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Entrepreneurial strategies for dealing with unemployment challenges employed by the graduate youths in Masvingo Urban

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Abstract

Youth unemployment remains a national catastrophe in Zimbabwe as long as institutions of higher learning continue to churn out graduates in thousands each year. Graduate youths unemployment is now an observable phenomenon in cities and towns and Masvingo is not spared. The present study aimed at documenting entrepreneurial strategies that are employed by the youths dealing with the scourge of unemployment in Masvingo. Literature about youth unemployment is abundant and point to the scourge as a phenomenon that hounds many governments. The study was qualitative and employed the narrative inquiry research design. A purposive sample was used and semi structured interviews were carried to generate data. The study found out that graduate youths are enterprising and have many strategies of entrepreneurship that they used to deal with unemployment. They engaged in entrepreneurial activities such political activism, folk-art, streetcar wash business and foreign currency dealing. The study recommended that stringent intervention strategies by both government and industry be adopted to reduce rampant youth unemployment.

Key words: Entrepreneurial, strategies, unemployment, graduate, youths

Background to the study

Africa is leading in terms of housing the fastest growing and youthful population in the world. As the population in Africa is increasing disproportionately with resources, more challenges are encountered especially by the youth who would be starting the journey for life. Access to job opportunities in the countries continues to be problematic to many sub-Saharan African countries (Africa economic research consortium, (2014). Africa has not been spared by the near collapse of the world financial markets in 2008, which has caused innumerable problems to developing countries like Zimbabwe and many others in the sub Saharan African region (Bell and Blanchflower, 2010). One of the obvious problems related to the weakening of the worldwide financial markets is the increase in youth unemployment. The youth are occupying a higher percentage of the total population of Zimbabwe demographically. That means attention on youth issues gives the impetus to policy makers to have a closer look so that a bombshell in the near and future times is avoided. Bulk youth unemployment usually is associated with negative terminal results in the economy. The recent dramatic increase in youth unemployment is an observable phenomenon in the Southern Africa region posing serious challenges to the administrators of the economy.

Youth unemployment is increasingly considered a political challenge by many governments especially in developing countries and Zimbabwe is not spared. Over the past 20 years, Zimbabwe has been grappling with severe economic challenges presumably linked to the economic sanction imposed on the ruling party officials by the United States of America government for the reason that the country is failing to observe human rights. Usually such moves by big nations who determine access to development funding by countries like Zimbabwe obviously have a negative bearing on the

general population of a country. In the process, the casualties are the youth who would face rampant unemployment. Their hopes of a glimpse of a job in life are shattered by the poor performance of the economy that is characterised by industry closures and massive retrenchments. Youth, when pushed to the corner in the economy vent out in somewhat unexpected ways of entrepreneurship (Banik and Kundu, 2018).

Masvingo urban is one of the areas in Zimbabwe that is blessed with higher education institutions. There are three universities operating side by side and of the three one is privately owned. Besides those university there are three teachers training colleges, two private and one government. In addition, there is a polytechnic college. All these higher education institutions are churning graduates into Masvingo Urban year in year out. However the challenge on the ground is that the city is not endowed with industries and coupled with the bad economic status of the country there is nowhere the higher education graduates can be absorbed gainfully. This means the rate of unemployment in Masvingo Urban is high. Despite the peaking of the economy during since dollarization of the economy, urban youth unemployment has not disappeared. With the coming of the dollarization policy, the youth in the country were hoping for the better especially those graduates in possession of essential skills in the required in both the government and the industry. The youth continue to suffer the severe effects of unemployment (Chirisa and Muchini, 2011; Bhebhe, Bhebhe and Bhebhe, 2016).

Conflicting statistics about youth unemployment rates in Zimbabwe have continued to be given by different economic and labour market commentators of employment levels. Politicians, especially from the main opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and the ruling party, Zimbabwe African National Union, Patriotic Front (ZANUPF) are always conflicting over the rate of unemployment in the country with the former accusing the later party for understating youth unemployment. The former pegs youth unemployment at 85% in 2014 and the later at 60%. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) pegs it at 95% in the same base year while Zimbabwe Statistical officials confirmed a zero percentage arguing that youth are employed in the informal sector in whatever activity they are, doing that brings income to them. Confirmation by Zimbabwe Statistical officials that the youth are engaged in the informal sector is clear admittance that the rate of unemployment is skyrocketing in Zimbabwe. Unemployment by definition relates to formal employment opportunities to the able bodied and willing individuals of the economy to partake employment. Arguing from the basis of the statistics given above about the rate of unemployment, disregarding the conflict of interest by the politicians about the state of affairs of the labour market, one can simply deduce that the rate of unemployment facing the youth in Zimbabwe is adverse. The situation on the ground is pathetic that younger graduates are found loitering in the streets of Masvingo while there are in possession of good higher education qualifications. Brixion and Kagonye (2013) argued that youth unemployment has social ramifications because those not employed may see no better alternatives but to join antisocial activities and politicking leading to in some cases armed conflict in a country. The observation described the severe result of not dealing with unemployment of the youth at the budding stage.

