



Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences

Department of Social Work

Master of Social Work

**OPINIONS OF SOCIAL WORK LECTURERS AND SOCIAL  
WORK STUDENTS ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN  
EDUCATION AND YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT: EXAMPLE OF  
MBALE DISTRICT, UGANDA**

Shamim WABALAYI

Master's Thesis

Ankara, 2019



OPINIONS OF SOCIAL WORK LECTURERS AND SOCIAL WORK  
STUDENTS ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION  
AND YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT: EXAMPLE OF MBALE DISTRICT,  
UGANDA

Shamim WABALAYI

Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences

Department of Social Work

Master of Social Work

Master's Thesis

Ankara, 2019

## KABUL VE ONAY

Shamim WABALAYİ tarafından hazırlanan "Opinions of Social Work Lecturers and Social Work Students About The Relationship Between Education and Youth Unemployment: Example of Mbale District, Uganda" başlıklı bu çalışma, 17/06/2019 tarihinde yapılan savunma sınavı sonucunda başarılı bulunarak jürimiz tarafından Yüksek Lisans Tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.



Prof. Dr. Kasım Karataş (Başkan)



Prof. Dr. Özlem Cankurtaran (Danışman)



Doç. Dr. Melahat Demirbilek (Üye)

Yukarıdaki imzaların adı geçen öğretim üyelerine ait olduğunu onaylıyorum.

Prof. Dr. Musa Yaşar SAĞLAM

Enstitü Müdürü

## YAYIMLAMA VE FİKRİ MÜLKİYET HAKLARI BEYANI

Enstitü tarafından onaylanan lisansüstü tezimin tamamını veya herhangi bir kısmını, basılı (kağıt) ve elektronik formatta arşivleme ve aşağıda verilen koşullarla kullanıma açma iznini Hacettepe Üniversitesine verdiğimi bildiririm. Bu izinle Üniversiteye verilen kullanım hakları dışındaki tüm fikri mülkiyet haklarım bende kalacak, tezimin tamamının ya da bir bölümünün gelecekteki çalışmalarda (makale, kitap, lisans ve patent vb.) kullanım hakları bana ait olacaktır.

Tezin kendi orijinal çalışmam olduğunu, başkalarının haklarını ihlal etmediğimi ve tezimin tek yetkili sahibi olduğumu beyan ve taahhüt ederim. Tezimde yer alan telif hakkı bulunan ve sahiplerinden yazılı izin alınarak kullanılması zorunlu metinleri yazılı izin alınarak kullandığımı ve istenildiğinde suretlerini Üniversiteye teslim etmeyi taahhüt ederim.

Yükseköğretim Kurulu tarafından yayınlanan "*Lisansüstü Tezlerin Elektronik Ortamda Toplanması, Düzenlenmesi ve Erişime Açılmasına İlişkin Yönerge*" kapsamında tezim aşağıda belirtilen koşullar haricince YÖK Ulusal Tez Merkezi / H.Ü. Kütüphaneleri Açık Erişim Sisteminde erişime açılır.

- Enstitü / Fakülte yönetim kurulu kararı ile tezimin erişime açılması mezuniyet tarihimden itibaren 2 yıl ertelenmiştir. <sup>(1)</sup>
- Enstitü / Fakülte yönetim kurulunun gerekçeli kararı ile tezimin erişime açılması mezuniyet tarihimden itibaren ..... ay ertelenmiştir. <sup>(2)</sup>
- Tezimle ilgili gizlilik kararı verilmiştir. <sup>(3)</sup>

17/06/2019



**Shamim WABALAYİ**

## ETİK BEYAN

Bu alıřmadaki bütn bilgi ve belgeleri akademik kurallar erevesinde elde ettiđimi, grsel, iřitsel ve yazılı tm bilgi ve sonuları bilimsel ahlak kurallarına uygun olarak sunduđumu, kullandıđım verilerde herhangi bir tahrifat yapmadıđımı, yararlandıđım kaynaklara bilimsel normlara uygun olarak atıfta bulunduđumu, tezimin kaynak gsterilen durumlar dıřında zgn olduđunu, Tez Danıřmanının **Prof. Dr. zlem CANKURTARAN** danıřmanlıđında tarafımdan retildiđini ve Hacettepe niversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstits Tez Yazım Ynergesine gre yazıldıđını beyan ederim.

Shamim WABALAYI

## **DEDICATION**

This piece of work is dedicated to my parents Hajji Amir Abbas Wabalayi and Hajjat Kasifa Mugide in appreciation of their efforts and contribution towards my education. It also serves as an encouragement to my siblings in their entire quest for knowledge and education.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Writing this thesis has been a humbling experience and the love, support, and guidance of the below named has been worthwhile. Firstly, I wish to express my unreserved and sincere gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Dr. Özlem Cankurtaran for the endless support and guidance you gave me throughout my study, without you I would not have made it. You taught me more than just research. The time you sacrificed, and your patience are deeply appreciated.

In addition, I am using this opportunity to express my special thanks to my dear teacher Prof. Dr. Kasım Karataş, who in spite of being extraordinarily busy with his duties, took out his time to hear, guide and keep me on the right path. For his contribution towards my thesis and myself, I will forever be grateful.

Many thanks to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Melahat Demirbilek for her encouragement and insightful comments, these were highly appreciated.

I wish to acknowledge with sincere thanks the efforts of my parents, Hajji Amiru Wabalayi and Hajjat Kasifa Mugide. Thank you very much for your continued words of encouragement and support throughout my education. May the almighty God reward you abundantly.

I also thank my siblings Mariam Nandudu, Saliwa Muduwa, and Nurudini Sulaiman Malunda for standing by me all this time. My friends Israel Nyaburi Nyadera, Halima Ali Shekuwe, Shariifa Namujuzi, Arafat Mukiibi, Gloria Nibogore, Michael Kisaka Othieno, Khaula Khalid, Fatmanur Kara, Tamara Estivert and Ramadan Shabani for their discussions, reviews and contribution to my research that has been invaluable.

I am deeply indebted to Islamic University in Uganda and all my respondents who willingly gave me the information I needed, for without them, this work would have been impossible.

Thank you Yurtdışı Türkler ve Akraba Topluluklar Başkanlığı (YTB) for giving me the opportunity to study in Turkey.



## ABSTRACT

WABALAYI, Shamim. Opinions of Social Work Lecturers and Social Work Students about the Relationship between Education and Youth Unemployment: Example of Mbale district, Uganda, Master's Thesis, Ankara, 2019.

This research aims at examining the relationship between education and youth unemployment in Uganda using Mbale district as a study area. The youth population is rising yet the economy is stagnant thus few job opportunities. Through education, the youths are expected to be able to either create jobs or increase their chances to access jobs on the labour market. However, many are unemployed despite being graduates. The question here is to understand why there are many unemployed youths despite attaining education.

A qualitative research design was adopted which included the usage of two different but closely related semi-structured interview guide forms with a total of 20 participants, 15 social work students and 5 social work lecturers. This study was carried out between January and March 2019. The analysis of these participants' opinions was carried out with MAXQDA 2018 software using thematic coding and data analysis.

The results of the analysis reveal that indeed unemployment among the youths in the district is high and this has become a general concern to the public and policymakers. Uganda's education system is found to be fostering a mismatch between the graduates and the market needs, commercialization of the education system, inadequate and under skilled educational instructors and poor curriculum development are some of the main challenges identified. Insufficient entrepreneurial skills, low level of aggregate demand for labour in the economy, corruption, poverty are among the other causes of youth unemployment in the district.

Education may not have a direct relationship with unemployment however it has a strong link with other labour related issues. From the findings, there is a need for resources allocation towards primary schools as they are the foundations to Uganda's education system and review the education curriculum so that students can be allowed to specialize from an early age.

Key Words: Education System, Youth Unemployment, Social Workers, Human Capital Theory, Signaling Theory and Job-Competition Model Theory.

## ÖZET

WABALAYI, Shamim. Sosyal Hizmet Öğrencileri ve Öğretim Elemanlarının Genç İşsizliği ve Eğitim Arasındaki İlişkiye Ait Görüşleri: Uganda Mbale Örneği, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2019.

Bu araştırma, çalışma alanı olarak Mbale bölgesini kullanarak Uganda'daki eğitim ve genç işsizliği arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Genç nüfusun artışı ekonomik durgunluk ile birleşince iş olanağının azalmasına neden olmuştur. Eğitim gençlerin işgücü piyasasına erişimini sağlamaktadır, ancak bir eğitim kurumundan mezun olmak gençlerin işsiz kalmasını engellememektedir. Burada sorulması gereken soru, eğitilmiş olmalarına rağmen gençlerin çoğunun neden işsiz kalmalarıdır.

İki farklı fakat yakından ilişkili yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme rehberi formunun kullanımını içeren nitel bir araştırma tasarımı benimsenmiştir. 15'i sosyal hizmet öğrencisi, 5'i öğretim elemanı yani 20 katılımcı ile yapılmıştır. Saha çalışması, Ocak-Mart 2019 ayları arasında gerçekleştirilmiştir. Görüşlerini analizinde tematik kodlama ve evri analizi kullanılarak MAXQDA 2018 yazılımı ile gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Analizin sonucu, bölgedeki gençler arasında gerçekten işsizliğin yüksek olduğunu ve bunun kamu ve politika yapımcılar için genel bir endişe haline geldiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Birçok aile, çocuklarına daha iyi bir gelecek sağlamak için eğitime güveniyor, ancak eğitimin işsizliğin sebeplerden biri olduğu söylenebilir. Uganda'nın eğitim sisteminin mezunlarla pazarın ihtiyaçları arasındaki uyumsuzluğu teşvik ettiği tespit edildi. İdeoloji eksikliği, eğitim sisteminin ticarileştirilmesi, yetersiz ve yetenekli eğitim öğretmenleri, Uganda'daki zayıf müfredat geliştirmesi ve elitist eğitim sistemi, tespit edilen başlıca zorluklardan bazılarıdır. Yetersiz girişimcilik becerileri, ekonomideki işgücü için düşük toplam talep seviyesi, yolsuzluk, yoksulluk, ilçedeki genç işsizliğinin diğer nedenleri arasındadır.

Eğitimin işsizlikle doğrudan bir ilişkisi olmayabilir, ancak işgücü ile ilgili diğer konularla güçlü bir bağlantısı vardır. Bu nedenle, bulgular, hükümetin, Uganda'nın eğitim sisteminin temelleri olduğu için ilkokullara tahsis edilen kaynaklar konusunda eğitim sektörüne daha fazla dikkat etmesi gerektiğini, ayrıca müfredata da gözden geçirilmeli ki öğrencilere erken yaşta uzmanlaşmaları için izin verilsin.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Eğitim Sistemi, Genç İşsizliği, Sosyal Hizmet Uzmanı, Beşeri Sermaye Teorisi, Sinyal Teorisi ve İş-Rekabet Modeli Teorisi.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>KABUL VE ONAY .....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>YAYIMLAMA VE FİKRİ MÜLKİYET HAKLARI BEYANI.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>ETİK BEYAN.....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>DEDICATION.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENT .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>ABSTRACT .....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>ÖZET.....</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS.....</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>ABBREVIATIONS .....</b>	<b>xiv</b>
<b>TABLES.....</b>	<b>xv</b>
<b>FIGURES.....</b>	<b>xvi</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND OF UGANDA, MBALE DISTRICT AND STATUS OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN UGANDA .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1.1. THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1.2. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF UGANDA .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1.3. LABOUR MARKET IN UGANDA .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>1.3.1. Characteristics of Uganda’s Labour Market.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>1.3.2. Dominant Sectors of Uganda’s Labour Market .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>1.3.3. Labour Underutilisation Components .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>1.4. EDUCATION IN UGANDA .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>1.4.1. Primary School Education in Uganda .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>1.4.2. Secondary School Education in Uganda .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>1.4.3. Tertiary Education in Uganda .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>1.5. DOMINANT FIELDS OF STUDY IN UGANDA.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>1.6. MBALE DISTRICT .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>1.6.1. Geography, Population, and Demographics .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>1.6.2. Administrative and Economic Structure of Mbale District .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>1.6.3. Education in Mbale District .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>1.6.4. House -Hold Income in Mbale District.....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>1.7. STATUS OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN UGANDA.....</b>	<b>28</b>

<b>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL APPROACHES OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION AND YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>2.1. EDUCATION AND YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>2.2. EDUCATION AND YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE .....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>2.3. YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN UGANDA .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>2.4. CAUSES OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN UGANDA.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>2.5. IMPACTS OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN UGANDA .....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>2.6. UGANDA GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES AND STRATEGY ON UNEMPLOYMENT.....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>2.7. THE ROLE OF SOCIAL WORK IN YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT.....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>2.8. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK ON EDUCATION AND YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT .....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>2.8.1. Human Capital Theory .....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>2.8.1.1. Human Capital Theory Framework: The 4 Es .....</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>2.8.1.2. Shortcomings of Human Capital Theory .....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>2.8.2. Signaling Theory .....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>2.8.3. Job-Competition Model Theory.....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>CHAPTER THREE:RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>3.1. RESEARCH MODEL.....</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>3.2. STUDY AREA .....</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>3.3. DATA COLLECTION TOOL .....</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>3.4. PARTICIPANTS .....</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>3.5. DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES.....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>3.6. DATA ANALYSIS .....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>3.7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS .....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>3.8. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS .....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION.....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>4.1. THE EXTENT OF UGANDAN EDUCATION SYSTEM IN PREPARING YOUNG PEOPLE FOR EMPLOYMENT .....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>4.1.1. Mismatch between Graduates and Market Needs .....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>4.1.2. Lack of Clear Ideology in the Education System .....</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>4.1.3. Commercialisation of the Education Sector .....</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>4.1.4. Inadequate and Under-skilled Educational Instructors .....</b>	<b>83</b>

4.1.5. Poor Curriculum Development in Uganda .....	84
4.1.6. Elitist Education System .....	85
4.2. OPINIONS OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION AND YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT .....	86
4.2.1. Education, Employment and Nepotism in Uganda .....	86
4.2.2. Does the System of Education in Uganda offer Equal Opportunity? .....	88
4.2.3. Level of Education in Relation to Employment.....	91
4.2.4. The Short- and Long-Term Future of Education and Youth Unemployment in Uganda .....	92
4.3. OTHER CAUSES OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT .....	94
4.3.2. Insufficient Entrepreneurial Skills .....	96
4.3.3. Low level of Aggregate Demand for labour in the Economy .....	97
4.3.4. Corruption .....	98
4.3.5. Poverty.....	99
4.4. ROLE OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT .....	100
4.4.1. Education Support .....	101
4.4.2. Encouraging and Supporting Households and Individuals to Establish Income-Generating Activities .....	102
4.4.3. Mobilisation and Provision of Resources .....	103
4.4.4. Capacity-Building.....	103
4.4.5. Brokering Role.....	104
4.4.6. Community Counselling and Organization .....	105
4.4.7. Promoting Positive Work Ethics and Attitudes among the Unemployed Youths .....	106
4.4.8. Research and Advice on Policy .....	106
4.4.9. Promotion of Good Health.....	107
 CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION.....	 109
5.1. CONCLUSION .....	109
5.2. RECOMMENDATIONS .....	111
5.2.1. Recommendations to the Government .....	111
5.2.2. Recommendations to Social Workers.....	114
5.2.3. Recommendation to Students.....	116
 REFERENCES.....	 119

<b>APPENDIX 1: ORIJINALLIK RAPORU.....</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2: ORIGINALITY REPORT .....</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>APPENDIX 3: TURNITIN RAPORU.....</b>	<b>134</b>
<b>APPENDIX 4: ETHICS BOARD PERMISSION.....</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>APPENDIX 5: LETTER FOR DATA COLLECTION.....</b>	<b>136</b>
<b>APPENDIX 6: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW FORM FOR LECTURERS .....</b>	<b>137</b>
<b>APPENDIX 7: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW FORM FOR STUDENTS</b>	<b>139</b>
<b>APPENDIX 8: VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION FORM .....</b>	<b>141</b>
<b>APPENDIX 9: IDENTIFICATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS .....</b>	<b>143</b>
<b>APPENDIX 10: AUTOBIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>144</b>



## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>BTVET:</b>	Business Technical Vocational Education and Training
<b>CBO:</b>	Community Based Organisation
<b>CIA:</b>	Central Intelligence Agency
<b>CPA:</b>	Certified Public Accountant
<b>GDP:</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>ICFGEO:</b>	International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity
<b>MFPED:</b>	Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
<b>MGLSD:</b>	Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development
<b>NGO:</b>	Non -Governmental Organisation
<b>OECD:</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>PEAP:</b>	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
<b>SMEs:</b>	Small and Medium Enterprises
<b>UBOS:</b>	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
<b>UNCDF:</b>	United Nation Capital Development Fund
<b>UNHS:</b>	Uganda National Housing Survey
<b>WHO:</b>	World Health Organization
<b>YEN:</b>	Youth Employment Network

## **TABLES**

Table 1: Population growth in Uganda between 1950 and 2018.

Table 2: Labour Indicators in Uganda between 2016 and 2017.

Table 3: Labour force distribution in Uganda.

Table 4: Enrolment and Transition from one level to another between 2012 and 2016.

Table 5: Key indicators in Uganda's secondary education between 2012 and 2016.

Table 6: Enrolment in Ugandan Tertiary Institutions between 2012 and 2016.

Table 7: Youth distribution in different fields of study.

Table 8: Population of Mbale district in terms of age, gender and size.

Table 9: Gender based level of education among the youths in Mbale district.

Table 10: Income distribution among the household in Mbale district.

Table 11: Patterns of saving in Mbale district.

Table 12: Table showing the policy plans adopted and the year.

Table 13: Youth unemployment in Uganda between 1991 and 2017.

Table 14: Showing a summary of themes and sub -themes.

## FIGURES

Figure 1: The Map of Mbale District.

## INTRODUCTION

African countries have in the past three decades been confronted by a series of multidimensional challenges that stretch from war, epidemic diseases, famine and drought as well as wide spread poverty. At the core of these challenges is the problem of youth unemployment that seems to cut across the entire continent in almost similar proportions and consequences. This research therefore seeks to analyse the relationship between education and youth unemployment in Mbale district Uganda from the perspective of social work discipline.

Unemployment among the youths in Uganda is a challenge that continues to occupy the mind of many policy makers in the country and remains a serious concern among the citizens. Unemployment has become a structural characteristic of Uganda's labour market and continues to affect people's social life. Persistent poverty, rapid population growth and weak economic policies that have resulted to slow economic growth are often fronted as some of the reasons responsible for the unemployment challenge among the youths of Uganda. According to ActionAid (2012), the unemployment rate in Uganda is among the poorest in Africa while a report by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2016) puts youth unemployment at around 9.1%. The report further indicates that 6.1% of youths in the country are underemployed while another 6.1% of the youths are working in levels below their education qualifications.

Despite figures indicating that there has been growth in the job creation by about 4.8% between 2013 and 2016 ( Ahaiwe and Mbowa 2014 ), a bigger percentage of these opportunities are found in the informal sector as compared to the formal sector of the economy. The lack or limited job opportunities has had severe consequences in the country's social, political and economic sectors. Not only is youth unemployment affecting young people's ability to meet their daily needs, some have resulted into social evils such as crime, drugs and prostitution in order to make a living. Youths have also been used to fuel ethnic and political violence that have rocked the country in the recent years.

The 2014 National Population and Household Census report reveals that majority of Ugandans, 75% of the population are below the age of 30 and further that the median age of 15.9 years is the second largest in the world (UBOS, 2014; Myers, 2016: 12). The Ugandan media has even described the combination demographic characteristics of the country that show very high percentage of young people and high unemployment rates as ‘Uganda’s ticking time-bomb’(Mboya, 2015).When it comes to employment and business opportunities, women are more vulnerable than their male counterparts making the situation even much more challenging for them. Majority of female youths have less capital inform of savings skills or access to capital/credit. This can be explained by a number of reasons, most prominent of them are the existing socially constructed stereotypes and norms that make it more difficult for them to compete for the few opportunities available (Okoiye, 2003: 16 -23). Yet the importance of women empowerment in contemporary economic growth and efforts to eradicate poverty continue to be emphasised (Chant and Jones 2005: 185).

In Uganda, unemployment among educated youths is another unique characteristic that continues to complicate the conventional understanding of employment which states that individuals with higher education have more probability of getting employed. Moreover, academic literature on what contributes to youth unemployment continue to focus on the government economic policies, colonialism, wealth distribution, rural urban migration and low demand for labour (Mukwaya et al, 2001; Akisimire, 2010; Chiguta, 2002; Kellow, 2010; Nnadozie, 2003; Ali et al, 2013; Udoh and Sanni, 2012; Wadesongo et al, 2011). However, there is comparatively lesser emphasis regarding the connection between education and youth unemployment in the country as well as the input of social workers in providing solution to this problem. Education has been touted as being able to reduce or lower the risk of unemployment. In Uganda, the number of educated people has been on the rise consistently in the last four decades with more and more young people achieving very high levels of higher education.

This would in theory mean that a similar trend would be seen in the labour market where more young people continue to get employment. However, this has not been the case and ironically education has made some young Ugandans to be unemployed due to mismatch between their academic qualifications and available jobs. In this research therefore, I

focus on the nexus between education and youth unemployment in Uganda by getting the opinions of social work lecturers and students. I also rely on the available literature to provide perspectives to the research questions to arrive at this research's objectives.

### **(i) Problem Statement**

The rate of population growth in Uganda is approximated at 3% annually hence making it among the fastest countries in the world with high population growth rates (Uganda Housing and Population Census 2014). This rapid growth in population would ordinarily require similar growth in job creation however this has not happened. Many Ugandan youths are today either unemployed or underemployed. If you combine such figures with the enormous number of people below the age of 18 years, then a bigger segment of the population is not engaged in active production and income generation. Dependency has been on the rise, savings have reduced meaning very few people have the capital to invest. Without investment, there are few jobs created thus worsening the already bad situation.

Many have thus turned to education hoping that after graduation, they would be employed. This however, depends on the education system, individual performance, level of study and the support one is able to get from teachers and parents. For Ugandan youths, however, a painful reality is increasingly becoming the order of the day. The outdated education system is denying many students exposure to practicality, lack of adequate career guidance, mismatch between the demand and access to the labour market and available programs, lack of work-related (non-academic work-related) skills such as how to write a curriculum vitae, interview skills, job searching techniques and communication skills.

Another challenge is that graduates after finishing all the stages of education will take a minimum of about three to five years looking for a job and in most cases, most job applications require the candidate to have a minimum of two to ten years' experience. Access to the labour market therefore has become a bigger challenge, especially for fresh graduates. One of the reasons is that the system of education is basically theoretical as students finish their education without any practical training such as internships. The mentality of most educated youths is that they have to work in offices and therefore pursue white-collar jobs which are scarce and riddled with cases of nepotism, bribery, and

patronage. The white-collar job mentality means few graduates look at themselves as job creators. The who-knows-who mentality coupled with corruption, low wage rate, and the increased population have also been factors in the increase in youth unemployment in Mbale district and the entire country at large. Weaknesses in the education system need to be examined deeply and necessary academic and non-academic reforms introduced in the education sector before it is too late.

### **(ii) Objectives of the Study**

This research's primary objective was to comprehensively analyse the connection between education and youth unemployment in Mbale district, Uganda and provide recommendations for policy makers and other stakeholders for consideration. The process targeted the opinions of social work lecturers and students regarding the link between education and the high unemployment rates among the youths in the district. Secondly, it gave the perspective of social workers on the problem of youth unemployment as well as concluded by giving a set of approaches worth considering in solving the problem.

### **(iii) Research Questions**

The agenda of this research was to illuminate the relationship between education and youth unemployment in Uganda by seeking the opinions of teachers and students. Mbale district was chosen as the study area and therefore, I examined the extent to which youths from the district were affected by the above nexus. Other causes of youth unemployment and the roles of social workers in helping to mitigate these problems were also assessed. Therefore, the study answered the four below mentioned questions;

- To what extent does the Ugandan education system prepare young people for employment?
- What are the opinions of social work lecturers and students on the relationship between education and youth unemployment in Mbale district?
- Are there other factors apart from education that contribute to youth unemployment?
- What roles can social workers play to try and solve the problem of youth unemployment?

#### **(iv) Significance of the Study**

The problem of youth unemployment in Uganda has rippling effects on the country's socio-political and economic dynamics and needs to be given special attention. Uganda has had several historical challenges such as colonialism, political instabilities as a result of military coups, drought and famine to deal with in the past. As years go by, there is a growing sense of frustration and hopelessness that the country is heading towards the wrong direction as most of the population lives under the internationally recognised. Many young people have put their hope on education as an exit strategy from the vicious cycle of poverty they experienced. Some families have had to sell their few assets to educate their children hoping that once they graduate, they will be able to secure a job and be stable.

Since this is not happening, there is need to investigate the gaps in the education system of Uganda and other factors affecting smooth transition from formal education to absorption in the labour market. This research will therefore provide policy makers with a broader picture of the realities experienced by young Ugandans who have been forced to venture into social evils to achieve their goals. If the recommendations from this research are adopted, they will not only have added valuable information and perspectives in the existing literature, the government will also be able to adjust its policies appropriately in order to avert further misfortunes and give young Ugandans hope in their education system once again.

#### **(v) Scope and Limitations**

This Research adopted a qualitative method approach characterised by in -depth interviews. The number of people interviewed is small if it is to give an image of the entire country. I however adopted the use of document analysis to bridge this gap. Another limitation occurred with the definition of the term 'youth' which according to youth policies of Uganda refers to individuals falling within the category of age 15 -35 years old (MGLSD, 2001: 9). Since the fieldwork conducted only focused on individuals above the age of 18 due to ethical considerations, reference to 'youths' in this thesis covers people who are between the age of 18 -35 years old. The choice of Mbale district as the study area enabled me to interact more with people in the rural area setting than the



urban population given the status of the district that has very few urban areas. I acknowledged that the experience of urban youths may be different from those in the rural areas, however that does not mean that there are no similarities. In addition, regions with significantly high number of urban populations are few and equally they have very small rural population.

# **CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND OF UGANDA, MBALE DISTRICT AND STATUS OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN UGANDA**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter serves as the background upon which the entire thesis is founded on. Foremost, it provides a general introduction to Uganda and Mbale relative to their demographic and social economic characteristics. Secondly, the country's labour market under which the dominant sector in the labour market and the labour underutilization components are also discussed. Education at both the country and district level is discussed and so are the dominant fields of study and the household income in Mbale district. Lastly, the status of social work in Uganda is also discussed.

### **1.1. THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA**

Uganda is located in the Eastern African region, a member of the East African Community and is bordered by Kenya, Tanzania, and Rwanda. Its colonial history is as an East African protectorate of the British Empire (1894) and gained her political independence from the British in 1962 (CIA 2017). It has a population of 44, 270,563 people with whom 22, 213,860 are males and 22, 118, 740 females (World Population Review 2018). According to a WHO data published in 2018, the life expectancy in Uganda stands at 60.2 years for men and 64.8 years for women which gives Uganda a world expectancy ranking of 159. Additionally, the fertility rate is 5.8 children per woman.

According to Hivos (2014), Ugandan population just like many African countries, comprises of more than 40 different ethnic groups, with the dominant tribe being the Baganda as it comprises of nearly 17% of the country's population located in the Central Region of Uganda. It is then followed by Banyankole, Iteso and Basoga at 8%, Bakiga fall at 7%, Banyarwanda and Langi people at 6%, Bagisu at 5% and lastly the Acholi and the Lugbara at 4%. However, cognizance is given to the extent that the diversity in the Ugandan ethnic composition has also been fuelled by the 15<sup>th</sup> century migration of the Luo ethnic group from South Sudan to Eastern and Northern regions of Uganda as well as the Bantu group which had already established settlement in the Western, Southern

and Central regions of Uganda (Karugire, 2010: 2-3). Regarding the religious composition of Uganda, the country is predominantly Christian at 42% (Catholics) 43% (Protestants) and 12 % Muslims (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2002: 11). Despite the widespread of traditional beliefs in the country, only 1% of the population believe the traditional religions in Uganda.

**Table 1: Population Growth in Uganda between 1950 and 2018**

Year	Population	% Male	% Female	Density (km <sup>2</sup> )	Population Rank	Growth Rate
2018	44,270,563	49.75%	50.25%	183.28	32	3.28%
2017	42,862,958	49.74%	50.26%	177.45	33	3.31%
2016	41,487,965	49.73%	50.27%	171.76	33	3.35%
2015	40,144,870	49.73%	50.27%	166.20	33	3.43%
2010	33,915,133	49.65%	50.35%	140.41	37	3.51%
2005	28,543,940	49.51%	50.49%	118.17	38	3.49%
2000	24,039,274	49.44%	50.56%	99.52	41	3.19%
1995	20,550,291	49.49%	50.51%	85.08	45	3.34%
1990	17,438,907	49.64%	50.36%	72.20	47	3.55%
1985	14,646,624	49.75%	50.25%	60.64	50	3.14%
1980	12,549,540	49.75%	50.25%	51.95	52	3.00%
1975	10,827,147	49.73%	50.27%	44.82	52	2.77%
1970	9,446,064	49.71%	50.29%	39.11	56	3.34%
1965	8,014,401	49.69%	50.31%	33.18	61	3.38%
1960	6,788,214	49.71%	50.29%	28.10	65	2.85%
1955	5,898,835	49.76%	50.24%	24.42	65	2.72%
1950	5,158,190	49.87%	50.13%	21.35	65	0.00%

**Source: World Population Review 2018**

## 1.2. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF UGANDA

A large percentage of the Ugandan population live in the rural areas with agriculture being the dominant economic activity. Additionally, the agricultural sector has the largest employment portion in the Ugandan economy (UNHS, 2012/13). However, this sector still remains lowly exploited and underutilised as a majority of the population are merely

subsistence farmers who continue to appropriate traditional technology such as the use of hoes to and other non-mechanized techniques. Moreover, this sector is continuously exposed to the mercies of environmental conditions which unfortunately are becoming more unpredictable and unreliable, low investments in agricultural sector by the state, soil fertility depletion and higher occurrences of drought and famine to continue with profitable agricultural activities (World Bank Economic Outlook, June 2014).

The economic performance of Uganda in the immediate years of employment was relatively steady having registered impressive average growth rates 6.7% between 1962 and 1966 with commercial agriculture contributing upto one-third of the total economic gross domestic product by the end of the 1960s. Additionally, there was significant increase of 9% from industrial outputs from the established food processing industries to the economy of Uganda. Progressively, the government still targeted economic growth in the 1970s averagely at about 5.6% annually. Unfortunately, rampant political instability due to mismanagement of the economy and consequently political strifes pushed Uganda down the economic growth and development to become one of the poorest countries in the world.

