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## **DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

**A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for  
the award of the degree of Master of Social Science in Social Development**

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### **Research Topic**

**An exploration of the perceptions of young unemployed graduates in  
Lusaka, Zambia, of the factors contributing to their unemployment**

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## ABSTRACT

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Among the problems that youth face, youth unemployment is more pronounced (Moleke, 2005; Annamária, 2013). Exclusion of youth from participating in the economy affects their wellbeing, and that of society. The objective of this study was, therefore, to explore the perceptions of young unemployed graduates in Lusaka, Zambia, of the factors contributing to their unemployment.

To achieve the objective of the study, a qualitative research study was conducted with 20 unemployed tertiary level youth graduates in the field of humanities and arts studies. A qualitative study helped to gain an understanding on how the unemployed youth graduates interpreted their daily experiences and the meaning they gave to their status of being unemployed. Meanwhile, Tesch's eight-step approach for data analysis was employed.

The study revealed that although the participants were actively job-seeking, a mis-match between their qualification and labour market skills demand; dependence on a formal or public sector post; lack of career guidance; lack of work experience; lack of social connections in the labour market; lack of merit based job recruitment practices which then promoted nepotism and corruption; lack of employment opportunities due to low levels of economic growth and high retirement age policy; and the unsuccessful government policies and programmes to promote self-employment through entrepreneurship skills and start-up capital for self-employment, were believed by the graduate participants to be the factors contributing to graduate youth unemployment. The study also revealed that exclusion of youth from employment affects the social and economic wellbeing of not only the unemployed youth themselves but also their family. In this study, it was further revealed that the youth, the government, and the NGOs and the private sector, have roles to play in promoting youth graduate employment.

The researcher in this study recommended that there was a need for youth graduates to be willing to venture into self-employment, to continue to demand for their right to employment opportunities from various stakeholders, to take responsibility to inform themselves about the existing government programmes and projects that relate to their employment, and to seek career guidance before embarking on their studies. On the part of government, they were to sensitize the graduate youth on and promote access to programmes that promoted youth employment, to provide and promote equal access to employment opportunities in all the sectors of the economy, to improve the macro-economic policies to attract foreign investment,

to promote economic growth, to be able to conduct monitoring and evaluation of internship programmes, and to inculcate an entrepreneurship spirit and skills in the youth of the country. The NGOs and the private sector needed to continue playing their role of promoting and also providing employment for the youth through empowerment and providing skills development opportunities through internships, and to improve partnership with government.

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## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Graduate youth unemployment is a growing global phenomenon that is negatively affecting their present and future social-economic wellbeing (Moleke, 2005). Annamária (2013:183) argues that “If an increasing part of the new generation begins its adult life with the feeling of being unnecessary and having no chance to integrate into the mainstream society, the future will be burdened with more and more inexperienced and disappointed people with all the consequences of this.” This emphasises the need for exploration of perceptions of young unemployed graduates in Lusaka, Zambia, of the factors contributing to their unemployment so that ways to promote their employment can be found.

Regionally, Africa is experiencing a youth bulge, and like other Sub-Saharan countries. Zambia’s population is overwhelmingly young with about 45.3% of its population being under the age of 15 years old (Central Statistics Office (CSO), 2012: IX). Zambia’s economy is largely driven by the mining, agriculture, construction, transport and communication sectors. By 2012, Zambia’s total population was estimated at 14, 375,601 of which 49.3% were males and 50.7% females, 60.1% resided in rural areas while 39.8% resided in urban areas. Out of the country’s total population, the working age population (15-64 years) was 7,861,259 (75.9%), of which 70% were employed and the majority of the employed (61.7%) were in rural areas while the remaining 34.3% were employed in the urban areas (CSO, 2012: IX).

Of the 2012 total labour force, 60.2% are youths, with a youth unemployment rate of 10% (CSO, 2012:73). The highest rate of unemployment among the youth in Zambia is in the age group 20-24 years old at 14.3%, followed by the age group of 25-29 with 8.8%. The lowest rate is in the age group 30-35 with 5.6% (CSO, 2012: 74).

A further analysis of youth employment and unemployment in Zambia indicates that, of the country’s active labour force, 84.6% are employed in the informal sector especially the agriculture industry, while 15.4% are in the formal sector of the economy with a dominance in the education industry (CSO, 2012: IX). When youth unemployment is analysed by literacy and education level, the indication is that youth unemployment among the literate is at 11.5% compared to 6.0% among the illiterate, this means that graduate youth experience high unemployment when compared to the illiterate youth cohort. Meanwhile, unemployment is also high for persons who attained grades 8-12 compared to those with lower or higher education attainment levels (CSO, 2012: 74), this could be due to the fact that the informal

sector dominates the economy and that grade 8-12 persons are busy with school and are mostly inactive in searching for employment.

In 2012, the youthful population in Zambia aged 15-35 years old was 35.1% of the total population (CSO, 2012:18). According to the World Bank, 85 % of the Zambian youthful population with post-secondary technical education was in wage employment by 2013 (World Bank, 2013:25). These facts indicate that, in Zambia, completing post-secondary technical education greatly enhances a Zambian graduate's probability of accessing employment. However, urban youth with post-secondary level education overwhelmingly comprise the ranks of most unemployed with 27.4%, compared with 4.4% of youth in rural areas where most youths have access to employment opportunities in the agriculture related ventures (World Bank, 2013: 39).

The unemployment rate in Zambia is highest for youth who have completed senior secondary education but have no post-secondary education, and in most cases are in search of formal wage employment. This is a similar situation with that of South Africa, another Sub-Saharan African country. It is argued that the current structures of these economies and sources of growth are such that formal wage jobs are being created slowly, closing up possibilities of being able to absorb the new, increasing cohorts of youth that are entering the labour market amidst rising investments in the education sector (World Bank, 2013; Moleke, 2005).

The above 2012 analysis on the levels of education and employment opportunities in Zambia, agrees with the arguments of Moleke (2005) that people with higher education have a clear advantage in the labour market, and their unemployment rates are low. However, Moleke (2005) also argues that this clear advantage in the labour market is not experienced by all higher education graduates, and hence the rationale of this study, to explore the perceptions of young unemployed graduates in Lusaka, Zambia, of the factors contributing to their unemployment.

The first chapter of this dissertation provides a contextual understanding of the problem as well as the rationale and significance of the study. It also states the main research problem, research questions, and research objectives. This is followed by a brief explanation of the key concepts used in the study, the issue of reflexivity, and the structure of the dissertation.

## **1.2 Research Setting**

During the 1960s and 1970s, the production and export of copper led to an expansion of the urban economy. During this time, Lusaka, the biggest urban city in Zambia experienced high levels of rural-urban migration, leading to unplanned and informal settlements. Among these informal settlements is the Kanyama compound, the community targeted for this study. Kanyama is located approximately four kilometres from the Lusaka's town centre. In this community, there are low levels of education, high levels of crimes and violence, and high levels of unemployment and poverty. The ministry of local government has since recognized these kind of settlements and in partnership with some non-governmental organisations like CARE International, provides basic social services to improve the living standards of people in this Kanyama compound (Zambia-report, 2015).

## **1.3 Rationale and significance of the study**

For many Zambians jobs are a source of income for survival. Jobs are also important for the psychological well-being of people and for social cohesion in communities and countries (World Bank, 2012). Graduate youth unemployment is damaging for the economy as it can lead to 'frustration and disillusionment among young people, while extended periods of unemployment may result in the erosion and outdateding of young people's skills base' (Pauw, Oosthuizen & Van der Westhuizen, 2006:10).

In the capability approach by Sen (1999), youth unemployment denies the young people's capability or opportunity to realise their goals/ends/functionings to live as they wish. Sen (1999) further argues that youth exclusion from employment opportunities can lead to further social exclusion from employment and education opportunities, and can actually keep these youths trapped in poverty.

From the above analysis of youth unemployment, it is clear that the exclusion of youth graduates from employment opportunities has a negative impact on their quality of life both in the present and the future; it is also a threat to their survival. Therefore, the rationale of this research is to explore the perceptions of young unemployed graduates in Lusaka, Zambia, of the factors contributing to their unemployment, with acknowledgement that this study is essential given the enormous investments made in graduates' education by both the government and private individuals (Moleke, 2005). The findings from this study could encourage larger similar research projects to be conducted. It is also hoped that the study will contribute to an understanding of the range of factors contributing to youth graduate

unemployment, thereby assisting policy makers and planners to rationally devise interventions directed towards improving the youth employment rate among graduates in Zambia.

#### **1.4 Research Problem**

Graduate youth unemployment is a growing global problem that is negatively affecting their present and future social-economic wellbeing (Moleke, 2005). However, there seems to be no research study conducted on exploring the factors contributing to unemployment among graduate youth in Lusaka, Zambia. Lack of research into this problem leads to lack of understanding of the nature of the problem, the factors contributing it and the appropriate interventions that could promote youth graduate employment. This study attempted to bridge this gap in knowledge, focusing specifically on Kanyama compound in Lusaka, Zambia.

#### **1.5 Research Question**

What are the factors that contribute to unemployment among graduate youth in Lusaka, Zambia?

##### **1.5.1 Research Sub-Questions**

1. What have the job-seeking behaviour and experiences been of unemployed youth graduates?
2. What is unemployed youth graduates' understanding of the reasons for their unemployment?
3. What are the views and experiences of unemployed youth graduates of the consequences of their exclusion from employment opportunities?
4. What are unemployed youth graduates' views of ways to promote the employment of youth graduates in Lusaka, Zambia?

#### **1.6 Research Goal**

To explore the factors contributing to unemployment among graduate youth in Lusaka, Zambia.

##### **1.6.1 Main Research Objectives**

1. To explore and describe unemployed youth graduates' job-seeking behaviour and experiences.

2. To explore and describe unemployed youth graduates' understanding of the reasons for their unemployment.
3. To explore and describe the views and experiences of unemployed youth graduates of the consequences of their exclusion from employment opportunity.
4. To explore and describe unemployed youth graduates' views of ways to promote the employment of youth graduates.

### 1.7 Clarification of Concepts

**Youth:** In Zambia, a youth is a male or female aged between 15 - 35 years old (CSO, 2012:12). However, this study uses the age category of 20-35, because this age group captures the college and university youth graduates group which is the focus of this study.

**Graduate:** In this study, a graduate will be broadly defined as “an individual with any form of post-high school qualification such as a diploma, technical qualification or degree” (Pauw et al, 2006:1).

**Employed:** According to the 2010 Labour Force Survey of Zambia, the ‘employed’ are “those people of working age (above 15 years old) who performed some work for pay, profit, barter, or family gain in reference period of 12 months” (CSO 2010, in World Bank, 2013: 33).

**Unemployed:** Those members of the labour force (ages 15 -64) who are not working but are looking for work or who intend to set up their own business (World Bank, 2013:33).

**Labour force:** (economically active persons): The number of people of working age (ages 15–64) who are employed or who are unemployed and were available for work in the last seven days before the survey day (World Bank, 2013: 33).

### 1.8 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is crucial in qualitative research as it adds credibility to the final research report (Dowling, 2006). According to Hertz (1997: vii; as cited in Christensen & James, 2008: 224), reflexivity is “achieved through the researcher’s abilities in detachment, internal dialogue and constant scrutiny of the processes which construct and question his/her interpretations of field



experiences”. Hence in qualitative research, the researcher’s own biases and feelings, age, gender, language, and cultural background can and might impact on the research process.

For this study, the fact that the researcher is a youth graduate might have negatively impacted the research process. In this situation, the researcher might have inclined more to the side with the unemployed youth graduates in their comments on graduate youth unemployment, rather than being analytical of their comments. However, the researcher minimised this possibility through exploration of the literature review on the subject matter in order to unlearn the preconceived ideas on the subject.

For this research, the researcher kept her objectivity by allowing reality to be interpreted as experienced by the participants, and had as much interaction with the participants as possible during the process of making interview appointments. Probing for more explanations during the interviews from the participants was done, which enabled the researcher see things the way the participants saw them.

## **1.9 Structure of the Dissertation**

### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

This is the first chapter of this dissertation, it provides a contextual understanding of the problem as well as the rationale and significance of the study. It also states the main research problem, research questions, and research objectives. This is followed by a brief explanation of the key concepts used in the study, the issue of reflexivity, and the structure of the dissertation.

### **Chapter 2: Literature review**

This chapter discusses the youth policy and legislation of Zambia. The chapter also discusses the theoretical frameworks for the study, which is necessary for the analysis of research data collected (Fouché & Delport, 2005) and for an understanding of the concepts of youth employment and unemployment. Finally, the chapter presents a literature review on each of the four objectives of this study.

### **Chapter 3: Research methodology**

This methodological chapter discusses how the researcher collected and analysed the data and describes the research design that was used, identifies the targeted population and the sample,

explains the data collection approaches and the tools that were used to collect data, presents the data analysis method, and the limitations of the study before concluding the chapter.

#### **Chapter 4: Presentation and interpretation of findings**

This chapter presents the analysis of the findings from in-depth face-to-face interviews conducted with 20 unemployed youth graduates in the field of humanities and arts studies on factors contributing to unemployment among graduate youth in Lusaka, Zambia. The chapter begins with a presentation of the demographic profile of the participants, framework of analysis that comprise of themes and categories that emerged from the study, and finally, findings are presented and discussed, including being compared and contrasted with the literature in Chapter 2.

#### **Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations**

This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations from the key findings of this Study. Conclusions for this study are presented in relation to the objectives of the study, and the recommendations are presented from the conclusions made from the findings of the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the youth policy and legislation of Zambia. The chapter also discusses the theoretical frameworks for the study, which will be necessary for the analysis of research data collected (Fouché & Delport, 2005). Finally, the chapter presents a review of the literature related to each of the four objectives of the study, ending with a summary of the chapter. Sources of information for this chapter included: journal articles, policy documents, research reports, books, and labour force surveys.

### **2.2 Legislative and Policy Frameworks**

In this section, legal frameworks that the Zambian government has developed to deal with youth unemployment which include; the national youth council Act of 1986 of Zambia, and the national youth policy 2006, are discussed in detail below.

Zambia identifies youth unemployment as one of the problems that Zambian youths face due to lack of economic growth and scarce job opportunities. The government of Zambia also points out that youth unemployment could lead to involvement of these youth in crimes, early marriages, and other health threatening situations (National Youth Policy [NYP], 2006). Hence, the Zambian government through various legal instruments has made attempts to promote youth employment. However, the persistent existence of the youth unemployment problem in Zambia today, indicates the existence of challenges pertaining to the success of such policy interventions to youth unemployment.

**The National Youth Council Act of 1986 of Zambia:** This Act provides a legal basis for establishment of Gazette Notice No. 547 of 2004 upon which the National Youth Policy (2004) was formulated and subsequently reviewed in 2006. The Gazette Notice No. 547 of 2004 “guides the review of various pieces of legislation relating to youth development” (NYP, 2006:40). To effectively implement the NYP (2006), the National Youth Development Council (NYDC) was established, and through collaborations with the ministry of sport, youth and child development, the national youth policy programmes are implemented and monitored.