Youth are an important resource for sustainable development to meet the various Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Future development is pinned on the youth who should forge ahead with the economy. Hadjivassilion, Kirchner-Sala and Specksser (2015) opined that youth are critical component for future development of any nation especially when they are equipped with high-class education. In general, Zimbabwean youth have received tutelage from one of the most refined lecturers in the world for universities, teachers' colleges and polytechnics. No doubt if the youth were given opportunities, they would transform the economy. Thousands of the youth graduate every year but the rate of absorption by the labour market is sluggish. Despite higher education that the Zimbabwean youth possess they find are found in desperate situations, which lead to their socio-economic degradation and rendered redundant by the society. Economically, lack of formal employment of the youth leads to devastating situations which are antisocial such as commission of crimes, prostitution, abuse of drugs in a bid to lower stress and embarrassment of being unemployed when educated and qualify for jobs. With this background, lack of employment by the youth causes lack of inflow of income to them forcing them to find alternative survival strategies that may not be in tandem with their levels of education. Because of failure to get gainful employment, the youth suffer

from deprivation and social exclusion (Mude, 2014; Hadjivassilion et al, 2015). The way the youth are finding them in social exclusion predicament does not spare them an inch in the labour market. Skills obtained, if not put to use may rust, requiring retraining and this continues to discriminate against youth employment. Many studies carried on youth unemployment have focussed on causes of unemployment and other things. The current study identified the gap of entrepreneurship strategies that the youth are using to circumvent the unemployment phenomenon in Masvingo urban. It is not good enough to talk about youth unemployment and not exploring how they are finding ways of surviving like other citizens in the country. If the discourse on youth unemployment ends on satisfactory grounds that it is skyrocketing, but the question still remains that as youth unemployment is rising like that are the youth then decimated if not so how are they surviving in that difficult circumstance. That formed the backbone of the present study.

Statement of the problem

Youth unemployment is a phenomenon observable in Zimbabwean towns and cities. Youth joblessness discourse has received attention in many quarters of the society because the element has social ramifications. The current study explored the entrepreneurship strategies that are employed by the youth to circumvent the ever-rising youth unemployment in Masvingo Urban of Zimbabwe.

Research objectives

The present study sought to unveil the entrepreneurial strategies that graduate youth are adopting in tackling youth unemployment in Masvingo Urban of Zimbabwe. The following research objective guides the research in fulfilling the main purpose of the study:

- To identify the entrepreneurial strategies that are adopted by the graduate youths in dealing with youth unemployment challenges in Masvingo Urban.

Research questions

- What are the entrepreneurial strategies that are adopted by the graduate youths in dealing with unemployment in Masvingo Urban?

Literature review

The problem of youth unemployment in Zimbabwe can be traced back to the independence period in 1980. When the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANUPF) government came into power in 1980, it faced a major problem of finding employment for the youth who some of them were in the country during the war and those who were refugees in neighbouring countries returning home after the end of the protracted liberation war. As all this was happening, the higher education landscape adopted a paradigm shift in enrolling students (youth) in colleges and universities. Coupled with this paradigm shift, domestically, the presidential scholarship schemes increased the demand for higher education in the country as more and more youths were sent to study in other countries. This was meant to fulfil the demands of the Education for All policy that the government adopted at independence. The policy led to enrolment in both the sectors of the education system in the country rising in leaps and bounces (Dumbu, Chiome, and Chadamoyo 2012). Colleges and universities student numbers rose sharply because of that with more colleges and universities being built by both private and public sector to meet the increase in demand for higher education. If you look closely on the youth unemployment in Zimbabwe you will be tempted to attribute it to the successful implementation of the Education for All policy adopted in 1980 by the government. Eventually this placed the country to be a victim of its own success.

