

The changing transition to adulthood in Ethiopia over the past three decades

Introduction

As most other developing countries, Ethiopia has going through social, political and economic transformations over the past few decades that have a profound impact on young people's transition to adulthood. Some of the changes are part of the broader and long-term social process such as urbanization, expansion of formal education, industrialization and emergence of market economy, commonly known as "modernization" process. Although Ethiopia is one of the least developed nations, expansion of formal education has been one of the major social changes in the country during the past three decades. Educational attainment is an important key for understanding changes in subsequent transition to adulthood (Furstenberg and Grant, 2007). Another major long-term change is a rapid growth in the size of the population of young people in the country. Furthermore, social disruptions from political instability and economic recession in the past decade pose paramount difficulties and uncertainty for young people's transition to adulthood in Ethiopia. Both long-term trends and short-term fluctuations shape the paths adolescents take from childhood into adulthood (Hogan and Astone, 1986; Shanahan 2000).

The secular increases in school participation and changes in other transition activities are also influenced by period-specific economic and political disruptions that could affect young people differently according to their social position. However, the effect of the short-term social disruptions on schooling and other transition activities has been given less attention and remained poorly understood. The major objective of this study is, thus, to explore and analyze how the patterns of transition to adulthood among young people in Ethiopia have changed over the last three decades and have been influenced by period-specific structural changes. This objective is addressed through descriptive and multivariate analyses of the patterns of transition

activities among young people over the past three decades and identifying changes in those patterns during the time of social disruption. This approach helps to throw light on impacts of long-term social processes and short-term historical events on changing patterns of transition to adulthood. Multiple cross-sectional data from the 1984 and 1994 national population censuses and the 2004 nationally representative survey are used for the analysis.

Conceptual Framework

The transition to adulthood is a process by which major changes in social statuses and activities are accomplished by young people as they become adults (Hogan and Astone, 1986; Modell et al. 1976). Markers of transitions to adulthood include social and demographic events or activities such as finishing school, entering the labor force, leaving parental home, marriage and parenthood (Furstenberg and Fussell, 2005; Furstenberg and Grant, 2007). However, the occurrence, timing, and sequence of these transition markers change overtime as social historical context changes, and vary across different countries and between cultural groups within the same country (Furstenberg and Grant, 2007).

Most of the existing literature in the western societies pointed to an increasing postponement of transitions and diverse pathways to adulthood (Modell et al. 1976; George 1993; Furstenberg and Fussell 2005). The modernization process is considered as the underlying factor for long-term trends that differentiate successive cohorts, but these trends have been complicated by short-term economic changes and discrete historical events (Shanahan 2007). Long-term social changes and modernization process have promoted both standardization and variability in the transition to adulthood (Furstenberg and Grant, 2007). Age-graded institutions such as schools and the labor market facilitate standardization of transition to adulthood through their rules on appropriate ages at entry to and exit from schools and the labor market (Riley 1973). As

modernization proceeded, the life course will be less determined by family and locale and transitions became de-standardized or individualized (Furstenberg and Grant 2007).

One of the major significant changes in sub-Saharan Africa over the past generation has been the increase in the education of its young people (Blum, 2007), and gradual expansion of market economy. However, these non-family institutions are still at low stages of development to have the standardizing and individualizing effect on the patterns of transition to adulthood as observed in the industrialized nations. Furthermore, these institutions have been vulnerable to short-term disruptions due to political instability, wars and economic recessions and structural adjustment programs (Furstenberg and Grant, 2007).

An increasing level of poverty has become a major constraint for many youth in sub-Saharan Africa to make effective transition to adulthood and become productive adults (United Nations, 2007). The decline of traditional family and community socialization-to-adulthood process and lack of adequate contemporary alternatives in many developing countries leave adolescents poorly prepared for transition to adulthood (Choe and Thapa, 2005). In addition, today the youth entering adulthood in the region are much larger than their predecessors and are facing strong competition for resources, social services and employment opportunities (United Nations, 2007). Like in many other countries, in Ethiopia the process of transition to adulthood has been influenced by the expansion of formal education and other secular social changes. However, short-term social disruptions such as political and institutional instabilities, war and economic problems specific to the country's social-historical context present difficulties and uncertainty to young people as they make transition into adulthood.

Background and Hypotheses

Long-term process

The relationship between school attainment and reproductive transitions such as age at first marriage, first childbirth and fertility is vastly studied in the field of demography. Formal education is believed to have both an ideational as well as role incongruity effects on reproductive transition activities. The traditional transition to adulthood in the sub-Saharan Africa has gradually been eroded by recent expansion of formal education (Calves et al., 2007). In addition, prolonged enrollment in schools reshapes the time available to engage in other transition activities and postpone the timing assuming adult roles (Mortimer and Larson, 2002).