**National Youth Policy 2006:** The commitment of the Zambian government in addressing youth unemployment is well detailed and documented in its National Youth Policy of 2006 (NYP, 2006). In this document, the Zambian government pledged to overcome most of the problems being experienced by the youth population in the country.

## 2.3 Programmes and interventions to address youth unemployment

Included in the legal frameworks discussed above that the Zambian government has developed to deal with youth unemployment, are the various programmes and interventions that address youth unemployment. These programmes and interventions include:

***Formal education and vocation training:*** Through this programme, the government intends to make the youths employable by providing and making formal education available and accessible to many youths, and providing skills through vocational training to those youths without formal education.

***Youth development fund and Citizens Economic Empowerment Commission (CEEC):*** Under this programmes, the government intends to empower the youths by providing land and micro-financing to youths as start-up capital for those youths willing to venture into an entrepreneurship kind of employment.

***Government Ministries Internship Programme:*** This programme intends to provide youths with work experience to enhance their employability. Under this programme, youths are required to apply in government ministries for internships.

***General Public Service Job Recruitment Programme:*** Under this programme, youths with any kind of qualification are given an opportunity to apply for any job in the public service at a central place for placement in all government ministries. This programme intends to ease the job application process of youths who wish to work in the public service.

In conclusion, despite the existing legislations, policies and programmes, graduate youth unemployment is high in Zambia. In the following section, theoretical frameworks will be used to understand the problem of graduate youth unemployment.

## 2.4 Theoretical Frameworks

This section discusses two theories that support this study, namely, social exclusion theory and capability theory.

### 2.4.1 Social Exclusion Theory

Social exclusion broadly describes both the structures and the dynamic processes of inequality among groups in society. Over time, social exclusion has a negative impact on the individual experiencing it, and on society (Toye & Infanti, 2004). Social exclusion involves “being shut

out from any of the social, economic, political and cultural systems which determine the social integration of a person in society” (Walker & Walker, 1997:8). According to Ward (2009), social exclusion in society reflects itself in different forms of poverty which include: lack of information, unemployment, poor housing, lack of freedom and power, lack of peace and safety, family breakdown, and lack of education.

Social exclusion is clearly a multidimensional process which combines various forms of exclusions, and is a form of inequality in both material and power relations in society. According to Guildford (2000), social exclusion can be caused and can also be caused by social problems in society, like a lack of education, a lack of health services, and unemployment because of the multidimensional nature of social exclusion, Haralambos and Holborn (2008) argue that addressing social problems in society should take a multidimensional route. For example, lack of education among female youth may result not only from lack of schools, but also from poor health, society cultural norms, and other factors that should be recognised and addressed to solve the problem.

Sen (2000) further argues that exclusion can happen un-intentionally (passive exclusion), for example, due to slow economic growth, while at times it can be intentional (active exclusion), for example, due to a certain policy being enforced. Sen (2000) also argues that, both passive and active exclusion in society are routes to capability failure and poverty that certain people experience. According to Sen (2000), social exclusion theory is helpful in building an inclusive society because it gives a better understanding of the diverse phenomena of deprivation and poverty, with a particular focus on relational obstacles to social inclusion, and offers the policy implications of that understanding.

In this study, social exclusion theory helps in understanding: the nature of graduate youth exclusion from employment opportunities; the relational causes of this exclusion; the consequences of this exclusion; and also the policy implications of graduate youth unemployment, on which interventions can be based.

#### **2.4.2 Capability Approach**

The capability approach is an approach that supports the concept of human development and well-being, in which people are seen to be active rather than passive agents in the development

of their own future. Hence, concepts like empowerment, freedom/human rights, and participation are commonly used in this approach (Sen, 1999).

The capability approach was pioneered by philosopher and Nobel Prize winner in economics, Amartya Sen. Sen (1999:3) defines development “as a process of expanding the real freedom that people enjoy,” adding that freedom is both the "primary end and ... the principal means of development"(Sen, 1999: 36). He centralises freedom as the space in which the achievement of development should be evaluated and judged.

According to Sen (1999:75), capability is a kind of freedom (substantive) that enables people to achieve their alternative functionings. “Functionings” are the “various things a person may value doing or being," and are enabled by the capabilities that a person enjoys. “Capability” refers to the alternative combinations of functionings that are feasible for a person to achieve (Sen, 1999:75). Capability and functioning are considered to be both instrumental and substantive freedoms at the same time and they constitute a person's well-being.

Sen (1999) further argues that youth unemployment denies young people’s capability or opportunity to realise their goals/ends/functionings to live as they wish. He adds that youth exclusion from employment opportunity can lead to further social exclusion from employment and education opportunities, and can keep these youths trapped in poverty.

In this approach, Sen is highlighting the argument that improving people’s social well-being should involve the enhancement of people’s capabilities/opportunities so that they can achieve their functionings (Sen, 2002). Sen (1999) adds that the ability of people to function well or to reap the full benefits of the capabilities/freedoms/opportunities made available to them, is determined by the quality of those capabilities/freedoms/opportunities.

The role of this approach in this study is that, it helps in understanding: the causes of graduate youth unemployment; the consequences of graduate youth from employment opportunities; and also the policy implications of graduate youth unemployment, on which interventions can be based.

## **2.5 Reasons for youth graduate unemployment**

The field of study of a graduate is said to be a factor in influencing the employability of youth graduates. In the studies by Moleke (2005) and Baldry (2013) in South Africa, they found that graduates in the field of humanities and arts had the lowest figures for finding jobs. From this finding, they both suggested that humanities and arts disciplines are not preparing graduates

adequately for the job market. Reasons for the low figures for finding jobs with these qualifications are that, “they are considered to be too general in skills focus and employers may be less certain about the capability of graduates with these kinds of qualifications” (Moleke, 2005:7).

In a study by Nel and Neale-Shutte (2013) they agreed that the field of study maybe a reason for unemployment. On career choice, Alesina, Danninger and Rostagno (1999) also argued that educational and attitudinal choices are tilted toward the public sector in countries where public jobs are much more attractive and available than private sector jobs. This suggests that attractiveness and availability of job opportunities for a specific career also influences choice of a career.

Social networks or what Putnam (2000) calls ‘social capital’ is identified as an important factor in job search resources and strategies. Hence lack of social capital or social networks has the potential to influence youth graduate’s inability to access the available jobs on the labour market. Schoer, Rankin and Roberts (2012) found that the majority of employees in their study had been recruited through social networks and that these same employees reported a higher number of employed household members, highlighting the importance of household connections to the labour market. Other literature, Bernstein (2010); Rankin, Simkins, Rule, Trope and Bernstein (2007); and Wittenberg (2002), also identify networking as the most effective job searching strategy.

With the global phenomenon of increasing investments in higher education in both the public and private sector, as reflected in the increasing number of colleges and universities, an increased number of new graduates in need of employment opportunities are being added yearly to the labour force (NYP, 2006; Nel & Neale-Shutte, 2013). This situation strains the labour market which can only take a limited number due to its slow growth. In Zambia, lack of job opportunities is further worsened by the kind of education curriculum that promote and produce graduates who rarely see themselves as potential employers, but only as potential employees in the formal sector. Furthermore, the structure of the economy and sources of growth are such that formal wage jobs are being created slowly, limiting the number of employment opportunities amidst increasing employment demand (World Bank, 2013).

In a study done by Nel and Neale-Shutte (2013:443-445), 37.3% of the graduates who participated in this study a year after graduation indicated that they were unemployed, while 62.6 per cent indicated that they were in paid employment. Of those unemployed, reasons

related to: a lack of available jobs (24.9%); a lack of opportunities in the respondent's particular field of study (9%), and a lack of work experience in a particular field of study.

While job opportunities could be available, youth graduates face the problem of lacking work experience. Nel and Neale-Shutte (2013) found that the majority of unemployed graduate respondents felt that experiential or work-based learning enhanced their employability. Anyanwu's (2000) study also had similar results, the majority of the graduates in his study who had no prior work experience or may had some delay in entering the workforce.

Writing about entrepreneurship employment opportunities, Manolova, Eunni and Gyoshev (2008:205) argued that 'the shape and pace of entrepreneurship in the emerging economies is significantly determined by the dominant influence of the institutional environment'. They further argue that 'for newly forming organizations, the institutional environment defines, creates, and limits entrepreneurial opportunities', and this affects the speed and scope of entrepreneurial entry rates. They suggest that 'there appears to be a need to initiate programmes to upgrade the knowledge and skills of the people to actualize their entrepreneurial aspirations'

Focusing on hindrances to accessing a job, Baldry (2013) argues that the ability to embark on an efficient and consistent job search journey is vital for graduates in need of employment. However, the ability to be active and effective in the job search venture is dependent on the socio-economic situation of individual graduates. In a study by Baldry (2013) in South Africa, it was found that graduates of low socio-economic status and graduates with difficulty accessing resources showed the highest prevalence of unemployment. The common job search techniques, like internet access, newspapers for job adverts, calling or visiting labour market networks, and mailing, all require money. For the socially and economically disadvantaged graduate, such an expenditure would not be an option to incur if the basic needs like water, food for survival are not met. Kingdon and Knight (2005) further explain that poor graduates become discouraged job seekers due to inability to effectively search for jobs.

When talking about the effects of poverty on job searches, issues of location, the area of one's residence at the time of searching for a job, also become an issue (Baldry, 2013). This is because the infrastructure and distance from one's residence to facilities like the internet café, or post boxes may add to the cost of searching for a job, and in such situations, poor graduates may be involuntarily excluded from employment opportunities (Baldry, 2013).



## **2.6 The job-seeking behaviour and experiences of unemployed youth graduates**

Among other factors that may contribute to youth graduate unemployment, is the job-search behaviour of the unemployed. This behaviour is mostly influenced by the motivation for finding a job. Most motivation theories assume that not searching by the unemployed is a function of one having a low level of motivation to seek employment, the value one places on having a job, self-determination, and the expected results from the job-seeking venture. These factors do relate and interact in shaping the job-seeking behaviour and experiences of unemployed people (Maarten, Willy, Hans De Witte & Feather, 2005; Feather, 1990; Maarten, Willy, Siegfried De, Hans De & Edward, 2004; Vansteenkiste, Lens, Witte & Feather, 2005). Vansteenkiste et al (2005) found that higher confidence about finding a job might indicate more positive attitudes towards self and towards the current state of the labour market in terms of provision of employment opportunities.

With these mentioned factors at play, job-seeking is negatively or positively experienced. Unemployment affects life satisfaction and general health of unemployed graduates. However, it is also argued that ‘although we believe that many people who fail to persist at job searching are not motivated, it is possible that some are instead engaging in alternative activities rather than searching for a new job’ (Maarten et al, 2004:347). Atkinson and Birch (1970) also argue that when people’s motivation for an alternative activity becomes greater than their motivation for a target activity, they may switch to the alternative activity. Thus, directing unemployed people’s attention away from a job search towards alternative activities.

In a study done by Maarten, et al (2005), job search intensity positively correlated with motivation and employment value, indicating that unemployed people who are self-driven and motivated to search for a job and unemployed people who place higher value on gaining employment are more active job seekers. The results further showed that the more unemployed participants valued having a job and the more they felt controlled in their job search, the more they reported feeling worthless and socially isolated. These research participants also reported having negative job-seeking experiences, and lower life satisfaction and psychological well-being. Meanwhile, those with higher autonomous motivation were somewhat less satisfied with their present lives. Those unemployed participants with higher job expectancies reported a negative unemployment experience.

## **2.7 The consequences of youth exclusion from employment**

Youth unemployment is a problem that affects not only the individual youth, but also the family, and the whole of society. Idleness, frustrations and depression resulting from youth exclusion from employment may lead youths to engage in social vices such as prostitution, drug-abuse and alcohol consumption as well as criminal activities (NYP, 2006; Kingdon & Knight, 2004). Having to deal with these consequences for jobless youth is not only expensive, but also a threat for the society, affecting its future (Annamária, 2013).

Annamária (2013:183) further argues that “If an increasing part of the new generation begins its adult life with the feeling of being unnecessary and having no chance to integrate into the mainstream society, the future will be burdened with more and more inexperienced and disappointed people with all the consequences of this.” This emphasises the serious consequences of youth unemployment.

Initial unemployment and idleness of graduates have adverse psychological, social, occupational and financial effects on them. In a study done in Nigeria. Fajana (2000) argued that unemployment can lead to: loss of status, loss of prestige and economic strength or power as a result of the loss of wages and benefits of job, infliction of psychological injury resulting from the breakdown in social contacts and isolation from the world of work, loss of responsibility, identity and respect which the position at work ensures, and loss of purchasing power.

Furthermore, on the effects of youth unemployment, Ward (2009) argues that people excluded from the economy may experience poverty and, in order to have a livelihood, they may commit crime.

## **2.8 Ways to promote youth graduate employment**

The systems and types of social interactions in our environments that we as human beings find ourselves in, shape our ways of life, our opportunities and our abilities (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). Bronfenbrenner’s (1989) argument is that answers to solving social problems in our societies lie in the systems and structures that shape our daily interactions, our capabilities, and the freedoms that we enjoy. Government policy and management practices of the government of a country could be referred to here as the systems and the social interactions that shape our ways of life, and access to opportunities like employment.

Other stakeholders that shape our ways of life in terms of provision and distribution of goods and services are the non- governmental Organisations and the private sector through different roles that they play in the community (Simmons, 1998). These roles include: advocacy, information gathering and analysis, information dissemination, monitoring and watchdog role, generation of ideas and recommendations, service delivery, facilitation/mediation, financing and grant making. These roles could promote youth graduate employment.

Furthermore, a study done by Nel and Neale-Shutte (2013) in South Africa in which graduates were asked to identify ways in which graduate unemployment could be improved, found that graduate's responses included: to improve particular aspects of the content and delivery of their qualification or programme by encouraging smaller classes; ensuring that the latest teaching technology is used for lectures; enhancing the approachability of lecturers; ensuring that lecturers are suitably qualified and experienced; incorporating more practical work into programmes/qualifications and providing assistance to students to ease their transition into the world of work.

Nel and Neale-Shutte (2013) also believed that experiential or work-based learning should be a compulsory component of their programme/qualification, and that entrepreneurial skills should be taught, and that career guidance for students should be enhanced, and advice should be provided to first-year students in choosing appropriate modules/majors that are in demand by the labour market.

Amidst the growing size of the youth labour force, and the limited growth rate of the labour market especially in the formal sector in Zambia, investments to expand the informal sector and inculcation of entrepreneurship spirit and skills in the youth labour force can be possible alternatives for expansion of labour demand (Baldry, 2013; World Bank, 2013). A study by Nel and Neale-Shutte (2013) indicated that only a small percentage of graduates (1.4%) who were sampled indicated that they were self-employed, and that of all the employability skills that graduates perceived to have developed during their studies, the lowest mean ratings were assigned to entrepreneurship.

Meanwhile, studies by Putnam (2000); Schoer Rankin and Roberts (2012); Bernstein (2010); Rankin et al. (2007), and Wittenberg (2002) also argue on the need for youth graduates to build social capital or social networks in the labour market to help them access the available jobs. In these studies, findings suggest that having friends or relatives already employed in the labour

market or who have connections with the labour market increases the chances of finding employment early and easily for youth graduates.

