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RAISING AWARENESS OF ALTERNATIVES
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AMONG SYRIAN YOUTH

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Raising Awareness of Alternatives to Public Sector Employment among Syrian Youth

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Abstract

In 2003, over 80 percent of unemployed 15-29 year-olds in Syria sought jobs in the public sector and 60 percent preferred jobs *exclusively* in the public sector. The purpose of this paper is to examine the preferences of young people in Syria for public sector jobs. The paper also discusses an intervention aimed at raising awareness among students about alternatives to public sector employment. Selection into the pool of unemployed is a key issue in our analysis. Preference for public sector jobs was found to be higher among young women and tends to increase with age and educational attainment through secondary school. Young men are motivated in their job search by family need. Social norms appear to influence the employment choices of young women. The difference in expected wages of unemployed youth in the public and private sectors was also associated with public sector job preference.

SHABAB, a local NGO, has introduced programs to raise awareness of opportunities in the private sector, and the benefits of starting a business among young Syrians. An evaluation of one of its programs conducted on students found that young male participants were significantly more likely than non-participants to identify self-employment as a career option. The increase among young women was weaker and not statistically significant. The evaluation found inconsistencies between the impressions that young people had about public and private sectors and the realities as observed through household survey data. This supports other evidence that most Syrian students do not engage in labor market activities or begin thinking about a career prior to completing school. Since the attitudes of students do not yet appear to have been shaped by labor market realities or social stigma, programs that raise awareness of employment alternatives may be appropriate for this group.

في عام 2003 سعي اكثر من 80% من العاطلين في سوريا في الفئة العمرية ما بين الخامسة عشرة والتاسعة والعشرين للحصول علي وظائف في القطاع العام كما فضل حوالي 60% منهم الوظائف في القطاع العام دون غيره. وتهدف هذه الورقة إلى دراسة تفضيل الشباب السوري للوظائف في القطاع العام. كما تناقش تدخلا يرمي إلى زيادة وعي الطلبة عن بدائل الحصول علي وظائف في القطاع العام. ويعد اختيار أفراد عينة المتعطلين التي يجري عليها البحث من الأمور المهمة في هذه الدراسة. ويزداد تفضيل الوظائف في القطاع العام بين الفتيات ويجنح إلى الازدياد كلما زاد العمر وارتفع مستوى التحصيل العلمي في المرحلة الثانوية وتحفز الاحتياجات الأسرية الشباب في سعيهم للحصول علي الوظيفة كما تؤثر المبادئ الاجتماعية علي الفتيات في اختيارهن الوظيفي. ويعد اختلاف الأجور المتوقعة بين القطاعين العام والخاص من أسباب تفضيل الوظيفة في القطاع العام.

وقد قدمت شباب وهي إحدى منظمات المجتمع المدني المحلية. قدمت برامج لزيادة وعي الشباب السوري بفرص العمل في القطاع الخاص وفوائد إقامة مشروعات خاصة. وقد اظهر تقييم أحد البرامج التي تم تطبيقها علي الطلبة أن المشاركين الذكور اكثر من غيرهم ميلا نحو المهن الحرة كخيار وظيفي بينما كانت النسبة اقل بين الفتيات وليست ذات بال من الناحية الإحصائية. وقد وجد التقييم تضاربا بين انطباعات الشباب حول القطاعين العام والخاص وبين الواقع كما تبين من خلال أحد الاستقصاءات المنزلية. ويعزز هذا أدلة أخرى علي أن اغلب الطلبة السوريين لا ينخرطون في أنشطة سوق العمل أو يبدؤون في التفكير في الوظيفة قبل انتهائهم من الدراسة المدرسية. وحيث أن مواقف الطلبة لم تتحدد بعد علي ما يبدو من واقع سوق العمل أو السمات الاجتماعية، فإن البرامج التي تهدف لزيادة الوعي ببدائل التوظيف قد تبدو ملائمة لهذه المجموعة.

1. Introduction

Unemployment rates in the MENA region are thought to be the highest in the world, reaching 14.8 percent in 2005 compared to a worldwide average of 6.4 percent (World Bank: 2007). Unemployment rates among MENA youth (age 15-24) are also estimated to be the highest in the world, at 26 percent in 2004, compared to 14 percent worldwide and 20 percent in the next closest region, Sub-Saharan Africa (Crespi Tarantino, 2004; Kabbani and Omeira, 2007).

Across most countries of the world, unemployment rates are higher among young people than among adults, as youth struggle to enter the labor market and find a good match for their skills and interests. In MENA, another factor contributing to the high unemployment rates among young people may be the “youth bulge”. The share of youth in the MENA population increased during the latter part of the 20th century due to a time lag between declines in infant mortality rates and declines in fertility rates decades earlier. Consequently, since the 1970s, the region has faced some of the most persistently high labor force pressures in the world. While the youth bulge has received much attention in recent literature on MENA, this demographic factor is transient. The MENA youth bulge reached its peak around 2004 and has begun to fall in most countries of the region; with the exception of the Gulf States where the share of youth in the population is expected to begin falling in 2011 (Kabbani and Omeira, 2007). As the demographic bulge moves into the 30-64 age group, it can confer a “demographic dividend” on countries that adopt appropriate macro policies, leading to lower dependency ratios and higher rates of savings and economic growth.

A second reason for the high unemployment rates in MENA, and the focus of this paper, is public sector employment policies. Over the past half century, public sector employment increased substantially in MENA as part of a *social contract* in which governments guaranteed educated workers access to permanent jobs with high wages and benefits (World Bank, 2004; Ovensen and Sletten, 2007). As a result, by the 1990s, MENA had the largest share of public sector workers in the workforce among developing regions (Figure 1). In countries like Egypt and Syria, where governments led development efforts, the share of public sector workers reached around 25 percent of the civilian workforce, compared to a worldwide average of only 11 percent (Abrahart *et al.*, 2002:4). Furthermore, in contrast with all other regions of the world, public sector wages in MENA were 30 percent higher than wages in the private sector, making government jobs highly attractive (Schiavo-Campo, de Tommaso and Amitabha 1997a; 1997b).

The oil boom of the 1970s helped both oil-producing and non-oil-producing states to meet their social contract obligations and to keep up with the increase in the labor supply. However, after the boom, MENA governments could no longer afford the fiscal burden of maintain their hiring practices. By the late 1980s, MENA governments began hiring fewer workers, resulting in long queues for public sector jobs in many countries, which contributed to high unemployment rates. Even though many MENA governments have allowed public sector wages to erode against the private sector, overall compensation packages offered by governments (wages, benefits, job guarantees, etc.) have ensured that government jobs remain highly attractive. While the recent rise in oil prices have helped MENA countries avoid further cuts in their workforce, most governments remain interested in finding ways of reducing demand for public sector jobs.

Furthermore, some governments, like Syria, are interested in reducing demand without cutting public sector wages or benefits.

Workers in MENA, especially women, continue to be attracted to public sector jobs because of the high wages, generous benefits, and job security. Other economic benefits associated with public sector jobs include shorter working hours and better leave policies (Abrahart *et al.*, 2002:11). Boudarbat (2004) found that more than half the unemployed workers in Morocco holding university degrees desired employment exclusively in the public sector, which offers better job security and initial wages that are 43 percent higher than those in the private sector. Assad (1997) found that in Egypt pre-1990, government employment guarantees for graduates and attractive public sector compensation policies encouraged queuing for government jobs and contributed to high graduate unemployment rates even in the face of wage erosion in the public sector. Economic factors are not the only issue. Family pressures may encourage young women to seek public sector jobs, which are deemed more appropriate and less prone to problems of harassment than jobs in the private sector. Other social and personal factors may include prestige and lack of knowledge about opportunities after school.

The purpose of this paper is to identify factors that are associated with demand for public sector jobs. While there is some literature examining the role of public sector wages and benefits on demand for public sector jobs, there is little research on other possible factors. Indeed, data on social and personal factors are very limited. This paper highlights some of the possibilities using data for Syria. It also presents findings from an intervention aimed at encouraging young people to consider alternatives to public sector employment. The results of this research can help inform public policy on mechanisms for reducing the share of young people seeking public sector jobs and leading to lower unemployment rates among youth.