In Ethiopia, like in many other developing countries, school participation has substantially increased over the past few decades. Primary school enrollment has increased from about 13 percent in 1974 to 74 percent in 2004 (CSA, 2005). The increase in primary school participation is more significantly among girls and rural residents. However, secondary school participation remains much lower among rural youth and women than their counterparts. The market economy is not well developed in the country and most of the labor force is employed in family-based subsistence agriculture. Particularly young people in rural areas and females involved in unpaid family works and are less likely to be at paid works than urban youth and men, respectively. The lower school continuation among girls and rural residents attributed to greater values attached to early marriage by rural communities and lower opportunity for females in the labor market. The country youth are by no means a homogenous group to face the challenges in their transition to adulthood uniformly. They come from varied regions, cultures, place of residence, and socioeconomic resources.

The current regional boundaries of Ethiopia were defined in 1993 based on ethnic composition criteria. Except Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa City Councils which have residents of mixed ethnic groups and administered by Federal Government, all others are identified as ethnic based regional states. Thus, the variable region can be taken as an indicator of ethnicity to capture cultural difference between ethnic groups. For instance, early marriage of girls is highly valued and practiced in some regions than others. This would have significant implication on the timing and patterns of young people's transition to adulthood, particularly among females. In addition, there are regional development disparities and significant differences in access to resources, basic social institutions and employment opportunities. Young people from regions with dominantly cash crop economy have better paid employment opportunity than the youth from subsistence agriculture or pastoral regions. Furthermore, the new education policy that was implemented in 1994 decentralized education system by region and introduced different languages of instruction at primary school level. The differences in education system and languages of instruction may have diverse implications on young people's school participation and employment opportunities, and hence patterns of transition to adulthood. In general, the variable region entered in the model as a control variable to capture cultural context, access to resources and policy differences between regions.

1. *Gender disparity:* Young women are less likely to be in school, at paid work or combination of these activities than those of young men. They are rather more likely to be housewives or in married-only status, particularly in rural areas.

2. *Place of residence:* Both young males and females residing in rural areas are less likely to continue schooling at secondary level than their urban counter parts. As a result, rural young males are more likely to take a role being married and worker, while females become housewife at early ages.

3. *Region as proxy of ethnicity*: Due to high cultural values to early marriage in Amhara region, young people from this region are more likely to assume adult role through early marriage than youth from other regions.

4. *Region as proxy of resource access*: Young males from SNNPR region where cash crop cultivation is the main economic activity are more likely to be employed in full time paid work at early age and less likely to continue in schooling.

Short-term Structural Changes

Although the expansion of formal education has contributed for delayed entry into the labor force, age at first marriage and childbirth, short-term economic fluctuation and discrete historical events are also important factors in affecting patterns of transition to adulthood. Over the past twenty years many sub-Saharan Africa countries including Ethiopia have experienced economic recessions, civil wars and HIV/AIDS pandemic that may negatively affect the context in which the young people make transition to adulthood. Young people's access to gainful employment opportunity is a crucial step for the transition to adulthood. Shortage of employment opportunities postpone marriage and lengthen the period during which young people remain economically dependent and live in parents' home (Calves and Schoumaker, 2004). In addition, the breakdown of normal social structures due to widespread civil war in late 1980s prevented many young people from making the natural transitions to adulthood.

As a result of government change through armed struggle in 1991 Ethiopia experienced drastic political and institutional changes. This violent regime change resulted in political turmoil, social unrest and interruption of different public sector services. Many primary schools, particularly in rural areas, were closed following political instability. In addition, following the government a new education policy was introduced in 1994 that dramatically changed schooling

system and languages of instructions at primary level. The policy change and institutional instability also disrupts education as it required time to prepare many teachers to teach in more than 18 different local languages, to translate and publish ten thousands of new text books. The country was also strongly affected by economic recession and the accompanying structural adjustment programs implemented in early 1990s. Particularly, young men and women who seek first time jobs seem to have suffered disproportionately from drastic reduction of employment opportunities in the public sector as a result of structural adjustment programs (Calves and Schoumaker, 2004). In general, political and institutional instabilities, and employment crisis during early 1990s had important consequences for youth transition to adulthood.

5. *Period-specific effect*: As a result of schooling disruption and employment crisis, young men and women who came of age in mid 1990s are less likely to be in school, at paid work or in marital union. That is, young people aged 12 to 25 years around mid 1990s are more likely to remain single, neither in school nor at paid work than those who came of age in the preceding or following decade.

6. *Period effect by place of residence*: Rural schools are vulnerable to administrative vacuum, teachers and resource shortages during political crisis. Thus, the schooling of young people from rural areas is more likely to be affected by political and institutional disruptions in early 1990s.

Community Characteristics

Young people's participation in transition activities such as school enrollment, employment and marriage are also bond to availability of local institutions and resources facilitating these activities. Availability of schools at district level is expected to enhance school enrollment among Youth. In the absence of direct measure of distance to school, percent of adult population in a district with some secondary education is used as proxy indicator in the analysis.

Better access to local labor market, measured by district level employment rate among adults aged between 26 to 34 years, increases the likelihood of young people participation in paid work. Similarly, the balanced local pool of marriageable men and women is a key factor for young people's chance of marrying.

7. *School availability*: Availability of secondary school in a district, as measured by percent adult population with some high school education, increases the probability of young people's school enrollment.