In another study by Bessant (2004:387), she acknowledged the fact that youth involvement in solving their own problems through voicing out in demand of their rights would be a way to promote youth graduate employment. She argued that ‘youth participation has become a policy cliché to say ‘increased youth participation’ will ‘empower’ young people, help build community and remedy a range of social problems that young people go through.’

Another way that would promote youth employment is the promotion of merit based job recruitment processes. Issues of nepotism and corruption in employment recruitment create unequal access to employment opportunities, thereby creating some form of exclusions that could lead to long sustained poverty on the part of the victims (Lam, 1993).

## **2.9 Summary**

From the discussions about the policy, theories, and literature on youth graduate unemployment, there appears to be agreement that a substantial problem of youth graduate unemployment exists in Zambia. This problem is influenced by a number of factors at both the individual and structural levels, and this problem is experienced more by socially and economically disadvantaged graduates. Furthermore, the literature also reveals that there are interventions to this problem of graduate youth unemployment.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

To meet the main objective of this study, which was to explore the perceptions of young unemployed graduates in Lusaka, Zambia, of the factors contributing to their unemployment, this methodological chapter of this study discusses how the researcher collected and analysed data. The chapter further describes the research design that was used, identifies the targeted population and the sample, explains the data collection approaches and the tools that were used to collect data, presents the data analysis method, and the limitations of the study before concluding the chapter.

### **3.2 Research Approach**

To meet the research objectives of this study, the use of an exploratory qualitative approach, an epistemological position based in interpretivism was deemed necessary. A qualitative research approach is defined as: "...the study of people...as they go about their daily lives. It tries to understand how people live, how they talk and behave. It strives to understand the meaning peoples' words and behaviours have for them" (Tutty, Rothery & Grinnel, 1996: 4). Thus, the use of an exploratory qualitative approach in this study helped the researcher to gain an understanding on how the unemployed youth graduates in the study field of humanities and arts interpreted their daily experiences and the meaning they gave to their status of being unemployed in Lusaka, Zambia (Engel & Schutt, 2010).

### **3.3 Research Design**

To gain an understanding of how the unemployed youth graduates interpreted their daily experiences and the meaning they gave to their status of being unemployed, the researcher used an exploratory qualitative research design. This kind of research design requires that the researcher enters the field with an open mind in order to be able to identify vital themes as they emerge during the interview processes with the research participants (De Vos & Fouché, 2005).

### **3.4 Research Population**

The unemployed youth graduate participants for this study were residents of Kanyama, a socially and economically disadvantaged community close to the researcher's place of

residence in Lusaka. The reason for the choice of this geographical area is because in this community, the majority of people are unemployed, according to the Zambia report (2015).

In this study, there was one population and one sample that together fulfilled the objectives of this study. The population from which the research sample was drawn was from all the unemployed youth graduates in Kanyama compound with tertiary education level qualifications in the field of humanities and arts studies from any higher learning institution in Lusaka, Zambia. There was no data base available for this population in the selected study community of Kanyama. Therefore, access to this population was through faith based organisations that were present in this community (refer to section 3.4.2 for the reason to use faith based organisations).

### **3.4.1 Sampling method**

Being a qualitative study, the research sample was drawn from the research population in this study using a non-probability sampling method (Strydom, 2005). Under non-probability sampling method, purposive sampling and snowball sampling was used. Purposive sampling is the most common sampling method in qualitative research where the researcher actively selects the most productive elements from the research population to answer the research questions (Marshall, 1996). With purposive sampling, clear selection criteria/specifications of the sample were necessary in order to gather meaningful data (refer to section 3.4.3). To reach the desired size of the study sample, snowball sampling from the study population had to be used. Snowball sampling is when the sample is made up by approaching one participant who then helps the researcher to identify other similar people within the study population to make up the complete study sample (Strydom, 2005).

### **3.4.2 Selection process**

The selection process for the sample of unemployed youth graduates involved the use of community informants within faith based organisations (FBOs) in Kanyama. The FBOs, churches, were used to identify unemployed youth graduates in the field of humanities and arts studies. The choice of community informants to gain access to these graduates was based on the knowledge that faith based organisations (FBOs) serve large and diverse populations in a particular community of which some members could belong to the identified category of unemployed youth graduates.

To get in touch with the FBO leaders, the researcher purposively approached one church in Kanyama on the day they had their Sunday service worship, and the researcher managed to talk to one of the leaders of that church about the study's objectives and their potential role in identifying unemployed youth graduates in their congregation. During that meeting, the church leader was able to direct me to one youth member who was a graduate in Bachelor of Arts with education, and unemployed. This unemployed youth graduate was willing to participate in the study after being told of the study's objectives and he was asked to identify other unemployed youth graduates in the field of humanities and arts studies that he knew in Kanyama. To make up the twenty two unemployed youth graduates, snowball sampling method was used. The first graduate identified five of his friends who met the selection criteria. These five identified youth graduates helped to identify the other sixteen youth graduates through church or college/university connections to make up the sample of 20 participants for the main study, and the two for a pilot study.

Access to the identified participants by the researcher was through their cell phone numbers, and through the phone, the researcher introduced herself, introduced the study and its purpose, and asked them if they were willing to participate in the study. Fortunately, all the youth graduates that were called were willing to participate, and appointment dates for the interviews were agreed upon although a few had to re-schedule to later dates due to their other commitments.

### **3.4.3 Selection Criteria**

The selection criteria for the unemployed youth graduates were that they had to:

- Be Zambian citizens, since experiences and access to certain national resources and opportunities may vary on account of nationality.
- Be male or female Youth graduates, as defined in section 1.7 of this study, namely youth graduates aged 20 - 35 years old. For this study, a gender balanced sample was preferred, since the experiences of unemployment may vary due to gender. However, only 5 participants were females and the other 15 were males.
- Be residents of Kanyama compound, a socially and economically disadvantaged community in Lusaka.
- Have a tertiary level certificate, diploma or a degree qualification from any higher education institution in the study field of humanities and arts.

- Have been actively involved in a job search for at least 10 months from the time of qualification or from the time of leaving their previous job.
- Be willing to participate voluntarily in the study.

### **3.5 Data Collection**

Creswell (1998: 111) defines data collection as “a series of interrelated activities aimed at gathering good information to answer emerging research questions.”

**3.5.1 Data Collection Approach:** The study used semi structured, face-to-face interviews with each of the 20 participants. Permission to use one of the church premises as an interview venue was sought from the church leaders. In the interviews, only the researcher and the participant were present in an effort to maintain confidentiality of the information shared, and also in order to keep the discussion focused without any third party interruptions. The advantages of these face-to-face interviews for data collection were that: the researcher was able to explore the context in which participants gained their understanding of their experiences and perceptions regarding graduate youth unemployment; the researcher was also able to see things from the participants’ point of view during the interviews; and allowed for a high level of confidentiality while allowing more flexibility and freedom for participants to share their experiences and perceptions of youth unemployment (De Vos & Fouché. 2005; Babbie & Mouton, 2001). However, this approach was time consuming in terms of data collection and data analysis. The face-to-face interviews were also costly in terms of transport to and from the place of interviews, and calls made to set up appointments.

**3.5.2 Data Collection Instruments:** One semi-structured interview schedule was compiled to specifically address the four research objectives. This acted as a guide to prompt an in-depth discussion around various themes that the researcher wished to address with the participants. According to Greeff (2005), a semi-structured interview schedule is a model for collecting comprehensive and comparable data. See appendix A for the interview schedule that was used.

In the interview schedule, simple language was used and leading questions were avoided so as not to distort the data. The questions in the interview schedule were open-ended to allow participants to give more data. The schedule began with the introduction which introduced the researcher; the study objectives; the study ethics around voluntary participation, issues of confidentiality; permission to use a digital recorder, informed consent, access to the research findings and the length of the interview. This introduction helped the participants prepare for



the interview, to open up after knowing that their information would be kept confidential, and to generally know their role during the interview.

After the introduction, the interview schedule had four sections that covered the study objectives. Questions that related to a similar objective were grouped together so as to capture and understand the themes, categories, and sub-categories that were emerging from the data for each research objective, this also encouraged probing for more information during the interviews. Lastly, the interview schedule had a conclusion which included: the appreciation of the researcher for participation in the study; probing for more information from the participant; reassurance of confidentiality of the information they shared; and it gave participants an opportunity to express their experience of the interview section. Through the questions posed in the conclusion part of the interview schedule, the researcher was able to get additional important information about the study that could have been missed out during the time of the interview.

### **3.5.3 The factsheet**

To understand the participant's characteristics in relation to the selection criteria used in this study, information such as age, gender, total number of people in household, average household monthly income, name of institution attended, graduation month and year, degree obtained, field of study, and length of unemployment was collected from participants using a factsheet. See appendix B for a copy of the factsheet.

### **3.5.4 Data collection Tool**

With the signed consent of the participant, a digital recorder was used to record the interviews. Recording the interview sessions allowed the researcher to concentrate on exploring the topic, noting the non-verbal cues and being more attentive during the interview process. During the interviews, there was no malfunctioning of the tape recorder, and all the participants seemed comfortable with being recorded, and so there was no disturbance with the interview process, and the quality of data collected. (Opdenakker, 2006).

### **3.5.5 Pilot Study**

For this study, a pilot study with two unemployed youth graduates who met the selection criteria outlined in section 3.4.3 of this study was conducted. This was done to determine the

interview schedule's ability to meet the main study's objectives, researcher's capability in interviewing-probing skills, and to assess the time it would take to interview one participant.

After the pilot interviews were done, the researcher realised that some questions were repeated in the interview schedule, and that the researcher was not audible enough. Adjustments were made before the main study was conducted. Through the pilot study, the researcher was able to establish a logical pattern in which the participants interacted and responded to the research questions, and this helped the researcher to know areas where more probing was needed.

For the pilot study, the first two unemployed youth graduates in Kanyama community that were identified as potential study participants were selected, and the interviews were conducted a week before the commencement of the main study.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

The data collected were analysed by the researcher, using the eight steps suggested by Tesch (1990) which are as follows:

- 1) This process involved transcribing all the interviews and analysing each transcript.
- 2) During the analysis, labels were accorded to various texts in an effort to understand the underlying meanings in relation to the objectives of the study.
- 3) The texts were then coded according to the main themes, categories and sub-categories.
- 4) Further refinement of this coding was done in order to arrive at a coding framework, to make sense of the data.
- 5) The findings were then written up using the coding framework as a guideline.
- 6) Actual quotes were used to illustrate the themes/categories/sub-categories and these quotes were linked to various authors in the literature review.
- 7) The researcher added her critical commentary in the discussion. This was done by comparing and contrasting the research findings with other studies in order to provide critical understanding as to why it is similar or different.
- 8) A further step was then taken to use a causal layered analysis approach and developing a deeper level of understanding.

### 3.7 Data Verification

The trustworthiness of qualitative research is established on a set of criteria: transferability, credibility, confirmability, dependability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

**Transferability:** This refers to being able to generalise the findings of the study to the general population. Due to the size sample of 20 participants, and the subjective nature of this study which is based on individual's experiences, the findings could not be generalised (Engel & Schutt, 2010).

**Credibility:** In a research study, credibility refers to a situation of ensuring that the data collected from the study participants corresponds to the research questions (Babbie & Mouton, 2010). To ensure credibility, the researcher was guided by the interview schedule during the interviews to keep the interviews focused and to limit asking misleading questions. The selection criteria used, and the linking of the research findings to literature enhanced the credibility of this study.

**Confirmability:** This refers to whether or not the findings can be confirmed by another (De Vos & Fouché 2005:347). To ensure confirmability, actual interviews with the participants were recorded and the transcripts were made available to the supervisor. Also, the findings of this study were linked to other literature available and similar studies done on the topic of this study.

**Dependability:** This refers to providing evidence that if the study were to be repeated with a different group of participants in a similar setting, similar results will be obtained (Babbie & Mouton, 2010). To ensure dependability of this study, a clear and precise detailed account of how data was collected and analysed was provided in the study methodology, a description of how data was analysed, and the use of a semi-structured interview schedule to collect data also enhanced the dependability of this research.

### 3.8 Limitations of the study

#### Research Approach

A qualitative research approach is subjective in nature, and with the small size of the sample used, the credibility of the research findings are vulnerable to the presence of biased views of research participants. In addition, a possible lack of honesty in data collected from the research participants affects the credibility of research findings (Grinnell & Unrau, 2008).

## **Sample Type and Size**

In this study, one small purposive sample was used and drawn using a snowball sampling method. This sample size of 20 research participants was not representative of all unemployed youth graduates in Lusaka, Zambia. As a result, the findings from this study cannot be generalised. This argument is supported by Engel and Schutt (2010:96) who assert that purposive sampling may adequately represent the issues studied, but it does not produce a sample that represents the broader population.

## **Data collection**

During the interviews, all the interviews for this study were conducted in English language. However, Due to the public nature of the church organisation where the interviews were conducted, there were some instances where there was loud background noise from children playing outside the church. Participants were informed of this situation and they generally did not show signs of being disturbed by that noise. Furthermore, the presence of the interviewer could have made the interviewee uncomfortable and unable to express themselves fully, thereby, distorting the quality of data that was collected (Opdenakker, 2006).

### **3.9 Ethical considerations**

Ethical considerations in this study were professionally adhered to in line with the guidelines by the ethical standards of social science research. This is done in order not to endanger the mental, emotional or physical health of the participants as the nature of the study may induce sensitivity or worry in them as they come to new understandings about themselves (Babbie & Mouton (2010). Below are the ethical considerations incorporated into this research:

**Voluntary participation:** At the first contact with all the research participants, they were informed that taking part in the research was voluntary, and that they were free to decide not to participate at any time. Participants were again reminded at the beginning of the research interviews. They were also given a document (informed consent) to read and sign to cement their voluntary agreement to be interviewed. See Appendix C for a copy of the informed consent form.

**Confidentiality:** The researcher informed the research participants that the interview recordings would be kept strictly confidential and would be available only to herself and the supervisor. The recorded interviews were protected by a pass-word known only by the

researcher. Research participants were also informed that the final research report would only be used for academic purposes (Engel & Schutt, 2010).

**Anonymity:** The researcher asked the participants to choose a pseudonym before each interview so that their real names would remain unknown to all, other than the researcher (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

**Deception of subjects:** To avoid deception of all the research subjects, the researcher did not withhold any information from any of the research participants in an effort to secure their participation; the objectives of the study were made known to all the research participants, so that no false hopes would be raised regarding the benefits of participating in the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

**Limiting Harm to Participants:** The Potential harm to the youth graduate participants was psychological, as they would be recalling negative life experiences and consequences they had gone through due to their unemployment situation (Babbie & Mouton, 2010). To limit potential harm to participants, the researcher explained the objectives of the study at the very first meeting with them, and again before the research interviews. The researcher also made arrangements to refer youth graduate participants to an appropriate resource should the need arise during the interview.

