

Equal Opportunity Factors for Youth Unemployment in the EA Countries Data and Policy Analysis

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ABSTRACT:

This paper analyses equal opportunity factors contributing to youth unemployment and provides working recommendations for further dialogue and engagement of youth in the EA countries. Data and policy analysis is based on the theory of 4-Es as propounded by the International Labor Organization and Youth Employment Network literature.

The field research survey focus group discussion, combined observation, and consultations with key informants were major research methods used in collecting secondary and primary data and information. Data analysis used non-parametric methods, mainly frequency and cross-tabulations.

The paper found that lack of equal opportunities contributes to youth unemployment. The main equal opportunity attributes include limited open-access application; unfair judgment; high and increasing corruption and prevalence of tribalism in the EA societies. Other factors are complex social, cultural norms and the existence of negative or biased religious beliefs.

The paper recommends enhanced equal employment in the labor market. The specific policy strategies include the need to enhance open access application; institute a fair judicial system; ensure corruption-free; minimize negative effects of tribalism; enhance gender mainstreaming; consider positive social and cultural attributes and uphold religious systems in the labor market and employment systems.

Keywords: *Youth Employment and Equal Opportunity*

INTRODUCTION

Background

Youth unemployment has remained a major development policy issue in the EA region, and it is not only affecting the economies but also life pattern, social welfare of youth and the community at large. Increasing youth population growth rate and limited employment creation have increased pressure among the EA governments to review their development strategies. Youth comprise of more than 30% of the total population and they are a leading

unemployed population group in the EA countries. Such large population dominance has not been absorbed in the current economic activities. Consequently, increased crime and social unrest, drug abuse, increase of beggars and increase of undesirable political youth movements have been major social-economic impacts of youth unemployment in these countries (Mlatsheni, and Rospabé, 2002; Semboja, 2017)

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In EAC the employment system is termed as poor, unfair, and undesirable labor market as it does not provide chances for equal opportunities in terms of recruiting youth. Employment system has been characterized with favouritism, corruption, and tribalism which in general can be marked as unequal treatment in employment. Such approach has damaged the economies by employing wrong people in certain sensitive positions. Furthermore, lacks entrepreneurship ability, limited employment generation, and being unemployable have been highlighted as major aspects for youth being unemployed or self-employed (David 2005; ILO, 2006 and 2012; Semboja, 2017). Therefore, for such reasons a number of unemployed youths in EA region has been growing overtime and impacted the economy in various ways.

Kenya is the leading country in the EAC with actual youth unemployment rate that stands at 70% while Rwanda ranked last in youth unemployment with only about 13.6% as per 2015 and expected to decline further; Uganda and South Sudan having more than 30%, Tanzania with 25% and Burundi at 50% of youth unemployment rate. That trend implies that youth unemployment has not been curbed at desirable levels and rates (Nayak, 2016). Of the particular concern is on how the youth are engaged in the employment process from the entry to exit stages.

Table 1 suggests a significant high youth unemployment rate in EA region. Recently, youth unemployment rate was noted to increase overtime from 2012 to 2015 whereby it rose from 25.3% to 30.9%. Such significant increase describes inability of the developing economies to absorb an increasing number of youths in the labor market. Each country in the EAC region has suffered from youth unemployment problems in form of social, economic, or political aspects.

However, some countries such as Burundi have suffered a lot due to political and security instabilities.

Between 2012 and 2015, Rwanda ranked last in youth unemployment rate standing at 14.2% on average and Tanzania with 18.7% on average. Rwanda and Tanzania are ranked last in youth unemployment in the EA region. Kenya ranked first with 51.4% of youth unemployment rate followed by Burundi, South Sudan, and Uganda with about 40.1%, 30.5% and 29.4% respectively (Table 1). Moreover, both time and cross-country comparison show that youth unemployment rates have different patterns among the EAC member states (Semboja, 2017).

Corruption, limited access and application, unfair judgment, gender discrimination, are among the causes of high youth unemployment rates in the EAC. Failure of employment system in terms of transparency and social exclusion of the youth in planning process has significantly increased youth unemployment rate. Though, generally youth unemployment is associated with lack of entrepreneurship ability, limited employment creation, being unemployable, and unequal opportunity (David 2005; ILO, 2006 and 2012).

The issue of high youth unemployment has huge negative consequences in the fight against poverty because it leads to slow economic growth, prostitution, social unrest, insecurity, and drug abuse in these EA countries. These negative consequences are to be minimized through creation of more and better jobs and promoting equal opportunities through harmonious labor relations, formalization of the informal economy, boosting productivity and improved working conditions. All national states must promote equal opportunities for all persons, to prohibit discrimination and provide for remedies for victims of discrimination.