8. *Local labor market*: High unemployment rate in a district among adult population indicates low employment opportunity at the local labor market. Thus, young people living in a district of high adult unemployment rate and less likely to be engaged in paid works.

9. *Sex-ratio and marriage*: A balance between young men and women in marriageable ages at local level increases the likelihood of being in marital union, particularly among women.

Data, Measures, and Methods

Data

The data for the analysis come from three cross-sectional data sets: the 1984 and 1994 population censuses, and the 2004 nationally representative social welfare monitoring sample survey. The 1984 census, the first national population census, covered 86 percent of the geographic area of the country. Some parts of Tigray region and most areas of Somali region were not covered in this census due to security problem during the time. In the 1994 census, most parts of the country were covered and the coverage rate was increased to 95 percent. The data from the two censuses used in the analysis comprise 20% of the households which were randomly selected and administered by the long-questionnaires. The 2004 social welfare

monitoring survey covered all regions, except Gambella, collected data from nationally representative random sample households. The pooled samples from the three surveys comprise 4,571,700 young people aged 12 to 25 years. Since Somali and Gambella regions were not covered by the first and third surveys, respectively, they are dropped from the analysis.

All the three surveys collected data on individual's productive and reproductive life domain activities such as school enrollment, paid work, and marital status, the status domains that will be explored in this analysis. Community characteristics on school attainment, unemployment rate and sex ratio are created by aggregating individual values at district level are used as proxies for access to schools, labor and marriage markets. The two censuses employed standard definitions and measures of variables on economic activity and employment. The 2004 survey also followed the standard definitions used in the censuses. Variables such as employed paid work are consistency and comparable across the surveys. Definitions and measures of the variable are presented in the section below.

The data have some important limitations. The multiple cross-sectional surveys provide only periodic "snapshots" of statuses for different individuals at various time periods, and there are no time variant covariates both at individual and household levels. In addition, data on ethnicity and religion, the variables usually used as proxy of culture, are missed from the 2004 survey. These variables are, thus, not included in the analysis though are available from the censuses data and are important proxies for cultural differences.

Measures

The definitions and descriptive statistics of variables used in the analysis are presented in Table 1. In this section, operational definitions and measures of some of the variables which need further descriptions are discussed.

Paid work: this variable is determined based on a respondent's current economic activities and employment status. All the three surveys collected data on current economic activity and employment status from each member aged 10 years and above in all sample households. In all the three surveys, a person is considered participate in economic activity if he/she engaged in any work which involve the production of goods and/or services for sale or exchange and production of certain products for own consumption (Central Statistical Agency 2005). A person involved in economic activity, in the seven days before the survey in urban areas and 12 months before the survey in rural areas, were further asked his/her employment status to determine whether the person worked for payment or engaged in an unpaid work.

Perchighsch26_34: refers to percent of adult population aged 26 to 34 with some secondary level education in a district. This variable is used as a proxy of indicator of access to high school for younger cohorts in the district.

Sexratio15_34: a number of males aged 15 to 34 for every 100 females in the same age group in a district. This variable is used to capture the palace between young males and females in marriageable ages, a proxy measure of marriage market.

Percnevmar26_34: percent never married among adults aged 26 to 34 in a district, used to represent the extent of delayed marriage in the community.

Percunempm26_34 and *percunempf26_34:* refer to percent unemployed males and females among respective population aged 26 to 34 reside in a district. Provide a proxy indicator of the access to the labor market for males and females, respectively.

Methods of Analysis

One way of capturing the diversity of status configurations at different ages during transition to adulthood is to employ a measure of *entropy*, a summary measure that describes the

age-specific heterogeneity in status combinations (Fussell, 2005; Furstenberg and Grant, 2007). The entropy index is derived from the age-specific distributions of status combinations. The three statuses included in this analysis, current school enrollment, paid work, marital status, result in 8 status combinations. Following (Furstenberg and Grant 2007), age-specific heterogeneity is calculated as: $H = -\sum_{s=1}^8 p_s \times \log(1/p_s)$, where p_s is the proportion of respondents at a given age with status combination s , and H is the heterogeneity summed across all 8 status combinations. This will be translated into an index of heterogeneity by taking as a percentage of the maximum possible heterogeneity value. Heterogeneity value is the highest when the 8 status combinations are evenly distributed (in this case, $H=0.9$), and it will be the lowest ($H=0$) when every respondent at a given age shares a single status combination.

