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Entrepreneurship among the Youth in Lusaka, Zambia

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to examine Entrepreneurship among the youth in Lusaka, Zambia. The main objectives of the study were to determine the attitudes of the youth towards entrepreneurship. To find out challenges youth experience in entrepreneurship. To find out the measures put in place to overcome some of the challenges. The study used a descriptive research design. In order to collect data from the respondents a questionnaire was used.

The findings of the research showed the majority of the youth were not involved in any entrepreneurial activities. The findings also showed that all of the respondents expressed interest in becoming entrepreneurs. The finding showed that the majority of the respondents did not have easy access to funds for their entrepreneurship ventures.

One of the recommendations of the study was that it is vital for the Zambian government to make it easier to obtain financing from lending institutions for youth entrepreneurs, by cutting down on red tape and expediting the application process. Another recommendation was that training and learning institutions should provide specialized training courses in digital skills, marketing, financial management, and business planning for youths in Lusaka Zambia.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Youth, Lusaka

INTRODUCTION

At the time of independence in the 1960's Zambia had very few numbers of graduates who were going to able to take up the jobs that were left vacant by the colonial government. Zambia was faced with a shortage of human resources. The Zambia government even employed expatriates who take jobs that Zambians had no specialisation. It appeared to be a situation where jobs were available but few young Zambians were trained for these positions. The Zambian government put in place measures where many people were able to go to school and be trained for jobs in the labour market. The government invested heavily in infrastructure development particularly in education.

According to Haabazoka et al (2016) In order to empower indigenous Zambians with jobs, the Zambian government in the late 1960s to early 1970s started transforming the economy from a market system to command economy system which characterized increased government participation in running the economy, central planning for the economy and nationalization. The repercussion was an upswing in performance in the labour industry up until 1991. After 1991 with the re-introduction of a market economy, over 220 companies were privatized. The counter effect of privatization was the closure of most sectors of the industry and consequently loss of employment and employment opportunities for the youths in particular.

In the 1990's Zambia had a lot of young people who had completed their education but could not find work in the formal sector. The formal sector could only employee few people as many companies where closing and retrenching most of their employees. Even at the present time unemployment among the youth both graduates and non-graduates has risen.

Youth unemployment has remained one of the biggest challenges in Zambia. Official figures from the 7NDP show that the youth unemployment rate is currently at 10.5 percent, which is higher than the national average unemployment rate of 7.4 percent. Similarly, the male youth unemployment rate is currently at 12.2 percent compared to the female youth unemployment rate estimated at 9.1 percent. Majority of the unemployed youth are also in urban areas where the youth unemployment rate is at 15.2 percent compared to 6.4 percent in rural areas (Zambian governance foundation, 2017)

Youth unemployment is a widespread phenomenon, which is a major concern for rich and poor governments alike. Youth entrepreneurship is one of the remedies which is often advocated both to create employment for the youth and to promote private sector development. This was recently stated also by the UN Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, during his visit at the International Labour Organization in Geneva on 18th June 2014 (De Gobbi, 2014)

According to the 2013 Global Entrepreneurship Monitor/Youth Business International (GEM/YBI) youth entrepreneurship report, of all the regions in the world, the highest proportion of potential youth entrepreneurs is to be found in Sub-Saharan Africa (60%). It is however to be noted that 32% of these young individuals are necessity- driven entrepreneurs, which means that entrepreneurship is perceived as a survival strategy and not as a business opportunity (Kew, Herrington, Litovsky and Gale 2013).

However, it is also important that young people see entrepreneurship as an alternate to employment especially in today's society where the rate of unemployment is high among the youth. According to commission (2000) Entrepreneurship has been adopted as a strategy to promote economic activities among young people. The European Commission argues that academics, practitioners and policy makers worldwide have heightened their commitment towards promoting an entrepreneurial mind-set within society.

Statement of the Problem

There has been high levels of unemployment in Zambia, while this affects people of all ages the youth have been affected the most. Entrepreneurship is seen as a way for the youth to be self-employed and self-reliant. Most of the youth wants to become entrepreneur but don't know how to go about it. Bhorat et al. (2015) highlights the importance of access to finance in promoting youth entrepreneurship, noting that financial constraints significantly limit the ability of young people to start businesses. This is consistent with findings from other developing countries, where entrepreneurship is seen as a viable solution to unemployment but is often hindered by financial barriers (Jumpah et al., 2020).