The Government of Uganda in the early 1980s embarked on actions leading to the path of economic reforms that brought back some elements of macroeconomic stability which was needed to inject more confidence to the national economy, create a decentralized system of governance in order to improve public service delivery, integrate the functioning of the three arms of government that includes the judiciary, legislature and the executive as well as reintroduce stronger political participation through the introduction of political pluralism and establishment of peace and security in Uganda (MFPED, 2013).

Even more importantly, the introduction of the structural adjustment programmes by the World Bank provided better foundations for economic growth experienced in the 1980s through increase in production and the general output of the economy. The consequence was reduced rates of inflation, stable macro-economic environment and low interests rates from financial institutions from the 1990s.

Contemporarily, the Ugandan economy continues to be heavily reliant on the agricultural sector which approximately employs 70% of the total labour market in Uganda. Additionally, exports from the agricultural sector account for 45% of the total returns of the export markets in terms of foreign exchange with tobacco, fish and coffee being the primary goods used trade.

### **1.3. LABOUR MARKET IN UGANDA**

In this section, I examine statistics from the labour market and also include business and individuals. This section provides information on the state of unemployment, productivity, income, employment, available skills, economic inactivity as well as underutilization.

Uganda's labour market has been facing rapid growth over the last two decades because of the increase in access to eligible labour between the ages of 14 -64. Results of the last census conducted by the Uganda National Population and Housing Agency in 2014 indicate that approximately 85.6% of those eligible to work was indeed working. In the report, the number of working women was 82% while men were 88.8%. Interestingly, the number of the working population in rural settings was 87.8% while in the urban areas only 79.2% of the capable working population was engaged. The increase in the number of working people in Uganda was dominated by growth in informal sector employment as the table below indicates.

Noteworthy, the country has equally been experiencing rapid growth in population and as it combines with an outdated education system, those entering the labour market have remained poorly skilled. A government policy to provide universal free primary and secondary education has been applauded for the improved rates in enrolment but not in the quality output.

**Table 2: Labour Indicators in Uganda between 2016 and 2017**

Labour Market Indicators	Male	Female	Rural	Urban	Total
Working population ('000)	6,890	7,108	10,804	3,194	13,998
Unemployed ('000)	103	179	141	141	282
Labour force ('000)	6,994	7,287	10,945	3,335	14,280
Total employment outside agriculture ('000)	2,271	1,618	2,043	1,847	3,889
Portion in Informal sector outside Agriculture (percent)	77.8	80.2	75.8	82.1	78.8
Employment in the informal sector outside agriculture ('000)	1,767	1,297	1,549	1,515	3,064
Employment-to-population ratio (Percent)	87.5	80.7	86.7	75.9	83.9
Labour force participation rate (percent)	88.8	82.8	87.8	79.2	85.6
Unemployment rate (strict definition) (percent)	1.5	2.5	1.3	4.2	2.0
Unemployment rate (relaxed definition) (percent)	2.6	6.1	3.1	8.6	4.4

**Source: Uganda National Household Survey 2016/2017**

### 1.3.1. Characteristics of Uganda's Labour Market

During the past few decades, Uganda has made relatively good steps towards macroeconomic growth. However, this growth has not transformed the labour market in terms of its structure. In the last decade, it was noted that there had been improvements in the rate of formal employment from both the public and private sectors at a yearly average of 5.1% which was considered above most of the other African countries grappling with the employment challenge. This percentage however still remains way below in regard to the labour force in formal employment.

Growth in economy is usually characterized by a rise in the advancement of technology which then becomes an integral part of development due to the fact that it becomes integrated with highly valued services and goods in sectors such as telecommunications, real estate development, large-scale agriculture, manufacturing and the very critical financial sector services. The inception of technology into service delivery and production goods means that a few numbers of people are tasked with the completion of bulk activities. As a result, the majority of new formal employment opportunities created are usually found in the comparatively lower production sectors in local commerce and subsistence agriculture.

The employment system in Uganda is divided into two broad sectors namely the private and the public. While it is the government that develops policy and regulations regarding

employment, it is the private sector that employs majority of people in Uganda. The private sector can further be divided into institution and self-employment. All these sectors have employment criteria's that have similarities and differences. They are also surrounded by numerous challenges that then explains why many people are unemployed. In the public sector, the government employment policy in Uganda is divided into those who are employed permanently and therefore under a national pension scheme while there are others who are employed under contract for a specified period or project. The recruitment method is supposed to be on merit, free and fair as well as open to public scrutiny. The police, military and the teachers service are some of the largest employers in the government. Some of the biggest challenges in achieving this goal include, corruption, nepotism and political interference. In the private sector, employment is sometimes permanent without pension but mostly on contract. Some of the main employers include NGOs, media house, sports organisations and civil society. A much bigger percentage of Ugandans are self-employed operating small and medium enterprises. The agriculture sector is the leading employer of people who are self-employed since most people own inherited land.

With the increasingly better technological advancements that provide for tailor-made or specific service delivery, the labour force involved in the subsistence or low agricultural production has been steadily increasing with the years. The labour force in 2012/13 for instance, 72% was engaged in either forestry, fishing or agricultural; an increase from 69% observed during the same period in 2009/2010. This was a reflection of the increasingly attractive subsistence agriculture driven by the increase in food prices. The agricultural output surprisingly only managed to increase by a paltry 1.2% annually for the next 3 consecutive years starting from 2012/13 despite the agricultural sector experiencing 6.0% increase in its rate of employment. This clearly indicated a decrease in general productivity. The emphasis made by these statistics on a wider perspective is that the rate of employment increased in the in the lower -productivity sectors such as farming while the higher output sector contracted more in terms of absorbing the labour force. It should be noted that the high-value activities are also the major front-runners in driving economic growth. Indeed, the structural changes made in the labour market yielded very little in as far as significantly contributing to growing the economy (National Housing Survey of Uganda, 2012/13).

Ugandan labour market has been characterized by mismatches between labour demand and supply due to demographic changes. Half of the existing labour force is constituted by employees who fall below 30 years. Half of the general population also fall under the age of 24 years. This means that the entrance to the labour market also increases rapidly. Rates of labour force grew constantly for 3 years at 4.8%. This rate was below the growth of formal employment during the same period of time. This scenario has created a very complex and difficult situation especially the youthful population who find it very difficult if not impossible to transcend into wage employment. Urbanization has also had an impact because currently, the labor force is being urbanized with most people moving from rural to urban centres. Between 2009 and 2013 the rate of urbanization increased from by 8% from the previous 15% to 23% and this is attributed to the expansion of local towns. The force that moves from the rural to urban centers ends up being absorbed in the informal sector with 62% either working as a self-employed or for their families or relatives, (Byamugisha, Shamchiyeva, & Kizu 2014:22-28).

Unemployment among the skilled or trained labour force is relatively low but increasing steadily. In the present day Ugandan labour force market, the youth are more likely not to get unemployment as compared to the older generations. The irony of it all is that while considering the difference in levels of education, the more-educated are significantly more unlikely to be unemployed especially women. In 2009/2010, 73% of university graduates were absorbed in various graduate-level jobs before this declined to a lower rate of 53% in 2012/13 (Byamugisha, Shamchiyeva, & Kizu 2014:22-28).

The labour force of the Ugandan economy is characterized by underemployment, especially in the dominant sector of agriculture. In 2012/13, an estimated 8.9% of the labour force was pointed out as time-related underemployed with a majority of the people working for less than 40 hours in a week. Most are not willing to work for longer hours because the earnings from their labour input are very minimal and as such, they have to supplement with other economic activities. However, the labour force engaged in household enterprises outside the agricultural sector do work for longer hours. The growth in this sector over the last two decades has significantly helped minimize underemployment and has supplemented the little household incomes from subsistence agriculture, (Byamugisha, Shamchiyeva, & Kizu 2014:22-28).



Uganda has a wide margin of groups participating in the labour force market that includes a massive 84% margin of working-age group, several children and elderly members of the society, are active economically. The youthful population is staying much longer in the education system in an attempt to attain some competitiveness once they graduate from the school system and put venture into the career world. This is also the exclusive group whose majority of members choose not to work and rather concentrate on their studies. The other members of this group may be economically active.

### **1.3.2. Dominant Sectors of Uganda's Labour Market**

A survey done on Ugandan households by the Ugandan Bureau of Statistics 2014 established that the agricultural sector was the highest employer in the country. 72% of the Ugandan workforce according to this report work directly or indirectly in agriculture-related activities. Interestingly the gender proportion among those working in the agriculture sector is dominated by women at 77% while only 66.8% of men work in the agriculture sector. 9.5% percent of Ugandans are working in the trade industry making it the second most prominent sector. The table below details how the working population in Uganda is distributed.

**Table 3: Labour Force Distribution in Uganda**

Industry	UNHS 2009/10			UNHS 2012/13		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Agriculture, forestry	64.4	74.5	69.6	66.8	77.0	72.0
Trade	9.1	8.3	8.7	8.9	10.1	9.5
Manufacturing	6.4	4.7	5.5	5.4	3.3	4.4
Transport and storage	4.8	0.1	2.3	4.4	0.2	2.2
Education	3.0	3.1	3.0	2.9	2.3	2.6
Construction	4.2	0.1	2.1	4.2	0.1	2.1
Hotels , restaurant e	1.0	2.9	2.0	0.6	2.4	1.5
Other service activities	2.2	1.9	2.0	2.2	1.7	2.0
Others	5.0	4.6	4.8	4.6	2.9	3.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Broad Sectors</b>						
Primary	64.4	74.5	69.6	66.8	77.0	72.0
Production	11.4	5.0	8.1	10.5	3.6	7.0
Service	24.1	20.5	22.2	22.8	19.4	21.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2014)**

### 1.3.3. Labour Underutilisation Components

It is imperative to pay attention to the nature of Uganda's economy while examining the issue of unemployment. Since agriculture is the dominant economic sector in Uganda, individuals who are not incorporated by the formal labour market, are able to find some form of work in the agriculture and informal sector. This, therefore, reduces the level of unemployment although such alternative to employment is often characterized by either low wages, few working hours or both. Thus, if we are to look at unemployment in Uganda and indeed many other developing countries using the international definition of the same, there are high probabilities to miss out the reality.

Therefore, other forms of mal-employment features need to be examined if we are to get a clear representation of the state of unemployment in Uganda. These features may include skill mismatch (due to a disconnection between the labour market and education system), seasonal/ time-related cases of unemployment, low wages/remuneration and inadequate work volumes. A report by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics in 2014 revealed that approximately 3.3 million Ugandans (20%) in the working bracket were

underutilized. Majority of the affected in this group are male at 24% of their working population and females were at 16% of the total female working population.

#### **1.4. EDUCATION IN UGANDA**

Education continues to play a very significant role globally in development of societies. Aside from creating universal culture through national curriculums, education also facilitates imparting of requisite knowledge and skills for securing decent employment. The education system in Uganda has evolved for a long period of time dating as far back as the pre-colonial times when it was basically informal in nature. However, with the coming of missionaries, the education system changed. Formal education was introduced and since then, formal education has had its extinction a characteristic quite different from the informal one. The structure of the contemporary system of education in Uganda has been constructed as a four-tier model and has existed since 1963 when the Castle Commission Report was published (Fountain Publishers, 1997: 245). It consists of a year in pre-primary education stage of education attended by children between the ages of 3 to 5 years before joining the primary school. Primary education consists of 7 years then a transition to a four-year level commonly referred to as Ordinary level, and finally a 2-year cycle of upper secondary that is Advanced level (7-4-2). Transition from the Advanced level leads to between two to five years of tertiary education. However, this existing system is criticized for its failure to equip its graduates with practical skills necessary to address the development needs of the country.

In 1997, Uganda introduced the Universal Primary Education objectively to offer free access to primary education. However, secondary and tertiary education was still only accessible to those who could meet the costs. However, in 2007, the government reintroduced the free universal secondary education system and set the pace as the first African government to do so. (The Guardian, 2011). Additionally, the government provides approximately 4000 scholarships to students in any of the seven public universities in Uganda. Moreover, there are other several private and public institutions that offer tertiary education.

There are also programmes that are intended to serve those who do not pursue the conventional formal education system from primary to tertiary level. This informal

system provides a range of practical skills to those who have not completely undergone through the formal education system or just partially. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development instituted the Functional Adult Literacy programme that targets older generations who do not have any form of formal training (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2006).

#### 1.4.1. Primary School Education in Uganda

Uganda over the years continue to witness a consistent and steady increment in enrolment students joining primary schools across the country. For example, the number of students who enrolled in 2012 was 8.3 million. In 2016 the number had increased to 8.6 million.

**Table 4: Enrolment and Transition from One Level to Another between 2012 and 2016**

Class	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
P1	1,877,801	1,883,803	1,932,489	1,842,006	1,888,847
P2	1,284,122	1,307,745	1,349,233	1,277,974	1,352,893
P3	1,291,268	1,312,592	1,362,786	1,283,194	1,349,293
P4	1,299,994	1,317,315	1,359,448	1,272,522	1,328,035
P5	1,118,900	1,138,789	1,178,273	1,101,698	1,156,465
P6	892,338	920,045	963,083	901,939	958,298
P7	564,217	579,431	627,343	584,984	622,093
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,328,640</b>	<b>8,459,720</b>	<b>8,772,655</b>	<b>8,264,317</b>	<b>8,655,924</b>

**Source: Ministry of Education and Sports (2017)**

Those who were able to successfully complete primary school are 65% of those who had enrolled in the first class. Out of those who completed primary school only 67% were able to join high school. The ratio between girls and boys who joined high school between 2012 and 2016 is almost similar.

#### 1.4.2. Secondary School Education in Uganda

Similar to primary schools, the enrolment rates in secondary schools have been increasing between 2012 and 2016. The ratio of teacher to students has been consistent a 1:22 over the same period. the table below gives vital information on secondary school indicators in Uganda.

**Table 5: Key indicators in Uganda's Secondary Education between 2012 and 2016**

Indicator	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Gross Enrolment rate	28	29	30	25	-
Net Enrolment rate	24	26	26	22	-
Student Teacher Ratio	30	22	22	22	22
Student Classroom Ratio	50	55	50	52	51
Student Stance Ratio	25	44	37	35	-
Enrolment (000)	1,252	1,362	1,391	1,284	1,457
Male	671	727	738	675	765
Female	581	635	653	609	692
% Annual change in enrolment	-	8.9	2.1	-7.7	13.5
Number of Schools	2,612	2,838	2,950	2,695	3,070
Number of Teachers	55,270	61,505	63,957	58,051	66,542
Number of classrooms	25,076	28,242	27,706	25,888	27,239

**Source: Ministry of Education and Sports (2017)**

In 2016, there were a total of 1,457,277 students enrolled in various secondary schools in Uganda. This is an increase from a total of 1,251,507 that were enrolled in 2012. In 2016, the UCE exam results for junior high school (O -Levels) indicate that 96% of the students passed the minimum grade that could allow them to join senior high school (A -Levels). The transition from junior high school to senior high school is however low across Uganda. Although there was an increase in the transition from O level to A level by 5%, this percentage is in reference to the students who completed junior high school 30% in 2016 up from 25% in 2012. In both years, there were more male students who transitioned to senior high school than females. This information is of significance reference when one seeks to examine the disparity between the number of unemployed men and women in Uganda.

### **1.4.3. Tertiary Education in Uganda**

Tertiary education has become one of the most entities with regard to whether or not one can get employed as well as determining the person's productivity, promotion, and ease of mobility. In this section, we will look at the status of tertiary education in Uganda as we continue to explore how education affects the labour market. In 2016, 72% of the 258,866 students registered in different tertiary institutions were university students. the remaining 28% are registered in Business, Technical Vocational Education and Training

(BTVET) which were established to provide room for primary, high school, and tertiary school dropouts to be able to gain skills.

In 2016, Uganda had a total of 129 BTVET institutions offering different technical and skill-based training. According to the Ministry of Education in Uganda (2016), 55.7 % of tertiary students in Uganda are male while 44% are women. In 2012 there were 198,066 students registered in tertiary institutions and in 2016 the numbers increased by 31% to 258,866.

**Table 6: Enrolment in Ugandan Tertiary Institutions between 2012 and 2016**

Institution type						Percentage in
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2016
<b>All tertiary Institutions</b>	<b>198,066</b>	<b>201,376</b>	<b>250,621</b>	<b>257,855</b>	<b>258,866</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Males	111,831	113,688	139,727	143,212	144,314	55.7
Females	86,235	87,572	110,894	114,643	114,552	44.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>198,066</b>	<b>201,376</b>	<b>250,621</b>	<b>257,855</b>	<b>258,866</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Of which, Universities</b>	<b>140,096</b>	<b>140,403</b>	<b>180,360</b>	<b>185,315</b>	<b>186,412</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Males	78,817	79,709	100,525	103,280	104,432	56.0
Females	61,270	60,398	79,835	82,035	81,980	44.0
<b>% enrolled in universities</b>	<b>70.7</b>	<b>69.7</b>	<b>72.0</b>	<b>71.9</b>	<b>72.0</b>	

**Source: Ministry of Education and Sports (2017)**

### **1.5. DOMINANT FIELDS OF STUDY IN UGANDA**

The area of studies is important in understanding whether the education system in Uganda is producing graduates with relevant skills needed in the constantly changing labour market. A survey by the Ministry of Education in 2015, established that majority of Ugandan youths are still being trained on general education programs and not highly specialized and technical courses. 88% of male and 85% of female students are registered in general programs. Business-related programs dominate the specialized fields with around 2.1% of the students while engineering and health sciences take 1.6% and 1.2% respectively as indicated in the table below.

**Table 7: Youth distribution in different fields of study**

<b>Field of study</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
General Education	88.4	84.6	86.6
Business Studies	2.3	1.8	2.1
Training course or apprenticeship/internship programme	1.1	2.3	1.6
Engineering	2.9	0.0	1.6
Education	0.5	2.3	1.3
Health Sciences	1.0	1.5	1.2
Others*	3.9	7.7	5.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

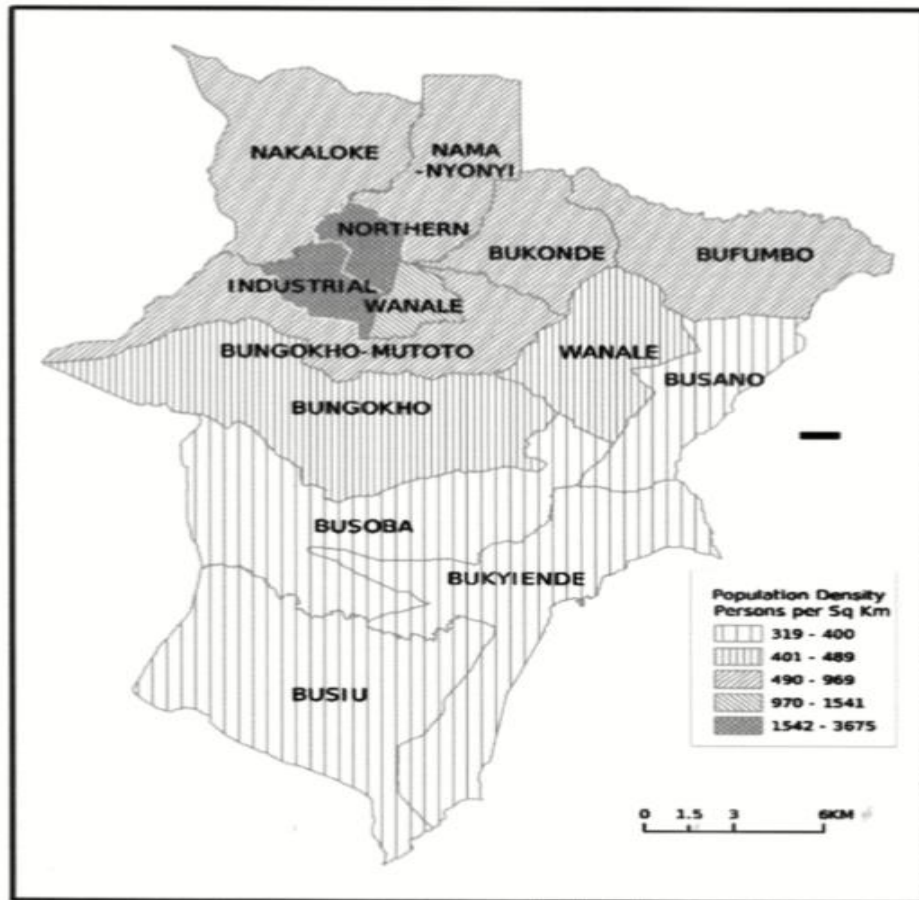
**Source Ministry of Education and Sports (2016)**

## **1.6. MBALE DISTRICT**

### **1.6.1. Geography, Population, and Demographics**

Mbale is a district located on the eastern part of the country. It comprises of three divisions, one county named Bungokho, nineteen sub-counties, and one municipality among other local administrative units. To the North, the district is bordering Sironko, Bukedea to the Northwest, Budaka and Pallisa districts to the West, Tororo and Butaleja to the Southwest and lastly with Manafwa and Bududa districts to the East. It covers approximately five hundred and nineteen sq.km of land (2,435 hectares) with an average 996.5 individuals per square kilometers in population density (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2015).

**Figure 1: The Map of Mbale District**



**Source: Mapsland 2018**

Demographically, as of 2014, the district's population was estimated to be at 488,960 people with 74.8 % of the population living in rural area and the remaining 25.2% living in the urban areas. The population of women is slightly higher than that of males, standing at an estimate of 52.3% as against 47.7% of male. When the population is further stratified in terms of age, four broad strata are established that is 53.4% fall between 0-17 years, 22.7% between the ages of 18-30, 19.2% between 31-59 years and lastly a percentage of 4.6 belonged to 60 years and above (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2015).

A study by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics in 2015 also established that Mbale has a young population with 65% of this population below the age of 35. The highest percentage is below the age of nine years who are about 35% of the population followed by those between the age of 20 and 39 who are around 30%.



**Table 8: Population of Mbale district in terms of Age, Gender and Size**

Age group	Male	Female	Total
0-9 years	78,100	76,027	154,127
10-19 years	60,398	67,255	127,653
20-39 years	59,472	72,043	131,515
40-59 years	25,490	27,465	52,955
60 years and above	9,879	12,831	22,710
<b>Total</b>	<b>233,339</b>	<b>255,621</b>	<b>488,960</b>

**Source: Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2015**

The population of Mbale district is distributed among three divisions. Industrial division which is not only the most prosperous in terms of economic activities, but it is also the most populous with 45% of the population living in industrial division. 40% of the population reside in Northern division and 15% reside in Wanale division. Migration explains the high population density in Industrial and Northern divisions as many people move to these divisions in search of employment. Wanale division is mainly a residential area with very few industries compared to the Industrial and Northern divisions. The central business district of Mbale is under the Industrial division thus explaining the high number of people living there. During the colonial era, Wanale division was home to senior officials of the administration and even today, it still remains sparsely populated with hotels and living quarters for government officials. Few slams have emerged in Busamaga and Mooni where the majority of the people in Wanale division live. The population density of the two largest divisions (Northern and Industrial divisions) has a population density of between 1542 – 3675 persons per sq. while Wanale division is characterized by 970-1541 persons per sq. Km (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2017).

### **1.6.2. Administrative and Economic Structure of Mbale District**

Mbale district falls under the local government administrative structure and is headed by a Mayor who is supported by a team of secretaries and a deputy mayor who together form an executive committee. Initiation, formulation, and monitoring of the implementation of the district's policies are done by the executive committee. There is a district council which functions as the supreme legislative organ of the district which apart from making decisions, also supervises how district policies are implemented. The council consists of twelve representatives directly elected from the twelve ward units in the district and additional special positions for women and persons with disability are preserved.

Administratively, the district is administered in three levels consisting of three divisions, twelve wards, and eighty-three Cells. A Local council (LCV) Chairperson is the political wing in the district structure and also heads the district council which is the top political authority equipped with legislative and executive powers. The Chief Administrative Officer is the oversees the technical wing that is in-charge of all the civil servants in the district. The district's total approved posts are two hundred sixty-six, however, a total of only one hundred and forty one posts are filled (Mbale District Local Government, 2016).

Economically, agriculture, though rain dependent, forms the major economic base of the district with vast areas of land covered with Coffee, Matooke (Uganda's staple food), Maize, Beans, Carrots and Irish Potatoes among others. These constitute both a means of subsistence as well as a foreign exchange through exportation to different countries like Kenya, Tanzania, and Rwanda. The thriving of agriculture in this area can be attributed to its vast arable land and consistent annual rains. However, the district strategic location makes cultivation of varieties of crops possible. Its proximity to Mount Elgon coupled with the availability of waterfalls provides suitable climatic conditions for agriculture to thrive as a major productive economic activity. Besides, tourism is also a source of revenue in the district. Mount Elgon national park that attracts both local and international tourists is home to over three hundred types of birds, small antelopes, forest monkeys, elephants and buffalos (Uganda Wildlife).

### **1.6.3. Education in Mbale District**

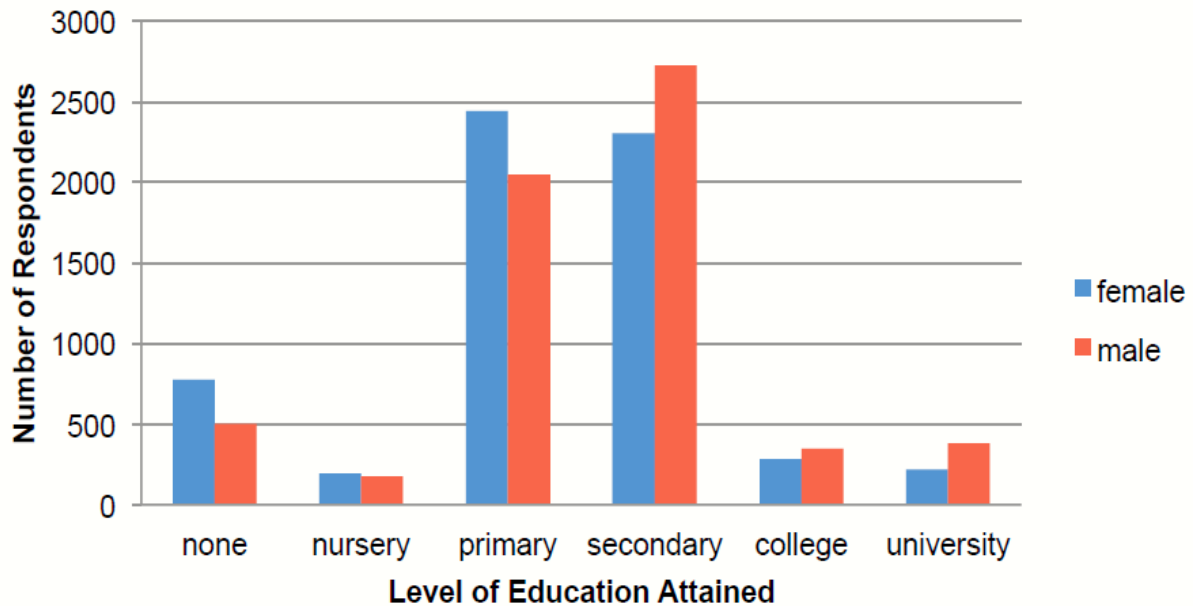
The educational sector has a structure similar to that at the national level. With pre-primary, primary level, O -level, A -level and tertiary education. The importance of education on a society's general growth cannot be emphasized enough. This particularly touches on the ability of a society to produce an employable human resource which in turn can attract investors who may want to tap on the availability of quality labour.

Mbale has a number of educational institutions, ranging from nursery and day-care centers, primary, and secondary schools to higher institutions of learning. The institutions vary from privately owned to public ownership. Majority of these institutions are located in the Northern Division, whereas the rest are divided between Industrial and Wanale Division. The literacy level is at 67.4 percent (Mbale Municipal Council, 2008 Human Resource & Management office records). The district comprises about one hundred twelve primary schools, thirty secondary schools, four technical colleges and five privately owned universities which serve the residents of Mbale district. Nabuyonga primary school, for example, founded by the Anglican Church of Uganda in 1923 by Bishop Wilson registers a population of 1673 pupils with 35 teachers and 22 classrooms. Mbale senior secondary school, one of Mbale's pride has a population of five thousand six hundred students, classes senior one to four each have ten streams hence totalling to forty streams altogether and there are around ninety students for each.

Finally, The Islamic University in Uganda locally referred to as IUIU was established in 1988, it started with two faculties; the Faculty of Islamic Studies and Arabic Language and the Faculty of Education, both which had a total student enrolment of 80 students representing these two faculties. However, it now accommodates over seven thousand students, four campuses and seven faculties. The university has an alumni base of over ten thousand students in areas of Administration, Islamic studies, Environmental Science, Arabic Language, Law, Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, Education, Food Science, Management, Procurement and Logistics Management and Technology and Postgraduate in Education, Kiswahili, Business Administration, Public Administration, History and Peace and Conflict Resolution. The School of Clinical Officers, and Mbale School of Hygiene.

Education in Mbale district is faced by two serious challenges that have far-reaching consequences on the young population. The first challenge is the few numbers of schools as compared to the enrolment rate and growing population. This has forced most young people to move to other districts to search for schools. The second problem is the issue of gender balance. As earlier observed, Mbale district has more female population than men yet when it comes to education, there is a serious imbalance on the number of females that are enrolled or able to complete their basic education. This has affected the female population's ability to compete for the few existing job opportunities as well as realize their full potential.

