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An Assessment of how Youth Empowerment Programmes have Influenced Availability of Jobs to the Youth in Nairobi County – Kenya

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Abstract

The Kenyan Youth today face a myriad of socio-economic hurdles. The introduction of Youth Empowerment Programmes (YEP) by the Government of Kenya was a move to satisfy the urgency of endowing youth to join in and nurture their development approaches. Empowerment of youths through provision of financial resources and involvement in productive business ventures following skills acquisition was the intention of YEP in an attempt to involve young people in nation-building and enhancement of their living standards. The study sought to assess how Youth Empowerment Programmes have influenced availability of jobs to the youth in Nairobi County, Kenya. Youths between the ages of 18-35 were targeted since they were beneficiaries from the fund. The study applied the Entrepreneurship innovation theory, the theory of youth empowerment, and the youth livelihood and employment theory of change. Contingent information was captured via evaluation of suitable literature on the challenges to the effectiveness of YEDF. Primary collection of information was done using questionnaires, interviews, and observations. The sample population was 120 respondents. Quantitative and qualitative methods were utilized in analysis of collected information. The study established that young people in Nairobi County have obtained loans from the Youth Enterprise Development Fund and embarked on starting their own business. They have been empowered economically and their businesses have grown hence the creation of self-employment and a reduction in unemployment. The study recommends youth training to enable them to acquire appropriate skills, data, and expertise in various and different domains.

Key words: *Youth Empowerment Programmes, National Youth Service (NYS), Uwezo Funds, Kazi Kwa Vijana (KKV), And Youth Employment Development Programme*

1. Introduction

The youth empowerment Programmes (YEPs) activities are founded on the fundamental evidence that if young people have adequate earnings and resources to maintain productive lives, they can produce an economic opportunity, contribute to the wider good, and care for others. Further, to enhance the capacity of young individuals to become drivers of change, it is critical to promote them to use their potentials as citizens and as economic subjects by ensuring that they transit well into adulthood with the skills and capacities to take care of their children (World Vision Armenia, 2015-2016).

Youths, as defined in other African countries like Sierra Leone, are people between 15 to 35 years and accounts for approximately a third of the national populous. However, in accordance with the United Nations UNESCO (2011), youth is defined as a transition period from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence and awareness of our interdependence as members of a community. It is a stage when an individual is becoming independent, fully responsible for his/her actions. He/she is no longer a child. However, age is the easiest way to define this group, particularly about education and employment. Therefore, United Nations defines a youth as a person between the age where he/she may leave compulsory education, and the age at which he/she finds his/her first employment (UNESCO, 2011). UNESCO comprehends that young people are a heterogeneous group in constant evolution and that the experience of 'being' young varies enormously across regions and within countries (UNESCO, 2011).

The Government of Kenya (Gok), like other African governments, has recognized that young people face a daunting hurdle in securing decent employment in an economic context characterized by a lack of job opportunities. Unemployment has been aggravated by factors such as limited work experience and educational levels. A country like Sierra Leone has thus prioritized youth employment as a critical element to its national development agenda in both the Agenda for change (2008-2012) and the agenda for prosperity (2013-2017). In Kenya, through support from the World Bank, the Kenya Government has launched several youth empowerment Programmes to alleviate the problem of youth unemployment.

Youth empowerment programmes have been enacted in both industrialized and emerging countries to tackle joblessness among young persons (Opiyo, 2013). Many countries have come up with different youth empowerment initiatives. For instance, in Britain, the Princes Trust Enterprise programme supports the youth aged between 18-30 years to explore business ideas. In Canada, the government provides loans to the youth to venture into businesses. The loan the government of Canada provides to the youth is without the requirement of collateral. In Nova Scotia, the government has set up since 1995 a Centre for entrepreneurship and development, which has, functioned to champion the start-up culture among the youth.

At the national level, the administration of Kenya has initiated several youth programmes to ensure that young people live a decent life. The government has developed steps and policies to ensure youth unemployment is addressed. The initiative is to enter into creation of direct employment, wages regulation, operation of employment exchange programmes, and develop a skill and talented based education (the Republic of Kenya, 2010). These steps are categorized into two: capacity building and competency acquisition and income growth. The capacity building and training step give them the expertise needed for the job market. However, the lasting resolution to unemployment is to prepare and equip the young individuals with practical, technical and vocational skills.

Capacity building and training steps include National youth service, talent youth academy and youth centers (Opiyo, 2013). The main objective was to develop and nurture young people's talent to help them change their lives. The government has also taken an affirmative action to ensure that youths get at least thirty percent of government appointments and tenders. Other youth empowerment programmes include National Youth Service (NYS), Uwezo funds, Kazi Kwa Vijana (KKV), Youth Employment Empowerment Programme and Youth Employment Development programme.

2. Research Problem

According to Opiyo (2013), developing strong training and mentorship programmes could help to equip the youth with the necessary skills. He observes that the skills gap and unemployment problems persisting in our nation can be resolved by instilling in the youths suitable skills fit for employment and connecting them with jobs.

Omune (2012) reported that over 61% of the youths in Kenya were not engaged in productive economic activities that would help them to generate income that would sustain their livelihoods. From the Kenya Integrated Household Budget Survey of 2015/16, at least 1.4 million Kenyan citizens creating the state's workforce are jobless. 17.9 million are in productive employment while 19.3 million are Kenya's average human resource as discovered during the survey period. The report suggests that the level of joblessness for the entire population has decreased to 7.4 percent from 9.7 percent in 2009 and 12.7 percent in 2005. The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) (2017) established that seven million Kenyans were unemployed in its 2017 economic survey. Moreover, individuals aged twenty to twenty four years form a massive percentage of youngsters not indulging in tasks or ventures following the recent survey of 2018. In Kenya, nine in every ten jobless people are aged not more than 35 years. Further, 19.2 percent of the unemployed are within the limit of 20-24 years marking the significant rate. KNB (2017) describes youth unemployment as a ticking bomb and further states that with disappointed young males and females vulnerable to narcotics, it is easier for them to engage in promiscuous activities, or even being enticed into terrorism.

