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FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE - DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

**FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO UNEMPLOYMENT OF
YOUNG GRADUATES IN BOTSWANA: THE CASE OF
GABORONE**

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTERS
OF SOCIAL WORK**

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Declaration

I, Sewnet Yilma, declare that this dissertation titled *Factors Contributing to Unemployment of Young Graduates in Botswana: The Case of Gaborone* is my own work. All sources have been accredited in the text and references.

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APPROVAL

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Dedications

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, Prof. Yirsaw Ayalew, my daughters-Elshadai and Meklit and my mother Aster H/wold for their endless love, support and encouragement.

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Abstract

Although Botswana has achieved rapid economic growth, unemployment still remains a serious concern for the country. According to the Botswana Labor Force Survey Report (2005/06), the rate of youth unemployment, including graduates, accounts for 69% of the total unemployed. Previous studies on graduate unemployment in Botswana identified some factors that are responsible for unemployment of graduates in Botswana. This study attempted to provide a comprehensive examination of the factors that contribute to unemployment of young graduates and explored the challenges in government initiatives which were established to address graduate unemployment.

A qualitative research method was employed using in-depth interviews and focus group discussion. A total of fifteen unemployed graduates and six informants from six organizations (two government, two private and two NGO) took part in the study. All respondents were from Gaborone. All the unemployed graduates have Bachelor's degree in the fields of Humanities or Social Sciences from the University of Botswana.

The findings indicate that graduates from the fields of Humanities and Social Sciences have difficulties in finding jobs in the labor market. The main factors that contribute to unemployment of young graduates are insufficient job creation, skill mismatch, lack of work experience, unavailability of early retirement scheme, inadequate practical skills, lack of entrepreneurship skills and to some extent the attitudes of graduates.

Among government initiatives which were established to address the problem of unemployment among young graduates, unemployed graduates are familiar with National Internship Program (NIP), Youth Development Fund (YDF), and Graduate Volunteer Scheme (GVS). The main challenge identified in these programs is lack of proper monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Some suggestions provided by respondents to address the challenges in government initiatives include strengthening monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, revision of YDF's list of business areas, increment of internship allowance, and increasing awareness about government initiatives.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	i
List of Tables and Figures.....	v
List of Acronyms and Abbreviations	vi
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
1. Introduction	1
1.1. Botswana context	3
1.2. Statement of the problem	5
1.3. Objectives.....	7
1.4. Research questions	7
1.5. Rationale for the study	7
1.6. Significance of the study.....	8
1.7. Definition of terms.....	10
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	11
2. Introduction	11
2.1. An overview of studies on graduate unemployment in Botswana.....	11
2.2. Factors contributing to unemployment of young graduates.....	12
2.2.1. Inadequate link between growth and job creation	12
2.2.2. Skill mismatch	14
2.2.3. Low level of collaboration between universities, employers and governments.....	16
2.2.4. Lack of practical approach in the education system.....	17
2.2.5. Graduates attitudes towards some jobs.....	18
2.3. Initiatives undertaken by governments to address graduate unemployment.....	19
2.4. Theoretical framework	22
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY.....	24
3. Introduction	24
3.1 Research site	24
3.2 Research methodology	25
3.2.1 Research design	25
3.2.2 Research methods.....	25

3.3	Sampling.....	26
3.3.1	Study population.....	26
3.3.2	Sampling technique.....	27
3.3.3	Sample size.....	27
3.4	Data collection techniques.....	28
3.4.1	In-depth interviews.....	29
3.4.2	Focus group interview.....	31
3.4.3	Instruments for data gathering.....	31
3.5	Data management and Analysis	32
3.6	Study limitation.....	32
3.7	Ethical consideration.....	33
3.8	Summary	34
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS.....		35
4.	INTRODUCTION.....	35
4.1.	Respondents	35
4.2.	Factors contributing to unemployment among graduates.....	37
4.2.1	Insufficient job creation	38
4.2.2	Skill Mismatch	46
4.2.3	Lack of Work Experience.....	50
4.2.4	Lack of Practical Skills.....	55
4.2.5	Unavailability of Early retirement Scheme	56
4.2.6	Lack of Entrepreneurial Skills.....	59
4.2.7	Graduate Attitude towards Some Jobs.....	62
4.3.	Government initiatives and its challenges.....	66
4.3.1	National Internship Program (NIP).....	66
4.3.2	Youth Development Fund (YDF).....	74
4.3.3	Graduate Volunteer Scheme (GVS).....	80
4.4.	Possible solutions to address the challenges of government initiatives	83
4.5.	Summary	85
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....		88
5.1.	Summary and Conclusion	88
5.2.	Recommendations	90

5.2.1 University of Botswana	90
5.2.2 Government of Botswana	91
5.2.3 Graduates.....	92
Bibliography	93
6 Appendixes.....	100
Appendix A: Questionnaire for Socio-Demographic Characteristics of unemployed graduates	100
Appendix B: Questionnaire for Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Key Informants	102
Appendix C: Informed Consent	103
Appendix D: Interview Guide.....	104
Appendix E: Questionnaire for focus group discussion.....	106
Appendix F: Research Permit	107

List of Tables and Figures

Table 1 Data on unemployed graduates 35

Table 2 Data on key informants 37

Figure 1 Factors which contribute to unemployment of graduates 38

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

BCWIS	Botswana Core Welfare Indicators Survey
BIDPA	Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis
BLFS	Botswana Labor Force Survey
CEDA	Citizen Entrepreneur Development Agency
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DNSI	Department of National Service and Internship
DPSM	Directorate of Public Service Management
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
EDD	Economic Diversification Drive
ESP	Economic Stimulus Program
FAP	Financial Assistance Policy
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GVS	Graduate Voluntary Scheme
HR	Human Resource
ILO	International Labor Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KBL	Kgalagadi Breweries Limited
LIMID	Livestock Management and Infrastructure Development
LEA	Local Enterprise Authority
MFDP	Ministry of Finance and Development Planning
MICs	Middle Income Countries
MYSC	Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture
NGO	Non-government Organizations
NIP	National Internship Program
OECD	Organization for Economic Commission and Development

PCI	Project Concern International
SMME	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises
UB	University of Botswana
WB	World Bank
YDF	Youth Development Fund
YES	Youth Empowerment Scheme
YFF	Young Farmers Fund

CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

Unemployment is one of the challenges that most developing and also some developed countries face. Unemployment as defined by the International Labor Organization (ILO, 2011) occurs when people are without work, available for work and actively seeking for work. Similarly, OECD (2013) defines an unemployed individual as an individual without work (i.e., neither had a job nor was at work for one hour or more in paid employment or self employment), actively sought work in the last four weeks and currently available to take up work within the next two weeks. In the context of the study, graduate unemployment refers to young people who have bachelor's degree from higher institutions and do not have formal job after graduation.

The 2008/09 economic global crisis has contributed significantly to an increase of unemployment in the world. In the industrialized countries, youth unemployment rate was recorded at about 18.1% in 2010 and the European Union is the highest affected (ILO, 2012a). For example, in the Euro zone countries such as Greece and Spain, youth unemployment rate doubled between 2007 and 2011, and the average duration of unemployment has reached up to nine and eighteen months respectively (ILO, 2014). In Portugal and Italy, youth unemployment reached over 25% in the same period. Similarly, youth unemployment recorded the highest in the Middle East and North Africa before and after the global financial crisis (ILO, 2012a). The youth are more affected by the current global unemployment than adult population (Okal, 2014; World Bank, 2013). The reasons for this, as Okal (2014) states, is lack of relevant work experience, weak economic prospects, lack of work related network and a decline in job creations aggravate the situation of unemployment despite their sometimes higher educational attainments. Since the economic crisis of 2008, in every region, it has become difficult for young people to penetrate the job market. As Biavaschi et al. (2013) state, the rate of unemployment for highly skilled people tend to be lower than low skilled people, and

those people who do not have proper training face multiple barriers in finding work. It was estimated that the total unemployed young people in the world were 74.5 million in 2013. This indicates that the situation of unemployment is getting worse compared to the pre-global economic crisis years. For example, the global youth unemployment rate was 11.6% in 2007, 12.9% in 2012 and 13.1% in 2013 (Okal, 2014). Furthermore, unemployment of young graduates from tertiary institutions is also becoming a challenge in different countries. It raises concerns in many countries because it is contrary to the assumption that high education and training increases productivity and employability of young people (ILO, 2012a).

According to United Nations (2004), the problem of graduate unemployment is more severe in developing countries. The main reasons for this is the mismatch between skills possessed by graduates and the needs of industries in the labor market, and lack of enough jobs in the formal economy in proportion to number of graduates. Despite the increase in the number of tertiary institutions, enrolment rate and graduate turnout, the issue of graduate unemployment and under employment have become serious challenges in many developing countries. In African countries, such as Tunisia, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Ghana and Tanzania, the number of unemployed graduates has accelerated. According to OECD (2012), in Tunisia, the unemployment rate of young graduates from the fields of Economics, Management and Laws is highest (47.1%) in 2007 than other fields of study such as engineering (24.5%). The rate of graduate unemployment in Nigeria increased from 25.6% in 2003 to 40.3% in 2009. The increase in the graduate unemployment is mainly due to the mismatch between the skills possessed by graduates and the needs of the labor market (Samuel et al., 2012). Similarly, in South Africa, young graduates, especially among black students from black institutions, have become unemployed (Pauw et al., 2006). Some of the students are graduating from the fields which have low employment prospect such as humanities and Arts. Students with technical and scientific fields of study have more chance to be employable. In addition, many graduates lack soft skills training, such as communication ability, work experience and work place readiness which are also required by employers.

1.1. Botswana context

Youth unemployment, including graduate unemployment has become a national concern in Botswana. According to United Nations System in Botswana (2007), although Botswana has achieved rapid economic growth, unemployment remains a serious problem. The trend in Botswana has shown an increase of unemployment between the 1990s and 2000s. The unemployment rate was about 14% in 1991; it rose to 22% in 1994 and remained at the same level till 1996. In 2002, unemployment rate hit the peak point which was around 24.6%, however, it declined to 17.3 in 2005/06 (Siphambe, 2007). During the global economic crisis, the unemployment rate had reached 19.5% in 2008 and then decreased to 17% in 2009, which later marginally increased to 17.8% in 2009/10 (CSO, 2011). According to Botswana Core Welfare Indicator Survey (BCWIS, 2009/10), unemployment is highest among the age group 20-24 years (34%), followed by age group 25-29 (22.4%). As reported in Botswana Labor Force Survey Report (2005/06), the youth (15-34 age group) accounted for 69% of the total unemployed and the majority of the unemployed were female. Therefore, Botswana's unemployment problem is mainly a youth unemployment problem where nearly two thirds of them are under age of 30 (United Nations System in Botswana, 2007; BLFS 2005/06). In addition, the unemployment rate is higher in urban centers compared to rural areas since many young people migrate to urban areas for better opportunities.

There is a general perception that graduate unemployment is due to mismatch between the skills demand in the labor market and skills possessed by graduates (Gregory, 2011). As Ama (2008) indicates, in the 2001 census report, unemployment rate of the labor force was 19.6%, among which, 8.1% were certificate holders, 4.4% were diploma graduates and 3.2% were bachelors degree graduates. The Botswana LFS Report (2005/06) shows that unemployment rate of graduates has increased; for example, degree holders constituted 5.5 % (which was 3.2% in 2001 Census Report), diploma graduates accounted 7.7% and 16.6% of unemployed were certificate holders. Ama (2008) describes that the trend of graduate employment was smooth until 1995 since the government of Botswana had given guaranteed employment to all graduates in various public departments and private sectors. In those days, the period of waiting time to be

employed was short and graduate unemployment was rare. However, after guaranteed employment was abolished by government, it has become common to see unemployed graduates even after many years of graduation (ibid.).

Available evidence reveals that graduates from the Faculty of Humanities were the least employed during the period 2008 and 2009 (Gregory, 2011). About 46% of unemployed graduates were from Humanities which is very high compared to other faculties such as Health (2%) and Engineering and Technology (8%). The increase in the level of graduate unemployment, particularly, from the above mentioned fields indicate the fact that the labor market is unable to absorb those graduates (ibid.). In other words, tertiary education institutions produce many graduates from these fields of studies even though the demand in the labor market is low.

There is a growing perception that skills and knowledge possessed by African Universities' graduates do not meet the requirements of industry and the wider economy (Ssebuwugu et al., 2012). "This mismatch, coupled with under-training in the critical skills of problem solving, analytical thinking and communication is blamed, at least in part, for the emerging high graduate unemployment and under employment in many parts of Africa" (Pauw et al, 2008). Botswana faces the challenge of high level of youth unemployment mainly due to failure to create enough jobs in the economy (United Nations System in Botswana, 2007). In addition, Ama (2008) indicates that the main reasons for graduate unemployment are related to lack of experience, lack of communication, creativity, analytical skills and critical thinking, versatility of the graduates, and mismatch between skills taught in universities and what the industry really needs.

Some African and European countries have developed policies and programs to curb the problem of graduate unemployment. In Africa, for example, Tunisian government introduced entrepreneurship programs at national and local levels (OECD, 2012). Entrepreneurship education is given at Universities including start up support for young graduates. Nigeria has also developed entrepreneurship and internship programs to

reduce unemployment of young graduates. Odia & Odia (2013) indicates that entrepreneurship education was introduced to redress the problems of unemployment and poverty among youth and graduates in Nigeria. Similarly, the government of Botswana has come up with different initiatives such as National Internship Program (NIP), National Entrepreneur Program and Graduate Volunteer Scheme (GVS) in response to the problem of graduate unemployment. The National Internship Program was established in 2009, under the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture, to help citizens who are Bachelor's degree holders' to have practical experience in government and private sector offices for a period of two years (African Economic Outlook, 2012). The main objective of this program is to develop the skills and experiences of young graduates on the job so as to increase their employability. The National Entrepreneur Program was also introduced to assist citizens to develop and use their own creativity and take initiatives to create jobs for themselves. Under this program, Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA), Local Enterprise Authority (LEA) and Young Farmers Fund (YFF) were developed as government initiatives along with labor market policies (United Nations Economic and Social Councils, 2015). CEDA was introduced in 2003 to provide financial and technical support while LEA, was established in 2004, to provide development and support services to Small, Medium and Micro enterprises (SMMEs). Recently, in April 2014, the government approved a new initiative called Graduate Volunteer Scheme (GVS) which targets unemployed graduates including degree holders who were not absorbed in the National Internship program.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Botswana is a middle income country with GDP growth of 5.4% in 2013 and good governance (African Economic Outlook, 2014). With the remarkable economic growth, however, the level of youth unemployment, including graduate unemployment, which accounted for over 60% of the total unemployed labor force, is posing a challenge to government of Botswana (African Economic Outlook, 2012).

In recent years, there is evidence to suggest that young graduates from Botswana tertiary education institutions find it difficult to penetrate the labor market. It is estimated that about 37% of unemployed are college and university graduates (Nthomang, 2007). This

indicates that acquiring education does not guarantee jobs for many young people. According to the 2005/06 Botswana LFS, from the total labor force, about 248,812 (17.5%) were unemployed; of this 114,042 (46%) were actively seeking employment and 134,770 (54%) were discouraged job seekers. Similarly, the BCWIS (2011) indicates that of the total labor force of 710,600, during the survey year, 126,349 were unemployed.

A significant number of graduates from some fields of study such as Humanities and Arts do not get adequate opportunities to participate in the economy. For example, 46% of graduates from the fields of Humanities were unemployed during the period 2008/09. Consequently, those unemployed graduates were seen roaming the streets looking for jobs (Ama, 2008). Some of the reasons for the rise in unemployment are the mismatch between graduates' skills and skills required in the labor market and insufficient job creation in the economy (Siphambe, 2003; National Economic and Social Councils, 2015).

The government of Botswana has over the years developed different initiatives to address the problem of youth unemployment, including graduate unemployment. To mention some of the initiatives, Financial Assistance Policy (FAP) which was in place from 1982-2002; Citizen Entrepreneur Development Agency (CEDA) which later replaced FAP in 2003; Local Enterprise Authority (LEA), Young Farmers Fund (YFF), National Youth Development Fund (YDF), Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES), National Internship Program (2008) and recently, Graduate Voluntary Scheme.

Available evidences suggest that, despite all government efforts and good will, most of the above initiatives have not been successful in lowering the rate of graduate unemployment. Besides, there are limited studies in Botswana regarding graduate unemployment. In the study conducted by Adeyemi (1997), it was indicated that skills mismatch and economic recession were the main factors contributing to unemployment among graduates. Similarly, Ama (2008) observes that mismatch between skills possessed by graduates and the requirements of the labor market, lack of employment opportunities, and lack of soft skills were the factors responsible for unemployment of graduates. Furthermore, Gregory (2011) indicates that skills mismatch and insufficient job creation were the factors which contributed to the unemployment of graduates.

However, none of these studies provide a comprehensive study on factors contributing to unemployment of young graduates. Thus, this study attempts to identify factors responsible for unemployment of young graduates from different perspectives. For example, studies conducted elsewhere looked at factors such as graduates' attitudes towards some jobs, practical skills, link between universities and employers, etc. This study, therefore, intends to explore the factors that contribute to unemployment of young graduates in Botswana and provide possible recommendations.

1.3. Objectives

The primary objective of this study is to identify factors that contribute to unemployment of young graduates and suggest possible strategies. Specifically, this study will:

- ❖ Examine the major factors that contribute to unemployment among young graduates in Botswana.
- ❖ Explore government initiatives targeting graduate unemployment in Botswana.
- ❖ Identify challenges in government initiatives.
- ❖ Suggest possible strategies that will help in addressing graduate unemployment.

1.4. Research questions

- ❖ What are the factors that contribute to unemployment of young graduates?
- ❖ What kinds of interventions have been designed by government of Botswana to address graduate unemployment?
- ❖ To what extent have the government interventions impacted graduate unemployment?
- ❖ What are the possible solutions to deal with unemployment of graduates?

