

A Comparative Analysis of Ethiopian Employment Policy

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Abstract

This comparative analysis was aimed to make comparison of national employment policy and strategies between developing and developed countries. To this end, National Employment policies of Ethiopia, Kenya and France was taken as a unit of analysis for comparison. The method of analysis was mainly descriptive by reviewing the contents, and contexts of the policy of these countries based on the given framework. The results of analysis revealed that there is a great deal of similarities/convergence between the two African countries - Ethiopia and Kenya in terms of policy content and context. For instance, the rationale and main focus of their employment policies are mainly revolving around employment creation and poverty reduction; but that of France is full employment and better jobs. In many aspects, the main contents and structure of the policy document of Ethiopia and Kenya are similar; but that of France is not. The policies of these three countries are often affected by the ideologies of the political context in which the policy is formulated and implemented. For example, the Ethiopian and Kenyan employment policies are largely under the influence of the ideologies of the governing parties and reflecting their preferences. Whereas that of France is reflecting the ideologies of the European Union. Countries particularly like Ethiopia and Kenya, whose economy is predominantly agrarian/rural with a labour market characterized by the existence of a substantial informal sector, greater focus would be needed on creating high growth of employment-intensive sectors and measures that can gradually transform the informal into formal employment. Visible support and regular commitment from the Governments and responsible Ministers and heads of Departments and Agencies and other relevant Regional/County stakeholders are essential for the effective implementation of the national employment policies and strategies in those countries under this review.

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1. Introduction

Public policy is what governments choose to do or not to do (Dye, 1995). Policy can even be viewed as change and goal oriented (Cloete, 1991). Cloete described the public policy as government program of action to give effect to selected normative and empirical goals in order to address perceived problems and needs in society in a specific way, and therefore to achieve desired changes in the society (Ibid.). Anderson (1997) describes public policy as 'a relatively stable, purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem and matter of concern'. According to Wong (2016), 'comparative public policy is an area of interdisciplinary study which uses public policy as its major unit of analysis for comparison across different systems and institutions, usually countries or governments'. He further explained that comparative public policy typically asks questions about how, why, and to what effect different governments pursue different or similar policies (Ibid).

A national employment policy is a vision and a practical plan for achieving a country's employment goals. To make such a plan, a government has to clearly see a country's challenges and opportunities. It has to consult widely to reach common agreement among all interested parties in the economy, including employers' and workers' organizations. A national employment policy is not just a job creation program. It takes into account a whole range of social and economic issues. It affects many areas of government, not just the areas in charge of labor and employment but also every part of the economy. It brings together various measures, programs and institutions that influence the demand and supply of labor and the functioning of labor markets. A national employment policy should promote decent work, in which international labor standards, social protection and workers' fundamental rights go hand in hand with job creation. A national employment policy is something that each country must forge for itself, according to its own context and state of development. It is not just an inspiring statement of what we hope for. It is a real plan for how we get there. Many stakeholders have to be involved in making it, and the result has to be something that they can all work towards.

According to the UNDP (2017) estimates, the current population of Ethiopia is 104,800,595 and constitutes about 1.23% of the world total population. Almost 80 percent of Ethiopia's population is living in rural areas. Ethiopia is one of the fastest-growing economies in the world. It has registered impressive GDP growth for the last several years, for example an average growth rate of 9.8% has been registered between the periods of 2009-

2019. The World Bank and IMF forecast reported an average growth rate of 7% over the next consecutive years. The five year GTP plan has envisaged that the growth rate will be improved and continue to register a double digit for the next consecutive years. With a population of roughly more than 112 million in 2019, Ethiopia is the second most populous country in sub-Saharan Africa, after Nigeria, and the fastest growing economy in the region. Notwithstanding the positive developments, Ethiopia still remains being one of the poorest countries in the world. Unemployment and underemployment continue to be serious social problems in the country despite some improvements in recent years. This is mainly a result of rapid population and labor force growth and limited employment generation capacity of the modern industrial sector of the economy.

Ethiopia, with this abundant labor force and unemployment problem, is thus required of to have a right employment policy in place in order to effectively use its growing labor force in a productive manner and thereby reduce rate of unemployment. In this regard the country is exerting efforts to make sure that new entrants to the labor force are equipped with the necessary knowledge, skill, and attitude that the economy needs. Micro and Small Enterprises have strategic relevance for employment creation, poverty reduction, rural-urban linkages, and for the growth of the private sector. A considerable number of permanent and temporary employment opportunities are being created as a result of the appropriate investment policy of the country attracting the private sector and also due to public investments especially in infrastructure, urban development, and housing construction.

The country's unemployment is a result of mismatch between rapidly growing labor force and the rate of growth of productive employment and income generation opportunities of the economy. Employment in the agricultural sector and the informal urban sector, which employ a large size of labor force in Ethiopia, is characterized by low earnings and significantly contributes to the problem of "working poor". Rapid population and labor force growth and limited employment generation capacity of the modern industrial and agricultural sectors of the economy both in urban and rural areas of the country create imbalance between labor demand and supply. Employment provides a link between economic growth and poverty reduction by allowing the poor to generate income; and this can be realized only when it is systematically guided through national policies and strategies. To alleviate the problems of unemployment and underemployment and thereby eradicate poverty, there is a need to adopt a national employment policy that is strong enough to address issues related to labor supply, labor demand, and labor market institutions in a coordinated and participatory manner.

The objective of this comparative analysis is, therefore, to compare the Ethiopian national employment policy and strategies with two other countries, namely Kenya and France in terms of policy contents and contexts.

2. Rationale of the Policies / Why Policy?

Ethiopia had no policy framework that guides the link between economic growth, employment and poverty reduction in a coordinated manner in order to ensure shared and pro-poor growth, until the first enactment of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia National Employment Policy and Strategy in 2009. After the coming into power of EPRDF in 1991, the 1975 Labor Proclamation was repealed and replaced by the 1993 Labor Proclamation of the Transitional Government. This proclamation was again repealed and replaced by Proclamation No 377/2003. And this proclamation has also been repealed by the current Proclamation No 1156/2019. Presently, the Council of Ministers of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, in its 12th ordinary meeting held on April 28, 2016, have thoroughly discussed and endorsed the National Employment Policy and Strategy document.