In 2017 December, it was reported that 53 percent of Kenyan youth were unemployed (Trends and insights for Africa...). Of the unemployed, 94 percent were actively looking for jobs while 6 percent were passive. This has been the case yet several youth empowerment programmes (YEPs) have been in existence for over the last 20 years. Therefore, the fundamental question to ask here is, do YEPs have a positive effect on the subsistence in the areas of availability of well-paying jobs, provision of health care and decent housing among others. Most of the studies have concentrated on governance issues (whether the funds are transparently administered to the intended beneficiaries). The evidence available has not been able to demonstrate how these programmes have improved the livelihoods of the youth in general as well as their livelihood outcomes. For instance, the studies were done by Kimando, Njogu and Kihoro (2012) on factors influencing the prosperity of YEDF projects showed that the techniques in strategizing startup ventures and wealth management must be elaborately be instilled prior to disbursement of any funds by the board.

3. Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study was to assess how the Youth Empowerment programmes have influenced availability of jobs to the youth in Nairobi County in Kenya.

4. Review of Literature

4.1 Theoretical Framework

4.1.1 Theory of Youth Empowerment

The theory was developed by Zimmerman (2000). According to the theory, the youth empowerment action gives the youth opportunities to establish skills that endow them to solve their problems and participate in decision-making. Zimmerman states that the outcomes of youth empowerment refer to the results obtained at the end of the process. Individual empowerment, organizational empowerment and community empowerment are asserted by him to be the components forming the theory of youth empowerment. Personal endowment is whereby youngsters or young persons are growing competencies and nurturing their talents and improving their understanding, the way they look at realities, being themselves and doing things right. Empowerment at an individual level will help them work very closely with their organizations and society. He further argues that YEDF should help youths to build their talents, skills and help them become more competent in their areas of specializations.

On the other hand, organizational empowerment offer the youngsters to get the necessary expertise required to take charge of their lives, give other ways or avenues to service provision and be able to develop and impact policy decisions while Community empowerment is the effort to establish the communities to resolve the issues affecting the quality of life and help the citizen or public to participate or engage in useful activities at local/ communities, county and national level (Zimmerman 2000).

Youth empowerment theory is important in guiding and analyzing the findings of this study as it demonstrates how the youth-owned enterprises have been empowered by the YEDF through. Entrepreneurship training and the provision of loans that acts as capital for their business. YEDF empowers the youth at an individual level where their skills are developed, talents nurtured and improve their competence. The youth are empowered to work in a well-established organization and position themselves to actively participate or engage in activities at both local and national levels. Zimmerman gives the difference between enhancing the individuals and endowing youth into becoming social transformers sometimes known as change agents in society. He summarizes saying that, empowerment theory links individuals' wellness to the extended social and political environment. He finally recommends that for young adults to become pro-active in decision making of the community, they should engage in public participation and politics to improve their livelihood (individuals' institution and society as large

According to Nancy, Bradshaw and Catherine (2008), more emphasis has been placed on issues turning south for the youngsters in their daily lives instead of focusing on the good things taking place in them. This has been seeing the young as a problem in itself that needs to be handled and solved. The perception of seeing the youth transformation as a process of fighting the risks has contributed to blocking the youth from being part of youth transformation programmes (Nancy, Bradshaw & Catherine 2008).

4.2 Empirical Literature Review

4.2.1 Youth Empowerment Programmes and Youth Employment

Youth empowerment involves equipping the youth to understand their environment, surrounding, and the world in general. Youth empowerment programmes and activities will enable them to develop leadership and civil responsibility, building lasting friendships across cultures and nurture their acquired skills, motivate them to make a difference and transform in their societies (French, 2015).

Narayan (2002) defines empowerment as the self-strength, control, self-power, self-reliance, own choice, the life of dignity which goes in line with his or her values, when one is in a position to fight his or her rights when they can make their own decision, have their freedom, they have their own breathing space, thinking for themselves and finally have a sound and critical mind (Narayan 2002. P13).

Empowerment can take place in three forms: at the individual, organizational or community level. At the individual level, this is when psychological empowerment (PE) occurs. Zimmerman (2000) in his work argued that psychological empowerment (PE) includes how people think about themselves. He terms as intrapersonal. He also talks about getting to know the resources needed to achieve the objectives set. The Ministry of state for youth affairs, Republic of Kenya (2007) also defines youth empowerment as a period when young persons are in a better position, well utilized for advocating establishment. The youth are the vehicles of social transformation in solving their fears, difficulties, and problems (MSYA, 2007:13).

A society characterized by youth empowerment will not undergo the suffering of unemployment that is currently tackled by numerous states. Further, a skill-endowed young person is a job creator. This is attributed to gained competencies subject to empowerment offered, and they can start or expand their venture and employ more citizens, which in turn solves unemployment crisis in the county (Uzochukw, 2016).

4.2.2 The Contribution of Youth Empowerment Programmes

The term empowerment includes self- strength, control, self-power, self- reliance, own choice life of dignity following the values, the ability of advocating for an individual's rights, independence and own decision making, liberty, awakening and capacity to acknowledge a sum of them. Empowerment is recognized to have inherent and instrumental value and is relevant at an individual and collective level, and categorized as either economic, social or political (Narayan 2002:14).

According to Peeters, et al (2009), working of low-skilled and rural young people in Public service is essential since it offers initial work experience. Moreover, this successfully provides a combination of skills training and temporary income simultaneously. Transparency and oversight are crucial to ensure inexperienced young people are trained, the projects favor the disadvantaged and the funding is solely done on worthy projects (Peeters, Wendy, and Gayatri, 2009:85). Uzochukw (2016) suggested that youth empowerment contributes a lot to society as discussed below:

4.2.2.1 Poverty Reduction

Uzochukw (2016) stated that youth endowment serves like having one's savings in a bank proved against any form of theft. Further, financial empowerment of young people enables them to utilize the profit gained in sustaining self and family. They may start-up business for poor relatives and if there is continuous growth, poverty will be eradicated from that vicinity. Boosting the youth with competencies provides a lasting strategy of reducing the poverty rates in vast societies ((Nikol, 2016). World development report 2000/2001: attacking poverty presents a multidimensional view of poverty. It underscores the importance of increasing poor people's access to opportunity, security, and empowerment for economic growth and poverty reduction. Building on World Development Report 2000/2001, the World Bank's Strategic Framework paper identifies two priority areas for Bank support to client governments to increase development effectiveness: a) building the climate for investment for jobs and growth, and b) empowering poor people and investing in their assets (Hirata, 2012:1).