1.5. Rationale for the study

Youth unemployment, particularly unemployment of graduates, from some fields of study is becoming a serious issue for the government of Botswana. This problem is also common in most African countries. The government of Botswana has come up with different initiatives to address the problem. Despite government efforts, enough jobs are not being created to accommodate young graduates from higher learning institutions. In order to address the problem of graduate unemployment and come up with appropriate

recommendations and policies, it is crucial that a clear understanding of the factors that contribute to graduate unemployment is established. Thus, the findings of this study will provide important information to deal with the problem of graduate unemployment.

1.6. Significance of the study

Policy level

- ❖ The outcome of the research may have implications for policy review. In other words, the findings of the research may provide input for the review of the existing initiatives to reduce unemployment of graduates.

- ❖ Currently, unemployment of graduates is one of the main issues in Botswana. Government is not the only organ responsible for creating jobs but also non-government organizations (NGOs) and the private sector should be involved in the policy making process to address the problem of unemployment. Thus, the study intends to provide an input for those who are involved in the policy making process and come up with appropriate measures that allow youth participation in the society and the economy.

Research level

- ❖ The study may identify areas for further research to get a better understanding of the link between the education system and the labor market. Some scholars mentioned that higher institutions' education systems need to be linked to labor markets in order to shape and prepare prospective graduates to be employable in the labor market. Thus, the study may initiate further research in this subject.

- ❖ As Gregory (2011) states, Humanities graduates are the highest unemployed compared to other disciplines and hence the study is expected to provide valuable information to researchers and academicians in dealing with graduate unemployment.

Evidence shows that there are differences in the employment prospects of graduates from different fields of study. A number of students who are graduates

of Humanities and Social Sciences take longer to find jobs than graduates from other fields such as Health and Medical Sciences. Therefore, the results of the study may give an insight into factors responsible for such issues.

Practice level

- ❖ The study will be beneficial for practitioners to design new approaches and methods to help graduates to tackle unemployment. Many of government's initiatives which aim to address graduate unemployment are implemented under the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture. Thus, this study will provide some input in their implementation of new initiatives. In addition, higher institutions and employers can benefit from the study as they are the main stakeholders in the supply and demand chain of graduates.

1.7. Definition of terms

Graduate – a person who has studied and graduated from university (Baldry, k., 2013). In this study, a graduate is defined as a person who has successfully completed his/her Bachelor's degree study from a university.

Unemployment – is the proportion of the labor force which is not employed at any given point in time. Therefore, **graduate unemployment** refers to young people who have graduated from tertiary education institutions and qualified to work but do not work at a given point of time (Samuel et al., 2012).

Youth - the United Nation uses the term youth and young people interchangeably to refer to the age group between 15 and 24. However, there is no universally agreed definition on Youth (ILO, 2006). According to Botswana's Revised National Youth Policy (2010), youth is defined as young women and men who fall within the age group of 15-35 years.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2. Introduction

This chapter discusses the literature review in relation to the research. The chapter is structured as follows: Section 2.2 describes an overview of studies on graduate unemployment in Botswana. Section 2.3 discusses factors responsible for unemployment of young graduates. This same section discusses factors such as inadequate link between growth and job creation, skill mismatch, low level of cooperation between universities, employers and governments, lack of practical approaches in the education systems, and graduate attitudes towards some jobs. Initiatives which have been taken by different governments are presented in Section 2.4. Finally, the theoretical framework adopted for this study is presented in Section 2.5.

2.1. An overview of studies on graduate unemployment in Botswana

Despite the extensive literature on unemployment in Botswana, limited attention has been given to research on graduate unemployment, particularly, on factors contributing to unemployment among graduates. However, widely read Newspapers such as the Sunday Standard, Botswana Guardian, and Weekend Post have been writing continuously about the problem of youth unemployment including graduate unemployment. In general, unemployment of graduates is not only the concern of policy makers but also civil societies, NGOs and the society at large.

There is a general consensus among the previous studies (Siphambe, 2003; Ama, 2008; Gregory, 2011) that graduate unemployment is mainly a ‘structural’ problem indicating that there is a need to structure the economy so as to generate jobs. Structural unemployment refers to a mismatch between the skills of graduates produced by higher institutions and the skills demanded by the economy. Siphambe (2003) and Gregory (2011) observe that insufficient job creation in the economy is the main reason for the rise of graduate unemployment. Ama (2008) and Gregory (2011) indicate the trends of unemployment in Botswana over a period of years and identified substantial differences in unemployment rates

between degree, diploma and certificate holders. The above studies also identified the types of fields and trainings in higher institutions that are relevant to the labor market. Thus, these are important contributions to our understanding of graduate unemployment.

2.2. Factors contributing to unemployment of young graduates

It would be worthwhile to investigate what factors are contributing to unemployment of young graduates. The identification of the factors which contribute to unemployment is the first step to provide long term solutions in addressing unemployment issues. In this regard, some researchers identified factors which may have contributed to graduate unemployment. These factors are discussed below.

2.2.1. Inadequate link between growth and job creation

Employment is closely linked to the state of the economy. In order to provide an overall assessment of the graduate labor market, it is important to look at a country's overall economic situation. Miller (2012) states that the ILO Employment convention policy views job creation as a direct policy goal which helps to stimulate economic growth rather than only an indirect result of growth. Economic growth has a positive contribution to job creation, but it is not a sufficient condition (ibid.). For example, in many developing countries, the overall employment intensity growth has been declining even though their economic growth has accelerated. It means that the growth has not created enough jobs to new entrants in the labor market (ibid.). For example, in China, the number of graduate unemployment has increased. With 8% annual growth, China can generate more jobs. However, jobs are mainly in the manufacturing sector requiring low-level qualifications (Schucher, 2014).

Although some African countries have shown progress in economic growth, they have failed to create enough jobs to absorb a rapidly growing labor force (Alfred et al., 2008, Page, 2012). In Ghana, Alfred et al. (2008) observes that even if young graduates possess the requisite skills, they may not get employed due to limited number of job opportunities. The main reason for this is that public and private sectors are not expanding enough to absorb the large number of graduates. Similarly, despite high economic growth in North African countries, the growth did not translate to creating job opportunities for many young

graduates. For example, in Egypt and Tunisia, insufficient job creation is a major problem (Ibid). In Tunisia, about 70,000 new jobs were created during the period 2005-2010, out of which, 30,000 were for people graduating from tertiary education institutions. The number of new graduates was 65,000 on average during the same period (OECD, 2012).

One of the main problems of graduate unemployment in Botswana is that the level of job creation has not been able to keep pace with the ever increasing educated labor force (Siphambe, 2003). Hence, many young graduates are forced to accept employment in positions and areas that are inadequate and unrelated to their disciplines (ibid.). This has negative consequences since they lose their valuable skills as well as depriving them of productivity growth that would have been achieved if these young people had been employed at their appropriate level of qualification.

As a job creation strategy for African countries, Fine et al. (2012) suggests that encouraging growth in the labor intensive sectors and collaboration with private sectors can have effective results as observed from the experience of many countries. Similarly, Page (2013) suggests that employment policies alone cannot solve the problem of unemployment in Africa; rather, it needs a strategy for industrial development including the growth of agro-industry and tradable services to boost job creation. Furthermore, government and private sectors should encourage growth on those sectors that are the most promising for job creation. For example, most natural resource sectors in Africa contribute the biggest share of GDP growth, but they employ less than one percent of African's labor force (Fine et al., 2012). Therefore, strategies should focus on other specific sectors that have greater potential for job creation. In this regard, some African countries such as Mali's mango exports, Morocco's automotive parts industry, and Lesotho's textiles can be good examples in employment creation (ibid.).

Economic diversification, particularly, for those African countries which mainly depend on mining and natural resources, is also suggested by some researchers in order to expand job creation. Economic diversification has always been the main agenda of the government of Botswana's development strategy. Botswana has a policy on economic diversification but it has not yet developed as per the plan. Therefore, there is a need to emphasize on investments

that are more labor intensive and have linkages with the rest of the economy (Siphambe, 2003). In addition, employment creation should also be encouraged in higher institutions' learning process in order to teach students the concept of self-employment (ibid.).

2.2.2. Skill mismatch

Skill mismatch is becoming a challenge for both developed and developing countries. The impact, however, is more severe on youth in developing countries where there are few alternative paths to sustainable livelihoods (EFA Global Monitoring team, 2012). Skills mismatch refers to the mismatch between what graduates are trained for and what the labor market needs. In other words, it means there are not enough graduates in the right fields of study to satisfy the requirements of the industries in the labor market. Klosters (2014) states that highly qualified graduates are available from different fields of study even in developed economies. On the other hand, shortage of professionals in the health care (e.g. Medical doctors and nurses), software and application developers, engineers and other professionals with specific vocational skills is reported in several countries. Thus, many countries' employers are getting difficult to fulfill their vacant positions even in countries where young people have tertiary degrees. For example, according to World Bank's 2010 enterprise survey, lack of right skills was reported in Ireland and Spain (3%), India (60%), Brazil (70%), Egypt (50%), Botswana (32%) and South Africa (6%) (ibid.). According to EFA Global Monitoring team (2012), in Cambodia, 87% of employers believe that many graduates do not have the necessary skills needed for the work. Thus, Cambodia's education system needs to produce the right skills which are practical and relevant to the labor market. Similarly, in India, about 30% of engineers remain unemployed even after one year of graduation. The main reason for this is that they are poorly prepared for jobs, i.e., they lack 'soft' and higher-order thinking skills (Blom & Sacki, 2011).

Although the number of higher institutions has increased in Africa, many researchers have indicated that the level of quality training and skills development has declined through time. Bawakyillenuo et al. (2013) and Alfred et al. (2008), indicate that the decline in quality and relevance of tertiary education in Ghana has been attributed, among other factors, to the mismatch between graduates' skill acquired from tertiary institutions and employers expected competences. For example, Ghana needs more technical and specialists such as geologists,

geophysicists and engineers; however, most of the country's higher institutions have been producing more students from the fields of Arts and Humanities (ibid.). Similarly, in Nigeria, many employers were reported to be dissatisfied by recent graduates since they are not well prepared for the world of work (Pitan & Adedeji, 2012; British Council, 2014). In addition, Pauw et al. (2006) states that despite skills shortages in South Africa economy, many graduates are not suitably qualified for the jobs which are available in the labor market. The main reason for this is that students are graduating from fields with lower employment prospects. The situation is more severe, especially, for black graduates (from historically black institutions) in the fields of social sciences and applied humanities (Moleke, 2005).

Likewise, in Botswana, prospective graduates from the fields of Social Sciences and Humanities do not easily get jobs compared to graduates from health and engineering areas (Gregory, 2011). Higher institutions run the risk of training graduates whose skills are not appropriate for the need of labor market (Siphambe, 2003). The issue should not be about increasing intakes of students in higher institutions rather producing graduates with the right skills which are needed by the different sectors in the labor market. Therefore, higher learning institutions should regularly check if their programs are relevant to the labor markets (ibid.).

The causes of skills gaps can be examined using qualitative and quantitative skills mismatch approaches (EFA Global Monitoring team, 2012). Qualitative skill mismatch occurs when employers can't fill their vacant positions by graduates despite the right qualifications on paper. Quantitative mismatch refers to where the available graduates are not educated or trained based on the needs of the labor market (ibid.). As it is mentioned in ECOSOC (2012), even if employers are increasingly demanding soft skills from graduates (such as communication skills, problem solving skills, entrepreneurial and creativity skills), their requirements are mostly unmet by many countries' education systems, particularly, developing countries. Employers are not only interested in the academic background of graduates but also their practical labor market skills which help them to be ready for the work environment.

2.2.3. Low level of collaboration between universities, employers and governments

Every country needs competent human resource to achieve economic growth and development. This requires tertiary institutions to produce graduates with relevant skills to meet the needs of the industry as well as the economy. Universities are not the only responsible entity to solve the problem of graduate unemployment but it needs co-ordinated efforts between diverse segments of governments and society (British Council, 2014). Available evidences have shown that the lack of effective co-operation between universities and various stakeholders could partly result in the wide gap between content of courses studied and demands of the labor market (Alfred et al., 2008, Ssebuwufu et al., 2012). As Ssebuwufu et al. (2012) observes African universities have been criticized for producing graduates who are not relevant to the needs of the industry as well as the socio-economic challenges that many African countries face. The problem of this mismatch, coupled with low level of graduates' soft skills such as critical skills of problem solving, analytical thinking and communication, exacerbates high graduate unemployment and under employment. Mbah (2014) indicates that universities should align their academic programs to the changing pace of local and global market demands. Thus, this will add an advantage for prospective graduates to maximize their employability locally as well as abroad.

The link between university and industry has a wide range of benefits. Guimon (2013) states that universities get benefit in the improvement of teaching; access to funding, reputation enhancement and access to empirical data from industry. In a well established link between academia and industry, firms benefit in gaining access to complementary technological knowledge; absorb a pool of skilled workers; training for existing and future employees; access to public funding and incentives; reduce risks by sharing the cost of research and development; and influence the overall teaching and research agenda of universities. Similarly, Ssebuwufu et al. (2012) indicates that the co-operation of the two entities benefits both sides. Among other factors, universities can improve their curriculum and training in technology-oriented programs and problem solving; increase employment for prospective graduates; and enhance contribution of universities to the economy.

Some researchers state that many developing countries, particularly, African countries, lack effective university-industry linkages and this takes time to develop strong link between them (Guimon, 2013, Creso, 2013, Ssebuwufu et al., 2012). Mostly, their collaboration is established on informal basis and focus on limited services such as firms' recruitment of university graduates, internships and consulting services (Guimon, 2013). According to Creso (2013), there are some barriers to the collaboration of university-industry partnership in Africa. Among the factors, cultural differences between universities and private sectors; the nature of national economies and research infrastructure; lack of confidence in universities; weak institutional capacity; and lack of strong policy framework to promote the partnership of universities and industries.

2.2.4. Lack of practical approach in the education system

It has been observed that graduates who do not have practical skills have difficulty to be employed in the labor market (Kalamatianou & Kougioumoutzaki, 2012; EFA Global Monitoring team, 2012; Klosters, 2014; ECOSOC, 2012). According to Samuel (2012), employers are not only interested in those graduates' academic backgrounds but also in their practical skills appropriate for job fulfillment. However, many higher institutions, particularly in developing countries, are criticized for their lack of emphasis on practical skills to meet employers' needs.

Evidence has shown that engaging students in practical activities provides good opportunities to apply their theoretical knowledge in a real world situation, which can help prepare themselves for life after work (Mbah, 2014). According to Klosters (2014), many employers are having difficulties to employ due to ill prepared young graduates for work. In the same report, across countries participating in the survey, 34% of employers are dissatisfied with the candidates due to their low technical competencies and 19% of the employers agree that the candidates lack work place competencies or soft skills. Similarly, it was reported that many graduates from the field of Humanities, even those who scored good grades, are having difficulties to find jobs since the content and teaching approaches are too theoretical. However, graduates from other fields of studies such as Engineering and Vocational areas have better chances to compete on the job market or to be self-employed (Bunoti, 2010).

Higher institutions and employers are expected to provide opportunities for university students to have practical skills. For example, the integration of internship and work based learning with courses has significant contributions in their employability (Lowden, et al., 2011). “Some of the more vocational and business-oriented courses already make use of these approaches but humanities courses could also benefit from greater use of such measures (ibid.)” Many higher institutions in Africa have failed to respond to changes in the labor market. As a result, the chance of employability is going down from time to time. Similarly, according to (Nthebolana, 2013), the Botswana education system failed to produce graduates well-matched to the labor market. She further indicated that producing graduates with limited practical exposure has been on-going for a long time with the current education system. As a result, graduates find the work environment totally different from what that they know. It can be argued that the current education system is not able to unleash learner’s potential to a desired level and hence did not live up to expectation to instill practical skills which can broaden students’ opportunities.

2.2.5. Graduates attitudes towards some jobs

Researchers observe that the attitudes of some university graduates for some type of jobs have affected their employability. Ariyawansa (2008) observes that the education system is not the only factor for unemployment of graduates, but attitudes of graduates also have an impact on the problem of unemployment. For example, in Srilanka, most graduates expect to get jobs in government organizations because they become automatically pensionable, get high salary and relatively high position at entry level. For this reason, graduates wait in the queue as they prefer to get jobs in government organizations and other big institutes even though jobs are available in other firms. Similarly, Alfred et al. (2008), indicates that among other factors, societal and graduate discrimination for some type of jobs can be the cause of graduate unemployment in Ghana. The majority of Ghanaian graduates believe that certain jobs which are available in the labor market do not meet their expectations. This view of job inferiority is not only held by graduates but also the general public discriminates among jobs. Thus, this makes it difficult for some parents to engage their young graduates in jobs such as agriculture and teaching. Moreover, in the survey of employers’ expectations in South Africa, it was reported that some graduates discriminate some type of jobs. The report indicates that university graduates have high job expectation, i.e., they believe their

qualifications open doors at middle management level and hence they are reluctant to start at the entry level (Pauw, 2006).

2.3. Initiatives undertaken by governments to address graduate unemployment

Unemployment has become a threat for many developing countries' socio-economic development and political stability. The recent Arab spring reflects the potential of unemployed youth, including young graduates, to create social and political unrest. Therefore, different countries have come up with different initiatives to address the problem of graduate unemployment. For example, the government of China has taken some measures to address the problem of graduate unemployment. This includes boosting post graduate enrolments, diverting graduates to rural areas, entrepreneurship, and promoting creative and vocational education (Schucher, 2014).

Some African countries such as Nigeria, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Ghana and Botswana have also designed entrepreneurship and internship programs to tackle the problem of graduate unemployment. According to Philip et al. (2013), the government of Nigeria, in collaboration with the private sectors, has developed different initiatives. Some of the initiatives, among others, are Small, Medium, enterprise Agencies; the youth enterprise with innovation; the national open apprenticeship scheme; and the graduate job creation loan guarantee scheme. In addition, many universities in Nigeria have integrated entrepreneurship education in their curricula to increase the employability of graduates. However, it is believed that the current entrepreneurship skills development and acquisition is insufficient to turn graduates to a considerable level of entrepreneurs (Odia & Odia, 2013).