According to Bhebhe, Sulochana, Zororo, Sifile and Chavhunduka (2015) the current situation of youth unemployment in Zimbabwe was exacerbated by the opening up of the country to internationally recognised policies of managing economies such as Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) that was adopted by the government in the early 1990s. Such policies did not work for the Zimbabwe, a developing country with a large base of youth population. Retrenchments that were done by companies and the public sector led to massive unemployment in the country and this created challenges for the government to manage youth employment in the country. Opportunities for the employment in the labour market declined so drastically. Tukuta, Saruchera,

Bhariri and Muchaendepi (2015) opined that youth unemployment remains a national catastrophe as long as institutions of higher learning continue to churn out thousands of graduates not proportionate to employment opportunities in the country. Both the private and public sectors of the economy are held accountable for creating job opportunities that can absorb huge numbers of graduates produced by higher education institutions.

Jacobs (2014) argued that youth unemployment is a disastrous phenomenon to any country despite the level of development because it affects the welfare of the economy. Youth in any country, undeniably are among the formidable force for sustainable development. If youth unemployment perpetuates in a country, that translates into a magnificent loss of earnings which affect the overall performance of the economy and its growth rate. Youth boast of being energetic, courageous and entrepreneurial. In addition to that, youth command numerical supremacy in the population of Zimbabwe. Ministry of Youth Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment (2016) stated that the youth occupied 35, 7% of the population. The stated statistics are a clear testimony to the government that the youth are posing a big challenge to policymaking, as there is need for a robust employment creation policy to be in place to deal with the soaring youth unemployment numbers in the country. As the economy is facing a downward turn in performance more and more youth coming out of colleges and university, the gap for employment opportunity continues to close up for the youth.

Youth unemployment is a worldwide phenomenon that continues to hound many governments today. In the endeavour to come up with an agreed definition of youth unemployment, many researchers such as Msigwa and Kipesha (2013), Jacob (2014), Oosterom and Pswarayi (2014) have attempted to document on the concept of youth unemployment but all failed to reach a consensus definition of the term. Youth unemployment is a multidimensional concept, which encompasses many aspects such as economics, social and political dimensions. Because of that, characteristic unemployment is difficult to have a consensus definition. In trying to define the term youth unemployment many of us would attempt to do that focusing on one or more dimension of the term. Consequently no agreed definition is reached. In the present study youth unemployment is regarded as the failure by the able bodied and willing youth in possession of relevant qualifications to get formal employment in Zimbabwe. The nation and Masvingo urban in particular have many youths that have the relevant educational qualifications but are still not being employed. Msigwa and Kipesha (2013) argued that youth unemployment has a number of negative effects to the economy that may cause labour market instability and erosion of the tax base and loss of gains from investments in education and training. A number of factors account for youth unemployment in a country. Some of the factors have to do with patronage along party or ethnic lines barring some youth to access employment opportunities. To answer this problem the call for youth entrepreneurship becomes eminent now to exonerate the youth from unemployment bedevilling them.

Youth entrepreneurship is not of recent origin. It has dominated discourse about socio-economic development in many parts of the world. Youths are seen as individuals suffering the economic hardships in the current economies, which have few or no opportunities for youth employment. Chimucheka (2012) argued that the Zimbabwean labour market is posing challenges to youth employment caused by a number of factors such as corruption, nepotism and economic conditions, which are on the decline side, have affected the current labour market and lead to rampant youth unemployment in the country. The predicament of youth unemployment is not a challenge to government alone but to the victims (youth) who should find entrepreneurial ways of surviving in the current turbulent economic environment. Tukuta et al (2015) argued that the current situation, which finds the youth unemployed, required the victims to be more creative and innovative to find means of being abreast with the phenomenon. Definitely, youth have to be entrepreneurial for them to defeat loafing in the streets. Some form of entrepreneurship is demanded so that life goes on. It does not help to talk about lack of job opportunities in the current labour market without doing anything that helps one's life. That was the desire of the present study to document the entrepreneurial strategies that the youth are using to navigate through the economic hardships exacerbated by high rising youth.

