	6	8	3.3
7	Africa Insurance	2	1	3	1.2
	Total	133	106	239	100%

The data in table 3, above clearly shows us NIB Bank has employed more young people graduated from the PHEIs (33.4%) than other employer organizations covered by the study, followed by Awash bank (28.0%) and Wegagen bank (20.9%) respectively. From this information one can deduce that, the PHEIs in Ethiopia are creating more employment opportunities in partnership with the private financial institutions operating in the country. On the other hand, almost all financial institutions covered by this study responded that many unemployed young people are always knocking at the door of their offices seeking either employment or free service opportunities. However, due to their limited capacity, they could not accommodate all applicants. This clearly indicates the problem facing the urban youth which needs the attention and collaboration of all public and private institutions including civil society.

Furthermore, according to the information gathered from the department of human resources of each financial institutions covered by the study, equal opportunity is given to all job seekers meeting the criteria during the whole process of employment. That is to say that no discrimination is made among graduates from both the public and private higher education institutions. What is more important is to be competitive and win both the theoretical and practical examination given to them. So the effort and qualifications of the individual person is important.

On the basis of the data indicated above one can say that for a country like Ethiopia, with high youth population and high urban youth unemployment problem, the contribution of PHEIs cannot be underestimated but rather they can be seen as an alternative for those unemployed young people unable to join the public higher education institutions.

The information gathered from the private financial institutions also indicates that the PHEIs in Ethiopia are not only playing greater role in meeting the needs of educated humanpower for all sectors of the economy, they are also helping the government by sharing its burden particularly in meeting the educational needs of the young and creating employment opportunities for those young people looking for jobs for their survivals and to support their families. Thus, provided that they are supported both technically and professionally by the government, private sector and the community at large, their contribution to the reduction of urban youth unemployment and other related social problems are more significant.

On the basis of the discussion held with the relevant persons of the selected private colleges say that employment opportunities are also being created for many students graduating from their own respective colleges and other unemployed young people. For instance, Admas College has created job opportunity for 300 unemployed young people out of which more than 50 employees are students graduated from the college itself. The same is true for St. Mary's college, which employed 26 young people who graduated from the college, out of which 24 are male and 2 are female.

Regarding linking theoretical education with the world of work, the college has also created a good relationship both with the public and private institutions. For instance, in 2003, about 800 students graduated from the College and almost 80% of them are employed in the Ministry of Inland Revenue. On top of this, the entrepreneurship knowledge and skills development center established in 2003 is doing its best to promote self-employment for its graduating students.

The private higher education forum, created among few private colleges is also another initiative to share their experiences and promote partnership among institutions to provide better quality of education for the reduction of unemployment problem among the growing youth population.

3.3 Analysis of Students' Response: The Case of St. Mary's College

In order to have better understanding about the role and contribution of PHEIs in reducing urban youth unemployment, the researcher has tried to assess the views and opinions of students at St. Mary's College. The researcher has interviewed 100 students randomly selected from St. Mary's College out of which 90% gave their responses.

Table 6: Distribution of Respondents in Terms of Their Field of Study and Sex.

<i>Ser. No.</i>	<i>Field of study</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>%</i>
1	Accounting	20	10	30	33.3
2	SSOM	-	11	11	12.2
3	Marketing Management	14	8	22	24.4
4	Law	15	4	19	21.1
5	Computer Science	3	5	8	8.8
	Total	52	38	90	100

As indicated above in Table 6, the size of respondents studying Accounting is higher than other field of studies (33.3%), followed by Marketing Management (24.4%) and Law (21.1%). And the number of female students studying Accounting and SSOM is relatively high, while their participation in studying Law and Marketing Management is low in relation to their counterparts.

The students were also asked to give their reasons as to why they chose their specific field of study. 71.1% responded to get job very easily, 7.7% to acquire knowledge while 32.2% for both reasons. This clearly tells us that the majority of students are learning to meet their employment or survival needs. On the basis of the information gathered from their friends and relatives the most marketable or employable field of studies are Accounting (43.3%), Computer Science (30%), SSOM (24.4%), Law (12.2%), and Marketing Management (5.5%).

Today, it is true that, there are many opportunities which foster the mushrooming and development of PHEIs in the country. These include, among other things, free market led economic system, provisions such as policies, laws and regulations enhancing investment in the country, Agricultural Development Led Industrialization (ADLI) development strategy, the National Education and Training Policy, National Education Sector Development Program could be cited. However, on the basis of the information gathered from different sources, the following issues could be seen as the major challenges facing PHEIs in the country.