Similarly, in Zimbabwe, different initiatives have been developed by higher institutions, private sectors and government to increase graduate employability (Garwe, 2014). Among these, curriculum changes in higher institutions to address the gap that exists between employers and graduates; work related training; Micro, Small and Medium enterprise policy and strategy framework are some of them. Most universities in Zimbabwe incorporated entrepreneurial aspects in all courses to shape the minds of graduates (i.e., to change their attitudes from to be employed to self employed). However, this initiative has not been

successful as it was designed because of government policies and lack of funding support (ibid.).

In Ghana, the introduction of entrepreneurship education in higher institutions is also considered as one of the initiative to solve the problem of graduate unemployment (Fosu & Boateng, 2013). A number of universities and polytechnics in Ghana are offering entrepreneurship module to their students to develop their skills and to create awareness about self employment, which can help as an alternative path other than formal employment (Ernest et al., 2015). It is believed that entrepreneurship education has positive impact in increasing the employability of Ghanaian graduates. However, there are no tangible evidences on the impact of entrepreneurship in unemployment since there are no statistics related to successful graduates who start up their own business (ibid.).

The government of Botswana has also come up with different initiatives to curb youth and graduate unemployment. These include Citizen Entrepreneurial Development Agency (CEDA, 2003), Local Enterprise Authority (LEA, 2004), Young Farmers Fund (YFF, 2005), Youth Development Fund (YDF, 2005), National Internship Program (NIP, 2009), Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES, 2012), and recently, Graduate Voluntary Scheme (GVS, 2014) (ECOSOC, 2015). Entrepreneurship has also been given high emphasis by government of Botswana in order to empower citizen entrepreneurs. For example, CEDA, LEA, Youth Grant Fund, Innovation Youth Empowerment Program (e-YEP), and Young Farmers Fund Schemes were developed for this purposes (Mwobobia, 2012). Despite the envisaged benefits of these programs, the initiatives have been criticized for the lack of coordination among stakeholders, abuse of program funds, and lack of systematic controlling and evaluation systems (ibid.).

CEDA was established to promote economic diversification, citizen entrepreneurial culture, and employment creation. It provides subsidized credit for Small and Medium scale citizen owned businesses; advisory and training services to start up the business or to expand the existing one (BIDPA, 2008). Although both FAP and CEDA have impacted positively on job creation, their progress has been slow (ibid.).

LEA was established in 2004 to promote the spirit of entrepreneurship and enterprise among the Small, Medium and Micro enterprises (SMMEs) in the country (Mwobobia, 2012). The authority also facilitates access for entrepreneurs to get financial assistance and other support services to SMMEs (ibid.). Despite its huge responsibility and mandate, LEA's activities were not well coordinated with different stakeholders. In addition, it was observed that LEA lacks strong monitoring and evaluation systems (ibid.). Young Farmers Fund (YFF), under CEDA, was introduced in 2005 to encourage youth to participate in the agriculture sector. It provides loans for citizens (aged 18-40) at lower interest rate and longer repayment periods (National Economic and Social Councils, 2015). Although agriculture is considered as the most important sector to respond to economic diversification in Botswana, the unfavorable weather condition (such as low rain fall, poor farming practices and low adoption of technologies) has limited many young people to engage in agricultural sector (Kgosikoma, 2015).

The National Youth Development Fund (NYDF) was introduced in 2005 to create sustainable employment opportunities for young people through the development of sustainable citizen owned youth enterprises. The challenge for this initiative, however, is a lack of monitoring and evaluation system. As a result it has not been implemented with high level of entrepreneurial discipline by the beneficiaries. Moreover, since government is the only implementer of the program (i.e., without partnership), the program has limited capacity regarding business development and support from other stakeholders (Organization Development Institute in Africa (ODIA), 2011). In addition, Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES) was developed in 2012 to support a wide range of initiatives aimed at encouraging employment, entrepreneurship and skills development among youth. Young people (18-35 years old) who are not employed and out of school have benefited from this program (National Economic and Social Councils, 2015). The National Internship Program (NIP) was established in 2008 to help unemployed graduates to acquire work experience and enhance their employability (Tesliuc, et al., 2013). The program targets only those unemployed graduates who have a Bachelor's degree or diploma. Interns have been paid P2000 until March, 31, 2013. Since then the allowance was reduced to P1400. From this amount, the government put aside P100 every month for each intern which will be paid to the interns at

the end of their program. Since its inception, interns have been assigned to government offices, private sectors, parastatals and NGOs. As per the report in May 2013, 55% of interns were employed. The public sector was the highest employer (45%).

2.4. Theoretical framework

The holistic employability approach which is proposed by McQuaid & Lindsay (2006) is adopted for this study. The model helps to examine different factors that might be responsible for unemployment of graduates. The model is different from the previous employability model which was developed by Gazier in 1998 as it focuses not only on personal skills and attributes (supply side), but also take into consideration personal circumstances and external factors (demand side). The three components of the model are presented as follows:

a. Individual factors

The model helps in identifying individual factors which affect graduates employability. For example, a person may not get employed even if he/she possesses a Bachelor's degree qualification because of lack of transferable and social skills. Similarly, a person may not be employed due to lack of work experience. Work experience and generic skills are important for graduates to increase their employability. Lees (2002) states that work experience, such as internship and voluntary work, help students to learn from their experiences from the world of work. As a result, they develop competences and skills to boost their employability. Similarly, Pool & Sewell (2007) observe that graduates with work experience are more likely to secure employment than those who do not have work experience. In addition to graduates' specific subject skills and knowledge, employers increasingly need graduates with generic skills in a number of areas. National council for work experience (NCWE) (2003) indicates that, according to international employer Barometer (IEB) survey, over 85% of employers prefer soft skills such as communication and team work as the most important capabilities among new graduates. Thus, the study will assess the impact of these factors related to graduate unemployment.

b. External factors

Labor market conditions, macro economic factors and recruitment procedures are considered as external factors which affect graduate employment (McQuaid & Lindsay, 2006). Macroeconomic stability, level of competition for job, availability of jobs in the national economy, condition of work and remuneration, employers' formal recruitment procedures, etc. are all related to external factors. Thus, the study will also investigate these factors in order to assess their impact on graduate unemployment.

c. Personal circumstances

This may affect graduates' ability and willingness to take an employment opportunity due to social and cultural influences (McQuaid & Lindsay, 2006). For example, some types of jobs are ostracized by graduates and society in some places. Thus, the study will examine the impact of those factors on unemployment of graduates.

Generally, the above stated factors are incorporated within the concept of employability. Thus, this broad framework could be helpful in this study in examining a variety of factors affecting graduates in getting jobs. For example, individual factors such as the level of personal motivation to seek work, the extent of an individual's mobility in seeking work, the extent of an individual's transferable skills (problem solving, communication, team work and adaptability), and work experience will be examined in this study to identify some of the factors which are responsible for unemployment of young graduates. Furthermore, some of the external factors such as provision of relevant and quality education, availability of appropriate jobs in the local economy, and level of competition for jobs will be examined.

Therefore, this study will examine the above factors to find out their impact on graduate employability in Botswana.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3. Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology used in this research. The chapter is structured as follows: Section 3.2 describes the research site. Section 3.3 discusses the research methodology. Under this section, the research design and research methods are presented. Section 3.4 focuses on research sample which constitutes study population, sampling technique and sample size. Section 3.5 presents data collection techniques which include in-depth interviews and focus group discussion. Under this section, instruments for data gathering such as semi-structured and unstructured interviews are presented. Data management and analysis are discussed in Section 3.6. Section 3.7 describes the limitations of the research. Section 3.8 presents ethical principles which are taken into consideration in this study. These include permission to conduct the study, informed consent, voluntary participation and confidentiality. Finally, the summary of the chapter is provided in Section 3.9.

3.1 Research site

The study site is Gaborone, capital city of Botswana. This is the place where I expected to find many graduates and organizations. A number of tertiary education institutions are located in Gaborone, including the University of Botswana. The University of Botswana is the largest university in the country and a large number of students from all parts of the country join this University every year. It is also in Gaborone that one could find a large number of unemployed graduates. Thus, it was convenient for the researcher to find graduates in Gaborone. Furthermore, due to time and money constraints, the research was confined to Gaborone.

Since the respondents stay in different places in Gaborone, the researcher carried out the interview in times and places which were convenient for the respondents. In this regard, five of the respondents chose their offices where they were working as Interns; two respondents preferred their home; six respondents chose University of Botswana campus and the remaining three respondents were interviewed at the researcher's residence. Most respondents preferred to have the interview carried out at the University of Botswana campus

and were comfortable to speak freely. The respondents from different organizations chose to be interviewed in their offices.

3.2 Research methodology

This section describes the research methodology employed in this study which includes research design and research methods.

3.2.1 Research design

A research design provides a plan on how a research is carried out. The decisions on how the data is collected and analyzed were the main parts in this research design. The study used exploratory research design in which qualitative approach was employed. This is because it helps in exploring factors that contribute to graduate unemployment.

3.2.2 Research methods

This study employed qualitative research method. Qualitative research involves a process known as induction approach which relies on ‘bottom-up’ from respondents’ views to construct different concepts and theories (Soiferman, 2010). Qualitative research is an open exploratory way of doing research that encourages research respondents to express their experiences, feelings and views in their own terms, and allowing them to give their own emphasis and meaning to their experience (Soul City, 2003). Thus, the researcher selected this method as it offers flexibility to respondents to express their views and experiences. In addition, the method allowed the researcher to understand in-depth the feelings of the respondents from their facial expressions, emotions or anger. Qualitative method also gives an opportunity for the researcher to have in-depth understanding of a social phenomenon by using different methods of data collection; for example, in-depth interview, respondent observation and focus group (Mack et al., 2005). The method provides the researcher different perspectives from which a social phenomenon can be seen. Furthermore, qualitative research uses a naturalistic approach that seeks to understand a phenomenon in context specific settings, such as “real world setting where the researcher doesn’t attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest” (Golafshani, 2003).

3.3 Sampling

Sampling refers to the selection of subjects to be studied. There are two major types of sampling methods – probability and non-probability sampling techniques. In this qualitative research, non-probability purposive sampling technique was used.

3.3.1 Study population

The study mainly targeted unemployed graduates in Gaborone, and key informants from organizations located in Gaborone. The unemployed graduates were drawn from the fields of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Botswana. The respondents were those unemployed graduates who graduated with a Bachelor's degree from 2011 to 2015. However, unemployed graduates from other fields of study and those with certificate and diploma were excluded from this study.

Furthermore, six key informants (two from each organization - government, NGOs and private) were drawn. From government organizations, Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture and University of Botswana were selected. The reason for the selection of Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture was that many government initiatives related to youth unemployment, including graduate unemployment, are implemented by this ministry. For example, the ministry is responsible for assigning unemployed graduates to organizations for the Internship Program. Therefore, it has better knowledge of what might be the chance of these unemployed graduates after their completion of the Internship Program and those unemployed graduates who are still in the queue for internship. Furthermore, the Ministry has information related to graduates such age, gender, type of qualifications, etc. The specific unit which participated in the study was the Department of National Service and Internship (DNSI). Similarly, one person from the University of Botswana was selected to gather information about employability of graduates. The University of Botswana is one of the higher learning institutions which produce many young graduates in the country. This helped to get information about the employability of its graduates, the need for collaboration between the university and employers, the type of fields which are demanded by Botswana's labor market and other related information. The specific unit that participated in the study was the Department of Institutional Planning.

Two organizations from NGOs were drawn for this study - Project Concern International and Humana People to People Botswana. These organizations were chosen because they have some knowledge about graduates as they always host graduate interns. From the private sector Kgalagadi Breweries Limited (KBL) and Limkokwing University of Creative Technology were chosen. The main reasons for the selection of these organizations were based on their knowledge related to labor market demand and graduates' skills that enable them to be employed.

3.3.2 Sampling technique

In choosing the sample of respondents, the researcher used non-probability purposive sampling technique. As Obasi (1999) stated, if the goal of a survey is to obtain ideas, good insights, and experienced critical appraisals, a purposive type of non-probability sampling is suitable. In addition, if a researcher is interested in a particular issue which very few people have knowledge about, a purposive decision has to be taken to include such knowledgeable people (*ibid.*). Therefore, a purposive sampling method was employed to enable the researcher to select those respondents who have particular experiences and specific knowledge about the issue. This method was also useful for situations where the researcher needed to reach a targeted sample quickly. The respondents who were chosen in this method generated useful data for the study.

3.3.3 Sample size

The sample size includes fifteen young unemployed graduates from the fields of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Botswana and six key informants from different organizations. The sample size was determined based on the theory of theoretical saturation or redundancy, the variation of target population, and the approach of the data collection method. Purposive sample size is determined on the basis of theoretical saturation (Mack et al., 2005). Thus, increasing the size beyond 21 could not produce new insights for the research questions. In addition, the sample size with respect to this study was considered enough to represent the variation within the target population. Limitation of time and resources were also considered by the researcher to limit the size to 21.

The researcher selected unemployed graduates only from Humanities and Social Science disciplines. The main reason was that the rate of unemployment is higher in these fields of

study compared to others. Although the number of female respondents dominated the sample, the sample consisted of both male and female respondents. The researcher made every effort to balance the gender; however, it turned out that female unemployed graduates were more interested to participate in the study than male respondents. In addition, three men from Humanities withdrew from taking part after they initially agreed to take part in the study.

3.4 Data collection techniques

Data collection was carried out from March 19, 2016 to June 6, 2016. There are four methods of data collection. These are questionnaire, interview, examination of documents and observation (Rubin & Babbie, 1997). The researcher used both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through interviews using selected young unemployed graduates and key informants from different organizations.

The researcher began data collection by interviewing the selected unemployed graduates. The researcher contacted the respondents (unemployed graduates) through the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture since the Ministry has a list of unemployed graduates through the Internship program. In addition, some respondents were approached by a research assistant who was recruited to identify potential respondents. The research assistant was one of the unemployed graduates from Social Sciences and hence it was easy for her to identify unemployed graduates. The research assistant identified respondents who are interested to take part in the study and the researcher met each respondent to carry out the interview. In addition, respondents from different organizations were identified based on personal knowledge of the researcher and direct contact of the organizations. The researcher used English language to communicate respondents in the interview.

A pilot study was conducted using two young unemployed graduates from the University of Botswana. The sample size of the pilot study was limited to two using the criteria of 10% of the actual sample size. The respondents who took part in the pilot study were not included in the main sample of the study. According to Simon, M.K. and Goes, J. (2010), researchers use pilot study to check out if there are any ambiguities or if respondents have any difficulty in responding to the research questions. Furthermore, pilot study often provides the researchers a clue or ideas that he/she may not have foreseen prior to conducting the pilot study. Therefore, the researcher will have the chance to redesign the interview instruments to

overcome difficulties the pilot study reveals (ibid.). During the pilot study, it was observed that providing some clues for some of the questions was necessary. For example, for the question, *what initiatives did the government take to address unemployment of young graduates?*, it was important to name some of the government initiatives to lead respondents to focus on government initiatives which were designed to benefit graduates. In addition, the researcher modified question number 5 to guide the responses of the respondents (see appendix D for Interview Guide). Therefore, the pilot study helped the researcher to identify the deficiencies of the interview instrument and to modify the questions. The data collected during the pilot study was not included in the main analysis.

The researcher also used secondary data from sources such as journals, articles, reports, and unpublished resources. In addition, official documents were used.

3.4.1 In-depth interviews

In-depth interviews with one-on-one were used in this study to explore in detail the respondent's own perception and accounts about the research questions. Unlike quantitative studies, this method allowed the researcher to probe respondents repeatedly in order to explore issues in-depth. Furthermore, it allowed the researcher to investigate issues beyond what has been said based on respondents' unexpected insights, for example, their facial expression, anger, etc.

Prior to in-depth interview, consent of the unemployed graduate respondents was formally sought from each participant. The respondents filled informed consent form (see appendix C) and the questionnaire which focused on socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents such as name, age, gender, qualifications, marital status, etc (see appendix A). All respondents were willing for the interview to be recorded using a digital audio recorder. The researcher also took field notes during the interviews. All respondents were very cooperative and free to express their views and experiences. Each respondent was interviewed with a similar set of questions related to the topic of the study. The questions were mainly semi-structured (open ended) questions.

The researcher had also a one-on-one interview with key informants from government, NGO and private organizations. Prior to the interview, the respondents filled the informed consent

form and questionnaire designed to capture demographic data (see appendix B). Except two respondents from government organizations, all agreed the interview to be recorded using a digital audio recorder. The first interview among key informants was carried out with the Director of Institutional Planning at the University of Botswana. The interview focused on tertiary education systems and current needs of industries, issues related to skill mismatch, and the success of entrepreneurship courses at the University of Botswana. Secondly, the researcher interviewed the Internship officer at the Department of National Service and Internship (DNSI) at the Ministry of Youth, Sports and culture. This interview focused on gathering information related to unemployment growth rate among graduates, particularly, from Humanities and Social Sciences, and the factors related to unemployment. The researcher also investigated the impact of government initiatives, for example, National Internship Program on graduate unemployment. Thirdly, the researcher interviewed the Administration officer of Project Concern International (PCI) which is an NGO. Currently, this organization is providing internship services to young unemployed graduates. The researcher was able to gather valuable information with regard to the effectiveness of the Internship Program. Moreover, the officer provided information regarding the main factors related to unemployment of graduates and the impact of government initiatives which were designed to tackle the problem of graduate unemployment. In the fourth and fifth place, Human Resource (HR) and Operation Manager of Kgalagadi Breweries Limited (KBL) and Director of Registry at Limkokwing University of Creative Technology were interviewed respectively. These respondents provided information related to what skills and attributes are needed from graduates to increase their employability; main factors which contribute to graduate unemployment and the challenges facing government initiatives that they are familiar with. Lastly, the researcher interviewed the Human Resource Manager from Humana People to People Botswana. In this interview, the researcher was able to gather information related to factors that lead to unemployment among graduates, the impact of government initiatives, and possible strategies to address the problem.