Objectives

a. To determine the attitudes of the youth towards entrepreneurship.
b. To find out challenges youth experience in entrepreneurship
c. To find out the measures put in place to overcome some of the challenges.

Research Questions

a. What attitudes do the youth have towards entrepreneurship?
b. What are the challenges youth experience in entrepreneurship?
c. What are the measures put in place to overcome some of the challenges?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Entrepreneurship Concept

In order to understand the concept of entrepreneurship, it is very important to begin by understanding what the term "Entrepreneur" means after which the concept can now fully be defined.

To begin with, Chell and Ozkan (2010) refer to an entrepreneur as "someone who is willing to bear the risk of a business venture where there is a significant chance for making profit". Bwisa and Ndolo (p.23) state that an

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entrepreneur is seen as an independent, risk-taking maverick who boldly organizes the people and resources necessary for creating new business ventures. Furthermore, a variety of definitions exist on the term entrepreneurship. Among the definitions is one by the European Commission referring to entrepreneurship as "an individual's ability to turn words into action. It includes creativity and risk taking as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives. It further stated that entrepreneurship provides a foundation for entrepreneurs to establish a social or commercial activity" (European Commission, 2012).

Relevance of Entrepreneurship

According to Chileshe (2015) Scholars like Ekmekcioglu have argued that entrepreneurship plays a critical role in the development of the economy as it is the key contributor to innovativeness and product improvement. It is further stated that, entrepreneurship "is one of the important ingredients to the creation of new employments and in the building of communities in ways of offering them jobs".

According to a report by the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) cited in Baringer and Irenland (2006) "the national level of entrepreneurial activity has a statistically significant association with the national level of economic growth". Subsequently, various scholars also hold particular assumptions that entrepreneurship indeed does have a positive effect on a society's economy as much as it does on the individual's life. There also exists a notion that if entrepreneurs are successful in their endeavors, their innovations may also help improve other people's lives.

Attitudes of African Youth towards Entrepreneurship

There is about 200 million young Africans aged between 15 and 24. Hence, this makes African a young continent on the globe. It is also estimated that by 2040 Africa's young population will be the largest workforce across the globe that means it will be more than that of both India and China. Therefore, these statistics show the potential contribution of Africa's young people to the continents sustained economic development, and thus it is very imperative to harness the potential of the youth (GEM, 2015).

The formal sector is not able to meet the employment demands for the growing young populations. Therefore, for many of these young people, creating their own business enterprises is the only way open to them for employment.

According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) (2015) the youth in Sub-Saharan Africa have generally positive attitudes and perceptions towards entrepreneurship. Most young Africans believe there are good business opportunities in their countries and that they have the skills and knowledge to start and manage a new business. There is also a high level of intention among young people to start their own enterprises and consider running a business to be a desirable career choice, undaunted by any significant fear of failure. Thus, the region has a large pool of potential entrepreneurs, and over a third of young people in all countries except South Africa demonstrate high levels of interest to engage in private enterprise.

A huge proportion of young people are engaged in entrepreneurial activity in sub-Saharan Africa. In Uganda, Zambia and Nigeria, in particular, more than half of them are either starting a business or running one. In addition to their high 'total early-stage entrepreneurship activity' (tea) rates that represent involvement in new or nascent enterprises, they also show relatively high levels of youth-owned, established businesses. The findings show that youth businesses have an overall positive impact on the livelihood of the entrepreneur in most countries. That means the business is making enough money to survive now and the owner expects future growth, or the business is already in a growth phase. In job creation, however, the majority of these businesses only create employment for the business owner. Angola stands out as the exception. While Angola's youth entrepreneurial rate is lower than most of the region, it has the highest percentage of youth businesses creating jobs for others.