Table 1: Youth Unemployment Rate in EA region 2012-2015 (15 - 35 Years) in percentage

Country	2012	2013	2014	2015	Average
Tanzania	14.6	18.3	25	16.9	18.7
Kenya	35.7	40.5	70	59.3	51.4
Uganda	29.4	31	30	27	29.4
Burundi	29.5	40.7	50	40	40.1
South Sudan	27.6	34	31.3	29	30.5
Rwanda	15	14.7	13.6	13.6	14.2
Average	25.3	29.8	36.6	30.9	

Objective of the Policy Research Paper

The objective of this policy paper is to analyse equal opportunity factors contributing to youth unemployment in the EAC countries. It will also provide policy recommendations as solutions for youth unemployment in the EAC region. Specifically, this paper recommends for an equal opportunity policy which are formal manifestos that set out regional and national commitments to fairness in the employment and labor market systems.

Study Approaches and Methodologies

Given the study objective, four independent but complementary methodologies and procedures were used. These included: [1] desk-literature reviews; [2] field research surveys in Arusha, Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar, Kampala, Bujumbura, Nairobi and Kigali; [3] data and policy analysis; and, [4] visits to the EAC head office in Arusha and ministries' internal consultative meetings in these cities. The field research survey, focus group discussion, combined observational and consultations with key informants were major research methods used in collecting secondary and primary data and information (Semboja, 2017).

The primary data and information were collected using questionnaires and interviewing the respondents based on the study objectives and questions to capture their perception on the subject matter. The targeted respondents included youth organizations; organizations for youth with disabilities; religious institutions; political parties; government ministries, departments, and agencies; individual youth and older people. The combined observational research techniques involved the direct observations of phenomena in their natural setting. The aim was to observe the situation to allow research team to qualitatively access the youth unemployment context and useful meanings for framing the evaluation and making sense of the data collected using other methods (Semboja, 2017).

Structure of the Paper

The paper is organized into four sections: Section one is an introduction detailing on background, objective, study approaches and methodologies. Section two provides a theory behind the 4Es model, with special focus on the equal employment opportunity. Section three

provides findings, data and policy analysis on equal opportunity factors contributing to youth unemployment in the EA countries. Section four is a conclusion that presents the major study findings and policy recommendations on enhanced equal employment opportunities.

The 4Es Model: Equal Opportunity Factors The Neo-Classical Labor Theory

The neo-classical labor economics makes a distinction between structural, frictional, and cyclical unemployment. Structural unemployment is conceived as a product of the institutional systems, including policies, laws, regulations, private and government organizations, types of market arrangements and demography. In the literature, the importance of the institutional features for structural unemployment is particularly tied to their implications for demand for and supply of labor, price, and wage formation, and the efficacy of search and matching process in the labor markets (ILO, 2006; Semboja, 2008 and 2012).

Frictional unemployment is regarded as a subset of structural unemployment mainly constituting temporary unemployment spells as the result of job mobility, search, and matching difficulties in the connection with quits, new entries to the labor market, and job separation because of the employers' dissatisfaction with individual workers.

Cyclical unemployment differs from structural and frictional unemployment by basically being tied to short-term economic fluctuations. An empirical illustration of the importance of structural unemployment as compared to cyclical is that variations in measured unemployment rates have turned out to be much larger between cycles than within cycles, presumably reflecting differences in structural unemployment.

In economic theory, structural and cyclical unemployment are usually regarded as social-economic disequilibrium phenomena in the sense that they reflect excess labor supply at existing wages, and hence labor market is not clear. Then, individual employers informally ration jobs through discriminatory employment application and hiring process. Nevertheless, technically (analytically) structural unemployment is often analyzed in terms of the concept of equilibrium unemployment. This means that the aggregate-

unemployment level is in a "state of rest"; and the existing excess labor supply is assumed to last if certain characteristics (parameters) of the economy are unchanged. It is unfortunate that none of these equilibrium models in isolation provide satisfactory theoretical explanation and policy guidance on unemployment situation in poor developing countries (ILO, 2006 and 2012).