The average time for the each in-depth interview was 30 minutes. At the end of the interview, the researcher asked respondents if they have questions or comments about the interview and thanked the respondents for taking part in the study.

3.4.2 Focus group interview

Focus group discussion is one of the methods of interview techniques which center on group shared values, beliefs and experiences with in the context of an issue under study (Obasi, 1999). Focus group is a guided discussion of small groups with a specific topic. Respondents are selected based on their relevance to the topic being discussed (Rubin & Babbie, 1997). The researcher chose focus group interview to get diverse, dynamic and detailed information from the respondents. In addition, this discussion helped to reach group consensus about factors that contribute to graduate unemployment and impact of government initiatives.

The respondents who took part in the focus group discussion were drawn from those respondents who participated in the in-depth interview. Initially, the researcher planned to form two focus group discussions. The reason for this was to avoid the risk of dependency on one group. However, the researcher faced difficulty to organize two groups. Most unemployed graduates who participated in the one-on-one interviews declined to come for focus group discussion. As a result, it was decided to carry out one focus group discussion. However, only three respondents showed up for the focus group discussion while the other three withdrew after they initially agreed on the time and date of the discussion. Although the researcher wanted to mix respondents from both fields of studies – Humanities and Social Sciences, the respondents who were in attendance were all graduates of Social Sciences. The researcher used digital audio recorder and field notes during the focus group discussion. The discussion took one hour and 20 minutes.

3.4.3 Instruments for data gathering

Two instruments, a demographic questionnaire and a semi-structured interview guide, were used to gather data. A demographic questionnaire was used to gather data about the participant's age, name, qualifications and other related information. This was designed to capture background information of the respondents.

The semi-structured questions focused on open ended questions. Open ended questions were important to get detailed information and allowed flexibility for both the researcher and the respondents. This also helped the researcher to probe, for example, by asking 'why' or 'how' questions. According to Edwards and Holland (2013), semi-structured questions assist researchers to probe issues during interview so that a researcher can have in-depth

understanding. It also helps to develop rapport with respondents. Furthermore, it can assist to uncover issues that may not have been anticipated by a researcher. However, the disadvantage of this instrument is that it takes longer time to conduct and analyze.

3.5 Data management and Analysis

Information which was collected in the field using digital audio recorder and hand written notes was transferred to a computer. The researcher conducted one interview per day and transcribed before the next interview with the other respondents. The audio recorded interviews were stored in a computer and protected with a password. The researcher then transcribed the audio format interviews into text form.

Prior to coding, the researcher read and re-read the entire interview to get a good grasp of the whole interview. Once the researcher has coded the data, themes and sub-themes were identified. Then the data was categorized according to the themes. The researcher began analysis in the field with jotting, field notes and transcriptions. As indicated in Braun and Clarke (2006), “qualitative thematic analysis focuses on identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes a data set in detail. However, frequently, it goes further than this, and interprets various aspects of the research topic.” Thus, the researcher used thematic analysis for this study because of its flexibility. It allowed the researcher to categorize and analyze a wide range of data. Furthermore, by using thematic analysis, the researcher was able to link the different opinions of respondents and compare their similarities and differences.

Finally, after the data was logically processed and analyzed, conclusion and recommendation were presented. The data will be kept for one year after the research is completed.

3.6 Study limitation

The study has limitations with regard to sample size and study site. The chosen study site was Gaborone with a sample size of 21 respondents. It is difficult to generalize the result of the study as a reflection of the situation in Botswana based on data collected from such a single site. However, Gaborone is the city where many organizations and unemployed graduates can be found. In addition, the study was limited to graduates from the fields of Humanities and Social Sciences as the rate of graduate unemployment is high in these

disciplines compared to others. Furthermore, the study was carried out based on cross sectional study and hence limited to the current state of graduate unemployment. Therefore, the result of the study may not be generalized as a representative of graduate unemployment in Botswana.

3.7 Ethical consideration

Ethical principles and standards are critical in qualitative research in order to avoid immoral behavior. Therefore, the researcher was guided by the following ethical issues to safe guard respondents' interest.

a. Permission to conduct the study

The researcher secured permission from the office of Research and Development, University of Botswana, and Ministry of Local Government to carry out the research. Research permission allows in assessing whether a research proposal is safe and ethical and will protect the rights and welfare of human subjects (Stuart & Barnes, 2005).

b. Informed consent

The research maintained informed consent. Respondents were asked to give their consent prior to the commencement of the research. The researcher provided the necessary information to respondents in order to get their consent. For example, the purpose of the study, potential benefits or risk of the study, the extent of confidentiality and rights to withdraw from the study at any time were explained.

c. Voluntary participation

Respondents were not influenced to be involved in the study. They participated voluntarily in the research study. Their rights were also respected throughout the entire research process.

d. Confidentiality

Confidentiality and privacy was maintained throughout the research process. Respondents were informed that their names will not mentioned in the study. Furthermore, data was kept confidentially, i.e., interview recordings and interview transcripts were stored in password protected files on the researcher's computer.

In addition, the audio files and the laptop were protected using password. The recorded audio files will be kept for a year. The researcher will keep the original audio file for year in case if there is a need to check the original one. After a year, the audio file will be deleted. The transcript was coded using pseudonyms so as to mask personal information.

3.8 Summary

The study employed qualitative research method. This method allowed respondents to express their views and experiences freely. The researcher benefited from this method since it provided flexibility as well as in-depth understanding of the issues related to the study. The study site was Gaborone, the capital city of Botswana where one can find a large number of unemployed graduates and different organizations. In this study, purposive sampling method was used in order to select respondents based on their experiences and specific knowledge about the study. The sample size (fifteen unemployed graduates and six organizations) was chosen based on the study objectives and availability of time and resources. The researcher used in-depth interviews and focus group discussion to collect data. Data was analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a flexible tool which helped the researcher to categorize and analyzed data.

The study, however, has limitations in terms of sample size and study site. Therefore, the study results may not reflect the general graduate unemployment situation in the country.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings based on the primary data collected from unemployed graduates and key informants from various organizations. Section 4.2 provides a brief profile of respondents. Section 4.3 discusses the factors which have contributed to unemployment of young graduates. In this section, the findings are organized according to thematic areas based on the individual views that have been identified as factors responsible for unemployment of graduates. Section 4.4 provides an assessment of government initiatives that have been directed towards addressing unemployment among young graduates in Botswana. This section also discusses the challenges faced by government initiatives. Possible solutions towards addressing graduate unemployment are discussed in Section 4.5. Finally, the summary of the chapter is provided in Section 4.6.

4.1. Respondents

The respondents for in-depth interview include fifteen unemployed graduates with BA degree from the fields of Humanities and Social Sciences. The individuals in the focus group discussion were the same individuals who participated in the in-depth interview. Furthermore, six individuals from different organizations were interviewed on one-on-one basis. The respondents' real names and their organizations are withheld to conceal their identity.

Table 1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of unemployed graduates

Respondent	Gender	Age	Fields of Study	Faculty	Marital status	Source of income	Duration of Unemployment
A	Female	27	Public Administration	Social Science	Single	None	3.5 years
B	Female	26	Public Administration & Psychology	Social Science	Single	None	2.5 years
C	Female	26	Public Administration	Social Science	Single	Internship	2.5 years

D	Female	27	Public Administration & Sociology	Social Science	Single	None	2.5 years
E	Female	26	Public Administration	Social Science	Married	Internship	2.5 years
F	Male	31	Environmental Science and Sociology	Humanities	Married	temporary	2.5 years
G	Female	23	Law	Social Science	Single	Internship	8 months
H	Female	26	Public Administration & Psychology	Social Science	Single	Internship	2.5 years
I	Male	25	Archaeology & Environmental Science	Humanities	Single	None	2.5 years
J	Female	27	Environmental science & education	Humanities	Single	None	2.5 years
K	Female	25	Double major (Public Administration & Environmental Science)	Humanities	Single	Internship	1.5 years
L	Female	26	Law	Social Science	Single	Internship	7 months
M	Female	26	Public Administration and political Science	Social Science	Single	Internship	2.5 years
N	Male	26	Public Administration and Sociology	Social Science	Single	temporary	3.5 years
O	Male	26	Environmental science & education.	Humanities	Single	temporary	2.5 years

As can be seen from Table 1, most of the respondents (eleven) were Social Science graduates and four were from Humanities. An attempt was made to include equal number of respondent from Social Sciences and Humanities. However, some respondents from Humanities withdrew after they initially agreed to take part in the study. In fact, three male respondents withdrew from

the interview after they had agreed. This may explain why the number of females was higher than males. Most of the respondents were aged between 25 and 27.

Seven of the respondents were engaged in Internship Program with source of income being internship allowance. Three of the respondents were in temporary employment and five of the respondents did not have any source of income. Thirteen of the respondents were single and two were married.

Table 2 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Key Informants from Organizations

Respondents	Gender	Level of Qualification	Marital status	Job Title
A	Male	BA Degree	Married	Director of Institutional Planning
B	Female	BA Degree	Married	Principal Internship officer
Z	Female	BA Degree	Single	Administration officer
X	Male	BA Degree	Married	HR and Operation Manager
Y	Female	Masters	Married	Associate Director of Registry
W	Female	Masters	Married	HR Manager

Table 2 highlights the demographic characteristics of key informants from different organizations. Among the respondents, two were male and four were female. All of them were married except one. In terms of level qualification, four have bachelor's degree and two have master's degree.

4.2. Factors contributing to unemployment among graduates

The respondents shared their views with regard to factors that contribute to unemployment of graduates. The factors raised by respondents include insufficient job creation, skills mismatch, lack of work experience, lack of practical skills, unavailability of early retirement scheme, lack of entrepreneurial skills and attitude of graduates for some type of jobs.

Figure 1 indicates the main factors that contribute to unemployment of young graduates in Botswana. The weight of each factor is indicated by its percentage.

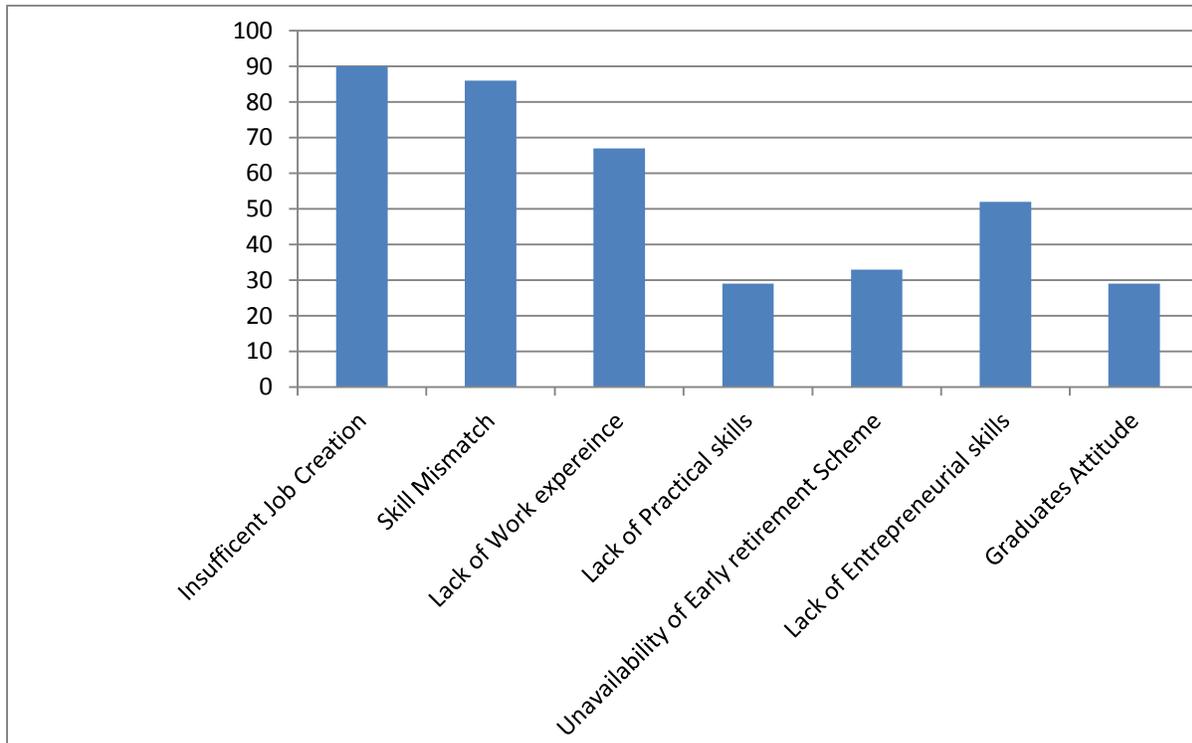


Figure 1: Factors which contribute to unemployment of young graduates

4.2.1 Insufficient job creation

All of the respondents (fifteen unemployed graduates) believed that there are limited jobs in the labor market. Among these, seven respondents felt that the supply of graduates exceeds the limited jobs available in the labor market. Five respondents remarked that freezing on hiring by government organizations has exacerbated the situation of unemployment. Furthermore, few respondents mentioned that the limited expansion of the private sector in the country has contributed to the rise of unemployment among graduates.

Research shows that Botswana has achieved impressive economic growth; however, this remarkable economic growth has not been able to create enough jobs in the economy (African Economic Outlook, 2012). Hence, the problem of unemployment among youth, including graduates, remains one of the main concerns of the country (ibid.). Malema (2012) state that

since 1991 Botswana's job creation in the formal sector has lagged behind compared to the rate of population growth. The mining sector has been contributing the biggest share of the GDP. However, few employment opportunities have been created in the capital intensive mining industry. The government of Botswana has given priority to its policy of diversifying the economy. But the progress has not yet been realized (Malema, 2012).

Respondent A, 26 years old female respondent with BA in Public Administration and political Science said that government is responsible for creating opportunities and jobs for youth, as reflected in the quote below:

"...Government is the main employer in this country. The increasing number of young graduates cannot be absorbed by limited vacant positions in government organizations. There are also limited vacancies in private organizations to accommodate the ever increasing graduates. Government should create enough jobs and opportunities for youth. One way of increasing employment is through the expansion of the private sector; therefore government should encourage private sector to expand in the country..."

(Respondent A)

Respondent L, 26 years old, who has a Bachelor's degree in Law indicated that there are not enough private sector organizations to provide jobs for young graduates.

"...There are not many foreign companies and investment organization operating in the country. That's why there is shortage of jobs in the market. Government should encourage foreign companies to invest in Botswana and create jobs for youth..."

(Respondent L)

A male participant, 26 years old, who has a Bachelor's degree in Public Administration and Political Science indicated that Botswana needs more private sector organizations to support government in creation of employment.

“...I think government is in a difficult situation to a certain extent because they also have a budget limit and establishment to recruit employees. Government cannot do it alone, so the private sectors should help government to create jobs. On the other hand, the expansion of private sector in the country is not large enough to absorb many graduates. So some initiatives are needed to encourage local entrepreneurs and graduates to create businesses so that they are able to create jobs...”

(Respondent N)

Respondent M, who has a Bachelor’s degree in Public Administration and Political Science, spoke of the need for more private organizations to boost employment.

“...I think government has not done a lot in terms of job creation in our country. As we know, government is the main employer in the country while the private sector in this country is limited. So government needs to encourage private sector to create more employment...”

(Respondent M)

A number of researchers have indicated that the private sector, particularly, Medium and Micro enterprises play an important role in the socio-economic development of countries since they are a major source of employment, economic growth and wealth creation (Nkwe, (2012); Mwobobia (2012)). The government believes that private sector can make significant contributions in terms of employment creation and economic development. Similarly, the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (2013) states that “government of Botswana has planned (in NDP 10) a policy to create favorable conditions that enable the private sector to assume the leadership role in the growth of the economy.”

Some respondents pointed out that, even though there are vacant positions in government organizations, government has frozen recruitment to reduce government expenditure.

“....Government has already stopped recruiting graduates. Although there are many vacant positions in government organizations, graduates are not hired. This is one of the reasons for the increase in unemployment of graduates.....”

(Respondent C)

A 26 years old female respondent, who has a Bachelor's degree in Public Administration and Sociology, agreed that the freeze on recruitment by government is one of the reasons for unemployment of graduates. Respondents E, G and K concurred with this view.

"...Government has suspended recruitment. In the olden days, young graduates were absorbed by different government organizations upon completion of their studies. Because of a freeze on government hiring, many of us are left unemployed..."

(Respondent D)

"...The jobs are there since they recruit interns in place of the vacant positions. Recently, government organizations froze recruitment of graduates because of the recession and limited budget. This exacerbates the situations..."

(Respondent E)

"...I think in 2014, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or World Bank (WB), advised the government not to hire more employees. I would not blame the government because the expenditure for government organizations has increased. On the other hand, this has contributed to the increase in the number of unemployed graduates but government is the only responsible organ to find ways to resolve the problem of graduate unemployment..."

(Respondent G)

"...I think jobs are there because we saw many vacant positions in government organizations. But, the problem is that they do not advertise those vacant positions...."

(Respondent K)

“...Government has been the main employer of graduates from Social Sciences and Humanities. Thus, the freezing of hiring in some government organizations has led to the increase in unemployment from those fields of study ...”

(Focus Group)

According to the budget speech of 2012, each Ministry has been advised to cut down on spending by 5% effective from April, 2012 and to freeze hiring unless it is very essential (MFDP, 2012).

Some respondents also indicated that the increasing number of graduates from different tertiary institutions have contributed to the oversupply of graduates to the labor market. Many tertiary institutions in Botswana, particularly, private ones, are producing a large number of graduates in Social Sciences and Humanities (Gregory, 2011). Thus, the number of graduates from these fields of study is increasing from time to time whereas there are limited jobs available in the market.

A 31 years old male respondent who has a Bachelor’s degree in Environmental Science indicated that the supply of graduates exceeds the limited number of jobs.

“...I think there are a lot of graduates in this country chasing limited number of jobs. The number of graduates has exceeded the available jobs. Therefore, graduates from the fields of Humanities or Social Science cannot find jobs....”