The rationales of this policy document are: (1) Effective coordination of efforts at different levels aimed at creating employment opportunities; (2) Identifying gaps in currently implemented employment-related policies and strategies and filling these gaps through appropriate policy provisions; (3) Promoting industrial peace through improved work relationships; (4) Coordinating education and skill development programs with contemporary labour market needs; (5) Ensuring that employment services respond to the needs of different societal groups and specific needs; (6) Identifying mechanisms to enhance rural employment opportunities towards reducing poverty driven rural-urban migration; (7) Better use of employment creation efforts extended by governmental and non-governmental organizations, workers and employers associations, and other stakeholders; (8) Gathering and dissemination of employment and labour market related information for policy making, planning and programming; (9) Gathering and documentation of information on employment related best practices and challenges to help guide successive policy directions and interventions.

The Kenyan Employment Act 1976 has been repealed by the current Employment Act 2007 which has become effective since June 2, 2008. The Employment Policy and Strategy for Kenya has been developed in 2013 with the rationale that a strong, dynamic and responsive labour and employment sector is critical in catalyzing and driving the transformations required for the attainment of the Kenya Vision 2030, of which one of its foundations is strong human resource base. The Constitution also advocates for decent work in accordance with the human rights conventions. However, high unemployment estimated at 12.7% remains a major challenge.

Employment creation interventions in the country have to be comprehensive, coordinated and robust enough to significantly contribute to employment creation. This requires an integrated policy framework based on focused strategies and strong institutional and legal foundation. It is for this reason that the government, social partners, private sector and other stakeholders have developed this Employment Policy and Strategy for Kenya.

The 2003 National Action Plan for Employment of France was developed in response to the Recommendations for France formulated by the European Council in June 2003. The rationale of this policy and strategy include: (1) Creating a dynamic labour market and reducing labour costs for employers; (2) Enhancing the value of work; (3) Providing support in times of economic change and expanding investment in human resources.

3. The focus of the policy

The main focus of the National Employment Policy and Strategy (NEPS) of Ethiopia is to promote decent, productive and equitable employment opportunities in Ethiopia by ensuring the harmonization and coordination of human resource development and employment related policies and strategies; by improving labour market information system and employment services; by maintaining industrial peace; and by undertaking periodic labour market and employment related researches and studies.

Whereas the focus of Employment Policy and Strategy of Kenya is to develop and promote comprehensive strategies and interventions for creation of productive employment and decent work. The policy focus of Ethiopia and Kenya seems to have similarity or convergence in that both have a clear direction towards the employment creation and decent work. According to Aluchio, (2005), employment creation and poverty reduction are important areas of policy concern in most developing countries.

The 2004 National Action Plan for Employment (PNAE) of France was developed in response to the 10 guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States adopted by the European Council in June 2003, and support endeavor to make Europe the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. The main focus of this policy is toward bringing about full employment and full better jobs.

4. Components of Policy document

The Ethiopian Employment Policy and Strategy (2016) document is organized into three chapters. The document consists of main components such as: (1) Forward highlighting the rationale/ need for developing the policy; (2) National Vision, Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives of the policy; (3) Principles of the policy, (4) Policy Priorities and Strategies, (5) Policy Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation. On the other hand, the Kenyan Employment Policy and Strategy (2013) document is organized into four chapters. The main components of this document are: (1) Rationale for developing the policy; (2) Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives of the policy; (3) Guiding Principles of the policy, (4) Situational analysis, (5) Emerging issues and Challenges, (6) Employment Strategies and Interventions (7) Policy Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation. Similarly, the France National Action Plan for Employment (PNAE) 2003 document is organized into three main parts including (1) France's employment strategy; (2) Responses to guidelines and recommendations, and (3) Governance and partnerships.

Regarding the main components of the policy document, the Ethiopian and Kenyan Employment Policy and Strategy are more or less similar in terms of the structure and contents of the policy document. But France's policy document lacks to incorporate some key elements such as vision, mission and principles of the policy, which makes it slightly different from the two African countries.

5. Target group

The target group is the group of people that an employment policy is hoping to influence/affect in some way. In Ethiopia, the target group of Employment Policy may comprise the employees, the employers, and the trade unions in general. To be specific, the Policy is targeting the following sections of the society. These are women, the youth, people with disabilities, people with HIV/AIDS, children who are subject to child labour abuse, young and women farmers, migrant workers of Ethiopian citizenship in different countries, employees of foreign nationals, and those vulnerable to climate change and related disasters and agricultural workers.

In Kenya, the target group of Employment Policy embraces those working age population including: women, the youth, people with disabilities, Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC), children who are subject to child labour abuse, women and children subject to trafficking, migrant workers, labour market institutions, workers' and employers' organizations (such as the Central Organization of Trade Unions (COTU) and the Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE)), and institutions of social dialogue (such as the National Economic and Social Council (NESC), National Labour Board (NLB), Industrial Court, National Council for Occupational Safety and Health (NACOSH), General Wages Council (GWC), Agricultural Wages Council (AWC) and other sector-specific wage councils. Other social dialogue institutions are the Labour Administration and Inspection,

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism and the Employment Agencies). In France, the target group of the National Action Plan for Employment includes those working age population, women, young children, job seekers, people with disabilities, vulnerable group, older employees, employers, trade unions, professional organizations.

6. Values and Ideologies of the Policy

Values (or value systems) are the set of fundamental beliefs or principles or standards held by an individual or group about what is valuable, what is fair, what constitutes right and wrong, who deserves what, and similar ethical matters. Ideology on the other hand can be described as a system of ideas and ideals, especially one which forms the basis of economic or political theory and policy.

The values of Ethiopian Employment Policy include: (1) All citizens who are able to work have indiscriminate rights for employment opportunities; (2) Compliance to labour standards is the basis for decent work; (3) Social dialogue and work place cooperation are instrumental for labour productivity and competitiveness; and (4) Labour market information is fundamental for effective human resource development and employment.