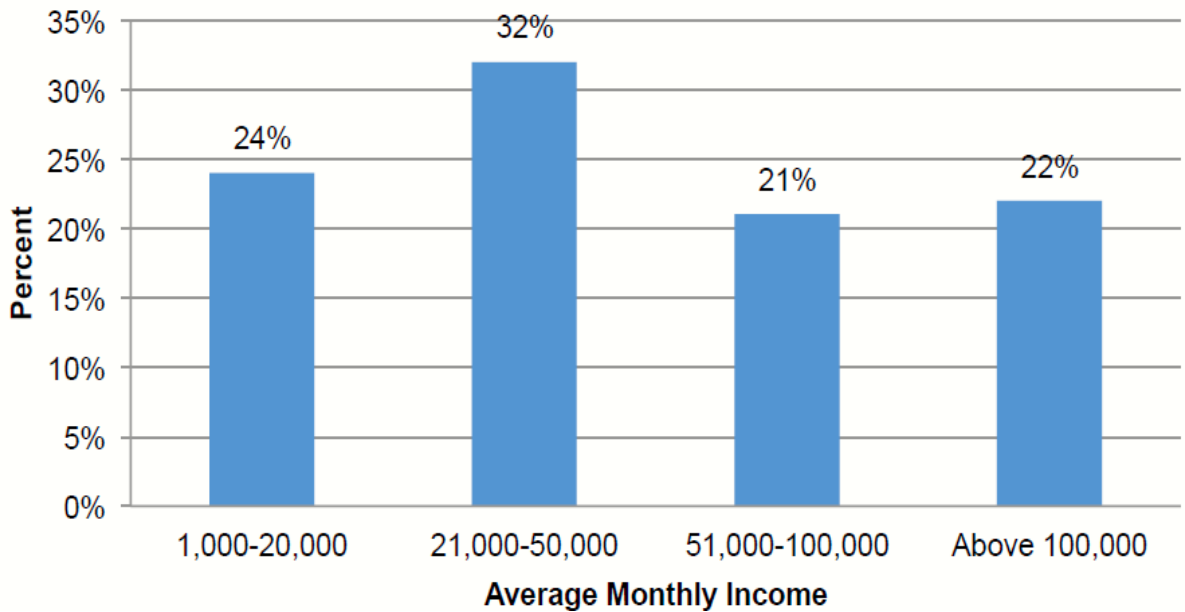
Beyond primary school education, there are more male students than their female counterparts. 44% of the male population are able to complete upto their A-levels while only 37% of the females are able to reach that level. At the tertiary level, 12% of the male population are able to complete while 9% of the females are able to enroll and complete their tertiary education. Even more concerning is the high number of female populations who are not able to receive any form of education at all (Uganda Bureau of Statistic, 2015). The table below shows that in the education cycle, more female than male students tend to quit school while it is also more challenging to keep females in school due to social factors such as teenage pregnancies, early marriages, peer pressure and child labour.

**Table 9: Gender-Based level of Education among the Youths in Mbale District**

Source: Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2015)

#### 1.6.4. House -Hold Income in Mbale District

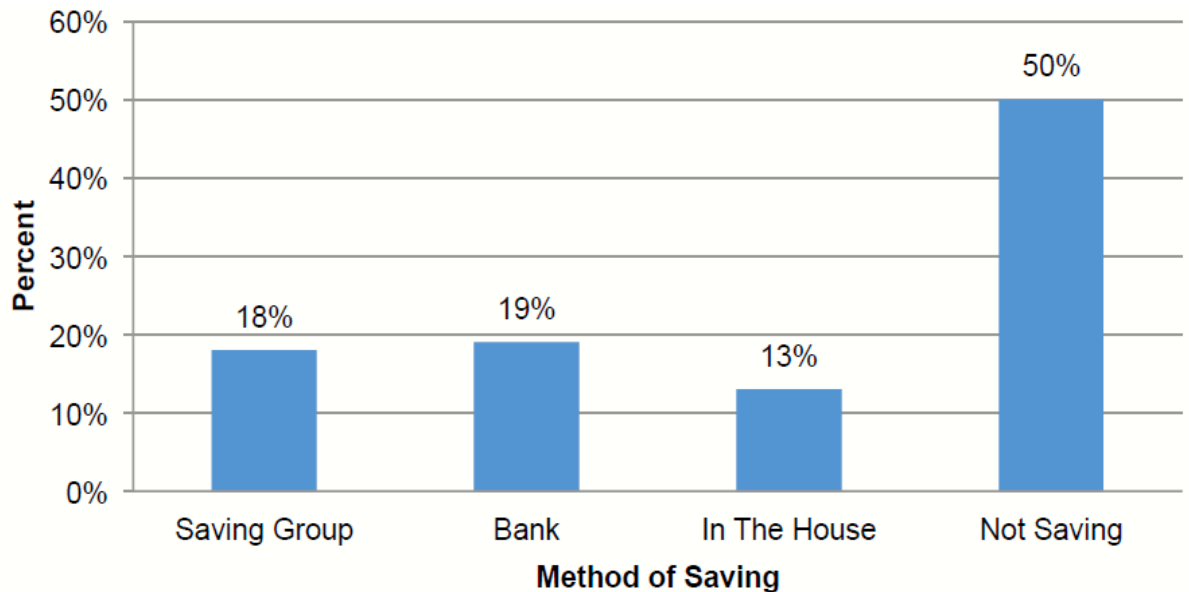
The census report of 2014 indicates that most of the residents in Mbale district are low-income earners. Majority of them are employed as casual laborers within the district and earn about forty thousand Ugandan shillings per month. Most of those who are not working as casual labours run small-scale business enterprises such as kiosks and grocery shops. In areas such as Namataala, Nabuyonga, and Namakwekwe, residence depends on local brewing in addition to casual labour and small business. Some of the residents engage in wheel-cart pushing activities as a source of employment. In other parts of the district such as Mooni settlement, bricklaying offers employment opportunity for many youths. The general range of income is between those earning above 100,000 shillings per month, 50,000-100,000, 21,000-50,000, and 1,000-20,000 Ugandan shilling (UGX) per month (US\$ 1 = 3697.30 UGX). The table below shows that 56% of the household in Mbale district earn less than 50, 000 UGX per month.

**Table 10: Income Distribution among the Household in Mbale District**

**Source: Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2015)**

In the survey, respondents from Mooni and Busamaga regions of Mbale district have the lowest incomes with 44% and 41% respectively getting less than 20000 UGX per month. Busamaga region also has the lowest number of people earning less than 100000 UGX per month at 14%, followed by Namataala where only 15% earn less than 100000 UGX. Mooni region also has the lowest number (11%) of people earning between 51,000-100,000 UGX per month. In Nabuyonga area of Mbale district, income distribution is relatively equal. Namakwekwe area has the widest gap between the top and lowest earners. 26% of the population in Namakwekwe area earn more than 100, 000 UGX per month while 18 percent earn less than 20, 000. Nkoma region in the district has the highest number of those who can be considered to be middle class since 61% of the population earn between 20,000 and 100,000 UGX per month.

Savings are still equally low with only 19% of the people in the district saving money with the banks, 18% put their money in groups, mostly women, and youth groups while 13% save their money at home. 50% of the people of Mbale district do not engage in saving according to the 2014 census report.

**Table 11: Patterns of Savings in Mbale District**

**Source: Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2016**

Saving has a direct impact on the ability of a society to create jobs. If there is low saving, it means there is a low investment which translates to low job creation and thus unemployment. In Mbale district, low savings is attributed not just to the low wages people earn, it is also caused by the huge dependency ratio by members of the close and extended family. In relation to this, most of the land in Mbale district is owned privately by the citizens. According to the Ministry of lands, 98% of the total land in Mbale district is owned privately, 1.4% is communal land, 0.35%, and 0.15% are owned by the municipality and the national government respectively. Land as a factor of production and more so in a predominantly agricultural society it becomes an important asset. However, the downside of private ownership is that farmers lack the equipment, capital and know-how to mechanize the sector thus land remains underutilized in the district.

### **1.7. STATUS OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN UGANDA**

Social work is very significant when it comes to addressing a majority of the fundamental issues that continue to affect our societies directly or indirectly by collaborating with other academic disciplines. The discipline developed from its early foundation as one of the academic disciplines inculcated in the Ugandan educational curriculum in 1952 when the

first Social Work training institution, Nsamizi Training Institute of Social Development was established. The establishment of this institution was guided by the need to equip and train clerical officers with the requisite knowledge and skills to serve in the colonial government's social sector. The completion in this course by the new clerical graduates culminated in the award of diploma and certificates in Social Work. Before this institution was established, people who desired to pursue this path towards career development had to obtain these studies from overseas countries like Britain or the USA (Spitzer H., Twikirize, M, J. & Wairire, G.G., 2014).

The Department of Social Work and Social Administration was established in 1963 at Makerere University to facilitate training in Rural Development, Social Administration and Social Welfare before finally providing the course as a degree programme later in 1969. The 1980s saw the transformation of the education sector in Uganda with the establishment of other universities besides Makerere which up to that point had been the only institution of higher learning in the country ( Spitzer et al., 2014). Currently, 35 higher institutes of learning are offering degree studies in Bachelor of Social Work and Social Administration.

A majority of the social workers are employed in the private sector which is majorly composed of non-governmental organizations while others are employed in the government departments and agencies. The health sectors absorb a significant number of qualified social workers who are in charge of running various social health programmes within the communities followed by community development and education. Low absorption of social workers is witnessed in the food security sector , gender and environmental protection and lastly the children social agencies when it comes to issues of social protection Northern Uganda employs majority of social workers more than any other region in Uganda. Their primary target was to provide relief and rehabilitation of individuals, groups and communities during and after the war (Twikirize et al., 2013).

However, the number of social workers operating within Uganda is not easy to determine. Accordingly, the Uganda Social Protection Public Expenditure Review (2012:71), documents that the sector is faced by a constant problem of understaffing. It is even more challenging to try and determine how many of them are involved with unemployed youths and the education sector. Relevant bodies that are supposed to offer employment to social



workers are often financially constrained. In most cases, vacancies are not filled due to insufficient budgets but in the event, they are, it has been established that social workers take up other activities due to low wages. Another challenge insufficient skill by individuals who are involved in the social work sector in Uganda. At the district level where social workers are distributed, the numbers are worrying. The highest number of social workers deployed in a district is ten, some have six while some districts have none. This reduces the efficiency and impact of social workers in providing solutions to the problem of unemployment and education that is affecting the country.

Traditional social networks such as the community and family continue to provide the much-needed framework in which social workers can reach out to the individual. However, these traditional networks are constrained by several socio-political and economic factors that affect the degree to by which they are effective. To fill this gap, NGO and government organizations have from time to time tried to supplement efforts by social workers but even this remains insufficient to cover the whole country. NGOs in Uganda appear to focus their efforts on a small geographical area or communities within a province or a district. Theoretically, NGOs are considered to be providing support to government efforts in a particular field, however, in reality, much of their work is done in areas where there is no government input. While NGOs and in extension social workers offer services in health, family counseling, and community mobilization, they are also highly involved in the provision of education services through private schools.

The role of social workers in promoting community development is done through four distinctive features both of which have limitations and strengths and what distinguish them from each other is the extent to which the community owns the initiative. These four approaches include; initiatives in which the NGO acts as the direct provider through identifying and implementing projects while the community members act as beneficiaries. Secondly, the community is involved in an initiative proposed by the NGO which then does the planning and training of community members, who in turn become both volunteers and beneficiaries. The third approach is where community members manage and own initiatives that have been mobilized by NGOs. Here the external agency provides funding, acts as a catalyst, facilitates networking activities and offer capacity building services in programs owned by the community members. Community members

play roles such as planning, assessors, analysts, implementers while being beneficiaries of the project. The fourth approach is where the community manages and owns initiatives that have been developed by the community itself. NGOs provide funding and capacity building while community members are involved in the daily management of the programs (Wessels, 2009:16).

Uganda Social Protection Public Expenditure Review (2012:34-5) emphasizes the importance of Social workers (NGOs) in community development. It highlights its contribution to the reduction of poverty in Uganda through promoting the development of social capital. Indeed, such measures not only help provide better opportunities for individuals, they help bridge the social inequality gap, promote economic stability and security. In their wide range of activities, community development officers make important contributions in mobilizing and supporting the marginalize segments of the Ugandan population and provide them with means and training of getting employment and education. Lombard & Wairire (2010), Patel (2005) and Lombard (2007, 2008) point out that social workers are critical players in denouncing and fighting against different forms of social exclusion, marginalization, and oppression that feature promptly in the causes of unemployment and lack of access to education. These scholars add that in contrast, social workers employ non -discriminatory approaches, strength-based advocacy, social investment and community empowerment strategies that in turn promote economic and social integration and inclusion. This approach is referred to as developmental social work and is promoted through partnership, self -determination and participation (Patel, 2005: 18 -39; Midgley, 1995, 2010).

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL APPROACHES OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION AND YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT**

### **2.1. EDUCATION AND YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT**

Education is one of those crucial topics raised by people whether politicians, bureaucrats, academicians or industrialists as having the potentials to transform people and the world. Different scholars in quite a number of ways have discussed the word 'education'. A great number of them prefer referring it to formal schooling or to lifelong learning. Others tend to put it as an acquisition of technical skills, knowledge and attitudes whereas others conclude that education is nothing, but the training of peoples' mind in a specific way to bring about anticipated changes (Winch, 2000: 12 -18).

Despite the aforementioned contradictory perspectives, education continues to be of utmost relevance in all societies. Apart from creating universal culture through national curriculums, education is a key channel that can be appropriated to impart the requisite knowledge and skills for securing decent employment. Schultz (1975), argues that education can, in fact, promote smooth employment and improve income of individuals through enhancing individuals' "allocation efficiency" in dynamic economic conditions that demand efficiency in response to economic changes.

Archibald (1971) mentions that in many developed and developing societies, the extension of formal education contributes to unemployment of youths. The expansion witnessed in some of these societies was due to the general belief and understanding that an increment in the rates of education within the society would translate in generating economic growth. Over time, the huge number of graduates from different tertiary institutions have become unable to secure employment and thus even more than ever before, it has become a necessity to restructure the system and scope of the education system in Uganda to suit the demands of modern-day society relative to development.

Olav (1979: 285-288) in discussing the educational factors that explain the very high unemployment rates among the youth in industrialized societies and the particular

characteristics of the youth labor market, points out a number of reasons how education and youth unemployment are related, as discussed below:

- ✓ Finishing of primary school is of great importance because of the large difference in unemployment rates among the youths between both those who have and those who have not completed primary level of education.
- ✓ Both formal education and practical skills are considered as complementary thus, the higher the education level of an individual is, the better the prospects of technical skill capacities of the same individuals. Formal education and on-the-job training seem to be what economists call complementary factors.
- ✓ Younger individuals have relatively shorter single spells of unemployment relative to those of adults. More comprehensively, younger people tend to have several but short periods of unemployment over time that total to a longer period of unemployment than an adult may experience over the same period.
- ✓ More oftenly, it is the level of education that is linked to unemployment and not the type of education as neither vocational training nor apprentice programmes do not improve the prospects in the labour market for youths relative to the general secondary education. Additionally, Olav (1979) argues that it therefore is mythical that it is education that needs to be practically oriented in order to deal with unemployment among the youth.
- ✓ Surveys of youth unemployment have also indicated that several individuals in this category especially in the developing world lack abilities in reading, writing and arithmetic even though some had progressed beyond basic education level. As such, most of the unemployment category lack some of the elementary skill required in modern societies.

Olav (1979) concludes by saying that in the presence of a deficient system of formal education, the labour market cannot compensate for this deficiency because the young people with low levels of formal education are absorbed in sectors where very minimal or no practical training is needed or provided. Consequently, the long periods of unemployment experienced by the younger people or their employment in sectors that need the least training result in transition into adulthood without any developed human

capital through either formal or informal training and are therefore reduced to working in tough and unstable jobs.

The relationship between education and unemployment continues to fascinate scholars in different fields of social science. Social workers are even more concerned to understand the relationship between these two phenomena because they both have an impact on the social structure, particularly how they affect social evils such as prostitution, drug abuse, and crime. These social implications of unemployment have also caught the attention of professionals, policy makers and the public in general who are keen to find urgent solutions to these challenges (Bell & Blanchflower, 2011; Verick, 2011). However, existing literature on Social Work provides very little information on the means in which social workers are continuously being involved in solving the problem of unemployment (Ngai & Ngai, 2007; Roets et al, 2012). The absence of existing literature continues to give economics theories prominence in explaining youth unemployment. Some of the most commonly used theories include the following; Human capital theory, Signaling Theory, and Job-competition model theory. These theories are founded on assumption that employers hire individuals based on a process of filtering their qualifications as reflected in their academic credentials. This makes the employer make a decision on who to hire based on imperfect information that is supported in which education acts as a proxy determinant of one's performance.

In addition to the above, Kettunen (1994), Mincer (1994), Winkelmann (1996) and Spence (1981) have written extensively on the different dynamics that explain how education impacts on unemployment. Wolbers (2000) observes that the probability of being unemployed, especially in the long run, affects different segments of the society unequally. These segments may include the youths, gender, persons with disability and sometimes racial and religious identities. Most of the above scholars argue that education equips an individual with valuable skills that better their chances of gaining employment.

Brunello et. al (2009) emphasizes on this relationship by adding that educated people can benefit from the increased possibility of matching with available opportunities and they are equally mobile, meaning with their skills, they can be able to move from one region to another and get employed. In this regard, Ho and Tan state that there is an existence of a non-monotonic connection between education and human capital and suggest that a

threshold exists beyond which the effects of the years spent in education on the chances of unemployment decreases (Ho & Tan, 2008: 12 -23).

Education alone cannot, however, explain entirely why people are unemployed. Other factors such as the person's labor market biography which can include his/her experience measured in the number of years one has been working are equally important. Becker (1964) and Mincer (1974) consider work experience as an important means of accumulating human capital and thus increase one's chances of securing a job. Employers value individuals with more relevant work experience because they will not need to invest a lot of resources in their training.

Brauns et al (2001) consider this to be the main cause of youth unemployment because most employers tend to discriminate individuals with little or no prior work experience thus affecting new graduate's chances of getting employed both in the short and long run. Older people can equally be affected especially those who have lower academic qualifications tend to be less attractive over time particularly in highly sensitive occupations that need high academic qualifications. This means that the importance of work experience can only be relevant to a certain limit and is highly affected by a person's age.

Another important determinant of employment is gender. Women have over the years suffered from lower prospects of being employed because they have other social responsibilities such as taking care of their children which can directly affect their productivity (Blossfeld & Hakim, 1997, Wolbers, 2000). Globally, the number of unemployed women is generally higher than those of men. This is further worsened among young women who may either lack the required education or professional experience due to other social reasons. The nature of contracts employers enter into with their employees provides an important insight as to whether an individual will be unemployed in the short or long -run.

This varies from country to country depending on the available opportunities. For example, in agricultural settings, the employer may opt to seek temporary contracts depending on the seasons that labor will be required. This means that there is a high likelihood of seasonal unemployment in such an area. A country's labor regulations plays

a significantly relevant role in influencing the level of entry or exit into the labor market and whether such employment will be permanent or temporary. A report by the European Commission (2008) points that it is important to take occupational status into account when analyzing how employment and education relate to each other since the latter's perspectives and the increasing needs the labour market has always differ depending on the complexity of the task and the field of work.

Another important aspect that affects unemployment is the economic status of the region in question. Evans and McCormick (1994) identify reasons such as how neighborhood effects impact of the employment equilibrium, industry composition, institutional settings or shocks that affect aggregate demand as having significant relevance in explaining unemployment. Across Africa and many other regions in the world, long-term unemployment is dominant. Many consider long-term unemployment to mean someone who is not engaged in employment between six and nine months or more. Several scholars have argued that employers tend to be reluctant to employ individuals who have been out of work for more than eight months (Australian Council of Social Service, 2005; Wong, Henson and Roy, 2005).

Data retrieved from Eurostat (2016) indicate that 45% of the unemployed labour force have on average not been involved in any meaningful work over the past eight to ten months, meaning long-term unemployment. Such information can be interpreted to mean that a segment of the society, majority of whom have not been engaged in some form of employment for a long time, and who therefore risk bearing the heaviest burden of unemployment. According to Heckman and Borjas (1980), an individual with records of past unemployment experience is highly likely to face challenges in getting a job. This does not only mean that these people face eminent financial challenges due to lack of income, it also means that getting a job in the future after long term unemployment will be a problem. A report by the OECD (2002) indicates that long-term unemployment can lead to even longer-term unemployment in some countries while in others it can lead to a complete exit from the labor market.

Short and longterm unemployment does not only affect the individual's income, they also have far-reaching consequences on the general macroeconomics status of a country. There are many types of research which have been done to examine how unemployment

affects an individual deterioration with cases such as low self-esteem, higher suicide rates and health problems being reported. These revelations are important since they justify the involvement of social workers in understanding issues related to unemployment in order to better provide solutions to the resulting consequences (Korpi, 1997; Clark, 1996; Winkelmann and Winkelmann, 1998). Some other scholars seek to look at the impact of unemployment at the macroeconomic level. They point out that unemployment is affected by wage setting behavior (Machin and Manning, 1999).

## **2.2. EDUCATION AND YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE**

The role of education in the employment industry has been interpreted in two ways. More so among the youths, there are those who consider education as an important driver to help youths secure employment while there are those who consider education as one of the causes of unemployment among the youths. A 2016 report by the world labour governing body ILO notes that there has been a progress in the decline of the number of youths without jobs globally over the last decade to stand at about 13% (ILO, 2016). This progress was credited to the growing number of people who had been able to access formal education and therefore skills. However, figures are still discouraging as over 260 million individuals, most of whom are below the age of 35 are still out of school and with the growing changes in the job market, the ICFGEO estimates that by 2030, approximately 1.6 billion young people will be unemployed due to demand for high-level skills to match the technology-driven market of the time. In seeking to find a solution to this, the G7 leaders were encouraged to shift their focus to investing in quality education and provide more resources to ensure more young people get access to it (Fukuda-Parr,2003:168).

The education system in most developing countries is blamed for providing insufficient and less relevant skills to the young people thus making them vulnerable to unemployment (Buchmann,& Hannum,2001:79). A report by the Guardian in 2012 indicated that over 45% of primary school graduated have difficulty reading a sentence (The Guardian, 2012). The lack of basic literacy skills is further worsened by the lack of transferable skills such as effective communication and teamwork skills that employers are seeking are not also taught in most schools. The argument has been that, after spending



both time and resources in getting an education, most youths are not able to use these skills to secure employment. The education system in developing countries are not only considered to be outdated, it tends to produce job seekers rather than people who can create jobs. The lack of sufficient innovative and entrepreneurial skills has a negatively affected the youth's ability to become self-reliant. They, therefore, find themselves at the mercy of employers who may choose to underpay them or not offer them work in the first place (Glewwe, P., & Kremer, M. (2006:956).

According to Alkan (2015:2), Youth unemployment is a global phenomenon and can be attributed to several causes. While some of the factors include the general global economic decline experienced over the years, other factor such as climate, policy and more importantly education have been blamed for the persistent challenge of unemployment among the youths. Globally, the youths are more likely to be unemployed compared to other demographics. This is even more common in developing countries as it also tends to affect women more than men as echoed by Tansel, & Taşçı (2010: 502). Furthermore, some researchers have argued that the duration in which youths stay unemployment is often longer than other category of people. This is attributed to the long years taken in school in some settings while the demand for long experience by some employers also become a challenge to the young people who find it difficult to get jobs without experience (Taşçı, & Tansel 2005: 517).

In a bid to effectively measure the unemployment rates, countries, international and local non-governmental organization that focuses on unemployment have embarked on the stratification method to reveal the extent of unemployment in various sub-strata. Majorly, women, men, and youth are among the categories that much research on unemployment have focused on. For instance, developed countries such as USA and Canada, unemployment among the young people in 2018 was projected to remain low and stable. This can be attributed to the efforts made to ensure that the number of jobs created and the people newly joining the labour market are balanced. This explains why between 2017 and 2018, the unemployment rate in Canada was below 3% while in the United States, unemployment during the same period fluctuated between 4% and 5%percent in 2017, (Canadian Bureau of Statistics, 2018, ILO 2018; &the US Bureau of Labour Statistics, 2018).

According to the ILO Trends Econometric Models (2016), unemployment in other parts of the world such as the Caribbean and Latin America was being projected to rise by between 0.4% and 8.4% in 2017. The explanation given for such rapid increase in unemployment can be associated with the 2016 recession experienced by Brazil which is one of the largest economies in the region and was expected to spill to 2017 (ILO, 2016). Indeed in 2017, Unemployment in Brazil had rose to 12% which is higher than the previous years. Projections too are not promising for the two regions as analysts believe that lack of adequate measures to match the number of job opportunities created to the number of new workers entering the labour market will stretch in the coming years (Garcia, Medeiros, & Vasconcelos, 2017:677). Despite the regional crisis, Mexico's economy and in extension labour market has not been affected much by the crisis. The unemployment rates in Latin America's second largest economy stood at 4% in 2017 and 4.1% in 2018.

In North Africa, projections for unemployment were expected to decline, dismally though in 2016 and 2017. According to major global economic and financial institutions, the region's rate of unemployment was expected to decline to 12% in 2017 from 12.1% in the previous year (IMF, 2016; ILO, 2017). The region's case is unique given the fact that most countries in North Africa register tremendous growth rates between 2000 and 2010 comparing to the rest of the continent. However, the violent and destructive events that begun in 2011 commonly referred to as the Arab spring diluted all the decade long gains in most of the countries. Before 2011, unemployment although high ranged between 10.2 and 15% compared to the higher rates some up to 45% during and after the revolutions (Kuhn, 2012:650). Therefore, with the positive projections on slight decline on unemployment rates in the region between 2017 and 2018 sends a positive message of resilience and progress in the once troubled region. Some have associated this progress to improved public spending following effective fiscal reforms as well as tourism and the re-emergence of labour -intensive sectors of the economy which are creating more employment opportunities.

The Sub-Saharan region of Africa, another part of the world that has for years experienced serious socio -economic and political crises has been forecasted for a much stable unemployment rates for the years between 2016 and 2017. According to ILO (2016)

although there will be an increase of around 2 million more people in search of jobs in 2017 pushing the number to around 28 million people, the macro level rate of unemployment will remain the same in 2017 as it was in 2016 at 7.2%. This form of stability is associated with the relative peace the region has experienced in the last five years with only few instances of political and economic instability. Nonetheless, despite the positive indications on a stable labour market, it is important that one examines unemployment in the region on a country -to -country basis to get a more detailed projection. For example, South Africa, one of Africa's largest economies is at the time facing serious problems of unemployment rates that range between 25% and 28%. However, the regional unemployment rate does not convey the considerable cross-country 26% between 2016 and 2018 (Banerjee, et al, 2018:716).

However, since this research focuses on the relationship between education and youth unemployment, I will give a more detailed representation of youth unemployment globally. We will limit our research on the youth. The United Nation's General Assembly in 1995 passed a 5 -year Action for Youths globally that were supposed to be achieved by 2000. This was supposed to lay foundation for a long-term commitment for the organisation in addressing the challenges youths across the globe were facing. It was indeed a continuation of the dialogue that begun in the late 1960s regarding critical matters of interest to the youths including job and employment opportunities and beyond setting forth a global framework to address key issues related to youth and reflecting an ongoing dialogue since the 1960s (Chaaban, 2009:33). Through a number of international forums such as the Fourth World Conference on Women, United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (1992), World Summit for Social Development, World Conference on Human Rights a number of policies were adopted. These were meant to priorities youth concerns at the international level. They include;

**Table 12: Showing the Policy Plans Adopted and the Year**

Name of the Program	Year
Programme of Action	1994
International Conference on Population and Development	1994
Rio Declaration on Environment and Development	1992
Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action	1993
Copenhagen Declaration and the Programme of Action	1995
Platform for Action	1995

**Source: Author compilation 2019**

According to Nebil et al (2010) citing the ILO (2005), youths globally are facing a serious challenge of getting employment. Findings of their research indicate that one in three youths is unemployed and either has lost hope in searching for employment opportunities or are in the process of applying. For those who are prevailed to be working the news is not so good for them either as a majority of them especially from less developed countries earn less than \$2 per day. Yet as the problem of unemployment continues to be a major cause of debate, population and demographic changes, again mostly in developing countries is not helping. Rapid population growth has seen huge numbers of young people enter the labour market, unfortunately the rate of population growth is not equal to the creation of job opportunities. In Africa alone, it is expected that over the coming two decades, young people joining the labour market will grow by 28% although it is difficult to anticipate that similar growth will be experienced in the labour market (Fields, 2019)

In terms of the number of youth unemployment globally, the rate has been growing from 12% in 2015, 13% in 2016 and 13.4% in 2017 (ILO, 2016). This means that an additional 500,000 youths are becoming unemployed annually according to the World Social Outlook and Employment report of 2016. It further put the number of unemployed youths at 710 million in the world. Majority of the unemployed youths are from underdeveloped countries where they face more challenges such as poverty due to lack of income, this makes them vulnerable to engaging in social evils such as gang violence, drug abuse or prostitution. According to Jones, & Chant,(2009) youths in Sub-Saharan

Africa consist of the highest presented of the unemployed people a characteristic they found to be spreading across most countries in the continent.

But youth unemployment is not only about the numbers that indicate the rise or decline of the vice, but it is the struggle that people living through unemployment have to face. Even worse is the fact that these struggles (poverty and others) affect even those who work since they are paid little wages for among other reasons lack of adequate skills and education. In extension, the tragedy of youth unemployment has become a dangerous cycle that's making it difficult even for international efforts to achieve noble goals such as the agenda to eradicate poverty by 2030, an initiative of the United Nations. An as noted by concerns of leaders, including the Assistant Director for Policy at the ILO Deborah Greenfield that unemployment does not only affect generational aspects of the societies but also the gender aspect. For instance, even among the disadvantaged youths, women are further disadvantaged than men when it comes to getting opportunities.

There is a general trend across many labour market jurisdictions that indicate huge gaps between male and female youths in getting employment and this affects the societal structure particularly in the transition process to adulthood. Albanesi & Şahin, (2018: 48) decry the inequality within the labour market for young men and women. In their research, they found out that out of the employed youths, only 37.3% of women are able to access employment compared to their male counterparts. The most affected regions that are experiencing this problem of gender within youth unemployment are; Northern Africa (30.4%), South East Asia (32.3%) and the Middle East (32.8%). This means that young females in the mentioned regions are likely to be at a disadvantage of getting a job compared to their male colleagues (Miles,2002).These figures indicate that in these regions, significantly lower number of female youths were employed as compared to male youth in 2016.

### **2.3. YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN UGANDA**

The search for statistics of unemployment in Uganda proves to be a comprehensive task as numbers vary greatly across the scale. The World Banks' estimates are as low as 2.3 % in 2016, in contrast, the same database puts Norway at 4.8 % (World Bank,2016, unemployment, total). The Uganda National Population and Housing Census 2014

(NPHS, 2014, p.27) established that 78 % of the working-age population (14-64 years) was working and puts the unemployment rate at 9.4 % (NPHC, 2014, p. ix). When looking specifically at the World Bank's statistics for unemployed youths the numbers are around 4 %, then counting the percentage of the total labour force aged 15-24 years old (World Bank, Youth Unemployment, 2016).