(Respondent F)

Another respondent who studied Public Administration and Psychology said:

“...Too many graduates from the same program compete for limited jobs. For example, in our field of studies, humanities, lots of graduates have attained their qualifications but the jobs are limited to absorb all of us...”

(Respondent H)

A 27 years old unemployed graduate from the field of Humanities said that she could not get a job since there are many graduates in the same field of study for the limited number of jobs out there.

“...There are lots of graduates, for example, in the fields of humanities but the jobs are limited in the market. I am saying the jobs are not enough to accommodate the ever increasing graduates...”

(Respondent J)

Similarly, respondents N, O, I, and B pointed out that there are limited jobs in the market compared to the number of graduates.

“...The number of graduates is high compared to available jobs. It is not only the University of Botswana but also private institutions produce many graduates in similar fields. Therefore, the industry in the country cannot absorb all these graduates...”

(Respondent N)

“...There are no more jobs in the economy to absorb graduates. Even if graduates have the right skills which are needed by the market, sometimes, they may not get employed because of limited jobs...”

(Respondent O)

“...I think the number of graduates is high compared to the available jobs. For example, I graduated in Archeology and Environmental Science but found it difficult to get a job in the museum or mining areas. Because, those positions are already filled up and there are no new positions...”

(Respondent I)

“...There are so many graduates from different institutions but government has not created enough jobs for all graduates...”

(Respondent B)

With regard to lack of job creation, among the six respondents from organizations (government, private and NGOs), four respondents concurred with the views of unemployed graduates indicating that there are not enough jobs created for graduates in the market. In relation to the question: *Do graduates from the fields of Humanities and Social Sciences have difficulties to find jobs compared to other graduates from the fields of Health and Engineering?*, a respondent from a government university indicated that it's true that graduates from those fields have difficulties in finding jobs because many positions in government organizations are already filled up. He further indicated that in the past, government used to train students and upon graduation assign them to different organizations. But now, graduates need to compete for limited jobs in the labor market and hence, graduates, particularly, from Humanities might get difficulties to find jobs. Likewise, another respondent from a government organization which deals about youth empowerment mentioned that the supply of graduates by different tertiary institutions surpasses the demand for the labor market. In other words, each year, a large number of graduates are produced from government as well as private institutions of higher learning but the jobs are limited compared to the number of these graduates.

A Human Resource and Operation Manager from a private brewery company also mentioned that low job creation in the economy is the main reason for unemployment among graduates. In his opinion, there is a lack of creativity in terms of jobs by the authorities. There should be a deliberate move to create jobs. For example, if you have Biology graduates from UB, there should be laboratories in different regions to conduct quality assurance on food, drinks, etc. But, we do not have such expansion in industries. Furthermore, an HR Manager from an NGO which deals with HIV/AIDS related projects indicated that Botswana's job market is small and now it has become saturated. According to the respondent, the number of educated people increases from year to year whereas the economy has not expanded to create enough jobs to absorb these educated young people.

However, two respondents from a private University and an NGO which deals with social welfare believe that there are enough jobs and opportunities in the market.

“...Government has created enough jobs and opportunities. When we talk about opportunities, people should be able to create their jobs too since there are opportunities. For example, government provides grants and different schemes to

unemployed graduates. But the problem is that many unemployed graduates from the fields of social science and humanities lack entrepreneurship skills and as a result they are waiting for long till they are employed. Therefore, I think government has provided enough opportunities for graduates to get jobs...

(Associate Director of Registry)

“...My opinion is that, I do not think there is lack of jobs in the market. Government alone introduced 6,500 jobs for people last year. This indicated that government is capable to recruit many people including interns. Although some of the positions might require many years of work experiences, I hope interns, who have two years of experiences through internship, would be considered...”

(Admin officer)

Research conducted by Szirmai, et al. (2013), on productive employment in Sub Saharan Africa, found that in middle income countries (MICs), the formal sector is too small. This leads to competition among the highly skilled people for limited jobs. In the same research, it was suggested that to expand job creation, attention should be given to entrepreneurs and firms in the informal sectors. In addition, African countries need to invest in agriculture, which is more labor intensive, by expanding commercial farming and manufacturing. Along this line of thought, the government of Botswana has introduced different initiatives such as CEDA, LEA, LIMED, YDF etc. to enhance economic diversification and employment creation (African Economic Outlook, 2012).

As per the findings of this study, most respondents (nineteen out of twenty one) remarked that there are no enough jobs in the labor market and attributed this as the main reason to the rise of unemployment among young graduates. Previous researchers (e.g., Siphambe (2003), Gregory (2011)) identified insufficient job creation as the main factor responsible for unemployment of graduates. On the other hand, two respondents from organizations pointed out that one cannot say there is no sufficient job creation since government has created enough opportunities that help young graduates to create jobs for themselves. For example, among government initiatives,

CEDA, YDF and YFF provide funding to young graduates to engage in self-employment and to create jobs for themselves as well as for others.

It seems unemployed graduate respondents consider only the limitation of the formal sector in terms of employment while there are opportunities to create self-employment through government initiatives. It could be argued that the limited expansion of the private sector and the freezing of government recruitment might have contributed to the increase in unemployment among young graduates. It is also stated in the theoretical framework that external factors such as unavailability of sufficient jobs in the local economy and high level of competition for limited jobs can have negative impact on the employability of young graduates.

4.2.2 Skill Mismatch

Among the fifteen unemployed graduates, twelve believe that some courses which are offered at the University of Botswana are not in demand in the labor market. As Kalamatianou & Kougioumoutzoki (2012) state, “unemployment can be due to mismatch between the skills of graduates and the needs of the economy.” In the same research, it was reported that young graduates in Ireland from 1980s to 1990s had difficulties in getting employment because of an oversupply of graduates and rise of enrolment across different fields of study that did not seriously take into account labor market needs.

Similarly, in Botswana, some researchers indicate that skill mismatch is one serious problem which leads to the increase in unemployment among graduates. Nthebolang (2013) observes that despite the problem of unemployment in Botswana, employers are still having difficulties to fill their vacant positions because they do not get applicants with the right skill set. Furthermore, Motlaleng and Narayana (2014) state that there is a mismatch between the supply and demand of skilled labor in Botswana. It is also indicated that the government of Botswana continues to sponsor students without assessing the needs of the industry, which has resulted on the increase of the rate of unemployment among graduates. Their research highlight that many graduates do not have the necessary skills which are required by the labor market.

One of the respondents who has a Bachelor's degree in Public Administration and Political Science confirmed that some of the courses in Social Sciences and Humanities are not in demand in the labor market anymore.

"...Many students are taking courses which are not needed by the market. For example, I studied Psychology and Public Administration but these courses are not in demand now. That's the main reason for most of us not to being employed..."

(Respondent B)

Similarly, respondent G who has a Bachelor's degree in Law pointed out that the University of Botswana is providing courses which are not in demand in the labor market and attributed this as a reason for being unemployed.

"...The problem here is government has sponsored those courses which are already saturated in the market, for example, social sciences, humanities, Information Technology, etc. As a result, many of us do not have skills and training which are needed in the market..."

(Respondent G)

Respondent L who graduated in 2015 with a Bachelor's degree in Law also indicated that graduates from some fields of study are no longer needed by the labor market whereas some areas are needed in the labor market even if people do not have degrees.

"...For some fields of studies the market is saturated. For example, in our field, you do not get hired. In other areas it is easy to get a job; for example in law enforcement areas such as police and army. You do not need to have tertiary education to get a job in these fields. In the area of health, for example nurses get jobs easily..."

(Respondent L)

A male respondent aged 26 who has a Bachelor's degree in Humanities indicated that Botswana's education system does not consider the needs of the industry.

“...The education system does not produce graduates ready for the job market. It focuses more on theory than practical skills. There is no needs assessment in terms of what the education system should produce to feed into labor market. Students take courses they wish to do without considering the employment opportunity. This creates mismatch between the education system and the needs of the industry. For example, there are more than 10,000 degree holder teachers sitting at home but government is still sponsoring more teachers. As a result, there is high unemployment among graduates...”

(Respondent O)

Respondent E who is a Public Administration graduate indicated that it is not easy for Social Science graduates to get jobs, particularly, in the private sector. She went on to say that:

“...Some fields of study are not in demand. For example, if you study Public Administration you may not get employed in private organizations....”

(Respondent E)

A male respondent, 26, who is Public Administration graduate, mentioned that some fields are saturated whereas University of Botswana is still producing graduates from such fields of study. He expressed that:

“...Some jobs are too crowded compared to others. In other words, some graduates do not get jobs because there are already many graduates from the same fields of study and who are still without jobs. I think some fields are saturated; for example, the University of Botswana still produces graduates from the field of humanities but the skills are not needed by the industry any more unlike fields like engineering, Health, etc ...”

(Respondent N)

Respondents from government, NGO and private organizations concurred with the remarks raised by the unemployed graduates with regard to the imbalance between supply and demand of

the labor market. For example, an HR and operation manager from a brewery company described that there is a mismatch between the demand in the labor market and skills of graduates. Furthermore, he mentioned that some graduates lack soft skills.

“...Nowadays, the quality of graduates is falling. Graduates cannot even construct a single sentence. In our days, we used to work hard but now many of them do not work hard. However, we cannot generalize since some graduates are good and competent. In the past, the University of Botswana had a very good reputation. Recently, however, I am starting to be a bit skeptical...”

“...It seems government is not fully aware of the skill mismatch problem. Higher institutions are admitting students who do not have value at the end. Training more people in humanities does not make sense while there are a number of unemployed graduates from this field of study...”

(Admin officer)

“...The market is saturated for some fields of study such as Humanities. However, many graduates studied these fields which are not needed by the labor market; as a result, they ended up being unemployed...”

(Internship officer)

“...Graduates from the fields of Humanities and Social Sciences are not able to get jobs immediately compared to other graduates who studied other areas such as Health and engineering. Government should assess the market in terms of what the country needs before they sponsor students...”

(HR manager)

With regard to skill mismatch, the University of Botswana has been criticized for producing graduates with skills which are not in demand in the labor market (Siphambe (2003); Ama (2008)). From the theoretical framework perspective, provision of relevant education has been stated as an external factor that affects graduates' employability.

The findings of this study also confirmed that graduates from the fields of Humanities and Social Sciences are having difficulties in finding jobs compared to graduates from other disciplines such as Health and Engineering. In the opinion of the respondents, the main reason for the difficulties in finding jobs is due to skill mismatch between the needs of the industry and the skills graduates' possess. Furthermore, the findings indicate that there is no strong link between the University of Botswana and potential employers. As a result, the University has been producing graduates with skills which are not required in the labor market.

4.2.3 Lack of Work Experience

Among the fifteen unemployed graduates, eleven indicated that work experience is one of the barriers for graduates to get employed. The unemployed graduates felt that the work experience that they got through the National Internship Program (NIP) is not enough for them to be employable. Their observation is that many job adverts specify many years of experience (mostly more than two years) which young graduates do not have.

A 26 years old respondent from the field of Public Administration and Political Science described that many employers require work experience as one of the criteria to be hired.

"...Many organizations require work experience such as five years or more to fill their vacant positions. They only hire experienced applicants. Because of this, we are not getting employed..."

(Respondent A)

"...Most government organizations require work experience, usually more than two years, but we have only two years work experience from NIP. It's mainly a matter of years of experience but not the capability to do the job..."

(Respondent B)

A 31 years old male respondent, from the field of Environmental Science and Sociology, explained that the National Internship Program is not enough since many employers require many years of work experience which young graduates do not have.

“...After I completed my studies, I tried to apply everywhere. I have been asked many times about work experience which I do not have. This makes me automatically disqualified from the competition. I have seen many people who went through Internship but did not make it due to lack of years of work experience...”

(Respondent F)

In relation to the question: *Can work experience be a factor of graduate unemployment?*, Respondent N who is 26 years old male responded that:

“...Yes, it can be. Some employers advertize jobs which require years of work experience. But that should not be an issue. Graduates need to be encouraged to be involved in attachment program and volunteer work to enhance their work experience during their studies at school. Therefore, when they graduate, they would have adequate work experience which is needed by employers...”

(Respondent N)

As indicated by Oxenbridge and Everson (2012), a high proportion of young people believe that lack of work experience is the main barrier to get work in the UK. According to ILO (2012b), one of the difficulties young people face in getting jobs is lack of work experience. ILO also mentioned that employers need to take a step to give young people a chance to get their first job. According to a 27 years old female respondent, who studied Environmental Science and Education, work experience that graduates get from the Internship Program is not enough since employers require more than that.

“...Many advertised jobs require work experience which specify more than five or ten years. But we have only two years experience from the Internship Program...”
When asked whether she has gone through Internship Program, she said, “No, I did not. Since it is difficult to get a job being a graduate from the field of Humanities, I decided to study Post Graduate Diploma in Education to become a teacher...”

(Respondent J)

The other female respondent, who studied double major in Public Administration and Environmental Science, agreed that the Internship Program is not sufficient to be considered as work experience.

“...The National Internship Program (NIP) is not really enough to be considered as work experience. Sometimes we are assigned in jobs which are not related to our field of study, so such experience does not benefit us...” She expressed her experience with an employer where she was asked whether she has five to seven years of work experience.

(Respondent K)

Similarly, a female respondent, who is a Law graduate, stated that employers do not see the Internship experience as equivalent to work experience.

“...I heard from some people that they were asked about their work experience. Some employers required five to ten years work experience. Because of this long experience requirement, they did not get hired. But, it does not make sense since the only way we get experience is by working...”

With regard to NIP work experience, respondent L said that, *“If I have two years of work experience from NIP and want to be hired by private law firms, I do not think I would be hired. This is because they want many years of court practices that I do not have.”*

(Respondent L)

Respondent M stated that:

“...Most of the jobs require work experience related to your field of study. When you are a fresh graduate, you do not have experience. Some employers like to ask for many years of experience that we do not have...”

(Respondent M)

When asked about the experience that she has from the Internship Program, she stated that *“I do not think most employers prefer Interns. They want people who have permanent jobs and have work experience related to their field of studies. In addition, the Internship is only two years which is not enough as most employers require more years of experience...”*

A 26 years old male respondent mentioned that many employers require work experience. As a solution, he suggested that students should spend half day in school and the remaining half day on practical skills in organizations, so that they will have four years of experience when they graduate.

“...Recent graduates lack job experience which is required by employers. For instance, most South African technical college students, by the time they complete their degrees and diplomas, have the same years of work experience as the duration of their studies. But, here is different. Graduates from many fields of studies including Science, Information Technology and Accounting do not get jobs since they do not have enough work experience...”

(Respondent O)

In relation to the question, *Can the Internship Program experience be considered as work experience for those graduates who have done Internship Program?*, the Associate Director and Registry Manager, from a private university, indicated that:

“It depends. For example, in Limkokwing, all projects that students are assigned are industry based. By the time, they graduate they already build profiles which are needed by the industry. Whatever is taught matches the needs of the industry. Students go for attachment or internship which helps to fill the gap of work experience. In the National Internship Program, graduates are sometimes assigned to undertake tasks which might not be related to their studies. For example, someone who is assigned in reception to answer phone calls or to serve tea does not get a job even if he/she spends two years. But if they are assigned to undertake tasks relevant to their qualifications, it could be considered as work experience”

An HR and Operation Manager from a private brewery company indicated that young graduates should not be required to have work experience since they get experience on the job. In his view, work experience from young graduates may be needed to a certain extent. He also pointed out that the Internship Program is a good opportunity for graduates to get work experience. Similarly, an Administration Officer from an NGO which works on social safety nets believes that young graduates should not be required to have work experience because when they graduate they do not have work experience unless they are put into a working environment. According to her, employers should give a chance to fresh graduates so that they can learn and acquire experiences on job. The important thing is to put people in a system where they can learn and do the tasks they are assigned to do.

Furthermore, an Internship Officer from a government organization which deals with youth empowerment mentioned that it is rare to find new graduates with many years of experience. As she pointed out, the main reason for the Internship Program is to provide work experience that young graduates do not have. *“One thing I actually feel sad about is that they may not learn a lot. Sometimes, employers or managers refuse to let Interns know and learn more about the organization.”*

Many respondents pointed out that lack of work experience is a major obstacle to get employed. Many unemployed graduates felt that the experience they acquired through the National Internship Program did not help them to get employed. On the other hand, two respondents from organizations pointed out that the Government of Botswana introduced the National Internship Program to prepare young graduates for employment through the experience they acquire from internship.

In the theoretical framework, work experience has been identified as individual factor which affects employability of graduates. Graduates not only get technical skills during job training but can also develop social skills, team work, communication skills, decision making ability and other soft skills which can help them to enhance their employability. The two years National Internship Program should be sufficient to prepare young graduates for the world of work. In fact, interns can add value if they are trained on areas related to their field of study. Thus, employers need to consider this experience and give a chance for young graduates to get a job.

4.2.4 Lack of Practical Skills

Some respondents indicated that the current teaching approach at the University of Botswana is mainly theoretical. This makes graduates not prepared for the labor market because many of the employers require practical skills from graduates. Lack of practical skills can affect the employability of graduates. Bunoti (2010) states that there are too many unemployed graduates from the field of Humanities even though some of them scored high grades in their courses. One of the reasons for this is that the content and teaching approaches are too theoretical which resulted in producing job seekers and not job makers. Graduates from the fields of engineering and vocational schools have better chances to compete on the job market or to be self-employed.

One respondent who has a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science and Sociology explained that he has difficulties in getting a job since the labor market demands more practical skills and specializations in some areas.

“...In the field of Humanities, we graduated without specializations. For example, I took courses from Environmental Sciences and Sociology but the market needs someone who has practical skills and specialized in some areas. Thus, even if jobs are advertised, you do not know where you exactly fall. That's the main reason we, most of the time, do not qualify. However, those graduates who further continued their education to Masters and PhD can make it...”

(Respondent F)

Similarly, a respondent who has a BA degree in Public Administration explained that most of the courses at University of Botswana are theoretical and lack practical skills which affected our employability.