Emperor Haile Sellassie I made the first Labour Relations Decree No.49/1962. The enactment of this Decree contributed a lot and serve as a foundation for the enactment of its subsequent labour proclamations. Due to the coming into power of the Derg regime, the Labour Proclamation No. 64/1975 was promulgated as a labour proclamation to govern the labour relations. This proclamation has overlooked the rights of employers, as stipulated in its preamble - "the harmonious relations between workers and management can be realized through the strict observance of socialist legality". Only one trade union was allowed to be established in an organization and the minimum number of workers required to form a union was 20. Most of the provisions of this proclamation attempted to emphasize and support the socialist ideology of the Provisional Government. The proclamation was serving as a tool for the government to control every activity of the workers.

After the downfall of the Derge regime, Labour Proclamation No.42/1993 was promulgated by the Transitional Government of Ethiopia and was put into effect until 2003. It attempted to make feasible that both workers and employers have the right to form their respective associations which was denied during the Derge Regime. Unlike its predecessors, Labour Proclamation No. 377/2003 tries to maintain compliance with the international conventions and other legal instruments to which Ethiopia is a member state. The Labour Proclamation No. 377/2003 has been repealed and replaced by a new one after it has been in place for the last 16 years. This has been a period where Ethiopia saw major shift in investment and business environment as well as the overall labor market. The new Labour Proclamation No. 1156/2019 acknowledges the key role of a skilled and disciplined workforce to Ethiopia's industrialization efforts and improve its global competitiveness by expressly stating in its preamble the need to create a favorable environment for investment. It is argued that the labour legislations in Ethiopia which has undergone through the process of changes in governments are the outcomes of the ideologies and strategies of the respective ruling parties, since public policies are often subject to such influences.

To accomplish the desired results, the Employment Policy and Strategy of Kenya is mainstreamed, coordinated and implemented within the framework of the national economic and social policy, so that it is consistent with the overall national development strategies, Kenya Vision 2030, the Medium Term Plan, Millennium Development Goals and other relevant policy documents. The values underlying this policy are: (1) Employment is multi-dimensional and cuts across all sectors of the country's economy; (2) Participation of the private sector is critical for sustainable employment creation, economic growth and development; (3) Culture shift from "job seekers" to "job creators" and self-employment; (4) Sound collective bargaining, fundamental principles and rights at work, social and solidarity economy and social dialogue; (5) Coordinated linkages and dialogue between government, education, research and training institutions and the private sector; (6) Effective labour market information system; (7) Transition to a green economy as a provider of human well-being, source of new decent jobs and supplier of sustenance for poor households; and (8) Transformative capacity building of institutions and organizations towards employment creation. Employment relations in Kenya are regulated by a number of sources: constitutional rights, statutory rights, as set out in statutes and regulations, rights set by collective agreements and extension orders of collective agreements, and individual labour contracts. These legal sources are interpreted by the Industrial Court, and in some cases by the ordinary courts. A particularly important role to play has the tripartite Industrial Relations Charter that laid the foundation for an industrial relations system already prior to Kenya's independence in 1963. International standards, especially ILO Conventions ratified by Kenya are used by the government and courts as guidelines, even though they are not binding.

The National Action Plan for Employment in France are that formulated by the European Council including: to pursue and develop measures to prevent unemployment; to pursue a comprehensive lifelong learning strategy; to implement a coherent policy to appreciably increase the participation in the labour market of older workers; and to stimulate and strengthen the social dialogue. The values are employability, adaptability, entrepreneurship

and equal opportunities. In 1997, the European Employment Strategy was launched (Luxembourg Jobs Summit/ Amsterdam Treaty). The ideology was to develop the co-ordination and convergence of employment policies in Europe in order to tackle the persistent unemployment levels in many Member States and to be equipped to deal with macroeconomic shocks. Due to the ongoing process of macroeconomic integration, including the European Monetary Union, there was the understanding that structural problems in the labour market of one country would diminish its economic performance and therefore have a negative impact on the economies of other European countries and the European Union in general.

7. Theoretical Perspectives/Approaches /Models Applied In Policy Making Process

Models/theories are needed to guide the study of public policy, to facilitate communication, and to suggest possible explanation for policy action. They are useful to the extent that they direct our attention to important political phenomenon, help clarify and organize our thinking, and suggest explanations for political activities such as public policies. Some of the major ones include: rational, incremental, elite, pluralist and institutional models. Though all the models originated from the conventional Western social and political values, elite and pluralist models appear to be relevant to developing countries and particularly the Ethiopian realities (Mulugeta, 2005). The following models have been designated as appropriate to compare the policymaking processes in Ethiopia, Kenya, and France.

The rational actor model involves the selection of an alternative which maximizes the decision-maker's values, the selection being made following a comprehensive analysis of alternatives and their consequences (Ham and Hill, 1993). The rational model is, therefore, based on the belief that problems of the society ought to be solved in a 'scientific' or 'rational' manner by gathering all relevant information on the problems and alternative solutions to them, and selecting the best alternative (Etzioni, 1967; Dye, 1995; Anderson, 1997; Howlett and Ramesh, 1995).

Unlike the rational theory that attempt a comprehensive survey and evaluation of all alternatives, in the incremental approach the decision-maker focuses only on those policies that differ incrementally from existing policies; Only a relatively small number of policy alternatives are considered; For each policy alternative, only a restricted number of 'important' consequences are evaluated; The problem confronting the decision-maker is continually redefined; Incremental model allows for countless ends-means and means-ends adjustments, which, in effect, make the problem more manageable; Thus, there is no one decision or 'right' solution but a 'never-ending' series of attacks on the issues at hand through serial analysis and evaluation; Incremental decision-making is described as remedial, more focused on the alleviation of present, concrete social imperfections than to the promotion of future social goals (Etzioni, 1967: 386-387).

In Lindblom's view, policymakers develop policies through a process of making successive limited comparison with earlier decisions (1959). He (1959: 81) argued that policymakers work through a process of 'continually building out from the current situation, step-by-step and by small degrees', unlike the rational approach, which starts 'from fundamentals a new each time...and [is] always prepared to start completely from the ground up'. Despite the fact that the reasons for the lack of suitability of the models may differ, neither the rational model nor incremental is suitable for understanding the policymaking process in the Third World states (Dror, 1968; Milne, 1972; Saasa, 1985).