The 4Es Model

In view of the theoretical limitations, the study used an eclectic social economic theory of 4Es as propounded by International Labor Organization (ILO) and Youth Employment Network (YEN) literature (David 2005; AfDB et al 2012; ILO, 2012). The 4Es model asserts that employment (E) is a complex function of Employability (E1), Employment Creation (E2), Entrepreneurship (E3), and Equal Opportunities (E4). The 4-Es Model is the best approximation of Human Capital Theory, Effective Demand Theory of Unemployment, Harris- Todaro Model of Unemployment, and Neo-Classical employment theories (McQuaid and Lindsay, 2005). This Youth Employment Model (E) is now formalized as follows (Semboja, 2017);

$$(1) E = E1 + E2 + E3 + E4$$

Whereby:

E1: Employability

Employability (E1) variable is defined as “doing value creating work, getting paid for it (unless opting to do it voluntarily without pay) and learning at the same time, enhancing the ability to shape work in the future (Harvey 2001 and McQuaid and Lindsay 2005).

$$(2) E1 = E1.1 + E1.2 + , \dots , +E1.10$$

In turn, we consider the main employability variables or attributes as; e1.1 for employer’s preference and worker’s preference and opportunity cost; e1.2 for family’s and employer’s expectations; E1.3 for transition from learning institutions to labor market; E1.4 for labor market information and conditions; E1.5 for cost of doing business; E1.6 for skills matching; E1.7 for personal factors: satisfaction level (rural-urban migration); E1.8 for level of information

technology; E1.9 for transition from school to labor market and E1.10 for access to education.

E2: Employment Creation

Employment creation variable (E2) is defined as the process by which the numbers of jobs in an economy are created and increased (David, 2005).

$$(3) E2 = E2.1 + E2.2 + , \dots , +E2.10$$

Whereby we consider the major employment creation attributes as E2.1 for fiscal policy; E2.2 for changes in production technology; E2.3 for labor market; E2.4 for wage rate or salary; E2.5 for sector policy linkages; E2.6 for participation of youth in planning process; E2.7 for policy implementation; E2.8 for population; E2.9 for reliance on sector to drive economy and E2.10 for regional integration and globalization.

E3: Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship variable (E3) has traditionally been defined as the process of designing, launching, and running a new business, which typically begins as a small business, such as a start-up company, offering a product, process or service for sale or hire (Yetisen, *et al.*, 2015).

$$(4) E3 = E3.1 + E3.2 + , \dots , +E3.5$$

Whereby the main entrepreneurship attributes are E3.1 for innovative skills; E3.2 for expected positive opportunity perception; E3.3 for entrepreneurship knowledge, education and training; E3.4 for communication barriers and E3.5 for informal sector and entrepreneurship barriers.

E4: Equal Opportunities

Equal opportunity variable (E4) is a stipulation that all people should be treated similarly, unhampered by artificial barriers or prejudices or preferences, except when distinctions can be explicitly justified (David, 2005).

$$(5) E4 = E4.1 + E4.2 + , \dots , +E4.7$$

Whereby we consider the main equal opportunity attributes as E4.1 for open access application;

E4.2 for fair judgment; E4.3 for gender issues; E4.4 for social and cultural factors; E4.5 for tribalism and regionalism; E4.6 for religions; and E4.7 for corruption. This policy research paper will focus on the equal opportunity as among the variables composing the 4Es model.

The Concept of Equal Employment Opportunity

Equal employment opportunity is a stipulation that all people should be treated similarly, unhampered by artificial labor market barriers or prejudices or preferences, except when distinctions can be explicitly justified. The aim according to this often-complex concept is that important jobs should go to "the most qualified" – persons most likely to perform ably in each task – and not go to persons for arbitrary or irrelevant reasons, such as circumstances of birth, upbringing, having well-connected relatives or friends, religion, sex, ethnicity, race, caste, or involuntary personal attributes such as disability, age, gender identity, or sexual orientation. Access and chances for employment advancement should be open to everybody interested such that they have "an equal chance to compete within the framework of employment goals and the structure of rules established."

The idea is to remove arbitrariness from the employment selection process and base it on some "pre-agreed basis of labor market fairness, with the assessment process being related to the type of position", and emphasizing policy, legal, regulatory, and procedural systems. Individuals in the labor market should succeed or fail based on their own efforts and not extraneous circumstances such as having well-connected parents. It is opposed to nepotism and plays a role in whether a social structure is seen as legitimate. This study is about equality of employment opportunity – the opportunity available to well-motivated, capable and hard-working youth to get ahead in life, employment and achieve their maximum potential, no matter their social background. Equality of employment opportunity can be measured in terms of social mobility: the frequency with which young people move up the social hierarchy to a higher income or occupational ranking irrespective of their different backgrounds and starting opportunities in the labor market.