Mitchell and Ashley (2010) asserted that a first glimpse of people aiming to end global poverty yet they are oriented on tourism seems to be ill fitted. Can you contribute to fighting poverty from a sunbed by the poolside? For poverty practitioners, tourism has three great attractions. First, tourism is a vital component of the poor countries economy. Although aggregate tourism receipts are saturated in rich countries like a form of economic activity, the poor countries perceive tourism to be relatively essential compared to rich countries. Ethiopia and the Gambia, are examples of the significant number of poor countries, which are small destinations and their international contribution to the economy is 29.8 percent and 33.1 percent respectively in terms of total exports (World Bank, 2009).

4.2.2.2 Crime Reduction

Crime is a specific law violation act committed against individuals or states. Lack of empowerment in youths results in them indulging in illegal business. Furthermore, the administrations have not realized youth empowerment is a solution to crime and have therefore, utilized numerous resources in curbing this vice. The lack of moral, academic and financial empowerment has forced many youths into engaging in illegal activities. (Uzochukw, 2016). Krienert and Fleisher (2004) asked the question of why a person should work for nothing at McDonald's when he can make thousands of dollars a week in cash selling drugs. According to a report by the Economic Policy Institute (2000) entitled 'crime and work', lack of jobs and crime rates are related. Economic theory predicts cause- and affects relationship between improvements in the labor market and a lower rate of crimes (Krienert and Fleisher 2004:9).

In the state-building process, the youths are the main component and failure to divert them from criminal activities yields to increased insecurity, and psychology deterioration. The process of state-building has been impacted by introduction of various youth militarized organizations, rising impunity, security threats and youth migration (Bishnu, Upreti, Sagar, and Kalash, 2010:206). Migration of most of the youth in search of employment were placed in 3D (Dirty, dingy and dangerous) work. This has further increased the amputation of youth body parts thus increasing the more idle and dependent population (Bishnu, Upreti, Sagar Kalash, 2010: 205). The presence of vacant and unproductive youths results to inability of state-building process. Further, the rise in militarized youths has caused the realization of state-building to be nearly impossible. Youths have become more lethargic due to having their threatening voices and wish fulfilled. Today, youths are not inclined to put their labor on anything hard since psychology has cultivated the element of finding pleasure in deriving power from the gun barrel they are armed with. Therefore making it a crisis in the contemporary society we dwell in (Bishnu, Upreti, Sagar Kalash, 2010: 206).

4.2.2.3 Security

The vast energy and ability trait of youths makes them the significant portion of employees in security departments of many nations. Furthermore, standard security jobs require youths rather than the feeble (Uzochukw 2016). According to Scott, Pease, McLaren (2000), levels of crime are the product of our social and physical arrangements, from the ease of criminal use of manufactured products, the supply of motivated offenders who sense they have little to lose, and the ready availability of markets for stolen goods. (Scott, Pease and McLaren 2000:21) states that present government policy have placed tackling of crime and making communities safer as their core component. It is a key benchmark against which government success or failure will be measured. The flagship crime and disorder Act (1998) sets a legislative foundation for establishment of local joint action and partnership in crime prevention and crime reduction marking beginning of a new regime (Scott, Pease and McLaren 2000:1).

4.2.2.4 Technological Development

Uzochukw, (2016) reported that youth empowerment elevates and enhances technological standards as agreed by technophiles. Empowered youth's yields to technological advancement and innovative discoveries. According to Abbott (2013), technological development in the industry is more than simply introducing new tools and technologies for performing given tasks in production, distribution, or data processing. The process involves mechanizing production and achieving greater autonomy of technical production systems from human control or intervention. It also entails changes in the integration of technical production systems and especially enhanced interdependence between machines and human beings.

Beyond hardware changes, technological development often means applying now scientific knowledge in production and other activities. Finally, the process enhances execution abilities or elevates the optimization of people's devices and instruments in fulfilling stipulated duties (Abbott 2013, 1). This leads to increased productivity of labor and higher earnings. Having a systematic integration of two types of phenomena with diverging and contradictory traits is comprehended as social-technical systems. STSs are comprised of both of computer networks, and software, and people, procedures, policies, law, and many other aspects. (Abdnelnour 2013:4).

4.2.2.5 Good Education Standards

Various states are experiencing issues in their education domain and these results from having underpowered youths. However, facilitating youth empowerment will yield to them supporting their state's education sector (Nyale, 2018). Human-capital theory suggested that education should be seen primarily as an investment because human capital makes a person more productive and this gain in productivity is reflected in higher wages. Thus it is argued that individuals primarily make investments in schooling and other forms of human capital to significantly raise the earnings in the coming days (Machin and Vigroles, 2005:4). When education systems foster the right form of capacities or types of knowledge, then it will be perceived to be fair. Education is valuable not only for competitive reasons, in addition to improving career prospects; it independently improves individuals' lives by enabling them to engage in a wide range of intrinsically valuable pursuits such as reading good literature and discussing it with friends, playing complex games, entertaining themselves with mathematical puzzles, and socializing with people who speak other languages. This intrinsic value of education typically contributes significantly to the quality of life (Kirsten 2014:69). Donation in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions is experienced once the previously empowered youths through education *attain success in their lives. The spirit of patriotism is embedded in youths following their academic endowment.