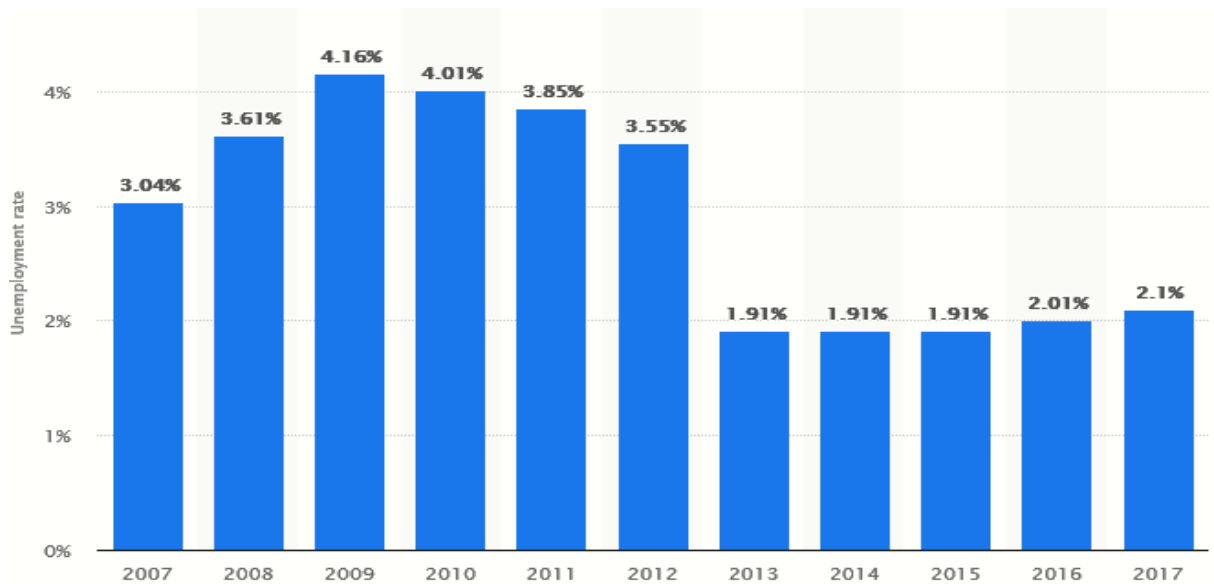
The official unemployment figures presented by the government of Uganda has often been criticised for being inaccurate and not showing the actual number of young people who do not have jobs in the country. But even the figures presented by the Uganda Bureau of Statistics still range between 3% and 10% which is indeed high numbers. Nonetheless critics of the government figures such as ActionAid in 2012 conducted a survey that sampled more than 1100 youths and covered a total of 11 districts across the country. The result was that 61.1 % of the respondents responded that they were not engaged in any employment activities (ActionAid 2012:27). Another non-governmental organisation, Youth Map Uganda gave a report indicating that the level of youth unemployment in Uganda could well be over 75% making Uganda the highest country with youth unemployment in the continent (IYF, 2011:viii)

The numbers given by the government and the non-governmental organisations in Uganda differed for a number of reasons. One of them is the definition of unemployment, given the nature of Ugandan economy, which is dominated by a large informal sector, it is very difficult to monitor employment in the country. The second reason for the difference is the social structure of the society in Uganda. Indeed, many people in Uganda are working in family owned enterprises mostly without pay. The confusion can be whether such a person can be considered as employed or not. That said, it has become a common trend among analysts and media publications referring to the situation of youths not having jobs in the country as a ticking time bomb. Even senior government officials including the president of Uganda has publicly admitted that the country's situation of youth unemployment is of concern and cannot be taken for (Vision Reporter, August 2013, 14)

Certainly, the absence of quality and up to date statistics in Uganda can be one reason for the diverse opinion of different stakeholders regarding the status of youth unemployment in the country (Devlin, 2013). Chigunta (2002:10-11) acknowledges that most developing

countries may not have the ability to keep their data up to date given the ever changing dynamics in such societies. He adds that while the researchers may face divisions on design, variables, definitions or measurements the reality is that unemployment is a big challenge among the young people in Uganda. Population census of 2016 shows that more than half of people living in Uganda are below the age of 30. This is a huge proportion of the population that if the issue of unemployment is not taken seriously. Similarly, a report by the World Bank report indicates that the level of unemployment among the Ugandan youths has been on an average of 3.72% between 1991 and 2017. Youth, in this case, refers to those between the age of 14 and 24 (World Bank, 2017).

Concerns have been raised over the low impact of the low impact of government policies on youth unemployment despite political and NGOs pushing on the agenda of youth empowerment. More specifically is the comprehensive job creation strategy the ruling party promised to implement between 2011 and 2015 if they were to be re-elected back to the office. The strategy, which was enshrined in a manifesto titled “Peace, Unity, and Transformation for Prosperity” of 2010 outlined 10 -points that would act as drivers towards achieving 90% and above employment rates. One of its pioneer blueprints was the “Youth Business Skills Training” programs that were to be spread across the country. The program at its initial stage managed to facilitate the establishment of 800,000 SMEs that provided an opportunity to over 2 million youths. That said, reports by organizations such as ActionAid, SNV, and INGO located in the Netherlands and an African Development Bank report showed that Uganda’s unemployment rates were among the highest in Africa. This was later confirmed by the 2014 national census report of Uganda which revealed that approximately 10.5 million (58%) of those within the productive bracket are unemployed.

**Table 13: Youth Unemployment in Uganda between 1991 and 2017**

**Source: World Bank (2017)**

#### **2.4. CAUSES OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN UGANDA**

The Aga Khan University conducted a research to establish the main causes of unemployment among youths in Uganda in 2016. Several issues were raised as the possible causes of unemployment one among them was corruption. Corruption as a concept can be broadly explained and is sometimes mixed with theft of public resources or bribery. In Uganda, corruption is strongly embedded in both the public and private sector as if the global Corruption Perception Index (CPI) rankings is anything to go by (Reinikka & Svensson, 2005). The corruption index report also shows that Uganda has been on the decline of the corruption report ranking poorer and poorer between 2010 and 2014 in which it ranked 127 at the lowest and the 142 at the highest. In 2015 the country improved from 142 to 139 which is still a much lower rank (Kearney, & Policy, 2016). The dangers of corruption on the society are pretty clear as it can lead to lost opportunities, development and in some cases sovereignty. Its prevalence in developing countries is sometimes attributed to the what some consider to be the positive aspects of the vice whereby through corruption people can be able to get things done faster and sometimes individuals who evade paying taxes can have more savings. That aside, corruption spells a dark image and contributes to growing public mistrust of existing institutions of the



state. Even though corruption is seen as a critical obstacle towards achieving the country's 2040 vision, the government appears incapable or reluctant to end the problem.

Galal (2002), considers that lack of information is another major challenge when coping with the problem of unemployment among the youths. Closely related is the lack of access to well organised and strong connections and networks. In Uganda, this is largely attributed to the insignificant or lack of social capital among the youths and members of their families. Lack of these attributes and advantages then leaves these young men and women either uninformed or ignorant of existing opportunities. They have often limited opportunities to access career guidance critical in helping them get employment. This is ideally typical to the youths in Mbale district as they tend to lose interest before they come out to face reality. Most of them have a bias as they are not born into families with a "name" or power.

According to Emmanuel Otala (2010), youth unemployment in Uganda has many varying causes but most of which include the poor connection between the labour market and the skills young people have, rural-urban migration, high population growth rates, quality of education and training, job seekers lacking critical working skills needed by employers and the poor business and entrepreneurship skills. However, his observation received much criticism as he did not address the problems of employers asking for exaggerated working experiences from the prospective workers, yet they very well know that they are fresh from school thus denying them the opportunity to practice and acquire the experience. He also ignored the financial and bureaucratic problems of setting up a business in Uganda which seems to have led many youths to unemployment. Below are some other outstanding causes of youth unemployment that can explain other reasons apart from education youths in Uganda are unemployed.

➤ *Limited Access to Capital*

Youths in Uganda are affected a lot by the limited access to capital. The lack of collateral assets that they can use to secure loans and lack of social trust continue to deny young entrepreneurs with good business plans access to the much -needed resources. The importance of capital in promoting the private sector cannot be emphasized enough (ILO, 2012:27). International and regional financial institutions and labour organisations such

as the Africa Development Bank, the World Bank and ILO as well as local organisations dealing with issues of youth unemployment such as UY-ONET associate the high level of unemployment among young people is the lack of capital have recognized that the youth unemployment (UYONET, 2010: 5).

It is also true that many young people residing in underdeveloped countries constantly face barriers and different obstacles when attempting to reach formal financial institutions for financial support (UNCDF, 2012). This can be attributed to the stringed measures most formal institutions providing financial services put on their potential clients. One of them is the demand for security most of which youths do not possess and therefore fail to meet the requirements (Ssewamala, 2010:1708). UNCDF explains that there are potentially three main obstacles to accessing funds from formal institutions by youths. These include incompatible financial products that are not relevant to the needs of youths, a financial environment that has too many regulations and restrictions and the low financial strength among the youths given the extent of poverty in many societies (UNCDF, 2012: 9). There are other technicalities such as age, membership level to the financial institution or sometimes the minimum amount of savings.

Although some restrictions such as minimum age to open an account at the institution can be overcome through various legal channels, some of the requirements are indeed rigid and difficult to overcome. These can be the question of collateral security which may be in form of logbook, title deeds and other movable or immovable assets. The lack of capital means young people can hardly engage in their own businesses in the event that they fail to secure other forms of employment. Yet in case some of them can access the financial resources and start up their own businesses, they would be able to create more opportunities for other young people to be employed.

Apart from restrictions placed by the banks and other possible lenders, some youths can still fail to access the financial loans due to other reasons such as the lack of proper identification documents. On the surface, this does not seem to be a very serious problem especially for people who live in the city. For those in the villages and other remote parts of the country, accessing vital documents such as IDs, drivers licence or passport is a toll order. The situation is not as bad since the government has attempted to provide these documents broadly. However, for the less privileged youths who have failed to get these

documents, is a very difficult situation to be since their access to financial institutions is further restricted (Kristensen, & Birch-Thomsen, 2013).

There is equally a very high cost of operating accounts with financial institutions in the country. For instance, the amount charged to operate an account in a bank is charged per transaction. This in itself is not a problem since banks too need to generate revenue. It is however the impact it has on low income earners who at the same time are already burdened by high level of taxes already imposed on them by the government. At this rate, an average youth will have very little or nothing to save. Alternative sources of youth finances such as donor organization and externally funded youth groups exist, they are very few in number and hardly operate beyond the major cities. This, therefore, marginalizes youths who are “too far away” these alternative institutions and thus suffer the greatest burden of unemployment. Low income earners are likely to transact very small amounts and quite often which means that such a person being charged money per transaction will not have much to show for their efforts. This has become a major source of discouragement forcing more people to shy away from financial institutions and result to other forms of savings.

Akisirire (2010) opines that the lack of access to financial packages by Ugandan youths also touches on the attitude of the financial institutions, both public and private, towards the youths. In the finding of a research in which he surveyed 500 youth owned SMEs with regard to ease of accessing capital, 374 of them considered Ugandan financial sector as not being favourable to the youths. This he relates to the treatment some of those he interviewed said regarding access to loans whereby the institutions are not willing to provide the requested amounts instead they only offer a fraction of what has been applied, often of which is not sufficient for starting up business (Akisirire, 2010: 34). Based on this, seeking loans to start business is not a popular avenue among Ugandan youths who are unemployed or who seek to expand their existing businesses. Beyond that lack of access, there are some youths who consider the government of not either deliberately addressing their grievances or government officials simply do not understand the issues and needs of the Ugandans. For instance, even those who have managed to start small businesses in the informal sector producing critical goods, the government is doing very little to protect these individuals from unhealthier competition from well-established local

and international companies. This pushes many youths out of the sector as they cannot cope with the pace and competition put but the larger firms.

A survey that was conducted at Potentiam Youth Development Centre an initiative where youths compete in writing business plans for funding. The revelation showed that despite comprehensive and detailed project plans being presented by the students who were taking the core courses, implementation of those same plans could only be successfully implemented by a fraction of those who wrote them. This shows the impact of lack of financial support to help the youths to successfully put their ideas into practice. The only option youths are left with is to seek for employment opportunities and since there are few, many of them remain unemployed.

#### ➤ *Rural-Urban Migration*

Rural-urban migration is another challenge to youth unemployment that keeps resurfacing in the existing literature. Over the last 30-40 years, developing countries have been experiencing rapid urbanization, a trend that continues its upward trajectory to date. To put it in context, one needs to look at the transformation that occurred between 1980 and 2010 where the number of people living in urban areas increased from 6.7% to 15% respectively (Mukwaya, Bamutaze, Mugarura & Benson, 2011: 5). Urban migration has seen the number of people living in the urban areas increase twofold over the last two decades. Even more interesting is if I include migration of people from rural areas to semi-urban areas example a 15-kilometre radius, then between 1980 and 2010 the number of people who migrated from rural areas becomes 29.6%. Mukwaya et al. (2011: 7).

Migration from rural to urban areas have been sparked largely by economic reasons with many people, especially the youths rushing to seek greener pastures in the urban areas. The low standard of living that characterize rural areas, with inadequate infrastructure, schools, and hospitals as well as employment opportunities. The hope for better quality of life and access to essential goods and services have become among the main reasons why people migrate to urban areas. The irony is that such rapid migration to urban areas of Uganda have not been accompanied by similar efforts to ensure that critical infrastructure and opportunities are made available to those moving to urban areas. This means that a bigger percentage of them will not get jobs or decent living opportunities.

Ugandan urban areas are relatively small and less sophisticated compared to those in more competitive economies. Therefore, it can hardly accommodate the pressure caused by rapid movement from the rural areas (Chigunta, 2002: 12).

➤ *Demographic Development and Population Growth*

Sub-Saharan Africa is one of the unique regions in the world when it comes to population growth. Uganda in particular, has been experiencing higher fertility and population growth making it among the fastest growing population globally (Kellow, 2010). This rate of population growth is expected to continue on a similar trend for the next forty years (WEF 2013, Haile 2003). This trend will see Uganda reach a population mark of 114 million people by 2050 up from the current 50 million (Population Reference Bureau, 2013: 8). With poor planning and lack of elaborate mechanisms in place, the economy of Uganda will not be able to sustain such a population leading to a massive crisis. Among the key concerns is how to address the impending unemployment gap that exists today and will likely worsen over the coming years.

Classical theories of economic development consider population an important component of the economic growth process. These theorists argue that with a higher population, a country will have sufficient labour force to work in the production sector, a broad market to consume the finished products and adequate recruits into the country's security agencies. Some scholars have argued that huge populations also have a likelihood for increased innovation and advancement in information and communication technology (Ali, Ali & Amin, 2013: 3-4). This positive outlook on rapid population growth fails to put into account some of the critical needs and demands of a society. In addition, it fails to take consider other causes of underdevelopment and unemployment such as poor planning and leadership. They also take for granted that employment opportunities will automatically rise with growth in population which may not be the case (Nnadozie, 2003:115).

Even though the Ugandan economy grew by an average of 6% over the last five years according to the World Bank, such growth has failed to reflect on the labour market. If the population is growing much faster than the economy, then unemployment will be inevitable. And, since such rapid change occur over a short period of time, the

characteristics of the population will be that the young people will be the majority and, in this case, more vulnerable to the challenges that will occur due to the structural and policy failures of the economy. This is the situation Uganda will experience if proper regulation on population growth and development strategies are not taken seriously.

Sometimes, culture and traditional beliefs affects government efforts to put in place policies and regulations that can help mitigate the negative consequences of population growth. For instance, the cultural mentality that the social status of an individual, mostly men, relies on the number of wives or kids one has is a recipe for disaster. In Uganda, such thoughts and practices are still very prominent in the villages and remote parts of the country. In a case where a single man's household comprises of four wives and more than 25 children whom fail to get proper education due to the limited resources in the family can explain the dangerous cycle of population, underdevelopment and unemployment.

➤ *Lack of Parental and Career Guidance*

In a number of surveys conducted in Uganda investigating challenges facing the youths, the problem of absentee parents and insufficient guidance often emerge. While some may view it as negligence on the part of the parent, there are those who view this as a lack of experience since the parents themselves may not have sustainable jobs. There are concerns that young people have very little opportunity to select what they want to do in life by themselves, instead the parents often intervene and dictates. A person may not be well acquainted with academic works but has tremendous talent in sports, arts or music will always find themselves castigated and forced to abandon anything that is not related to education and devote all their time studying. At the end the persons do not perform well and end up being hopeless.

Parents spend very little time with their young ones because of the economic situation in the country that needs one to work for longer hours. This leaves children without adequate parental supervision that is dangerous especially when they reach the adolescence stage. Young people in in this case will miss figures who are role models as their parents lack distinguished career or sometimes lack strong academic background leaves the children at the mercy of trial and error as they try to find their way into the labour market

(Wadesango, Chabaya, Rembe & Muhuro, 2011: 153). Parents also seem to have left the responsibility of disciplining and education the children to the educators.

While parents leave their children to schools and learning institutions for guidance, these institutions fall short of having established career centers that can provide students with relevant information on the available opportunities and how what they need to maneuver through it. The attitude of many students in high schools and tertiary education centers is that once they graduate, they will be able to secure a job with their academic qualifications. This, however, turns out not to be the case because available opportunities, as well as the required qualification, are not often communicated to the student. In addition to that some additional skills such as how to prepare a curriculum vitae, how one should conduct themselves during interviews of how to get information about existing vacancies are rarely communicated to the students. At the end of the day, education institutions continue to produce more young people into the labour market who do not possess the required skills needed to secure a job.

➤ *Corruption, Nepotism, and Tribalism*

Corruption has become one of the biggest enemies of progress in developing nations, when combined with the challenge of nepotism and tribalism in a society, then the situation becomes even more serious. This is where Uganda finds itself in the past three or four decades. Corruption has strongly embodied itself in all levels of the society becoming a normal feature of most people's daily life. If not having to pay a bribe to a state officer to secure basic public services, then one needs to have what many describe as 'connections' in order to secure a job. In a much broader perspective, while some may take such happenings as 'normal' in Uganda, it continues to have devastating effects on the labour market. The youths of Uganda are the most affected as a result of these problems and many are deterred from getting employment not because they lack the qualifications, but because they either lack connections or come from the 'wrong' clan. This has, in turn, led to more unqualified people getting employed, despite the country having some of very educated and skilled individuals. Lack of merit results to frustration among young people who would prefer to leave the country and seek better prospects elsewhere.

Tribalism despite its negative social challenge is often ignored or discussed mutedly when obstacles of economic growth are being discussed. The reality is that tribalism has become an important criterion in determining who gets what when and how especially in government services and employment opportunities.

A discussion I had with some of the youths from Kapchorwa, Iganga and Mbale confirmed this assertion as the majority of the youths confess that ethnic identity comes ahead of national identity and this is the root cause of favouritism based on clan. As in most African countries, the absence of strong national unity and patriotism, strong institution and weak separation of power continues to provide a fertile ground on which corruption, nepotism, and tribalism thrive in. It is not a surprise that many Ugandans first identify themselves with their ethnic group before the national identity (Poku & Mdee, 2011: 42-43).

## **2.5. IMPACTS OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN UGANDA**

The impact of unemployment can affect anyone quite severely. Among the youths it has even deeper social, psychological and financial consequences. In this section I will examine some of the consequences of unemployment.

Ayres (2013), considers unemployment as an experience that has both short- and long-term consequences on the youths. For the young people, unemployment is a cycle which one can easily be stuck in. For instance if upon graduation one is not lucky to get employment, such as person is likely to lack job experience which is something many employers want their recruits to possess. Therefore, a person will keep on being unsuccessful in their application for a long period that their relevance to the labour market becomes obsolete. Secondly, without a job one cannot have a stable income. At the micro level, the individual will fail to meet his or her needs while at the macro level, government revenues will significantly decline since very few people have sufficient income and purchasing power. The unstable economy cannot create more jobs therefore trapping the young people in a vicious cycle of poverty (Ayres, 2013: 7). The Ugandan economy is a good example of why huge unemployment is not good for the economy. For instance, the government of Uganda today is trapped in foreign debts as it has to seek loans from different institutions and countries to conduct projects in the country. The revenue



authority does not collect sufficient taxes that can finance government plans since the tax base is too small.

Youth unemployment impacts negatively on a country's political stability. Azeng and Yogo (2013:19) in their quantitative research established that political instability can quickly be accelerated to very dangerous levels since the unemployed youths can take advantage of the chaos to engage in distractive activities or they can also be easily recruited by various groups aimed at creating instability. In Uganda, the persistent chaos in the capital and other parts of the country can be linked to the high levels of youth unemployment.

## **2.6. UGANDA GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES AND STRATEGY ON UNEMPLOYMENT**

Since independence, the government of Uganda has been making policy adjustments to help cope up with the challenge of unemployment, especially among the youths. The structural adjustment programs were policy reforms that swept across the African continent backed by the World Bank and IMF. These measures were primarily to help curb the high inflation rates and the African economies towards a path of rapid growth and development. The policy reforms included the adoption of fiscal and monetary discipline. Indeed, these structural reforms were lauded for their success as they assured in a period of rapid economic development. The reforms were based on the need to provide an enabling environment that could support industry growth in all spheres of the Ugandan economy with the ultimate goal of creating more employment opportunities through manufacturing and processing.

By the mid-1990s, growth had started to pick up, but the employment challenge still remained dire with a very huge population still living in extreme poverty and unemployment. Basic social services such as healthcare, proper public transport system, and education were still lacking. This dire situation prompted the government to act by introducing the Poverty Eradication Plan of 1997. This plan directed the government and aid institutions to spend more towards improving social services. This plan is considered widely successful because it saw a reduction in poverty among the population from the

previous 39% in 2002/3 to 24.5% in 2009/2010. This further reduced to 19.7% in 2012/13.

With the launch of the National Development Plan in 2010, employment became the main driver of Uganda's development plan under the wider Vision 2040 development framework. The plan was anchored on an agenda to create a long-term production capacity that had the able to create room for the rise of gainful employment opportunities to the various sectors of the economy. Through more employment opportunities it would be possible to create wealth while at the same time fundamentally reduce the poverty levels. During this first batch 5year development framework, the emphasis was put on physical infrastructure.

The government also came to the realization that in order to facilitate access to productive employment opportunities, it needs to be an active player in expanding facilitating the rise of a more skilled human resource and this desire instigated a significant change in the approach of how they handled the public sector through programs that were aimed at streamlining this sector so as to stimulate development. Prior to this, between 1990 and early 2000 the government went ahead to develop an institutional structure approach meant to gain from the merits of the free markets without losing the equity benefits of the existing status quo in political economy. However, despite the emphasis that is put on the development of infrastructure, other forms of strategic interventions that boost rapid economic transformation requires effective and efficient enhancement. The government's efforts towards this endeavour such as its efforts to strengthen dialogue and consultation between the public and private sectors

In 2011, the government launched the ambitious *National Employment Policy* in trying to establish a comprehensive approach for job creation. This document outlined six major objectives that touched on various government sectors.

- ✓ To promote purposeful and functional technical and vocational skills.
- ✓ To promote macroeconomic policies and investment strategies.
- ✓ To promote further skill development and training to those employed and internships to the youths.

- ✓ To protect the interests and rights of workers according to the legally stipulated law frameworks.
- ✓ To increase production, competition, and employability human resource especially among the youth who constituted the largest age group.
- ✓ To ensure the availability of timely and reliable information about available opportunities especially the sectors within the economy that employ the poor and other vulnerable members of the society (MFPED 2014).

It is arguably correct to point out that despite the National Employment Policy (NEP) being vital move in regard to problems of unemployment that faced the country, implementation, especially during the first 3 critical years, fell short of putting into focus the wider government development framework in addressing employment issues. Despite this policy being formulated by the relevant ministry (MLGSD) which received substantial technical support from ILO. It did not fully put into consideration the input of other ministries, departments and agencies all which play very vital roles when it comes to economic development. The National Employment Council which was provided for by the NEP has also not been established and this has greatly handicapped the government when it comes to its efforts to integrate its policies with the relevant interventions for job creation across the different sectors of the economy.

## **2.7. THE ROLE OF SOCIAL WORK IN YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT**

According to Bell and Blanchflower (2011), unemployment among youths is one of the social challenges societies across the world are struggling to cope with and. An understanding of youth unemployment in the realm of social work requires a prior conceptualization of the term social work. Unfortunately, this is still crowded in mystery as many have painstakingly gamed the definition to no clear common point. Cree (2003) mentions that “it is almost impossible to find a simple definition of social work with which everyone is likely to agree”. However, Thompson (2000:12-14) opines that “Social work is what social workers do.” Other scholars have gone ahead to argue that;

*We should not expect to find unanimity in books about social work, or even in accounts of social workers. Social work is always subject to competing claims of definition and practice and cannot be separated from the society in which*

*it is located. Rather social work has to be seen as a collection of competing and contradictory discourses that come together at a particular moment in time to frame the task of social work (Creed, 2003:4).*

A broader conceptualisation of social work as a discipline and field is that its main concern has to do with supporting various categories of people, especially those who are vulnerable to be able to gain collective or personal well-being. In its application, people involved in Social Work as professionals are at all times expected to adhere to the value, techniques and principles associated with social work. These can include among many other things, providing counselling, physical and emotional support as well as advocate for the vulnerable members of the society.

Briar (1983: 211-215); Riches & Ternowetsky (1990) and Sherraden (1985), ratify that truly social work has had quite an extensive past in working with the jobless people nonetheless there has not been any precise emphasis on the work with unemployed youth. Therefore, with the inadequate literature presented, suggestions from Sherraden (1985) that social workers can be involved in putting pressure on relevant authorities for appropriate employment policies. Similar sentiments are echoed by Ekelinen & Caswell (2003) who mention that a social worker can help support unemployed people through different channels including those that will enable them access social needs while for the employed people social workers can provide counselling.

Briar (1980) is concerned that social work as a profession is concerned with the social challenges that people face from time to time. However, despite its severity, unemployment as a social problem has not attracted the attention of many social workers. Indeed, there are a number of studies that attempt to explain why social workers are reluctant to involve themselves in trying to tackle problems of unemployment (Briar, 1983). One of the prominent explanations is that unemployment seems to be strongly attached to economic issues as well as public administration more than sociology. For others, the detachment of social workers from unemployment has to do with lack of resources to venture in that area which needs massive investment to solve. Based on this, many social workers will choose to leave the problem to government and policy makers. Another deterrent is associated with the question of whether social workers are trained to skilfully understand and tackle unemployment. The social work training manuals in many

places seems to avoid an in -depth analysis of unemployment. Also, there are those who look at the problem of unemployment as a personal weakness or failure and not a social problem. None of these explanations however touch on the core issues of unemployment especially its impact on the society.

According to Jianqiang et al., (2017) social workers have a duty to help in curbing the menace of youth unemployment. They argue that in spite of the fact that efforts have been directed towards providing a solution to youth unemployment, there has been a missing link. Social workers refer to this link as a social work perspective. Firstly, there has been a scholarly discussion placing the role of social workers on facilitating the formulation of suitable employment policies, collect data on the number of unemployed people and to assist people who are unemployed in job searching. Arguing that the above roles are not satisfactory enough, the researchers stress that social workers need proper skills and training as well as information about the job market especially for semi-skilled people and that inadequate involvement of social workers in performing these roles has elevated career civil servants to perform social work rules that require qualified social workers. In regard to being in a position of helping the jobless, the researchers find two key barriers to youth employment that social workers should be aware of. Namely:

- ✓ Transitional barriers: These tend to be more personal, focusing on both the employer's and job seeker's psychological and physical outlook. Employers tend to construct an individualistic, exploratory and adventurous perception of 'generation Y'. On the contrary, the job searchers appear to be choosy and have certain job terms and conditions in mind for preferred jobs.
- ✓ Structural barriers: As opposed to transitional barriers that are basically individual, one can associate structural barriers with economic and social factors which make it difficult for young people to get stable jobs. These consist of economic conditions, segmentation of labour skills, obscured employment discrimination and the gap between school and work.

According to Briar (1983), the perpetual increase of unemployment rates across the globe has dictated the need for social workers to become more conscious of the consequence of this problem and become more proactive in giving unemployed people alternatives to

their lives. Davis (1967) opines that the origins of the social work discipline can be traced to the earlier struggles by people collectively to help the unemployed persons. Social workers are supposed to investigate. The decade long great depression that ended in 1939 social workers played a crucial role in explaining the challenges of unemployment at the time. Even today, it is not a surprise that some social workers continue to be on the forefront promoting the adoption of policies and legislations that can eradicate the problem of unemployment.

Social workers should be involved in providing guidance and counseling services, community outreaches and youth works or probation services among others to the unemployed young people who may have resorted to crime, drug addiction and commercial sexual activities as a result of the unemployment. Briar (1983) further states that social workers also offer advice to young people seeking employment. They should separate themselves from employers and other policymakers who put the blame of not being able to secure a job for the youths. Social workers can take up initiatives such as welfare -to -work programs and policies which loosely translates to the social workers being involved in the regulatory climate by encouraging people to participate in reducing welfare cases (Briar, 1983: 211 -215).

## **2.8. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK ON EDUCATION AND YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT**

This section of the literature focuses on the theoretical framework that puts into context the relationship between education and unemployment among youths. Given the complex nature of the relationship and the changes that have occurred between them over the years, I choose to relay on the explanations provided by the Human capital theory, signaling theory and Job competition model theory to address the different gaps that occur when one relies only on one theory.

### **2.8.1. Human Capital Theory**

Human Capital theory was first founded in the 1960s by Theodore Schultz and it was later expanded by Gary Becker in ‘investment in human beings’ and Jacob Mincer in ‘schooling, experience, and earnings.’ (Blaug 1976: 827). This theory explains how

people spend time doing different activities for the sake of better future needs than their present needs thus trying to invest in themselves to enhance their own economic productivity. This economic productivity that they need to invest is in the form of education. A person educates oneself in order to fulfil the needs of the labour market and also to have the necessary skills to compete in the labour market and to earn a better salary.

Current years have witnessed an increasing awareness of the importance of the human in the process of economic growth, The Human capital theory dating as far back as the late 1950s has for a very long time had an insightful impact on a number of disciplines in social sciences including economics. Much as it has had its fair share of criticisms by some liberal academicians, the theory has managed to live on and increase its influence over other research disciplines with social work being one of them. According to Garibaldi (2006), Human Capital refers to the accrued skills, knowledge and capabilities that a person has and that can be useful in the process of production. These characteristics can be natural such as talent or acquired through education. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (2001) also defined Human Capital as “productive wealth embodied in labour, skills, and knowledge”.

#### **2.8.1.1. Human Capital Theory Framework: The 4 Es**

In 2001, the Youth Employment Network (YEN) developed the 4Es framework as a priority way of intervention to provide a solution to youth unemployment challenges faced by different countries across the world. Freedman (2005) identifies these 4Es as being equal opportunity, employability, entrepreneurship, and employment creation.