The GEM (2015) data shows that young people in Ghana, Uganda, and Zambia are highly entrepreneurial with around 4 out of 10 being involved in early-stage business activity. These levels are slightly higher than the adult population in both Ghana and Uganda and much higher than their youth counterparts in other regions of the world. Gough (2015) cites from a survey conducted by GEM that is Consistent with the high levels of entrepreneurship, young people in Ghana, Uganda and Zambia generally have very positive attitudes towards

self-employment. They exhibit relatively high confidence in their own abilities to start businesses and they perceive the opportunities for entrepreneurship to be favourable. In Uganda, for example, almost 8 out of 10 young people perceive good opportunities for starting a business within the next 6 months. About three-quarters of Ugandan youth who were not already operating a business stated that they intended to start a business in the near future. Furthermore, 88 percent believed that they had the required knowledge to start a business. Notably, 90 percent of all young people stated that they would prefer to be entrepreneurs in the future while only 6 percent expressed a preference to be employed by others.

Furthermore, it has been noticed that all three countries have very high rates of female entrepreneurship - much higher than the global norm. While in Uganda and Zambia the rates for female youth entrepreneurship are only slightly lower than for male youth, in Ghana, exceptionally the rate of female youth entrepreneurship exceeds that of male youth.

Challenges Experienced in establishing viable entrepreneurial ventures

Despite having the positive attitude, the youth are facing quiet a number of challenges when it comes to establishing business start-ups. These challenges come in various forms; which could be social, cultural, and even economical.

Gough (2015) alludes to the fact that young people’s business ventures are very vulnerable to a number of things, there are a number of them flourishing while a majority of them are failing to grow into full-fledged ventures that can be able to create employment for others. However, many of them that strive to make it end up at employing themselves. In a period of one year for instance, one in five young people would have discontinued a business venture usually due to lack of profitability and access to funding. Gough continues to allude to the fact that most of the young people’s business ventures are concentrated in a number of limited vocations, most of them characterised by trading of similar goods and services hence creating stiff competition amongst themselves.

As earlier alluded to, the major characteristic of these business ventures is that they end up at their micro-level scale, thereby making it hard for them to massively contribute economically by creating employment as a number of them have none or a few counted employees.

It has also been observed from these facts that even though youths in Zambia, Ghana, and Uganda express high interest in venturing into entrepreneurial activities, they still have low expectations of business growth. This also basically shows the considerable amount of challenges they face in sustaining and expanding their businesses.

According to GEM (2015) the following factors were highlighted as the main obstacles that hinder youth entrepreneurial development in Africa: access to finance; lack of management, technical and marketing skills; and access to infrastructure and markets. Young people in sub-Saharan Africa perceive lack of capital, lack of skills, lack of support and lack of market opportunities as the main obstacles to entrepreneurial ambitions. Other barriers identified in sub-Saharan Africa include the lack of links to professional networks, corruption, lack of property rights and the over-regulated information and communications technology sector. Barriers to youth employment identified in high-income or middle-income countries include the lack of an enterprise culture in many countries; unfavourable legal, policy and regulatory frameworks for youth entrepreneurship; the lack of entrepreneurship education across formal and informal educational systems; the lack of access to affordable financing in the form of start-up investment or working capital; and lack of knowledge about and access to relevant business development services and support schemes for youth already in business or for those interested in pursuing an entrepreneurial career.

Measures put in place to mitigate youth entrepreneurial challenges.

Youth are not a homogenous group of individuals, hence the many entrepreneurial challenges that they face also vary in their endeavors depending on the economy type, and location. However, there are a number of similar scenarios across the globe that affect youth engaged in entrepreneurship. The following are some of the interventions that are being practiced by governments in order to mitigate these challenges:

Examining the Regulatory Environment

"In establishing a regulatory environment that is conducive to business, including youth-led enterprises, it is important to identify the regulations that are essential for businesses to function. Formalization is an essential component of establishing an enterprise. However, processes involved in formally registering a business can prove to be burdensome particularly to young people, often discouraging them from starting their businesses. Facilitating formalization for start-ups can create conditions that enable an entrepreneurial ecosystem that is conducive for the development of youth-led enterprises. Business registration procedures, specifically, the number of days it takes to register a business and the cost associated with the registration process such as administrative and legal fees, are predictors of formalizing a business and indicators of the ease of doing business in a specific country. According to the World Bank (2014), Canada and Singapore, which have few procedures required to formally register, short time frames to formally register a business and low registration costs make it easier to start and operate a business. Conversely, numerous procedures and lengthy time frames to formally register a business, and high registration costs are associated with an unfavourable regulatory environment in which to start and operate a business. It is important to consider whether regulations will particularly affect young people, such as minimum age for bank accounts or loans." (UNCTAD, Policy Guide on Youth Entrepreneurship, 2015).