4.2.2.6 Good Governance

Good governance is attained with youth empowerment. An empowerment youth stands to empower the masses. Any youth who was empowered in his time of hardship will lead his people to greater achievements and those empowered on leadership skills will do well in leadership positions (Uzochukw, 2016). Smith (2007) implies that an administration organized democratically and in such a political setting and within efficient governance is required, in addition to the correct policies, especially in the economic sphere (Smith, 2007). It also requires policy reform as well as the reform of governmental organizations (for example for tax collection) and institutions such as the rule of law. For example, the UN defines good governance as policies for sustainable human development including enabling the private sector to create employment): and government that is democratic, decentralized, empowering, and accountable, a government (with properly functioning legislatures, the legal and judicial system to protect the rule of law and human rights, and well-functioning electoral processes that ensure that election results reflect the wish of the people) (Smith 2007:4).

Advancement in humanity is a direct resultant of good governance or an end in itself. Further, it is better for individuals to have respect for their civil and political rights instead of having them denied and abused in order to receive entitlements without having to give bribes to corrupt officials, while holding them answerable to the law. Agere (1998) asserted that participation, transparency and accountability are among other essential elements that form good governance and ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on a broad consensus in a society and that the voices of the poorest and most vulnerable are heard in the decision – making process regarding the allocation of resources. He observes that good governance has major implications for equity, poverty and quality of life

5. Research Methodology

The researcher used a descriptive survey method. The research design comprises the blueprint for the gathering, measurement, and analysis of data (Kothari, 2004). The main significance of this design is to describe the state of affairs as they appear. A descriptive research design was employed since this study provided in-depth view into the study issue. The research describes existence of elements in terms of practices, trends, attitudes, and beliefs among youth on the effectiveness of YEP on positive livelihood results.

A populous is the whole cohort of people or events or objects that have a mutual observable characteristic from which a sample is obtained for analysis (Mugenda and Mugenda 2003:9), Kombo Tromp 2006:76). The aimed audience in this research was the youth groups that have benefitted from the YEDF funds. The target population was composed of 200 youth groups in

Nairobi County which have accessed YEDF. Each group composed of 10 members inclusive of 3 officials. According to Omune (2012), the group that is eligible for YEDF stimulus package is between the age brackets of 18-35 years.

The study focused on thirty registered groups. The groups were selected randomly. The following groups were identified for the researcher by YEDF constituency officers: Roysambu New stage, Marurui youth self-help group, Rainbow group, Global mind self-help group, Inka Boma Self-Help Group, Cantarah Self-Help Group, Desai Youth Group, Thinamaa Self-Help Group, Pamoja Daima Self-Help Group, Young Master Self-Help Group, Kariokaor Uwezo Group, Kariokor Uwezo Group, Jitengeme Kenya Pamoja Self-Group, Umoja Youth Group, Visionary Youth Initiative, Shinning City Star Self-Help Group, Amazing Grace Self-Help Group, Kigami Self-Help Group, Unity West Self-Help Group, Kamuiru Self-Help Group, Golden Ten Self-Help Group, Blessed Couple Self-Help Group, The Seekers Self-Help Group, Phonix Self-Help Group, Amani Youth Group, United Youth Group, Kiambu Trust empowerment Self-Help Group, Hekima Self-Help Group, Rawa Youth Group, Solicitors Youth Group, Jubilee for Success Youth Group, Berikawa Investment, Ten Tech Warrior Self-Help, Ngara Vision Group and many other more The groups were: United Self Help group, Elshadai Self-Help Group, Pin Chokaa Self-Help Group, Ashley Orphans Youth Group, Best 15 Youth Group, Marurui United Youth Organization, Shalom Youth Group, Tom Mboya Hall Welfare, Excel Self-Help Group, Lazio One World, Obama Satellite Youth Self-Group, Gikama Self-help Group, Desai Self-help Group, Motivation Self-Help Group, Gwitethia Self-Help Group, Remvak Self-Help Group, Jawabu Self-Help Group among others. Out of these thirty groups, four members were picked randomly from each group and were given questionnaires.

The appropriate sample size is that satisfying the stipulations of efficacy, representativeness, reliability, and flexibility. Good sample size should cover the ranges of 10-30% of the population (Kothari, 2004, Mugenda & Mugenda, 2008). Walsh (2001) argues that a sample of 30-60 respondents would generate enough data for analysis, provided the questionnaires have 15-40 questions and that it contains both closed and open-ended questions. The study used 120 respondents who are within what Walsh recommends. The participatory groups was sampled using the simple random sampling method and a list of every group that benefitted from YEDF was acquired from the organization's headquarter.

6. Research Findings, Data Analysis and Discussions

6.1 Response Rates

Out of the sum 120 questionnaires dispatched to the target youth respondents, a total 80 were successfully filled-out and returned, thereby producing a response rate of 66%. Guided by the standards recommended by established writers on research methodologies in the social sciences, this response rate surpasses the minimum threshold required for analysis and drawing conclusions. For example, Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) consider a limit of at least 50% as sufficient for drawing conclusions about target population in a study.

6.2 YEPs and Youth Access to Employment Opportunities

The study aimed at assessing how the Youth Empowerment programme influence youth access to employment opportunities in Nairobi City County. Respondents were asked whether the YEDF had enabled them secure employment. The answers are summarized as in table 1.

Table 1 YEDF Enabled Youth Secure Employment

YEDF helpful	Frequency	Percent
Yes	59	73.8
No	21	26.3
Total	80	100.0

The results indicate that the majority of youths (73.8%) agreed that YEDF was helpful in enabling them acquire employment. Only 26.3% responded in the negative. These statistics indicate that the youths who have interacted with the YEDF are likely to view the programme as an effective facilitative tool for the youth in NCC in landing an employment opportunity.

This was effected by determining the association between the responses of youth on their current employment status and various components of the YEDF programme delivery, namely training on aspects entrepreneurship, provision of technical skills, business operations management (business development), networking strategies, and mentorship. The results were as described in the rest of this sub-section.

6.2.1 Training and Youth Employment

Respondents were asked whether they had been trained before initiation of the YEDF programme. As shown in figure 1 below, the findings revealed that 44 out of the 80 youth (55%) had been trained on business skills, 9 (11.3%) on skills development, 8 (10%) were trained on savings and loaning. The rest (19, 23.8%) had not been trained in any area.