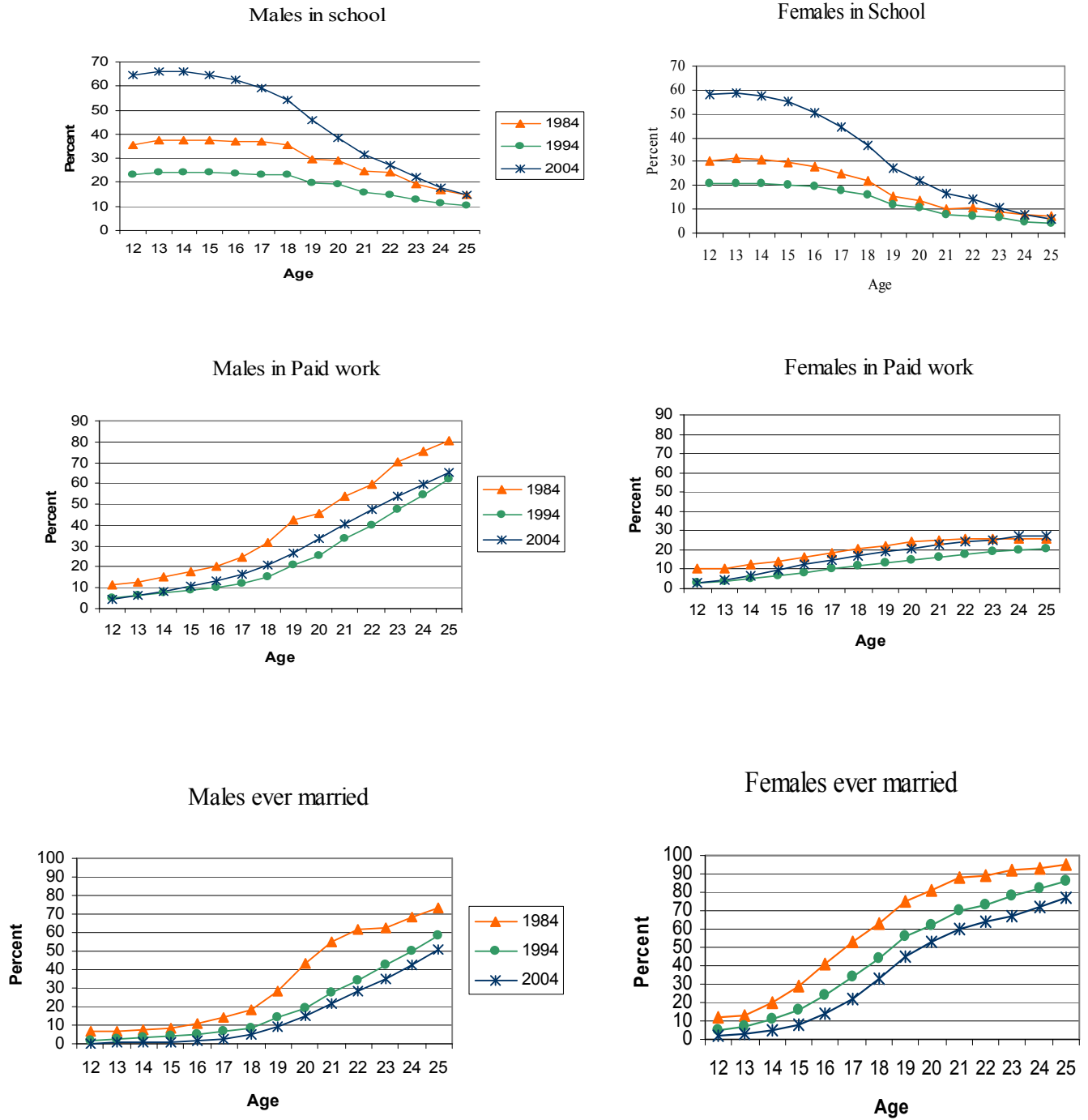
Finally, a multivariate analysis of combinations of life domain statuses at each age is done using multinomial logistic model. Multinomial logistic model estimation is chosen for the multivariate analysis because the outcome variable (combinations of status) is nominal. Five status combinations: “*student-only*”, “*work-only*”, “*marriage-only*”, “*marriage and work*”, and “*none of the activities*” are categories in the dependent variable. The remaining status combinations (working-student, married-student, and those assuming all the three activities) represent only for about 3 percent of all respondents, are combined with work-only, marriage-only and marriage and work categories, respectively.

Table1. Description of dependent and independent Variables used in the analysis

Variable	Definition	Mean	SD
Roles/status (D)			
In-school	currently enrolled in school	0.19	0.39
Paid work	currently working for payment	0.20	0.40
Ever married	have been ever married	0.34	0.47
Age			
	age in single-year	17.7	4.15
Female (D)	gender=female	0.50	0.49
Rural (D)	lived in rural area	0.82	0.37
Period (D)			
Year1984	survey year=1984	0.33	0.47
Year1994	survey year=1994	0.65	0.43
Year2004	survey year=2004	0.02	0.10
Region (D)			
Tigray	lived in Tigray region	0.04	0.20
Amara	lived in Amara region	0.27	0.44
Oromia	lived in Oromia region	0.36	0.48
SNNPR	lived in SNNPR region	0.20	0.41
Addis	lived in Addis Ababa region	0.06	0.23
Diredawa	lived in Dire Dawa region	0.02	0.08
Harari	lived in Harari region	0.01	0.06
Others	lived in other regions	0.03	0.14
Community characteristics at district level			
Perchighsch26_34	% adults aged 26-34 had HS education	7.29	11.50
Sexratio15_34	Sex ratio of young adults aged 15-34	96.35	8.39
Percnevmar26_34	% adults aged 26-34 never married	10.56	9.7
Percunempm26_34	% adult men aged 26-34 unemployed	16.82	9.8
Percunempf26_34	% adult women aged 26-34 unemployed	74.36	10.19