Minimizing Regulatory hurdles for business start-ups where necessary

Many countries have taken steps to create an enabling environment that is conducive to enterprise development by minimizing the hurdles for start-ups. The implementation of electronic procedures, the elimination of minimum start-up capital requirement and the establishment of one-stop shops that bundle procedures have enhanced the regulatory environment.

Technology is increasingly being harnessed to facilitate formalization processes. In countries with electronic registration, formalizing a business not only involves fewer procedures, but also takes less time and is less costly. Singapore implemented an internet-based business registration system, BizFile, which has made it easier, efficient and less expensive to register start-ups. Information is updated within 30 minutes of filing when compared with 14–21 days before the implementation of the web-based system. Registering a new business takes 15 minutes, it took 24 hours prior to the implementation of the web-based system, and the fees to register a business have been halved from $100 to $50. Bangladesh, Brunei, Botswana, Cyprus, Dominica, India, Kenya, Malta, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Samoa, to name a few, have also implemented online business registration procedures (World Bank, 2014).

Eliminating the minimum capital requirement to start a business can also enhance the regulatory environment for aspiring entrepreneurs, in particular, for young people who often lack access to start-up capital. In some countries, these measures have been targeted to youth-led enterprises. For example, in January 2012, Italy introduced a simplified registration procedure for youth-led start-ups that allowed young entrepreneurs under 35 years to register a limited liability company with negligible share capital. A year after the implementation of this measure, about 12,000 youth-led businesses had been registered and more than 17,000 new jobs had been created."

Building entrepreneur's confidence in the Regulatory Environment

A transparent regulatory system that has clear rules on compliance and insolvency and effective mechanisms for resolving disputes can build entrepreneurs' confidence in the regulatory environment and encourage them to engage in economic activity. Transparent and universal rules can also enhance the entrepreneurial ecosystem for young people and stimulate youth- led start-ups (UNCTAD, Policy Guide on Youth Entrepreneurship, 2015). In many countries, however, property rights are neither adequately defined nor well protected. Registering property can be a time consuming and costly endeavor. Moreover, processes associated with property registration are often unclear. Poor enforcement of copyright, patent and trademark regulations can greatly disadvantage young people who are often uninformed of or unfamiliar with these regulations, and do not have resources or networks necessary to fight for justice. Since young entrepreneurs generally lack knowledge of and are poorly informed about property rights and trademark regulations, they cannot adequately protect their businesses, and could potentially find themselves in litigation with individuals or businesses for copyright infringement. Simpler procedures, effective administration of time limits, fixed registration fees, online registries and low property transfer taxes can reduce the burden associated with registering property (World Bank, 2014). These and many others are some of the possible interventions that can help mitigate the youth entrepreneurial challenges.

METHODOLOGY

The study used an explanatory, thematic and descriptive research designs. Since the data collected is qualitative and quantitative, it gives a holistic understanding of a research topic. The information is varied, diverse, and thorough (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). The target population included youth from Lusaka. It was out of this population that the sample was extracted. The study sample size was 50 youths in Lusaka.

The study used non-probability sampling technique which was convenience sampling technique. The study used one on one administered semi structured questionnaires to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data was analysed using frequencies tables, while Qualitative data was analysed by categorising responses given into themes.

FINDINGS

Distribution of respondents by age.

Age	Frequency	Percentage
15-35	40	93
36-45	3	7
46-65	0	0
Total	43	100

According to the study results, 93% of participants are between the ages of 15 and 35. Just 7% of participants are between the ages of 36 and 45, and none are between the ages of 46 and 65. There are forty-three people in the total sample size. Younger respondents' prominence in the survey and their enthusiasm in entrepreneurship is highlighted by this distribution.