“...Most of the courses that were taught in the university are theoretical. We did not get the chance to apply our theoretical knowledge practically. On the other hand, employers need practical skills not only theoretical knowledge. Therefore, we could not be competitive in the labor market...”

(Respondent E)

The importance of practical skills is also emphasized by a graduate of Law who works as an Intern in the High Court of Botswana.

“The education system focuses more on theories than practical skills. We are taught more theoretical courses. It should be the other way round. In the end, we could not get sufficient practical experience which is needed by employers...”

(Respondent G)

“...Many courses in the Humanities and Social Sciences do not provide practical skills compared to courses in other fields of study. For example, students from science fields such as Physics or Engineering would have temporary or practical work experience which can help them work in industry. Social Sciences focus more on theory than practical needs of the industry...”

(Focus Group)

The teaching method of the University of Botswana has been criticized for its limited practical work such as work based learning (Nthebolana, 2013). The findings indicated that, in the fields of Humanities and Social Sciences, there is limited integration of practical work with theoretical knowledge. As a result, most graduates from the mentioned fields of studies lack practical skills which are required by employers. In addition, in the literature review, it was indicated that employers are not only demanding academic qualifications from graduates but also require graduates' to have practical skills that can readily be applied to work.

4.2.5 Unavailability of Early retirement Scheme

Some respondents expressed concern that keeping older workers in the work place for long period has negative consequences in the employability of young graduates. In their opinion, government needs to develop early retirement packages in order to release jobs for young people.

A female respondent who has a BA degree in Public Administration and Political Science indicated that:

“...Many positions in government organizations are occupied by aged people. Consequently, fresh graduates may not get vacant positions to be recruited at entry level. Retirement age should be reduced to fifty so that there will be space for us, ‘young graduates’....”

(Respondent D)

A female respondent, age 26, who has a Bachelor’s degree in Public administration and Political Science, explained that early retirement needs to be encouraged; the performance of every employee should be assessed and appropriate action taken. She said that:

“...I am talking about government since government is the main employer. There are a lot of employees who are old and incompetent. So, government should give opportunity to young graduates to replace old employees. Most of them continue to occupy positions regardless of whether or not they are performing well. Government should encourage early retirement and establish a mechanism to assess the performance of every employee....”

(Respondent M)

A 26 years old female respondent, who graduated in 2012, blames government for not introducing early retirement scheme.

“...Many positions in government organizations are occupied by people who are over 60 years old, and this decreases the chances of employment for young graduates. Government should encourage early retirement to create jobs for the youth....”

(Respondent A)

Respondent J from the field of Humanities also indicated the need for early retirement but government should put some conditions to support those people who are willing to take early retirement.

“...Old people need to be encouraged to take early retirement. Of course, government should provide money (as a loan) to get them into business. This will help to create jobs for us...”

(Respondent J)

An HR and Operation Manager from a private brewery company indicated that the unavailability of early retirement scheme leads to high unemployment rate among young graduates. The government needs to improve salary of employees so that they can save for retirement.

“...The lack of early retirement program leads to the increase in unemployment among graduates. The reason why many people do not take early retirement is that they do not save money to start their own business. Therefore, they cannot leave their jobs and create space for new graduates. That’s why in Botswana we cannot leave before retirement. But, government should improve remunerations and encourage and support old people to engage in business before retirement...”

There are different views among scholars in developed and developing countries regarding early retirement. According to some researchers (Boheim, 2014; Banks et al., 2008), there is no evidence that reducing the retirement age leads to creating jobs for younger workers. Those who oppose increasing the retirement age argue that keeping older workers leads to lower opportunity for employment of young graduates. Mbijjiwe and Kathure (2013) state that “many developed countries are increasing the retirement age but it is obvious that such policy will never do any good to Africa. If we have to reduce the unemployment problem in Africa, early retirement schemes with conditions should be considered.” The importance of early retirement scheme was emphasized by many respondents as one mechanism in reducing unemployment among young graduates.

Encouraging aged public service employees to take early retirement might help to increase the chance of young graduates getting jobs. However, there must be supporting mechanisms such as entrepreneurial training before they leave their jobs.

4.2.6 Lack of Entrepreneurial Skills

Among the fifteen unemployed graduates, seven respondents remarked that the lack of entrepreneurial skills among young graduates has contributed to unemployment. In their opinion, since many of young graduates depend only on white collar jobs in the formal sector, they are left unemployed when jobs are unavailable in the labor market. Furthermore, the respondents mentioned that the concept of entrepreneurship does not come within one night; rather it needs a change of mindset. The self employment concept should be taught in higher learning institutions and even at primary and secondary school level.

Four respondents from unemployed graduates revealed that since they were not taught the concept of entrepreneurship at the university as well as secondary school levels, they did not think much about self-employment.

“...Many of us do not have the concept of self-employment. Students should be taught entrepreneurship concept. This helps graduates to create jobs for themselves and reduce their dependency on government...”

(Respondent L)

“...Most of us do not have entrepreneurial skills. Therefore, we could not create jobs to be self-reliant. We were not taught the concept of self-employment at secondary school and university...”

(Respondent D)

“...We always depend on formal employment and we want government to recruit all of us. This is impossible; we should also think about self-employment. Most of us, however, do not have entrepreneurial skills since we have not passed through it. I think entrepreneurship courses should be given at early level- like primary and secondary school levels in order to instill business concepts into students...”

(Respondent M)

“...Many young graduates do not have an understanding of the concept of self-employment. In fact, we do not have background in business. One needs some

kind of skills, training and even interest to be involved in businesses. But, most of us do not have skills to run business...”

(Respondent O)

Since most graduates do not have relevant experience and confidence to engage in entrepreneurship after graduation, the main purpose of entrepreneurship should be to develop entrepreneurial capacities and mindsets of students (Lekoko et al., 2012). Taking this into consideration, the Ministry of Education and Skills Development introduced entrepreneurship education to empower students with entrepreneurial skills (ibid.). Consequently, the curriculum for primary and secondary school across the country was revised in order to integrate entrepreneurial education in all subject areas. According to Ojeifo (2012), effective entrepreneurship education enhances student’s creativity and increases the spirit of taking initiatives which are useful in every one’s life. Thus, entrepreneurship education should be given to students across all disciplines in higher institutions of learning.

One of the respondents, who is 25 years old and a graduate of Humanities mentioned that many graduates are not ready to be engaged in self-employment.

“...Since there are few employers in the market, we need to create jobs for ourselves. But most of us are not ready to be self employed. If you are not hired by government or private organizations you should create jobs for yourself...”

(Respondent I)

Similarly, another respondent with a BA degree in Public Administration and Political Science said that some graduates do not want to take risk in doing business.

“...Even if some graduates had some skills to run their own businesses, they do not get involved in business because of risks. There are no channels for graduates to encourage them to be involved in business...”

(Respondent C)

According to an HR and Operation Manager from a private brewery company, many graduates do not have the concept and culture of self-employment.

“...Graduates should not just focus on formal employment. They need to think about self employment if they do not get job. In Botswana, we prefer to be taken care of by the government. We seem to depend on spoon feeding by the government. Here, graduates prefer to sit and look smart instead of work hard....”

An Associate Director of Registry from a private university indicated that institutions are responsible for training students to understand the concept of self-employment.

“...I would say in Botswana market there is a lot to be done. Many graduates lack self employment concept. We cannot blame them; they are not taught at secondary school and higher learning institutions. Institutions are responsible for training graduates to become entrepreneurs and independent. For example, there are so many social problems such as drug abuses, teenage pregnant, etc. in the country, however, there are very few private counseling services to deal with these problems. There are many avenues in which graduates can start business in such areas....”

According to some scholars (Lekoko et al. (2012); Odia & Odia (2013); Ojeifo (2012)), entrepreneurship education has a positive influence in order to change the mind set and attitudes of students. It also helps to fight unemployment and poverty among youth, including graduates, through the creation of self-employment. In addition, entrepreneurship education is useful, particularly, in countries where the culture of entrepreneurship is not well developed (Ayatse, 2013).

Research indicates that entrepreneurial skills are very important in order to shape the minds of graduates from expecting to be employed to become self-employed (Garwe, 2014). In our study, seven unemployed graduates and two respondents from organizations believe that lack of

entrepreneurial skills is one of the reasons for the increase in unemployment among graduates. This has been observed in this study as most respondents (unemployed graduates) have been waiting to be employed instead of taking self-employment as an option. For example, government initiatives such as CEDA, YDF, women empowerment and YFF are some of them which promote entrepreneurship in the country. However, the lack of entrepreneurial skills seems hindering young graduates from benefiting from these opportunities.

4.2.7 Graduate Attitude towards Some Jobs

Respondents had mixed views regarding graduates' attitudes towards any job. Among the fifteen unemployed graduates, six respondents believe that, currently, graduates do not have negative attitude towards some jobs; rather they are ready to pick any job in any organization. They mentioned that, in the past, graduates had many options to choose from since government was responsible to assign them to different organizations. They indicated that it was possible to get employment in government or private organizations. However, in the current situation, it is not easy to be selective since the jobs are limited in the labor market.

“...In Botswana, the Directorate of Public Service Management (DPSM) is responsible for recruiting graduates for government organizations. One has options to apply to government, private or other organizations but the main thing is when one needs a job, one has to apply where there is a vacancy. One does not discriminate...”

(Respondent F)

“...I am ready to be employed by any organization- private or government. But if I have a choice I prefer to be employed by government organizations because of high salary and job security...”

(Respondent H)

“...Most of us do not want to be employed in some kind of jobs which are not related to our qualifications...” When she was asked which sector (government or private) she prefers, she said, *“personally I do not mind to be hired in any sector but government is more secure than private and it has many benefits. In*

private organizations, one can get easily fired when profit goes down. Therefore, I prefer government organizations to private. But, generally, I do not have negative attitude towards any job.”

(Respondent I)

“...Nowadays, I do not see that happening. We do not have negative attitudes towards jobs. Currently, we are willing to go to rural areas if we get permanent jobs...”

(Respondent J)

“...These days, a lot of people, including myself, are desperate to get a job so I do not think graduates can afford to discriminate jobs...”

(Respondent M)

“...I do not think graduates have negative attitudes towards any job. In the past, graduates used to be assigned jobs in different organizations. But now, things have changed. In fact, we are so desperate to pick any job out there since there are not enough jobs in the market...”

(Respondent A)

“... I think it depends on the attitudes of graduates. I, personally, prefer to work in an area related to my field of study but if I do not get a job related to my field of study, what can I do? I will pick any....”

(Respondent C)

An HR and Operation Manager from a private brewery company also concurred with the views of the unemployed graduates regarding job discrimination.

“...I do not think many graduates are picky in terms of jobs. In the past, it was possible. But nowadays, it is hard for them to be selective since there are limited jobs in the market...”

Similarly, the Associate Director of Registry from a private university indicated that currently graduates are desperate to take any job.

“...Right now, graduates are really willing to go anywhere to get a job as long as they get something. That’s why they go for the Internship Program throughout the country with P1400. Even for jobs outside Gaborone they are ready to go. They are willing to take anything...”

Some respondents, four out of fifteen respondents, stated that graduates are too selective in terms of jobs. In their opinion, some of the graduates do not want to get out of the city even if they are offered permanent jobs because of many opportunities in the city. Furthermore, some of them indicated that they prefer government to private organizations because of job security and high salary.

“...Private organizations do not want to pay more for young graduates and they want to get labor for free. Thus, I prefer to be recruited by government organizations for job security reasons and also to get better salary...”

(Respondent G)

“...I think we are picky. For example, many of us, including myself, do not like to get out of Gaborone even for permanent jobs. That’s why most of us remain unemployed and stay at home...”

(Respondent K)

“...Now the situation in Botswana has changed, you cannot target the job that you want. For example, if I concentrate only in the legal field, I will not get a job. It is hard to get a job related to your field of study...” When asked the question: *Do you think graduates, including yourself, do not want to go out of Gaborone even if they get a job related to their field of study?, she said “Yes, if you tell them there is a job in Francistown or Kanye, they may not go; rather they want to stick*

here (Gaborone). Most of us, including myself, do not like to go out of the city because there are more opportunities in the city.”

(Respondent L)

“...It is very true that we do not like some jobs because most of us are looking for jobs related to our fields of studies. And this helps us to improve our CV and even to continue for our Masters degree...”

(Respondent N)

“...Yes, graduates choose some jobs over others. Even myself, I prefer to work in an area related to my field of study...”

(Respondent O)

Two respondents from NGOs indicated that some graduates have negative attitudes towards some types of jobs. An Administration Officer mentioned that some graduates do not want to go out of the city for jobs.

“... Honestly, they do. Some graduates are so picky in terms of jobs, particularly, if a job is not related to their qualifications. For example, graduates do not want to get out of the city; rather they prefer to be recruited in a Bank and to have their own car... etc. I personally did not want Internship but after Internship I got a lot of experience....”

Similarly, an HR Manager from an NGO which works on HIV/AIDS related projects had this to say:

“...Many graduates prefer some types of jobs. For example, when we interview graduates for some positions they focus more on salary. Some of them compare their salary with other staffs. To get high salary they should start at entry level with a low salary...”

Five out of fifteen respondents from unemployed graduates remarked that they cannot say graduates are selective or not selective in terms of jobs, but it depends on the individuals.

The findings highlight that the attitudes of graduates towards some types of jobs have changed. Previous studies indicate that some graduates had negative attitudes towards some type of jobs and these attitudes left them unemployed (Adeyemi, 1997). However, unlike in the past, the findings reveal that most respondents believe that graduates do not have negative attitudes towards some types of jobs as there are limited jobs in the labor market.

4.3. Government initiatives and its challenges

The government of Botswana has come up with different initiatives to reduce unemployment and empower the youth to participate in economic development. In the last decade, many initiatives were introduced to address youth unemployment, including young graduates. For example, Citizen Entrepreneur Development Agency (CEDA), Local Enterprise Authority (LEA), Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES), Young Farmers Fund (YFF), Youth Development Fund (YDF), National Internship Program (NIP), Graduate Voluntary Scheme (GVS) and Women Empowerment are some of the initiatives introduced to address unemployment. Among these initiatives, most respondents were familiar with National Internship program (NIP), Graduate Volunteer Scheme (GVS) and Youth development Fund (YDF). Thirteen respondents were either undergoing Internship or have already done so.

4.3.1 National Internship Program (NIP)

National Internship Program (NIP) is one of the government's initiatives meant to prepare graduates for employment and to sharpen their skills in order to be competitive in the labor market. All respondents were familiar with this program. The respondents acknowledged that the National Internship Program can help them to get work experience, develop their skills and keep them busy. According to some respondents, the Internship Program also creates an opportunity to increase their employability. The program enables some of the interns to be absorbed by government departments or employed somewhere else upon completion of the program.

Some studies have indicated that internship program, both in developed and developing countries, has been carried out for more than a decade to close the gap between graduates skills and needs of labor markets. According to Mgaya & Mbekomize (2014), the Internship Program

prepares graduates for the world of work, shape their soft skills, and improve their use of technologies. Furthermore, employing interns could be cost effective and minimizes the risk of recruiting unsuitable employees. Similarly, Bukaliya (2012) mentions that internship offers variety of benefits for graduates, graduates' institutions and employers. The program provides graduates with hands-on experience and improves their personal development. Graduates are able to enhance their decision making skills, critical thinking and increase their confidence and self esteem. Furthermore, graduates get a chance to develop skills such as team work, relationship building, leadership, presentation, communication, time management and problem solving (Mgaya & Mbekomize, 2014).

Despite the potential benefits of the Internship Program, many of the respondents believe that the program has not been effective in its impact. In their views, the program has not been assessed whether it has contributed to reducing unemployment of graduates. Furthermore, some respondents indicated that some employers consider the Internship Program as a way of getting cheap labor. They also mentioned that they work eight hours per day five days per week for two years but they do not get paid a decent salary and that resulted in them being demoralized. In addition, they commented that the internship allowance is inadequate (i.e., P1300 (approximately, \$130) because it is not enough to cover their transport, accommodation, food, medical, and other expenses.

Most respondents (seventeen) explained that the National Internship allowance is not enough even to cover basic needs, as reflected by quotes below:

“...The success of this program is to equip students with work experience and skills. In addition, some lucky interns might get jobs. But, we are paid P1300 which is not enough to cover our transport, rent, food, medical, and other expenses. Because of this, sometimes, we are forced to ask for money from our parents and relatives...”

(Respondent B)

“...It's obvious that the success of this program is providing work experience. But, internship is like a free labor since we spend eight hours at work place with inadequate allowance. The allowance is very small to cover our expenses such as

food, transports, house rent, medical and other expense. People are stressed out with this insufficient allowance...”

(Respondent F)

“...Although the National Internship Program provides us work experience, the allowance that we get is inadequate. For example, I come from Muchudi so I spend the allowance for transport, toiletry, food etc. The money is not enough to cover all these basic things...”

(Respondent L).

“...The positive part of the Internship Program is it gives you exposure to real world, develop your skills and help you to establish network. However, the allowance is very small while the price of everything has gone up. It's also stressful to be interns since we do not get encouraged to do more...”

(Respondent I)

“...The success of the program is that it keeps us engaged in some work instead of roaming the streets. In addition, you learn and acquire the necessary skills even if it is not considered as work experience by some organizations. Furthermore, one can get acquainted with work environment. The challenge of the program, however, is we work as interns eight hours but we do not get paid. Mostly, we do not benefit from the program except the low allowance...”

(Respondent A)

The above notwithstanding, the Internship Officer from a government organization which deals with youth empowerment emphasized that the purpose of National Internship allowance is not to cover all the needs of interns; rather it is to cover their meal as well as transport costs. According to her, some unemployed graduates are not interested in volunteering because of National Internship allowance. She also explained that the initiative offers benefits to the youth to get work experience that most fresh graduates do not have. The program also enables them to be competitive in the labor market. Similarly, the Administration Officer from an NGO which deals

with social safety nets indicated that interns should not expect internship allowance to cover all their needs. Because, the main purpose of the allowance is for transport and meal.