##### **➤ *Employability***

According to Freedman (2005), Employability means the combined competencies such as skills, knowledge, experience and personal attributes that enable a worker to competitively get and secure a job. They should also facilitate a person’s progress in terms of promotion or in case of transfer or changes, enable one to adapt to their new tasks. To enhance the employability of the youth, the human capital theory emphasizes the need to increase the employability potential of young people by enabling them to gain valuable

personal attributes such as problem-solving skills, analytical and communication as well as technical and organizational skills that are necessary for the workplace.

Some of the elements of employability are likely to be developed through an education system where people get to be trained. It is therefore prudent that the system of education in a country is designed in a way that the graduates are able to become highly employable. Such skills will give people nearly equal chances of competing with others for job opportunities.

➤ ***Equal Opportunities***

Imbalanced access to employment opportunities has been an issue that human capital theory seeks to discuss. It proposes the need to advocate against discrimination through educating and sensitizing the young people about the existing laws and policies that protect their right to equal employment opportunities. Social workers can partner with trade unions, lawyers, and other state and non-state organizations to promote equal field for everyone in the society to get employed irrespective of their social, gender, identity or political views. Minorities and other vulnerable groups should also be protected from any form of discrimination or marginalization when it comes to employment. To achieve this, all forms of socio-cultural, political and economic barriers need to be removed and social workers can play a vital role in this process.

➤ ***Employment Creation***

Unavailability of jobs has been one of the major drivers of unemployment. Human Capital Theory places at its core the essentiality of employment creation. Although several practitioners like social workers may lack the authority and resource to create employment opportunities for young people, the organizations which they work for may have these resources. Practitioners can, therefore, work with these organizations to create more jobs for the youth.

Besides, helping someone to get a job is not the only way to help deal with the problem of unemployment. Most young people will need mentorship and advise on rules, obligation, and responsibilities needed of them in their places of work. Lack of such information can mean that a person may lose the job for violating some of the rules they



are supposed to follow. It will also protect them from possible exploitation by employers who may want to exploit them through low wages or working hours. There is need for strong collaboration between various stakeholders to protect the interest of the employees.

➤ ***Entrepreneurship***

Has become an important area for creating jobs. In fact, for many societies, entrepreneurship is providing employment opportunities for more people than the government can offer. Entrepreneurship is characterized by personal employment and expansion of micro-enterprises key for economic growth. The main obstacle to the success of entrepreneurship particularly among less developed societies is the difficulty to access capital, lack of entrepreneurship skills and little protection from the government.

➤ ***Ecological Connections***

In a bid to modify human capital theory framework, Liang and his colleagues (2017) proposed the fifth dimension within the framework-ecological connection. Ecological connections operate within both micro and meso context. Within the microsystem, social workers and other practitioners can get involved with the young both in their families and at school. At the family level, there should be the involvement of both the parents and the young people to cut the intergenerational gaps, where support by the parents at the family level will play an important role. As for the school as a microsystem, social workers can complete the already existing efforts made by family and schools by providing other non-academic support such as helping youths develop vital life skills. Sometimes ecological connections have been abused with nepotism and corruption worsening the situation. Some people are using their connections to gain an unfair advantage over other people. Within the mesosystem, Human Capital Theory emphasizes collective responsibility at the community level, and this may also include a partnership with educational institutions.

The YEN 4Es framework has had the support of other major international organizations including the United Nations, ILO, and the World Bank. ILO which since the 1960s has been a strong advocate of youth employment continues to offer policy recommendations

to several countries including Uganda for whom ILO has helped the government in developing youth employment policies. Freedman (2005) observes that among some of the recommendations of the ILO, few of them are not targeted meaning in most cases they are channeled towards those youths who are highly disadvantaged who have low levels of education. Some of the categories of youths ILO considers being disadvantaged include youths living in rural areas, ethnic minorities, single parents, child laborers and persons living with a disability. The problem with this approach is that it does not explain for the ever-growing numbers of educated youths who form a significant fraction of unemployed youths in the world.

#### **2.8.1.2. Shortcomings of Human Capital Theory**

The framework described as the 4Es which as examined above is concerned about remedying the problem of youth unemployment borrows its principles from a much broader Human Capital Theory. It states that there is a direct increase in individual employability if they invest in education. Not just employment opportunity but it also assumes that investment in education will translate to better-paying jobs, better career prospects and financial rewards in the short and long run. Also, there is an assumption that unemployed youths find themselves in such a situation because they lack critical values such as work ethics, attitude and motivation and as such to solving these issues will enable them to get employment. This perception overlooks important facts such as job quality and availability. These two are beyond the natural ability of young people who may have played their part by investing in education, yet they remain unemployed. What this thesis seeks to emphasize on is that unemployment is closely intertwined with other non-economic factors such as families, environment, culture, the interaction between people, identity, gender, labor market and social factors. This, therefore, gives rise to the need to shift from simply emphasizing on human capital approaches to explain unemployment but rather adopt an ecological approach that will see social workers become part of the solution to youth unemployment (Sharland, 2006: 247–265).

In conclusion, despite its shortcomings, the human approach gives a new inspiration to the field of social work in tackling the problem of unemployment among young people. The level of engagement of social work is confined intwin-tier levels, where social

workers are not only operating within a micro or a mesosystem but move back and forth between the operational levels.

### **2.8.2. Signaling Theory**

This theory seeks to examine the impact of information on employment. Spence (2002), summarises the aim of this theory as one that seeks to reduce the information gap between employers and employees. It is in this regard that signaling theorists have come up with ways in which potential job applicants can bridge the gap (Spence, 1973). It is how one manages information that creates a distinction between a high-quality applicant and an average one. The ability of one to stand out in the labour market and distinguish themselves from other applicants is associated with the level and quality of education that one has.

Spence (1998) explains that market signals refer to the behavior and possessions an individual has in the labour market. These are important in shaping a person's expectations and ideas about the job market. Employers can project their signals in a number of ways that can include advertisement, prices or wages among others.(Bird & Smith, 2005). Signaling theory has been able to broadly spread to other fields such as anthropology, zoology, and education. This theory has come under criticism from among others, Weiss (1995),who feels that the theory does not give importance to the role of education as the human capital theory does. However, Weiss does not take into account the fact that signalling will only work well if the applicant has a higher level of education and thus education is critical for the signaling theory too.

### **2.8.3. Job-Competition Model Theory**

This is perhaps the most competent theory of this research and will complement the above-mentioned theories to help explain our research question better. It is centred on the assumption that workers are well aware of the job scarcity and the competition that comes as a result. It further assumes that to become more competitive in the job market, one needs to get a higher education than the others. Education is an important aspect of this theory since it provides a distinction between what Thurow(1975) considers as the two types of jobs. The categorisation is generally defined by the kind of jobs that need

educated people and the ones that will not need educated people. In other words, the education level needed, and the quality of job defines the two categories in which people then compete. Jobs that need highly educated and skilled individuals are considered more superior than the ones that need little or no education. However, the irony is that when there is too much demand for job opportunities, the educated lot will be willing to apply for the inferior positions but those with low education may not get a chance to apply for jobs that need skills (Hirsch, 1977; Boudon, 1974).

According to Weiss (1995) possessing some attributes that can give them an edge in the job market. The educated people may have better attitude towards work, easily interact with people from different backgrounds, better motivation, and higher creativity. An applicant who is educated will be able to communicate these features easily to employers. Education is also an important criterion used during the recruitment process. Therefore, it is worth noting that the screening and signaling process are all vital complements of the human capital theory. According to Weel (1999) people with higher skills can use them in different areas, therefore, diversifying their possibility to get employed.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3. INTRODUCTION**

In this section, I present and reflect upon my methodological choices for this thesis. Noteworthy, that most of the secondary data used in this research includes information that has continuously been processed by either the government, local or international agencies as well as academics. The primary data which includes the field study that was done in seven weeks between the months of January and March 2019. The research was conducted through a qualitative method approach. An open-ended interview guide and review of the existing literature are the main approaches used in data collection, however, I also employed observation techniques in some cases. Being a Ugandan and a resident of Mbale district, I had a good understanding of the country and district's social-cultural, education and economic spheres which made it easy for me to carry out the fieldwork.

### **3.1. RESEARCH MODEL**

In this research, a qualitative research design was used to examine the extent to which the Ugandan education system prepares young people for employment, the opinions of social work lecturers and students on how education and youth unemployment relate, other factors that contribute to youth unemployment and lastly the roles played by social workers to help curb the problem of youth unemployment were discussed. Denzin and Lincoln (2000:3) two proponents of the qualitative approach describe it as being a natural and interpretive approach. "This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them." Qualitative data was selected so as to allow me to obtain accurate and reliable information about the opinions of the teachers and students. Furthermore, Qualitative research was preferred because of its unique characteristics especially in examining social phenomena. For instance, data collection can be done through the word. It studies also by collecting information from the natural setting instead of an artificial laboratory, the researcher is able to take note of other facts around. The process, not the outcome is emphasized while the respondents' views are significantly used. (Murphy, et al., 1998; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The human capital theory, Job-competition model and signaling theories were used as well in the discussions.

### **3.2. STUDY AREA**

Mbale district was chosen as the study area of this research because of its unique combination of a high number of youths as well as several educational institutions which include four university campuses. Mbale provides a good combination of both urban and rural area making it a good laboratory to examine the challenge of youth unemployment from the two dimensions. Several types of research have been conducted in Kampala which is the capital as well as the largest city in Uganda and selecting Mbale gives an opportunity to get a diverse opinion on the research question. With the majority of Ugandans working in the agricultural sector, Mbale district which is also an important hub for agriculture in the country provides a good picture in the largest employing sector of Uganda and the challenges faced there. I was also guided by an assumption that people with low-level of education would be more vulnerable to unemployment and since Mbale is largely a rural area with few urban areas then chances are high that access to education would be a challenge to many youths.

### **3.3. DATA COLLECTION TOOL**

The research relied on a qualitative research design which included the usage of semi-structured interview guide forms . Face to face interviews were conducted with a total of 20 participants. That said, the qualitative design was influential in helping to find the opinions of social work students and lecturers on the relationship between education and youth unemployment in Uganda and Mbale district in particular. I prepared different semi-structured interview guide forms for each group which were divided into two, the first section was about the background information rather the social demographic characteristics and the second section tackled the four research questions (Appx.6&7).

### **3.4. PARTICIPANTS**

I set a target of thirty respondents fifteen from each group. Fifteen lecturers and fifteen students in their third year from the department of social work and social administration at the Islamic University in Uganda, Mbale campus. However, I managed to reach out and conduct interviews for twenty people from the two categories. Nine of them were male and eleven were female. Of these fifteen students they were not only selected from

third year, but they included all the three levels or years, five from the third, six from first year then lastly four from the second year. A total of five male lecturers were interviewed as the department only has four social work lecturers and two coming from different departments as well making them six, one from the economics department and the other from development studies' department but since one of the social work lecturer was on leave, I managed to interview only five of them. The age bracket of those interviewed was between the ages of twenty who was the youngest and forty-six who was the oldest with the rest belonging to different ages within the bracket. Ten of the respondents were residents of Mbale district whereas the rest hailed from other districts that is; three were from Iganga, two from Jinja, two from Pallisa, one from Kajjansi and lastly two from Kapchorwa. Many of the lecturers were married except for one and with the students, only one female was married. The interviews with students were carried out in open places within the campus premises as most of them were residing in the campus hostels except two students who were commencing from out. And for the case of the Lecturers, interviews were conducted in their respective offices. All in all, a total of twenty respondents both teachers and students were interviewed in the months of January and March 2019. These interviews were only and only conducted by me and each interview lasted about thirty to sixty mins.

### **3.5. DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES**

Data used in this research was collected using two approaches both with significant relevance. I acquired primary data from using interviews. Rigorous and extensive review of the existing literature was used to get the secondary data.

#### **➤ Interviews**

A total of twenty respondents were interviewed using open-ended interview guides, one on one interviews were conducted to produce the primary data. In the survey, I relied on semi-structured interview with open-ended questions. The interview guide was divided into two components. The first part included the respondents' background information and the second part a set of questions which the respondent was to address. Important to note, different but a closely related set of questions were provided for each category of respondents, that is the lecturers had different questions addressing different issues from

the students and vice versa. As the interview proceeded, I took notes on the respondent's body language and other relevant observations in the surrounding.

These notes were used in the analysis stage and provided a valuable resource for strengthening the finding's internal validity. Throughout the interviews, I used a voice recorder which helped to capture all the responses without having to write on a timely basis and instead focus on the tone, flow, and depth of the research. After the interview, I documented the respondent's general considerations and feelings of the interview. The interviews sought to capture the daily realities of how different people perceive education and youth unemployment in Mbale district. These interviews lasted between thirty to sixty minutes.

The importance of conducting interviews cannot be emphasized enough. To show this importance, DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree state that "*While all interviews are used to get to know the interviewee better, the purpose of that 'knowing' varies according to the research question and the disciplinary perspective of the researcher*" and that in research, the importance of conducting interviews is to "*contribute to a body of knowledge that is conceptual and theoretical and is based on the meanings that life experiences hold for the interviewees*" (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006: 315)

#### ➤ *Analysis of Existing Literature*

To generate secondary data, which plays an important role in this research, I relied on existing literature and official documents. Literature analysis refers to the systematic evaluation and review of electronic and printed documents (Bowen, 2009: 27). This approach has been supported by scholars such as Merriam (1988) who argues that researchers particularly those in the cross-cultural field have no alternative than to examine existing literature. Similar sentiments have been raised by Bowen (2009) who adds that researchers can rely on existing literature and incorporate the findings into their research.

Therefore, I was able to improve my understanding of existing arguments on youth unemployment in Uganda and how it is affected by the education system. This prior knowledge came in handy in my fieldwork as I already had a glimpse of the existing narratives. Documents used to generate secondary data include academic articles and



books, government surveys and reports, fact sheets, newspapers, statistics by local and international agencies, online publications, thesis, and census reports. The information available on these documents helped not only to contextualize the research questions, it also helped to open up the historical aspects of the research topic as well as useful data that would have otherwise been very difficult to generate.

Apart from helping to generate secondary data, document analysis is crucial in the verification and generation of findings in this research. Single study approaches are vulnerable to biases, and therefore I opted to not depend solely on interviews but use existing literature to verify the findings of the primary data. Some scholars contend that researchers may face accusations of their findings being artifacts of single sourcing and thus recommend triangulation to overcome any such possibilities (Patton 1990, in Bowen (2009: 28). Of course, in some cases, existing literature may contradict the findings of the research being conducted and, in this case, there is a need for further research to determine where the diversion emanate. However, in this research, there is a consensus between the findings from the literature and the interviews conducted. This shows that the findings in this thesis have also been observed by other scholars and there is a need for relevant authorities to use them in finding a lasting solution to the problem of youth unemployment. I did not come across any major contradiction between this research and the existing literature. However, that does not mean that there are no documents that may have different findings on this or similar topic.

Another important observation is that majority of the literature did not directly relate or address the same research question as this thesis, however, the information these documents provided were of great importance. They did offer a valuable information on the nature, status, statistics, and impact of youth unemployment and education in Uganda as captured in the background of this thesis. In sum, document analysis provided critical additional questions worth examining, a means of tracking how the challenge of youth unemployment and education in Uganda have changed over the years, supplementary data and a platform on which other data sources can be verified.

➤ *Observation*

Observation is similar to visual and insight data collection techniques and involves obtaining information from non-verbal and behavioral elements. In this thesis, I was able to collect valuable information by observing the behavior, environment and working environment during my field study in Mbale district. This approach was fruitful as most of the time I was constantly on the move within the district and this enabled me to assess the situation of youths, working behavior, and status of different enterprises in the region.

### **3.6. DATA ANALYSIS**

According to Moore & Rossman (1995) data analysis is the process of “organizing, structuring and giving meaning to the raw data.” Brink (1996:16) states that “in qualitative research, analysis is an ongoing process... there is a large amount of data collected; therefore, the researcher begins processing the data from the first day.” for Polit, et al., (2008) data analysis in qualitative method involves a rigorous process of reading the data more than once with the aim of getting beyond the surface meaning and expressions of the data. Empathetic attitude remains an important tool when making interpretations while the researcher should closely remain within the parameters of the data.

Therefore, while conducting the interviews, I paid much attention on the reactions of the participants, noted their responses and tried to make sense of the data. Impressions made during the interviews were also noted. Since all the participants allowed me to record them during the interviews, I later transcribed the audio recordings to the written documents after the interviews. During the analysis process, I reviewed the interviews by repeatedly reading all the written documents. I then created a list of themes by identifying the codes of 132 pages that were decrypted, and the codes related to the themes that were prominent in line with the purpose of the research. In the interviews, highlighted concepts helped in the process of creating codes. Through the research, I created thematic codes through the MAXQDA 2018 program. The main titles were formed by creating the connection between the data and thematic coding with the open coding (Neuman, 2011). The themes developed in the research include; (1) The extent of Ugandan education system in preparing young people for employment, (2) Opinions of social work lecturers

and social work students on the relationship between education and youth unemployment, (3) Other causes of youth unemployment and (4) the role of social workers in youth unemployment. The findings of the research are connected to the theories and put into the research context in order to measure the extent to which unemployment is affected by education in Mbale district, Uganda. The following table (Table 14) presents the outline of the themes and sub-themes.

**Table 14: Showing a Summary of Themes and Sub -Themes**

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>
4.1. The extent of Ugandan education system in preparing young people for employment.	4.1.1. Mismatch between graduates and market needs. 4.1.2. Lack of clear ideology in the education system. 4.1.3. Commercialisation of the education sector. 4.1.4. Inadequate and under-skilled educational instructors. 4.1.5. Poor curriculum development in Uganda. 4.1.6. Elitist education system.
4.2. Opinions of social work lecturers and social work students on the relationship between education and youth unemployment.	4.2.1. Education, employment and nepotism in Uganda. 4.2.2. Does the system of education in Uganda offer equal opportunity? 4.2.3. Level of education in relation to employment. 4.2.4. The short and long term future of education and youth unemployment in Uganda.
4.3. Other causes of youth unemployment.	4.3.1. Inadequate job information. 4.3.2. Insufficient entrepreneurial skills. 4.3.3. Low level of aggregate demand for labour in economy. 4.3.4. Corruption. 4.3.5. Poverty.
4.4. Role of social workers in youth unemployment.	4.4.1. Education support. 4.4.2. Encouraging and supporting households and individuals. 4.4.3. Mobilisation. 4.4.4. Capacity building. 4.4.5. Brokering role. 4.4.6. Community counselling and organisation.

	<p>4.4.7. Promoting positive work ethics and attitudes among the unemployed youths.</p> <p>4.4.8. Research and Advice on policy.</p> <p>4.4.9. Promotion of good health.</p>
--	--

**Source: Author compilation 2019**

### **3.7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

In every society, norms and ethics play an important role in maintaining harmony among the people. It is, therefore, an important responsibility on the part of the researcher to ensure that norms and ethics are not overlooked while conducting research (Ferrel & Fraedrich, 2008). Ethical considerations included: confidentiality (I used numbers to conceal their identity for example Students 1 and Lecturer 1) secondly, I sought the consent of the respondents prior to conducting the interviews and they all agreed to participate in the research voluntarily. The voluntary participation form was signed by all the respondents (Appx. 8). For the students, I used the university premises to interview the student respondents since most of them respondents reside within the campus. The interviews carried out with the lecturers were done within the university offices. The respondents allowed the use of a voice recorder during the interviews which after documenting the interviews, I erased them. Some questions were skipped because the respondents felt uncomfortable to respond to them.

### **3.8. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS**

While giving detailed information about the participants, I chose to use numerical digits to conceal the participants' identities considering ethical rules. Introductory information about the twenty participants that is fifteen students and five teachers was however summarised in a table too as shown in the index (Appx.9).

**Lecturer 1:** thirty two year old married male, resident of Mbale district. A lecturer at the Islamic university in Uganda in the faculty of Arts and social sciences, in the department of social work and social administration. A masters' degree holder in political science

and had worked at the university for seven years. He had a helpful persona as he helped me to organize and mobilize the students for the interviews.

**Lecturer 2:** twenty nine year old happily married male, a resident of Kampala road, Mbale district with a master's degree in social work and social administration at the Islamic university in Uganda, a lecturer in the department of social work and social administration since 2013. His responses towards the interview portrayed him as a person who is passionate about his profession.

**Lecturer 3:** thirty six year old married male, a resident of Mbale district with a PhD in development studies from Radboud university Nijmegen, Netherlands. A lecturer at Islamic university in Uganda in the department of development studies as well as social work and social administration. Had worked at the university for twelve years. He seemed to have a concern on the country's education which he kept saying has been commercialized.

**Lecturer 4:** thirty nine year old single male, a resident of Mbale district with a masters' degree in political science, lecturer in the department of economics at the Islamic university in Uganda since 2005 making them fourteen years. An instructor of economics in the department of social work and social administration. His emphasis was more on the alteration of the minds of the youths to not only think about education preparing them for the job market, but also other ways of how useful education can be in their lives.

**Lecturer 5:** Forty six year old married male, a resident of Mbale district with a master's degree in sociology. Been a lecturer in the department of social work and social administration at the Islamic university in Uganda since the year 2000. He was not so verbal with his responses however his responses were directly answering the asked questions.

**Student 1:** twenty three year old single male, a student in his third year rather final year of campus in the department of social work and social administration, a resident of Iganga but during school time he resides within the campus hostels. He seemed like a great talker.

**Student 2:** twenty three year old single male in third year pursuing a bachelor's in social work and social administration from Jinja district but a resident in the campus hostels.

**Student 3:** twenty year old single female from Kapchorwa district residing in Sumaya a hostel within the campus premises pursuing a bachelor's degree in social work and social administration year two day programme.

**Student 4:** twenty year old single female residing within the campus premises but a resident of Pallisa district, pursuing a bachelor's in social work and social administration year two.

**Student 5:** twenty year old single female, a first year student in the department of social work and social administration, a resident of Iganga district but staying within the campus hostels.

**Student 6:** twenty one year old single female, pursuing a bachelor's degree in social work and social administration day programme year two, a resident of Mbale district but stays with the campus premises during school time.

**Student 7:** twenty eight year old single male, an evening programme third year student in the department of social work and social administration, residing in Nkoma, Mbale district. A non-resident and own a retail business.

**Student 8:** twenty year old single male, resident of Maluku, Mbale district pursuing a bachelor's degree in social work and social administration second year.

**Student 9:** twenty four year old single female, resident of Mbale district, Kampala road. A third year social work and social administration day programme student at Islamic university in Uganda. A resident within the campus hostels.

**Student 10:** twenty year old female student, resident within the campus hostels but hails from Kapchorwa district in her first year.

**Student 11:** twenty one year old single female, resident of Pallisa district but stays within the campus premises pursuing a bachelor's degree in social work and social administration day programme.

**Student 12:** twenty three year old single female from Jinja district but residing with in the campus hostel pursuing a bachelor's degree in social work and social administration year three.

**Student 13:** twenty year old single female, resident of Kajjansi but residing within the campus hostels pursuing a bachelor's degree in social work and social administration first year day programme.

**Student 14:** twenty one year old single female, resident of Iganga district but resides with in the campus hostels pursuing a bachelor's degree in social work and social administration year one day programme.

**Student 15:** twenty four year old married female, resident of Nauyo, Mbale district. Pursuing a bachelor's degree in social work and social administration year one day programme. Worked as a cashier in a sports betting center. A non-resident.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4. INTRODUCTION**

In this part, I provide the research findings. I discuss in details four themes that cover the main scope of this research. These include the education system in preparing youths for employment, the opinions of the lecturers and students on the relationship between education and lack of jobs among youths, other causes of unemployment and the role of social workers. The thesis identifies that aside the theoretical education system, there are several causes of unemployment among youth and those discussed here are among the most.

#### **4.1. THE EXTENT OF UGANDAN EDUCATION SYSTEM IN PREPARING YOUNG PEOPLE FOR EMPLOYMENT**

In Uganda, the education system is considered to be one of the sectors the government has done poorly in terms of speedy reforms to match the current needs and demands of the labour market (Liang, 2004:28). Although the government has done some reforms in the education sector, these reforms have failed to address the concerns raised by critics that the education system in the country is not only less practical, it is also academic - oriented and elitist (Higgins, & Rwanyange, 2005: 8-11). Even as the government gears towards the national Vision 2040 which seeks to make Uganda a regional commercial and technological hub, the education system has not matched the skill -driven labour market to help achieve the aspirations of Vision 2040. Education sector policy experts have continued to call for a major shake -up of the different levels of education (Wood, 2008). Some of the most prominent recommendations have been the reduction of primary education by one year and transforming it to a system where Ugandan children can have a solid ground to master mathematics, understanding reading and writing. A survey conducted by the Ugandan education ministry in 2017 revealed that majority of primary school students fail to pass in an exam designed for students of three classes lower than where they are studying. This revelation means that the students have not yet mastered their previous classes, yet they have moved ahead.

Similarly, Reading and understanding well the content of what one is reading is part of the nexus between education and unemployment. While a large number of students in



Uganda are able to read, understanding what they have read is still a big problem. This problem has been further worsened with the huge enrolment of students into primary schools following the government program of free universal primary education (Nishimura, Yamano, & Sasaoka, 2008). Yet while implementing this program, school infrastructure and the number of teachers have not been increased making the teacher - student ratio one of the highest globally. The challenge of reading well affects students beyond the primary education and continues to high school and university.

#### **4.1.1. Mismatch between Graduates and Market Needs**

Chigunta (2002),ILO (2012), Kellow (2010) and Haile(2003) among others have extensively written about the problem of mismatch in the education and labour market; with the two sometimes not complementing each other. The respondents who participated in the interviews equally concur with this assertion. Most of them decried it as one of the biggest problems that new graduates face when they are seeking employment especially for technical jobs and some even after they are employed.

*“...I think education has contributed to youth unemployment because most of the people don't get enough skills they are more of theory than practical, they are not getting enough skills to enable them like qualify for some jobs just because if you go to some institutions most people say that they are learning computer but they just learn it in theory they don't do the practical part of it just because they lack the computer laboratories so they cannot get the real skills that's what I think.”(Student 5)*

Some surveys conducted in Uganda also confirm the reality that the education system sometimes does not provide quality human resource (Haile, 2003: 7). However, when it comes to applying some of these skills in practical work, they fail to live up to the expectation of the employers. A research conducted by Kellow concludes that despite the number of students enrolled in education centres in Uganda increasing rapidly, the number of youths who remain unemployed keeps on increasing (Kellow, 2010: 11). Another scholar examining the connection between skills and education in Uganda, mentions that, education institutions in the country are like “*exam factories*,

*concentrating their energies on securing passes at A grade in exams and have given too little attention to the labour market requirements” (Peter, 2013:10).*

The teachers while acknowledging the gap, in Ugandan education system that results into production of graduates who are incompatible with the job market blame it on several issues. Lecturer One blames it on the rapid changing demands of the labour market;

*“... the unfortunate bit is our education system seems not to be changing tremendously with the changes in the market, what I mean here is that the market changes at a very fast rate compared to the rate at which the education changes, if we are to say that we change our curricular every 3 years, there are so many things that happen in 3 years which will not have moved with the curriculum that you are changing now look at for example accounting or the banking sector that every now and then they are bringing in new packages from somewhere else so if we don't change the education system to fit that which is not possible of course then it means that at the end of the day we are going to have a lapse in between what the market says you should and then what you have so you are asking for CPA when this person who has just completed has even never heard of CPA and whatever packages so at the end of the day the person is forced to upgrade or to get whatever other experience from elsewhere so that's one of the unfortunate bit about our education system. When you look at other societies ...they emphasized on technical education.”( Lecturer 1)*

The situation can further be described in two ways, first, the Bureau of Statistics estimates that more students (90%) in Uganda are taking general courses and few are taking highly specialized science courses (UNBS, 2017:23). When one makes a quick review of the current labour market, successful enterprises are being driven by innovation and science. This means that investors are willing to put their money in such sectors thus leaving the majority of youths unemployed due to a mismatch in skills. Secondly, both in the general education and sciences, I noted that there is dependence on theoretical approach and hence culminating to mismatch of skills and the education provided. Student 2 argues that in Uganda the system of education seems to generate job seekers rather than job creators.

In other words, much attention is given to approaches and courses that are geared towards white-collar jobs as student 2 describes;

*“The role of education depends on the other side of teaching the white-collar jobs other than concentrating on the blue-collar ones. It is contributing to youth unemployment.”* (Student 2)

A research conducted by a student of Makerere University on Bukyiende sub-district of Mbale in 2016 also got similar findings. Out of the 1650 respondents 32.5 % mentioned that the factors ailing the education system in the country is that it is too theoretical while 12.5 % mentioned that youths are not employed because of mismatch in the training provided by schools and the needs of the job market (Nanungi, 2011: 21).

Another survey conducted by the School Net Africa revealed a disturbing trend among recent graduates in Uganda. Through a competence-based test, it revealed that majority of graduates from the universities could not answer 50% of basic concepts related to their field. The sorry state of the education sector is not by accident but as a result of a number of reasons. Key among them is the insufficient resources to put up the necessary facilities such as laboratories and equip them well. The budget allocated to the education sector is not enough and even got worse with the introduction of free primary and secondary education leaving the government as the main financier of the sector. Lecturer Three explains that this problem is further affected by other issues when he states that;

*“I think there are some structural factors that are beyond them (students). There are of course certain skills that they need in order to excel in the labour market. For example, many students complete their studies and are not able to use a computer; they cannot type, they cannot write a decent curriculum vitae because in most cases they have been relying on other people to do these things for them. It is becoming a common trend to find that some students seek to find someone to type their assignment for them, or sometimes they just dictated. These are important life skills that can help them to get a job. It is time Ugandan youths start to ask themselves difficult questions such as; do we know how to type, can we use the computers adequately, do we read newspapers ... do we have access to information, or additional skills so it may not be a job in his profession initially but if they stay in the system they have*

*knowledge they are exposed they have information continuously things move on there are networks the networks help them and eventually they are absorbed into the system.”(Lecturer 3)*

#### **4.1.2. Lack of Clear Ideology in the Education System**

The general assumption is that education is all about the hard skills and training and how these have contributed to the inefficiency of education to provide employment to the youths in Mbale. There are soft skills which are either deliberately or unintentionally not part of the education system but would have greater impact when one is looking or maintaining a job. Issues such as a strong philosophical orientation towards work (example being a workaholic among the South Koreans), honesty, hard-working, loyalty, and reliability are important characteristics that some employers use to hire and maintain their employees. Student 7 argues that;

*“... even the best vocational or technical training (plumbing, civil engineering, electrical wiring) is useless if the person is not able to be on time or to be honest with his/her customers as well as the employer.”(Student 7)*

While the lack of skill mostly attributed to an outdated education system can be solved through in-job training, the lack of ethics, philosophy and personal attributes such as timekeeping, attention to detail and teamwork are often hard to train someone once he or she is working. Increasing the number of universities and vocational training institutes without introducing a way in which graduates can acquire these soft skills will be in vain. Fighting youth unemployment should be done in a more holistic manner and should address various aspects. Soft skills will not only prepare Ugandan youths to be more efficient at work, they will also help promote entrepreneurship skills and encourage positive attitude at work.