Distribution of respondents by gender.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	22	51
Male	21	49
Total	43	100

According to the survey data, of the total sample size, 43 people were surveyed, with the majority of respondents (51%) being female and 49% being male. This gender distribution sheds light on the makeup of the surveyed group, emphasizing the relatively balanced representation of both genders.

Distribution of respondents by occupation.

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Employed	**4**	**9.3**
Self-employed	**7**	**16.3**
Unemployed	**32**	**74.4**
Total	**43**	**100**

Four respondents, or 9.3% of the sample as a whole, indicated that they were employed, according the survey results above. Only a small percentage of the respondents were employed. Seven individuals, or 16.3% of the sample as a whole, identified as self-employed. A small percentage of the respondents are self-employed. A substantial 74.4% of the sample as a whole, or 32 people, reported being unemployed. The majority of research participants are unemployed. There were forty-three people in the total sample size. In conclusion, these results demonstrate that a greater percentage of the surveyed group is unemployed, whereas a lower percentage is either employed or self-employed.

Thematic Analysis: Attitudes of the Youth towards Entrepreneurship

Based on survey data, the researchers examine the opinions of young individuals toward entrepreneurship in this analysis. Understanding how young people view and interact with entrepreneurial concepts is the aim. The following are the main themes:

Theme 1: Entrepreneurial Engagement

- Active Entrepreneurs: 15 of the 43 respondents, or 35%, were actively involved in entrepreneurial endeavors. These people were engaging in entrepreneurship-related endeavors, such as launching companies, providing services, or retailing goods.

- Non-Entrepreneurs: Twenty-eight respondents, or 65% of the sample, said they did not engage in any entrepreneurial endeavors.

Theme 2: Types of Ventures

- Goods Sales: Selling goods was indicated by the majority of respondents who were actively involved in entrepreneurship. These products include things like clothing, accessories for phones, and fragrances.

- Service Offerings: Other participants choose to engage in service-oriented entrepreneurial activities. These services include money lending, printing, and mobile money services.

- Tutoring: It was interesting that one person claimed to be tutoring. This demonstrates the variety of entrepreneurial endeavors.

Theme 3: Sources of Entrepreneurship Knowledge Social media:

86% of 37 respondents, a sizable portion, said they learned about entrepreneurship from social media sites.

Online platforms are essential for promoting entrepreneurial awareness and knowledge dissemination.

- Consultation with Family Members and Entrepreneurs: Having personal relationships with family members who are business owners helps one understand entrepreneurship.

- Workshops and School Courses: Formal courses and seminars offered structured learning opportunities that impart both theoretical underpinnings and practical skills.

- No Knowledge: 6 respondents (14%) stated they knew nothing about entrepreneurship.

Thematic Analysis: Accessibility to Business Funds for the Youth

The researchers collected responses from survey participants, and key findings emerged:

- A sizable portion of respondents thought it was difficult for young people to obtain capital for starting their own businesses.

- A lot of respondents were annoyed by the lack of information regarding government initiatives for youth empowerment.

Thematic Analysis: Benefits of Youth Entrepreneurship in Lusaka

Theme 1: Self-Reliance and Independence

- Young people could become autonomous and self-sufficient through entrepreneurship, according to the majority of respondents.

- Young people could take charge of their financial future by launching their own companies.

Theme 2: Crime and Poverty Prevention

- Entrepreneurship served as a deterrence against a life of poverty and crime, according to some respondents. Getting involved in legal business ventures helped keep young people away from criminal activity.

Theme 3: Job Creation and Economic Growth

- Some respondents acknowledged that young people could start their own businesses and generate their own employment. By doing this, they support the nation's general economic expansion.

Thematic Analysis: Challenges Youth Experience in Entrepreneurship

Theme 1: Lack of Capital

- Lack of capital was cited by several respondents as a major obstacle. Young entrepreneurs often have a hard time finding capital to expand their enterprises.

Theme 2: Complex Business Registration Procedures

- Prolonged and pointless business registration processes were criticized by respondents. Entrepreneurial operations are impeded by bureaucracy and paperwork.