Section 2 introduces the Syrian context and discusses the preferences of young Syrians for public sector employment. Section 3 discusses the data and methods used in the empirical analysis. Section 4 presents descriptive statistics and regression results of the characteristics of young job seekers who are searching for public sector jobs. Section 5 discusses an intervention aimed at encouraging young people to consider private sector work or starting their own business and presents key results from that intervention. Section 6 concludes.

2. The Syrian Context and Preferences for Public Sector Jobs

Syria is a lower-middle income country with per capita income of around \$3,400 in 2003 (adjusted for purchasing power parity). By mid-2007, an estimated 21 million people lived in Syria. This includes a Syrian population of just over 19 million and estimated 1.5 million refugees from neighboring Iraq. The national population growth rate (excluding the recent influx of refugees) has been around 2.3 percent per year. Forty percent of the population is under 15 years old and 62 percent are under 25 (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2006).

Like other MENA countries, during the 1970s, Syria experienced high population growth rates, reaching over 3.5 percent per year. This resulted in a significant increase in the young population that peaked in 2005. The share of youth (age 15-29) in the population increased from 25.1 percent in 1970 to 32.2 percent in 2004. This demographic wave has moved towards adulthood.

In 2005, the share of youth started to decline and is projected to continue falling, reaching 20 percent by the year 2050 (Kabbani and Tzannatos, 2006).

Like most countries in the MENA region, Syria's economic fortunes have been linked to oil both directly, through oil extraction, and indirectly, through remittances and bilateral aid from oil-rich states in the Gulf. A period of strong economic growth occurred in the early 1990s, due to oil discoveries and economic reforms. The oil sector currently accounts for around half of all government revenues and two thirds of export revenues. But, this situation is changing, as oil reserves are falling fast. In the absence of new discoveries, Syria is expected to become a net importer of oil within a few years (Kabbani and Tzannatos, 2006).

The Syrian government is undertaking substantial economic reforms to move the country from a state-controlled to a social market economic system, which aims at empowering the market but maintaining a role for the state in terms of safeguarding social equity (Thanawala, 2002: 669). Despite its intention to minimize public expenditure on services, the government increased spending on public services and infrastructure during 2004 (Oxford Business Group, 2004:59). The state also increased public sector wages substantially since 2000. Almost half the increase in public spending in 2003 came from an increase in the wage bill. In 2004, the government again increased wages, by 20 percent, for 2 million workers and retirees at an estimated cost of 2.3 percent of GDP. The public sector minimum wage more than doubled over a 5-year period, from 2,115 Syrian Pounds (42 US Dollars) per month in 2001 to 4,805 Syrian Pounds (96 US Dollars) per month in 2006. The wage increases were facilitated by higher oil revenues, thus introducing elements of irreversibility in the budget accounts as oil proceeds are unlikely to remain high while higher wages will not easily be reversed (Kabbani and Tzannatos, 2006).

In other words, the Syrian government's obligations have been increasing while its resources are likely to decline in the near future. As a result, the state is reviewing many elements of the social contract that obliges it to guarantee services, employment, and other public goods. For example, the Syrian government is studying methods to replace energy price subsidies, which cost 11 percent of GDP per year, with benefit transfer systems that more directly target the poor. The state is also trying to reduce reliance on public sector jobs and to loosen regulatory controls to spur growth in the private sector (Street *et al.*, 2006).

The unemployment situation of young people in Syria has improved in recent years, falling from 25 percent in 2002 to 19 percent in 2005. Still, this is significantly higher than the worldwide average of 14 percent. Just over 60 percent of the unemployed in Syria are youth, down from nearly 80 percent in 2002. Adult unemployment rates, at 4.4 percent, are lowest in the region except for Qatar (Kabbani and Kamel, 2007; Central Bureau of Statistics, 2006).

Even though the employment outcomes of young Syrians appear to be improving, they still have difficulty finding suitable jobs that fit their qualifications and career ambitions. These are represented by unemployment rates among youth that are more than 4 times higher than among adults. In 2005, unemployment rates were 19 percent among 15-24 year olds and 10 percent among 25-29 year olds. Unemployment rates drop to only 2.7 percent for those above 30. Unemployment in Syria has a significant gender dimension as well, with higher rates among females across all age groups. For youth, the unemployment rate among young women is more than twice as high as among men (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2006). Finally, unemployment spells are

high. Over 70 percent of the unemployed have searched for 12 months or longer and over 40 percent have searched for 24 months or longer.

High unemployment rates among young people in Syria are due to a combination of factors, including the demographic bulge, rising labor force participation rates among young women and mismatches between the skills of young jobs seekers and those demanded by employers (Kabbani and Tzannatos, 2006).

Queuing for public sector jobs is also considered to be one of the factors behind the high rates and long spells of unemployment. According to results from the 2003 Unemployment Survey conducted by the Syrian Central Bureau of Statistics, over 80 percent of unemployed youth (ages 15-29) were looking for public sector jobs in 2003 and around 60 percent sought jobs exclusively in the public sector. On the other hand only 34 percent were seeking jobs in the private sector and less than 10 percent sought jobs exclusively in the private sector. Additionally, only 14 percent considered self-employment or starting a business as a career option and 6 percent were interested exclusively in this option. This supports the observation that Syrian youth prefer public sector jobs. Young women showed higher levels of interest in public sector employment and less interest in self-employment or owning a business. Around 90 percent of unemployed young women were considering public sector employment and 71 percent were looking exclusively in the public sector.

The reasons that lead young people to seek public sector jobs include job security, social status, wages and benefits, fewer working hours and more. That said, from a policy perspective, it is important to delve deeper and analyze whether there are systematic differences between young people who seek employment solely in the public sector and those who are willing to consider other career options. Such information can help policy makers and NGOs target youth employment programs to those groups where impact is likely to be greatest. Thus, this paper compares the characteristics of young people who desire work exclusively in the public sector to those who are open to private sector alternatives.

3. Data and Empirical Methods

The paper hypothesizes that there are systematic differences between the characteristics of young people who are interested exclusively in working in the public sector and those who are open to private sector alternatives. Government and NGO efforts to reduce “wait unemployment” among young public sector job seekers should take these characteristics into account in designing policies to encourage youth to include other sectors in their job search. Wages and benefits are well-discussed reasons for preferring government employment. Some of the less studied issues that this paper focuses on include level of information, previous work experience, and assumptions about working conditions in the private sector.

The investigation in this paper focuses on unemployed youth. The main data for the study comes from the 2003 Unemployment Survey in which unemployed people are asked to define their preferred sector of work. The survey was carried out by the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) in Spring 2003. The nationally-representative survey has valid cases of 27,611 households (96,173 individuals) covering the 14 governorates of Syria. The survey included household-level data, such as the type of dwelling, number of rooms, amenities, and business and agricultural activities. Also, it included data about individuals within the household: age, occupation, education, employment status, and others. Most importantly for our analysis, the survey included data about the sector preferences of job seekers.

The key dependent variable used in the regression analysis is preference for public sector versus private sector employment among unemployed youth. Respondents could select more than one sector. Thus, possible response combinations include: exclusively public sector, public or private sector, and exclusively private sector.

Unemployed persons who were asked this question were persons who did not work during the previous month, who were seeking a full time job, and who were ready to take up any opportunity that arose within a month. The question was also asked of discouraged workers: those who stopped looking temporarily, but were ready to take opportunities that arose within a month. The question was not asked of those seeking part-time positions. This limitation does not affect our particular analysis, because most public sector positions are full time. Our comparison between preferences for public and private jobs would thus anyway focus on those seeking full time work.

The analysis focuses on unemployed youth age 15-29, who are seeking full time jobs and are available for work (3,115 individuals). The analysis includes “youth” above age 24 (the ILO definition of youth) because the full transition to regular work in Syria often lasts until age 30. To check for consistency of results, all regressions were also run on three other groups: (i) unemployed plus discouraged youth age 15-29 (3,349 individuals), (ii) unemployed youth age 15-24 (2,258 individuals) and (iii) unemployed plus discouraged youth age 15-24 (2,467 individuals). Only minor differences were observed.