**Participant's Access to the Research report:** The researcher will make sure that the final report and findings are made available to the research participants by contacting them on their cell numbers and meeting them individually to give them a hard or soft copy of the report.

### **3.10 Summary**

This chapter discussed the methodology that was used in this research project. The chapter also revealed the research design that was used, the sample population and how the sample was selected, and how data collection and analysis was approached. Included in this chapter is a discussion on data verification, the limitations of the study and the ethical considerations.

## CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents findings from in-depth face-to-face interviews conducted with 20 unemployed youth graduates on the perceptions of young unemployed graduates in Lusaka, Zambia, of the factors contributing to their unemployment. The chapter begins with a presentation of the demographic profile of the participants, framework of analysis that comprise of themes and categories that emerged from the study, and finally, findings are presented and discussed, including being compared and contrasted with the literature in Chapter 2, and a summary of the chapter is given at the end of this chapter.

#### 4.1.1 Profiling Participants

Key: **P:** Pseudonym

**AV:** Average household monthly income (Zambian Kwacha)

**NH:** Number of people in household

**Table: 4.1 Participants Profile**

P	Age (Years)	Gender	NH	AV	Field	Qualification	Graduation period	Unemployment period	Previously employed
Himpande	31	Male	2	K4500	Adult Education	Degree	08/2011	4 years	No
John	24	Male	7	-	Demography	Degree	08/2014	1 year	No
Ender	24	Female	9	K5000	Education	Degree	11/2014	11 months	No
Precious	24	Female	6	K8000	Education	Degree	11/2014	11 months	No
Chileshe	25	Female	3	K4500	Education	Degree	11/2014	11 months	No
Martin	27	Male	4	K6000	Education	Degree	11/2014	11 months	No
Pefias	30	Male	6	K5000	Education	Degree	11/2014	11 months	Yes
Conswell	29	Male	6	K3000	Journalism	Diploma	11/2013	1 year	No
Vinchi	27	Male	6	K4500	Education	Degree	11/2014	11 months	No
Nachi	25	Female	10	K4000	Education	Degree	11/2014	11 months	No
Mr. J	29	Male	7	K1000	Education	Degree	11/2014	11 months	No
Miles	26	Male	7	K5000	Education	Degree	11/2014	11 months	No
Jim	23	Male	10	K5000	Economics	Degree	11/2014	11 months	No
Sam	35	Male	6	K5000	IT	Certificate	11/2010	5 years	Yes
Jean	25	Female	8	K7000	Economics	Degree	11/2014	11 months	No
Mr. B	25	Male	4	K5500	Dev.studies	Degree	12/2013	1 year 8month	Yes
Mr. Price	26	Male	10	K2500	Economics	Degree	12/2013	2 years	Yes
Given	24	Male	4	K5000	Economics	Degree	8/2014	1 year	Yes
James	25	Male	3	K6000	Economics	Degree	12/2013	5 months	Yes
Peter	24	Male	6	K8000	Demography	Degree	11/2014	10 months	Yes

As seen from the table above, the age of the participants in this study ranged from 23-35 years. According to the Central Statistics Office of Zambia (CSO, 2012: ix), this age group unemployment rate is high. Fifteen of the twenty participants were males and five were females.

The average household number of people is 6 people and the average household income per month is K4, 974 (Zambian kwacha). This means that the financial capacity of the participants is very low, and it explains the finding that most of the participants indicated that the job-seeking process was very expensive undertaking that needed a lot of resources.

It is also seen that all the participant's education qualifications are in the field of arts and humanities, with a majority majoring in education. This fact concurs with the findings of CSO (2012) that the formal sector of Zambia is dominated by the education sector.

Eighteen of these participants obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree and the remaining two had a diploma and a certificate. Thirteen of the participants indicated that they had not been employed since their graduation, meanwhile most of those who indicated that they had worked since graduation had worked in a contract position.

The unemployment period of these participants averaged at 16 months. This demographic characteristics of the participants will help us understand the nature of unemployment among youth graduates later in this study.

#### **4.1.2 Themes and categories**

This section presents themes and categories that emerged from the analysis of the data collected during the face-to-face interviews. These themes and categories form the framework used in discussing the findings of this study.

**Table 4.2 Main themes and categories**

Main Themes	Categories and Sub-categories
4.2 The job-seeking behaviour and experiences of unemployed youth graduates	4.2.1 Job -seeking behaviour 4.2.1.1 Actively seeking for a job 4.2.1.2 The confidence of finding a job 4.2.1.3 Motivation for job-seeking 4.2.1.4 Determination in job-seeking 4.2.2 Job seeking experiences 4.2.3 Summary of Job -seeking behaviour and experiences
4.3 Unemployed youth graduates' understanding of the reasons for their unemployment	4.3.1 Field of study 4.3.1.1 Qualification-employment mis-match 4.3.1.2 Dependence on a formal or public sector post 4.3.1.3 Lack of career guidance 4.3.1.4 Lack of work experience 4.3.2 Lack of social connections 4.3.3 Socio- economic status 4.3.4 Lack of merit based job recruitment practices 4.3.5 Government policy 4.3.5.1 Lack of Job opportunities 4.3.5.2 Unsuccessful government policies and programmes to promote self- employment 4.3.6 Summary of the reasons for unemployment.
4.4 The views and experiences of the consequences of youth exclusion from employment	4.4.1 The consequences of youth exclusion from employment 4.4.1.1 Social wellbeing 4.4.1.2 Economic well-being 4.4.1.3 Illegal means of survival 4.4.1.4 Psychological well being 4.4.2 Effects on family 4.4.3 Effects on the future outlook of exclusion from employment 4.4.4 Summary of the views and experiences of the consequences of youth exclusion from employment



Main Themes	Categories and Sub-categories
4.5 Unemployed youth graduates' views of ways to promote their employment and that of other youth graduates	4.5.1 Youth driven ways to promote youth graduate employment 4.5.1.1 Self-employment 4.5.1.2 Youth to demand for employment opportunities 4.5.2 Government policy and programmes to promote youth graduate employment 4.5.2.1 Provision of employment opportunities 4.5.2.2 Provision of internship opportunities 4.5.2.3 Promotion of self-employment 4.5.2.4 Promote merit based employment recruitment 4.5.3 NGOs and the private sector based ways to promote youth graduate employment 4.5.3.1 Advisory role 4.5.3.2 Advocate for and provide youth graduate employment

## 4.2 The job-seeking behaviour and experiences of unemployed youth graduates

### 4.2.1 Job seeking behaviour

Most of the participants indicated that they were actively seeking employment, and that they were also confident that they will find the job they are seeking for. On the other hand, most of the participants indicated that they were prepared for job-seeking although the level of determination in job-seeking for most of them had gone down. Most of the participants indicated that family pressure and the need for personal income motivated them to seek for a job, and that the experiences of job-seeking for most of them were negative. It is important to note that all these factors relate and interact in shaping the job-seeking behaviour and experiences of the unemployed people as will be explained below.

#### 4.2.1.1 Actively seeking for a job

Most of the participants mentioned that they were actively searching for employment.

*“You know, a job as a man it will make me stable. It will define me as a man, yes I just need it so that I become independent, you know, staying with parents or guardians. There is a certain stage when a man just feels uncomfortable you know, being under one roof with someone whose taking care of you, it just pains (Vinchi).”*

*“Yes, I am actively searching, at least in a week I should drop 3 or 4 applications. The first thing I do when I wake up in the morning, I check the [website] for vacancies. I have access to the internet, just when I wake up I hear the news and net for vacancies.” (Mr. B)*

*“There are quite a number of reasons why am looking for employment. The first one being that financially am not stable. In the sense that in order for one to survive in this world, you must have...or you have to be able to meet the basic needs. That is shelter, water and some other necessities (Himpande).”*

This finding supports the argument that among the unemployed, not searching or being actively searching for a job is a function of the value one places on having a job, the expected results from the job-seeking venture, motivation, and determination that one has in searching for a job (Maarten et al, 2005; Feather, 1990; Maarten et al, 2004; Vansteenkiste et al, 2005). Hence, unemployed people who are motivated to search for a job and unemployed people who place higher value on gaining employment are more active job seekers.

#### **4.2.1.2 The confidence of finding a job**

The majority of the participants indicated that they were very confident that they would find the job they were searching for. The main reason they gave for having this confidence was because of the public sector job opportunities that were being promised by the government. This promise by the government to provide job opportunities was in reference to the lifting up of the employment freeze that government had effected over 2 years before the interviews for this study were conducted.

*“I hear the wage freeze will be finished... will be put to an end... am very hopeful there will be some jobs and opening of new what’s this.. Ministries, um, and I think that has brought new hope in me.” (Jim)*

*“You know, it was effected in 2013, 2013, no deployment, 2014 nothing, 2015 it’s almost going to an end this time...there is nothing...but because of general elections, actually we are sure to say before September, government will do something... yes, buying votes, it will be one way of buying votes, so there we will try our lucky. Yes, am more confident on my part that I will find a job, come 2016.” (Vinchi)*

*“I am very much confident looking at my qualification, looking at the current situation, we are just waiting for government to open up some openings.” (Pefias)*

The above verbatim(s) show that these participants had a high level of confidence that they would find a job. Although most of the participants in this study indicated that they were confident that they would find a job, they also indicated that their confidence had been low before the promise by the government to open up job opportunities especially in the education field. This finding concurs with that of Vansteenkiste et al (2005) who found that higher

confidence about finding a job might indicate more positive attitudes towards self and towards the current state of the labour market in terms of provision of employment opportunities.

#### **4.2.1.3 Motivation for job-seeking**

Most of the participants indicated that the need for personal income and to financially support their families were the motivating factors behind their search for a job.

*“Mainly because I want to better my standards of living.... and my driving force is that I just want to be... more relevant to society, to apply the skills which I have acquired over the years and over the course of my studies, so there is that financial incentive, like you want to help in supporting your family and also just to become relevant.”(James)*

*“To begin with, my motivating factor for searching a job is just to get established as an individual in life...Yes, I’ve been in school for quite some time and am still wandering if... but I think at this stage I just want to establish myself and start the foundation of my own in life, and take probably a different step in life. And the other motivating thing towards me searching for a job is helping out with family errands.”(Peter)*

*“it’s just, ah...to make a living, and for me it’s, ah, on a personal note in terms of, ah, I have younger siblings, I lost both parents and am being kept by my auntie, so I just want a job so that I can make a living and also be able to take care of my younger siblings.” (John)*

The above show that the unemployed youth graduates were well motivated in their job-seeking venture. Having motivation to find a job could increase not only the intensity of job-searching among the unemployed, but may also influence a negative job seeking experience due to frustrations of not finding a job at the expected period (Vansteenkiste et al, 2005). Similarly to this study, the majority of participants indicated having a higher level of motivation for job-searching.

#### **4.2.1.4 Determination levels in job-seeking**

Another important factor in the job-seeking behaviour is the determination level of the job seekers. Most of the participants in this study pointed out that their determination had decreased below imagined levels, for example:

*“Ah, it is not the same, it has changed a little bit... because of the responses that we meet in the job market, some where were you go you find that at least a degree, and you don’t have that degree besides a degree, to some they may have a degree but they will be told at least five years of experience and you just graduated from school, so that’s where the challenges sometimes is.”(Sam)*

*“No, not any more, I was very determined in the beginning but now not so much because I think it has taken too long.” (Jean)*

*“The interest and determination is going down because we were really expectant that things would be easy, but after a year, two, it’s just reducing...Until you eventually find people who have just given up entirely.”(Mr. Price)*

The above quotes provide evidence that these three participants’ determination in job-seeking had gone down, and the reason given by most participants was due to the negative experiences in the job-seeking venture. Maarten et al (2005), and Vansteenkiste et al (2005) argue that determination on the part of the job seekers plays a critical role of influencing job-seeking intensity (Maarten et al, 2005; Feather, 1990; Maarten et al, 2004).

#### **4.2.2 Job seeking experiences**

The job-seeking experiences for most of the participants were found to be negative. These negative experiences were expressed in the following manner:

*“This journey has been long for me and very painful because I’ve got goals. There are things which I need to do but the time has taken too long, but I still have that determination in me...Yah, otherwise what I can say the experience has been very painful.”(Pefias)*

*“I have my degree and I have been dropping application letters in different places, depreciating shoes and the response hasn’t been overwhelming. The enthusiasm fades out and the psychological aspect also hit you, you would think you are not capable of this particular job.” (John)*

*“You know sometimes it is frustrating...It is very painful, you find that people who are being employed they are not qualified, you know that you are qualified for that job but at the end of the day you are not getting it. The one who has been given that job is not qualified. So it’s really painful and frustrating, sometimes you even reach the point of giving up.” (Himpande)*

The above quotes indicate that the job-seeking experiences of these three unemployed youth graduates were negative. This finding supports that of Maarten, et al (2005) who found that unemployed participants who valued having a job and felt pressured by the family in their job search, indicated having negative job-seeking experiences especially as the period of unemployment increases. Although reasons for negative experiences varied for each participant in this study, they all indicated that their experience had been rough, frustrating or depressing. The main reasons that were said to have influenced this experience were those

identified as the reasons for the participants' unemployment problem. These are explored in the next section 4.3 below.

### **4.2.3 Summary of Job seeking behaviour and experiences**

Factors such as high level of motivation for job- seeking, the value one places on having a job, the determination, and the expected results from the job-seeking venture, relate and interact in shaping the job-seeking behaviour and experiences of people who are unemployed (Maarten et al, 2005; Feather, 1990; Maarten et al, 2004).

In this study, the findings on job seeking behaviour and experiences of youth graduates indicate that most of the participants mentioned that they were actively searching for employment; that they had a high level of confidence that they would find a job; that they were well motivated in their job-seeking venture although their levels of determination in job-seeking had gone down; and that the job-seeking experiences were negative.

## **4.3 Unemployed youth graduates' understanding of the reasons for their unemployment**

There are many reasons that were indicated by unemployed youth graduates as having contributed to their unemployment, these include; qualification-employment mis-match, dependence on a formal or public sector post, lack of career guidance, lack of work experience, lack of social connections lack of professionalism in job recruitment, Social economic status, and lack of job opportunities.

### **4.3.1 Field of study**

#### **4.3.1.1. Qualification-employment mis-match**

As can be seen on the participant's profile, all the participants were in the field of humanities and arts studies as was indicated in the participant's selection criteria in chapter Three, and most of them majored in education. The majority of these graduates pointed out that according to their understanding, their qualification disadvantaged them in finding a job because of a mis-match between their qualification and the labour market skills demand. This was echoed in the following quotations:

*"I can feel the qualifications that I have according to the way ...the way the institution has been giving it to us, there isn't too much of a link of the industry and the university where I was at because with them they said...they feel, the education that I was given is not really necessary ah for me to go and fit in their industry"(Miles).*

*Well I think I could say that there are few advantages, mostly they are disadvantages. First it's like h...when you tell people I have a degree from the University of Zambia, they will say 'ah nice' but when you tell them the program, for me mostly, people change their facial expression. So I am like, oh, this thing has actually brought some kind of a curse on me."(Mr. Price)*

*"And it seems that most of the people or the employees...the employers themselves they don't understand what adult education is, sometimes they will just say "what is that?"(Himpande)*

The above quotes provide evidence that unemployed youth graduates' field of study contributed to their unemployment problem. This finding supports that of Moleke (2005) and Baldry (2013) who found that graduates in the field of humanities and arts had the lowest figures for finding jobs because the qualifications in these fields are considered too general in skills focus and employers may be less certain about the capability of graduates with these kinds of qualifications.