Theme 3: Limited Information

- A few respondents pointed out that youths did not have easy access to information regarding entrepreneurship. Not enough people are aware of the opportunities, initiatives, and resources available.

Theme 4: Lack of Supportive Institutions

- The lack of organizations that encourage youths to start their own businesses was brought up by a few respondents.

Theme 5: Government Taxation Burden

- Over taxation was mentioned by a number of responders as a problem. High tax rates put a pressure on small enterprises' finances.

Thematic Analysis: Measures Put in Place to Overcome Some of the Challenges

Theme 1: Entrepreneurship Training Programs

- Respondents underlined the necessity of entrepreneurship-focused government-sponsored training initiatives.

Theme 2: Integrating Entrepreneurship in School Curriculums

- A few responders emphasized how crucial it is that entrepreneurial courses be taught in schools. Early exposure stimulates creativity and cultivates an entrepreneurial mindset.

Theme 3: Ministry Support and Policy Framework

- Some respondents recommended an active role for the Ministry of Youth and Sport. It was mentioned that supportive policies and small loans should be established.

DISCUSSION

Attitudes of the Youth towards Entrepreneurship Entrepreneurial Engagement

Fifteen respondents, or thirty-five percent, of the forty-three survey participants were actively involved in entrepreneurial activity. These people were engaging in entrepreneurship-related endeavors, such as providing services, or retailing goods. Their participation highlights the spirit of entrepreneurship in our research group and represents a sizable fraction of the sample. According to a GEM data analysis, approximately 40% of young people in Ghana, Uganda, and Zambia are involved in early-stage entrepreneurial activities, which is in line with the survey results. These figures are slightly higher than those of the adult populations in Ghana and Uganda, and much higher than those of their young counterparts in other regions of the world. Young people in Ghana, Uganda, and Zambia typically have very positive attitudes toward self-employment, which is consistent with the high levels of entrepreneurship, according to a GEM poll that Gough cites. They believe there are many good opportunities for entrepreneurship and appear to have a reasonable amount of confidence in their own skills to start businesses.

The majority of participants (65%), or 28 respondents, stated they did not pursue any entrepreneurial activities, which is significant. Maybe none of these individuals are currently involved in entrepreneurial activities. This is consistent with the GEM 2015 study's results that young people in Zambia, Ghana, and Uganda are very entrepreneurial, with about 40% of them engaged in the early phases of their entrepreneurial endeavors as opposed to the other 60% who are not.

The study featured forty-three participants, and it is noteworthy that all forty-three of them exhibited interest in entrepreneurship. No respondent voiced a disapproving opinion. This 100% participation rate shows that the group being polled is really enthusiastic in starting their own business. The unanimity of interest in entrepreneurship is encouraging for the development of new businesses. It implies that the people polled are aware of the potential and worth of entrepreneurship. Making the most of this excitement is essential given the high level of participation. According to Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) (2015), young people in Sub-Saharan Africa have a generally positive attitude and perspective on entrepreneurship, which is consistent with the findings. Most young Africans believe that there are many business opportunities in their countries and that they possess the entrepreneurial skills necessary to start and manage a new company. Young people also show a high degree of intention to start their own firms and see business ownership as a desirable career choice, unfazed by any significant fear of failure. As a result, the area has a large pool of prospective business owners. In reality, a sizable percentage of youth in every country save South Africa express a strong desire to work in the private sector.

Accessibility to Business Funds for the Youth

The findings of this research about youth entrepreneurship in Lusaka, Zambia, highlight a number of issues that are in line with previous studies on the topic. Youth access to business funding is essential for a number of strong reasons, such as job creation, economic expansion, and ending the cycle of unemployment. Youth entrepreneurship stimulates innovation, opens up new markets, and creates jobs, all of which contribute to economic growth. Young people can start and grow enterprises and contribute to general economic growth when they have access to capital. Disillusionment and societal instability can result from high youth unemployment rates. Governments and organizations enable young people to establish their own livelihoods and lessen reliance on traditional jobs by offering financial options. Accessible business capital for young people empowers the upcoming generation of entrepreneurs while also enhancing economic vibrancy. However, the majority of respondents asserted that it is challenging for young people to get the funding they require to launch their own enterprises since the government has not effectively communicated youth empowerment initiatives to the vast majority of the country's youth.