The main control variables used in our analysis are at two levels. Firstly, variables at the level of individuals: gender, age, level of education, and marital status. Secondly, variables at the level of the household: number of family members, number of children under 15 in the household, number of workers in the household, location (urban/rural), level of education of the head of the household, age and gender of the head of the household and the job of the head of the household.

Data on *prospective* wages for unemployed workers are estimated using a two-stage procedure; the first stage estimates a wage equation for working youth and the second stage uses the coefficients from the first stage to predict wages for unemployed youth. The 2003 Unemployment Survey did not collect data about wages. Therefore, first-stage parameters are estimated using data from the 2003-04 Household Income and Expenditure Survey, which includes a representative sample of 12,165 working young people aged 15-29. The model includes log hourly wages as the dependent variable and several control variables: seven levels of educational attainment (S_i), age and age squared, gender, marital status, and geographic variables (G_i) – i.e urban/rural location and dummy variables for governorates.

$$(1) \quad \ln(w_i) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 S_i + \beta_2 \text{Age}_i + \beta_3 \text{Age}_i^2 + \beta_4 X_i + \beta_5 G_i + \varepsilon$$

Regressions are run separately for young men and women working in the public and private sectors. The parameters of each model are used to predict the expected public sector and expected private sector wages for unemployed men and women in the 2003 Unemployment Survey. Preferences for public sector jobs is expected to be higher the higher the difference is between the expected public sector and expected private sector wages.

Logistic regression analysis is used to examine the relationship between preference for exclusively public sector work and individual characteristics (X_i) and household characteristics (H_i) discussed above as well as the difference in expected wages. The equation is given by:

$$(2) \quad \ln [\text{Prob}(P_i=1) / \text{Prob}(P_i=0)] = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 X_i + \alpha_2 H_i + \alpha_3 \Delta \tilde{\omega}_i$$

and is run separately for young men and young women.

The Business Shabab Evaluation

In addition to data from the unemployment survey, the study also analyses data collected as part of an evaluation of an intervention aimed at changing young people's attitudes towards private sector work. The results of this analysis can be compared to the results from the analysis of sector preferences to get a better sense of how policymakers and NGOs can target their efforts in reducing the number of young people waiting for government jobs.

Business Shabab is a 2-hour audio-visual show that aims to convince young people of the possibility of starting their own business. It is a fast-moving event where a presenter hosts the show and introduces 3 or 4 young entrepreneurs who share their experience and ambitions with around 250 attendees. The young people leave with literature and ideas about starting in business. Business Shabab is one of several programs developed and run by Strategy Highlighting and Building Abilities for Business (SHABAB), a youth employment strategy designed to prepare young people for work in the private sector and providing them with key skills for a successful working life. SHABAB is a project of the Syria Trust for Development, a non-profit NGO.

In Spring 2007, an evaluation was conducted to assess the impact of Business Shabab on participant attitudes towards private sector work and starting a business. A survey was conducted at seven Damascus high schools that provided participants for Business Shabab events in autumn 2006. The survey instrument was a self-administered in-class questionnaire given to students in specific sections of each school. Program participants generally came from specific sections. Participating sections do not appear to have been selected in any systematic way. The questionnaire was administered to students in both participating and non-participating sections. The attitudes of participant and non-participant students were then compared to assess program impact, as no baseline data had been collected. The questionnaire collected demographic data, educational preferences, career preferences, attitudes towards starting a business and behaviors that indicate entrepreneurial tendencies. The final sample included 462 individuals: 231 participants (treatment group) and 231 non-participants (comparison group) distributed across the seven schools. The sample was almost equally distributed among male and female participants.

4. Analysis of the Sector Preference of Young Job Seekers

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics from the data. Overall, 59 percent of the unemployed youth in our sample only prefer public sector work. Disaggregating by gender revealed that the proportion of unemployed young women who prefer exclusively public work is much higher than among young men. Around 70 percent of young women only prefer public sector employment as compared to 52 percent of young men. Still, the fact that a majority of unemployed young men prefer jobs *exclusively* in the public sector is telling.

It is not possible to distinguish, at this stage, to what extent these findings represent the preferences of youth overall versus the possibility that young people queuing up

for public sector jobs face long wait times, such that they eventually come to represent the majority of unemployed youth in our sample. We do notice that preference for public sector jobs tends to increase with age. For 15-17 year-olds this makes sense, since most people in this age group did not finish secondary school and are less likely to find or seek government work. However, the fact that the share of unemployed young women who seek jobs exclusively in the public sector increases even at age 27-29 suggests that those looking for work in the private sector find jobs more quickly to leave the labor market, leaving those who prefer public sector work overrepresented in the pool of 27-29 year-old unemployed young women.

The descriptive statistics reveal a strong relationship between educational attainment and public sector employment preference. Among both young men and women, the share of unemployed youth who exclusively prefer work in the public sector increases with educational attainment, but then drops for post-secondary school completers. Again, this could be because university and post-secondary vocational school completers are not as interested in public sector work or because post-secondary school completers are able to find public sector jobs more quickly than those with secondary schooling, making them less represented in our sample of unemployed youth. Most likely it is a combination of both factors.

The unemployed youth who responded to the survey were in general either married or single. A very small proportion of respondents were either divorced or widowed (11 observations) and were thus combined with single youth as “not married”. The overall results, without disaggregating by gender, suggest that there is no significant relation between marital status and public sector employment preference. Around 60 percent of married and not married unemployed youth sought work exclusively in the public sector. However, disaggregating the data by gender yielded different results. Married young men were less likely to prefer exclusively public sector work, while married young women were more likely to prefer exclusively public sector work. It seems that married men could not afford the luxury of waiting for a public sector job and were more open to other opportunities. Married women, on the other hand, appeared to be more interested than non-married women in working conditions in the public sector, such as longer paid maternity leave and shorter working hours.

Household conditions are also likely to influence employment preferences. The descriptive analysis suggests that there is no significant relation between household size or the number of children under 15 and the career preferences of unemployed young men or women. However, the number of income generators in the household is positively associated with the share of unemployed youth who prefer exclusively public sector jobs, especially young men. There are several possible explanations for this association. Young people in households with fewer sources of income might be under pressure to accept a job in any sector. Another explanation may be that households with more workers provide real world experience that encourages young job seekers to keep their options open and not restrict themselves to one career path. Yet another explanation may be that households with more workers are able to help young household members obtain jobs more easily in the private sector, leaving those young people seeking public sector work overrepresented in the sample. These possibilities point to the complex relationships and selection mechanisms that govern our analysis.

Although rural workers are usually involved in agriculture work, unemployed youth from rural areas have higher preference for exclusively public sector jobs than their urban counterparts. This might be because public sector employment opportunities are more accessible in urban areas. Those looking for public sector work are more likely to have difficulty finding jobs in rural areas and are therefore more likely to be included in our sample. Social norms may also play a role. Norms tend to be more conservative in rural areas which might explain why rural women are less interested in private sector jobs.

In MENA, families in general, and parents in particular, have a great deal of influence over their children's life decisions. Hence, we investigate whether the characteristics of the head of household affect the career preferences of unemployed young men and women. The descriptive analysis suggested that there was no relation between the gender or age of the household head and the young job seeker's work preference. Perhaps surprisingly, the analysis also suggested that the sector of employment of the household head (public or private) did not affect the career preferences of young men or women. The only variable that seems to have had an effect was the level of education of the household head. The share of unemployed youth who prefer jobs exclusively in the public sector decreases with the increase of the educational attainment of the household head (results not shown). Around 62 percent of young job seekers in households headed by an illiterate person prefer employment solely in the public sector, declining to 55 percent in households headed by university graduates. Investigating further, we find that this effect is concentrated among young women. It might be assumed that educated household heads (typically fathers) might be more flexible with the possibility of their daughters seeking employment in private sector. An analysis of the characteristics of the spouse found no significant associations.

Logistic regression analysis disentangles confounding effects and provides a better indication of the factors affecting preferences for public sector jobs. The results of the logistic regression showed a significant relation between gender and public sector employment preference. Therefore, the analysis was conducted at the level of young men and women separately. Also the analysis was conducted twice: with and without predicted wages.