#### **4.3.1.2 Dependence on a formal or public sector post**

It is important to note that in one section of Kanyama compound, a majority of participants majored in education. Their prolonged unemployment could indicate that such a reason restricted the graduates to only a formal, public sector kind of employment. However, as indicated above by some of the participants, this kind of employment was not available at the time of the study because the government had effected an employment freeze for three years. Moreover, most of these participants indicated that their confidence of finding a job had been based on government-teacher deployment that had been promised after the lifting up of the employment freeze in the public sector. For example:

*"Of course with ah the course I did, the key employer is government, normally we would rely on government when they are recruiting teachers... in the education sector. We are hoping that they would absorb us. At the moment it's hard." (Mr.J)*

*"in my own view, one of the main reason why am unemployed is that, I mentioned earlier that we dependent, we are depending so much on our courses. On the public sector and the government again has gone on employment freeze that has been a big blow."(Mr J)*

*"They don't really give us the other side of the picture where you might not be employed by the government or by the private sector. They don't really give us the skills on how we can survive. Without that, the only thing is, we just we wait for government to employ us if not government the private sector, not really self-employment."(Ender)*

Apart from the above indication that most of the participants depended on public sector employment opportunities, Most of the participants also indicated that they were seeking for formal kind of employment because of the job security guaranteed in the formal sector. For example:

*“The informal one there is no security. Yes, when you are formally employed, it means that you have... you will be secured, you will be protected. Rather than in the informal sector, where there is just... when you are employed you can be fired at any time.” (Himpande)*

*“The best that I would love is to be in formal employment because that’s where there is-job security. If today I joined, let me say, Zambia national broadcasting corporation, it means that eh, I will not...somebody will not just wake up tomorrow and fire me.”(Conswell)*

*“It is formal employment because of the security purposes, since there is job security. I would want to be deployed in government because there if I start a job I am assured that that thing is sustainable. Yah it will sustain me for some time and if I further my studies, even the better.”(Miles)*

In relation to this finding, Alesina et al (1999) argued that educational and attitudinal choices are tilted toward the public sector in countries where public jobs are much more attractive and available than private sector jobs. The demand for public employment is drawn by the advantage of a large income and greater job security, according to Alesina et al (1999). This kind of situation creates a culture that discourages private activities and entrepreneurship that could create more job opportunities.

#### **4.3.1.3 Lack of career guidance**

In this study, most of the participants indicated that they did not receive formal career guidance before choosing their studies. Some of the participants indicated that they just received a friend’s piece of advice or had someone who chose the qualification for them. For example:

*“I can’t really say they were professional because the only thing that the University of Zambia (UNZA) does is, when you go there in first year. They will call you as a group, just give you a brief orientation about each course they offer and the program that they offer, and that isn’t enough because they just give you a general idea. Yes you just feel that here and there, but, from the way they just presented themselves to us, and I think, coupled with our own ambitions and dreams, that wasn’t enough.”(Mr. Price)*

*“In terms of that, it was just my personal decision; I actually made that decision when I was already at the University of Zambia (UNZA), like I never really... got any career advice.”(James)*

*“Actually, ah, as I told you to say coming from a village set up...It was difficult for me to know which career is best for me...I had no option but to let the guys who had*

*exposure and experience apply for me. So they said no, we will pick where you will automatically be picked.” (Vinchi)*

A lack of career guidance is evidenced by these three participants. Formal career guidance avails one with the information necessary for making rational decisions regarding their career and employment opportunities available for them. Nel and Neale-Shutte (2013) argued that career guidance for students should be enhanced, and advice should be provided to first-year students in choosing appropriate modules/majors that are in demand by the labour market.

In addition, most of the participants indicated that poor secondary school certificate results rather than passion for the field influenced their choice of the field of study. For example:

*“Considering that the university were getting 6 points marks for the program, they wanted perfect marks so I thought my chances of being picked would be less. This is because I had 10 points, so better I go in a field I know I would be guaranteed of being chosen” (Jim)*

*“Usually when applying at UNZA they look at your results grade twelve results. So before I applied in the Bachelor of Arts with education. I was, ah, I had to go and consult at the academic office. They advised me that with your results the only programme they can accept you is to try in Bachelor of Arts, but these other programmes are very competitive. That’s how come I applied in Bachelor of Arts with education. It wasn’t really my heart desire.” (Endar)*

*“And now when applying you have to apply in a course which you are almost 90 percent sure you will be picked. And I think, and the only option where I think the points in terms of cut-off points when going to enter, in was the school of education.” (Mr. J)*

The above show that circumstances rather than passion for and employability in the field of study influenced most of the participant’s choice for their field of study. Lack of passion for one’s field of study or choosing a qualification that is not in demand in the labour market may contribute to lowering the chances of finding a job and demotivate unemployed job search intensity (Maarten et al, 2005; Maarten et al, 2004).

Meanwhile, a number of them also indicated that they would not upgrade their studies in the field they majored in. for example:

*“I want to further my studies but not in this qualification, I want to do something else. I wanted to... you know like something to do with health but mostly something to do with catering, I enjoy doing that.” (Chileshe)*

*“Ah no I won’t do a masters in demography... but I’ll do a masters in population studies course which is the public health and /epidemiology...Yar as I said, demography is not quite marketable...I want to broaden it now, looking at our labour market.” (Peter)*



*I think my plan, ah, maybe in years to come, I want to upgrade it, to go and do master's...I want to divert, do something else, maybe business courses, because I think am a business minded person.”(Martin)*

The above quotations indicate that the three participants did not like the programmes they majored into.

#### **4.3.1.4 Lack of work experience**

The majority of participants indicated that according to their understanding lack of work experience contributed to their unemployment. In reference to the participant's profile, the majority were youth graduates straight from their institutions of learning with an average of a year of unemployment. Lack of experience was voiced out in the following manner:

*“Jobs that are advertised they want people with experience, and ah being a graduate just coming straight from school without any experience. Is hindering graduates like me to be employed.” (Eder)*

*“Most qualifications that are advertised, they want masters so I feel like am disadvantaged there and if not they want experience and I only graduated last year and where am I going to get the three years-experience when everybody who is employing wants to employ somebody with experience?”(Jim)*

*“Number one factor I think, some of us are not told... I think when you are in university 2nd, 3rd year, your are supposed to start your internships, it really helps with work experience, work experience puts off a lot of people, that I wasn't told, only knew about after I graduated.”(Mr. B)*

From the above, it is clear that the three participants lacked work experience for them to be employed. In a study by Nel and Neale-Shutte (2013), it was also found that the majority of unemployed graduate respondents felt that experiential or work-based learning enhanced their employability. Anyanwu's (2000) study also had similar results when he found that the majority of the graduates in his study who had no prior work experience may have or had some delay in entering the workforce. In this study, a majority of participants indicated that they had not worked since their graduation and work experience was also indicated by most participants as a factor that enables young graduates to secure a job in the labour market.

### 4.3.2 Lack of social connections

A lack of social connections was indicated by most participants as one of the reasons for their unemployment. Conversely, social connections was voiced by a majority of participants as one of the factors that counts in the labour market for young graduates to secure a job. For example:

*“The levels of nepotism are very bad because it think most people that got jobs after me, after we graduated in my intake, most of them, is because of ah connections.”(Mr. B)*

*“The reason could be I have no one to back me up, am trying quiet alright. I am trying to apply but there is no one that I know there to back me up if my name comes, talking about connections.”(Miles)*

*“You find that in our days people don’t find employment because you have got the right paper. Sometimes you can only find employment because there are certain connections, certain connections that you have.” (Conswell)*

Social networks or what Putnam (2000) calls ‘social capital’ is identified as an important factor in job search resources and strategies. Schoer et al (2012) found that the majority of employees in their study had been recruited through social networks and that these same employees reported a higher number of employed household members. Hence, lack of social networks in the labour market limits the chances of being employed for the unemployed.

### 4.3.3 Socio- economic status

The ability to be active and effective in the job search venture is dependent on the socio-economic situation of individual graduates. In this study, all the participants were residents of Kanyama compound, a socially and economically challenged community, and most of them indicated that their household average income of K4,974 was very low to support the average family size of 6 people, hence a finding that the job-seeking process was expensive for them.

*“It’s frustrating on the fact that. say today I read about an advert I have to move from home Makeni to town to get my papers and everything ready, minimum if I see a job advert I need a K50 and like I have told you it’s been a struggle money wise it’s been frustrating, that has been my experience, it’s very frustrating.” (Mr.B)*

*“My experience has been such, there is a responsibility, and it needs money. I think there was a situation where you completely have no money to print your CV, photocopy your results and to drop an application... That has been my worst experience.” (Mr. J)*

*“The main challenge that I usually find in active job search is mostly financial, whereby, like when you have to make many applications. Meaning you have to make a lot of copies, you have to spend money, you have to move around...sometimes opportunities may come but you can’t –but you can’t make it there because of limited finances.”(James)*

From the above, it is evident that the participant's job seeking process was expensive for them. The long distances that they had to cover to either attend interviews or submit their application letter and the printing /photocopying of job application materials all added to the cost of job searching. Similarly, in a study by Baldry (2013) in South Africa, it was found that graduates of low socio-economic status and graduates with difficulty accessing resources showed the highest prevalence of unemployment. Therefore, the low socio-economic status of most participants in this study could have played a role in their problem of unemployment.

#### **4.3.4 Lack of merit based job recruitment practices**

Most of the participants reported that the job recruitment practices of many employers was not based on the merit of one's qualification but based mainly on nepotism and corruption. This was voiced out in the following words:

*“Sometimes you go to this office...you knock, you introduce yourself and you tell them why you are there or you have visited them, then they will just say there are no vacancies...but at the end of the day you find that in the same ministry or the same office, the other one or a relative goes then he or she is employed. It is very painful, and then sometimes you find that people who are being employed they are not qualified. You know that you are qualified for that job but at the end of the day you are not getting it.” (Himpande)*

*“Factors like nepotism, corruption, and other factors like connections, made it worse because you find those who are supposed to get the jobs are out there, and those who are not supposed to get the jobs are the ones getting the jobs.” (Mr. Price)*

*“I feel people right now are not employing on merit, they are employing through corruption, nepotism all, who knows. Everybody is unemployed right now so people are getting employed through mischievous means.” (Jim)*

The above verbatim(s) show that nepotism and corruption hindered participant's access to employment. Asaju, Arome and Anyio (2014) also found out that rising levels of unemployment was due to nepotism and corruption in both public and private sectors. Participants expressed high emotions when speaking on this issue. In the researcher's view, nepotism as a negative effects of not having or lack of enforcement of job recruitment labour policies. Many participants indicated that if such job recruitment practices continue, the value of education will be lost because having a qualification is no longer necessary in accessing formal employment. For example, some of the participants, Mr. Miles, Vinchi and Conswell had this to say:

*“It seems, ah, to me in fact the message that am sending to those that are still in school...could be like there is nothing good that comes out. It doesn't show any difference in fact with those that are successful that have not even gone to school, they are laughing at us now, one year without a job.”(Miles)*

*“And the person who did not go to tertiary education, they want to see, to say what are the benefits of tertiary education? But the moment they, they are busy everyday they are seeing me home without any employment they see no value of education.”(Vinchi)*

*“Now at the moment we just tell people, no I completed, I have got a diploma, but can you show me the fruit of what you have gone through, you are not able to, so it's very difficult....Our image is being killed and not only my personal image, also the image of the education sector in the country.” (Conswell)*

Corruption in job recruitment on the other hand could deny access to a job especially if job seekers are financially challenged to bribe someone to access a job, as indicated by the participants below.

*“There is bad leadership, because there is corruption in our country. So for you to get a job, you need to know someone, you have to bribe someone.” (Precious)*

*“You'll find you are more than 1000, so out of that number its rear to be picked out of lucky but it is normally out of nepotism, you know bribery...That's how our friend pull out, you find they have gone, they have found jobs because of such, not only on a merit basis.” (Vinchi)*

*“Sometimes you will find there are people who would say the job is there but, we are going to deal on a ground of 'you scratch my back, I scratch yours,' so you start now bribing people for you to have access to that job and if you, as poor as I am, you just fold your arms behind and watch people get jobs.” (Sam)*

Being financially challenged was the case of many participants who indicated that they had no means of generating income. This indicates that corruption in job recruitment could hinder access to a job on the part of youth graduates that are financially challenged. Moreover, most of the participants also indicated that they had financial challenges, such that most of them indicated that they were still dependent on their family for a living. For example:

*“I'm a grown up youth I think I deserve privacy. In this situation I don't have that privacy, I have to stay in my fathers' house whereby sometimes I'm forced to sleep at the sitting room so imagine that situation. I've no financial independence. I cannot do what I want, in fact what I can say is that I can't live my goals because of my financial challenges.”(Pefias)*

*Then the other part is that I am staying with my relatives. And I feel at this age am creating another burden on someone else. They might not come open to me and tell me but you feel guilty personally. There is always stress and depression.”(Mr. J)*

*How do I survive? I have been assisted by my parents with rentals from a shop in the jack market, that money I use it to survive and to keep on with my job search, so the money I get, I use it as a continuation and to keep on job searching...Am being kept by*

*my father, he provides everything, the food...and the money I use for job searching.”(Jim)*

### **4.3.5 Government policy**

Government policy provides a system in which citizens are able to access and make use of opportunities that enable citizens to develop as individuals or as a society (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). In this case, the government of Zambia through several legal instruments takes the responsibility of providing educational skills and employment opportunities to citizens which included all the participants in this study. Sen (2000) further argues that exclusion in society can happen unintentionally (passive exclusion), for example, due to slow economic growth, while at times it can be intentional (active exclusion), for example, due to a certain policy being enforced. This means policy monitoring and programme evaluation would help provide more and better-quality jobs for young people.

#### **4.3.5.1 Lack of Job opportunities**

The majority of participants indicated that lack of job opportunities was one of the reasons for their unemployment. For example:

*“Yar, that makes you find it difficult to be employed... I feel there are so many graduates every year in Zambia. So many institutions have mushroomed and we have so many graduates with different qualifications and there are limited jobs out there... So I feel the number of graduates be in relation to the opportunities that are out there.”(Peter)*

*“Somewhere in a compound where we come from, you will find a group of 20 people, and the chances of you getting or finding somebody who is in formal employment are zero...It’s zero so that’s actually, it is supposed to tell you that people do not have jobs, we do not have jobs.”(Conswell)*

*“I think even the job market, I think the fact that from the time I graduated we have had employment freeze in Zambia. The government, the biggest employer has not been employing so everyone has been exerting pressure on the private sector. So we have not had to many job openings.”(Mr B)*

In the capability approach, Sen (1999) recognises the fact that in order for people to develop, opportunities for them to do so should be provided. In this case, lack of employment opportunities for youth graduates cripples their ability to function and become who they want to be, to enjoy the things they want to enjoy.