Research methodology

The study was qualitative which allowed a naturalistic approach to the phenomenon under investigation. Qualitative research paradigm focuses on studying a phenomenon in its natural setting

in attempting to interpret and get meaning from the expressions made by research informants (Townsend and Lander, 2010). The advantage of using qualitative research paradigm is the opportunity it accords to the researchers to make sense of the phenomenon under study through meaningful interpretations (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2007). Rich contextual data, which is detailed, is obtained from rich information informants about the phenomenon being studied. Teddlie and Yu (2009) argued that researchers using qualitative approach make inferences from the words that reflect each participant's truth about the phenomenon in question.

Research design

To get the true information from the research informants the study employed the narrative research design. Narrative inquiry is based on the belief that humans live storied lives. They tell stories everyday about their life experiences and about their actions and choices (Hunter, 2010). This research design brings with it the potential of making the researcher yield contextually rich information that reflects real-life experiences of the informants. In the present study, graduate youths reflected their real-life entrepreneurial strategies that they used to navigate through the economic hardships caused by perennial graduate youth unemployment in Masvingo urban. Such situations, where informants reflect on their real-life experiences usually motivate informants to narrate their experiences in a free manner (Bense, 2010).

Sample and sampling technique

A non-probability sampling method called purposive sampling was used to come up with the sample for study. A purposive sample of six graduate youth practicing their entrepreneurship in Masvingo urban were sampled for the study with the rationale to get the live experiences of the graduate youths as far as strategies for navigating through, for survival in the scourge of graduate youth unemployment is concerned in Masvingo urban. Purposive sampling entails a purposeful sampling of informants who are experienced and knowledgeable about the phenomenon being studied (Collonridge and Gantt, 2008; Trotter, 2012).

Instrumentation

With the nature of research informants under investigation the research could not opt for develop and questionnaire and administer. The nature of the graduate youth entrepreneurship does not suit that instrument for data generation because these informants have to be visited on site doing their daily activities to irk a living. The best instrument to generate data was therefore semi-structured interviews. Visiting and interviewing the informants at their sites gave the research an opportunity to observe and interact with the informants in a more comfortable manner. Conversation with the informants need to be in a relaxed manner which allow the interviewees to say more about their significant lived entrepreneurial strategies in dealing with graduate youths unemployment in Masvingo Urban.

Results and discussion

Youth unemployment remains a national catastrophe as long as the institutions of higher learning continue to churn out thousands of graduates not in tandem with employment opportunities in the country and Masvingo in particular. The youths bulge in general in the population structure of Zimbabwe offers a strong challenge to the society and country at large as there is need to create job opportunities to ease youth unemployment. Graduates are being churned from colleges and universities in the country but fail to get a formal employment opportunity commensurate with their educational qualifications. In the face of such socio-economic challenge face by the graduate youths, the present study found out that graduate youths are using different entrepreneurial strategies to deal with unemployment in Masvingo urban. Graduate youths are engaging in various income generating activities that they think generate income for their livelihoods now. In doing those different entrepreneurial activities, the youths are seen somewhat to be entrepreneurial and organised to generate income for their livelihoods. Whatever activities are done by the youths the bottom line is that they are generating income for their livelihoods in the process. These graduate youths are

currently facing unprecedented challenge of unemployment, engaged in various economic activities that are briefly outlined in the subsequent sections of the present study.

Political activism

What can be regarded as the major accelerator of graduate youth unemployment in Zimbabwe is the current global crisis exacerbated by failure by the government to access Foreign Direct Investment, an instrument that can stimulate the industries of the country. Urban youth continue to suffer and generally open to abuse by politicians who lure them to become political mafia teams to fight for their interests of different political parties. The study established that graduate youth are recruited by different political parties to become their political mafia teams that are used during inter party clashes and skirmishes. Since independence in Zimbabwe, the local politicians have been embracing the arm of the youths during election periods as a major campaigning tool. Power hungry politicians have turned the youths into political thugs for small tokens of appreciation such as buying them beer, meat braais and cigarettes. One of the informants in the present study opined the following:

I do not mind which political party to join. What I simply consider as important is how much those politicians can give me to get food for the day. Look, I am not employed but I need food just like any other person in the society. I have gone to college and graduated with a diploma in education but cannot find a job. Food, food my brother, I need it.

The above opinion indicated that the graduate youth that are not employed end up involved in political party activities but not with interest but only to find a cushion on their livelihoods. Given the small incentives in the form of beer, food and other things youth can be contented for that time but the search for other political events that can bring again incentives continues in the next day. This is why the youth are not supporting a particular political party but just grab the opportunity that come by in the day in order to have a living. Sometimes youth are organised into groups that form bodyguards of politician informally. The worse thing associated with graduate youths can become vehicles for politically motivated violence in the country. However, to the graduate youth, it is better having than not because the daily meal is required on the table. The only way to get it if it is from political activism, they do not mind. Interestingly such individuals do not have a particular political party to support but pounce on every opportunity that brings with it some income somehow.