Results of the logistic regressions without predicted wages suggested that the preference for public sector employment increases with age, for both young men and women but more so for young men. Also, as noted in the descriptive discussion above, young men and women in rural areas showed higher interest in public sector jobs than their peers in urban areas. The level of education of young men and women appear to have an association with preferences for public sector jobs. Secondary education attainment seems to be the most strongly related. This might be due to the fact that those with education levels below secondary school do not have a real chance for public sector jobs, whereas post-secondary school completers do, leaving secondary school completers with just enough of a chance that it is worth the wait.

Married women appear to have a greater interest in exclusively public sector jobs compared to single women. This could be the result of the higher benefits in public sector jobs, such as shorter working hours and longer maternity leaves. Some of the characteristics of the head of the household had a slight association with the job preference of young men and women. Young men in households headed by women were less likely to prefer public sector jobs than their peers in households headed by men. They might feel pressure to find a job quickly in order to support the head of the household, so they might not have the luxury of waiting for public sector jobs.

Also, the youth preference of public sector jobs showed a slight decrease with the increase of the level of the education of the household head.

After including the difference in predicted public sector and private sector wages into the equation, the analysis showed that there was a significant positive association between predicted wage differences and public sector job preference of young men and women. Young job seekers who could expect to receive higher wages in the public sector than they could in the private sector were more likely to prefer public sector jobs.

Many of the factors associated with preference for public sector work in the model without predicted wages also holds in the model with wages, including gender and rural residence. However, including predicted wages in the analysis weakened the coefficients on educational attainment for the young women, but not men. One way of interpreting this finding is that young female job seekers with secondary school credentials were more interested in public sector jobs (as per equation 1) because of the higher wages offered to them compared to what they could earn in the private sector. Once expected wages were controlled for, the association between public sector preference and educational attainment was weakened.

The association between marriage and public sector job preference became stronger when taking predicted wages into consideration. Young women showed higher preference for public sector jobs after marriage, this again might be related to the work conditions in the public sector. Conversely, the married young men were less likely to prefer public job sectors after marriage. This could be because they prefer the higher wages offered by the private sector, even with less encouraging working conditions.

5. Youth Employment Strategies and SHABAB

The high rates of unemployment among Syrian youth led both the government and civil society organizations to regard youth employment as a national priority. The 10th Five Year Development Plan and the State Agenda give special attention to the issue of youth employment. Civil society organizations have also introduced programs targeting young people. One such program is SHABAB, a youth employment strategy designed to prepare young people for work in the private sector. SHABAB works through local partnerships between government, the business sector and civil society to develop programs under four principle strategies: (1) developing life skills, (2) creating an awareness of business, (3) creating access to employment, and (4) developing entrepreneurial skills and support. The second of these strategies speaks directly to the issues discussed in this paper.

In order to develop these strategies, SHABAB has initiated several projects under each strategy. Some projects cut across more than one basic strategy. We briefly introduce some of SHABAB's projects to give a sense of the motivation and how they link to its strategies.

Business Awareness: A 2-day classroom-based course for 14-19 year-olds. A trainer teaches the course and 3 volunteer business people share their knowledge and experience of business and employment, for 90 minutes each. They run exercises to illustrate concepts such as marketing and production. Young people receive training in key skills and finish with a formal presentation of a business idea they worked on during the 2 days.

Work Experience: A one-week course where 15 young people spend a week in a workplace to acquire some basic work experience. They are supervised by a trainer who looks after them and provides supporting exercises and key skills training to complement what they see at the workplace.

Business Shabab (Blue Skies): A 2-hour audio-visual show to open young people to the possibility of starting their own business. A presenter hosts the fast-moving event and introduces 3-4 young entrepreneurs who share their experience and ambitions with 250 attendees. The young people leave with literature and ideas about starting in business.

Know About Business (KAB): KAB is an ILO business curriculum that teaches students at school and university all they need to start their own business. Its content requires 80 to 100 hours of teaching time.

Data collected during an evaluation of Business Shabab is used to study the impact of the intervention on the attitudes of young people towards public sector employment. The previous analysis focused on the preference for public section jobs among young *job seekers*. The data from the intervention allows us to study a different perspective. It provides data on youth, age 15-18 years, who are *still students*. The data collected from the Business Shabab evaluation will be used to shed light on the work and job preferences of young respondents. A brief descriptive analysis will also be conducted to assess the impression of youth about public and private sector jobs, which are expected to influence future job preferences.

A. Youth and Employment:

Examining students separately is important because Syrian students typically have no interaction with the working world until after completing their schooling. Indeed, most young Syrians do not start seriously considering career options until they finish school. This is because success at school (i.e. grades) determines the career path of most students. Data from 2003-04 Household Income and Expenditure survey suggests that only 3.4 percent of students age 15-18 had started their interaction with professional life. Among young women, only 1.8 percent had had any interaction with the labor force.

Students (15-18 years)	Male	Female	All
Working	0.6%	0.3%	0.4%
Worked Before	3.9%	1.4%	2.7%
Unemployed	0.3%	0.1%	0.2%
Not working	95.2%	98.2%	96.6%

The 462 respondents to the Business Shabab evaluation survey gave different responses, but underscored the main observation of lack of work experience. Only around 10 percent were involved in some work-related activity during the school year. Half of these working described themselves as employed and the rest consider their work as self-employment. The vast majority were men (94 percent), with only three young women involved in labor market activities. Additionally, 10 percent of respondents were involved in labor activities during the 12 months before the survey but were not working at the time of the survey. Again, most were men (95 percent). Overall, only 19 percent of the young participants had some work experience, either working earlier (most probably during summer) or being currently active.

Differences between the results of the Business Shabab evaluation and the HIES data might be due to the sample, the survey instrument, or the respondents. The data from

the youth intervention is mainly from students at seven vocational and general schools in Damascus. The high share of vocational students in the sample might have increased the share of students with work experience. Vocational students are often more work-oriented due to the nature of their studies. Also, the intervention survey instrument was a self-administered survey filled in by the students themselves while the household survey was completed through an interview with the head of the household. The definition of "work" might have been perceived differently in each case. In any case, both datasets suggest that the vast majority of Syrian students are not work-oriented and do not seek work experience until later.

B. Job Preferences:

The sector preferences of young respondents, both those who benefited from the Business Shabab intervention and those who did not, appear to be very different from the respondents of the 2003 Unemployment Survey. Only a minority of the young participants were interested in public sector employment. Among young women, less than one in three was considering government work. This may seem inconsistent with findings from the Unemployment Survey. However, the respondents from the two surveys are quite different. The young men and women from the Shabab evaluation are 15-18 year-old students. Whereas, the 2003 Unemployment Survey focused on 15-29 year-old job seekers. The different sector preferences might also be due to sample selection. Many of those who were unemployed in the Unemployment Survey are those queuing for public sector jobs.

Finally, the observed disparity between the two surveys might be due to the fact that students have not started thinking about their career yet. They may therefore have been more or less equally likely to select “public sector”, “private sector” and “entrepreneur” without having given serious thought to the matter. This point is also reflected by the fact that fewer than 8 percent of young women in the evaluation sample were considering not working in the future. This is interesting in light of the fact that the majority of young women in Syria do not work after school. This supports the observation that young students do not start considering their career options until they finish their studies.

Jobs Preferences	Male			Female		
	Treat	Comp	Δ	Treat	Comp	Δ
Do Not Want to Work	1.8%	3.7%	- 1.9%	7.8%	6%	1.8%
Public Sector Employment	10.1%	17.4%	-7.3%	23.5%	30.2%	-6.7%
Private Sector Employment	15.6%	24.8%	-9.2%	27.0%	31.0%	-4.0%
Self-Employed/ Business Owner	72.5%	54.1%	18.4%	41.7%	32.8%	8.9%

In terms of actual program outcomes, the evaluation findings suggest that the intervention affected the preferences of young men more than young women. Young male participants were significantly more likely than non-participants to identify self-employment as a career option. The increase among young women was weaker and not statistically significant.