In addition, the majority of participants also pointed out that issues of high retirement age policy that was effected by the government limited their access to job opportunities in the public sector. For example:

*“Again the government has extended the retirement age for teachers from 55 to 65 years which means ten years of working has been added, there will be no teachers who are retiring. How do I get employed when you elders or the elders who are already in employment are not retiring for ten years. Which means they will still have those places for the youth for ten years, which is a burden to the youths.” (Vinchi)*

*“I think in terms of bad planning, government bad planning, you find that those people who are supposed to retire, they are still working there. So as a result, it takes time for us graduates to be in service.” (Martin)*

*“To promote youth graduate in Zambia, first they should revise the retirement age because most of the reasons why they are not employing is because they have people who are already there and there are people who are old and they still want to claim for those positions so its difficult to create opportunities especially for the youth.” (James)*

High retirement age could hinder the earlier entry of young graduates in the labour market and can contribute to graduate youth unemployment. Sackmann (2001) argues that the transition between education and the employment system and the transition between employment and retirement share parallels. He further argues that such transitions are shaped mainly by the institutional structures in one’s environment.

Poor investment policy by government was another issue that was said by participants to be contributing to lack of job opportunities. Many said that the government lacked new industries to absorb a lot of graduates, for example:

*“The first thing why I am not employed, it’s, ah, it’s because there are no jobs in the country. The government is not opening up the, ah, the job industry.” (Conswell)*

*“Create more industries, create more institutions where those graduates who finished school... they need a place to work, to use their knowledge, so the government also needs to make enough institutions or industries.” (Jim)*

*“There is need for government to open more companies so that whoever graduates at least, they can be able to work. Again the other thing they need to do is ah include industrial skills in every programme so that if we don’t get a job at least we can be able to help ourselves with those industrial skills.” (Precious)*

Freeman and Wise (1982) agree that macroeconomic policies, trade and foreign direct investment policies do play a role in the creation of job opportunities. In the capability approach, Sen (1999) argues that people need to be provided with opportunities or means to be able to function and provide for their needs. In the case of unemployed youth graduates, lack

of employment opportunities would deny them the ability to earn income to provide for their daily basic human needs.

#### **4.3.5.2 Unsuccessful government policies and programmes to promote self-employment**

Failure by the government policies to promote self-employment through inculcation of entrepreneurship spirit and skills and providing loans for youths in the country were pointed out as the main hindrances to self-employment. For example:

*“I think even the education we get, maybe it is mainly theoretically, it’s not really practical, so no wonder we are...when we finish school we always think of being employed.” (Nachi)*

*Yes, the other thing is, you can blame it on poor education system. We are not okay, in whatever field, they are supposed to include industrial skills, so that if you are unable to get a job, you can use those industrial skills for you to sustain yourself. Like for my program, there were no industrial skills, so the only thing that am waiting for is to be employed. Yes, even if I am to start business, what business can I do, where can I find the money from.*

*“But again the problem also comes in with the education system that we have. Usually they are more theoretical than practical. They don’t really give us the skills on how we can survive. Without that, the only thing we are waiting is for government to employ us if not government the private sector, not really self-employment.” (Eder)*

In a study by the World Bank (2013), it was found that lack of job opportunities was worsened by the kind of education curriculum and economic structures that promote and produce graduates who rarely see themselves as potential employers, but only as potential employees in the formal sector. When asked if they had ever tried self-employment, many participants indicated that they had not tried anything of their own due to lack of capital and entrepreneurship skills. For example:

*“Self-employment? No, I haven’t tried it... I think I am able to do it. With resources, I am able to do it.” (Precious).*

*“At the moment I don’t even know what I can do if it comes to self-employment...like I said the only thing we rely on is government...I think it’s nice when you know where to start and how to go about it.”(Endar)*

*“I haven’t tried it really at the moment...But once in a while, I think that’s the next strategy I am working on. If I go beyond November, December going into 2016 I think I would love to venture into informal sector.”(Mr. J)*

Despite the fact that most of the participants had not tried self-employment, most of the participants expressed an interest in venturing into self-employment as an option to their unemployment problem. For example:

*“I think if I do not find a job, I can do something else, like maybe I can even get a loan I do some business. If am able to or if someone is to give some money, I can do something else than just depending on a job hunting. Yes, but I can as well job hunt and then do something else.”(Precious)*

*“But ah but right now the plans I have, ah, maybe just to start something else, entrepreneurship that’s what I am thinking as at now...I think, ah, I just have to start my own business.”(Martin)*

*I’ll still do something though I haven’t told anybody but I have been thinking of venturing into ah designing, yes, fashion and designing...I can do it. I was thinking I should start as little as mum can afford to give me, I start my own thing. Yeah, I think that way will make me to survive because I have to think in those lines, the thing is...At least I should have a back-up.” (Nachi)*

However, a majority of them indicated that self-employment was not feasible at that time because of lack of capital. For example:

*“Now...ok the challenge which is there is if you have little of capital and you depend on that same money, sometimes you will end up by eating /the capital. So right now, self-employment is not feasible because I don’t have money.” (Himpande)*

*I have never but because of the experience I have had for the past 12 months, it has given me that self– drive of becoming self-employed. At the moment, ah, it’s not really feasible because I haven’t done anything of that kind.”(Nachi)*

*“Am really saying entrepreneurship is not feasible for me because of the funds that are there...You know, it’s feasible only if someone has income that is enough.”(Mr. Price)*

An indication that the majority of youth graduates had not tried self-employment was also found in a study by Nel and Neale-Shutte (2013) who found that only a small percentage of graduates (1.4%) who were sampled indicated that they were self-employed, and that of all the employability skills that graduates perceived to have developed during their studies, the lowest mean ratings were assigned to entrepreneurship.

Meanwhile, indications by participants were also made that the economic environment for any business was not favourable in the country at the time of the interviews. This was specifically due to the eight hour electricity power-cuts that were experienced by the whole country, and the loss of value of the Zambian currency, for example:

*“Look at the current situation, how do I get motivated to open a barbershop or a welding chani when there is no power every day. the whole day, Its ever, you know*



*load-shedding is continuous eight hours during a day there is no power, how many hours are you going to work.”(Vinchi)*

*“A few people you know, that have tried to be in business, they have failed because the economy is being run in a disjointed manner. You can’t do business as for now because all your capital is going to be eaten, it will go. The dollar is so high, It’s hard really even to try something of your own.” (Conswell)*

*“At the moment it’s very risky for entrepreneurs to exist in Zambia. Risky in the sense that if you look at the government, they have been carelessly allowing the foreigners to invest in Zambia. They don’t define what companies or what businesses foreigners should run...Such that you’ll find, Chinese are operating shops, and if they are operating shops, they are making blocks, what are we Zambians going to do?”(Mr. Price)*

These quotes above are evidence that the environment for self-employment was indeed not favourable. In a study by Manolova et al (2008) they found that the institutional environment defines, creates, and limits entrepreneurial opportunities, thereby affecting the speed and scope of entrepreneurial entry rates. They argue that there seems to be a need to initiate programmes that will upgrade the knowledge and skills of the people so that they can actualize their entrepreneurial aspirations. Moreover, the majority of the participants indicated that they were not aware of any government programmes that aimed at assisting young graduates with employment opportunities. This was pointed out in this manner:

*“At the moment, there is none... I don’t know any of those because if there was any I could have heard about it. I don’t think there is any. Unless if it was recently introduced because I don’t know any. Ok, I might not really be too well vested on this but I think I don’t because am saying this if they were any, they would have told us when we were graduating because we had government officials there.”(Mr. Price)*

*“I am not aware of any government program, maybe I haven’t just heard of any of them but am not aware of any.”(Jean)*

*“Right now am not aware of any government programme which is aimed at assisting me who is a graduate with employment... But for us graduates, am not seeing anything the government is trying to do to put across to help us, because everything is against us.”(Vinchi)*

The above would give an indication that the government programmes mentioned in the National Youth Policy of Zambia, that promote youth graduate employment were not being publicised or made available to the youths, the intended beneficiaries. Manolova et al (2008) argue that programmes that enhance entrepreneurship should be developed and be able to inculcate a spirit of entrepreneurship in people, hence access to such programmes and a good entrepreneurial environment should be enhanced so that young graduates are be able to venture into self-employment.

### **4.3.6 Summary of the reasons for unemployment**

From the analysis above, it is clear that the participant's understanding of the reasons for their unemployment centred around their qualification-employment mis-match, dependence on a formal or public sector post, lack of career guidance, lack of work experience, lack of social connections, the social economic status, lack of professionalism in job recruitment, lack of job opportunities, and the unsuccessful government policies and programmes to promote self-employment.

## **4.4 The consequences of youth exclusion from employment**

Graduates' initial unemployment has adverse psychological, social, occupational and financial effects on them (Fajana, 2000). Unemployment may cause distress, income loss, and damage to social standing and self-respect. Idleness, frustrations and depression resulting from youth exclusion from employment may lead youth to engage in social vices such as prostitution, drug-abuse and alcohol consumption as well as criminal activities (NYP, 2006; Kingdon & Knight, 2004). Over time, social exclusion has a negative impact on the individual experiencing it, as well as on society (Toye & Infanti, 2004).

### **4.4.1 Experiences of the consequences of exclusion from employment**

#### **4.4.1.1 Social wellbeing**

The majority of participants in this study indicated that exclusion from employment had affected their social interactions. They expressed experiencing discrimination and loss of power in their daily interactions with their friends. This was pointed out in the following words:

*"I cannot socialise with people, because usually my financial status hinders me to reach to that level. I cannot eat what I want, I cannot dress the way I want to dress, so even in terms of health wise, I cannot go to medical check-ups because I have no money, because I've no employment, so it has, it has really affected me in all angles of my life, socially, spiritually I cannot worship well at church coz always am thinking about my needs." (Pefias)*

*"Yes, socially, you know, classes, there are certain people that were friends but maybe if one gets employed, one wouldn't want to associate oneself with them because one will know that these people...this person will just be asking for money from me." (Conswell)*

*It has affected me in a way such that you can't really contribute something even when you are with your friends, you can't really say something trying to make them believe*

*or something, you can't really come out on some certain issues just because you still a dependent (Nachi)*

As can be noted above, participants' exclusion from employment leads into further social exclusion. Lack of power is a form of poverty that people need to get out of (Sen, 1999). Participants also cited that being unemployed had made them lose self-esteem, respect from others and friends due to inability to socialise. Others said that it was depressing not to have income. In a study done by Fajana (2000), he also found that there is an infliction of psychological injury as result of the breakdown in social contacts and isolation from the world of work, loss of responsibility, identity and respect. Annamária (2013) argued that the consequences of jobless youth is not only expensive, but also a threat for the society. Unemployed youths tend to engage themselves in criminal, and illegal activities that might affect their future (NYP, 2006).

#### **4.4.1.2 Economic well-being**

Further exploration during the current study of the consequences of exclusion from employment found that many participants indicated that they were economically affected by being excluded from employment. For example:

*"I was detached from mom when I was two years old, so, ah, there are times when I want to go visit her but I have no means. She would at times take it as if maybe I just did it because I've not been with her. She has not been with me for twenty one years, like am neglecting her but it's not like that. I may want to help but I don't know how, where to start from." (Miles)*

*"In terms of financial wise, it's a challenge because at the moment we are talking of a dollar being above, somewhere thirteen kwacha. That in itself is serious... it has got actually serious implications on our part because things now are very much expensive. They are very expensive, we are actually living maybe, not more than a dollar very less, I mean far, far below the dollar... You can't have a full meal. You can't buy anything for your child. So that is a serious disaster on our part." (Conswell)*

*"Financially I am not stable in the sense that in order for one to survive in this world, you must have...or you have to be able to meet the basic needs that is shelter, water and some other necessities." (Himpande).*

It is clear that economically, participants were affected. Ryan (2001) argues that unemployment may damage the economic prospects of the unemployed, by causing skills and motivation to decay, and inducing employers to disfavour them as potential recruits to enable them access to a means of survival. As already indicated by participants earlier on, a need for income to support themselves and family members was highlighted to be the motivating factors for job searching.

Furthermore, a majority also indicated that they planned to further their studies but a lack of money was the hindrance. For example:

*Yah, plans are there, I want to go as far as I can. I think the only thing which is hindering me as I said earlier on that I need a job as earlier than yesterday. When I get this job, it will be easier for me to implement those plans, I want to go as far as being a professor.”(Pefias)*

*“I would like to either do masters in economics and finance or a second degree in actuarial science. Hopefully next year...if I can find a scholarship or funding of some sort next year June...Self-sponsorship at the moment, no, I can’t.”(Jean)*

*“Sure, I wish to further my studies as soon as possible given the financial muscle...If I find a job my first priority is to do a post graduate and do my doctorate in economics, but now because of money am handicapped.”(Given)*

In a study by Moleke (2005), he argues that people with higher education qualifications have a clear advantage in the labour market, and their unemployment rates are low. In line with Moleke (2005)’s argument, the unemployment situation of the participants could be improved by enabling them to further their studies. Hence, a lack of access to income due to lack of employment hinders the youth graduates from furthering their studies. According to Sen (1999), such forms of exclusion from employment deny the victims freedom to become who they want in life and this negatively affects human development.