Note D= dummy variable, which equals 1 when the condition under “definition” is true, 0 otherwise

Figure 1. Age-specific distributions of transition activities by gender and years



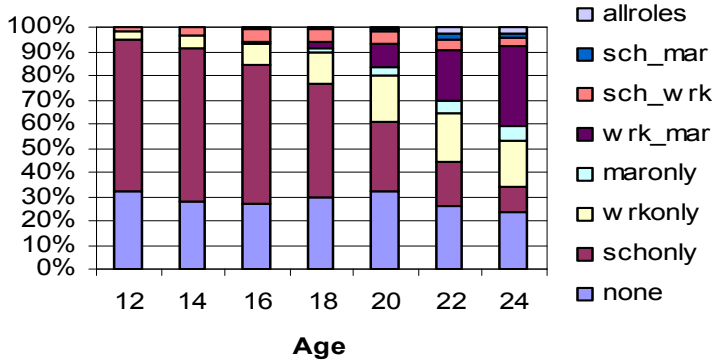
Patterns of the Transition to Adulthood

Figure 1 shows the patterns of age-specific transition to adulthood activities between age 12 and 25 males and females at different time periods. The graphs show that school enrollments among both male and female youth were the highest in 2004 than the previous time periods. The increase in school participation was particularly substantial before age 18 and sharply declined thereafter. Although school participation has increased for both sexes, females' school enrollment considerably declined immediately after age 15 and the gender gap became wider at later ages. This reflects the significant school dropout among females after primary level mainly due to early marriage. The decline in school enrollment between 1984 and 1994 was observed at all and the decline was higher among males than females.

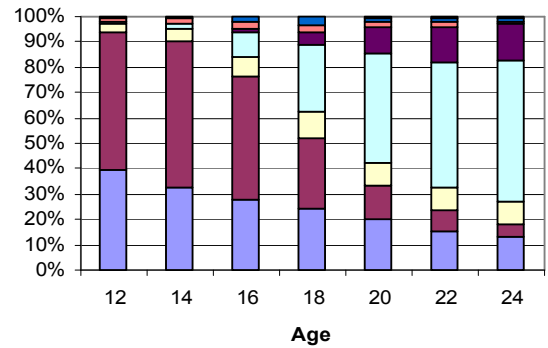
Age-specific participations in paid work were the highest in 1984 and the lowest in 1994 at all ages from 12 to 25 years for both men and women, but the gap was wider among males. In all the three time periods, less than 20 percent of males and females engaged in paid work at their early ages from 12 to 15 years. For men the participation rate rose above 20 percent at age 16 and steadily increased to 80 percent by age 25 in 1984, in the latter periods it started to increase around age 18 and reached about 60 percent by mid-twenties. The proportion of women engaged in paid work increased to about 25 percent around age 21 and stabilized thereafter in the earliest and the most recent time periods, while in 1994 women's participation remained below 20 percent through mid-twenties. Gender difference in participation in paid work begins to emerge at age 20 and picked at mid-twenties, when women's participation stabilize at 25 percent and men's continue to rise.

The proportion of ever married young people has significantly declined at all ages over the past thirty years. The decrease in rate of marital union formation was considerably higher between 1984 and 1994. Although there is no information on timing of first marriage in the