“...The allowance is not enough but we are lucky to have it. When I was abroad studying international relations, many people did not get the chance to get involved in an internship program, scholarship and free school fee. Basically, internship allowance is for Interns to work to get experience but some people think that they should get salary as employees. The purpose of the allowance is for lunch and transport. Actually, when you get such small amount of money from internship program, you appreciate the value of money when you start working....”

Majority of the respondents (eighteen) expressed their feelings that most of the time interns are not absorbed up on completion of the program. Hence, they are left unemployed.

“...NIP provides work experience and helps to establish network but the problem is that it does not solve unemployment of graduates. Many of us did not get the chance to be employed at the end of this program; instead we remain unemployed...”

(Respondents D)

“...The advantage of this program is that it provides some experience whether related to ones field of study or not. However, some organizations are exploiting graduates, especially, private organizations. Most government organizations are trying to absorb interns whereas many private organizations do not hire interns; rather they keep on changing interns every two years. Eish, Internship is killing us. Once we complete the program we are not hired. It is like free labor...”

(Respondent E)

“...Government spends a lot of money on this program but at the end of the day it does not benefit us. I could say government is more like a mother. But those

private organizations exploit us and they do not care about us. They keep changing interns every two years and they do not hire graduates...”

(Respondent L)

“...The Internship Program is making many companies not to hire young graduates because they use interns to run their day to day businesses with minimal expense...”

(Respondent N)

“...Upon completion of the National Internship Program, many of the interns are left unemployed. Currently, some organizations, particularly, private organizations prefer to use interns instead of recruiting fresh graduates because the Internship Program encourages them to recruit interns instead of hiring.....”

(Respondent B)

“...Internship program helps graduates to get work experience and develop skills. However, the allowance is not enough but it is better than sitting at home. The problem of this program is that we do not have any guarantee for employment. If you are not employed at the end of the program you will be unemployed again...”

(Respondent G)

An Associate Director of Registry in a private university indicated that although there are vacant positions in organizations they do not recruit graduates; rather they prefer to use interns.

“...Now people are deliberately getting graduates for free through the Internship Program and are not ready to recruit graduates. If you visit different departments, they always use temporary staff such as Interns for P1300....”

A respondent from an NGO which deals with social safety nets remarked that the Internship Program has benefited graduates to get work experience and be competitive. However, the challenge in this program is that most graduates were not absorbed at the end of the program.

“..Since its inception in 2011, there are many graduates who have been employed upon completion of the program. However, after 2011, the chance of getting employment becomes minimal. Currently, government has stopped to assign to private companies because they took advantage of interns instead of hiring...”

In addition, respondents in the focus group discussion expressed that some companies do not hire graduates because they use Interns without any cost.

“...Some companies are not willing to hire graduates since they get free labor using interns. Because, they know government is paying for these interns. So unemployment is blooming and blooming but nothing is done to address this...”

The HR and Operation Manager from a private brewery company, however, disagreed with respondents' views that private organizations do not employ interns. In relation to the question: *Is it true that most private organizations do not recruit Interns?*, he indicated that this idea is totally not true.

“...From my experience this is not true. But the problem is some graduates do not perform to the level needed by organizations. Some graduates are not ready to work. There is no job security in private organizations unless you work hard...”

Furthermore, some respondents indicated that, sometimes, they are assigned to tasks which are not related to their fields of studies such as file recorder, clerk, receptionist, etc. This affects their employability because their academic backgrounds are not in line with the work experience they get through the internship.

“...when we are assigned to big organizations, we are excited to learn but we end up practicing some jobs which are not related to our qualifications. This may affect our employability since our training and work experience are different...”

(Respondent B)

“...The success of this program is that graduates are engaged in some tasks. We get to learn office environment. In this program, however, we get assigned to jobs which are not related to our qualifications. So this will be a problem when we go for job interviews...”

(Participant, H)

A Director of Institutional Planning from a government university also agreed that, sometimes, interns are assigned tasks which do not benefit them.

“...In this program, sometimes, interns are assigned tasks which are not related to their profession. For example, some interns are assigned to work as clerk, file recorder, and receptionist. This makes the value of education worthless ...”

Some respondents also explained that the Internship Program lacks continuous monitoring and evaluation.

“...It was a good initiative in the beginning but after sometime the implementation failed. Currently, this program is not well managed and controlled....”

(Respondent C)

“...No one comes and checks us how we perform. We are not monitored by the host organization as well as responsible person from the Internship Department. Generally, there are no monitoring and evaluation systems in the program...”

(Respondent D)

“...Despite the good intention of the Internship, it has not been evaluated or assessed. Certain institutions provide only the allowance without assessing whether the intern has got proper training or not...”

(Respondent O)

An HR and Operation Manager from a private brewery company also indicated that the impact of the National Internship Program needs to be assessed continuously.

“...The success of this program is that it helps graduates to get work experience. It also gives good exposure to the real world. However, the challenge of this program is that the responsible department is not making rigorous review about this program. For example, graduates are trained as interns for two years but it is not clear what is going to happen to the interns after completing the internship. Many of them are not absorbed after wards. It seems the program is saturated. So what’s the next plan...?”

Similarly, the Administration Officer from an NGO which deals with safety nets mentioned that there is minimal monitoring system for the Internship Program. The department which is responsible for the management of the National Internship program did not monitor whether interns are performing well or not.

“...One of the problems of the Internship Program is that there is no evaluation mechanism whether the interns perform well or not during their internship. They (the responsible organ) do not even check if interns are in the program or not...”

Furthermore, an Associate Directory of Registry from a private university mentioned that:

“...In this program, nobody cares about the monitoring aspect. People use these interns as free labor. Interns do not get the skills that they need which could also benefit employers. Interns do not benefit much. The program pays P1400 which is better than nothing...”

The National Internship Program is expected to benefit young graduates in getting work experience and acquiring skills. However, most unemployed graduate respondents (seventeen) indicated that the internship allowance is not enough to cover their basic needs such as transport, accommodation, food, and medical. On the other hand, the Department of National Service and Internship (DNSI), which is in charge of running the

Internship program, explained that the main purpose of the Internship program is for young graduates to acquire work experience and enhance their employability. The program was not designed to pay salary; rather provides allowance to cover transport and lunch expenses. DNSI also mentioned that host organizations are not forced to recruit interns at the end of internship. Host organizations responsibility is to train interns so that interns can get necessary skills that help in employment.

It seems that unemployed graduate respondents have a different view with regard to the purpose of the National Internship Program. Therefore, DNSI needs to clarify the purpose of the National Internship Program for Interns before they are assigned to host organizations. With regard to tasks assigned to interns, some respondents indicated that they were assigned to tasks which were not related to their fields of study. This could have negative impact towards employability. To alleviate such problems, DNSI should establish appropriate monitoring system in order to assess the performance of interns and related issues.

4.3.2 Youth Development Fund (YDF)

Many of the respondents acknowledged that YDF benefits every youth without discrimination as far as their proposals are successful. However, the respondents expressed that the process to get the grant is not easy; requires too much paper work; and most of the items in the list are not their choice. According to them, sometimes, people are forced to choose a business idea that they do not want because the list is not comprehensive enough. Moreover, the respondents indicated that monitoring and evaluation of YDF is minimal.

Many respondents (eight out of fifteen) among unemployed graduates stated that the process of getting the grant is difficult, takes time and only few people are successful in their grant applications.

“...YDF helps youth to be self-employed and create jobs for others. However, the procedure to get the grant is difficult. It has too much paper work and one has to wait for long time to get a response whether the application is approved or not. For example, my cousin waited for six months to hear from them ...”

(Respondent H)

“...YDF has an advantage since it equips youth with some skills and provides grant for those who succeed in their proposals. However, the program does not benefit all of us. For example, it is not easy for everyone to succeed and get money from this scheme. It failed to meet its objectives....”

(Respondent A)

“...The problem in this program is that not all of us will be successful to get the grant. Only few people benefit from the program...”

(Respondent B)

“...Some people benefit from YDF. But it is not easy to fill the form and get the fund. You should be lucky to get the fund (10/1000 applicants get the money). Sometimes, they would say we do not have money; for example, in 2011, they stopped to provide funding. They have their own standard that we do not understand...” When asked if she was communicated about the outcome of her application, she said, *“Yes. But, the assessment took more than three months.”*

(Respondent C)

“...Citizen Entrepreneur Development Agency (CEDA) or YDF were established to provide funding as well as training for youth who are interested to start up their own business. However, only few individuals have been successful and benefitted from the programs while the majority of the applications were rejected...” When asked whether she has ever applied to YDF, she replied, *“I have not yet applied for funding but I heard from my friends that they were not called after they applied. Usually, one waits for a long time to hear from them...”*

(Respondent D)

“...YDF provides you with the money to start up a business. However, it takes long time to get the fund. For example, I applied in 2014 but I am still waiting to get the fund....”

(Respondent E)

“...I witness that some individuals are successful through this initiative but the challenge is that it requires a lot of paper work; they want you to register for this, for that, photo copies,.... Since all these activities require money which we do not have, we could not be successful in our applications...”

(Respondent J)

“...YDF program provides grant to start up business. But, the paper work is not easy....” When asked whether she has ever applied to get the grant, she replied, *“No, I have not. Because, I am not sure that I am a business person. But I heard from my friends that the paper work is difficult.”*

(Respondent K)

One respondent with a BA degree in Public Administration and Political Science appreciated the YDF initiative.

“...I think this program is good but most graduates are reluctant to access it. The program is available to anyone whether they are educated or not. But to be honest, graduates are reluctant to be self-employed; rather they want to be employed. It benefits all of us...” When asked whether some unemployed graduates complain about the paper work and proposal preparation to get the grant, he said, *“The reason I am saying they are reluctant is because people do not want challenges. When you establish a business, there are ups and downs that you might face. But a lot of people give up when they face challenges.”*

(Respondent N)

Regarding the question whether graduates have difficulties to fill the forms and other processes in the YDF program, an Associate Director of Registry from private organization said that graduates should not complain about the process and filling in YDF’s forms to get funds. She further explained that:

“...Some people do not want hardships. Sometimes they are not willing to go through some challenges. For example, some people do not want to sit down for two or three weeks and come up with viable business plan; rather they complain about the paper work like to fill in the forms. Initiatives are there but to get the money they should go and try those initiatives. And this also requires hard work...”

Among the unemployed graduates, three respondents remarked that there is poor monitoring and evaluation for the YDF initiative.

“...Government is doing well in this program since they give opportunity to the youth to prepare them financially and professionally. Regarding this, most youth have been successful in the area of agriculture and catering. However, the problem is that some people do not repay back the loan once they are given the grant. I can say there is no follow upon how the money is spent or whether people are on the right track or not in their business. Usually, they come once in a while to monitor the beneficiaries, which in my observation is very minimal. I have seen some of my friends end up misusing the money before they start up the business...”

(Respondent F)

“...Despite the benefits of YDF program, there is no monitoring and evaluation system. There is no evaluation whether the program is successful or not; and its challenges, etc...”

(Respondent E)

“...The program is good since it provides you with money to start up your own business but the problem is that there is no support or follow up from government once you get the money...”

(Respondent H)

Respondents in the focus group discussion indicated that YDF should provide continuous support for beneficiaries.

“...The government has money to dish out but if we are not supported we will fail. For example, if you tell your child to cook but you do not show him/her how to cook, it will be a disaster. Therefore, the YDF program should provide us with continuous support in terms of training or funding even after we start the business ...”

An Associate Director of Registry from a private university indicated that YDF needs monitoring and evaluation systems to assess the impact of the program.

“...In my opinion, the challenges of YDF is lack of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Because, once they provide the funding they do not check whether

the project runs successfully. The beneficiaries might not be successful after starting business because some of them do not have a whole set of entrepreneurial skills. Therefore monitoring and guidance are important....”

Four Respondents also complained of the list of business ideas in the YDF program. According to them, the list is not comprehensive enough and if they bring new ideas which are not in the list, their proposals might not be reviewed or may not get the grant. Furthermore, the respondents mentioned that, most of the time, they do not get the amount they applied for in their proposals.

“...In YDF, we are limited by their list of business ideas. We choose only from their list of business items. Thus, sometimes we are forced to choose what we do not want or know. But if we bring our own business ideas, it takes a long time to get an approval...”

(Respondent E)

“...Even if your proposal is accepted, you might not get the amount of money that you applied for. They decide the amount without considering or consulting the applicants. In addition, the business ideas of YDF are limited, so we are forced to choose a business that we do not have interest in...”

(Respondent B)

“... Mostly, this program focuses on agriculture such as farming, fishing, etc. It also has tourism but the challenge is the money is not enough. In Botswana, the tourism is one sided. The list that you get from the YDF program does not consider the needs of all beneficiaries. For example, I want to do business but not related to agriculture such as farming...”

(Respondent O)

“...The success of YDF is in empowering youth to be creative and self-employed. But, the categories of business that get funding are limited. Personally, those business ideas on the list are not in line with my passion to get into business...”

(Respondent A)

Two respondents explained that it is not easy to penetrate the market since there is high competition. Moreover, many beneficiaries are engaged in the same kind of business, for example, catering or hair salon.

“...Not all businesses have market. Sometimes it would be hard for a business to penetrate the market as competition is high...”

(Respondent I)

“...Many of the beneficiaries started similar businesses. But the question is whether the business is profitable or not? How many customers are willing to support our business? Do we have the capacity to run the business? Some people failed to succeed because of lack of support from our people. For example, we, Batswana, prefer to buy food from Spar than to buy from street vendors...”

(Respondent C)

The HR and Operation Manager from a private brewery company also concurred with the views of some unemployed graduates about the difficulties that the youth, including young graduates, have in getting into the business supply chain.

“...Throwing money does not solve the problem. The issue is that the structure of the economy does not allow the youth to penetrate the market. The intention is good but is it the right medicine for the disease? No, it is not...”

Many developing countries including Botswana set up national youth development funds either as grants or loan for the youth to start new business or to expand the existing one. Although the specific objectives of such programs vary from country to country, its common purpose is to create employment through small enterprises development which focuses on specific homogeneous target groups such as women and youth (ODIA, 2011). According to Mwobobia (2012), the main priority for the government of Botswana is empowering the youth by creating more job opportunities. Hence, YDF as well as CEDA give opportunities for many young people to be self employed by providing funds to start or expand existing business. In addition, the programs help beneficiaries by marketing their products and by providing short course training on business skill and management (Tesliuc, et al., 2013). However, these programs have been criticized for their lack of monitoring mechanisms and inadequate regular reports and loan repayments (Themba, 2015). In addition, the programs have not given much attention to the marketing side of businesses (Ibid.)

There is a perception among the unemployed graduates that the YDF application process takes long time and requires too much paper work. In addition, it has been indicated by the unemployed graduates that the list of business areas in the YDF application is not comprehensive enough which results in applicants being forced to choose from the list without having keen interest in the business area. On the other hand, respondents from organization indicated that filling the forms of YDF application should not be seen as a challenge; rather unemployed graduates should be ready to go through challenges in the process of YDF application as well as in the process of business startup.

It is important to understand that there may be challenges one could face in starting up a business. However, the Department of Youth under the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture, needs to regularly revise the forms and list of business areas in order to simplify its services. Based on the findings and other researchers' views, it is crucial to establish monitoring and follow up mechanisms for the YDF initiative so as to support beneficiaries.

4.3.3 Graduate Volunteer Scheme (GVS)

Young graduates are already familiar with Graduate Volunteer Scheme (GVS). According to respondents, the National Internship Program and GVS are different in terms of allowance and completion period. GVS does not have limitation on completion period so that volunteer graduates can stay in the program until they get a job. In addition, the allowance for this program is only P600 which is half the National Internship Program allowance.

According to the Principal Internship Officer from government organization, the government of Botswana introduced Graduate Volunteer Schemes in 2015 so that young unemployed graduates can have opportunities for volunteer work. The program is open to only unemployed Bachelor's degree holders who are not enrolled in other schemes. This program is also open to those graduates who have gone through internship but want to contribute as volunteers. The main objectives of the program are to facilitate skills development and to reduce idle time of young unemployed graduates.

Although few respondents believed that GVS can help them to acquire work experience and skills which enable them to be competitive in the labor market. Most of the respondents, however, expressed that the allowance that they get from GVS is very small and does not cover

anything - even transport. Furthermore, they mentioned that most volunteers do not get employed at the end of this program.

Among the fifteen unemployed graduates, thirteen respondents explained that GVS is not their choice because the allowance does not cover even transport and other basic needs, as reflected by the quotes below:

“...The challenge, however, is government does not force those organizations to absorb volunteer graduates at the end of the program. Furthermore, the allowance (P600) is very small (half of NIP allowance). Graduates in this scheme are not paid as interns in the National Internship Program. It is like free labor. It is completely disastrous...”

(Respondent A)

“...I think it is a waste of time- in terms of money which is very low but you are there from the morning till 5:00 pm. We do not even have time to submit our applications to organizations where there is vacancy...”

(Respondent M)

“...GVS is the worst program because the allowance is much lower than the allowance in the Internship Program. It is P600 which is not enough for food, accommodation and transport...”

(Respondent N)

“...It gets most of us out of our home and helps to acquire some skills and work experience. The challenge is we do not have time to go to other offices for job application. Because, offices are closed after 5:00pm...”

(Respondent K)

“...Honestly, GVS does not work. Because it pays you P600 which is not enough to cover transport and food...”

(Respondent O).

“...It is quite similar to NIP but the allowance is lower than the Internship Program. The benefit of this program is that it helps us to get work experience and skills. In addition, graduates can stay in the program even more than two years. The challenge, however, is that the allowance is very small which does not cover basic needs. In addition, government does not force those organizations to absorb volunteer graduates at the end of the day...”

(Respondent B)

“...It is a shameful scheme. We get nothing out of it. Imagine, you work for eight hours from Monday to Friday but you are paid P600 which does not enough to cover food, transport, toiletry...”

(Respondent C)

“...It is the same concept as NIP but this one is only for government organizations. It is very depressing since we are paid only P600 but we work for eight hours...”