The classical liberal vision pontificates about equality of opportunity and 'a fair go for

everyone'; they often mean little more than equality under the legal and regulatory system. The formal equal opportunity (FEO) concern is to ensure that the legal, regulatory, and institutional frameworks do not impede youth from accessing social economic opportunities, such as employment, health, and employment competing on equal terms. There is an absence of officially sanctioned or condoned discrimination based on characteristics such as age, religion, gender, ethnicity, race, sexual and other discriminatory social preferences.

But many youths have something much more ambitious in mind than this classical liberal vision. Their norm is Substantive Equality of Opportunity (SEO). SEO refers to a situation where everyone can develop their full potential irrespective of the original circumstances of their birth and childhood and where a person's economic prospects are determined overwhelmingly by their own ability and character. Equal employment opportunity under this case, takes place in all employment systems and practices, including hiring, promotion, demotion, transfer, recruitment, termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training. SEO differs fundamentally from FEO in two ways.

Firstly, SEO takes a dynamic or longer-term perspective and FEO is about ensuring the best person wins at any point in time: individuals competing in the labor market at any time are judged only on the attributes they bring which are relevant to the duties of the position, without any bias on grounds of race, ethnicity, gender, caste hierarchy or nepotism. But SEO is also concerned with risk factors and handicaps in early childhood and teenage years. As it embraces meritocracy, it also looks backward at the situation before the competition starts in the labor market. That is, SEO wants to ensure not only that selection for superior jobs is based on objective qualifications but also that all youth have had an opportunity in earlier life to become qualified for these superior jobs. It thus looks at opportunities over a lifetime, in dynamic context, not just at a point in time.

Secondly, the two concepts differ on the extent of government intervention required. On the narrow FEO perspective, governments are only expected to minimally intervene to deter overt or covert discrimination. By contrast, under SEO the governments are expected to actively

intervene to ensure that youth are not unduly discriminated or impeded by lack of parental wealth, status and power from achieving their full education potential; and as adults, citizens are not impeded by location, inadequate access to training and skill-enhancement, poor access to health and housing or poor networking from achieving their full employment potential.

Laws of some of the EA countries such as Equal Opportunities Bill, 2007 of Kenya; Tanzania’s Employment and Labor Relations Act of 2006; the Ugandan Equal Opportunities Commission Act, 2007 and Article 12 of the Law regulating Labor in Rwanda, of 2009 consider discrimination in the employment and labor markets to include both direct and indirect discrimination. It is essentially any practice that makes distinctions between individuals or groups so as to disadvantage or advantage others. Direct discrimination may refer to individual actions or behaviour usually resulting from prejudice or stereotypical thinking. Indirect discrimination involves instances where certain groups e.g., based on their religion, gender, race, and age, are unreasonably excluded, or otherwise

disadvantaged by apparently neutral policies, practices, procedures or decisions that are unfair or unequal in their effect.

Lack of Equal Opportunities Contributes to Youth Unemployment

This section presents major data findings and policy analysis of equal opportunity factors contributing to youth unemployment in the EAC Countries. Data analysis uses non-parametric methods, mainly contingency tables (*also known as a cross tabulation*) as types of tables in matrix formats that display the (multivariate) frequency distribution of the variables defined in 4Es model theory section. Table 4 summarizes views of respondents on the overall performance of the equal opportunity factors and comparative attributes for the youths in the EAC region. Based on the above model, the research team collected, organized and made summaries of about 1000 observations or stakeholders from Tanzania and about 71 observations from the other EA countries; namely, Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda (Semboja, 2017).

Table 2: Age Distribution of the Respondents in Tanzania

Age	Frequency	Percent
15-24	398	39.8
25-35	411	41.1
36-59	173	17.3
60 and above	18	1.8
Total	1000	100

Source: FCS, 2016

Table 3: Age Distribution of the Respondents for other EAC Countries

Age	Burundi	Uganda	Rwanda	Kenya	Total	Percentage
15-24	5	0	10	6	21	30
25-35	9	10	10	10	39	55
36-59	2	16	0	3	21	30
60 and above	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	16	16	20	19	71	100