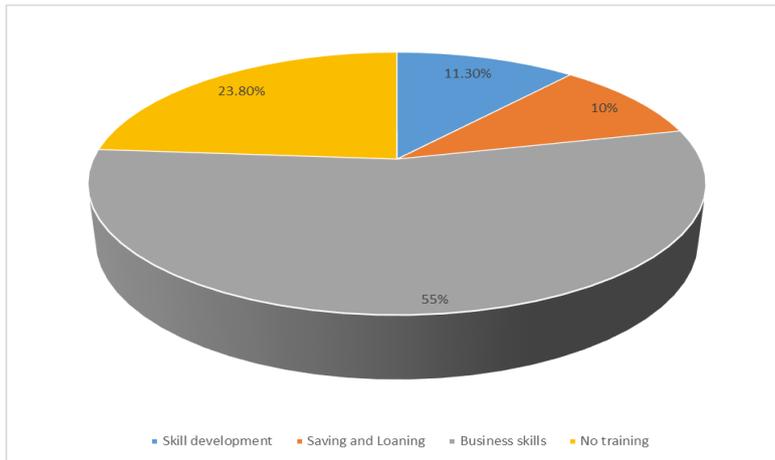


Fig.1 Training theme

Cross-Tabulation of the youth employment status and their perceptions about the skills imparted by the YEDF was run, including the related Pearson χ^2 - test statistic. The outcomes were as presented in table 2.

Table 2 Association between the YEDF Skills and Management package and Employment Status of Youth

Employment Status of the Respondent	Unemployed/looking for job	Count % within Members are trained on Skills and Management	Members are trained on Skills and Management				Total
			Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
			0	4	3	9	16
			0.0%	19.0%	10.0%	32.1%	20.0%
	Self-employed		1	17	24	15	57
			100.0%	81.0%	80.0%	53.6%	71.3%
	Part time employment		0	0	1	3	4
			0.0%	0.0%	3.3%	10.7%	5.0%
	Full time employment		0	0	2	1	3
			0.0%	0.0%	6.7%	3.6%	3.8%
Total			1	21	30	28	80
			100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

($\chi^2 = 10.321$, $df=9$, $p=0.325$)

The results indicate that there was a strong association between the skills imparted and employment status of the youth respondent, a scenario which points to the possibility that the skills development component of the YEDF programme is likely to be viewed by the youth as an important determinant of their preparedness for the employment market. This finding was affirmed by key informants. For nearly all key informants, an overriding view was that almost negligible effort was being invested into equipping the youth YEDF beneficiaries with business management skills. This was also noted by Amenyaa et al. (2011). All the youth cohorts who were beneficiaries of YEDF loan noted that they only received the initial training performed before acquiring the loan and none after it.

The degree in which the development of life support skills and character of youths are the two elements utilized to quantify the success of leadership in the different stages of society. Further, graduates fail to be incorporated into the mainstream economy due

to the presence of mismatched competencies. Initiation and support of economic growth wants due to lack of entrepreneurial, management and leadership skills. Yet, this is a sector where the YEDF programme has not substantively examined. From the identification of youth cohort's right to loan disbursement to governing of loan scheme, it is evident that young people are marginalized. Although the loan plan is established to benefit the youth, there responses pointed to strong evidence pointing to low awareness amongst the youth about how the YEDF microfinance scheme functions. As Ameny (2011) have pointed out, that a significant number of young people lack information on the loans making it difficult to obtain the YEDF microfinance service. The finding also concurred with findings by Odera (2013) that most youth were unaware of the diverse government strategies towards transforming their livelihoods.

6.2.2. Development of Technical Skills

Technical skills have traditionally been in the limelight as important enabling entry points for youth into the employment market. This is to the degree that technical skills present the basic requirements that the youth require to venture into self-employment, or to make entries into the domains of established firms as paid-employees. In respect of this tenet, this research aimed to discover if the youth had acquired technical competencies from their engagements with the YEDF microfinance scheme. As shown in table 3, half (50%) of the respondents did not possess any technical skills.

Table 3 Technical Skills Development Efforts

Type of technical skill developed	Frequency	Percent
Training	6	7.5
Plumbing	5	6.3
Electricity	8	10.0
Carpentry	1	1.3
Mechanical	6	7.5
Welding	5	6.3
Hairdressing	8	10.0
Others, specify	1	1.3
No skill development	40	50.0
Total	80	100.0

As indicated in Table 3, a majority of the youth in the County were not adequately prepared with appropriate technical skills to confront the challenge of unemployment. 50% of the youth who run some projects, either individually or as a group, emphasized that deficiency in preparedness on skills was a significant obstacle to their successful livelihoods ventures. Many youths affirmed that YEDF trains a few selected group members for 3-5 days before and after giving out the loan which, in their view, is not enough to propel them to utilize the prospective job chances.

The reportedly appalling picture about the level of technical skills preparedness of the youth was cross-examined with their stated "current employment status", and the χ^2 test of interdependence run. The results were as presented in table 4.4. As this Table depicts, the cross-tabulation revealed a very weak association between these variables, $\chi^2 (24, n=80) = 44.969, p=0.05$, thereby pointing to the possibility that the technical skills reported by the respondents were less likely to had been as a result of effects of the YEDF programme actions.

Table 4 Association between Employment Status and YEDF-Facilitated Technical Skills*

			Skill development								Total	
			Tailoring	Plumbing	Electricity	Capentry	Mechanical	Welding	Hair dressing	Other		No skill
Employment Status of the Respondent	Unemployed/looking for job	Count	3	2	2	0	2	2	1	1	3	16
		% within Employment Status	18.8%	12.5%	12.5%	0.0%	12.5%	12.5%	6.3%	6.3%	18.8%	100.0%
	Self employed	Count	3	2	6	0	3	3	6	0	34	57
		% within Employment Status of the Respondent	5.3%	3.5%	10.5%	0.0%	5.3%	5.3%	10.5%	0.0%	59.6%	100.0%
Part-time employment	Count	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	4	
	% within Employment Status of the Respondent	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	
Full time employment	Count	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	
	% within Employment Status of the Respondent	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
Total		Count	6	5	8	1	6	5	8	1	40	80
		% within Employment Status of the Respondent	7.5%	6.3%	10.0%	1.3%	7.5%	6.3%	10.0%	1.3%	50.0%	100.0%

* $\chi^2 = 44.969, df=24, p=0.006$

6.2.3 Skills for Business Growth and Access to Employment Opportunities

The research also delved into the association between youth employment and the skills developed to support the growth of their businesses. As shown in Table 12, 38.8% of the respondents had been trained on book keeping, 30% on good customer care, 17.5% on business plan development, 12.5% on basic communication skills for business management and 1.3% on sales negotiations.