(Respondent D)

“...It is similar to NIP but the allowance is not enough for food and transport; we go to work for five days a week but we are paid half of the allowance of NIP...”

(Respondent I)

“...GVS is the worst I have ever known, but it is a volunteer...”

(Respondent J)

Respondents from focus group discussion concurred with the views of respondents on one-on-one interviews about the challenges of GVS.

“...It is frustrating! We cannot survive with P600. Nowadays, you cannot even get a maid with P600. I think it is created for entertainment, especially for those of us not to sleep at home. The experience is also not recognized as experience...”

(Focus Group)

Although the GVS initiative is expected to benefit unemployed graduates to acquire work experience, most unemployed graduate respondents do not seem convinced about the importance of the program. In their opinions, even though GVS is similar to NIP, the allowance (P600) is very small compared to the allowance in NIP and does not cover transport and other expenses. Therefore, the Department of National Service and Internship needs to study the impact of the program as most unemployed graduates did not see the importance of the program.

4.4. Possible solutions to address the challenges of government initiatives

Respondents were asked to suggest possible solutions to address some of the challenges in government initiatives that have been discussed in the previous sections. Most respondents are familiar with only few government initiatives. Therefore, their suggestions are limited to the initiatives they are familiar with.

Most respondents' suggestions focused more on monitoring and evaluation aspect of government initiatives. With regard to the National Internship Program, respondents suggested that there is a need for regular follow up on how interns perform during their participation in the Internship program and how they are trained, i.e., if they were trained properly and got the necessary skills in the program. In their opinion, no one visited them from the department responsible for the Internship Program and monitor how they performed. In addition, they suggested that the performance and progress of interns should be reported to the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture (particularly, Department of National Service and Internship) every three months. They feel that the report can assist in assessing how the program runs and in evaluating its impact.

Furthermore, some respondents suggested the need to increase the internship allowance as price of everything has gone up.

“...Government and Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture should increase the allowance for interns. At least, the allowance should be half the salary that entry level employees earn...”

(Respondent F)

“...The allowance for the NIP should be revised. It has to be, at least, half of the graduate salary at the entry level....”

(Respondent H)

“...Government should increase the allowance for interns since the allowance does not cover for basic needs- rent, food, transport, etc...”

(Respondent I)

Some respondents also suggested that government should put some conditions on private organizations as many private organizations exploit interns. In their opinion, private organizations should be required to employ at least some percent of interns who are attached in their organizations. Government pays P1320 for each intern on behalf of organizations. Thus, if they do not employ some percent of interns, government should not assign any more interns to such organizations.

“...Evaluation mechanism is also needed so that, every graduate, after the end of the Internship program, can be employed. Because, they used their mind and energy...”

(Respondent O)

“...Government needs to consider the two year Internship Program as a probation period. Upon successful completion of the Internship, interns should to be hired automatically...”

(Respondent E)

With regard to YDF, respondents suggested that the list of business areas in YDF should be revised since it is not comprehensive enough. According to them, instead of listing what beneficiaries have to choose from, it is better to make it open since some people can bring different and fresh ideas which might help to diversify the economy. They indicated that the list limits their choice and hence many of them choose similar businesses such as hair salon, catering, etc, without their interest.

In addition, they recommended setting up an effective monitoring and evaluation system for the Youth Development Fund (YDF) program. Respondents suggested that there should be serious

monitoring system in YDF. For example, it was mentioned that some people get funding from YDF and spend it for unintended purposes. Therefore, a monitoring system should be established to follow up on the purpose for which the beneficiaries spend the funding.

Respondents from organizations also made some suggestion as solutions to the challenges facing government initiatives. Some respondents believe that graduates do not have enough awareness of government initiatives. Therefore, government should do more to create awareness about the existing initiatives. The Internship officer at the Department of Internship indicated that many graduates do not have adequate knowledge about government initiatives. To address this issue, the Department of Internship has a plan to campaign intensively about those initiatives such as NIP, GVS, etc. This will help to create awareness about the benefits of government initiatives. In addition, the officer mentioned that partnership with host organizations is needed to strengthen the positive impact of NIP and GVS.

All respondents indicated the importance of proper monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for government initiatives. In their opinion, although there is an office in charge of monitoring the YDF, the implementation is not satisfactory. Moreover, they mentioned that government alone cannot do everything but the involvement of other stakeholders is needed in job creation.

The respondents also pointed out the importance of self-employment to create more jobs for young graduates. Students from the fields of Social Sciences and Humanities need to be taught entrepreneurial skills since many of them may not get jobs in the labor market. For example, if they are organized in groups, they may get funding from CEDA or YDF that can help them to establish their own businesses.

4.5. Summary

This chapter presented the findings from both the in-depth interview and focus group discussions. In relation to the first question, **what do you see as the major factors that contribute to unemployment of young graduates in Botswana?**, respondents felt that insufficient job creation is the main factor that contributed to unemployment among graduates. Among the twenty one respondents (unemployed graduates and informants from organizations combined), nineteen indicated that there are not enough jobs in the labor market to absorb the increasing number of young graduates. Secondly, eighteen respondents indicated that skill

mismatch is a major factor of unemployment. Thirdly, lack of work experience was stated as one contributing factor of graduate unemployment where fourteen of the respondents believed that young graduates may not get employed due to lack of work experience. Fourthly, many respondents mentioned that lack of entrepreneurial skills also leads to unemployment among graduates. Furthermore, unavailability of early retirement schemes, attitude of graduates for some type of jobs, and lack of practical skills were mentioned as factors that could be responsible for unemployment of young graduates.

Generally, most respondents have similar views on the above factors with the exception of the factor - attitudes of graduate for some type of jobs. Ten respondents believed that graduates are not selective in terms of jobs and ready to pick any jobs.

Regarding the second question, **what initiatives have been in place to address graduate unemployment? And what are the success and challenges of these initiatives?**, respondents expressed their views on those initiatives which they are familiar with. All respondents understand the benefits of government initiatives to tackle the problem of unemployment. However, respondents pointed out the challenges in those initiatives which were introduced to address the problem of unemployment. Regarding the National Internship Program, nineteen out of twenty one respondents believed that the allowance was inadequate to cover basic needs such as transport, food, accommodation, etc. Respondents also expressed their views on the monitoring aspects of the NIP. Eleven respondents indicated that there was minimal monitoring in the program. Moreover, fifteen respondents indicated that interns are not absorbed at the end of the program. Eight respondents also indicated that, sometimes, interns may not be assigned to tasks related to their fields of study.

Even though respondents acknowledged the benefits of Youth Development Program to empower youth in the creation of self-employment, they indicated some of the challenges associated with YDF. Nine respondents believe that YDF has no strong monitoring system. Moreover, eight respondents mentioned that the process to get a grant was difficult. However, key informants from the different organizations did not concur with the views of unemployed graduates on the difficulty of the process to access YDF fund. Moreover, majority of respondents (seventeen) expressed that the Graduate Volunteer Scheme has many challenges including inadequate allowance. Furthermore, respondents suggested some solutions to address the

problems in government initiatives such as the need for monitoring and evaluation, increment of Internship allowance and the need to be absorbed immediately after completion of internship.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the main points of the study. Conclusions are drawn based on the research objectives. This chapter provides some answers to the main research question: *What factors contribute to unemployment of young graduates*. Finally, based on the findings, some recommendations are provided.

5.1. Summary and Conclusion

Graduate unemployment has become a serious concern for the government of Botswana. Graduates from the fields of Humanities and Social Sciences are having difficulties to find jobs in the labor market compared to graduates from other fields of study such as Health and Engineering. This research attempted to identify the factors that may contribute to unemployment of young graduates in Botswana. The research questions were examined through qualitative approach in the form of in-depth interviews and focus group discussion. These methods helped to explore in-depth information from respondents.

The main factors that contribute to unemployment among young graduates are insufficient job creation, skill mismatch, lack of work experience, unavailability of early retirement scheme, inadequate practical skills, lack of entrepreneurship skills and to some extent the attitudes of graduates. Based on the findings and review of previous research, it is possible to conclude that there are limited jobs in the economy to absorb the increasing number of graduates. The government's decision to freeze recruitment in government organizations also has exacerbated the situation of unemployment. In addition, the limited expansion of the private sector in Botswana has contributed to the unemployment of graduates.

Looking at the individual factors, skill mismatch is frequently mentioned as a factor for unemployment of graduates. University of Botswana and other higher institutions are producing graduates with skills that are not needed by the labor market. The demand for Humanities and Social Science graduates has gone down. However, government is still sponsoring many students who study such programs. This will contribute to the increase in unemployment among graduates. Similarly, lack of work experience was reported as a cause for unemployment of graduates. Many vacancies require work experience, sometimes, more than two years which graduates do not have. This requirement makes young graduates disadvantaged in labor market. Furthermore, the lack of practical skills among university graduates affects their employability.

According to the respondents, many courses which are offered at the University of Botswana are theoretical which lack practical skills. On the other hand, employers require graduates who specialize in some areas of study and have practical skills related to their fields of study.

The unavailability of early retirement scheme may also contribute to unemployment of graduates. There are concerns that keeping employees who have served for long period of time might have negative impact on the recruitment of young graduates. Lack of entrepreneurial skills can also lead to inability to create jobs and hence unemployment among graduates. Many graduates, particularly, from the fields of Social Sciences and Humanities lack the idea of self employment. Moreover, the attitudes of some graduates may contribute to unemployment of graduates. For example, some graduates do not want to go out of the capital city to look for jobs and some indicated that they do not accept jobs which are not related to their qualifications. However, most of the unemployed graduates indicated that they do not discriminate jobs.

The government of Botswana has developed a number of initiatives to address the problem of graduate unemployment. Some of the initiatives include National Internship Program, Youth Development Fund and Graduates Volunteer Scheme. The National Internship Program assists graduates to have work experience and expose them to work environment. In addition, it provides opportunities for interns to market themselves and get employed by host organizations at the end of the program. However, the challenge in this program is that, currently, many interns are not employed after completion of the program; as a result, they are left unemployed. In addition, the assignment of interns to jobs which are not related to their fields of study makes the program ineffective. Similarly, Graduate Volunteer Scheme assists unemployed graduates to get work experience. However, all respondents question the importance of this program. Youth Development Fund benefits all youth, whether they are educated or not, as far as they are successful in their proposals. The challenge in this program, however, is that there is lack of proper monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. As a result, some beneficiaries misuse the fund they receive through the initiative.

Some suggestions forwarded by respondents to address the challenges in government initiatives include strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems, revision of YDF's list of business areas, increment of internship allowance, and increasing awareness about government initiatives.

5.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are put forward. The recommendations focus on the three main actors in graduate employment, namely, University of Botswana, Graduates, and Government of Botswana.

5.2.1 University of Botswana

- It seems that the University of Botswana is still running some programs of study that are less favorable in the job market. The University needs to assess the current and future demands of the job market so as to align its programs of study. Therefore, the university needs to regularly review its curricula so that its graduates can be able to find jobs in the labor market. Training of graduates based on the needs of the economy and the country's manpower shortage might help to reduce the problem of unemployment. Therefore, the University of Botswana needs to reduce its intake of students in Social Sciences and Humanities, and increase students' enrollment in those fields which are marketable in the labor market. Furthermore, the university needs to establish a strong link with potential employers to increase graduate employability.
- The Career and Counseling department of the University of Botswana needs to do more to increase awareness among new students about each program of study and the prospect of employability. This gives students insight about what kinds of skills are demanded in the economy.
- It seems that most courses at the University of Botswana are theoretical. Employers require not only theoretical knowledge but also practical skills from graduates. The Universities needs to consciously find the right balance between theory and practical skills so as to increase students' employability.
- The University of Botswana needs to integrate entrepreneurship courses across all fields of the study to develop the concept of self-employment. The findings indicate that many unemployed graduates lack entrepreneurial skills which impede

their ability think about self-employment; instead they are waiting in a long queue to be employed by government.

5.2.2 Government of Botswana

- The Ministry of Education and Skills Development together with the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture needs to involve all stakeholders such as youth, employers, universities, and civil societies to find a way on how to solve the problem of unemployment among young graduates. Since the youth are the main stakeholders in the youth policy, they should be involved in the policy formulation process.
- The private sector (both foreign and local investors) should be encouraged to expand their businesses. In many developed countries, the private sector contributes a lot in the creation of employment for the youth. The government of Botswana has started to empower the youth by establishing different initiatives. For example, the government has a policy to expand the Small, Micro and Medium Enterprises (SMME) in the country. This initiative should continue in a sustainable manner since it has the capacity to grow the economy and to create decent jobs for those graduates who are involved in self-employment.
- The Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture needs to increase awareness of graduates about the purpose and benefits of government initiatives which were developed to address graduate unemployment. This is because many graduates do not have full knowledge of the existing initiatives that were created to address the problem of unemployment. These initiatives should be campaigned through social media, newspapers and other channels so that graduates can become aware and benefit from them.
- Proper monitoring and evaluation mechanisms need to be established for government initiatives such as Youth Development Fund (YDF), Citizen Empowerment Development Authority (CEDA), etc. In addition, these programs

need to provide continuous support such as business training and follow up on the business of beneficiaries.

- The Department of National Service and Internship needs to revise the National Internship Program. It is obvious that the program can help graduates to acquire work experience and develop soft skills. However, it does not seem that interns are satisfied with the allowance and job assignment. In addition, it appears that some employers take advantage of the Internship Program by using interns year after year instead of employing the interns after completing the program. Therefore, government needs to assess the impact of this program. Furthermore, there must be a regular reporting system for program to monitor the performance of interns.

5.2.3 Graduates

- Graduates need to develop skills and work experience through volunteer programs to increase their employability. The volunteer scheme as well as the Internship Program can assist graduates to get work experience and enhance their soft skills which are also required by many employers.
- Young graduates also need to make an effort to explore self-employment as an option if they do not get employed. There are a number of initiatives such as CEDA, YDF, Women empowerment, etc. which can provide funding. Thus, graduates should explore and take these opportunities even though it requires hard work and perseverance to be successful in this competitive environment.

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6 Appendixes

Appendix A: Questionnaire for Socio-Demographic Characteristics of unemployed graduates

Project name: **Factors contributing to Unemployment of young Graduates in Botswana: The Case of Gaborone**

Date: -----

Code no: -----

1. Participant's name: -----

2. Age:

-----Years old

3. Gender

- a. Male
- b. Female

4. Level of qualification: -----

5. Field of study: -----

6. Marital Status

- a, married
- b, single
- c, divorced

7. Size of the family: -----

8. Source of income: -----

9. Year of graduation

a. 2011

d. 2014

b. 2012

e. 2015

c. 2013

Thank you very much for your participation

Appendix B: Questionnaire for Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Key Informants

Project name: **Factors contributing to Unemployment of young Graduates in Botswana: The Case of Gaborone**

Date: -----

Code no: -----

1. Participant's name: -----

2. Gender

c. Male

d. Female

3. Level of qualification: -----

4. Position: -----

5. Marital Status: a, Married b, single c, divorced

Appendix C: Informed Consent

Title of the study: **Factors contributing to unemployment of young Graduates in Botswana: The Case of Gaborone.**

Researcher: Mrs. Sewnet Yilma

Institute: Department of Social work

University of Botswana

Dear Participant,

You are kindly invited to participate in a study about the root causes of Graduate unemployment in Botswana. The overall objective of this study is to identify the root causes that contribute to graduate unemployment; to examine government initiatives targeting graduate unemployment; and to identify challenges in government initiatives. Based on the findings of the study, the project also aims to come up with relevant recommendations which can be used as input for the review of the existing initiatives to reduce unemployment of graduates.

Your participation is voluntary; therefore, no one is forced to take part in this study. You are free to refuse to answer any questions; you are free to withdraw from the study at any time even without giving any reason.

The one-to-one interviews and focus group discussions will be recorded (only audio). However, the respondent has the right to request that the recording be paused at any time. The respondent may ask questions at any time, i.e., before, after or during the interview.

The audio recordings of the interviews will be kept strictly confidential. Transcripts will be stored on a password protected computer. Audio recordings and transcribed data will be destroyed up on the completion of the study. Respondent identity will also be maintained confidential during data compiling.

Please sign this form to show that you have agreed to take part in this study

Name of participant-----

Date-----

Signature-----

Appendix D: Interview Guide

Objective 1

- ❖ To examine the major factors that contribute to unemployment of young graduates in Botswana.

Questions related to this objective

1. What do you see as the major factors which contribute to unemployment of young graduate in Botswana?
2. Do you think unemployment among bachelors' degree graduates from the fields of Social Science and Humanities are increasing?
 - 2.1. If so, what are the factors for graduate unemployment?

Objective 2

- ❖ To explore government initiatives targeting graduate unemployment and their challenges.

Questions related to this objective

1. Which Government initiatives are you familiar with?
 - 1.1 To what extent did these initiatives contribute towards addressing the problem of graduate unemployment?
 - 1.2 What are the challenges in the implementation of these initiatives?
 - 1.3 What are possible solutions to address the problem?

Objective 3

- ❖ To suggest possible solutions that will help to address graduate unemployment.

Question

1. What do you think should be done by the government, UB, employers and graduates themselves to improve employability?

Appendix E: Questionnaire for focus group discussion

Objective 1

- ❖ To examine the major factors that contribute to graduate unemployment in Botswana

Question

1. Why do you think students who graduated from the fields of Humanities and Social Sciences take longer time to find jobs than graduates from the other fields of study?

Objective 2

- ❖ To explore government initiatives targeting graduate unemployment and their challenges in Botswana

Questions

1. Which government initiatives are you familiar with to solve the problem of unemployment among graduates?
2. To what extent these initiatives have addressed the unemployment problem?
3. What are the challenges in these initiatives?
4. What are possible solutions to address the problem?

Objective 3

- ❖ To suggest possible solutions that will help to address graduate unemployment.

Question

1. In your opinion, what could be done by government, employers, University of Botswana and graduates themselves to address the problem of unemployment?

Appendix F: Research Permit