Source: FCS, 2016

Table 4: Equal Opportunity Factors and Comparative Attributes

Equal opportunity	Tanzania		Burundi		Kenya		Rwanda		Uganda	
	Without Disability	With Disability	Without Disability	With disability	Without Disability	With Disability	Without Disability	With Disability	Without Disability	With Disability
1 Open Access and Application	50.4	48.5	43.8	63.5	63.2	52.7	20	30	18.8	50
2 Fair Judgment	49.1	48.7	87.6	100	73.7	57.9	20	20	87.5	93.8
3 Gender Issues	43.4	43.3	56.3	62.6	78.9	47.4	10	20	6.3	12.5
4 Social and Cultural Factors	35.9	37.4	100	87.5	42.2	47.4	65	69	12.5	43.8
5 Tribalism and Regionalism	42.5	44.5	100	100	84.2	79	10	5	62.6	93.8
6 Religious	39.9	44.5	43.8	43.8	63.1	47.4	15	0	81.3	87.5
7 Corruption	75.7	73.2	100	81.3	84.2	79	5	0	81.3	87.5
8 Overall EE Effects	48.1	48.5	75.9	76.9	69.9	58.7	20.7	27	43.8	58.9

Source: FCS, 2016

Tables 2 and 3 summarize general characteristics of the data set. We made assumption that all capital cities of the EAC countries are "big villages" thus consisting of both urban and rural households and or at least these households represent views and perceptions of the EAC populations.

We also assumed that modern youth are aware and tell more stories about their problems than adults. Table 1 shows that respondents aged from 15 years to 35 years were majority, which is about 81% in Tanzania and 85% from other EA countries of the total research sample indicating that majority of the respondents interviewed were youth. The policy research targeted the youth as the main investigation variable.

Table 4 suggests that all EA countries have put in place an adequate, legal, regulatory, and institutional framework facilitating equal employment opportunities (Semboja, 2017). However, data findings suggest that a significant number of respondents perceived that lack of equal opportunity leads to unemployment for youths in the EAC countries. The main equal opportunity attributes include corruption, fair judgment, open access and application, tribalism, and regionalism. Youth in the EA countries overwhelmingly have the view that equality of opportunity is a social economic and political norm. Many youths also believe that it is being realized in political forum that youth's social economic life chances are less dependent on their circumstances of birth, gender and less hampered

by rigid class structure, debilitating snobberies, or lack of social networks, than are the life chances of many people in comparable nations. The following is a brief exposition of these attributes.

Limited Open Access Application

Open access application is concerned with ensuring that available positions in the labor market bring superior advantages to all applicants; job openings to be publicized in advance to give applicants a full access to apply for the announced jobs (Braimah and King, 2006). On equal opportunity the concept of open access application is to allow all candidates seem qualified to engage in the competition of being chosen as right candidate for a given required criteria. Table 4 suggests that many people in Tanzania and Rwanda perceived limited open access application having high probability of limiting youth employment in the EAC countries. This implies that many youths fail to access the jobs due to restricted means of communications used by the employers during jobs announcements, searching and recruitments. For example, these days, some employers use their websites which many youths cannot access because they do not have devices like smart phones and their counterparts in villages face network problems.

Openness on job advertisements has remained on the perception of employers while job seekers depend on different means of communication from which it is hard for the employers to

understand which media is highly preferable. On the other hand, youth fail to access the job announcements because many adverts are done through daily newspapers for which they do not have money to spend. Thus, despite various initiatives taken to ensure open accessibility in employment vacancies application in Rwanda, still there are information limitations for youth with disabilities.

The underlying factors causing limited open access and application that constrain youth with disabilities in employment include bad governance, lack of accessibility to various means of communication through which they can be informed on available opportunities, inability to visit public notice-boards on which many job adverts are posted, lack of facilitative instruments such as wheel chairs to assist them in various movements to read newspapers and employment announcement, and lack of information facilitating tools such as smart phones and internet connected computers due to poverty and remoteness (Yokoyama, 2012).

Rwanda has been taking deliberate measures to address the open access application problems. These measures include establishment of employment centres such as Kimisagara Employment Centre to disseminate employment opportunities together with helping youth with and without disability to prepare for interviews and train them how to write CVs; Creation of Job Desks (JD) through which youths can access information about employment opportunities and are free to apply through directed websites and emails. These desks are both physical and online. Moreover, private organizations such as Job in Rwanda are disseminating employment opportunities to ensure open access to youth with disability (Aiyedogbon and Ohwofasa, 2012). Therefore, allowing all candidates to get access and apply for available employment opportunities creates a chance for getting right candidates and advocates transparency in employment systems. Furthermore, many individuals argue that it is important to keep it open for all individuals in rural and urban areas to see widely that choice was not biased at all.

Many large scale and modern firms have technologies that provide software enabling organizations to search and hire new employees and acquire skilled young professionals. These companies integrate industry-leading solutions

across mobile, mainframe, distributed, virtual and cloud environments. With an increasing youth workforce, these ICTs ensure that potential youth can easily access the business apps they need, no matter what type, without compromising security. However, these open access application modes are limited to few youths from relatively well-to-do families in the urban areas.