Male 2004



Female 2004



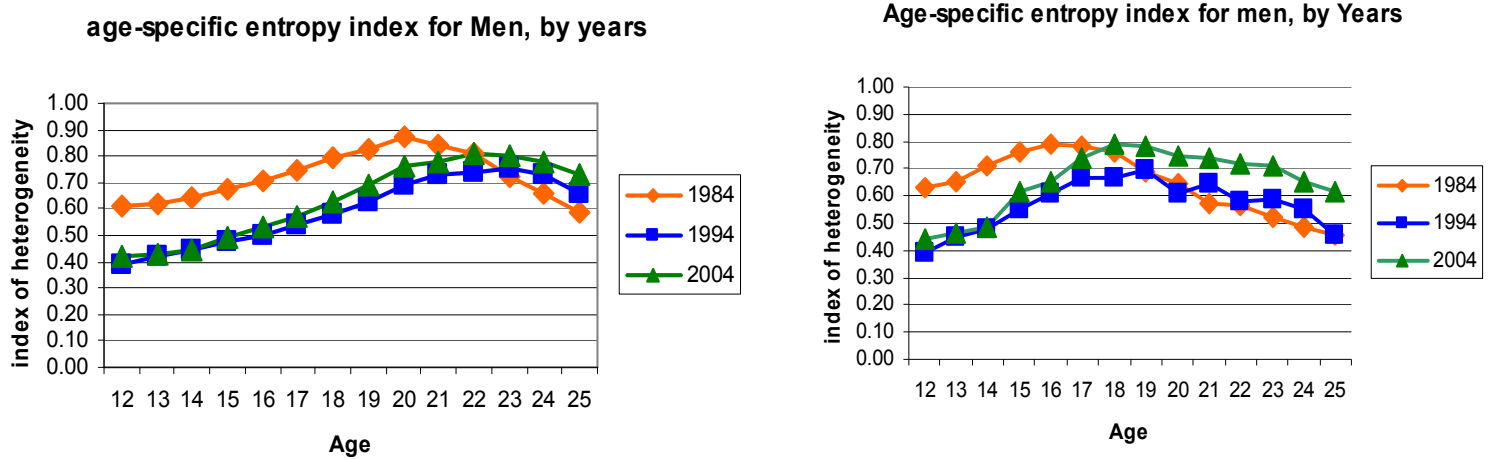
Status combinations

In addition to patterns of individual transition activities, figure 2 above shows the age-specific distributions of combinations of transition activities at each age between 12 and 25 for men and women. For brevity and to save space, however, the distributions are shown only for every other age starting from age 12. In 1984, common status combinations until age 16 were either being student or not involved in any of the three transition activities. Between age 12 and 16, about 30 percent of males and 20 percent of females were enrolled in school while about 40 percent both sexes were not involved in any of the three activities. After age 16 the most common status combination for men was to be non-student, single and paid worker followed by non-student working married. For women the most common status combination was “marriage only” followed by non-student, married worker.

In 1994, the majority of young men and women were neither in school nor at paid work and single. This state remained dominant through age 20 for males and until age 16 among females. They most likely spend their time in unpaid family economic and domestic activities, rather than doing nothing. In the 2004 survey “school only” state, that is, being single and non-working student was the most common state at early ages of young people. After age 18, the

dominant combination of status for men is to be being married and paid worker, among women the most common state was being a housewife with only few of them engaged in paid works. Surprisingly, in 1984 relatively higher proportion of men and women were attending school after engaged in paid work and married, combining schooling with work and family. This could be attributed to the strong national adult literacy and education campaign by the socialist government from mid 1970s to the mid 1980s.

Figure3. Age-specific entropy index distribution of women and men



Heterogeneity in status combinations

The entropy index as heterogeneity measure is derived from the distribution of status combinations at each age. For this analysis the values of the index ranges from 0 to 0.9, where the higher values correspond to greater heterogeneity at a particular age. The heterogeneity is the lowest ($H=0$) when every respondent at a given age share a single status combination, and it is greatest when all the 8 status combinations are evenly distributed. Figure3 shows the age patterns of entropy indices over three time periods for males and females separately.

At early ages of young people, the heterogeneity indices are higher in 1984 than the later time periods. This may be attributed to the fact that in earlier time period youth are more likely to be out of school, enter into marriage at early ages and participated in paid work, thus, assume different adult statuses starting at early ages. The fact that the entropy index is found to be higher in 1984 than the recent time period may reflect the effect of increasing primary school participation and standardization of transition activities at early ages in the recent time period. Particularly, in 2004 as most of the youth enrolled in school the number of status combinations becomes smaller and lower heterogeneity indices. In 1994, due to widespread economic problems most young people were forced to drop out of school, unable to find paid work and delay marriage, that is most of them share a single combination of statuses and hence lower heterogeneity indices.

On the other hand, in the earlier time period the index declines substantially after age 18 among women and after age 20 among men, while in the recent time period it declines only slightly thereafter. This indicates that as young people approach late teens and early twenties the heterogeneity indices are higher in 2004 than those in the earliest time period, particularly among women. This may indicate that in 1980s young people took a great variety of transition activities at their early ages before marriage, after marriage most of women limited to a status of being housewives while men combine family and work. In contrast, in most recent period most children attending primary school would take varied pathways after finishing primary education, some continue to secondary school, work and attend school, while other engage in paid work and /or get married.

Among women the heterogeneity index increases as age rises and peaks at ages 16 to 17 in 1984 and around ages 18 to 19 in the recent time period and steadily decline thereafter. In contrast, among men the entropy index increases progressively with age and peaks in early twenties. This indicates the greater diversity in transition to adulthood at younger ages among women than that of men. This mainly related to early age of marriage among women, and after marriage women are more likely to be housewife spending their time on domestic activities. Whereas young men are more likely to combine family and paid work while some of them still continue school at advanced ages.

Multivariate analysis

Multinomial logistic regressions are employed to estimate the odds of being in one of the status combinations as compared to being in none of the statuses. The dependent variable is combination of adult statuses among young people aged 12 to 25 years. The most common status combinations involve five categories are: “student”, “working”, “married”, “married and working”, and “none of the three statuses”. To better reflect the large difference between men and women social roles in Ethiopia, two models are estimated separately for men and women. To relate changes in the combinations of adult statuses to historical events and structural changes over the past three decades dummies of three time periods are used in the models. The covariates included in the models as control variables are age in single-year, age-squared, place of residence, region, proportion of adults with secondary education, adult employment rate, and proportion ever married young adults. The odds-ratios of being in one activity or combinations of activities as compared to being in “none” of the activities are presented in table 2 and table 3 for men and women, respectively.