The study's findings support those of Gough (2015), who found that young people's business ventures are extremely vulnerable to a number of variables. While some are successful, most don't grow into fully functional businesses that can create work for others. However, many people who put forth the effort to achieve finally land an employment opportunity. One in five young individuals, for example, would have abandoned a firm within a year, primarily due to the inability to secure capital or the fact that the venture was not viable. The research findings are corroborated by GEM's (2015) study, "Africa's Young Entrepreneurs: Unlocking the Potential for a Brighter Future," which found that limited access to markets and infrastructure, a lack of technical, managerial, and marketing skills, and the availability of capital were the main obstacles preventing young entrepreneurship in Africa from growing. According to young people in sub-Saharan Africa, the major obstacles to pursuing entrepreneurial aspirations are a lack of capital, experience, network, and market opportunities.

Benefits of Youth Entrepreneurship in Lusaka

Thematic research of young entrepreneurship in Lusaka, Zambia, reveals important advantages that go beyond personal profit to have wider social and financial effects. The three main themes—independence and self-reliance, preventing poverty and crime, and creating jobs and economic growth—highlight the revolutionary potential of young entrepreneurship.

Self-Reliance and Independence

Young people can become autonomous and self-sufficient through entrepreneurship, according to several responses. Young people can take charge of their financial future by launching their own companies. As young individuals become financially independent, this promotes self-assurance and a feeling of achievement. This independence improves their general well-being by enabling them to make choices that will affect their future. Public employment systems are under less strain when fewer young people depend on government jobs.

Sustainable development requires an innovative and self-sufficient culture, which is fostered by this change. "I don't want to wait for a job; I'll create my own path," said one respondent, emphasizing the proactive mindset that comes with becoming an entrepreneur. "Entrepreneurship empowers us to stand on our own feet," another person observed, expressing the sense of empowerment that comes from engaging in entrepreneurial endeavors.

Crime and Poverty Prevention

Entrepreneurship serves as a deterrence against a life of poverty and crime, according to some respondents. Getting involved in legal business ventures helps keep young people away from criminal activity.

Entrepreneurship diverts young people from criminal activity by offering a viable route to economic stability, which benefits individual lives as well as the safety and cohesiveness of communities. Young people are less prone to turn to crime out of despair when their finances are secure. By lowering the costs to society of crime and instability, entrepreneurship provides a long-term solution to poverty. One person mentioned, "When I'm busy with my business, I stay away from trouble," highlighting the constructive distraction that comes with being an entrepreneur. "Poverty pushes people into desperate situations; entrepreneurship offers hope," said another, emphasizing the latter's function in providing alternatives to dangerous actions.

Job Creation and Economic Growth

A small percentage of respondents acknowledged that young people can contribute to the nation's general economic progress by starting their own businesses. Businesses run by young people generate employment for others in addition to the entrepreneurs themselves. In order to combat underemployment and unemployment in Lusaka, this job creation is essential. By boosting the local economy's resilience and diversity, a flourishing entrepreneurial environment promotes economic growth. Innovation and competition, which are essential for economic growth, are fueled by young entrepreneurs. "I employ three people in my small shop; that's my contribution," said one respondent, illustrating the real-world effects of youth entrepreneurship on employment. "Our businesses collectively drive prosperity for Lusaka," said another, emphasizing the wider economic advantages.

Challenges Youth Experience in Entrepreneurship

Data from respondents and the literature both show that youth entrepreneurship, a key factor in economic growth, faces several obstacles. Youth have many challenges in starting profitable entrepreneurial endeavors, such as social, cultural, and financial limitations. Young people's entrepreneurial endeavors are extremely susceptible, and many of them never develop into fully fledged companies that can employ others, (Gough, 2015). The concentration of young entrepreneurs in a small number of professions exacerbates this susceptibility by creating fierce rivalry and constrained business expansion. In a similar vein, GEM (2015) highlights major barriers to youth entrepreneurial development in sub-Saharan Africa, including limited infrastructure, lack of management and marketing skills, and access to financing.