C. Factors that Influence Youth's Job Preference:

Young respondents were asked to identify the factors that influenced their job preferences. For both the treatment and comparison groups, as well as for both young men and young women, it was found that the two key factors were personal interests and parents.

Factors that Influence Youth's Jobs Preference	Treatment Group			Comparison Group		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
Friends	5.9%	0.9%	3.3%	7.7%	5.3%	6.4%
Parents	30.4%	29.7%	30%	26.9%	23%	25.2%
Family	7.8%	13.5%	10.8%	4.8%	19.5%	12.4%
Teachers	2.9%	1.8%	2.3%	1%	1.8%	1.4%
Media	2%	-	0.9%	1%	-	0.5%
Available Opportunity	9.8%	13.5%	11.7%	12.5%	6.2%	9.2%
Personal Interests	29.4%	36%	32.9%	30.8%	35.4%	33%
Financial Needs	7.8%	3.6%	5.6%	13.5%	5.3%	9.2%
Others	3.9%	0.9%	2.3%	1.9%	3.5%	2.8%

Since young respondents considered personal interest to be the most influential factor when deciding a career, it would be interesting to study their impressions about public and private sector jobs. In order to assess youth's impressions about private and public sector jobs, they were asked to rank private and public sector jobs according to several criteria: wages, working hours, working conditions, job security, accessibility, self-satisfaction, and prestige.

The table below represents the shares of young men and women who ranked public sector as better than private sector according to the defined criteria. The analysis revealed that the respondents believed that wages in the private sector are higher than in the public sector. This is in fact the case for young men who receive, on average, higher wages in the private sector. However, survey data shows that average wages for young women are higher in the public sector. Female students are mistaken in their beliefs and this might explain the weak preference of public sector jobs among this group. When they start seeking jobs, it is possible that they will develop a better idea about wages and shift their preferences to the public sector.

The young respondents appeared to have more informed impressions about the public sectors when it came to working hours and job security. Around two thirds believed that working hours in the public sector are better than in the private sector. Also, over 70 percent considered public sector jobs more secure than private sector jobs. The proportions did not vary much for young men or women or for comparison and treatment groups.

Criteria	Treatment Group			Comparison Group		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
Wages	18.8%	8.8%	13.8%	22.4%	12.9%	17.5%
Working Hours	67.7%	62.6%	65.2%	67%	56.4%	61.3%
Working Conditions	40.4%	33.3%	36.9%	43.3%	42.1%	43%
Job Security	73.7%	71.6%	72.7%	65.6%	74.2%	70.1%
Accessibility	54%	53.7%	53.8%	38.9%	51.6%	45.5%
Self-Satisfaction	34.7%	30.5%	32.6%	39.1%	38.1%	38.4%
Social respect	36%	14.9%	25.8%	41.1%	26.8%	33.7%

In general, the young respondents had a more favorable impression of working conditions in private sector than public sector, young women even more so than young men. Youth were evenly divided between those who thought it was easier to find public jobs or private jobs. However, they did not believe that public sector jobs were more self-satisfying. Only a small share believed that public sector employees are more respected in society than private sector employees. These impressions did not change after the intervention. These findings are at odds with some anecdotal evidence from parental and societal views of the private sector. The evidence is that these perceptions develop over time as young people start thinking about their career or being influenced by social norms.

The findings suggest that programs that raise awareness of employment alternatives may be appropriate for this age group. There is no need to adopt strategies which challenge more deep seeded beliefs.

D. Household Impact on Student Jobs Preferences:

The analysis using the 2003 unemployment data suggested that household conditions might influence job preferences of unemployed youth. The data from the intervention allows for a similar analysis. The analysis examines whether there is a relation between the respondents' preference of public jobs and household factors such as parents' education, parents' work and household size. We assume that the father is the head of household and the mother is the spouse. This might not be valid in all cases, but it should be applicable in most.

The results of a multinomial logistic regression analysis suggested that there is a significant difference between the job preference of young respondents from the treatment and comparison groups. The respondents from the treatment group expressed less preference to employment (public or private) and leaned more toward self-employment and business ownership. This is consistent with the objectives of the intervention to promote entrepreneurship. Also, the analysis revealed that there are significant differences between the job preferences of young men and women. Young women showed higher preference for employment, whether in the private or the public sector, than young men. This pattern was detected for the whole sample and for disaggregated treatment and comparison groups.

The unemployment survey suggested that the educational attainment of the household head affects the public sector preferences of young women but not of young men. The data from the intervention supported this finding. Young women whose fathers' have post-secondary education showed slightly lower preference for public sector jobs. However, this difference was only marginally significant. Also, the unemployment survey revealed no significant relationship between the sector of the household head and youth's job preference. However, the data from the intervention suggested a positive relationship between young men's sector preference and the father's job type. Young men of employed fathers showed higher preference of employment either in the public or the private sector and lower preference of starting their own businesses. Such a finding was not detected among young women.

The mother (the spouse of the household head) had a greater influence on the job preferences of young respondents from the intervention data in comparison with the findings from the unemployment survey data. The analysis of the intervention data revealed that the educational attainment of mothers affected the job preferences of the young women but not young men. Young women whose mothers had post-secondary education expressed less interest in employment, either private or public, and an increased interest in starting a business or being self-employed. The job type of the mother did not appear to affect the sector preference of young men or women within the household. This, in fact, is consistent with the findings from the unemployment data that was discussed earlier in this document. The size of the household seemed to have greater impact on youth's job preferences in the unemployment survey than in the intervention data. In the unemployment survey, the overall size of the family had no significant impact but rather the number of workers affected the public sector employment preference among young job seekers. In the data from the intervention, the analysis suggested that neither the size of the household nor the number of workers in the family affected the job preference of youth.

Household Characteristics and Youth's Jobs Preferences, Multi-logistic Regression Analysis (*Omitted Business Owner/ Self-Employed*)

Public Sector

	Male		Female		Control		Treatment		All	
Treatment	-0.855	(0.591)	-0.380	(0.455)	-	-	-	-	-0.707	(0.342)*
Female	-	-	-	-	1.720	(0.560)**	1.479	(0.552)**	1.362	(0.360)**
Father Education										
<i>Omitted Below Secondary</i>										
Post-secondary	0.054	(0.483)	-0.677	(0.385)+	0.007	(0.393)	-0.450	(0.445)	-0.256	(0.291)
Father Work										
<i>Omitted Self-Employed</i>										
Not Working & Other	2.931	(0.799)**	0.197	(0.548)	0.880	(0.884)	1.552	(0.862)+	1.287	(0.574)*
Public Sector Employee	2.604	(0.651)**	0.005	(0.378)	-1.555	(0.584)**	0.750	(0.642)	1.093	(0.406)**
Private Sector Employee	0.446	(1.187)	-0.784	(0.713)	-0.858	1.038	-0.546	(1.256)	-0.540	(0.755)
Mother Education										
<i>Omitted Below Secondary</i>										
Post-secondary	-0.647	(0.505)	-0.930	(0.394)*	-0.808	(0.407)*	-0.700	(0.463)	-0.761	(0.303)*
Mother Work										
<i>Omitted Self-Employed</i>										
Not Working & Other	-0.214	(0.826)	0.089	(0.935)	-0.020	(0.757)	0.416	(1.104)	0.077	(0.602)
Public Sector Employee	0.388	(0.906)	0.137	(0.984)	-0.182	(0.837)	1.299	(1.146)	0.424	(0.647)
Private Sector Employee	-	-	-0.442	(1.144)	-1.281	(1.304)	0.405	(1.339)	-0.529	(0.864)
No. of Family Members										
<i>Omitted 9 and above</i>										
1-4	-0.129	(1.487)	-0.799	(1.055)	0.766	(1.208)	-0.695	(1.172)	-0.295	(0.794)
5-8	0.230	(1.428)	0.277	(0.941)	1.450	(1.072)	-0.090	(1.101)	0.397	(0.721)
Number of workers										
<i>Omitted 4 and above</i>										
0-1	1.176	(1.208)	1.526	(1.264)	-0.325	(1.008)	1.322	(1.082)	0.827	(0.752)
2-3	-0.208	(1.110)	1.267	(1.247)	-1.151	(1.000)	1.241	(1.077)	0.210	(0.732)

Standards errors are in parentheses. ** Significant at the 1% level, * Significant at the level 5%, + Significant at the 10% level.