Table 3. Odd-ratios on Combinations of activities in Transition to Adulthood, men aged 12 to 25

Independent Variables	Combinations of life Domains							
	Student		working		Married		Married & working	
Age	1.11**	1.10**	1.24**	1.23**	1.28**	0.01**	1.77**	1.76**
Age ²	0.98**	0.99**	0.99*	0.99	0.99	0.01	0.99**	0.99**
Residence (Urban)								
rural	0.08**	0.11**	0.27**	0.29**	0.90	0.35	1.29**	1.16**
Period (2004)								
1984	0.65**	0.84	1.36*	1.42*	2.96**	4.23**	2.82**	2.92**
1994	0.22**	0.22**	0.39**	0.47**	1.19	1.80*	0.59**	0.90
Region (Tigray)								
Amara	0.26**	0.26**	0.82**	0.71**	1.84**	1.24*	1.55**	1.06
Oromia	0.49**	0.52**	1.19**	0.83	0.42**	0.41**	1.20**	0.97
SNNPR	0.82**	0.87*	1.39**	1.10	0.46**	0.39**	1.53**	1.09
Addis	0.47**	0.22**	1.28**	0.51	0.23**	0.84	0.52**	0.90
Dire	0.31**	0.17**	1.07*	0.87	0.53**	1.43	0.94	1.99**
Harari	0.62**	0.36**	1.26**	0.91	0.65*	0.55**	1.81**	1.54**
Others	0.36**	0.38**	1.38**	1.14	0.67	0.65*	1.44	1.19
Perchighsch26_34		1.04**		1.02		1.10*		1.08**
Sexratio15_34		0.99		1.01		1.03*		1.02**
Percnevmar26_34		0.98		1.03		0.85**		0.90**
Percunempm26_34		1.02**		0.96**		0.99		0.96**
Interactions								
Rural x year1984		0.11**		0.43**		1.16		0.56
Rural x year1994		0.20**		0.64**		0.51*		0.81
LR Chi-square								
Model I								
Model II		1289236**						
		1389834**						

Omitted categories are in the parentheses.

Level of significant: *p<.05; **p<.01

Among young men residing in rural areas, the estimated odds of being enrolled in school compared to doing none of the activities is one-tenth times the estimated odds for their counterparts living in urban areas. The interaction effects between time period and place of residence show that young men residing in rural areas significantly less likely to be enrolled in school at any age than men in rural places in the recent time period (0.22x0.20=0.04). That is, rural young men came of age in 1984 are 96 percent less likely to be enrolled in school than the youth living in rural areas in the most recent time period. Young people living in rural areas are also much less likely than urban youth to be engaged in wage works. The interaction effect also indicates that young men living in rural areas in 1994 are significantly less likely to have paid

work than those rural youth in 2004. On the other hand, rural young men are 16 percent more likely to combine marriage and paid work at any age than their urban counterparts.

The odds of participating in paid work, being in marital union or combining both statuses are much higher in 1984 than the later time periods. Men aged 12 to 25 years in 1984 are four times more likely to be married, and more than two times to be married and engaged in wage work than those young men came of age in the recent time period. Young men came of age in 1994 are significantly less likely to be married, engaged in gainful employment or assume both statuses at each age compared to their counterparts in the preceding and following decade.

Comparisons between regions is done using Tigray region as reference category. The result shows that odds of being student-only compared to being in none of the transition activities are higher among youth from Tigray region than any other region. This may reflect regional disparities in education policy and resource allocation for schools. Conversely, except the Amara region, the likelihood of being in married-only status combination is lower in Tigray region than all other regions. The likelihood of assuming adult role through marriage is 24 percent more likely in Amara than Tigray region. Combining marriage and paid work adult roles is significantly higher in Dire and Harari regions than any other region.

Youth living in districts where high proportion of adult population have some secondary education are more likely to be enrolled in school at any age. One percent increase in proportion of adults with secondary level education is associated with four percent increase in odds of school enrollment among young people aged 12 to 25 years. The odds ratio indicates that for every one percent increase of unemployment among adult population aged 26 to 34 years is associated with 4 percent decrease in the likelihood of youth's participation in paid work. An increase of sex ratio and a balanced proportion of young men and women in a district increase the probability of marriage among young people by 2 percent.

Table4.Odd-ratios on Combinations of activities in Transition to Adulthood, women aged 12 to 25