#### **4.1.3. Commercialisation of the Education Sector**

While the government of Uganda declared free basic education for all. It would be ironical to talk about the commercialisation of education in Uganda. However, the free education has been received with a lot of scepticism as parents are not convinced that the public

education will guarantee a better future for their children. This has therefore seen the mushrooming of new private schools to provide an alternative education but at a very high cost. For example, to enrol to some of the private schools, one needs between 10,000 and 15000 USD annually which is out of reach for many parents. This has two impacts on unemployment; one it creates two cleavages in the society, that is those who manage to go to private schools and get better education allowing them to perform better in national exams. Then those who cannot afford private schools and have to attend public schools which do not in many cases cater for the individual needs of the student. Employers will tend to favour students from private schools than those from public schools. The second impact is that some of the schools disguised as private schools are allowed to operate just because they provide revenue to the government and not focus on the quality. Student 15 decries the high level of tuition fees charged in schools that in turn makes education inaccessible to more students;

*“I suggest that the level of tuition payment should be reduced for every student to afford it because some students don’t have access to higher education because of poverty. This may not necessarily be a reflection of their academic potential and the ability to make a difference in Uganda. so, I suggest that whoever is concerned about the education system they should put this forward, that the government intervenes and regulates the fees private schools charge on the students. I also suggest that the government should ensure uniformity in the quality of education between public and private schools so as to allow fair distribution of knowledge and skills. The government can also subsidize private schools because in private schools there is good education and most people are not there because of money.” (Student 15)*

Lecturer 2 also echoes similar sentiments with regard to commercialization of education when he states that;

*“We teach our children and give them exams from the west, we ignore our own local exams and how these children are supposed to solve problems in the societies they are living in. We tend to give them a lot of history sometimes which is not realistic and then our education system has been commercialized. There is a lot of commercialization of education we have had a lot of problems*

*that because of commercialization these children do not offer us what they have but the teachers that are mentoring them try to give them something to offer to us and they tend to believe that is what they manage and yet it is not because some of these schools go an extra mile and cheat in the national examinations and you find a child who would have scored a 2 grade scoring a first grade and then you tend to think you are misguided and think this is what this child is capable of doing when this child goes to another level of education that's when you realize this child has problems so these are pertinent issues.”( Lecturer 2)*

#### **4.1.4. Inadequate and Under-skilled Educational Instructors**

Related to the above, most schools and universities lack either enough or sometimes unskilled teaching staff. This is increasingly becoming a threat to youth unemployment because the quality of instructors has a strong bearing on the quality of graduates. The quality of graduates mostly youths end up not able to meet the needs of employers as a result. Lecturer 3 explains that;

*“Uganda has many institutions offering degree programs these institutions even have some branches across the country. However, a big percentage of these institutions are taught by individuals who do not have Ph.D. For example, it is not a surprise to find that a whole faculty or a department has one Ph.D. holder, yet they may be offering Ph.D. courses. In some instances only one or two masters and the rest have bachelors and they are teaching bachelor and masters students so what skills are they putting in place? it's now a free market economy capitalism pure capitalism the government is only interested in the taxes these institutions can pay but not in the quality that can come out of the institutions so do those have the same qualities as the ones coming from IUIU do they have the same qualities as those coming from Makerere where they have devoted time to teaching them by people who are qualified so I think too many people have graduated anyway but not all of them have the same skills, not too many universities have identical skills that the students have, employers hire workers and they will tell*

*you some institutions give us students or graduates but the graduates are not of good quality so they all don't have the same quality but a student or a graduate who went to a good institution is well grounded in theory understood their things and also understands the practice is definitely going to make it if the society is fair and they are being taken on merit they will succeed....”(Lecturer 3)*

Lecturer 1 also asserts the notion that indeed the educational facilitators rather instructors are under skilled by providing ways in which this issue can be overcome as quoted below;

*“we may also need to retrain those who are offering the education services because most of the members we have are traditional facilitators and you know if you are trained in the other traditional way then you may also find yourself training in a traditional way. So, repackaging and retraining of facilitators will also help to probably see what skills we are missing and which skills we can extend to those people and you know it becomes unfortunate that the person who sits before you the instructor, takes whatever without questioning and also uses it without giving an additional package to top on to what you give as a facilitator so if that is the nature of our society then we are better off having teachers or lecturers or facilitators with completely new skills and knowledge so if this person chooses to take on that then the person knows that he is at least taking up something in terms of knowledge and also in terms of skills.” (Lecturer 1)*

#### **4.1.5. Poor Curriculum Development in Uganda**

The curriculum in Uganda's education system over the last three decades is a cause for concern over the growing number of youths who are unemployed. First it is designed in a manner that allows only the educationally gifted students to proceed to higher levels but leaving behind those who are not fast learners. Ironically this is the group of people who are then pushed to join vocational and technical colleges thus making this sector lack quality practitioners. But even more interesting, the education system does not give

room to other talent-based learning such as art, sports, music and creativity. This means that highly talented students end up being hopeless because they did not achieve their education dreams, yet they could have done far much better in their respective areas of talent. Student 6 opines that;

*“To think about the curriculum just maybe I do not know if the government doesn’t trust its own curriculum because we don’t study the same things as those in Europe, I think it’s because for them the curriculum allows for multidimensional approach to education. Some are able to go to the ground and see what is on ground because my cousin in Canada she is doing social work she is in her 3 year but she is also a key player at the university volleyball team and she is part of the martial arts club for them they go on ground and see what people are experiencing and counsel them but here we do not go so they think we do not have enough skills. So, they should be equipping their students with the necessary skills and knowledge.”* (Student 6)

The curriculum is seen as if it is burdening students who spend years taking courses that later are not relevant in their career. Student 13 mentions that;

*“For example, in O’ level I took science subjects and right now I am doing Social Work, what were the use of the science subjects? Assuming since I wanted to be a social worker, I should have been paying attention to those subjects that can connect me to being a social worker. Maybe if I wanted to be a doctor, I would have been doing those science subjects.”*(Student 13).

#### **4.1.6. Elitist Education System**

An interesting result of the interviews with the teachers and students revealed negative attitude in seeking employment among the youths as a big hindrance to their employment and this can be blamed on the elitist mentality in the education system. First, most of the young people are not keen on committing to work in Mbale which they consider a rural area but seek to move to major cities such as Kampala. Such an attitude means that even if there is a job opportunity in the district, some of the youths will not bother to apply for it as their ultimate goal is to migrate to urban areas. Apart from that, the teachers and



students expressed concern that youths are not giving their best efforts in looking for jobs. Lecturer 2 states that;

*“One of the reasons as to why some of these people are not employed is laziness, people especially in the area we are looking at people are unemployed not because of education, but because they are too lazy you call them for some work they cannot do it to the extent that as if that’s not enough some of them despise work they say I cannot do this kind of work I cannot do this...”* (Lecturer 2).

The elitist mentality makes young people to discriminate some jobs even though the alternatives they are seeking are not available. Teachers interviewed in this research admit that youths in Mbale are increasingly becoming choosy about the kind of jobs they are willing to do. Certain occupations that youths consider not to be ‘cool’ are not attracting attention even though they may offer more jobs to the youths. This attitude the teachers blame on an education system that gives exaggerated hopes to the youths. Many graduates consider themselves to be above certain types of jobs and they would rather remain unemployed than take up such jobs. This takes us back to the argument that the education system has a mismatch with the reality in the country and it does not prepare the youths well for their future experiences in seeking employment. Student 11 mentions that

*“Some youths despise jobs, most of them. I maybe like a lawyer, so maybe when I finish my levels at law, when maybe there is a certain job which is not connected to law, I might say like “I didn’t study to do this,” my occupation has to be a lawyer not some other job.”* (Student 11)

## **4.2. OPINIONS OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION AND YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT**

### **4.2.1. Education, Employment and Nepotism in Uganda**

This finding is an important pillar of this research as it gives us an insight of how youths in Uganda and more specifically in Mbale district interpret their situation within the labour market. It bisected two main themes of this research namely education and

employment and examined the interaction between the two. The way Ugandan youths evaluate the possibilities and challenges provided by the local education system is strongly highlighted. Findings from the primary data indicate that the youths are informed of the weakness created by the education system and are developing alternative means of achieving their personal goals. Apart from being optimistic and working hard, members of the family are equally playing an important role in helping support the Ugandan youths who are facing an uncertain future of unemployment despite having gone through the education system. Youths are able to benefit from an informal support structure created by family and friends thus acting as an alternative to the weak formal support system that exists. The notion that getting education will lead to employment opportunities seem to be a recurring ideology among the respondents. Student 5 mentions that;

*“I think educated people have high chance of being employed because now days in Uganda if you are not educated you cannot get a job easily because you need skills to do the particular job... so I need to get some knowledge about the particular area that I intend to work. If a person with a primary 7 certificate applies for a job along with someone with a university degree, the latter would stand a higher chance of getting employed. Most institutions that are offering jobs have become very demanding in the sense that majority of jobs advertised, even those ones considered to be less formal require someone to at least to be an A -level graduate... Therefore, if someone is highly qualified, they stand higher chances of getting employed.” (Student 5)*

This general perception works only when there is merit involved in the process, however in the case of Uganda, personal connections and networks are important in the process of getting employed. This supports the theoretical concept of ecological connection associated with the human capital theory. Indeed, there are a number of young Ugandans who are sceptical about the possibility of getting employed purely based on merit. Uganda is a highly ethicised society with various communities treating each other with suspicion even when it comes to job opportunities. Student 1 summarises the situation by saying that;

*“The case in Uganda is abit different, there are cases where merit works but not all the time, it is not surprising to find that someone with lower education*

*qualification is considered in place of another with higher education. Some may associate this to luck, however social and political connections play a crucial role in facilitating less qualified people to get jobs.” (Student 1)*

He goes further to give an example of himself and how he was able to get a job without going through an interview as the other applicants who not only had higher qualification than himself, but also went through the entire formal process only to be rejected. He states that;

*“...even at one time I happened to apply to be a presiding officer during elections and by that time I had a ‘big man’ following up my application I didn’t even do the interviews I just saw on the final list that I had been short listed. This shows a case where I got a job without either appearing in front of an interviewing panel or providing my academic document, connections helped me.” (Student 1)*

#### **4.2.2. Does the System of Education in Uganda offer Equal Opportunity?**

This question is important in addressing the concept of equal opportunity in the Human capital theory. It offers two perspectives. On one hand there is the problem of access based on gender and on the other, people’s social status and how they affect one’s potential to gain education and work.

Gender inequality in Uganda when it comes to access to education is a serious challenge. Women marginalisation in Uganda cannot only be seen in one form but is part of a larger institutionalised way of gender marginalisation. The level of women marginalisation differs from region to region across the country. Culture in most communities places girls below boys and if families need to make a choice then they will choose male children over women to go to school. Some of the challenges girls face in getting education include early marriages, being subjected to housework and other income generating activities as well as sexual harassment. Looking at the statistics from a survey conducted by the UN Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI) is equally worrying. By July 2018, over 700, 000 girls in school going age were not in school while only 50% of the girls between 13 and 25 are literate. Student 5 highlights the fate of girls in Mbale district by saying that;

*“In my research in Mbale, particularly among the young females I have witnessed that many girls they do drop out of school and due to some circumstances in family issues like dues to lack of school fees, and lack of some materials to sustain them so they end up going into marriages in order to sustain what they need so many girls in Mbale at around the age of I think 12 years and above though even some 11 but mainly that age those girls most of them drop out of school. They are forced by their parents to drop out of school” (Student 5).*

The prevailing high rate of female students in Mbale district and Uganda at large dropping out of school has an impact on their ability to get job opportunities. They not only aren't competitive in application processes compared to their male counterparts; they also tend to dominate the informal sector where they earn low wages.

The finding also reveals that the experience among the youth is different depending on whether you come from the rich or poor segments of the society. Student 7 explains that the experience of coming from a poor family means that education and work are not separate stages but parallel stages of life. Meaning one has to work and study at the same time to make ends meet. More specifically poor youths who dare to take on higher education.

*“Coming from a poor background, I am forced to work in order to pay my own school fees. My parents cannot afford to pay and because I am optimistic about completing my education, I have to do what it takes to pay the fee. Some youths are not educated reason being some of them just drop out when they don't have education, or lack of money to continue with school. And poverty is the main reason as to why people are uneducated. And you don't expect someone who is not educated to get a good job.” (Student 7)*

Student 8 also has the same opinion, but also believes that the government has not done enough. He argues that;

*“Youth unemployment can also be blamed on the too much poverty in a way that, the youths can't access funds to afford an education which could in turn*

*help them get training to do even some simple jobs. The government of Uganda has also greatly contributed to youth unemployment in a way that, large investments (budgets) are being made in sectors that don't directly address the youths' problems. Sectors like manufacturing and industry which would provide jobs to the youths both directly and indirectly have been neglected through allocating to them small budgets and small investments.”*  
(student 8)

This revelation is further supported by Student 15 who comes from low-income family. Of interest is not the fact that one has to work and study, it is how this impacts on a person's future in the labour market.

*“.. Sometimes I am forced to miss classes because I have to work, this has had a negative impact on my performance at the college. I also know some of my friends who have been forced to drop -out of school because of negative results and in some cases not being able to meet the institution's financial obligations.”* (Student 15)

This challenge affects the level of employability and in extension equal opportunity for many youths in Mbale district since those who successfully manage to complete their education but are affected by low grades due to missing lecture courses are not competitive in the job application process while those who drop out from school do not meet the minimum requirement for job application. The dilemma of whether to work and study at the same time is faced by many Ugandan youths. Indeed, an in-depth examination of the existing literature and other empirical data concurred with the findings. According to a survey conducted by Wordofa (2004), 65% of his respondents (20 Unemployed youths in Uganda) would prefer to work and study at the same time while only 35% would choose to study only. The rationale behind this kind of mindset is that most Ugandans consider education as an important asset for one to get employment in the future. This strong belief has made the majority of Ugandan youths dependant on education despite its obvious costs such as loss of time going through the education system, lack of funds to support their studies, lack of education facilities.

### 4.2.3. Level of Education in Relation to Employment

This subject sought to investigate the opinions of the students on whether employers considered the level of education when hiring or recruiting their workers and at the same time answering the question if the levels of education affected the students' prospects of getting employed. This is however in correspondence to both the signaling and the job competition model theories. In the signaling approach, the factor of education is considered to be an important characteristic employers often consider when they are recruiting their employees, that is to say, in the process of screening their applicants (Weiss 1995). Job seekers always aim at finding comparatively good jobs however, employers prefer employing those with higher levels of education. And surprisingly, these students concurred with the notion for example Student 4 mentions that;

*“employers consider the level of education when hiring employees because those with a higher level of education must have attained some knowledge and ideas and skills as compared to those with low education. the higher the level of education the higher the opportunities that's what I think.”*

(Student 4)

It is important to mention that success in most Ugandan households is measured by the level of education one has achieved. However, this, in turn, has denied many young people to exploit other forms of talent that they have. In addition, most of the graduates lack the proper skills and resources to be job creators thus having to depend on the few state and NGO jobs available. The government is also not investing adequate resources in talent-related activities that would have helped many youths discover other areas of employment. Of course, the question as to whether the education system gives the student sufficient skills to match the job market is equally an important observation. This means that non-academic activities such as sports, art, music or poetry are not given attention they deserve yet these are sectors that can employ very many youths both in Uganda and abroad. The discouragement of non-academic aspects of education do not only occur at school but also at home with the parents. Student 8 gives his experience as;

*“My parents insisted that I must complete my studies to the tertiary level even though my passion is in a totally different field, football. I found it difficult to*

*cope up with my colleagues at school because I was not very good in science and mathematics, however, my biggest contribution to the school was my performance in football team.” (Student 8)*

When I asked the student respondents what motivates them to study, several of them said that they were motivated by the thought of getting professional careers was their priority while other respondents were motivated by prospects of having higher incomes, increased knowledge, their parents pushing them or peer influence. With such a huge number focusing on professional careers yet the annual professional jobs created is much lower compared to the high number of school graduates in Uganda. This explains the widening gap of youth unemployment because most youths are not able to connect their aspirations with the reality (Ssempebwa, 2006).

The belief by many young people in Uganda that with education, one can be able to get employment is what adds hope to them. They thus continue to find different means of going to school in order to gain an education. This positive outlook is, however, a dangerous phenomenon in the country despite being a step towards the right direction as it keeps the youths away from engaging in other social evils. Dangerous in the sense that such high hopes may keep the educated youth in the job seeking category for long for a perfect job that education should help bring about. The reality, however, is that few are able to be absorbed in the professional labour market. Student 9 describes her optimism as

*“Once I complete my education and get a good job, my aim is to build a community library here in Mbale, construct houses for the poor and take my children to the best schools.” (student 9)*

#### **4.2.4. The Short- and Long-Term Future of Education and Youth Unemployment in Uganda**

This theme sought to examine the opinion of the respondents regarding the future of education and youth unemployment in Mbale and Uganda as a whole. I found that it remains a divisive topic as the respondents are divided between optimists and pessimists. Among the optimists, student 5 argues that

*“I think with time to come, unemployment will have reduced among the youths because now days, we can talk about the president himself because he has come up and involved himself in such programs like these organizations that bring youths together and I remember some time was it I don’t remember either from where, he gave a thanks to the youths for coming up with their own jobs and he gave them some amount of money in order for them to continue with their work and then said that youths shouldn’t just sit back but they have to look for work and not specifically office work but the handy work as well that’s why some vocational institutes have come up and they are still coming up as well.” (Student 5)*

Lecturer 5 is abit pessimistic about the ability of Uganda to deal with the issue of youth unemployment in the short run, he believes that only long-term solutions will have the necessary impact. He states that;

*“...the problem of youth unemployment is very big it is not something that you can address in a short time. However, we need to get started such that possibly in 5 or 10 years to come, we start seeing the fruits but we do not expect to see the results in a very short time that is not practical because the programmes that we need to start up definitely take a bit of sometime before we start registering some achievements so it’s not an event it’s a process solving a problem you know very well is a process the problem of youth unemployment is a problem that can be addressed slowly but systematically and possibly after some time we can start experiencing some positive results.”(Lecturer 5)*

Lecturer 2 also expresses concern over the possibility of the unemployment crisis in Uganda to be fixed quickly, He argues that,

*“I want to say that when we talk about change of youth unemployment in relation to education in Uganda, we still have a long way to go this cannot be solved today, tomorrow or the other day. We still have a long journey to go first of all we need to have an overhaul in the political system because it plays a big role. The reason why I am saying so is, we have a government that is full of corruption I want to tell you that even*



*when we blame the youths or we put the blame on the youths themselves but sometimes there are factors that are beyond their control yes that we have high rates of corruption in the country that wherever they go you find someone who has just graduated from a university and then you are asking them for 4/5 million to pay for a job so for as long as we still have corruption in Uganda and if our head of state does not really gain the political will to fight corruption, we will not change the education system as well as solve the problem of youth unemployment.” (Lecturer 2).*

### **4.3. OTHER CAUSES OF YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT**

During the research, I came to a conclusion that aside the education system, there were other factors contributing to the problem of youth unemployment in the district and some of these included;

#### **4.3.1. Inadequate Job Information**

During the interview with the teachers and students at the Islamic University of Uganda, Mbale, I noted that the respondents while discussing other causes emphasized more on the lack of sufficient information between the employers and the youths regarding the available skills and job opportunities in the labour market. Teacher 2 and Student 1 expressed concern that the learning institutions were doing a good job in training the students but fell short of not helping provide both the students and the employers with the job -matching information. This can be explained using the signaling theory which assumes that the more information employers have regarding their prospective employees and vice versa, the higher the possibility of getting jobs. Student 1 recommends that it is high time learning institutions establish career guidance and information centres where current and former students can be able to get information regarding existing opportunities. In addition, they need to create an information bank that can help employers search for potential employees using a simple yet informative avenue. Some of the interviewed students also agreed that they lacked access to information on job opportunities because few of them are able to afford newspapers or surf the internet where most of the jobs are announced.

Numerous reports by local and organizations like, OECD, ILO, UNDP and the African Development Bank, indicate that there is inadequate job matching information in most developing countries, and this negatively affects the youths. According to the African Economic Outlook (2012) most countries in Africa face the challenge of information flow between the potential employers and employees. Among those who are most affected are individuals with low education qualification. Therefore, even when attempting to curb the problem of unemployment, lack of information needs to be addressed otherwise the problem will not easily be solved (African Economic Outlook, 2012). Students and young people also lack platforms which they can advertise their skill such as a job -seekers data (ILO, 2012: 26). Student 1 mentions that;

*“... It is important that a resource centre or other forms of platforms be established so that the Youths of Mbale can receive information regarding any available vacancies regardless of the qualification required. The youths should also be able to have a platform where potential employers can interact with them and get to know their skills... the local administration and private sector in Mbale need to come up with a recruitment hub located within the district or distributed at all administrative unit offices across the districts. The hub should equip the youths with ICT, Business, and English skills and work ethics. The skills will make the youths not only more employable but also transform their attitude towards work and encourage self-employment”*  
(Student 1).

Although actualisation of such a program may be a challenge due to the large number of unemployed youths that may be interested, support from the private sector, NGOs and the national government can help the local administration overcome these challenges. Plus, the services of the recruitment hub can be spread across different platforms such as social media and posters so as to reach as many youths as possible without all of them necessarily having to crowd at the centre. This hub will give the students access to online information where they can check job advertisements.

### **4.3.2. Insufficient Entrepreneurial Skills**

During the field research in Mbale, I was able to easily take note of several small-scale businesses coming up. This is an indication that there is definitely a growing desire towards entrepreneurship amongst the youths in the district. This observation is further supported by findings of a report by International Entrepreneurship. It indicated that the percentage of individuals ages 18 to 64, who are actively engaged in self -employment increased to 29.3% from 15.3% in 2010 (International Entrepreneurship, 2018, Uganda). Even the already employed youths are engaging in extra income generating activities. According to Briggs, (2009) the lack of competitive entrepreneurial skills is making the private sector less efficient. The white-collar job mentality produced by the elitist education system in Uganda means majority of young people do not have the ability to start and manage a business. Yet in an environment such as Uganda where the government due to financial constraints is not able to provide sufficient employment opportunities, it means that small business in the private sector can help bridge the gap. Among the students I interviewed, they expressed their desire to have small business enterprises to supplement their income when they get employed or when they are still looking for employment.

During a verbal interaction with Josephine, a Human Resources Manager in one of the leading industries in Mbale she observes that employees have limited management and entrepreneurial skills. She gave an example of an unsuccessful attempt by the junior workers to start a poultry farm together. The farm did not yield much profit before it collapsed because of what she described as poor management and entrepreneurial skills. Narratives of other failed private business start-ups are confirmed by Student 3 and Student 14. Most young people are afraid of taking risks, especially with their investments (Mlay, Zlotnikova, & Watundu, 2013:4). Those who can manage to raise capital sometimes fail to conduct an adequate market study to know the best sector to invest in. Some of the youth's lack of ideas on how to start and run a business has led to the collapse of several enterprises (Omidyar Network, 2013: 8). Ironically some of the youths who have good ideas and clear business plans lack the resources required to actualize their ideas (Ikoja-Odongo & Ocholla, 2004).

Some basic knowledge of accounting, project management, and market research are lacking among the youths. The importance of such skills towards successful management of businesses cannot be emphasized enough. Youth groups which had come up with small businesses with the support of the government in Mbale district have not grown much either. The consequence of poor management skills is that it affects the ability of small businesses to grow and create more employment opportunities that can be taken up by other unemployed youths.

The limited training in business and entrepreneur related skills in most of the vocational training institutes is also a problem I observed in this context. While vocational training is indeed one of the keys to fighting youth unemployment in Uganda, it is also very important to provide business management skills so that the youth can actually start up a business in the respective field of their studies. Without this training, the youth is forced to look for a job and getting employed, leaving a lot of potential unused. Student 12 mentions that;

*“...and sometimes a job maybe available but a person lacks the skills to enable him or her qualify for the job. For example, someone may get an opportunity where they are looking for a person who did computer science and he did it but because he doesn't know how to use a computer and yet they are looking for one with computer literacy he may lose out”* (Student 12).

Student 1 too echoes lack of skills to the rampant cases of unemployment;

*“On the side of education, people acquire the skills, but maybe other things are not inclusive on the education as in the curriculum of people or on the education level because they always say that once someone acquires the education must also gain other skills apart from the qualification that person is hoping to get.”* (Student 1)

#### **4.3.3. Low level of Aggregate Demand for labour in the Economy**

To understand the problem of youth unemployment in Uganda, some of the respondents recommended that it will be insufficient to look at the supply side without also looking at the demand aspect of labour. Those affected the most in this situation are the youths who often find themselves trailing on the “job queue”. This is because employers tend to give

priority to those with more experience something many youths do not have (Haile, 2003: 6). It's worth noting that the labour market has been strongly affected by capital-intensive techniques of production that have taken over from manual labour. Mbale district which is mainly an agricultural area has been adversely affected by the introduction of machines. Student 12 mentions that;

*“...I think its limited jobs, in Mbale jobs are limited. And maybe sometimes lack of skills a job maybe available but a person lacks to qualify for the job.”* (Student 12)

Lecturer 2 reiterates that;

*“terms of availability of employment, employment itself is not easily found, most of the jobs we call them the least paying jobs that's why I think some people despise them.”*(Lecturer 2)

#### **4.3.4. Corruption**

The impact of corruption on youth unemployment in Mbale and Uganda as a whole rivals the impact of the poor education system in affecting youths in the country. Uganda's corruption index is among the lowest in the world ranking number 149 out of 175 countries surveyed by trading economics in 2019. The danger of corruption is that it affects people in many ways. For example, the mere theft of public resources by public servants means that money that was supposed to be invested in projects that could have provided opportunities to young people are lost. Even worse is that much of the proceeds from corruption are invested in other countries and not Uganda hence leading to capital flight making people much poorer and unemployed. The most direct consequence of corruption is whereby people offering jobs demand kick-back from prospective applicants for them to consider their applications. This sometimes becomes very expensive for most average Ugandans to manage making only those capable of paying the bribes getting the jobs. Student 7 states that;

*“we have a very big problem with the government and private sector employers currently. It is easy to observe that there is a lot of high level of corruption in the country. In addition to that, there is a lot of tribalism, nepotism so for young people to get access to a job opportunity, they need to*

*have someone who will help push for their application. It is an open secret that someone has to be the one to link you by the time they advertise jobs when maybe they have already secured, they just give adverts to blind fold the general public that a recruitment process took place but in actual sense these positions have already been taken. For example there is a case with the local government where sometime back one of my friend who was telling us a scenario where a person working in the local government authority and when time came for promotion, the human resource office wanted him to give like around 2 million Ugandan shillings so that kind of staff is the one making us let me say making most of the youths in Mbale to be unemployed.”(Student 7)*

More to corruption, MGLSD (2011) asserted that corruption was one factor leading to the escalation of the unemployment problem in the Uganda. The ministry suggested that many of the government officials need to be investigated by the office of the IGG because they have misappropriated the financial resources the government allocates to fight youth unemployment.

#### **4.3.5. Poverty**

In Uganda today, poverty has proven to be an endemic social phenomenon. An estimated 45 -50% of the population lives under the poverty line (Kituuka, 2010). Gender is also an important level of analysis in Uganda as women are often poorer than men. This is as a result of many social and economic obstacles women face in the country. And low purchasing power of the people, political and ideological factors should also be considered as causes of poverty in Uganda. Other causes of poverty in the country include geographical factors, corruption, climate since many people rely on agriculture. Student 8 confirms the notion mentioning that;

*“Youth unemployment can also be blamed on the too much poverty in a way that, the youths can’t access funds to afford an education which could in turn help them get training to do even some simple jobs. The government of Uganda has also greatly contributed to youth unemployment in a way that, large investments (budgets) are being made in sectors that don’t directly address the youths’ problems. Sectors like manufacturing and industry which*

*would provide jobs to the youths both directly and indirectly have been neglected through allocating to them to small budgets and small investments.”(Student 8)*

#### **4.4. ROLE OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT**

The impact of unemployment on the society can at times go beyond economic deprivation. In Uganda, unemployment is affecting individuals in many ways to the extent that it has caught the attention of social workers. Psychological stress is one of the main challenges for unemployed youths in Uganda and other parts of the world. Unemployment creates an environment where an individual loses social contacts, experiences a less acceptable status in the society, they cease to participate in collective aims of an organization as well as their engagement in regular activities diminish. These have impacts on different dimensions of a person’s life and is manifested through psychological stress.

Social workers have thus become keen on addressing the issue of individual welfare. Fergusson, John Horwood and Woodward (2001) and Clark and Oswald (1994) share similar sentiments that unemployment related psychological stress affects a person’s happiness, mental and health well -being. There is a sense of satisfaction that being employed helps to derive and often when an individual finds themselves unemployed, they sink into a state of stress, depression or sometimes face harassment (Nodrenmark, 1999: 23). This shows that a person’s social status and identity have important relations with their mental well -being.

In Uganda, most of the unemployed youths have resorted to different ways of coping with their status. Coping in this sense means the various ways in which individuals opt to face their challenges. One of the emerging ways of coping with unemployment related challenges in Uganda has been seeking the social support. While family and close friends often take the lead, social workers are increasingly playing an important role in supporting the unemployed youths. Their expertise in treating, assessing and preventing emotional, social, environmental and behavioural problems continue to help many Ugandan youths to cope with their situation. Below are some of the ways in which social workers in the country should assist the unemployed youths;

#### 4.4.1. Education Support

In Uganda there is a need for social workers to support less privileged children to access education. This strategy targets poor families and takes over the responsibility of providing financial and material support to their children in order to allow them to gain the necessary skills that can see them secure employment in the future. In addition to that, supporting parents with educating their children helps to reduce the burden such a responsibility that often-puts pressure on their limited resources. This, in turn, frees the parent to be able to divert the would have been school fees to other family activities such as starting a small business.

This notion is also in line with ecological connections one of the human capital theory frame works, where social workers and other practitioners are encouraged to get involved with the young people. Within the microsystem, social workers and other practitioners can get involved with the young both in their families and at school. At the family level, social workers are encouraged to involve the young people and their relatives so as to reduce the gap among older and young people, encourage the parents to provide more family support to their unemployed youths. As for the school as a microsystem, social workers can complete the already existing efforts made by family and schools by providing other non-academic support such as helping youths develop vital life skills. Sometimes ecological connections have been abused with nepotism and corruption worsening the situation. Some people are using their connections to gain an unfair advantage over other people. Within the mesosystem, social workers are encouraged to emphasize collective responsibility at the community level, and this may also include a partnership with educational institutions.