Folk-art performing

Zimbabwe is an ancient nation rich of cultural heritage culminating from the vast diversity traditions and languages. This, when used well can lead to a paradigm shift from the agro based economy to an industrial and service sector economy. The success stories to boost industrial opening doors for operation in the near future are still a dream so that the graduate youth could be employed. Many companies that have promised to open and start running in the current new political dispensation has not yet opened and the youth unemployment in Masvingo urban remains a challenge. Graduate youths in Masvingo have taken traditional folk-art as their alternative entrepreneurial activity to earn their livelihoods. Folk-art is a branch of Arts, which is performed by words of mouth by folk groups. The art is however not popular in many universities in the country but has been practiced for time immemorial although people termed it 'making funny' or comedy. In the history of Zimbabwe, folk art was confined to the individuals in the society who were regarded as failures in their lives and mostly the illiterate. These were not expected to be highly educated. However now, because of desperation and frustration of lack of employment opportunities in the Masvingo urban the graduate are forming groups, which perform folk arts in public places, and charging a fee. The collections as dividends of performing folk art will be shared among the group members. Some of the youth form drama groups, which perform in public and charge a fee. Today, in Masvingo there have mushroomed a number of performing arts groups in the various residential areas. Some of the groups are even performing and marketing their arts on the Zimbabwe national broadcasting corporation earning a living from that. In the past performing arts was relegated to those people who did not receive any education such that it was not expected to see a graduate on stage performing. Therefore, lack of employment opportunities to the graduate youth has caused them to become entrepreneurial and find alternative means to gain an income for their livelihoods.

Streetcar washing

Life style of many Zimbabwean owning cars is changing drastically. Many of them prefer to take their cars for washing at car wash points in the city and along streets in town. In the past, car washing was a domestic chore that was normally relegated to children but these days it is no longer the same. Car owners have been attracted by the youth who are practicing their entrepreneurship on open spaces in the city centre or other places, which suits such business. Any place left unutilised by the city council can be a target for establishment of a car wash business but the youth in Masvingo urban. Even the Central Business District (CBD) is not spared by the youth who are carving for a living out of that entrepreneurial activity. Asked why they were doing car wash in street and at an open space in town or streets of the residential areas the graduates reiterated that they have no gainful employment to lean on for survival. One of the informants commented:

Car was is a source of income for me and many other graduates operating in the streets and CBD. We are using the opportunity to relieve us from streets of lack of employment opportunities in the country. It is better to get a dollar, buy food for the day than just sit, and die from hunger.

The informant lamented lack of opportunities for formal employment is the major driving force for the youth to engage in car washing as an alternative means to gain an income for livelihood. With the current situation where many youths are found loitering in the street, car washing is taken as a second opportunity cost for irking a living by the graduate youths. In order, for the business to be able to operate, costs of entering are so low and some of the materials that are used in the business are obtained free of charge for example water, which the main resource is simply obtained from the city council public, taps. In Masvingo, graduate youths have established their car wash businesses in car parks, near major shopping stores, bus terminuses and any other spaces not utilised by the council including along streets. Car wash businesses are not registered and they form part of the informal sector that supports the currently thriving street entrepreneurship.

It was established in the study that for survival in the business there is high-level competition for customers. One has to be very fast in dealing with competition challenges in order to remain in business. To do so you need good marketing skills and good customer care and customer service. Without those tools, it will be difficult to fend off competitors because there are no barriers to entry in to the market. Such situation opens that market to everyone who has the potential of raising the small capital requirements for the business to be started. The graduate youth are taking advantage of their level of education to pounce on clients and tie them to their services. Developing customer loyalty becomes the backbone of the survival strategies in the entrepreneurship of car wash business by the graduate youths in Masvingo urban. Customers have developed solid relations and trust with the car wash business operations. They leave their car keys with them and can allow them to drive the car changing positions or creating space for the other car on queue to be washed. What it showed is that the graduate youth have not relaxed and said there are no jobs. Entrepreneurial activities that they are doing are giving them an opportunity to have inflow of income and relieves them of stress of failing to find employment after graduating from colleges and universities.