- Lack of strong vision and commitment to work towards meeting the long-term objectives of the country, focus on similar fields of studies rather than focus on more diversified and marketable courses such as Medicine, Engineering, Auto-mechanics, Agriculture, etc;
- High concentration of insitutions in the city Addis Ababa and few regional cities, no proper attention to the less developed regions of the country;
- Being unable to create strong linkage with the demands and needs of the labour market and the economy at large. That is the lack of strong relationship with the public and private sectors including NGOs operating in the country;

- Being unable to make timely assessment or evaluation study about their strength, limitations including their contribution to the reduction of unemployment and poverty in the country; and
- Lack of strong partnership among themselves and relevant government institutions. That is to say, no common forum for social dialogue or open discussion on common issues such as the quality of education, unemployment, research activities, etc which can promote their strength.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

As indicated in the Education Sector Development Program of Ethiopia, the over all strategy of higher education is to provide good quality higher education to large numbers, equitably but with diminishing dependence on public resources in the long term. It is also stated that, higher education is the central programme in the national capacity building programme which emphasizes on human resource development improving working systems and setting up institutions to facilitate the overall agricultural and industrial development process.

Investment in higher education is so important for socio-economic development which in turn is crucial prerequisite for sustained poverty reduction in the future in the country. In a country like Ethiopia, where higher education sector is not developed and where there is a huge demand for highly trained personnel to foster the development of the country, investment on higher education is really indispensable.

It is true that, today, with the conducive environment being created in the country, Private Universities and Colleges are flourishing mainly in the city of Addis Ababa and in some Regional cities. PHEIs in Ethiopia are playing greater role in meeting the demand for educated manpower for all sectors of the economy. They can be seen as helping hands of the government and sharing its burden particularly in meeting the educational demand for the young people, who are unable to join the public higher educational institutions. Regarding employment creation, the growth and expansion of PHEIs has also created employment opportunities for many young people looking for jobs for their survivals and support their families.

When we see the employed young people by type of their field of studies and sex, graduates in the field of Accounting are 136 out of the total 239 employed young people in 7 financial institutions, out of which 85 are male and 51 are female, followed by 43 female graduates in SSOM, then by 28 graduates in Computer science, out of which 23 are male and 5 are female, followed by 20 graduates in Marketing Management, out of which 16 are male and 4 are female. However, investment on higher education alone is not enough, unless it is supported by the provision of good

quality of education and training that enables the youth to make a living and actively participate in the development efforts of the country. This could be equally shared by the PHEIs which are growing in the country, which in turn demands the strong commitment and good will of these institutions to work towards the reduction of poverty and unemployment facing the Ethiopian Youth.

Provided that PHEIs in the country are supported by the government both technically and professionally, their contribution to the reduction of youth unemployment problem and other related social problems is more significant. This does not mean that PHEIs in the country have no limitations, rather they have certain problems such as lack of skilled and qualified teachers, limited availability of text books and computer services, lack of strong relationship with employer organizations, and absence of timely assessment and research on the needs and demands of the labour market, lack of working space, and other recreational facilities as suggested by the students themselves and the observation made by the researcher himself.

Therefore, for more contribution in the reduction of poverty and unemployment, PHEIs should undertake national assessment on issues related to what is going on in the economy. Then pre-plan on the basis of their findings what field of studies are more demandable/marketable, with what amount and which sectors of the economy are in favour of employing their graduates. In order to do this, they should also adopt themselves to the changing political, socio-economic, technological and environmental realities both locally and globally, and prepare the youth for productive engagement in national development.

More importantly, PHEIs in Ethiopia should reorient themselves into a direction where apprenticeship plays an important role. They should also reflect more the educational and employment needs, problems and potentials of the youth in particular and the country in general. Furthermore, PHEIs in Ethiopia should establish strong partnership among themselves and other relevant Government institutions such as MOE, MOLSA, Investment Office, etc. Public colleges and universities and other private institutions including NGOs. They should also have common forum for social dialogue /open discussion on common issues such as the quality of education, unemployment, poverty, HIV/AIDS, etc so that they can promote their strength and minimize their weakness.

To sum up, the creation of an organic link between education/training and the job market is a fundamental prerequisite or a priority area for accelerated development.

References:

- Children and Youth Affairs Organization (1995), Ethiopian Youth: Challenges and Prospects, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- CSA (2000) Analytical Report on 1999 National Labour Force Survey, Addis Ababa.
- ECA (2000) "Situation Analysis of Youth in Africa". A Paper presented to Pan-African Conference on Youth and Development, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Kassaye Tikuye (1997) "The Linkage Problem between Education/Training on the one hand, and Employment Market on the other." A Thesis Presented to the Institute of Social Studies, the Hague, the Netherlands.
- _____ (2000) "Unemployment: Its Impact on the Formation of the Family." A Research Paper Presented at the National Conference on 'Building a Culture of Peace, Character, Family and Public Service'. Organized by Family Federation for World Peace- Ethiopia, Sheraton Addis, Addis Ababa.
- Michael Todaro P. (1997) Economic Development, New York, Longman.
- MOE (1999) Education and Training Policy, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- _____ (1999) Education Sector Development Program Action Plan, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- MOLSA (1999) An Assessment of Marketable Skills for Youth in Addis Ababa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- MOLSA and Italian Cooperation (1999) Proceedings of the Workshop on Vocational Training and Youth Employment in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- St. Mary's College (2003) Proceedings of the First National Conference on Private Higher Education in Ethiopia, Sheraton Addis, Addis Ababa