#### **4.4.1.3      Illegal means of survival**

Without an income, most of the participants experienced economic hardships. When asked how they survived without an income, as already indicated earlier, most of the unemployed graduate participants indicated that they were dependants, and that they got involved in the illegal act of writing assignments and reports for students in various colleges and universities to earn something that they could use for their personal needs. For example:

*“The effect of not having money is that what I said is that it leads into so many bad things because others will be going into behaviours which are not accepted. People will start doing certain things which were not supposed to be done, because somebody will say “me the only survival ways I have now is being maybe in a brothel”. Then you are seeing that this person is risking his life or her life, because now her life is at risk. She will contract...somebody can contract HIV and AIDS.”(Conswell)*

*“It’s tough but we have to cope. You know, sometimes I wonder why people go to school these days, because in the past people used to go there for knowledge but these days they go to school and end up giving us the assignments and reports to do for them. But we grateful cause, even with the little money we get from those... if it wasn’t for them we would have died of hunger.” (Mr. Price)*

*“So instead of me just being seated, I need to utilise my skills. So I go and meet students who are in colleges and universities, they give me their own work, I write for them, they give me money, that’s the only way I will keep going. It has now become formal in Zambia because we don’t have employment. Yah, that’s what is keeping me busy, actually I get an assignment for someone and charge K150, I write it because I have that skill then life continues.” (Vinchi)*

The above finding illustrates a serious consequence of youth exclusion from employment, and it concurs with the argument by NYP (2006); Kingdon and Knight (2004) that idleness, frustrations and depression resulting from youth exclusion from employment may lead youth to engage in social vices such as prostitution, drug-abuse and alcohol consumption as well as criminal activities. Ward (2009) also argues that people excluded from the economy may experience poverty and, in order to have a livelihood, they commit crime. When commenting on the above illegal acts, some participants indicated that such acts would further diminish the value of education in the country. For example:

*“It’s because of the government policies, so many youths are in society, and they have no jobs... It has led to these dubious means of you know young people graduating with degrees through other people’s work... The calibre of the human resource we have in the country is affected. Am busy writing for her or him and he is busy passing, saying he has acquired a degree but when he goes in the field. He can’t perform.” (Vinchi)*

*“I don’t know, education is ah becoming so, is like a game now days, it’s no longer what it was long time ago where people would learn and go to school for the seek of learning...I wonder why people go to school these days. I am saying this cause I’ve been surviving cause of writing assignments and reports of people. So they are there, such people who just go to get the research and give it to others to write it. While, that’s how low education has suck.” (Mr. Price)*

#### **4.4.1.4 Psychological well being**

Health wise, most of the participants indicated that the problem of unemployment depressed them. For example:

*“Yes definitely. Not only direct, well both direct and indirect, direct pressures from relationships, people somehow...I have even have to lay off relationships because I can’t be a provider in a relationship.” (Jim)*

*“The negative is the psychological aspect, as I said earlier...You would go like am I good enough to work out there? I mean you spend 4 years to get this degree and put in the closures maybe 5, 6 years program and then I am unable to find a job. And that weighs you down psychologically and it is very discouraging. Psychologically, it really gets to a point where it got to me at times, but in life what has helped me not curve in is the support structure around me.” (John)*

*“Yes, even mentally, you know, when you are at certain age, then you don’t do certain things which are according to that age psychologically and you get disturbed, you get to think a lot, so there are a lot of things which are all affected.” (Conswell)*

This finding concurs with that of Fajana (2000) who found out the graduates’ unemployment affects them psychologically, and this could affect their present and future health wellbeing, making it hard to even access opportunities that could better their life.

#### **4.4.2 Effects on family**

When participants were asked who else was affected by their unemployment situation, a majority of them indicated that their families, especially the siblings were affected. For example:

*“Of course my young brother, even my mom, she invested a lot of money in my education and this time she was expecting that I will be helping her to support my young brother, so specifically my mother is very much affected because she thought since her son has finished school he is going to be a right hand man to help me at least to come out from poverty.” (Pefias)*

*“So you know, the policies which are put by the government again, inputs for them, It’s a challenge. Yah, it’s too expensive for them to acquire farming inputs, actually they were going to benefit if I was in employment, actually I was going to help them buying fertiliser. Yes, now they are affected, a lot of people are affected.” (Vinchi)*

*“I have to use the skills...for my own benefit and also for others especially my siblings. I don’t want them to go through what I went through like having no finances...I need to do something about that.” (Nachi)*

From the above, it is clear that youth unemployment is a problem that affects not only the individual youth, but also the immediate family (Kingdon & Knight, 2004).

#### **4.4.3 Effects on the future outlook of exclusion from employment**

When the question of how the unemployed youth graduates pictured their future without employment, the majority of participants pointed out that their future would be unbearable without employment, for example:

*“It can be dreadful, I think I can become more and more depressed in almost anything... if I don’t find a job.” (James)*

*It is very difficult for me to picture my future because when you look at things which are happening...Then we just see a dark, almost a dark future because when you say, ok, what am I going to eat tomorrow, what am I going to do, you can’t make long term plans. So what we have now is that I should find money for me to buy food for today*

*and tomorrow...You can't have any thoughts of like investing in bigger projects.”(Conswell)*

*“I see myself suffering. I think I see the levels of poverty increasing in my life because ah being unemployed is not easy because I've really felt it. Yes, I've really felt it and I am praying I find something to do.” (Eder)*

The above show that unemployment would negatively affect the future development of unemployed youth graduates. Annamária (2013:183) argued that ‘If an increasing part of the new generation begins its adult life with the feeling of being unnecessary and having no chance to integrate into the mainstream society, the future will be burdened with more and more inexperienced and disappointed people with all the consequences of this.’

#### **4.4.4 Summary of the views and experiences of the consequences of youth exclusion from employment**

In this study, evidence has been seen that exclusion of participants from employment has both present and future consequences which affect not only their social and the economic well-being, but also their psychological and their family's wellbeing.

#### **4.5 Unemployed youth graduates' ways to promote their employment and that of other youth graduates**

When participants were asked to give their views of ways to promote their employment and that of other youth graduates, the majority indicated that all stakeholders including the youth, Government, non-governmental organisations in civil society and the private sector, should play a role in promoting youth graduate employment. The various roles that these three grouping of stake-holders should play are explored below.

##### **4.5.1 Youth driven ways to promote youth graduate employment**

###### **4.5.1.1 Self-employment**

Many participants pointed out that amidst high unemployment rates in the country, youth should think of venturing into self-employment as a way to promote their employment. For example.

*“Yah, the role of business and private sector I think they have to...they have to create a conducive environment for these young graduates to be able to join them. They have to assimilate them, to allow them to come in. They should take them and train them, and give them something to do or impart into them skills so that they can know how to run businesses.”(Pefias)*

*“If you have the skills and you have the capital, you can open up whatever you can so that you employ others as well. That should be our goal, not just to sit. If you have the skills, you use them, if you have capital open some business.” (Precious).*

*“There is need to sensitise, my role is to sensitise my fellow youths on other means of survival apart from government as a major employer. I think my role as a youth. I think its high time we started looking at self-employment also, relying on self-employment rather than just government.”(Endar)*

The above finding supports the finding of a study done by Nel and Neale-Shutte (2013) in South Africa in which graduates were asked to identify ways in which graduate unemployment can be countered. Graduate’s responses included that entrepreneurial skills should be taught. In the studies by Baldry (2013) and the World Bank (2013), they argue that in cases of a growing youth labour force, and the limited growth rate of the labour market especially in the formal sector, inculcation of an entrepreneurship spirit and skills in the youth labour force could be possible alternatives for employment opportunities. Therefore, self-employment through entrepreneurship is one way of promoting youth graduate’s participation in the labour market and the economy of the country.

#### **4.5.1.2 Youth to demand for employment opportunities**

Most of the participants indicated that youth should demand for promotion of youth graduate employment from relevant stakeholders. This was said in the following manner.

*“I think we should be given a chance to air out our views, the freedom of speech, I think we should be given a chance to air out our views to the people in those high positions...the government, so that they know what’s happening on the ground.”(Jean)*

*“We should keep on advocating for justice, I mean there is too much corruption happening especially in government institutions. I think should continue speaking out there.”(Peter)*

*“The role of the youth is to keep on speaking to government and also to show government that we have the necessary skills, we are able to do this, we are able to do that like what we are doing.”(Conswell)*

Presented above is evidence that the unemployed graduate youth participants viewed youth participation through making demand for their right to employment opportunities as one way that would help to promote youth graduate employment. Bessant (2004) acknowledged the fact that ‘youth participation has become a policy cliché to say ‘increased youth participation’ will ‘empower’ young people, help build community and remedy a range of social problems that young people go through.’ Hence empowering the youths to make their own demands and ensuring that their voices are heard is one way to promote youth graduate employment.



## **4.5.2 Government policy and programmes to promote youth graduate employment**

### **4.5.2.1 Provision of employment opportunities**

Provision of employment opportunities by all stakeholders was indicated by all the participants as one way to promote youth graduate employment. The creation of new industries, expansion of the informal sector, and revision of the retirement age were the main areas that were viewed by most participants to be crucial in providing employment opportunities for youth graduates. For example:

*“I think firstly government should come in and provide employment. It’s not easy quite alright but if they plan ahead, efficiently and effectively, I think that can happen, I think the government should be the first to start with providing employment for the youth graduates.” (Jean)*

*“The role of government is to ensure that the youths have got jobs. Not really formal jobs, to ensure that they have, ah, an enabling environment for them even to have, to be self-employed.” (Chileshe)*

*“Government has a role to employ, to provide employment for the youths. not only the youths but the graduates. Employment is supposed to be readily available for the youths because if they don’t employ the youths, they encourage the youths to engage in activities that are not good.”(Endar)*

Through various policy instruments, the government is tasked to facilitate the creation and or promotion of formal, informal and self-employment. Apart from having the responsibility to facilitate the creation of employment opportunities in the public sector, the government also plays a key role in promoting the creation of employment opportunities in civil society, and the private sector (NYP, 2006). This could be done by strengthening the effectiveness of policy instruments that would enable these sectors to grow and expand in in the economy. The main argument here is that institutional structures inherent in an economy influence the availability of employment opportunities, and that government policy is key in influencing the institutional structures in an economy. (Manolova et al, 2008; Bronfenbrenner, 1989; World Bank, 2013).

### **4.5.2.2 Provision of internship opportunities**

Work experience was cited by many participants as an important factor for finding a job on the labour market. Hence, a need for government to provide youth graduates with internship opportunities to enable them have work experience, was pointed out by a majority of participants as one way of promoting youth graduate employment. For example:

*“And the government can also get fresh graduates, and train them for a year, in their expertise, through their various parastatals, like Zesco for engineers, banks for those*

*in finance and then hire them or find appropriate jobs for them, and in that case it can help with the youth graduate employment problem.” (Mr. Price)*

*“No country has developed without investing in the young generation...I am of the view that government needs to put a deliberate policy for internships. Every graduates is supposed to be subjected to internship so that they should gain experience for at least one year.”(Mr. J)*

*“I think what counts most is, while you are still at school UNZA (University of Zambia) or at college or any university, at least somebody should do internship with other organisations, different organisations just to equip yourself with, you know, because even if they say they need someone with experience, at least one can be brave enough to say, you know while I was studying I did this.”(Nachi)*

Ryan (2001:82) argued that ‘mass apprenticeship in Germany and school-employer recruitment networks in Japan both promoted the direct hiring of school-leavers into a wide range of regular and career employment.’ in this study, very few participants were aware of the fact that the government had a programme that provided youths with internship opportunities. So lack of marketing and effectiveness in the provision of this programme to the youths could have played a role in the employability of participants due to lack of work experience.

#### **4.5.2.3 Promotion of self-employment**

The majority of the participants indicated that promotion of self-employment through acquiring of entrepreneurship spirit/skills, and creation of a favourable environment for the same by the government would be one way of promoting youth graduate employment.

*“There is need to change the education system, like I said earlier on its not only...they shouldn’t give us, ah, the only option...it’s like the way we are trained the only option we have is government or the private sector, working under someone. But I think there is also need to promote self-employment.”(Ender)*

*“I think government should come in and support us, those who want to be self-employed and I think we should be helped so that we can also help others.” (Nachi)*

*“Government should provide employment by setting up projects that can involve the youth and, ahh...also providing small loans to people who want to do business and to those who want to start up SMEs.”(Jean)*

The above gives an indication that in the opinion of some of the research participants, promotion of self-employment through policy instruments could be a way to promote youth graduate employment. Baldry (2013) and World Bank (2013) also argue that investments to expand the informal sector and inculcation of entrepreneurship spirit and skills in the youth labour force can be possible alternatives for expansion of labour demand.

In this study, few participants indicated that they were aware of government programmes that provided loans to youth graduates to enhance self-employment. For example:

*“The programmes have been there in Zambia for so long have been in existence. Maybe only access, one of them is Citizens Economic Empowerment Commission (CEEC) which was basically formed to help the upcoming entrepreneurs. Also we have, I think there is youth development fund from the ministry of youth and sports. You can probably access that fund, to finance a project for entrepreneurs.”(Mr. J)*

*“Um, am are of youth empowerment projects, yes, and I think at the moment that is the only one am aware of...I have not participated in it but I wanted to.”(Himpande)*

*“I think there was this organisation in government...I think graduates will be given something to do just after they graduate, something to do at least that can sustain themselves, I think that’s the thing I know government...I think it’s about youth something, youth empowerment...I have not interacted with it, I just heard.”(Martin)*

As evidenced above, most of the participants who indicated that they were aware of government programs that aimed at promoting youth graduate employment, had not interacted with those programs. Participants indicated that access these government programs was said to be problematic due to bureaucracy and cadre-ism, for example:

*“You find that even accessing those funds at the moment especially if you are spotted to be the opposite, seen to be associated with the opposition party in opposition, the percentage that you will get that fund is very low and I think colleagues and friends who associate themselves with members of parliament have easy to access funds for various entrepreneurship projects.”(Mr J)*

*“The whole process of you being awarded the empowerment after the application is quite long because the bureaucracy its self is big as well, yea, so those are the hiccups there.”(Peter)*

*“The issue of cadre-ism, usually those who are in forefront, they were put in by the same government and they would rather, in most cases they support those who are supporting them. So it’s not ah—it’s not an easy thing to access the money.”(Himpande)*

#### **4.5.2.4 Promote merit based employment recruitment**

As indicated earlier on in this study, issues of nepotism and corruption in accessing employment opportunities were pointed out by a majority of participants as one of the reasons for their unemployment and a majority indicated that promotion of merit based employment recruitment processes would be one way that would promote youth graduate employment. For example:

*“I think the issue of nepotism in some of these areas should be looked at, I think people should be going into institutions to check what’s really happening, to check if people are being employed based on their qualifications or merit.”(Jean)*

*“Let people be picked on merit. Let them ensure that qualified people are the ones employed not nepotism or tribalism because at the end of the day it will not only affect those who are not employed, it will even affect the labour market.”(Himpande)*

*“Yar, it is just endurance, you try as many applications as you can but with the criterial that a country like Zambia, we know there is this whole corruption thing, the nepotism thing, jobs are being politicised now... And we should keep on advocating for justice, I mean there is too much corruption happening, especially in government institutions.”(Peter)*

The above supports the idea that promotion of equal employment opportunities based on merit in employment recruitments and hiring practices may be a way to promote youth graduate employment (Lam, 1993). Lam (1993) further argues that inequality in access to opportunities promotes the creation of exclusions, which leads to a long and sustained kind of poverty on the part of the victims. In this study, most of the participants indicated that continued nepotism and corruption in accessing employment opportunities on the labour market would diminish the value of education in the country.

### **4.5.3 NGOs and the private sector based ways to promote youth graduate employment**

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the private sector are stakeholders in enhancing youth development (NYP, 2006). The NYP 2006, also acknowledges that partnership between the government and the private sector would enhance service delivery for youth development. The different roles that NGOs play in communities have the potential to influence change at the level of the individual youth, government and the whole society. Their goal is to change societal norms, improve understanding, influence agendas, influence policies, implement policies, and to solve problems. The sub-section that follows explores the roles that the NGOs and the private sector could play in promoting youth graduate employment as indicated by the unemployed youth graduates.

#### **4.5.3.1 Advisory role**

In the exploration of the roles of NGOs and the private sector in promoting youth graduate employment, most of the participants indicated that the NGOs and the private sector should be the voice for the youth and should give advice to government regarding youth graduate unemployment in the country.