Independent Variables	Combinations of life Domains							
	Student		Working		married-only		married-working	
Age	1.11**	1.12**	1.20**	1.21**	2.02**	2.03**	2.14**	2.14**
Age ²	0.98**	0.98**	0.99*	0.99*	0.98**	0.98**	0.98**	0.98**
Residence (urban)								
rural	0.05**	0.06**	0.17**	0.18**	2.01**	1.67**	0.58**	0.52*
Period (2004)								
1984	0.68*	0.85*	1.23	1.25	2.63**	2.06**	4.42**	3.16**
1994	0.26**	0.32**	0.36**	0.44**	0.84	0.80*	0.72**	0.87
Region (Tigray)								
Amara	0.42**	0.39**	0.84**	0.95	1.53**	1.11	0.95	0.97
Oromia	0.44**	0.41**	0.65**	0.67**	0.40**	0.40**	0.39**	0.42**
SNNPR	0.60**	0.59**	0.81*	0.92	0.42**	0.39**	0.35**	0.39**
Addis	0.49**	0.18**	0.84**	0.68	0.17**	0.89	0.13**	0.55
Dire	0.30**	0.16**	0.66**	0.54*	0.28**	0.70	0.19	0.42**
Harari	0.67**	0.38**	0.74**	0.67**	0.41**	0.46**	0.32**	0.43**
Others	0.27**	0.27**	0.80**	0.89	0.52**	0.54*	0.48*	0.55
Perchighsch26_34		1.02		1.01		1.05**		1.03**
Sexratio15_34		1.00		1.00		1.03**		1.02**
Percnevmar26_34		0.99		0.99		0.88**		0.90**
Percunempf26_34		0.98		0.97**		0.99		0.96**
Interactions								
Rural x year1984		0.09**		0.63*		1.47		0.81
Rural x year1994		0.14**		0.84		1.42		1.27
LR Chi-square								
Model I		1760325**						
Model II		1851170**						

Omitted categories are in the parentheses.

Level of significant: *p<.05; **p<.01

For rural women, marrying and becoming housewives is an important marker of entry into adulthood. The likelihood of becoming housewife is much higher among rural women than their urban counterparts. Conversely, they are less likely to be enrolled in school, being working single or working wives than urban women. As a result of women's increasing participation in primary schools, the odds of being in school is much higher in recent years than the previous periods. While women aged 12 to 25 years in 1984 were more likely to marry and engage in paid work than those came of age in 2004, in the 1990s economic problem and political unrest keep most of them out of marriage and gainful employment. Young women aged 12 to 25 from Tigray region are more likely to be enrolled in school marry and employed in gainful work compared to

women from other regions. Like young men, women living rural areas in the preceding two decades are significantly less likely to go to school than the recent time period. One percent increase in sex-ratio among adult population increases women's odds of being ever-married by 3 percent. On the other hand, one percent increase in proportion of unmarried adults in a district decreases the likelihood of being married by about 12 percent.

Conclusions

Young people in Ethiopian, particularly in urban areas, have increasingly postponed their transition to adulthood because of increasing participation of youth in the formal education over the past few decades. The improvement in school participation in recent years was particularly substantial at early ages of youth and among females. The proportion of young people enrolled in schools declines considerably after age 16, particularly among females. This reflects that the largest increases in school enrollment were limited to primary level and subsequently decline as many girls drop out of school due to early marriage. There are significant differences in school participation between males and females, rural and urban residences, and different regions. Young females are significantly less likely to be enrolled in school and participate in paid work than males at all ages. In general, females are more likely to drop out of school at early ages and enter into marriage at early ages. However, in recent years there has been significant increase of female's primary school participation and this slightly delay age at first marriage. Young men and women residing in rural areas are generally socialized- to-adulthood through unpaid family work and early marriage than formal education and participating in paid work in the labor market.

The likelihood of school enrollment among young men and women as compared to being in none of the transition activities was significantly lower in 1990s than the preceding and the following decades. The decline in school enrollment was much higher in rural areas where many schools were closed due to political instability. The improvement of modern education expansion observed in the country since the end of World War II was disrupted by discrete historical events such as social strife and political instability following the government change in 1991. The new education policy introduced in 1994 changed the medium of primary school instruction into more than 18 different local languages. This policy change causes shortage of teachers as well as textbooks as millions of old textbooks should be translated and replaced in short time period in many parts of the country. Thus, change of language of instruction had short-term negative effect on children's school participation.

The likelihood of participating in paid work among both young men and women was significantly lower in 1990s compared to the preceding and following decades. This may be explained by combination of factors ranging from domestic political unrest to unfavorable global economy. Particularly, the economic decline and structural adjustment reform and privatization program led to shrinking the public sector jobs decreases young people's employment opportunities. Shortage of employment opportunities for young people also reduces their chance of marital union formation. Despite significant drop in school enrollment among men and women, the odds of marriage was more than 60 percent lower in 1994 than ten years earlier for both sexes.

Due to political and economic problems and unpredictable economic and social conditions, increasing proportion of young people in Ethiopia has faced difficulties and uncertainties in their transition to adulthood. Macro-level economic crises result in increasing

number of impoverished families with high number of unemployed young adult dependants. The decline of traditional family and community resources such as shortage of farmland in rural areas and lack of employment opportunities in urban areas leave young people poorly prepared for transition to adulthood. As a result increasing number of young adults in Ethiopia remains economically dependent and live with parents beyond their ages of mid-twenty. This places them in a situation where they are no longer children, but they are also deprived of resources and skills as they strive to make their transition to adulthood. Extended period of unemployment during the peak of productive life stage decreases young people's work experience and future employment opportunities. There is little doubt that young adult who lack employment opportunities, unable to be economically independent and to, will face social exclusions and frustration. In such a situation, young people deprived of adult identity will be attracted to the military or join armed struggle by rebel groups.

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