The research found another open access problem related with constrained transportation systems. When poor youth can't find or afford transportation to a job interview, job training or place of work, youth become hopeless and helpless. This cycle is hard to break, and frequently moves from one generation to another, creating a downward spiral of long-term unemployment, poverty, and despair. The spread of jobs to suburban areas with limited public transportation has been a direct cause of long-term unemployment, particularly in communities with lower household income and fewer cars available. Across the unemployed population in all major cities in the EAC countries, transportation is by far the most reported barrier to getting a job. This suggests that constrained transportation systems linking rural and urban areas limit job access for the rural and sometimes urban youth communities.

Youth are now more likely to identify job opportunities located outside the urban areas where they live than within the places they live. But for many, the high cost of owning a means of transport greatly limits them to access to those jobs. Consultations and observations identified inadequate bus services on weekends and evenings, and infrequent or late service in general, as issues that greatly reduce their ability to access, find and maintain good jobs.

Unfair Judgment

The concept of fair judgment in job application is where all applicants on a particular post or position are given equal chance of winning the interview regardless of the age, sex, location, and other kind of discrimination (Peters, 2009). Applicants are judged on their merits with procedures designed to identify those best-qualified. The evaluation of the applicant is in accord with the laws of the country, job description and requirement. Table 3.1 shows that many respondents in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, and Burundi perceived unfair judgment

to have high probability of limiting youth employment in these EA countries. That is, many jobs seekers in the region are not treated well and equally. This suggests that employers are not aiming for a fair process that focuses on candidate's ability to perform the essential job duties. Also, the decision-making processes are never uniform, consistent, transparent, unbiased, comprehensive, and objective. There are kinds of unfair judgements due to nepotism, tribalism, religious inclinations and sometimes corruption demanded by employers to young women or men. All these limit youth to access desirable jobs opportunities.

Unfair judgment hinders employers to get qualified candidates and instead they get wrong candidates. This is largely attributed to imperfect labor and employment market systems. For instance, in Tanzania unfair judgment is observed as one of the main reasons influencing youth unemployment while in Rwanda fair judgment is not always the case. Many youths are unemployed due to the rapid population growth that leads the failure of the economy to absorb a number of youth entering the labor market. Rwanda is the leading country in EAC with low rate of unemployed youth.

There are noted unfair judgments related to prevalence of corruption and tribalism whereby youth face extreme challenges in finding jobs and earning a steady income in Uganda and Kenya. The situation is particularly difficult for youth with limited education, young females, disabled as well as those living outside of urban centres. Tribal clashes in these countries have penetrated even in employment provision thus creating unfair judgment in employment provision, (Niwigira, 2014).

The fair judgment in employment opportunities has never been a basic youth right and have not been given emphasis it deserves by all involved in the labor market in these EA countries. Employers, government, and unions have failed to identify best practices and good governances which provide equality of employment opportunities in many productive and service sectors and firms.

High and Increasing Corruption

Corruption is a form of dishonest or unethical conduct by a person entrusted with a position of authority, often to acquire personal benefit

(Razafindrakoto and Roubaud, 2010). There are existing malpractices in some private and public firms and organizations associated with lack of good governance or corruption practices. Table 3.1 suggests that majority of respondents perceived that high and increasing corruption have a significant probability of limiting youth employment in Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, and Tanzania. Corruption Watch 2014 Survey in South Africa revealed that youth believe that their employment prospects are compromised by corruption. This perception is borne out by the jobs-for-pay scandal in the education system and by the consistent reports of nepotism in appointments that we receive. Bribery, nepotism, and irregularities in the appointment of candidates for positions are the most common forms of employment-related corruption (Corruption Watch, 2014).

Corruption in the EAC has been high, on increase and associated with various complex factors such as selfishness behaviour among individuals, ineffective legal system and law enforcements institutions, low salaries in public offices, greater interventions of states in form of regulation, lack of political will breakdown / erosion / perversion of societal values and norms, tribalism, favouritism, nepotism and cronyism weak or absence of management systems procedures and practices, weak civil society and apathy, lack of professional integrity; lack of transparency and accountability (Martini. *et al*, 2013).

High corruption creates the opportunity for increased inequality, reduces the return of labor productivity, inefficiencies and hence, makes rent seeking more attractive (Corruption Watch, 2014 and Beltrán, 2016). This opportunity for increased inequality not only generates psychological frustrations to the underprivileged but also reduces total productivity growth and new job opportunities. With such negativity, corruption induces imbalances between employers and employees. Not only for that case but also on the idea creation and project financing, even when youth are able to write a proposal for a particular activity it might be rejected simply because they have nothing to offer in return.