Private Sector

	Male		Female		Control		Treatment		All	
Treatment	-0.168	(0.513)	-0.532	(0.436)	-	-	-	-	-0.564	(0.307)+
Female	-	-	-	-	1.859	(0.530)**	1.061	(0.458)*	1.252	(0.318)**
Father Education										
<i>Below Secondary Omitted</i>										
Post-secondary	0.642	(0.420)	-0.434	(0.373)	0.394	(0.367)	-0.096	(0.406)	0.106	(0.270)
Father Work										
<i>Omitted Self-Employed</i>										
Not Working & Other	0.159	(0.837)	-0.375	(0.758)	0.085	(0.876)	0.226	(0.968)	0.062	(0.629)
Public Sector Employee	1.025	(0.385)**	-0.390	(0.520)	1.220	(0.558)*	0.362	(0.540)	0.521	(0.360)
Private Sector Employee	-0.129	(0.687)	0.494	(0.754)	-0.505	(0.899)	0.191	(0.843)	-0.303	(0.558)
Mother Education										
<i>Omitted Below Secondary</i>										
Post-secondary	-0.332	(0.416)	-0.698	(0.372)+	-0.257	(0.367)	-0.855	(0.420)*	-0.494	(0.271)+
Mother Work										
<i>Omitted Self-Employed</i>										
Not Working & Other	-0.619	(0.648)	0.279	(0.932)	-0.791	(0.639)	-	-	-0.693	(0.525)
Public Sector Employee	0.147	(0.720)	0.057	(0.988)	-0.128	(0.689)	-	-	-0.158	(0.573)
Private Sector Employee	-	-	-1.540	(1.406)	-1.974	(1.238)	-	-	-2.033	(1.153)+
No. of Family Members										
<i>Omitted 9 and above</i>										
1-4	0.582	(1.072)	0.940	(1.278)	1.795	(1.135)	0.154	(1.278)	0.796	(0.786)
5-8	0.420	(1.003)	1.548	(1.235)	1.421	(1.036)	1.137	(1.231)	0.984	(0.740)
Number of workers										
<i>Omitted 4 and above</i>										
0-1	-1.860	(0.857)+	0.865	(0.971)	-1.347	(0.945)	-0.308	(0.773)	-0.348	(0.563)
2-3	-1.512	(0.783)+	0.696	(0.977)	-1.312	(0.918)	-0.834	(0.812)	-0.504	(0.549)

6. Conclusions

The Syrian economy is in the middle of a transition from a state-controlled to a social market economic system. Among the key elements of the state-controlled paradigm was the prominence of public sector jobs, which offered competitive wages and benefits as well as job security, flexible working conditions, and greater social acceptability for women. While the private sector has gained prominence since reforms began a few years ago, many young people still desire jobs exclusively in the public sector. This has led to queuing for public sector jobs and may have contributed to high unemployment rates of young people relative to adults and of young women relative to young men.

Indeed, according to the 2003 Unemployment Survey, over 80 percent of unemployed youth (15-29) were looking for public sector jobs in 2003 and 60 percent sought jobs *exclusively* in the public sector. By comparison, only 34 percent were willing to consider jobs in the private sector and 14 percent in self-employment. Young women were more interested in public sector jobs and less interested in self-employment. Around 90 percent of unemployed young women wanted public sector work and 71 percent were looking exclusively in the public sector. The purpose of this paper is to study the preferences of young people for public sector jobs. Identifying key characteristics associated with those seeking employment solely in the public sector can help policy makers and NGOs target youth employment programs to those groups where impact is likely to be greatest. The paper also discusses an intervention aimed at raising awareness among students about alternatives to public sector employment.

Our analysis of the unemployment survey data found that exclusive preference for public sector jobs is indeed higher among young women and tends to increase with age and educational attainment, rising through secondary school, but then dropping among post-secondary school completers. This latter finding may be due to the fact that those with education levels below secondary school have little chance of obtaining public sector jobs, whereas post-secondary school completers are able to find government jobs more quickly, making them less represented in our sample of unemployed youth. These factors would leave secondary school completers both overrepresented in our sample of unemployed youth and with just enough of a chance of finding public sector work that it is worth the wait.

The discussion above reminds us that selection into the pool of unemployed youth is a key factor in our analysis and can help explain our results. For example, our analysis found that unemployed youth from rural areas have higher preference for exclusively public sector jobs than their urban counterparts. This may be due to the fact that there are fewer public sector jobs in rural areas, making rural public sector jobs seekers overrepresented in our sample.

The findings suggest that young men are motivated in their job search by family need. The greater the need, the less likely they are to focus exclusively on obtaining public sector jobs. For example, married young men, young men in female-headed households, and young men in households with fewer income generators are all less likely to prefer public sector work exclusively. They might feel pressure to find a job more quickly in order to support the family.

The association between preference for public sector jobs and the number of income generators in a household might also be because households with more workers may provide real world experience that encourages young job seekers to keep their options open. It might also be that households with more workers are able to help young job seekers find jobs in the private sector, leaving public sector job seekers overrepresented in the sample. These possibilities underscore the complex relationships and selection mechanisms that govern our analysis.

There is some evidence that social norms influence the employment choices of young women. The share of unemployed young women who prefer jobs exclusively in the public sector decreases with the increase of the educational attainment of the household head. This might indicate that educated household heads (typically fathers) might be more flexible with the possibility of their daughters seeking employment in private sector, which is viewed with suspicion in Syria. Also, we find that married women are more interested in public sector work than non-married women, which may partly reflect the preferences of their husbands. Married women may also be more likely to prefer public sector work because of the higher benefits, such as longer paid maternity leave and more flexible working hours.

The difference between the predicted public and private sector wages for the unemployed youth in our sample was also associated with public sector job preference, especially women. Also, including predicted wages in the analysis weakened the coefficients on educational attainment for young women, but not young men. This may indicate that young female job seekers with secondary school credentials were more interested in public sector jobs because of the higher wages offered to them compared to what they could earn in the private sector.

In light of evidence that young people in Syria prefer public sector jobs and are queuing up for them, which may in turn be contributing to high unemployment rates among youth, a local NGO, SHABAB has introduced programs to raise awareness among young Syrians of opportunities in the private sector and the benefits of starting one's own business. A study of the characteristics and attitudes of 15-18 year-old student participants in one of its programs, Business Shabab, and a comparison group of non-participants from the same schools helped shed light on the issue from the students' perspective. This perspective is important, as the majority of Syrian students do not engage in any labor market activity or begin thinking seriously about a career prior to completing school. Indeed, the lack of interest in life after school may be reflected in the fact that a minority of the young respondents were interested in public sector employment, which would otherwise seem inconsistent with our earlier finding that a majority of young job seekers are mainly interested in public sector work.

The evaluation of findings suggests that the intervention affected the preferences of young men more than young women. Young male participants were significantly more likely than non-participants to identify self-employment as a career option. The increase among young women was weaker and not statistically significant. The evaluation also found that the parent's post-secondary education and sector of employment did have some effect on the sector preferences of their children. Notably, the educational attainment of mothers was associated with the job preferences of the young women but not young men. Young women whose mothers had post-secondary education expressed less interest in employment, either private or public, and an increased interest in starting a business or being self-employed.

The evaluation found some inconsistencies between the impressions that young people had about the differences between the public and private sectors and the realities as observed through household survey data, notably differences in wages. Perhaps surprisingly, the young respondents had a more favorable impression of working conditions in private sector than public sector, young women even more so than young men. The attitudes of students may therefore have not yet been shaped by the realities of the labor market or social stigma. The findings suggest that programs that raise awareness of employment alternatives may be appropriate for this age group. There is no need to adopt strategies which challenge more deeply-seeded beliefs.