Table 5 Youth Skills for Business Growth

Business development skill	Frequency	Percent
Book keeping	31	38.8
Customer care	24	30
Communication in business	10	12.5
Sales negotiation	1	1.3
None	14	17.5
Total	80	100

Cross-Tabulating the responses summarized in Table 5 with the variable on current employment status, the results obtained were as presented in Table 6.

Table 6 Association between Current Youth Employment Status and Skills for Business Development*

			Business Development					Total
			Book keeping	Customer care	communication	sales negotiation	No skill	
Employment Status of the Respondent	Unemployed/looking for job	Count	5	3	4	1	3	16
		% within Employment Status of the Respondent	31.3%	18.8%	25.0%	6.3%	18.8%	100.0%
	Self employed (own)	Count	24	19	5	0	9	57
		% within Employment Status of the Respondent	42.1%	33.3%	8.8%	0.0%	15.8%	100.0%
	Part time employment	Count	1	2	1	0	0	4
		% within Employment Status of the Respondent	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Full time employment	Count	1	0	0	0	2	3
		% within Employment Status of the Respondent	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	66.7%	100.0%
Total		Count	31	24	10	1	14	80
		% within Employment Status of the Respondent	38.8%	30.0%	12.5%	1.3%	17.5%	100.0%

* $\chi^2 = 15.398$, $df=12$, $p=0.220$

Table 4.5 shows, the results indicated a very strong association between the two variables, $\chi^2 (12, n=80) = 15.398$, $p=0.05$, an indication that youth have an increased probability of perceiving business development skills as central to their chances of winning an employment opportunity.

6.2.4 Networking

On networking, Figure 4.2 highlights that a substantial proportion of youth correspondents (60%) reported that they had not been linked or networked to other organization. Only 40% responded that after receiving funds from the YEDF kitty, they had been linked to other funding agencies such as Uwezo Fund.

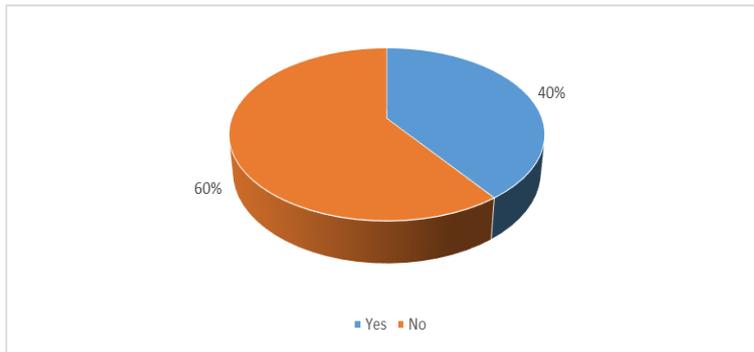


Fig. 2 Responses on links with other funding development partner

The study reveals that there is a lack of well-thought-out exchange programmes for the youth. The beneficiaries of YEDF function in silos and are mainly informal and they club together solely for daily survival. No concerted efforts exist to integrate young people from different economic enterprises to discuss their best practice, learn new trends in economic transformation discourse and comprehension of crucial dynamics of the industries of the economy and policy as well as governance stipulations. Further, comprehension that young people are vulnerable group is essential and the majority is involved as unintended beneficiaries in the economic mainstream.

For young individuals to benefit fully from programmes, they indulge in those characterized by unstructured engagement and monitoring mechanism lacking targeted interventions. Following the mentioned instance, young individuals are manipulated and 'used' by adults. Moreover, YEDF is marked by few markets for its products due to a deficiency in networking. It is no wonder that the depth of mentorship the youth received was found also to very low, with a near-similar proportion (61.3%) of the youth affirming that they had not received any form of mentorship before and after receiving the YEDF funding relative to 38.7% who responded in contrast (Figure 4.3).

According to Serener and Woolcock (2004), social networks build ties that link people and enable them to effectively relate to others in their social contexts. In this study, youth in their networks had built ties with each other. These close ties provided a sense of identity, shared purpose, support, and information.

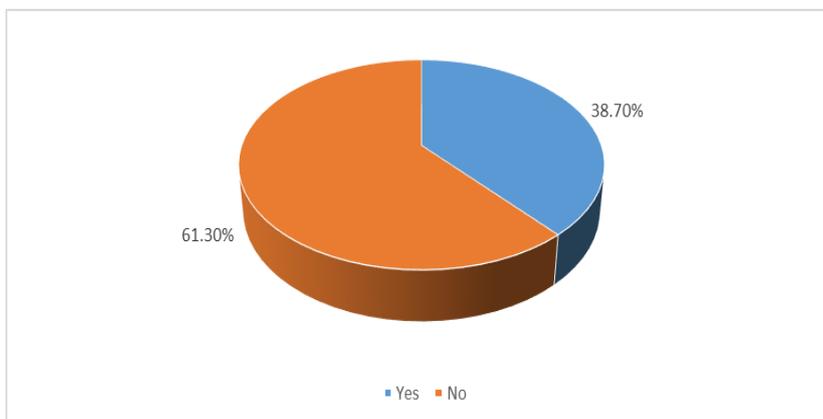


Fig. 3 Youth mentored after receipt of the YEDF funding

6.2.5 Impact of the YEDF on youth livelihoods

The third research objective examined the effects of the YEDF on youth source of income improvement in Nairobi City County. This was analyzed by understanding the impact of YEDF on the youth in terms of human, financial and physical capital. The results were as presented in this sub-section.