It can nevertheless be argued that elite theory describes and explains developing countries' policymaking circumstances more appropriately than rational and incremental approaches do. Drawing on the work of the classical elite theorists, Pareto and Mosca, writers such as Wright Mills pointed to the concentration of power in the hands of a minority of the population (Ham and Hill, 1993: 31). Elite theory asserts that public policy decisions are not made based on the demands and interests of the people, but rather based on the interests of governing elites, whose preferences are carried into effect by bureaucratic agencies.

Policymaking in pluralist perspective is the process by which various competing interests are reconciled; public policies are thus a result of competition and collaboration among groups working to further their members' collective interests (Howlett and Ramesh, 1995: 34). In other words, the pluralist approach to policymaking assumes that public policy is the outcome of a free competition between ideas and interests (Parsons, 1995: 134).

Policy as an outcome of political institutions has been the oldest concern of political studies (Dye, 1995; Anderson, 1997). Public policy is authoritatively determined, legitimated and implemented by governmental institutions (Hanekom, 1987). Policy is the outcome of government institutions such as the legislature, the executive, the courts and bureaucratic agencies. As is the case in most developing states, policymaking institutions give advantage to certain interests in the society and withhold it from other interests. The very small number of ruling elites, who allocate values and resources, are also the ones who enjoy greater access to government and bureaucratic power in developing countries including Ethiopia and Kenya. Hence, it is argued that incremental and elite are thought to be appropriate models of policy making process for both Ethiopia and Kenya, since employment policy and strategy of these countries appeared to reflect preferences/ideologies of the

respective ruling party and to incrementally build out from the existing than developing a new one.

The Constitution of the Fifth Republic endows the French executive with extensive policy-making powers. Despite their formal omnipotence, however, successive French governments since 1958 have found the implementation of radical domestic policies to be a far from simple task. As the French Socialists came to appreciate, formal control of the state institutions is not a sufficient condition for the introduction of radical change. Public policy-making, in France, as in all liberal-democratic societies, is a more complex and incremental process than rationalistic models suggest. All governments have to contend with the uncertainty of the future and external pressures over which they ultimately have little or no control. Moreover, conflicting policy-objectives elsewhere, ideological preferences and internal divisions over policy within the government further reduce the range of plausible policy-options available to governments. The fragmented and complex nature of the French politico-administrative system also tends to impede government attempts to orchestrate and successfully implement radical policies.

8. Policy actors/ public bodies who have been assigned specific roles and responsibilities under the Policy

The Ethiopian government is committed to work in collaboration with other stakeholders towards creating and promoting decent employment opportunities. Social partners -employers and workers (and their associations) - can play a considerable role in settling conflicts and labor disputes that might arise between them through consultation, social dialogue and workplace cooperation which in effect can contribute to industrial peace and decent employment. The Ethiopian Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA) along with the Government is the main actor which takes part in the initiation and preparation of National Employment Policy and Strategy (NEPS). Moreover, MoLSA, relevant federal and regional bureaus, the International Labor Organization (ILO) are participated in the process of development of this policy document. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is mandated with the responsibility of following the proper implementation of the employment policy and strategy, assessing the effectiveness of measures taken to improve the implementation of the policy, and providing information to relevant stakeholders. To this end, the policy implementation process is evaluated periodically by engaging all relevant stakeholders.

In Kenya, policy formulation process involves a variety of stakeholders. At the national level the key actors include: (a) the Executive, which includes the President, Cabinet, respective Cabinet Secretaries, State Department, State Organs or Agencies, their technocrats, drafters and policy analysts; (b) Parliament, which includes the Members and Speakers of the National Assembly and Senate, their Clerks, the respective Parliamentary Committees, researchers and others; (c) the Office of the Attorney General (State Law Office), Kenya Law Reform Commission and the Commission for the Implementation of the Constitution (CIC); and (d) the Government Printer for purposes of publication upon assent by the President. At the County level the key actors include: (a) the Executive, which includes the Governor, County Executive Committee, responsible County Executive Committee Member, departments, agencies and other technocrats; (b) the County Assembly, which includes the Speaker, the Clerk, the members of the Assembly, Committees and their technocrats; and (c) County Government Press. Similarly, the key actors for employment policy at this level are the Governor, County Executive Committee, responsible County Executive Committee Member, departments, agencies and other technocrats.

The National Employment Authority is the lead actor to undertake coordination of the policy implementation and all productivity promotion and employment creation interventions in the country. The Government further recognizes that successful implementation of the strategies and activities identified in policy blueprint will require involvement and active participation of virtually everybody in the society. Key among them are the social partners, private sector, civil Society, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) and development partners. The National Employment Authority which is the key actor in coordinating the actualization of the policy draws membership from line Ministries responsible for Labour, Education, Planning, Finance, Trade and Industry, Youth Affairs and Immigration and registration of persons. Other members are also drawn from the Central Organization of Trade Unions (COTU), Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE), NGO Council, Youth Associations, MSE Associations, Research Institutes, Universities, Training Institutions and Private Employment Agencies. The National Employment Authority in collaboration with the Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate (M&ED) in the Ministry of Devolution and Planning, and Vision 2030 develops a comprehensive logical framework to guide the policy implementation process at national, county, sector and enterprise levels. Private sector stakeholders, development partners and other labour market support institutions are actors who involve through an integrated approach with the Government of Kenya (national and county levels), in financing the policy.

Government institutions listed for implementing France's National Action Plan (NAP) for Employment which is part and parcel of NAP include: Ministries of Foreign and European Affairs, Justice and Freedoms, Defense, the Interior, National Education, Labour, Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Solidarity Development, General Directorate of Global Affairs, Development and Partnerships, General Directorate of

Political and Security Affairs, French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons, French Agency for Development, International Organization of Francophone. Many of these same government institutions are a part of the Steering Committee that is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the French NAP for Employment. A Steering Committee comprised of responsible government departments is tasked with coordinating implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The Steering Committee is required to meet bi-annually, in addition to holding ad hoc meetings as required. The Minister of Labour, Employment and Economic Inclusion (commonly referred to as Minister of Labour) is responsible actor for initiation and preparation of NAP for employment, labour legislation. Trade unions, employers' organizations and public institutions play a key role in the governance of the employment relationship, working conditions and industrial relations structures.