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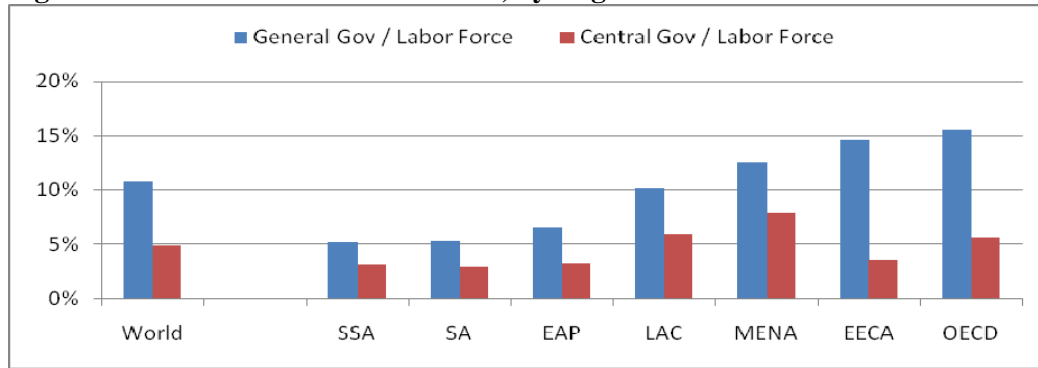
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Appendix: Labor Force Participation & Unemployment Rates by Region (2004 est.)

	Unemployment Rates							
	Adult		Youth		Adult		Youth	
	All	All	Female	Male	All	All	Female	Male
Developed Economies	61%	51%	47%	55%	6%	13%	12%	14%
East Europe / Central Asia	62%	38%	36%	40%	8%	18%	20%	17%
Asia / Pacific	75%	57%	48%	66%	3%	11%	11%	12%
Latin America / Caribbean	68%	55%	43%	66%	5%	15%	19%	13%
Sub-Saharan Africa	79%	65%	58%	73%	6%	20%	17%	22%
Middle East / North Africa	59%	39%	24%	53%	8%	26%	33%	23%
World	70%	55%	46%	63%	4%	14%	14%	14%

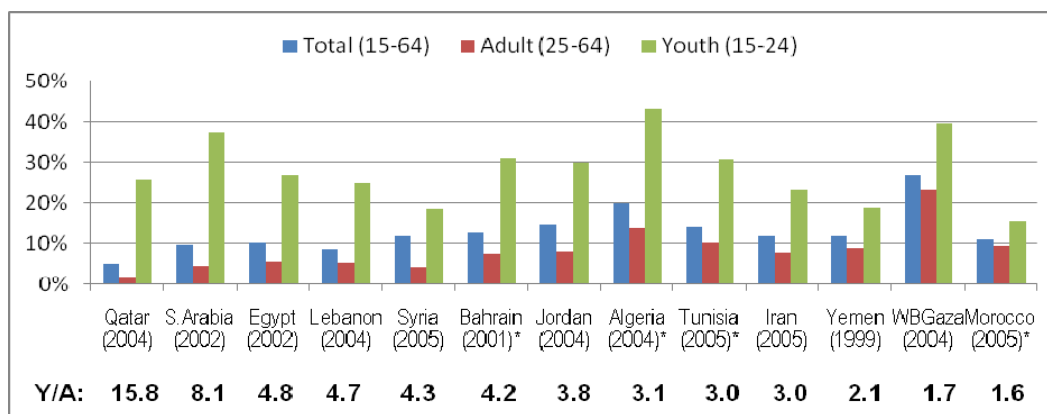
Source: Kabbani and Omeira (2007) computed from Crespi Tarantino (2004)

Figure 1: The Size of the Public Sector, by Region:



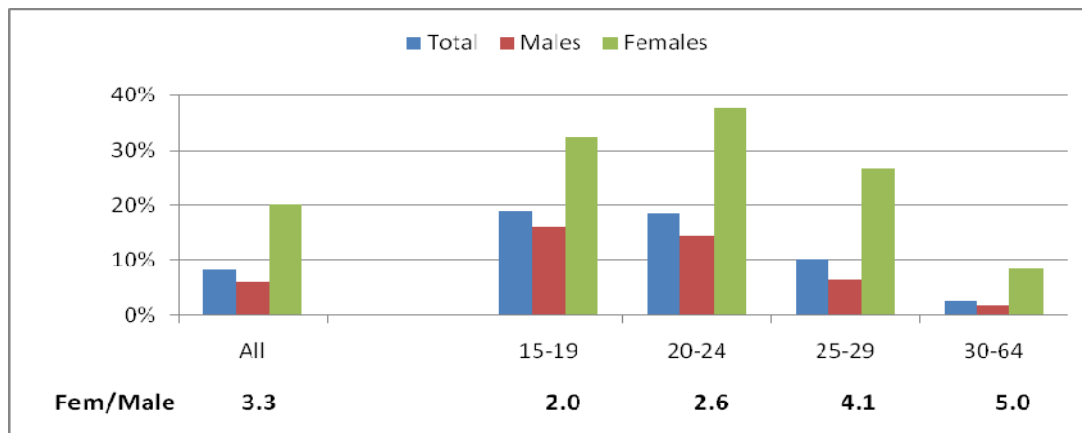
Source: Schiavo-Campo, de Tommaso and Mukherjee (1997)

Figure 2: Unemployment Rates in MENA Countries (youth, adult and total)



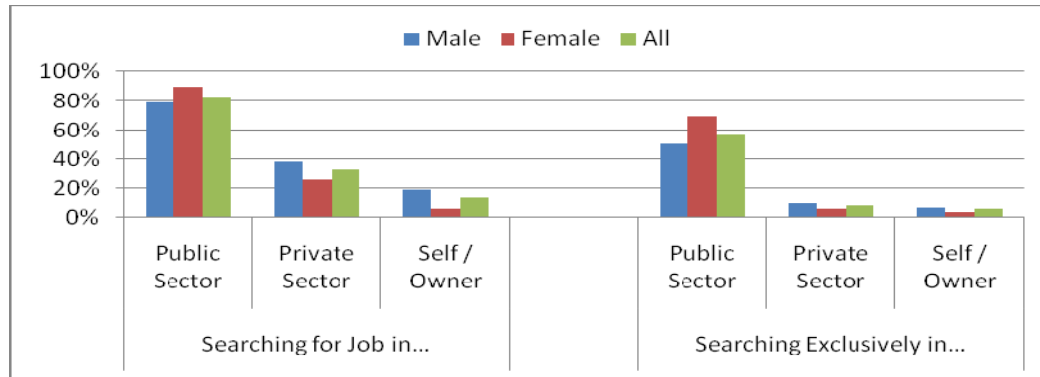
Source: Kabbani and Kamel (2007) and Central Bureau of Statistics (2006)

Figure 3: Unemployment Rates in Syria, by age (2005)



Source: Central Bureau of Statistics (2006)

Figure 4: The Job Preferences of Unemployed Youth (15-29) by Sector of Work



Source: 2003 Unemployment Survey

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on the Job Sector Preferences of Unemployed Youth (15-29)