Student 5 is of the opinion that social workers in Uganda can play a role in helping Ugandan youths acquire vocational training

*“... for example, in Mbale girls who end up getting married at an early age means they are not able to finish their education. The stigma that comes with young married girls also is that they are afraid to continue with education. Since it is difficult to take these ladies away from their husbands, social workers can intervene and provide them with vocational training support.*”



*These skills will help them get money and be able to take care of their families. We can come up by for example with a program of teaching hand skills for example moulding, crafting like making bags they can also make liquid soap because it's not that hard you can like it within one day and then we make groups and teach them and the next day when we come back, we start giving them materials so that they can start doing their own businesses or give them some money.” (Student 5)*

#### **4.4.2. Encouraging and Supporting Households and Individuals to Establish Income-Generating Activities**

Social Workers in Uganda seem to acknowledge the negative impact of unemployment in Uganda especially among the youths and in response have come up with initiatives that are helping Ugandans generate income at the micro and meso level. These programs specifically target the unemployed segments of the society who need support to generate income. Youths, old people, women, orphans and other vulnerable members of the community benefit from such kind of initiatives. There are three levels of income generating activities in Uganda, the individual level where programs target people individually, it can be at the household level where a family is granted a project in order to collectively generate income or societal level where an initiative targeting a given society. The most common programs include small-scale businesses, animal rearing (goats, dairy cows or sheep's), poultry and small-scale farming. Student six suggests some of the areas in which social workers can be involved in helping the unemployed youths;

*“Social workers in Mbale can also equip these (unemployed) youths with the ideas on income generating activities and link them up with training opportunities to help them gain some basic skills which will be handy in helping them specialise. Apart from counselling, social workers can encourage youths to venture into some of the neglected fields such as crafting, baking among others. Advise them not to look for jobs but create their own because you are going to look for a job till when because for someone of a PhD is not having a job where do you think you are going to get a job you of a bachelors.” (Student 6).*

#### **4.4.3. Mobilisation and Provision of Resources**

This approach is done through two distinct strategies namely; development approach and a remedial approach. The remedial approach is closely related to humanitarian efforts where food, medical care, and accommodation can be provided to the people in need. However, it is the second approach, the development strategy that is of relevance to us. It is noteworthy that social workers in Uganda have been able to support youths in the country not only to access microfinance loans, they have been able to facilitate access to grants, agricultural inputs, and training as well as animals. These efforts have gone a long way in providing employment opportunities to many youths in Uganda. Lecturer 2 who is also a social worker by profession believes social workers should assist youths mobilise resources;

*“As social workers, we need to do a lot, because one of the roles as social workers is to ensure that there is social functioning in the society but when there is youth unemployment then that means that achieving social functioning becomes very difficult. We have a lot of roles to play first of all we need to do a lot of sensitization, we need to do a lot of mobilization, lobbying and advocacy for more resources to be invested in youth related activities. Equally we need to tell our leaders what they are supposed to do we are supposed to guide them it is our responsibility as social workers to guide our leaders and tell them what they are supposed to do to help us solve the problem of youth unemployment.” (Lecturer 2)*

#### **4.4.4. Capacity-Building**

The limited practical skills and up to date knowledge in various fields have been an obstacle for young Ugandans. Capacity building programs are therefore in response to gaps created by lack of experience and skills in order to improve one’s ability to effectively engage in income-generating activities. In addition, some of the initiatives go as far as providing information and training to the youths and other vulnerable members of the community. For example, training on new irrigation techniques or high yield seeds helps small-scale farmers generate sufficient resources for their survival. Lecturer 1 opines that;

*“We can sensitize and mobilize resources for youths so that we can help them gain capacity to do more things. Social workers begin by creating associations as one way to go and through those different associations we get to know ourselves as social workers and then communicate to the business sector or to the employment sector what we do as social workers because part of the challenges is that people do not know what social workers are supposed to do and the unfortunate bit is that there are also some social workers who do not know or are not clear with what they should do that’s the unfortunate bit but if we have an awareness of what we should do as social workers and then we also inform the business sector of what we are capable of doing then you will realize that there are opportunities of social workers in almost every avenue, whether you are looking at ministries, NGOs, CBOs, at whatever level you realize that there is an opportunity because social work is almost everything, individuals in the community that is part of the social work and there is a lot that must happen ok, economically, politically and socially that requires the intervention of social workers so after bridging the knowledge gap, then we can also design programmes and talk through institutions like the government and NGOs about those programmes that help directly in the community where as that maybe too tasky, it maybe another way to because as social workers if I have failed to get an opportunity then I can look at the challenges that are in the society and then design an interventionary programme for that when I do that I can talk it through the NGOs but then there is bureaucracy which discourages members.” (Lecturer 1)*

#### **4.4.5. Brokering Role**

Related to the above, it is common to find that social workers are acting as go-between between the youths and relevant services. Most prominent is linking youths to technical and resource services. Small-scale, self-employed Ugandans can continue to remain productive since social workers are able to link them with the potential market for their products as well or sources of cheap raw materials. Student 9 mentioned that;

*“Social workers can help us the students by acting as link agents by that I meant they can connect with the employers and find out jobs out there and*

*they advertise to the students, so that its easier for the students to know where to apply. And then they can also give advice to the students to not lose hope because of unemployment because in the future they have papers they will get jobs.” (Student 9).*

#### **4.4.6. Community Counselling and Organization**

Unemployed youths form a group of people with similar challenges. The impact of unemployment among the youth is driving them towards similar social evils and health challenges. To provide the necessary assistance, social workers in Uganda are organizing forums whereby power, ideas, and resources are pooled together in order to solve existing problems and create development. Organising unemployed youths into groups has helped create a channel through which support and opportunities from government and non - governmental organizations can reach the right people in the appropriate time and manner. Those who are experiencing psychological stress and health complications can also get help through similar initiatives. Lecturer 4 argues that social workers can use their counselling skills to change the mindset of youths who may have lost hope of getting jobs;

*“I believe that first of all there is need to get into the minds of the graduates and to a degree alter their perceptions right that even when they graduate they can still engage themselves meaningfully in activities that are found in the area and why that must be the case is because where they want to end up in the job markets that are found in urban areas the opportunities are quiet limited so if I am a social worker and if I was part of the team to interface with the young those of 18 to 35 years of age and they have their degrees I would try to convince them that your degree is not just a document that is meaning full only in Mbale town or Kampala city it is also very ,meaningful and very helpful in rural areas where you come from where you are deeply rooted so you can apply it you can use it there, there are very many social problems to me it starts with perceptions how those perceptions can be altered away from thinking that you can only work in an urban place you can only work in town you can only work in a city and yet they can work everywhere else.” (Lecturer 4)*

#### **4.4.7. Promoting Positive Work Ethics and Attitudes among the Unemployed Youths**

Sometimes, young people fail to realize their full potential or to succeed in their endeavours due to negative work ethics and attitudes. Lack of discipline in financial management has and continues to affect young entrepreneurs and employed people who fail to maintain their productive engagements for a long period of time. Social workers intervene to discourage negative social practices such as domestic violence, gender discrimination, injustices and inequalities all which negatively affect one's academic and employment opportunities. By addressing such challenges, young men and women are able to return to productivity. Student 13, Student 2 and Student 8 both talk about solving the attitude and ethics problems among youths. That is some time youths consider themselves as being overqualified to do certain jobs because of their education levels. Student 8 states that;

*“They should advise them not to neglect jobs, those who have dropped out of school be given courage to finish their studies. Whatever situation you're in you believe in yourself that in future you will be ok. Mobilize them to get involved in different jobs for example I maybe an engineer and my main focus is on becoming an engineer.” (Student 8)*

#### **4.4.8. Research and Advice on Policy**

Social workers have the privilege of working closely with young people and have the ability to reach out to important policy-making organs such as parliament and other influential non-governmental entities. Youth unemployment, as well as education sectors, are highly affected by government policies. Social workers have continued to work closely with relevant bodies through reports, advocacy and conferences to call for reforms in the labour and education sectors. Lecturer 3 thinks that social workers can advise the government on various policy issues that touch on youths;

*“There is little that they can do they can advise the government that's all. They can also strengthen social work policies because social work is also unregulated in Uganda while in the developed world it is a highly regulated professional body.”*

*For example, in the US you cannot practice social work without a social work degree or a masters and then you also need to be licensed. In Uganda anyone who has done any course maybe they have done education or social sciences you sit with them in the bus what do you do I am a social worker where do you work I work with maybe a children's organization in Soroti and then you ask the person did you study social work I studied development studies so clearly social work is open to abuse to everyone. It also means the sector in Uganda lacks quality minds that can offer policy recommendations to government on youth unemployment. But I think if it was regulated and a requirement that institutions have social workers who are actually social workers then it would help social workers to reduce unemployment because I don't think we have many educated social workers in Uganda, yet they are not as many as other countries.”( Lecturer 3)*

#### **4.4.9. Promotion of Good Health**

This is a point that has largely dominated the literature. The argument is that the quality of a society's health reflects on its ability to produce effectively. In other words, the phrase “a healthy nation is a working nation” best underlines the importance of good health in the labour market. Youths are at times vulnerable to not only sexually transmitted diseases but also the dangerous side effects of drugs on their health. Social workers are dominant in the health sector and conduct several anti-drug campaigns in Uganda. Some of the reformed drug -addicts are able to be trained and become productive in the country.

In this chapter, I have examined the opinions of social work lecturers and students in Mbale district regarding the relationship between education and Youth unemployment. From their responses, it is clear to tell that youth unemployment is a serious issue, a ticking time bomb which if not addressed with the urgency it deserves can lead to disaster. I have also learnt that youth unemployment is indeed a very complex problem with different causes. I can confirm that with education it is clear that the education sector in Uganda is letting down the young people by not providing them with the necessary skills, they would need to successfully navigate the labour market, other socio -political, cultural and economic factors are equally playing a critical role in worsening the unemployment

crisis. Having said that, I believe that with swift and deep-rooted changes in the education system of Uganda, the problem of youth unemployment will be drastically reduced. From there then the other obstacles on youth unemployment can also be tackled. Until then, the people of Uganda will continue to face numerous challenges towards getting employment.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

### **5.1. CONCLUSION**

Youth unemployment is a global challenge and developing countries like Uganda appear to be among those that face even a bigger challenge. The consequences of youth unemployment cut across all spheres of society with dangerous outcomes. I have observed that rampant youth unemployment is as a result of many reasons most of which are interrelated. Over the years, progress has been made by the Ugandan government to increase access and make education more affordable to the people especially with the introduction of free secondary and primary education. However, most observers are concerned about the relevance and quality of the education system.

In addition, there is little doubt that the education system in Uganda continues to produce individuals with a mindset of white collar jobs which is making them choosier on the nature of jobs they want despite the limited opportunities. According to the Uganda Bureau of statistics (2016), unemployment among those without any formal education is 1%, those with primary school qualification is 1.2%, those with secondary qualification is at 4.1, post-secondary qualification 4.7, while those with university degrees and above have 11.8% unemployment. Additionally, 26.1% of the youths have completed only primary school level and 38.6% of them have completed high school education, the majority of them do not have specialized skills that can be attained from tertiary institutions of education. Moreover, such gaps are created by existing challenges such as poverty and parents being unemployed and therefore cannot afford fees for their children hence creating a cycle where parents are unemployed and because they cannot afford to take their children to school, the children also become unemployed.

Other factors such as lack of financial, administrative and training support for young entrepreneurs as well as limited access to capital, lack of information on the existing opportunities, neglect of key sectors such as agriculture which despite being the main employer receives very little attention from the government budget and outdated cultural practices such as gender discrimination are also contributing to the problem of youth unemployment in Uganda.



It has also been observed that those who are unfortunate not to secure job opportunities end up in crowded slums in the major cities from where they involve themselves in crime, prostitution and other less productive activities. Militia groups such as Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) have been fighting government forces and targeting civilians. These groups are believed to be recruiting unemployed youths into their organisations. There have been increased reports of depression and psychological stress among the youths who cannot meet some of their basic needs and financial obligations and therefore choose to lose hope and do whatever they want with their lives.

Education, upon which many families have put their hopes on to help their children stand a better chance of getting employment in the future appears to have betrayed these aspirations because of a number of reasons. First, and the most obvious, is that attaining education irrespective of the level does not guarantee anyone a job opportunity. In fact, due to corruption, tribalism and political patronage, some people with very low education qualification find jobs much easier because of their contacts and networks. Secondly, even those who have gone through the education system lack the skills necessary to either secure a job and those who are able to get a job sometimes fail to live up to the expectations of the employers. The gap hindering the easy transition from school to the job market is one that policy makers should endeavor to close. This includes urgent reforms in both education and labour laws in the country so that young graduates can be able to transition from school to jobs with ease and maintain efficiency.

However, the said reforms can only make sense in the long run as already the country has approximately 7 million youths who have either gone through the existing education system and are currently seeking for jobs or have not acquired the formal education but are above the schooling age (MES, 2017). This is a huge number and a short-term solution for them whereby it also needs to be factored in. This is perhaps where the role of social workers comes in. Social Work can indeed play an important role in assisting these approximately 7 million youths to cope with the social effects of unemployment, they can help organise community initiatives that can help unemployed youths specifically the marginalised categories such as those with disabilities to generate income through self-employment. Social workers can also be the link between the government and young

people most of whom may not have access or information on how to get support from the government.

In conclusion, education may not have a direct relationship with unemployment given the various factors discussed above. It, however, has a strong link with other labour related issues such as the employee's quality of skills, management practices as well as individual reliance. It is therefore fair to argue that the relationship between youth unemployment and education cannot be ignored and stakeholders need to begin revisiting the education system in Uganda and come up with reforms that will tilt the relationship in favour of employment.

## **5.2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Having examined the relationship between education and youth unemployment in Uganda, I wish to make my recommends into three categories; namely the government, the social workers and the students.

### **5.2.1. Recommendations to the Government**

#### **➤ *Education Sector Reforms***

Since it got independence, Uganda has undergone tremendous changes. The most remarkable reform was the 1997 Universal Primary Education law that declared free education for primary school going students. At the core of this policy was the government's goal to increase access to primary education for all Ugandans including those from the poor segments of the society. Indeed, the initiative was able to meet its objectives as the enrolment rate and school drop-out significantly improved over the next two decades. However, in the third decade, since the program was launched, there have been obvious challenges facing the education sector as more students have begun to drop out.

This has been as a result of very low investment on the much-needed infrastructure in schools to help cope with the rising numbers of students being registered at schools. The lack of sufficient infrastructure is having a big impact on the quality of students who graduate from public schools as their learning is highly affected. Also, the teacher-student ratio has also been poor ranging between 1:49 and 1:56 in primary schools. Such numbers

indicate that the education reforms that only target higher enrolment of students to schools can only serve the short term. I, therefore, recommend that the government gives the education sector more attention, particularly about the amount of money that is allocated towards primary and secondary schools since these are the foundation of Uganda's education system.

➤ ***Curriculum Reforms***

After successfully implementing the free Universal Primary Education program that has seen more Ugandan kids enrolling in schools, it is a high time that the government now shifts focus from simple number driven policies to quality driven output policies. This means that education should not be simply a matter of getting a certificate, but it should focus on producing a skilled workforce that can drive the Ugandan economy forward.

To achieve this, I recommend that the government should review the education system to allow students specialize from an early age and allow those who can do well in a specific field to focus on the areas that they have better talent on. There are many areas as noted in the research that are ignored in the curriculum, yet these areas can provide students who are not academically gifted an opportunity to realize their full potential. Some of the areas that the government needs to put more attention include sports, art, artisan, and woodwork courses as well as improved technical skills. It is necessary to mention that the curriculum reforms need to focus on promoting more practical approaches rather than relying on theoretical aspects of education.

➤ ***Improve Access***

Although the basic education in Uganda is, in theory, free, the already discussed challenges are making parents and guardians skeptical about taking their children to public schools. Such negative opinion on public schools are founded on real problems such as the low distribution of schools, meaning students may need to travel much longer distances to reach school, which can be discouraging and expensive. On the other hand, private sector players who are trying to bridge the gap by opening up private schools have failed to offer economically friendly rates that can allow even the sons and daughters of poor people to go to their schools. My advice is that the government needs to engage with the private sector players to come up with a cost-effective solution that will benefit the

investors at the same time enable poor students to access education. In the meantime, the government can also make investments in expanding infrastructure at the existing schools such as building more classrooms, recruitment of more teachers to reduce the ratio between teachers and students.

➤ ***Relevance to Industry Demands***

This is another important area that the government of Uganda needs to give the best attention. In contemporary societies, education is seen as a vehicle through which one can gain relevant skills to enable them to enter into the labour market. While I acknowledge that the current demands by the labour market, in general, is based on the desire to recruit skilled individuals with technological and scientific knowledge, the government should be able to do its internal assessments and establish which specific sectors the countries have a comparative advantage over the others. For example, in Uganda, while technology and manufacturing are very important sectors that need to be exploited through improved education. This should not come at the expense of another source of income such as farming which is highly profitable given the geographical and climatic conditions in Uganda as well as fertile soils and the potential demand for agricultural products domestically and regionally.

Agriculture is a broad sector that has the potential of employing thousands of youths who are currently unemployed while the cost of food products will also go down. This means that the government instead of abandoning other critical sectors. I hope that in the coming years, more and more Ugandan's will be much more aware of the country's capacity and therefore focus on those areas that are relevant to the growth of the economy. If many people do engineering courses and neglect agriculture courses in a country with huge agriculture potential this contributes to unemployment.

➤ ***More focus on R&D***

Research and development have emerged as one of the most critical areas of education and employment. With proper investment in R&D, students are not only able to achieve high-quality education but also become self-employed. With proper tools and environment, young Ugandans can engage in invention and innovative activities as part

of their education life. High-quality innovation can be a good source of capital as well as employment as major firms will seek to tap on the skills of the youths. Interestingly, innovation can be done in different sectors of the economy thereby attracting a whole diverse group of youths. Universities and schools can lead the way by providing platforms such as innovation camps, summer schools as well as inter-University competitions that will motivate the students to work harder. The government on its part needs to support such initiatives.

### **5.2.2.Recommendations to Social Workers**

Social workers have an important role in bridging the gap between education and youth unemployment not only in Uganda but across the world. In this section, I will give recommendations to social workers in Uganda so that they can be part of the solution to the problem of youth unemployment in Uganda.

#### **➤ *Counselling***

Although this role is often taken for granted particularly in public schools, the role of social workers in the life of students cannot be emphasised enough. Government and school administrators need to see to it that social workers are deployed to counsel students at school over a wide range of issues. Given that most post-primary school institutions provide boarding services to students, they get to spend a lot of time away from their parents which given their age (mostly between 14 -18) they are vulnerable to the effects of adolescence.

Two issues are important in this point; first is the importance of the boarding schools to Ugandan students since they provide a conducive environment for most of them to study without having to face the immense constraints that they may face when they have to study at home. Second, given the freedom of being away from their parents, some students may want to engage in behaviours that will affect their progress at school and in extension their ability to get jobs in the future. Social workers can, therefore, be deployed to schools to provide advice to students on issues of being responsible, avoiding drugs as well as the kind of company they should keep.

➤ *Advocacy*

Given the laxity by the Ugandan in implementing relevant reforms in the education sector, social workers can play a crucial role as pressure groups as well as a bridge between the government and the schools. Social workers interact with people much closer sometimes than the government. This gives them a unique opportunity to identify and understand some of the constraints students face at school that in turn affect their performance and prospects of employment. Given their skills in research and advocacy, social workers can be contact points for policymakers interested in understanding the true challenges people are facing and thereby provide the necessary support in terms of recommendations in the policy process.

Having a realistic understanding of some of the challenges that undermine the success of Ugandan students will be important in providing sustainable solutions to the crisis. I recommend that social workers become more active, spread across the country and consider their positions and role as having significant relevance to the education, employment and the lives of Ugandan people in general.

➤ *Providing Skills*

Formal education may be the most desired avenue for getting knowledge, skills and possible employment in the future. However, as it is evident in the case of Uganda, not all young people can have access to education, and even for some who do, perhaps academics is not an area they are talented in, and therefore they do not perform well in school. Social workers can support such students with other skill-based training that will help them become employable and more productive in society. Some of the skills social workers can help youths acquire are tailoring, metal work, plumbing, woodwork, beadwork, painting among others.

Equally, social workers can help organize these groups so that they can individually access loans and funding meant to benefit unemployed youths or as it is becoming more popular today, coordinate smaller groups of unemployed youths to form elaborate table-banking initiatives. Where members of the group can contribute money into one pool and use it as capital to start businesses which will earn them profits and at the same time create jobs for some of their members. Skills can also be sought by educated people who have

failed to get opportunities in their trained field and may want to do another short course that is more relevant.

➤ *Career Guidance and Information Workshops*

They say information is power and evidently as seen in Uganda, the lack of information on existing opportunities has left many young, educated people unemployed and hopeless. This is where social workers need to come in since they work closely with young people and have the ability to form a network with employers; youths can benefit from similar networks. My recommendation is that this program can be conducted in several ways; first, information centers can be spread across the country where students can walk in and check in well-catalogued platforms relevant jobs opportunities that are currently open. The second option can be to develop designated billboards where vacancies can be pinned for youths to go and read which companies need workers.

Even more, important is the availability of social media platforms which social workers can use not only to share information on existing job opportunities in the same platforms for youths to apply. Apart from the information about existing job opportunities, it is prudent that adequate career guidance programs are provided to young people both in school and those who have recently graduated. They can be trained on how to choose their specialization, job application techniques, interview skills, job search methods among others. Some of the students have ended up with the wrong combination of courses which becomes difficult when choosing a course to specialize in at the university, some have opted for science courses due to family and peer pressure, yet they do not have the capacity to pass the courses successfully. Sometimes some do not know which organizations or institutions they should target with their qualification thus ending up unemployed for a longer period than expected. Social workers can be influential in closing this gap.

### **5.2.3. Recommendation to Students**

While the issue of youth unemployment and challenges in the education sector can be associated with poor policies, students too have an important role to play in solving the problems. With this therefore I suggest some of the issues that will help the students to this end.

➤ *Attitude and Expectations*

Many students tend to enrol to school with the sole goal of getting employed once they have graduated. This is a legitimate expectation given the positive correlation between education and employment. However, when the young people are too focused on their area of study and do not want to be fluid and flexible to other opportunities that may come up not necessarily in their direct field of study. This problem is associated with the elitist mentality many young Uganda develop while in school.

They tend to become bias on other jobs considering their education as superior to indulge in such activities; therefore, some will be willing to leave the available opportunities since they ‘don’t meet their standards.’ Particularly those who have university degrees and diplomas seem to be more interested in working in government offices and not willing to do jobs that either don’t pay well or they may consider not prestigious enough. The circumstances in Uganda should provide good lessons to the youths to be flexible with their expectations of a job after school should not amount to one being choosy of any opportunity since the economic situation in the country cannot guarantee everyone a white-collar job.

➤ *Exploit Other Avenues*

With formal employment being a limited option, youths can explore other avenues of employment in the informal sector. As a less developed country, Uganda needs a lot of innovative solutions to its challenges and educated youth who think outside the box can play a crucial role in this extent. For example, agriculture, environmental conservation, alternative energy, housing and provision of household appliances and transport are sectors that are in dare need of innovative solution to fix the gap between demand and supply. Even those who are educated can venture into other forms of non -formal employment to keep them busy while they wait for better prospects. Some job opportunities also need someone to be computer literate to do and many youths across the world are employed to do online jobs. Also, youths can also diversify their search for jobs to include search for part-time jobs. It is indeed a problem when youths are keen to get long -term permanent employment and they forget that there are part-time jobs which is a good avenue to have more people working at a time.



➤ *Youth Groups*

Another area that young people can initiate themselves is the formation of youth groups which they can collectively share burdens needed to start private enterprises thus creating jobs. The burden of unemployment goes beyond just lack of economic means, but it also affects people psychologically and socially. Therefore, through these groups, youths can be able to support each other in different ways including motivation and morale boost. In the Ugandan case, youths can also use the groups to access funding from various public and private institutions which would rather be reluctant to provide funding to individuals. The strength of being in a group as a means of reducing unemployment can also be a foundation for innovation either from youths from similar training background coming up with a new idea in the same field or an interdisciplinary approach from youths trained in different fields coming up with a new project.

## REFERENCES

- ACEVO. (2011). *Youth unemployment: the crisis we cannot afford*. Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organizations. London, UK.
- Action Aid Uganda. (2012). “*Lost Opportunity? Gaps in Youth Policy and Programming in Uganda*” Retrieved from: [http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/youthreportfinal\\_0.pdf](http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/youthreportfinal_0.pdf) (Accessed 23. 12.2017)
- Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2014): “Uganda National Household Survey 2012/2013”, Kampala Uganda; UBOS
- Akisimire, R. (2010). Microfinance Credit Terms and Performance of SME’s in Uganda: A Case Study of SME’s in Mbarara Municipality. *Unpublished master thesis, Makerere University, Kampala.*
- Al Jazeera. (2012). *The UK suspends Uganda aid over corruption*. Retrieved January 30, 2018, from <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2012/11/20121117155051480786.htm>
- Albanesi, S., & Şahin, A. (2018). The gender unemployment gap. *Review of Economic Dynamics, 30*, 47-67.
- Ali, S., Ali, A. & Amin, A. (2013). The Impact of Population Growth on Economic Development in Pakistan. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research, 18*(4), pp. 483-491.
- Alkan, I. (2015:2). The Problematic of Youth Unemployment in Turkey. In *EY International Congress on Economics II “Growth, Inequality and Poverty” Ankara, Turkey.*
- Archibald Callaway (1971). *Educational planning and unemployed youth*. Paris, UNESCO: International Institute for Educational Planning.
- Banerjee, A., Galiani, S., Levinsohn, J., McLaren, Z., & Woolard, I. (2018). Why has unemployment risen in the new South Africa? 1. *Economics of Transition, 16*(4), 715-740.
- Becker, G. (1964). *Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis, with Special Reference to Education*. National Bureau of Economic Research., New York

- Bell, D., & Blanchflower, D. (2011). Youth unemployment in Europe and the United States. Retrieved on 23.01.2018 from <ftp://ftp.iza.org/RePEc/Discussionpaper/dp5673.pdf>
- Bell, D., & Blanchflower, D. (2011). *Youth unemployment in Europe and the United States*. <ftp://ftp.iza.org/RePEc/Discussionpaper/dp5673.pdf>
- Blossfeld, H.P., & Hakim, C. (eds) (1997) *Between Equalization and Marginalization: Women Working Part-time in Europe and the United States of America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bowen, G.A., (2009) "*Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method*", *Qualitative Research Journal*, Vol. 9 Issue: 2, pp.27-40.
- Brauns, H., Gangl, M& S. Scherer (2001). "Education and unemployment: patterns of labor market entry in France, the United Kingdom and West Germany." Working Paper. Mannheim Centre for European Social Research.
- Briar, K. (1983). Unemployment: Towards a social work agenda. *Social Work*, 28(3), 211–215.
- Briggs, B. R. (2009). Issues affecting Ugandan indigenous entrepreneurship in trade. *African Journal of Business Management*, 3(12), 786-797.
- Brink, H. (1991). Quantitative vs Qualitative Research. *Nursing RSA*, 6(1), 14-18.
- Bruce L., (2001) *Qualitative research methods for social sciences* (4<sup>th</sup> ed). California State University. Long Beach, USA.
- Buchmann, C., & Hannum, E. (2001). Education and stratification in developing countries: A review of theories and research. *Annual review of sociology*, 27(1), 77-102.
- Byamugisha, J., Shamchiyeva, L., & Kizu, T. (2014). *Labour market transitions of young women and men in Uganda*. ILO.
- Catherine P., and Nicholas M., (2006). *Qualitative research in health care*. Blackwell Publishing Ltd. Massachusetts, USA.

- Chaaban, J. (2009). Youth and development in the Arab countries: The need for a different approach. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 45(1), 33-55.
- Chigunta, F. (2002). *The Socio-Economic Situation of Youth in Africa: Problems, Prospects and Options*. Retrieved April 30, 2018, from <http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:4-Lm26tR4KsJ:yesweb.org/gkr/res/bg.africa.reg.doc+&cd=1&hl=de&ct=clnk>
- Clark, A. (1996) “*Working and well-being: some international evidence.*” Paris: OECD
- Claudio Zaki Dib (1988), Formal, Non-Formal and Informal Education: Concepts /Applicability. American Institute of Physics, New York, pgs. 300-315.
- Creswell, J.W. (1994), *Research design: Qualitative and Quantitative approaches*. Sage. Thousand Oaks, CA.
- David C., and Robert W., (2007). *Designing and Construction Instruments for Social Research and Evaluation*. Published by Jossey Bass, San Francisco, CA, USA.
- Denzin, K.N and Lincoln, S.Y., (2000) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd Ed. Sage, Thousand Oaks.
- DG Murray Trust [DGMT]. (n.d.). *Addressing the issues of unemployment and poor career guidance*. Retrieved January 30, 2018, from <http://www.dgmt-community.co.za/organ-isations/beautiful-gate-south-africa/learning-briefs/addressing-issues-unemployment-and-poor>
- DiCicco-Bloom, B. & Crabtree, B.F. (2006): “*The qualitative research interview*”, Blackwell Publishing Ltd 2006, 40: 314–321
- European Commission (2008). “*Employment in Europe 2008*”. Commission Staff Working Document. Brussels: European Commission
- Ferrell, O. C., Fraedrich, J., & Ferrell, L. (2008). *Business ethics: Ethical decision making and cases*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.

- Fields, G. S. (2019). Self-employment and poverty in developing countries. *IZA World of Labor*.
- Fontes Foundation [FF]. (2014). *Potentiam Youth Development Centre – Annual Report 2012 – 2013*. Kampala
- Freedman, D. (2005). Youth employment promotion: A review of ILO work and the lessons learned. Youth Employment Network (YEN) papers, Employment Strategy Department.
- Fukuda-Parr, S. (2003). New threats to human security in the era of globalization. *Journal of Human Development*, 4(2), 167-179.
- Galal, A. (2002). *The paradox of education and unemployment in Egypt*. Cairo: Egyptian Center for Economic Studies.
- Garcia, M. G., Medeiros, M. C., & Vasconcelos, G. F. (2017). Real-time inflation forecasting with high-dimensional models: The case of Brazil. *International Journal of Forecasting*, 33(3), 679-693.
- Garibaldi Pietro. (2006) *Personnel Economics in Imperfect Labour markets*. Oxford University Press Inc., New York.
- Geoferey M, David D., and David F., (2005). *Essentials of research design and Methodology*, Jhon Wiley & Sons Inc. New Jersey, USA.
- Gillespie, D (1999). Ethical issues in research. In *Encyclopedia of social work* (19<sup>th</sup> ed), pp 884-893. Washington DC: NASW Press.
- Glewwe, P., & Kremer, M. (2006). Schools, teachers, and education outcomes in developing countries. *Handbook of the Economics of Education*, 2, 945-1017.
- Gowon, Y. (1994) “A keynote address”, paper presented at the Second Global Conference on National Youth Service, Abuja, Nigeria.