9. Conceptual and methodological approaches applied and challenges

The comparative study of public policies relies on assigning numbers to social, economic, and political phenomena with the goal of examining their relationships. Quantitative analysis provides one avenue for understanding policy variations and their political and institutional causes. Quantitative methods help demonstrate whether a relationship exists between policy designs and policy outcomes, test whether the relationship can be generalized to similar settings, evaluate magnitudes of the effects of policies on social, economic, and political factors, and find better policy alternatives. The use of such methods is part of the scientific expertise with which policy analysts claim their relevance. Techniques such as modeling, quantification of inputs and outputs, descriptive statistics, statistical inference, operations research, cost-benefit analysis, and risk-benefit analysis are frequently used in comparative public policy studies.

Understanding how and why policy outcomes occur is at the heart of public policy research. Thus, current research on public policy research relies mostly on qualitative methods. Comparative approaches to policy analysis have privileged qualitative methods. Both in terms of research design and the actual goals and needs of policy-oriented research, there seems to be a preferential connection between qualitative comparative analysis and public policy analysis.

Several researchers who are engaged in the study of policy divergence (or convergence) mostly pursue similar methodologies which could give response to questions they often raise like 'Are policies of different countries similar?' if not, 'How they are different? And Why? This comparative analysis is reliant on such methodology throughout the process. The review mainly uses secondary sources of data for the purpose of comparison of policy content and context between the three countries under consideration. The unit of analysis is the content and context of employment policies of these three countries. The method of analysis is mainly descriptive by reviewing the contents, and contexts of the policy of these countries on the basis of the given framework.

The main conceptual challenge is a central question in comparative policy design which is: what is to be compared? If policy design is context-dependent, then what is the lowest common denominator between different policies addressing similar problems or similar policies addressing different problems? There are two main methodological challenges in comparative public policy analysis. First, researchers limit themselves to explain or explore why and how a certain outcome occurs, ignoring inductive methods that aim to generate theory from data. Second, although multiple causes of policy outcomes are understood in terms of interactions among structures, institutions and agents, weaknesses in data collection, presentation, and analysis in the current research allow for only limited progress towards qualitative rigor achieving a balance between data and its interpretation in explaining agency behavior that generate policy outcome.

10. The role of contexts (Political , Social , Economic , Cultural ..) and their impact on policy making process

10.1 Political Context

Politics is conceptualized as 'the processes of conflict, cooperation and negotiation involved in the ownership, use, production and distribution of resources' (Leftwich 1996). Youth employment policy, economic opportunity and economic citizenship rights are important elements for these political processes. Political processes that affect the provision of economic opportunities directly influence how economic resources are accessed and claimed by citizens particularly the youth.

After the EPRDF came to power in 1991, the country was forced to implement structural adjustment programs by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (Demissie 2008; Feyissa 2011). The structural adjustment programs had significant impact on society and particularly on the youth. More importantly, government employment, which was often considered necessary for young people joining the labor market, was severely threatened. A reduced public sector as a result of privatization, reduction of public expenditure and restructuring contributed to increased unemployment (Krishnan, Selassie and Dercon 1998; Demissie 2008).

Youth unemployment became a major problem starting from the early years of EPRDF's tenancy, as a result

of increased number of high school graduate job seekers in urban areas. The inadequate capacity of the state to create employment opportunities has led to a considerable urban youth unemployment and widened the gap between education and job openings. In 2001, the EPRDF through a major ideological revision has dropped a socialist society and replaced by building a capitalist society (Tadesse and Young, 2003), which allows smooth functioning of free market economics and offers more opportunities for private accumulation of wealth. The reform processes also endorsed the good governance agenda and established formal institutional and policy frameworks. As part of this, the national employment policy and strategy was formulated in 2009 with the aim of improving employment opportunities and its poverty outcomes in the country.

Ethiopia has witnessed unprecedented political changes within past five years, with a peace agreement signed with Eritrea, and reforms initiated by the Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed in the army and local administration. The country's political system is aimed to achieve greater autonomy for regional state, and strong control at the federal level. The ruling party, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), holds an overwhelming majority of 502 seats out of 547 in the House of Representatives. However, the party itself has gone through a major reform in November 2019, when the Prime Minister unified most of its constituent parties except the TPLF into a new party called Prosperity Party. The latter was officially founded on December 1, 2019 and will run for the first time in the May 2020 general elections. The ruling coalition is the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), which is formed by four ethnically-based parties: the Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM), the Oromo Peoples' Democratic Organisation (OPDO), the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and the Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (SEPDM). The TPLF is the dominant group within the coalition, though Tigrayans represent only 6% of the country's population.

The highest executive powers of the Federal Government are vested in the Prime Minister and in the Council of Ministers. The Prime Minister is elected from among members of the House of Peoples' Representatives, and his term of office is for the duration of the mandate of the House of Peoples' Representatives. The Prime Minister is the Chief Executive, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, and the Commander-in-Chief of the national armed forces, he/she leads the Council of Ministers, coordinates its activities and acts as its representative. The Council of Ministers comprises the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, Ministers and other members as may be determined by law. Among its powers and functions, it formulates and implements economic, social and development policies and strategies. Federal legislative power is vested in both the government and the two chambers of the Federal Parliamentary Assembly: the House of Peoples' Representatives (with 547 members elected for a five-year term in single-seat constituencies), and the House of the Federation (with 110 members, one for each nationality, and one additional representative for each one million of its population, designated by the regional councils).

Kenya has introduced a major reform in its political system by enforcing a new constitution in 2010. The new Constitution, among other things, created a bicameral legislative house, as well as a constitutionally tenured Judiciary and electoral body. After the cancellation of presidential elections initially scheduled for 8 August 2017, President Uhuru Kenyatta won the new vote that took place on October 17, 2017. The leader was sworn in for a second and final term. The ruling Jubilee Party founded in 2016 following the merger of 11 smaller parties secured 171 of the 349 seats at the National Assembly and 34 of 67 seats at the senate. The internal political struggle was largely pacified after the reconciliation between one of the main opposition figures, Raila Odinga, and President Kenyatta. Security challenges related to Al-Shabaab's attacks in Kenya-Somalia bordering provinces are now the most important source of uncertainty.