Beltrán (2016) used representative data for firms for Latin American firms and showed that corruption decreases employment in firms.

Corruption appeared to negatively impact the growth and wealth in a country, not by introducing labor distortion in firms, but by keeping them small. Dealing with corruption in the labor markets has been first good governance priority for many governments in the EA countries. However, this remains hard to deal with since the existing system is unable to provide required services at desirable time and quality (Rose-Ackerman, and Palifka, 2016). With increasing social economic difficulties, youth are highly attracted to give what they have in order to get what they need and save their lives. Weak anti-corruption combating systems, procedures, legal and regulatory framework; and policies have provided loophole for bribery and happy ending of the corrupt officials.

Prevalence of Tribalism in the EA Societies

Tribalism is the state of being organized in or an advocate for a tribe or tribes. In terms of conformity, tribalism may also refer, in popular cultural terms, to a way of thinking or behaving in which people are loyal to their own tribe or social group. Tribalism has been defined as a 'way of being' based on combinations of kinship-based organization, reciprocal exchange, manual production, oral communication, and analogical enquiry. Tribalism implies the possession of a strong cultural or ethnic identity that separates one member of a group from the members of another group.

Table 4 suggests that many respondents in Burundi, Kenya and Uganda perceived that tribalism has high probability of limiting youth employment. In Uganda context, tribalism has been as a social phenomenon is associated with the identity of members of a competing communal group(s) seeking to protect and advance their interest in social, economic, and political systems. The relevant communal factors in Uganda and Burundi are language, culture, religion and/or common history. The impacts of tribalism include a guarantee of employment or award of contract in public service as a function of one's tribesperson in position of authority.

Tribalism breeds corruption. In Kenya employment has been skewed with members of certain community being given certain positions due to tribalism (Wanjohi, 2014). Public institutions in Kenya present a case where the members of staff are rendered tribal. Effective

performance of duty therefore becomes a big issue since tribalism affects work ethics. In terms of employment, people are given jobs based on tribe regardless of having lower qualifications. Hence, the inefficient use of available skills. Thus, the very rationale of being educated lacks meaning. Bad governance and lack of accountability has also been linked to tribalism as people do not question a government run by their tribesmen. Delivery of services is also hindered as the culture of impunity is also inculcated. Delivery of services in both public and private institution where tribalism is rampant is also highly affected by tribal affiliations (Wanjohi, 2014).

Corruption, nepotism, and tribalism are mostly affecting youth employment; for instance, in Uganda and Burundi youths argue that "*no connection no accessibility to the job*". Consequently, the unqualified people end up getting a job. Some youth claim that being affiliated to a certain tribe determines your chances of getting a job in the government administration or not. For example, in Uganda a Banyankole youth has a much higher chance of getting assigned to a government post than somebody from the Acholi tribe (Lewellen, 2002; Laruni, 2015).

Furthermore, the eye-sight observations in terms of job provision by the seniors and top leaders create more and vivid evidence towards their leaders' choices of group within members of the country. Sometimes other people are being fired not because they have not fulfilled their roles and responsibilities instead the leader wants to give that position to his or her favourites from the based on tribal or regional affiliations (Mutua, M. 2009). For instance, in Kenya tribalism is much deeper within and the fancy talk of doing away with it is like a dream whose realization is only possible in the afterlife. However, Kenyans seem to have embraced tribalism in both body and soul and are not willing to let it go.

Tribalism is a complex function of past colonial manifestations, poverty, limited resources, and social economic opportunities. Negative effects of tribalism are since poor people in these EAC countries have not learnt to respect their culture and traditions of other tribes especially if they live and work amongst people from other tribes. Also, globalization, technological development, and the integration of

the modern western way of life in African cultures have not been effective to change the "tribal, village or bush mentality".

Tribalism in the labor and employment markets has been the possession of a strong cultural or ethnic identity that separates one member of a group from the members of another group. It has been a precondition for members of same tribe to possess a strong feeling of identity for a true tribal society. Imbalance of power, unfair government employment practice and tribal conflicts are among the effects of tribalism. Clans or tribes that have not been occupying any position of power in government believe that they cannot develop to the same extent as those on the position. Moreover, even their children expect not to be employed since they have tribal or clan differences. The economies of the EAC countries have caused youth unemployment and this has been a hindrance of poverty reduction by maintaining well desirable social cultures and ignoring any kind of discrimination in the labor markets.