- Haile, G. (2003, July). *The incident of youth unemployment in urban Ethiopia*. Paper presented at the 2<sup>nd</sup> EAF International Symposium on Contemporary Development Issues in Ethiopia, Addis Ababa.
- Higgins, L., & Rwanyange, R. (2005). Ownership in the education reform process in Uganda. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 35(1), 7-26.
- Ho, K. And R. Tan (2008) “Nonmonotonic relationship between human capital and unemployment: an exploratory study with empirical evidence on Singapore.” *Applied Economics Letters*, 15: 1177-1185.
- Ikoja-Odongo, R., & Ocholla, D. N. (2004). Information seeking behavior of the informal sector entrepreneurs: the Uganda experience. *Libri*, 54(1), 54-66.
- International Labour Office (ILO). (2017). *World employment and social outlook: Trends 2017*. Geneva, Switzerland: Author.
- International Labour Office. (2016). *Global Employment Trends 2016: Risk of a Jobless Recovery*.
- International Labour Organization [ILO]. (2012). *Working with Youth: addressing the youth employment challenge – Highlights of the national and regional events with young people*. Geneva: International Labour Office.
- Jones, G. A., & Chant, S. (2009). Globalising initiatives for gender equality and poverty reduction: Exploring ‘failure’ with reference to education and work among urban youth in The Gambia and Ghana. *Geoforum*, 40(2), 184-196.
- Karataş, K. (1994). Genç İşsizliği Ekonomik, Toplumsal ve Ruhsal Sonuçları. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Institute of social science Hacettepe University.
- Kearney, A. T., & Policy, F. (2016). Globalization index. *Foreign Policy*, 157, 74-81.

- Kellow, N. (2010). *Enabling the Private Sector to Contribute to the Reduction of Urban Youth Unemployment in Ethiopia*. Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce and Sectorial Associations.
- Kettunen, J. (1994) "The effects of education on the duration of unemployment." *Labour*, 8: 331-352
- Kituuka, W. (2010). Poverty in Uganda. <http://williamkituuka.blogspot.com> retrieved on 23, April 2019.
- Korpi, T. (1997) "Is utility related to employment status? Employment, unemployment, labour market policies and subjective well-being among Swedish youth." *LabourEconomics*, 4: 125-147.
- Kristensen, S., & Birch-Thomsen, T. (2013). Should I stay or should I go? Rural youth employment in Uganda and Zambia. *International Development Planning Review*, 35(2), 175-201.
- Kuhn, R. (2012). On the role of human development in the Arab Spring. *Population and Development Review*, 38(4), 649-683.
- Liang, Jianqiang., Guat, T, N., Ming-sum, T., Miu, C, Y., & Ching, M, L. (2017). Youth unemployment: Implications for social work practice. *Journal of social work*, Vol.17 (5) 560-578.
- Liang, X. (2004) *Uganda Tertiary Education Sector Report* (English). African Region Human Development working paper series. Washington DC: World Bank.
- Lisa M., (2008) *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*. Sage: Thousand Oaks, CA, Vol.2, pp.697-698.
- Lombard, A. (2007) „The Impact of Social Welfare Policies on Social Development in South Africa: An NGO Perspective“, *Social Work/Maatskaplike Werk* 43(4): 295– 316.

- Lombard, A. (2008) „The Implementation of the White Paper for Social Welfare: A Ten year review“, *The Social Work Practitioner-Researcher/Die Maatskaplikewerk Navorsers-Praktisyn* 20(2): 154–73
- Lombard, A. and Wairire, G. (2010), Developmental Social Work in South Africa and Kenya: Some Lessons from Africa“, *The Social Work Practitioner-Researcher*, Special Issue April: 98–111
- Machin, S. and A. Manning (1999). “The causes and consequences of long-term unemployment in Europe.” *Handbook of Labour Economics*, 3(3): 3085-3139.
- McMillian, J.H., & Schumacher, S. (2010). *Research in Education: Evidence based inquiry*, Seventh. Pearson Education Inc: Pearson.
- Merriam et.al. (2001) “*Power and positionality: negotiating insider/outsider status within and across cultures*”, *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 20:5, 405-416
- Midgley, J. (1995). *Social Development. The Developmental Perspective in Social Welfare*. London: Sage.
- Mike Ingham (1989) Education and Youth unemployment: A Reappraisal. *Journal of Economic Studies*, Vol 16 issue 3.
- Miles, R. (2002). Employment and unemployment in Jordan: The importance of the gender system. *World Development*, 30(3), 413-427.
- Mincer, J. (1974) *Schooling, Experience, and Earning*. National Bureau of Economic Research, New York.
- Mincer, J. (1994) “Human Capital: A Review.” In Clark Kerr et al. (eds) *Labour economic and Industrial Relations: Markets and Institutions*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Ministry of Education and Sports (MES) (2017): Students’ data. Uganda Bureau of Statistics.



- Mlay, S. V., Zlotnikova, I., & Watundu, S. (2013). A quantitative analysis of business process reengineering and organizational resistance: the case of Uganda. *The African Journal of Information Systems*, 5(1), 1.
- Moore, C., & Rossman, G. B. (1995). *Designing qualitative research* (2nd ed). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Morrison Paul, C. J., & Siegel, D. S. (2001). The impacts of technology, trade and outsourcing on employment and labor composition. *Scandinavian Journal of Economics*, 103(2), 241-264.
- Mukwaya, P., Bamutaze, Y., Mugarura, S. & Benson, T. (2011, May). *Rural-Urban Transformation in Uganda*. Paper presented at the joint IFPRI and University of Ghana conference on Understanding Economic Transformation in Sub-Saharan Africa, Accra.
- Murphy, E. Dingwall, R. Greatbatch, D. Parker, S. Watson, P. (1998). Qualitative research methods in technology assessment: a review of the literature. *Health Technology Assessment*, Vol. 2: No. 16. <http://www.nchta.org/fullmono/mon216.pdf> Accessed April 5, 2019.
- Myers, J (2016, 9. May): “The worlds 10 youngest populations are all in Africa”, Published by WorldEconomicForum, retrieved from: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/05/the-world-s-10-youngest-countries-are-all-in-africa/>
- Nanungi, C.N. (2011). *Unemployment among the youth – A case study of Kisenyi 1 parish in Kampala District*. Unpublished bachelor thesis, Makerere University, Kampala.
- Nebil, K., Gezahegn, A., and Hayat, Y. 2010. *Enabling the Private Sector to Contribute to the Reduction of Urban Youth Unemployment in Ethiopia*. Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Associations, Addis Ababa.
- Neuman, W. L., and Kreuger, W. L., (2003) *Social work research methods: Qualitative and Quantitative applications*. Pearson Education, Inc. The USA.

- Neuman, W.L., (2011) *Social research methods: qualitative and quantitative approaches* 7th ed. Pearson Education, Inc. USA.
- Ngai, S., & Ngai, N. (2007). Employment or disempowerment? A review of youth training schemes for non-engaged young people in Hong Kong. *Adolescence*, 42(165), 137–149.
- Nishimura, M., Yamano, T., & Sasaoka, Y. (2008). Impacts of the universal primary education policy on educational attainment and private costs in rural Uganda. *international Journal of Educational development*, 28(2), 161-175.
- Nixon A., and Wild D., (2012). *Methodologies for assessing and demonstrating data saturation in Qualitative inquiry supporting patient-reported outcomes research* Affiliations. Oxford Outcomes Ltd. London UK
- Nnadozie, E. (2003). *African Economic Development*. San Diego: Academic Press.
- OECD (2001). Glossary of statistical terms. Retrieved from <http://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=1264>
- OECD (2002) *OECD Employment Outlook*. Paris: OECD.
- Omidyar Network [ON]. (2013). *Accelerating Entrepreneurship in Africa – Understanding Africa’s Challenges to Creating Opportunity-driven Entrepreneurship*. Washington.
- Patel, L. (2005) *Social Welfare and Social Development in South Africa*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press
- Patton, M., (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). Sage Publications. Newbury Park, CA.
- Penny, A., Ward, M., Read, T., & Bines, H. (2008). Education sector reform: The Ugandan experience. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 28(3), 268-285.

- Peter, S. (2013). *Nature of Urban Youth Unemployment in Tanzania: Challenges and Consequences*. Paper presented at the REPOA's 19th Annual Research Workshop, Dar es Salaam.
- Poku, N.K. & Mdee, A. (2011). *Politics in Africa – A New Introduction*. London/New York: Zed Books
- Population Reference Bureau [PRB]. (2013). *2013 World Population Data Sheet*. Washington D.C.
- Reinikka, R., & Svensson, J. (2005). Fighting corruption to improve schooling: Evidence from a newspaper campaign in Uganda. *Journal of the European economic association*, 3(2-3), 259-267.
- Ritchi, J. & Lewis, J. (2007). Generalizing from Qualitative Research. In J. & Ritchi, *Qualitative Research Practice* (pp. 1-320). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Roets, G., Roose, R., Claes, L., Vandekinderen, C., Van Hove, G., & Vanderplasschen, W. (2012). Reinventing the employable citizen: A perspective for social work. *British Journal of Social Work*, 42(1), 94–110.
- Sharland, E. (2006). Young people, risk-taking and risk making: Some thoughts for social work. *British Journal of Social Work*, 36(2),
- Spence A. M. (1973) Job market signaling. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 88: 355-374
- Spence, M. (1981) “*Signalling, screening, and information.*” In Rose, S. (ed) *Studies in Labour Markets*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press
- Spence, M. 2002. Signaling in retrospect and the informational structure of markets. *American Economic Review*, 92: 434-459.
- Spitzer, H., Twikirize, J.M & Wairire, G. G (2014) *Professional work in east Africa: Towards Social Development, Poverty Reduction and Gender Equality*. Fountain Publishers, Kampala.

- Ssempebwa, J. (2006). Graduate unemployment in Uganda: Socioeconomic factors exonerating university training. In *First Graduates Conference on Research and Dissemination of Findings*. as Proceedings: no.
- Ssewamala, F. M., Karimli, L., Han, C. K., & Ismayilova, L. (2010). Social capital, savings, and educational performance of orphaned adolescents in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 32(12), 1704-1710.
- Tangri, R. & Mwenda, A. (2013) *Politics of Elite Corruption in Africa: Uganda in Comparative African Perspective*. Routledge Studies in African Politics and International Relations London: Routledge.
- Tansel, A., & Taşçı, H. M. (2010). Hazard analysis of unemployment duration by gender in a developing country: The case of Turkey. *Labour*, 24(4), 501-530.
- Taşçı, H. M., & Tansel, A. (2005). Youth unemployment duration in Turkey. *METU Studies in Development*, 32(2), 517.
- The Independent. (2014). *The monster of tribalism*. Retrieved January 30, 2018, from <http://www.independent.co.ug/cover-story/9283-the-monster-of-tribalism>
- Transparency International. (2017). *Corruption Perceptions Index 2017*. Berlin
- Tutty, M., Leslie, R., Rothery, A., Michael, & Grinnell, M., Richard (1996). *Qualitative research for social workers: phases, steps, & tasks*. Allyn and Bacon, Boston.
- Twikirize, J. M., Asingwire, N., Omona, J., Lubanga, R., & Kafuko, A. (2013). *The role of social work in poverty reduction and the realisation of Millennium Development Goals in Uganda*. Fountain Publication
- UBOS, (2015). *Uganda National Household Survey, 2004/15*; Kampala, Uganda Bureau of Statistic.
- UBOS, (2016). *Uganda National Household Survey, Education Qualification*; Kampala, Uganda Bureau of Statistic.

- Udoh, N.A. & Sanni, K.B. (2012). Parental Background Variables and the Career Choice of Secondary School Students in Uyo Local Government Area, Nigeria. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 3(1), pp. 497-504.
- Uganda Youth Network [UYONET], (2010). *National Youth Manifesto 2011 – 2016*. Kampala.
- United Nations Capital Development Fund [UNCDF]. (2012). *Insights from UNCDF's Youth-start Programme – Policy Opportunities and Constraints to Access Youth Financial Services*. New York: Author
- Verick, S. (2011). Who is hit hardest during a financial crisis? The vulnerability of young men and women to unemployment in an economic downturn In I. Islam & S. Verick (Eds) *From the great recession to labour market recovery: Issues, evidence and policy options*. Great Britain: ILO/Palgrave Macmillan.
- Wadesango, N., Chabaya, O., Rembe, S. & Muhuro, P. (2011). Poverty as a Source of Behavioural Problems that Affect the Realization of the Right to Basic Education among Children: A Case Study of Schools in the Eastern Cape – South Africa. *Journal of Social Science*, 27(3), pp. 149-156
- Winch, C. (2000) *Education, Work and Social Capital*. London: Routledge.
- Winkelmann, L. and R. Winkelmann (1998) “Why are the unemployed so unhappy? Evidence from panel data.” *Economica*, 65: 1-15.
- Winkelmann, R. (1996) “Employment prospects and skills acquisition of apprenticeship trained workers in Germany.” *Industrial and Labour Relations Review*, 49: 658-672
- Wolbers, M. (2000). “The effects of level of education on mobility between employment and unemployment in the Netherlands.” *European Sociological Review*, 16 (2): 185-200.
- Wong, G., Henson, H., and A. Roy (2005). “Predicting Long-Term Unemployment in Canada: Prospects and Policy Implications.” In W. Vroman and V. Brusentsev

- (eds.) *Unemployment Compensation Throughout the World: A Comparative Analysis*, Chapter 11, pp.309-333.
- Wood, J. C. M. (2008). *The impact of globalization on education reform: A case study of Uganda* (Doctoral dissertation).
- Wordofa, D., 2004. Poverty reduction policy responses to gender and social diversity in Uganda. [online publication]. *Gender and development* 12: pp 68-7.
- World Bank. (2014). *Uganda Overview*. Retrieved January 29, 2015, from <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/uganda/overview>
- World Economic Forum [WEF]. (2013). *Global Agenda Councils – Youth Unemployment Visualization 2013*. Retrieved January 30, 2018, from <http://www.weforum.org/community/global-agenda-councils/youth-unemployment-visualization-2013>
- Yegidis, L.B., & Weinbach.W.R. (2002) *Research methods for social work* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.) A Pearson Education company.75 Arlington Street. Boston.
- Young Leaders Think Tank for Policy Alternatives. (n.d.). *A Paper on the Challenges of Youth (Un) Employment in Uganda*. Retrieved January 30, 2018, from [http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas\\_29017-1522-2-30.pdf?111020125911](http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_29017-1522-2-30.pdf?111020125911)

## APPENDIX 1: ORIJINALLIK RAPORU



HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ  
YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZ ÇALIŞMASI ORIJINALLIK RAPORU

HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ  
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ ANABİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞI'NA

Tarih:24.06.2019

Tez Başlığı: Sosyal Hizmet Öğrencileri ve Öğretim Elemanlarının Genç İşsizliği ve Eğitim Arasındaki İlişkiye Ait Görüşleri: Uganda Mbale Örneği.

Yukarıda başlığı gösterilen tez çalışmamın a) Kapak sayfası, b) Giriş, c) Ana bölümler ve d) Sonuç kısımlarından oluşan toplam 108 sayfalık kısmına ilişkin, 24.06.2019 tarihinde şahsım/tez danışmanım tarafından Turnitin adlı intihal tespit programından aşağıda işaretlenmiş filtrelemeler uygulanarak alınmış olan orijinallik raporuna göre, tezimin benzerlik oranı % 2 'dir.

Uygulanan filtrelemeler:

- 1-  Kabul/Onay ve Bildirim sayfaları hariç
- 2-  Kaynakça hariç
- 3-  Alıntılar hariç
- 4-  Alıntılar dâhil
- 5-  5 kelimedenden daha az örtüşme içeren metin kısımları hariç

Hacettepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Tez Çalışması Orijinallik Raporu Alınması ve Kullanılması Uygulama Esasları'nı inceledim ve bu Uygulama Esasları'nda belirtilen azami benzerlik oranlarına göre tez çalışmamın herhangi bir intihal içermediğini; aksinin tespit edileceği muhtemel durumda doğabilecek her türlü hukuki sorumluluğu kabul ettiğimi ve yukarıda vermiş olduğum bilgilerin doğru olduğunu beyan ederim.

Gereğini saygılarımla arz ederim.

24.06.2019

Adı Soyadı: Shamim Wabalayi

Öğrenci No: N15120380

Anabilim Dalı: Sosyal Hizmet

Programı: Sosyal Hizmet

### DANIŞMAN ONAYI

UYGUNDUR.

Prof. Dr. Özlem CANKURTARAN

## APPENDIX 2: ORIGINALITY REPORT



**HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
MASTER'S THESIS ORIGINALITY REPORT**

**HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT**

Date: 24.06.2019

Thesis Title: . Opinions of social work lecturers and social work students about the relationship between education and youth unemployment: Example of Mbale district, Uganda,

According to the originality report obtained by myself/my thesis advisor by using the Turnitin plagiarism detection software and by applying the filtering options checked below on 24/06/2019 for the total of 108 pages including the a) Title Page, b) Introduction, c) Main Chapters, and d) Conclusion sections of my thesis entitled as above, the similarity index of my thesis is 2 %.

Filtering options applied:

1.  Approval and Declaration sections excluded
2.  Bibliography/Works Cited excluded
3.  Quotes excluded
4.  Quotes included
5.  Match size up to 5 words excluded

I declare that I have carefully read Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences Guidelines for Obtaining and Using Thesis Originality Reports; that according to the maximum similarity index values specified in the Guidelines, my thesis does not include any form of plagiarism; that in any future detection of possible infringement of the regulations I accept all legal responsibility; and that all the information I have provided is correct to the best of my knowledge.

I respectfully submit this for approval.

  
24.06.2019

**Name Surname:** Shamim Wabalayi

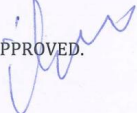
**Student No:** N15120380

**Department:** Social Work

**Program:** Social Work

### ADVISOR APPROVAL

APPROVED.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Prof. Dr. Özlem CANKURTARAN



### APPENDIX 3: TURNITIN RAPORU

#### OPINIONS OF SOCIAL WORK LECTURERS AND SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION AND YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT: EXAMPLE OF MBALE DISTRICT, UGANDA

ORIJINALLIK RAPORU


<b>%2</b>	<b>%2</b>	<b>%0</b>	<b>%</b>
BENZERLIK ENDEKSI	İNTERNET KAYNAKLARI	YAYINLAR	ÖĞRENCİ ÖDEVLERİ

BİRİNCİL KAYNAKLAR


<b>1</b>	<b>munin.uit.no</b> İnternet Kaynağı	<b>&lt;%1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>fontes.no</b> İnternet Kaynağı	<b>&lt;%1</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>internationalcommunitydevelopment.org</b> İnternet Kaynağı	<b>&lt;%1</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>lengaripolebahati.blogspot.com</b> İnternet Kaynağı	<b>&lt;%1</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>www.kas.de</b> İnternet Kaynağı	<b>&lt;%1</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>etheses.whiterose.ac.uk</b> İnternet Kaynağı	<b>&lt;%1</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Frances Crawford, Sabina Leitmann. "The midwifery of power? Reflections on the development of professional social work in</b>	<b>&lt;%1</b>

## APPENDIX 4: ETHICS BOARD PERMISSION

Tarih: 26.04.2018 15:40  
Sayı: 35853172-100-E.00000019197



E.00000019197



T.C.  
**HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ**  
Rektörlük

Sayı : 35853172-100  
Konu : Etik Komisyonu Hk.

**SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜNE**

İlgi : 09.04.2018 tarih ve 3233 sayılı yazınız

Enstitümüz Sosyal Hizmet Anabilim Dalı yüksek lisans programı öğrencilerinden **Shamim WABALAYI**'nın **Prof. Dr. Özlem CANKURTARAN** danışmanlığında yürüttüğü "**Eğitim ve Gençlik İşsizliği Arasındaki İlişkisi: Öğretmenler, Öğrenciler ve İşveren Görüşleri, Uganda'daki MBALE Bölgesinin Örneği**" başlıklı tez çalışması, Üniversitemiz Senatosu Etik Komisyonunun 17 Nisan 2018 tarihinde yapmış olduğu toplantıda incelenmiş olup, etik açıdan uygun bulunmuştur.

Bilgilerinizi ve gereğini rica ederim.


e-imzalıdır  
**Prof. Dr. Rahime Meral NOHUTCU**  
Rektör Yardımcısı

*Prof. Dr. Özlem Cankurtaran*

Evrakın elektronik imzalı suretine <https://belgedogrulama.hacettepe.edu.tr> adresinden c6e8e1a3-6f34-451d-837e-c4e7fa05553b kodu ile erişebilirsiniz.  
Bu belge 5070 sayılı Elektronik İmza Kanunu'na uygun olarak Güvenli Elektronik İmza ile imzalanmıştır.

---

Hacettepe Üniversitesi Rektörlük 06100 Sıhhiye-Ankara  
Telefon:0 (312) 305 3001-3002 Faks:0 (312) 311 9992 E-posta:yazimd@hacettepe.edu.tr İnternet Adresi: www.hacettepe.edu.tr



## APPENDIX 5: LETTER FOR DATA COLLECTION



TC  
HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi  
Sosyal Hizmet Bölümü

**Sayı** : B.30.2.HAC.0.13.16.00 789/01-03  
**Konu** : Yüksek Lisans Tezi İşbirliği hk.

Date: 2 January, 2019

The Head of Department  
Social Work and Social Administration  
Islamic University in Uganda  
Mbale

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: DATA COLLECTION FOR A MASTER'S THESIS

In partial fulfillment of our requirements for a Master's Degree in Social Work at Hacettepe University, Turkey, students have to complete a thesis for a Master of Science Program. This letter intends to initiate co-operation and ask for support.

The bearer of this letter Ms. Shamim WABALAYI. Student number N15120380 is interested in collecting data from your department by carrying out interviews with the lecturers and students under the topic "The Relationship between Education and Youth Unemployment: Teachers and Students' Opinions in Mbale District, Uganda under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Özlem CANKURTARAN, lecturer at Hacettepe University.

We shall be grateful if you accord the student the necessary assistance to help her in carrying out the interviews. By doing so, you will be positively contributing to the completion of her Master's degree.

Looking forward to your positive response.

Kind regards,

Prof. Dr. Kasım Karataş

Hacettepe Üniversitesi  
İ.İ.B.F. Sosyal Hizmet  
Head-Department of Social Work

## **APPENDIX 6: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW FORM FOR LECTURERS**

**Institute: Islamic University in Uganda, Mbale. Department of Social Work and Social Administration.**

### **PART A: Background Information:**

- Gender:
- Age:
- Marital status:
- Education level:
- Area of residence:
- Occupation

### **PART B: Relationship between education and youth unemployment:**

1. How long has this institution been in existence?
2. How long have you worked in this institution?
3. On average how many students graduate from this institution per year?
4. Do you think that this institution provides the students with the necessary skills that makes them competitive in the job market?
5. Does this institute have a tracking mechanism of their graduates?
6. Is there any form of collaboration between the institution of learning and the employers?
7. What do you think about youth unemployment in Mbale district?
8. According to you, what is the main cause of youth unemployment?
9. What are the other causes of youth unemployment in Mbale district?
10. What is the role of education in youth unemployment?
11. Do you think the problem of youth unemployment in Mbale is the same with the rest of the country?
12. What is your view on the impact of education system on youth employment?
13. What changes can be done to the education system in order to provide the skills required in the job market.

14. Is the education system in Uganda parallel to the current situation in the t job market?
15. Do you think the unemployment problem affects other age brackets besides the youths?
16. Do you think the challenge of youth unemployment in Uganda reflects the global trends?
17. Are there any social work programs or organizations that seek to help address the issues of youth unemployment?
18. How can social work practitioners help in reducing the youth unemployment rate in Mbale district?
19. What do you think is the short- and long-term future of education and youth unemployment in Uganda?

**Thank You!**

## **APPENDIX 7: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW FORM FOR STUDENTS**

**Institute: Islamic University in Uganda, Mbale. Department of Social Work and Social Administration.**

### **PART A: Background Information:**

- Gender:
- Age:
- Marital status:
- Education level:
- Place of residence:

### **PART B: Relationship between Education and Youth unemployment:**

1. What do you think about youth unemployment in Mbale district?
2. According to you what is the main contributor to youth unemployment?
3. What are other causes of youth unemployment?
4. What is the role of education in youth unemployment?
5. Do you think that the unemployment problem affects other age brackets besides the youths?
6. Do you think the problem of youth unemployment in Mbale district is the same with the rest of country?
7. Why did you choose to pursue a university degree?
8. What form of guidance did you receive when selecting your course and university?
9. Do you intend on pursuing the course further?
10. Does the university organize any career sessions? Have you ever attended any? How beneficial was it?
11. Does the university make internships compulsory?
12. Have you attended any training relevant to your field?
13. What are your prospects of getting employed immediately after graduation?
14. What is the impact of education system on youth unemployment?

15. How does the university placement process impact on your attitude towards the course?
16. How do you think the level of education affects the prospects of getting employed?
17. Have you ever applied for a job? What was the experience?
18. Has the experience of applying and not being selected affected your attitude towards applying for a job?
19. Are there any changes that should be made on the education system to enhance employability of fresh graduates?
20. Do you think that employers consider the level of education when hiring employees?
21. Are you aware of any social work programs or organizations that seek to help address the issue of youth unemployment?
22. How can social work practitioners help in reducing the youth unemployment rate in Mbale district?
23. What do you think is the short- and long-term future of youth unemployment in Uganda?

**Thank you!**

## **APPENDIX 8: VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION FORM**

“Opinions of social work lecturers and social work Students about the relationship between education and youth unemployment : Example of Mbale district, Uganda”, is a master's thesis under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Özlem CANKURTARAN a professor at Hacettepe University Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Department of Social Work.

The main purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between education and youth unemployment seeking the opinions of social work lecturers and students in Mbale district, Uganda and answer the following research questions; (1) To what extent does the Ugandan education system prepare young people for employment? (2) What are the opinions of teachers and students on the relationship between education and youth unemployment in Mbale district? (3) Are there other factors apart from education that contribute to youth unemployment? (4) What roles can social workers play to try and solve the problem of youth unemployment?

Ethics Commission Approval was received from Hacettepe University Ethics Commission for the implementation of this research. The questions used in this study were carefully selected by the researcher and the questions and opinions of the researcher were taken into consideration. Therefore, there is no risk / inconvenience to participate in the interview. This interview will be conducted in accordance with your voluntary participation. You may feel comfortable during the interview and stop the conversation when you feel uncomfortable. Your credentials are not requested. You are free to give up at any time after joining. These and similar situations will not put you in any way legal, material and spiritual responsibility, and the decision taken by the researchers in the process will be met with respect and understanding. Your thoughts and experiences are very important for the study. During the interview, what we talk about will only be used for research purposes and will not be shared directly with you and your name.

Our interview can take approximately 1 hour. In addition, a voice recorder will be used to make your thoughts and experiences more comfortable. The recorded information will not be shared with other people and will be deleted after the analysis is finished. The information given by you valuable participants will support both the science and the practices in this field, and it is very important for us. Thank you for your participation.



If you have any questions or questions about the research you would like to ask before giving consent, please do not hesitate to contact the researchers. Hacettepe University Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences if you want to reach us during and after the research. You can contact Shamim Wabalayi at the Department of Social Work on 03122976364 (business).

If you would like to participate in the research yourself after all this information, please fill in and sign the places below.

I am willing to participate in this research and accept the above conditions.

Name of Participant:

Telephone:

Name of Interviewer: Shamim Wabalayi

Telephone:

Signature:

### APPENDIX 9: IDENTIFICATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Participant	Gender	Age	Marital status	Education level	Year of Study	Place of residence	Occupation
Lecturer 1	Male	32	Married	Masters	N/A	Mbale	Lecturer
Lecturer 2	Male	29	Married	Masters	N/A	Mbale	Lecturer
Lecturer 3	Male	36	Married	PhD	N/A	Mbale	Lecturer
Lecturer 4	Male	39	Single	Masters	N/A	Mbale	Lecturer
Lecturer 5	Male	46	Married	Masters	N/A	Mbale	Lecturer
Student 1	Male	23	Single	Bachelor's	Three	Iganga	Student
Student 2	Male	23	Single	Bachelor's	Three	Jinja	Student
Student 3	Female	21	Single	Bachelor's	Two	Kapchorwa	Student
Student 4	Female	22	Single	Bachelor's	Two	Pallisa	Student
Student 5	Female	21	Single	Bachelor's	One	Iganga	Student
Student 6	Female	21	Single	Bachelor's	Two	Mbale	Student
Student 7	Male	28	Single	Bachelor's	Three	Mbale	Student
Student 8	Male	20	Single	Bachelor's	Two	Mbale	Student
Student 9	Female	24	Single	Bachelor's	Three	Mbale	Student
Student 10	Female	21	Single	Bachelor's	One	Kapchorwa	Student
Student 11	Female	21	Single	Bachelor's	One	Pallisa	Student
Student 12	Female	23	Single	Bachelor's	Three	Jinja	Student
Student 13	Female	21	Single	Bachelor's	One	Kajjansi	Student
Student 14	Female	21	Single	Bachelor's	One	Iganga	Student
Student 15	Female	24	Married	Bachelor's	One	Mbale	Student

## **APPENDIX 10: AUTOBIOGRAPHY**

### **Personal Information**

Name/Surname : Shamim WABALAYI

Date of Birth and Place : 07.01.1991. Mbale, Uganda.

### **Education**

Bachelor's degree : Islamic University in Uganda , Mbale Campus.  
(Social Work and Social Administration)

Master : Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social  
Sciences (Department of Social Work)

Foreign Language : English and Turkish

Scientific activities : N/A

### **Job Experiences**

Apprenticeship : Uganda Red Cross Society, Wandegaya Branch  
: Mbale Municipal Council, Industrial Division  
(Community Development Office)  
: YFU Türkiye (Youth for Understanding)

Institutions : Habib Oil Company ( Secretary to the Chief of  
Operations)  
: National Security Information System (NSIS),  
Budaka (Enrolment Officer)  
: The Electoral Commission, Budaka District  
(Display Officer)

**Contact**

E-Mail Address : shamimshamiew@gmail.com

**Date** : 17.06.2019