The executive power consists of the President, who is directly elected for a five-year term (and can serve for a maximum of two terms), an elected Vice President and the Cabinet. The President is the head of state and government, commander-in-chief of the armed forces and also chairs the National Security Council. The legislature consists of the National Assembly and the Senate. The National Assembly has control over the nation's expenditure and the distribution of revenue between the two levels of government. The Senate represents the country's 47 counties and serves their interests and those of county governments.

There is convergence of division of legislative power between federal government and the unitary government can be observed from both Ethiopian and Kenya constitutions. Both constitutions establish bicameral legislature consisting of upper and lower chamber. While the Ethiopian Constitution provides House of Peoples' Representatives as (lower chamber) and House of Federation (as upper chamber), the Kenya constitution establishes the Senate (as Upper House) and the National Assembly (as Lower House). The National Assembly has the highest legislative power of the unitary government in Kenya while the House of Peoples' Representatives of Ethiopian parliament, on the other hand, has the highest authority of the federal government. Both Constitutions allocates legislative power on the basis of Exclusive, concurrent and reserve powers. Despite the different system of government but similar two Chamber (Bicameral) Parliament, both Federal and unitary has concurrent authority to exercise on concurrent legislative list.

France is a unitary State organized on a decentralized basis under the 1958 Constitution. In France, the

President of the Republic is the Head of State, and is elected by direct universal suffrage for five years. The Prime Minister is appointed by the President. The prime minister of the French Republic is the head of government of France. During the Third and Fourth Republics, the head of government was formally called president of the Council of Ministers. The Prime Minister sets the amount of the State's expenses and revenue, and prepares some bills. The parliament is bicameral and composed of the Senate and the National Assembly. The 348 senators are elected by indirect universal suffrage for nine years, renewable by a one-third majority vote every three years. The 577 deputies (MPs) are elected by direct universal suffrage. They examine bills and private bills successively, vote laws and monitor the Government. The economic, social and environmental council has an advisory function (optional or compulsory) within the framework of the legislative process.

10.2 Economic Context

Employment can be described as persons of working age who were engaged in any activity to produce goods or provide services for pay or profit, whether at work during the reference period or not at work due to temporary absence from a job, or to working-time arrangement. The table below illustrates the summary of employment created by main sectors of the economy in Ethiopia, Kenya and France. According to the World Bank development indicators (2020), employment in agriculture (% of total employment) has been reported at 65.6 %, 53.8%, and 2.4% in Ethiopia, Kenya, and France respectively. France's Employment in agriculture is the smallest one as compared with those of Ethiopia and Kenya. Agriculture is the main engine of economic growth both in Ethiopia and Kenya, which accounts about 80% of the labour force in Ethiopia, and about 75% of Kenyans earn all or part of their income from this sector.

According to World Bank development indicators, agriculture accounts for about 34% of the Ethiopia's gross domestic product (GDP) and 50% of Kenya's gross domestic product (GDP) in 2019. Agriculture is the dominant sector in both Ethiopian and Kenyan economy which could determine the growth of all other sectors in the nation economy. This result has witnessed the existence of convergence of the agricultural policy frameworks between Kenya and Ethiopia. Agricultural policy in Kenya revolves around the main goals of increasing productivity and income growth, especially for smallholders; enhanced food security and equity, emphasis on irrigation to introduce stability in agricultural output, commercialization and intensification of production especially among small scale farmers; appropriate and participatory policy formulation and environmental sustainability (Agricultural policy in Kenya, 2006). Likewise, the key policy issues of Ethiopia's Agricultural Sector Policy and Investment Framework (PIF) are increasing productivity in smallholder agriculture, recognizing the importance of the smallholder sub-sector, the high prevalence of rural poverty and the large productivity gap (PIF, 2010).

Similarly, the total employment in industry has accounted for 10.4 %, 7.4%, and 19.9% in Ethiopia, Kenya, and France in 2020 respectively. The share of employment in Ethiopia and Kenya seems comparable, but that of France is by twofold far from Kenya and Ethiopia. Employment in service sector has been reported 77.7%, 38.7% and 24% in France, Kenya, and Ethiopia in 2020 respectively. Employment in service sector of developed countries such as France are by far greater than that of developing countries like Ethiopia and Kenya.

Table 1: Summary of Employment By Main Sectors of The Economy for the three countries

Economic Activity By Sector	Employment By Sector (in % of Total Employment)	Value Added (in % of GDP)	Value Added (Annual % Change)
Ethiopia			
Agriculture	65.6	33.9	3.8
Industry	10.4	24.8	12.6
Services	24.0	36.9	11.0
Kenya			
Agriculture	53.8	34.1	3.6
Industry	7.4	16.1	4.6
Services	38.7	43.2	6.7
France			
Agriculture	2.4	1.6	-0.7
Industry	19.9	17.1	0.8
Services	77.7	70.2	1.7

Source: World Bank Development Indicators, 2020 Compiled by the Author.

11. Policy Implementation strategies

As employment policy is wide and multi-sectoral in its nature, it requires an integrated implementation modality involving government and other stakeholders. Accordingly, in Ethiopia a National Employment Council (NEC) is established comprising the representatives of relevant public sectors at federal and regional level, Workers'

and Employers' Associations, representatives from the informal sector and others as appropriate. The National Employment Council ensures that employment related issues are mainstreamed and properly addressed at the level of all macro and sectoral policies in a coordinated and integrated manner. The NEC also serves as an advisory body to the government on issues related to employment. Employment Council bodies with similar composition to the National Employment Council will be established at regional and woreda levels to ensure the implementation of the provisions of the Employment policy and the creation of decent employment opportunities. The National Employment Council will establish a Technical Committee representing different stakeholders. The Technical Committee, in accordance with the guidance of NEC, will develop modalities, programs and plans that help effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the employment policy and strategies. Technical Committees can be established at regional level to serve the same purpose.