	Exclusively in The Public Sector			Public Sector or Others		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
Total	51.9%	70.1%	58.8%	80.3%	89.9%	83.9%
Individual Characteristics						
Age Group						
15-17	39.4%	51.7%	42.0%	73.4%	77.0%	74.2%
18-20	52.5%	69.6%	59.5%	77.9%	88.5%	82.3%
21-23	55.6%	70.7%	61.7%	82.3%	90.4%	85.6%
24-26	55.1%	71.0%	61.3%	84.0%	91.7%	87.0%
27-29	53.8%	77.5%	63.7%	82.2%	94.7%	87.4%
Education						
Illiterate	50.5%	45.5%	50.0%	73.6%	81.8%	74.5%
Literate	37.3%	57.9%	41.2%	71.1%	78.9%	72.5%
Elementary	48.3%	62.7%	51.8%	78.8%	85.7%	80.5%
Preparatory	54.8%	73.3%	63.4%	83.3%	90.1%	86.5%
Secondary	71.1%	79.1%	76.1%	87.6%	94.6%	92.0%
Post-secondary	60.6%	68.7%	65.8%	87.4%	91.2%	89.8%
Marital Status						
Not Married	52.5%	68.3%	58.3%	80.5%	89.4%	83.7%
Married	44.3%	82.6%	63.7%	77.9%	93.1%	85.6%
Household Characteristics						
No. of family members						
1-4	49.6%	68.3%	57.8%	76.7%	90.2%	82.7%
5-8	49.9%	71.2%	59.0%	79.3%	90.9%	84.3%
9 and above	54.6%	69.0%	59.0%	82.2%	87.9%	83.9%
No. of children under 15						
0-3	49.5%	70.8%	57.7%	81.5%	91.0%	85.2%
4-6	53.1%	67.3%	57.0%	80.1%	83.7%	81.1%
7 and above	53.4%	66.7%	55.9%	81.4%	96.3%	84.1%
No. of workers						
0-1	50.2%	69.5%	57.3%	80.2%	89.2%	83.5%
2-3	53.8%	70.5%	60.2%	81.0%	92.6%	85.4%
4 and above	61.6%	73.1%	67.1%	76.7%	82.1%	79.3%
Location						
Urban	44.8%	65.4%	52.7%	75.6%	89.0%	80.8%
Rural	57.1%	73.6%	63.3%	83.6%	90.5%	86.2%

Source: 2003 Unemployment Survey

Table 2: Prefer Work Exclusively in the Public Sector (Without Predicted Wages)

	Male		Female		All	
Individual Characteristics						
Female	-	-	-	-	0.593	(0.082)**
Age Group						
<i>Omitted 15-17</i>						
18-20	0.432	(0.149)**	0.356	(0.257)	0.424	(0.127)**
21-23	0.515	(0.148)**	0.355	(0.262)	0.480	(0.127)**
24-26	0.497	(0.161)**	0.384	(0.275)	0.488	(0.137)**
27-29	0.508	(0.196)*	0.725	(0.306)*	0.595	(0.160)**
Education						
<i>Omitted Illiterate</i>						
Literate	-0.651	(0.309)*	0.574	(0.726)	-0.490	(0.281)+
Elementary	-0.205	(0.227)	1.046	(0.595)+	-0.030	(0.209)
Preparatory	0.018	(0.258)	1.451	(0.608)*	0.289	(0.229)
Secondary	0.791	(0.281)**	1.842	(0.611)**	0.865	(0.238)**
Institute	0.510	(0.318)	1.452	(0.620)*	0.562	(0.255)*
University	-0.449	(0.441)	1.028	(0.673)	-0.063	(0.319)
Married	-0.370	(0.206)+	0.717	(0.268)**	0.056	(0.151)
Household Characteristics						
No. of family members						
<i>Omitted 1-4</i>						
5-8	-0.069	(0.115)	0.291	(0.173)+	-0.008	(0.094)
9 and above	0.109	(0.175)	0.178	(0.267)	0.084	(0.145)
No. of children under 15						
<i>Omitted 0-3</i>						
4-6	0.093	(0.119)	0.098	(0.201)	0.113	(0.101)
7 and above	0.107	(0.196)	0.175	(0.405)	0.117	(0.175)
No. of workers						
<i>Omitted 0-1</i>						
2-3	0.131	(0.107)	-0.077	(0.152)	0.057	(0.086)
4 and above	0.309	(0.216)	0.060	(0.286)	0.216	(0.171)
Location						
Rural	0.515	(0.096)**	0.442	(0.138)**	0.481	(0.078)**
Head Of the Household Gender						
Female	-0.524	(0.245)*	0.192	(0.320)	-0.338	(0.188)+
Head of the Household Education						
<i>Omitted Illiterate</i>						
Literate	-0.119	(0.132)	0.362	(0.204)+	0.004	(0.110)
Elementary	-0.329	(0.136)*	0.184	(0.201)	-0.198	(0.112)+
Preparatory	0.072	(0.209)	0.477	(0.269)+	0.160	(0.163)
Secondary	-0.001	(0.234)	0.690	(0.349)*	0.198	(0.191)
Institute	0.283	(0.294)	0.226	(0.378)	0.207	(0.231)
University	-0.722	(0.326)*	-0.191	(0.357)	-0.514	(0.232)*
Postgraduate Study	-	-	-1.623	(1.311)	-0.683	(1.046)
Head of the Household Work						
Employed	0.097	(0.128)	0.135	(0.190)	0.104	(0.105)
Unemployed	0.143	(0.228)	-0.550	(0.352)	-0.171	(0.184)
Public	0.108	(0.131)	-0.243	(0.175)	-0.024	(0.104)

Regressions also included age and marital status of the household head. Standards errors are in parentheses.
 ** Significant at the 1% level, * Significant at the level 5%, + Significant at the 10% level.

Table 3: Prefer Work Exclusively in the Public Sector (With Predicted Wages)

	Male		Female		All	
Individual Characteristics						
Female	-	-	-	-	0.352	(0.129)**
Age Group						
<i>Omitted 15-17</i>						
18-20	0.428	(0.149)**	0.565	(0.278)*	0.417	(0.128)**
21-23	0.468	(0.149)**	0.726	(0.320)*	0.461	(0.128)**
24-26	0.376	(0.166)*	0.822	(0.350)*	0.440	(0.139)**
27-29	0.325	(0.205)	1.078	(0.353)**	0.522	(0.163)**
Education						
<i>Omitted Illiterate</i>						
Literate	-0.442	(0.318)	0.925	(0.749)	-0.357	(0.287)
Elementary	-0.017	(0.236)	0.327	(0.693)	0.066	(0.214)
Preparatory	0.098	(0.262)	-0.134	(0.986)	0.306	(0.230)
Secondary	0.769	(0.284)**	0.942	(0.753)	0.890	(0.239)**
Institute	0.494	(0.321)	-0.239	(1.034)	0.543	(0.256)*
University	0.118	(0.468)	-0.131	(0.881)	0.076	(0.326)
Married	-0.644	(0.227)**	0.960	(0.296)**	-0.012	(0.154)
Household Characteristics						
No. of family members						
<i>Omitted 1-4</i>						
5-8	-0.087	(0.116)	0.286	(0.174)	-0.025	(0.095)
9 and above	0.075	(0.176)	0.157	(0.268)	0.057	(0.147)
No. of children under 15						
<i>Omitted 0-3</i>						
4-6	0.066	(0.120)	0.060	(0.202)	0.095	(0.102)
7 and above	0.073	(0.198)	0.129	(0.407)	0.094	(0.176)
No. of workers						
<i>Omitted 0-1</i>						
2-3	0.158	(0.109)	-0.065	(0.152)	0.072	(0.087)
4 and above	0.352	(0.217)	0.077	(0.287)	0.243	(0.172)
Location						
Rural	0.482	(0.097)**	0.486	(0.141)**	0.475	(0.078)**
Head of the Household Gender						
Female	-0.508	(0.247)*	0.118	(0.326)	-0.324	(0.189)+
Head of the Household Education						
<i>Omitted Illiterate</i>						
Literate	-0.114	(0.133)	0.395	(0.206)+	0.010	(0.111)
Elementary	-0.299	(0.137)*	0.227	(0.203)	-0.186	(0.113)+
Preparatory	0.089	(0.210)	0.552	(0.273)*	0.171	(0.164)
Secondary	0.011	(0.235)	0.747	(0.351)*	0.208	(0.191)
Institute	0.233	(0.299)	0.263	(0.380)	0.203	(0.232)
University	-0.645	(0.328)*	-0.149	(0.359)	-0.474	(0.233)*
Postgraduate Study	-	-	-1.615	(1.301)	-0.662	(1.045)
Head of the Household Work						
Employed	0.090	(0.129)	0.123	(0.191)	0.102	(0.105)
Unemployed	0.134	(0.230)	-0.621	(0.355)+	-0.205	(0.186)
Public	0.103	(0.131)	-0.254	(0.176)	-0.024	(0.105)
Wages	0.023	(0.007)**	0.120	(0.059)*	0.014	(0.006)*

Regressions also included age and marital status of the household head. Standards errors are in parentheses.
 ** Significant at the 1% level, * Significant at the level 5%, + Significant at the 10% level.