6.2.5.1 Human Capital

Human capital is the competencies, know-how, and exposure that an individual or populous has perceived in regards to their attribute or expense to an organization or state. To understand the impact of YEDF on the youths in terms of human capital, several issues were considered for instance, leadership/technical skills, knowledge, ability to work and academic engagement.

Table 7 Human Capital

Human Capital	Frequency	Percent
Leadership/technical skills/team	11	13.8
Knowledge	16	20.0
Ability to work	52	65.0
Academic engagement	1	1.3
Total	80	100.0

Table 6 indicates that majority (65%) of the youth could work, 20% of the youth had knowledge, 13.8% of the youth had leadership/technical skills and 1.3% of the youth had an academic engagement. The findings are an indicator of confidence of the young people in working, business venture and a willingness to take entrepreneurial risks. Generally, Human capital is a situation where the youth are in a better position to meet their primary needs, be able to educate their children among others.

6.2.5.2 Financial Capital

Financial capital is the finances and credit that generate products. Ventures utilize it to expand. Individuals utilize it to attain a better financial future. To understand the impact of YEDF on the youths in-terms of financial capital, several issues were considered, for instance, savings, obtaining funding and employment both formal and informal as hereafter described.

Figure 4 illustrates that the significant number (50%) of the youth were able to do savings, 46.3% were able to get access to financial services, and 3.8% of the youth were employed in both informal and formal sectors. The findings are an indicator of saving culture in young people for future personal growth. 50% of the youth confirmed that the fund helped in such a way that they do not depend on anybody for assistance.

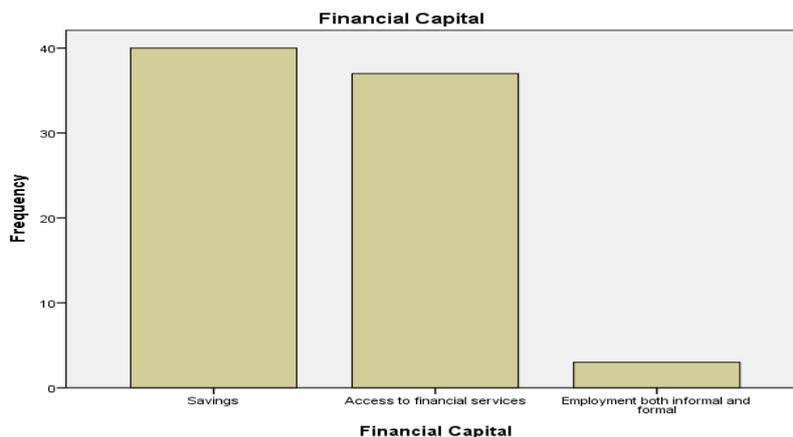


Fig. 4 Financial Capital

In an interview with one group official from Pin Choka self-help group in Ruai, he said that: *“I am in a position now to depend on myself through the support of the youth fund. I thank the youth fund for being there for the vulnerable youth”*. A group member asserted that: *“I am now in a position to pay my bills very well, educated and acquire a piece of land and save for his future development. I also thank the youth fund for being very supportive”*. A youth from Gwitethia self-help group said: *“I am in a position to depend on my own. I own a plot and I can save and move on well with my life”*.

6.2.5.3 Physical Capital

Physical capital consists of tangible, man-made objects that a company buys or invests in and uses to produce goods. In other words, physical capital is when the youth can be self-reliant, be in a position of initiating development projects among others. To understand the impact of YEDF on the youths in-terms of physical capital, several issues were considered for instance, whether a youth owns a house or not, access to affordable housing, access to affordable health care and access to affordable energy.

Table 8 Physical Capital

Physical Capital	Frequency	Percent
Own a house	4	5.0
Access to affordable housing	28	35.0
Access to affordable health care	26	32.5
Access to affordable energy	22	27.5
Total	80	100.0

Table 8 shows that 35% of youth respondents were able to have access to affordable housing, 32.5% were able to have access to affordable health care, and another 27.5% were able to have access to affordable energy. From the findings, many youths were in a position to live decent lives, were not homeless. Instead, they were able to afford access decent housing. A good number of the youth had acquired the National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF) and covered their dependents.

This finding highlights that YEDF has a positive impact on the standard of living among the youth in Nairobi County. For instance, their housing condition significantly improved, access to medical services both in government and public hospitals increased and many were able to access affordable energy. This finding indicates the possibility that the YEDF microfinance scheme was likely to have significantly changed the lives of many youth in NCC, in relation to their capability to provide for their own basic needs, buying assets, investing in businesses, creating self-employment and being able to make savings for business expansions and emergencies.

6.2.5.4 Diversification of Income amongst the Youth

As shown in figure 5 below, the majority (60%) of the youth did not diversify income while 40% diversified income. From this finding, many youth did not have any other sources of income; however, a few of them were able to diversify income. 40% of the differentiated and addition of emergent kinds of functions to the activities they had been involved in.

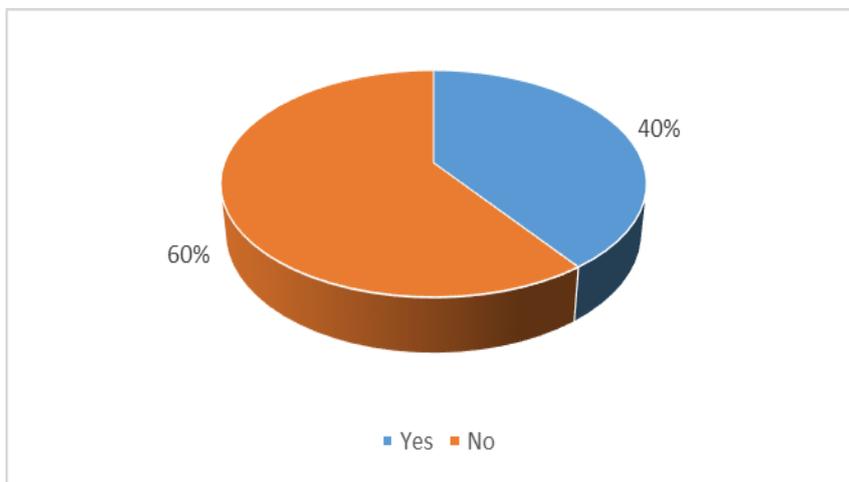


Fig. 5 Diversification of income amongst the youth

This diversification of income had taken the forms securing insurance cover for their businesses, boosting their savings and debts minimization. Figure 6 summarizes the responses of youth on the matter of whether they had achieved these forms of income diversification strategies.