Foreign currency dealing

With levels of youth unemployment remaining a challenge to the government now, the graduate youth have sort safe haven in foreign currency exchange in the city. The business although it is deemed illegal in the country it has flourished in the city practiced at many of the public places in the town. Foreign currency dealing seems to be legalised as those involved in it dare to transact even in front of patrolling police officers and sometimes trading to the law enforcement officers. Many public places in Masvingo, which attract a sizeable number of people, have been turned into a bureau de change. Most of those foreign currency dealers are the youth and among them are the unemployed graduate youth who have resorted to the entrepreneurial activity after they failed to get employment opportunities in the dwindling economic condition currently faced by the country. The major place for the foreign currency dealers is the Exor Maart, a stopover place for long distance international coaches and international trucks to and from South Africa. As you get to the place, you are greeted with smiling young men and women trying their luck to solicit a transaction for you. Computations for the traded currencies are quickly done with great ease and fluency in monetary economics language a sign that some of these youth have been schooled along those lines.

During the interview with one of the informants based at Exor Maart in Masvingo, I discovered that the woman was a holder of a Bachelor of Commerce Honours in Banking and Finance degree from a local university. She narrated her story as follows:

My brother, the economy is not favouring us the youth and more specifically us who have degrees. There is nowhere to get employment. The industry is already paralysed except for few small-scale enterprises whose capacity cannot employ graduates. The only way to survive the noose of unemployment here is to venture into foreign currency dealing.

The above comments showed that the graduate youth who are facing unemployment end up in the streets trading foreign currency as a means to salvage life after years of unemployment. The formal foreign currency exchange system in the country is porous and foreign currency dealers take advantage of the laxity of the system. Entrepreneurial graduate youth are taking advantage of that to carve for a living out of trading foreign currency although the business is illegal. Asked about how profitable the entrepreneurial activity was, the informant indicated that on a good day one could pocket home from \$20 to \$30 as net profit. However, on a bad day about \$10 can be pocketed as profit. Cumulatively the profits per month averaging \$10 per day, the individual has the potential of pocketing plus or minus \$300 per month. This amount is close to the monthly salary of the general government workers in various ministries placing the graduate youths practicing entrepreneurship in the street at par with them. The profitability of the business and the lack of tight measures on controlling the trade of foreign currency on the streets by the government give the graduate youths an opportunity to find them occupied and remove stress of lack of opportunities to get employment.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Youth unemployment remains a challenge to modern economies. Graduate youths unemployment in Zimbabwe is high. The study concluded that the graduate youths who face the problem of unemployment find alternative entrepreneurial activities to occupy them to carve a living. Some of the youth engaged in political activism, foreign currency trading, streetcar wash businesses and folk-art as means for survival in the current economic situation characterised by underperforming economy. Although it seems as though the graduate youths are contented with the entrepreneurial activities that are occupying their minds, a time bomb may be simmering. Generally, it is not good to have many young graduates loitering in the streets for long in a country as many studies have shown that such a situation can pave way for internal conflicts and clashes with the government. The situation of youth unemployment in the country requires immediate attention.

The study recommended that the government must strengthen the labour laws and policies focusing on enabling graduate youth to acquire relevant work experience before joining the labour market. Current situation is that many companies that are advertising job vacancies in the local newspapers and sources of are demanding that the individual to apply for the post must have a certain number of years of experience. If the labour market continues to work like that, the graduate youths without experience are discriminated to compete on the labour market. Therefore, it is important for the government in its capacity to manipulate the labour laws and policies, targeting on internship, should offer it to the maximum of three years. This will lengthen the period of study of the graduate before entering the labour market and of course reducing youths loitering in the streets, as they will be engaged gainfully. In addition, three years internship will groom the learner and come out of the mill with the required experience that is required by companies.

The industry of the country should play a major role in reducing youth unemployment. This can be done through opening vacancies for apprenticeship. Apprenticeship facilitates the transition from school to work giving the youth work engagement at the same time acquiring skills while working and earning an income. Companies should realise that the use of apprenticeship programmes allow them to exploit the use of cheaper labour in the production process because normally apprentice wages are low. Apprenticeship gives companies an opportunity to train the youth, identify entrepreneurially productive workers, and retain them for the benefit of the company. The scheme however has to be fully supported by the government and if well managed and monitored the scheme has the potential of keeping graduate youth unemployment low in Zimbabwe.

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