To promote effective implementation and monitoring of the policy, sector-specific employment creation targets is developed and implemented within the mechanism of the *Kenya Vision 2030*. Policy monitoring and evaluation is undertaken regularly under the National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System. To achieve the outcomes set out in the Policy, it is important to have an effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation framework that will facilitate assessment of progress while at the same time allowing for learning from any implementation or strategic pitfalls. This framework envisages establishment of a National Employment Authority. The Authority is the lead agency to undertake coordination of the policy implementation and all productivity promotion and employment creation interventions in the country. The Government further recognizes that successful implementation of the strategies and activities identified in this blueprint requires involvement and active participation of virtually everybody in the society.

France being a member state of the European Union, pursue the European Employment Strategy (EES) for the implementation of its employment policy. The Open Method of Coordination (OMC) is one of the soft law methods used to promote cooperation between European countries. Under the OMC member states evaluated by one another through peer pressure. Under the framework of OMC member states jointly identify and define objectives to be achieved; establish measuring tools; benchmarking that is, comparison of member states' performances and exchange best practices.

The French employment strategy has been developed around three main principles: stronger growth, improved growth-driven job creation and growth which is of benefit to all.

- Growth is an essential condition for the creation of jobs. France aims to increase permanently its growth potential through a policy of stimulating innovation, through the emergence of new market and non-market jobs and the creation of new enterprise with special emphasis on small and medium-sized companies.
- To improve growth content, France is advocating a reorganization and negotiated reduction of working hours as a way of modernizing companies and creating jobs, and is continuing to try to find ways of decreasing indirect labour costs, especially unskilled labour.
- To ensure that regained growth benefits everyone, the Government wishes to prevent long-term unemployment and tackle exclusion.

12. Policy outcome and impact

Ethiopia has issued proclamations in the effort to improve employment outcomes through improving employment relations. The Labor Proclamation (Proclamation No. 1156/2019), the provisions of the Employment Exchange Service Proclamation (Proclamation No. 632/2009) and the Right to Employment of Persons with Disability (Proclamation No. 568/2008) govern the relations between employers and employees. There are also employment related ILO Conventions (about 20) that Ethiopia has ratified as part of its domestic law. In terms of the impact of growth on employment creation, the growth process is more important than the growth itself. For any growth to impact on job creation and help reducing poverty, it needs to be broad-based and pro-poor. Ethiopia's growth has been broad-based and pro-poor. For example, about 80 percent of the population resides in rural areas and derives their livelihood from agriculture. The fact that poverty has significantly declined in rural areas from 1999/00 to 2004/05 itself is an indication that growth has been broad-based and pro-poor. Urban unemployment, particularly youth unemployment has been growing areas of concern for the Government of Ethiopia. The rate of unemployment has decreased from 2.35% in 2009 to 1.81% in 2019 (NBE, 2019). The National Employment Policy and Strategy of Ethiopia was developed to alleviate problems of unemployment, promote equal employment opportunities, help eradicate poverty, and address labor related issues in the country.

Unemployment and underemployment are the biggest challenges faced by the labor market in Kenya (Republic of Kenya, 1969; 1983; 2008a, 2008b). The Employment-to-population ratio of men is generally higher than that of women in Kenya for the period 1991 to 2015. This indicates that men are more likely to be employed than women. Vulnerable employment is observed to be relatively low, with its highest value at 2.6% in 1991 and the lowest value at 0.6% in 2012. The proportion of people living below the poverty line in Kenya decline from 43.4% in 1990 to 19.6% in 1997 but later increased to 45.2% in 2009. Kenya has been ranked 147th

in the 2019 UNDP human development index. The unemployment rate was 2.64% in 2019.

Persistently low employment rates, particularly for low-skilled workers, represent a major challenge for France. To enhance the position of low-skilled workers, France has embarked on reforms to make work pay and stimulate job creation. Take-home pay at the minimum wage level has increased by 8.6%, by reducing employee social security contributions and extending in-work benefits. Employer social contributions for low-wage workers have been cut by 3.7 percentage points to lower labour costs and promote job creation. France now has the second lowest effective tax rate on labour at the minimum wage in the OECD area. In recent years, France has implemented a number of reforms to tackle labour market duality by lowering the costs of dismissing workers on permanent contracts. This has resulted in a significant reduction in the OECD employment protection index for permanent workers, in particular its component related to the difficulty of dismissal. The reduction in employment protection is primarily driven by the introduction of a ceiling for compensation in the case of unfair dismissal. This is expected to substantially reduce firing costs, as well as legal uncertainty for employers and employees, given the high degree of variation in granted compensation before its introduction. Before its introduction, unfair dismissal compensation exceeded the new ceiling in 71% of cases.

13. Strength and Limitations of policy transfer and perspectives of policy learning

Policy transfer occurs when there is an exchange of policy idea between governments, institutions or systems. A government can borrow policy idea from the other and partially or fully apply it to the development of policy process. Policy transfer requires policy learning. Policy transfer could affect the stages of policy process of the borrower. Hence, policy transfer has become important and influential method in changing the aspects of policy system. Most of the public policies of the Republic of France is subject to European policy framework. Being one of the Member State of the European Union, the France National Action Plan for Employment is designed in response to the European Employment Strategy and Guideline. The process of Europeanization has not only changed the policy process of member states but also influenced the sovereign legislative procedures. Moreover, politics within European countries are often influenced by the actions and legislation of the European Union (Risse *et al.* 2001).

Policy transfer may have both strength and limitation depending on the degree of its application. One of the frequently cited reasons for unsuccessful policy transfer is the effort to transplant a policy intended to serve one purpose in the originating country to serve other ends in the borrowing country, particularly if these differences are not recognized and taken into account.

Policy transfer presumes that there is some awareness of policies elsewhere, but prospective adopters should also have information from as many sources as possible and of sufficient detail and accuracy with respect to program design and operations. Most of the policy transfer exercises appeared to focus on information from only one country, even when similar policies existed elsewhere. The problem of how to evaluate the performance of a policy in the country from which transfer is being considered is the most difficult dilemma in the policy transfer process (Mossberger, 2000). Formal and rigorous evaluations may not have been undertaken.