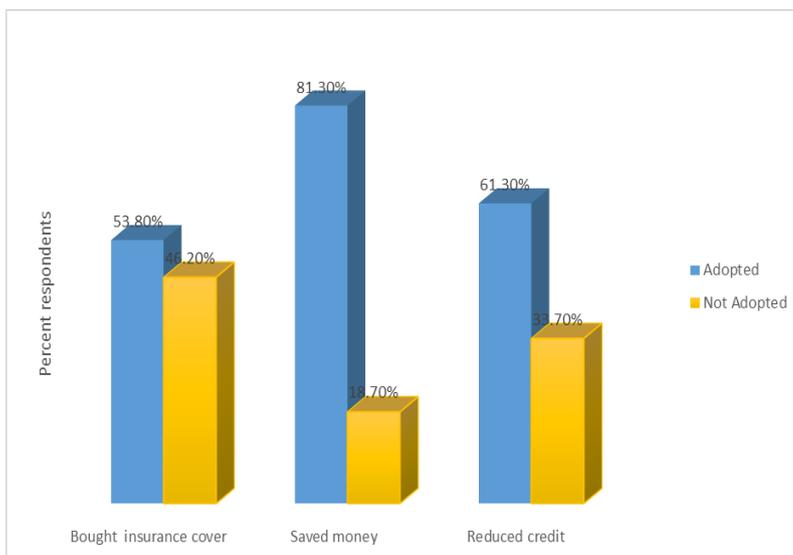


Fig. 6 Income Diversification Strategies Adopted

Figure 4.6 shows that over half (53.8%) had insured their businesses while 46.3% of the respondents did not. According to the youth respondents, they typically: *“We have insured our businesses and assets to help us to protect our lender and ourselves. Sometimes we face damages caused by fire and as a result of post-election violence. It, therefore, covers us against business-related losses”*.

Figure 9 further illustrates that 81.3% of the youth saved money, while 18.8% did not save money. Majority of the youth confirmed that savings helped them to pay their bills, buy assets, support their families, some said that they were able to take their families/friends for holiday outings and some managed to face college fees and believed they have sufficient savings to draw in times of emergency. 18.8% of the young people who participated in this research agreed that their poor saving pattern is due to a lack of financial discipline. They argued that they equated their poor savings culture to a lack of financial discipline. Some expressed the view that an increase in their income would make it possible for them to save. They argued that there is a need for greater financial literacy.

Figure 6 depicts that the majority (61.3%) of the respondents had no credit facilities while 38.8% of the youth had credit facilities. There were no institutions cited that also provided microfinance service to the youth. This signals that once they fail to secure the loan from the YEDF kitty, the youth are likely to be exposed to limited sources of capital for their business ventures.

9. Conclusions and Recommendations

The study sought to assess how the YEP programmes contributed to improved youth empowerment and livelihoods in Nairobi County. The study confirmed that significant portion (65%) of the young people had self-employment, the ability to work, savings and had access to affordable health care. This shows that YEDF has to some extent improved the livelihood of youth in Nairobi County. The literature review confirmed that Projects adopted creative strategies to build disadvantaged youths into tech-savvy individuals suited to fill the gap in the domestic labor market, and equipping them with business planning capabilities to establish their businesses (Kempe, 2012: 230). From the surveyed sample, the programme recorded significant rates of productive youth engagement after training, with an average placement rate of 72% with inclusion of young people who went back into learning and 61% rate while excluding those back in school. Following the six projects, between 52% and 94% of young individuals secured employment and/or enrolled in internships, community service, or resumed education. According to Kempe, YEP stakeholders determined that the programme had increased their networks and secured alliance with companies, employer associations, and placement agencies. (Kempe, 2012).

The research exhibits and illustrates that the youth in Nairobi County have been able to obtain loans from the Youth Enterprise Development Fund and embark on starting their businesses. The effectiveness of the youth fund on young people's livelihood is yet to be felt. However, few cohorts that have benefitted from the youth fund are doing projects, though their businesses are experiencing limited outcomes. The positive aspect is that since its inception in 2006, the youth fund has enabled several youths to engage in enterprises and become development-oriented. From their responses, they have been empowered economically by boosting their capability to sustain and grow their enterprises. In effect, the youth have been economically empowered, their business has grown to the extent of being relatively profitable. Therefore, there has been the creation of self-employment hence a reduction in unemployment and among the youth which is a good indicator of growth.

The government which is the initiator of this programme needs to ensure that this project meets the intended purpose. The government should critically re-examine the development philosophy, which is based on capitalism. The government should open many opportunities for the youths and fight to eradicate discrimination of the young individuals by coming up with just a social and economic system that will not only change the livelihood of individuals but also the communities at large. The government should set up good effective and transparent control systems that call for auditing of the funds allocated to the youth initiatives. This will ensure that the fund is protected from misappropriation by politicians or youth, group leaders or individual beneficiaries. Policies should be made stipulating the penalties to the offenders. This can be addressed through effective management and leadership in dealing with YEDF. YEDF offices in all Constituencies should be fully empowered to reduce the bureaucratic challenges that affect the youth when it comes to accessibility of YEDF. At the moment it is centralized, it takes a long period for the applicants to access money. Devolution will ease congestion on the disbursement process.

The government should increase the number of trained personnel especially those in the field who are monitoring and evaluating the project. Through this, many projects will be redeemed from collapsing and sensitizing and training of the young stars will be uplifted.

The government should also rely on a financial intermediary to ensure that the credit facilities are made accessible to the youth. There should be a chosen intermediary which should be concerned with youth issues to avoid youth being exploited by the cartel in the banking sector.

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