Capital Constraints

One important theme in the data from the respondents was capital restrictions. Financial obstacles, including a lack of funding, hinder the expansion of young entrepreneurs' companies by making it difficult to develop, acquire qualified staff, or enter new markets. This is consistent with the literature, which emphasizes that one of the biggest obstacles facing young entrepreneurs is access to financing (GEM, 2015). This problem is made worse for young people by their lack of work experience, credit history, and asset accumulation, which makes it harder for them to get typical bank loans or investor funding. The literature's claim that expanding finance without corresponding assistance in skill development or market access is unlikely to result in appreciable gains in young entrepreneurial activity is reflected in the respondents' emphasis on the necessity of easier access to entrepreneurial capital.

Complex Business Registration Procedures

For young entrepreneurs, complicated business registration processes are another significant obstacle. The protracted, bureaucratic procedures required to get the required licenses, permissions, and legal documentation were criticized by the respondents. The literature supports this by pointing out that difficult registration processes can discourage would-be business owners and make it more difficult to formalize a company (UNCTAD, 2015). The registration process is made more difficult by the participation of numerous government entities and the variations in procedures among jurisdictions. Simplifying these processes, as recommended by the literature and responders, may lessen the need for expensive legal aid and facilitate the launch of new companies by young entrepreneurs.

Government Taxation Burdens

Another significant issue was the weight of government taxes. Respondents commonly identified high tax rates and a dearth of tax incentives as major obstacles. Due to their limited funding and sales, startups find it difficult to meet their tax obligations, which have a direct effect on sustainability and profit margins. The literature supports progressive tax structures that take into account business size and revenue, highlighting the negative consequences of high taxes on youth entrepreneurship (GEM, 2015). The literature's suggestions for supportive policies that create an environment that is favorable to entrepreneurship are echoed by respondents' demands for tax breaks and less red tape.

Limited Information and Lack of Supportive Institutions

Other issues mentioned by the literature and respondents include a lack of supportive institutions and incomplete information. The literature highlights how crucial it is for young entrepreneurs to have access to finance sources, industry information, and networking possibilities (GEM, 2015). According to the respondents, there is a notable lack of knowledge about the programs, opportunities, and resources that are available, which has an impact on corporate strategy and planning. Young business owners are further isolated and deprived of vital advice and assistance due to the lack of organizations created especially to encourage youth entrepreneurship, such as mentorship programs, incubators, and accelerators. To close this gap and improve the entrepreneurial ecosystem, the literature and responders both recommend making investments in the establishment and maintenance of supporting ecosystems.

CONCLUSION

The study sought to gain insight into entrepreneurship among the youth in Lusaka. The study was based on the following three objectives, to determine the attitudes of the youth towards entrepreneurship, to find out challenges youth experience in entrepreneurship and to find out the measures put in place to overcome some of the challenges.

The findings of the research showed the majority of the youth were not involved in any entrepreneurial activities. The findings also showed that all of the respondents expressed interest in becoming entrepreneurs. The finding further showed that the majority of the respondents did not have easy access to funds for their entrepreneurship ventures. Other challenges included the complicated business registration processes, tax costs and the absence of supportive organizations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is vital for the Zambian government to make it easier to obtain financing from lending institutions for youth entrepreneurs, by cutting down on red tape and expediting the application process.
2. Training and learning institutions should provide specialized training courses in digital skills, marketing, financial management, and business planning for youths in Lusaka Zambia.
3. Successful entrepreneurs should offer coaching and mentoring to improve practical knowledge for youth who are aspiring to become entrepreneurs in Lusaka.
4. The ministry of education in Zambia should strive to include instruction on entrepreneurship in all levels of school curricula, so that learners are exposed to entrepreneurship at an early stage.
5. Organisations that advocate for youth empowerment such as the National Youths Development Council should be encouraged to use seminars, workshops, and campaigns to spread the word about entrepreneurship as a feasible career path.
6. The Zambian government should remove legal and regulatory obstacles to create a favourable business climate for entrepreneurs.

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