*“The NGOs are the medium between the youth and also the government, I think they are the voice and they should check what’s happening on the ground and take those problems to them and vice versa. I think they have a bigger role to play, cause, I mean the NGOs are here to help...” (Jean)*

*“Yah, the role of NGOs is to criticise where the government has gone wrong, the government has not done well. They need to voice out to say no this is bad, this is not supposed to be like this.”(Vinchi)*

*“NGOs they can try and do research. There are certain NGOs that do research to try and check or do background information, see how many, let’s say organisations that are able to assist such graduates that do a particular programme, then give that information to government.” (Miles)*

The above is an indication that promotion of youth graduate employment is multi-dimensional in stakeholder approach. NGOs are said to have long played the key role in forcing leaders and policy makers to pay attention to the concerns of people in society (Simmons, 1998). But as mentioned by some participants, NGOs and the private sector’s role in society is at times intimidated by government’s quest for absolute power. For example:

*“Yes they have the role though their role is limited because you know the controlling system of everything of anything in the country is government. So as long as certain system in government are not ok, we can have good NGOs in the country, but their advice, their advocacy will just be ah falling on deaf ears.”(Conswell)*

*“Yah, the role of NGOs is to criticise where the government has gone wrong, the government has not done well. They need to voice out to say no this is bad, this is not supposed to be like this ...Right now they are undermined by the so called selfish motives of our leaders for personal gains, they just say everything the NGOs civil societies are saying its wrong since we have experts in government.”(Vinchi)*

#### **4.5.3.2 Advocate for and provide youth graduate employment**

The majority of participants also pointed out that the NGOs and the private sector can play an advocacy and service delivery role in commuting graduate youth unemployment by making government accountable for its governance, empowering the youth, and by providing employment opportunities to graduate youth. For example:

*“I am sure you are aware that most, most of the NGOs in Zambia, they were talking about--they were advocating for a new constitution. They were advocating for, ah, like certain laws which are not favourable...With, ah, investment to be changed.”(Conswell)*

*“The NGOs and private sector also they should employ youths, they should consider them as ah people that have relevant skills, we are able to add to the development of this nation.”(Precious)*

*“NGOs can try and empower our local citizens, to empower us graduates or just other business men so that they invest locally.” (Miles)*

This finding resonates with Simmons’s (1998) outline of the roles of the NGOs and the private sector in communities. The functions of NGOs which include: advocacy; information gathering and analysis; information dissemination; a monitoring and watchdog role; generation of ideas and recommendations; service delivery; facilitation/mediation; financing and grant making, could play a role in promoting youth graduate employment (Simmons, 1998).

#### **4.6 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has presented and analysed the findings of this study. The main findings indicate that the unemployed youth graduate participants had reasons that hindered them in finding a job. Revelations were also made that exclusion of youth graduates from employment opportunities has serious consequences. Another finding indicates that all stakeholders which include the youth, government, and the NGOs and the private sector have a role to play in promoting youth graduate employment. The following chapter centres on the conclusions and recommendations for this study.

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations from the key findings of this study. Conclusions for this study are presented in relation to the objectives of the study, and from these conclusions, recommendations are presented, ending with a conclusion of the chapter.

### **5.2 Conclusions**

The following presents the conclusions related to each of the study objectives.

#### **5.2.1 Objective 1: To explore unemployed youth graduates' job-seeking behaviour and experiences**

This objective was met to a large extent. Findings indicated that the unemployed youth graduate participants were actively seeking for a job to financially support themselves and their families, and that they had the motivation for job-seeking. Participants also indicated that they were very confident that they would find the job they were seeking for. However, there appears to be a contradiction on the findings that the participants were actively seeking for a job, confident about finding a job, but their level of determination to find a job was low. Other findings indicated that the participant's job seeking experiences were mostly negative.

In conclusion, it can be argued that having the motivation for job-seeking, and being confident that they would find a job, would have kept the participants active in job-seeking. However, low determination and the negative job-seeking experiences that were identified as reasons for their unemployment, would have reduced the level to which they were actively involved in job-seeking. Otherwise, the job -seeking intensity may have had a positive influences in accessing a job.

#### **5.2.2 Objective 2: To explore unemployed youth graduates' understanding of the reasons for their unemployment**

This objective was met. Findings indicated that participants' understanding of the reasons for their unemployment were: a mis-match between their qualification and labour market skills demand; dependence on a formal or public sector post; lack of career guidance; lack of work experience; lack of social connections in the labour market; lack of merit-based job recruitment

and hiring practices; lack of job opportunities, and the unsuccessful government policies and programmes to promote self-employment.

It can be concluded that a mis-match between the participant's qualification and the labour market skills demands, and the dependence on a formal or public sector post, including a lack of career guidance contributed to their unemployment. Yet still, conclusions can be made that apart from having a degree level qualification that should have increased their chances of access to a job, lack of work experience on the part of the unemployed youth graduates participants limited their chances of being employed.

Conclusions can also be drawn that a lack of social connections in the labour market contributed to unemployment of youth graduate participants, and that issues of corruption and nepotism in job recruitments meant that the unemployed youth graduates who had no connections in the labour market, and those who had no money to bribe an official for a job had limited chances of accessing a job. Other conclusions that can be drawn are that lack of job opportunities, and the unsuccessful government policies and programmes to promote self-employment were understood by graduate participants to be the reasons for participant's unemployment problem. A conclusion can further be drawn that unemployed graduate youth participants had an understanding of the reasons for their unemployment situation.

### **5.2.3 Objective 3: To ascertain the views and experiences of unemployed youth graduates of the consequences of their exclusion from employment opportunities**

Findings on this objective indicated that lack of income affected the participant's ability to fully interact with friends due to lack of money. Due to lack of income, most of these participants were dependants with no means of survival, and cited lack of life satisfaction resulting in finding illegal means of earning an income where these graduates resorted into writing assignment for students in various universities and colleges. Due to the social and economic problems experienced by the unemployed youth graduates in this study, they expressed feeling depressed about the whole issue of unemployment. Meanwhile, the participants viewed their exclusion from employment as not only affecting their present wellbeing but also their future wellbeing, and that of their immediate family's wellbeing.



It can further be concluded that participant's social, economic and psychological wellbeing were also being affected due to their exclusion from employment opportunities. In addition, it can also be concluded that participants viewed their future as being unbearable without employment. According to the experiences of the participants in this study, their immediate families were also being affected by their exclusion from employment.

#### **5.2.4 Objective 4: To explore unemployed youth graduates' views of ways to promote the employment of youth graduates**

The objective was met. The findings indicated that unemployed youth graduate participants viewed that self-employment and the youth's ability to demand for employment opportunities to be provided by stakeholders would promote youth graduate employment. It was also viewed that provision of employment and internship opportunities, promotion of self-employment by relevant stakeholders, and merit based employment recruitment and hiring practice by employers would be other ways to promote graduate employment. Furthermore, participants indicated that the NGOs and the private sector's role of advisory to influence policy change, the advocacy, and the service delivery role would promote youth graduate employment.

In conclusion, it can be said that the youth, government, the NGOs and the private sector were identified to be the key role players in promoting youth graduate employment. On the part of the youth, it can be concluded that youth graduate participants viewed self-employment and the ability of the youth to demand for employment opportunities from stakeholders as ways that could promote youth graduate employment. On the part of the government, conclusions can be drawn that provision of employment and internship opportunities, promotion of self-employment, and a promotion of merit based employment recruitment and hiring practice by all stakeholders would promote youth graduate employment. Another conclusion can be drawn that the NGOs and the private sector's roles of advisory, advocacy, empowerment and provision of employment opportunities to graduates were viewed by participants to be ways to promote youth graduate employment.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

The following recommendations are offered based on the conclusions drawn above.

#### **5.3.1 The unemployed youth graduates**

Amidst the increasing numbers of graduates coupled with the slow economic growth in Zambia, formal employment is scarce. Youth graduates should therefore be willing to venture into self-employment and begin to view self-employment as a possible option for employment other than being dependent on formal employment. The youth graduate should also take responsibility to inform themselves about the existing government programmes and projects that relate to their employment. On the other hand, the youth should seek career guidance before embarking on their studies, and should also be in a position to demand for their right to employment from various stakeholders in the country.

#### **5.3.2 The Government**

In this study, most of the unemployed youth graduates indicated that they were not aware of any government programme that promoted their employment, the government should therefore sensitize the graduate youth on, and promote access to such programmes. The government policies and programmes should also promote self-employment, and should through the education curriculum, inculcate an entrepreneurship spirit and skills in the youth. Through policy instrument, the government should furthermore enhance equal access to employment opportunities in all the sectors of the economy by ensuring that job recruitment and hiring in the country, is merit-based rather than being based on nepotism and corruption. On the other hand, the government should improve the macro-economic policies to attract foreign investment by creating an enabling political and economic policy environment; promote economic growth in order to create more jobs; and to be able to conduct monitoring and evaluation of internship programmes to assess if these are being utilised effectively.

#### **5.3.3 The NGOs and the private sector**

The NGOs and the private sector should continue to play their roles of advocacy; information gathering and analysis of the graduate youth employment and unemployment; dissemination of information on graduate youth employment and unemployment; monitoring and watchdog role on the implementation of policies and programmes on youth graduate employment; generation of ideas and recommendations on ways to promote youth employment; provide employment to youth graduates; facilitating/mediating between the youth and other

stakeholders on this issue; financing and grant making in promoting and providing youth graduates with employment opportunities. The NGOs and private sector should also provide empowerment to youth graduates, provide skills development opportunities through internships, and should realise the need to improve partnership with government in order to effectively deal with the problem of youth graduate unemployment in the country.

#### **5.3.4 Recommendation for further research**

It is recommended that a research be done on exploration of perceptions of college and or university students on self-employment as an employment opportunity for them after their studies.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

This chapter concludes this research study. The chapter presented the conclusions and recommendations from the key findings of this study. Conclusions for this study were presented in relation to the objectives of the study, and from these conclusions, recommendations were presented.

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# Appendix A

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
SWK5001W MINOR DISSERTATION

## Interview Schedule for Unemployed Youth Graduates

### INTRODUCTION

- Introduce self
- Thank the participant for participation
- Purpose of research
- Ethical considerations:
  - Digital recording
  - Confidentiality - link to choice of pseudonym
  - Voluntary participation
  - Access to findings
- Referral if necessary
- No right or wrong answers

- Estimated time frame of interview

## **SECTION 1**

### **The job-seeking behaviour and experiences of unemployed youth graduates**

- 1.1 Are you currently actively searching for a job? ( If not, explore responses)
- 1.2 How confident are you that you will find a job?
- 1.3 How well prepared do you think you are for job searching? (probe response)
- 1.4 What is the driving force behind your search for employment? (Probe motivation)
- 1.5 Do you think that you still have the same level of enthusiasm/self-determination you had when you started searching for a job? (Probe response).
- 1.6 Please talk to me about your job-seeking experiences thus far.

## **SECTION 2**

### **Unemployed youth graduates' understanding of the reasons for their unemployment**

- 2.1 Please tell me about your field of study (probe: Why and how this field was chosen; whether any assistance on career choice was received)
- 2.2 Bearing in mind your specific field of study, what advantages and/ or disadvantages do you think this qualification brings you with regard to participation in the labour market?

- 2.3 What are your plans (if any) regarding further studies? (Probe... Whether satisfied with current qualification level)
- 2.4 Please tell me about any previous employment you may have had (If worked, probe...type of work, when worked, length of employment, why stopped working)
- 2.5 In your experience, what do you think counts in order for young graduates to secure a job in the labour market? (Probe... Social networks, work experience, qualifications, socio-economic status)
- 2.6 What, in your own view, are the reasons why you are unemployed?

### **SECTION 3**

#### **The consequences of youth exclusion from employment**

- 3.1 In what ways has your current exclusion from employment affected you personally? (Probe, self- image, depression, idleness, life satisfaction, financially, socially)
- 3.2 How do you survive, not having an income of your own?
- 3.3 Who else (if anyone) is affected by your situation of being unemployed? (Probe... how others are affected)
- 3.4 How do you picture your future if you do not find a job?

## **SECTION 5**

### **CLOSING REMARKS**

- Thank you for this time we have had together and for all the information you have shared about yourself and youth graduate (un)employment.
- Is there anything else you would like to tell me about yourself or youth graduate unemployment that you have not mentioned during this interview?
- How has this interview been for you?
- Share with the young person the positives of how the interview has been for you.
- Reassure the participant of confidentiality

## SECTION 4

### **Unemployed youth graduates' views of ways to promote their employment and that of other youth graduates**

- 4.1 What kind of employment are you seeking? (Probe...type, formal sector employment, informal sector employment, self-employment, rationale for the choice)
- 4.2 How feasible is self-employment for you (Probe.. Whether ever tried self-employment and if not, why)
- 4.3 What government programmes are you aware of that are aimed at assisting young graduates with employment opportunities? (If aware, probe... Participants' interaction with the programmes mentioned)
- 4.4 What do you think needs to happen to promote youth graduate employment in Zambia? (Probe... role of youth, government, business, and NGOs )

## Appendix B

### FACTS SHEET FOR UNEMPLOYED YOUTH GRADUATES

#### BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

Name/ pseudonym	
Age (In years)	
Gender	
Total number of people in household	
Average household monthly income	
Name of institution attended	
Graduation: month and year	
Degree obtained (e.g certificate, diploma, bachelor's degree e.t.c)	
Field of study(e.g education, development studies e.t.c)	
Length of unemployment: years/months	

# Appendix C

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
SWK5001W MINOR DISSERTATION

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## Informed Consent Form

**Title of the study:** An exploration of the perceptions of young unemployed graduates in Lusaka, Zambia, of the factors contributing to their unemployment.

This project forms part of the qualification of Master of Social Science (MSocSc) degree in social development.

**Name of Participant:**.....

**Name of Researcher :**.....

1. My participation in this project is voluntary. I understand that I will not be paid for my participation. I may withdraw and discontinue participation at any time without penalty.



2. My participation involves being interviewed by a researcher from the University of Cape Town, on the topic of exploration of factors contributing to unemployment among graduate youth in Lusaka, Zambia. The interview will last approximately one hour, during which an audio recorder will be used and notes will be written.
3. I understand that there will be no expected harmful experiences involved in participating in this research study.
4. I understand that the researcher will not identify me by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview, and that my anonymity as a participant in this study will remain secure.
5. I understand that the content of the interview will be kept strictly confidential and will be available only to the researcher and her university supervisor. Extracts from the interviews will be included in the final research report, but pseudonyms will be used to protect the identity of participants. All the information collected from me will be destroyed after being used for the research report. A copy of the report will be kept in the University of Cape Town Libraries.

By signing this informed consent form, I confirm that I have read and understand the explanation provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I also understand that I will be given a copy of this signed consent form.

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**Signature of Participant**

---

**Date (dd/mm/yyyy)**

---

**Signature of Researcher**

---

**Date (dd/mm/yyyy)**

---

Dr Margaret Booyens is supervising the project and can be contacted on the contact details below, should you have any questions:

Tel: 021 650-3481

Fax: 021 689-2739

Email: [margaret.booyens@uct.ac.za](mailto:margaret.booyens@uct.ac.za)

**OR**

Contact the Researcher on:

**Cell:** 0977 987836

**Email:** [mmungule@yahoo.com](mailto:mmungule@yahoo.com)