It is readily acknowledged that differences in setting might affect a program's transferability. Differences in setting might affect transferability either because the policy or program, if adopted, might not actually work in a different setting or because the policy or because the program, whether or not it might work, may not be politically feasible to adopt given the differences in the political environment and circumstances in the two settings. Both are critical concerns in lesson-drawing (Rose, 1991).

14. Variations and similarities in policy across countries

Ethiopia and Kenya have convergence or similarities in many aspects of the policy contexts. As discussed in the previous sections of the analysis, the rationale and main focus of their respective employment policies are employment creation and poverty reduction; whereas that of France is promoting full employment and better jobs. In many aspects, the main contents and structure of the policy document of Ethiopia and Kenya are similar; but that of France is not. Regarding the target group, again the two African countries and France are gaining similarities; but France with more gender sensitive, that is women and aged workers are high pointed. As far as the values and ideologies of the countries under review are concerned, the three countries have similarities with values of equal employment, social dialogue and participation; France and Kenya have common values of encouraging entrepreneurship, which is a culture shift from job-seekers to job-creators. The policies of these three countries are often affected by the ideologies of the political context in which the policy is formulated and implemented. For example, the Ethiopian and Kenyan employment policies are largely under the influence of the ideologies of the governing parties and reflecting their preferences. Whereas that of France is reflecting the ideologies of the European Union.

In many instances, the elite, pluralist and incremental models of policy making are deemed to be appropriate to developing countries including Ethiopia and Kenya. It is argued that the elite and incremental models of policy making models are applied, since policies of these countries has been reflecting the preferences

of the few ruling elites, and incrementally built out from the previous successive policies. However, France seems to pursue a rational model which is typical in most European countries. In Kenya and Ethiopia, several public bodies are involved in the formulation, implementation and monitoring activities of the employment policies. In both countries, among others, the Governments by initiating the policy, the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Services of Kenya and the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs of Ethiopia by preparing, implementing and monitoring the policy document through the participation of relevant regional/county stakeholders are key actors taking part in the policy process. Other relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) are also key public actors.

In France, Ministry of Labour, and other relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies are involving in the process of policy preparation, implementation and monitoring. Concerning the political context, the three countries under consideration have bicameral parliaments/ legislative bodies. Kenya and France are unitary and Presidential system of Government in which the executive power is exercised by the President. Whereas Ethiopia is structured in the form of federal parliamentary in which the executive power is exercised by the Prime Minister. Regarding the economic context, Ethiopia and Kenya are agrarian economy in which, agriculture is the leading sector determining the growth of all other sectors of the nations' economy, accounting for largest share of GDP and employing largest number labour force. France is by far different from these African countries, and has a very small percent (2.4%) of employment in agriculture and a very large (77.7%) employment in services.

15. Lesson learned

- France has given greater priority policy action to encourage employment of older people. The employment of older people has increased rapidly due to increasing retirement age and pension reforms. This is reflected in the employment rate for 55-64 year olds, which rose from 30% in 2000 to 51% in 2017.
- Empowerment of the legislative bodies of the government in both African countries are less as compared with that of France, which emphasize empowerment of these institutions responsible for drafting national policies.
- Kenya's and Ethiopia's efforts to achieve high growth rate and economic diversification which are often anticipated to enhance employment creation in the formal sector.
- Kenya's Education Sector Reform (2-6-3-3-3) which ended the 32 years old 8-4-4 education system, so that it meets the needs of employers. Support youth self-employment in agriculture and the informal sector through household enterprises.
- In Kenya and Ethiopia, job creation was not balanced to cover rural and urban areas since only 25% and only 20% of the population live in urban areas respectively.
- In Kenya, there is a lack of coordination among the different youth employment initiatives and therefore little opportunity for synergy.
- Women in Kenya have less access to secondary and tertiary education and there is a gendered segregation of employment.
- Since 2016, France has been running large deficits. Fiscal deficit is also a problem in most developing countries. Fiscal policy can be used to support employment creation and critically to reduce job losses. This may include both a focus on ensuring increased employment within the public sector and supporting investment that will result in increased levels of employment.

16. Visible support and commitment from the government leadership

Visible support and regular commitment from the Governments and responsible Ministers and heads of Departments and Agencies is the necessary requirement for the effective implementation of national policies. In view of that, National Employment policies of the countries under this review are initiated and drafted by the Governments and responsible Ministries of these countries at the top with the involvement of relevant Regional/County stakeholders. This has shown that Governments and responsible Ministries of those countries under this review have prepared and introduced National Employment policies dedicated to support the link between economic growth and employment creation.

17. Conclusions

The objective of this comparative analysis was to compare the Ethiopian national employment policy and strategies with developing and developed countries - Kenya and France - in terms of the various contexts of national employment policies. The results of the analysis identified that there were variations/divergence and similarities/convergence in policy contents and contexts. For example the contents of national policy documents of Ethiopia and Kenya are well structured, organized and good looking on the paper, despite their limitation in implementation. The policy priority areas of these agrarian developing countries are mainly employment

creation and poverty reduction. In developed countries like France, the priority is on full employment and better jobs, and addressing the issue of gender equality, environment, human development and the like. Informal employment is often a problem in developing and emerging economies. According to the 2018 report of the ILO, more than 2 billion people work informally, most of them in emerging and developing countries. Countries particularly like Ethiopia and Kenya, whose economy is predominantly agrarian/rural with a labour market characterized by the existence of a substantial informal sector, greater focus would be needed on creating high growth of employment-intensive sectors and measures that can gradually transform the informal into formal employment.

18. Implications

- Since Ethiopia and Kenya are known for agrarian economy with very large proportion of their population living in rural areas, the employment creation program should be balanced to narrow down the disparity between the rural and urban areas.
- Ethiopia and Kenya should increase investment in employment-intensive enterprises which contributes to the formal sector employment. They should also support youth self-employment in agriculture and the informal sector through household enterprises.
- The main focus of these two African countries should be a sustained growth rate and level of economic diversification in order to increase job creation in the formal economy.
- Like in France, more policy priority should be given to women education and employment and reduce gender inequality in employment.
- There should be an increase in levels of coordination, planning and implementation of priority interventions to support employment creation and poverty reduction particularly in Africa.

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