Gender Discrimination

Gender discrimination issues are primary and traditional social attributes contributing to youth unemployment. These are due to the cultural background from which female youth are not equally treated with males in many aspects including wages, jobs and even inheritance of the family assets for investment. For a long time, the share of women in the employment markets has been relatively low for about 40 per cent while the remaining 60 per cent remained to men in many EA countries (Semboja, 2017). The proportion of women in wage employment in non-agricultural sector remains low, and this implies that women have less access to wage employment than men and therefore there is a need to reduce that gender inequality. Also, there is low number of women who have secured top positions in public and private sectors; hence there is low representation of that group in managerial positions. A low number of employed women have got low positions in their workplace and thus earning very low.

Table 4 suggests that a significant number of people in Tanzania and in Kenya perceived that gender discrimination has high probability of limiting youth employment. Associated factors on that perception include nature of the job,

corruption, social and cultural factors. Focusing on nature and type of the job, some jobs are considered not fit for females and with such consideration various effects such as an increased gender-based discrimination, misallocation of the labor force; and increasing wage gap between male and female youth with and without disabilities.

Gender discrimination issues are fewer problematic factors in Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda. However, like other African countries, gender discrimination means that women must submit to an overall lower social status in Uganda. For many women, this reduces their power to act independently, become educated, avoid poverty, or develop self-reliance for social and economic shocks (Equal Opportunities Commission, 2016). The women continue to face constraints related to, among others, limited access to control over and ownership of productive resources such as land, credit, and businesses, in addition to limited employment opportunities in industries that require sophisticated skills; and this limits their income-generating potential.

The "insensitivity" of the gender discrimination issues in Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda is a reflection that equal treatment between male and female has been given priority hence reducing gender stereotyping. Despite being one of the hot national and global agenda yet less response has been witnessed. This is since national efforts such as sensitization on gender aspects have been successfully in these countries (Equal Opportunities Commission, 2016).

At the political front, all EA countries have progressed on providing equal chances to both male and female, and sometimes females are given higher chances than males. Such pace indicates that EAC member states are socially and politically aware of the gender issues and address it with the global perspective. Various national economic development plans and policies have explicitly integrated gender issues as a policy target and means to increase equality between male and females. However, in practice efforts have been ineffective and have failed to remove gender bias and attain true candidate while holding a principle of equality.

In all EA countries, women are employed and concentrated in working in micro -small farms or operating small scale firms, making them

overrepresented among unpaid workers and in the informal sector. In keeping with social norms, women employment bears a disproportionate share of house and care responsibilities; hence creating barriers to their taking (formal) wage jobs. They require flexible work arrangements and have less control over time use than their male counterparts; so, they are confined to lower-quality jobs (World Bank, 2010). Moreover, the participation of females in national activities as well as in self-employment has been witnessed in recent years hence to conclude that female participation in formal employment is growing at reasonable pace (AfDB, OECD, and UNDP, 2012; ILO, 2013).

Other Equal Opportunity Factors

Table 4 suggests that there are other equal opportunity factors influencing youth unemployment in the EAC countries. These include social and cultural factors and religious.

Complex Social and Cultural Factors

Social and cultural factors are complex function of customs, language, attitudes, religion, lifestyles, and values that characterize a society at particular point in time. These can affect quality of life, ways of living, thinking and perception of the society on a given subject matter. These social and culture factors do change with time, technology, political, and social economic developments. They impact behaviour and preferences of employers and employees in employment conditions. Since youth with disabilities are members of the society that means they are subjected to these factors whereby they can limit their probabilities of being employed simply because of their social and cultural influences (Kieselbach, 2003).

Table 4 shows that few people in Rwanda and Burundi perceived that complex social and cultural factors have high influences on causing unemployment for youths with and without disabilities. Such perception is due to social selective types of jobs, and social cultural beliefs existing in Rwanda and Burundi. Also, employer's preference describes the tendency of the employers to choose/ select the job applicants based on social and cultural factors. For example, many employers in the tourist sector in Zanzibar prefer foreigners rather than local Zanzibaris arguing that locals are "Swahilis" and inefficient.

Social and cultural factors have resulted into an increase of social discrimination, unfair judgement, and limited access to formal jobs, expanding wage gap between male and females, and rejecting some of reasonable employment opportunities. Often in the EA region like in any other African countries, still tribes and other cultural backgrounds are used in assigning one's roles. This leads to the wrong choice of the position or sometimes engaging in low paying jobs as it has been normal for a woman in African culture. Though it cannot be ignored that social and cultural factors provide identity of the society, but policy actions are needed to address that issue.

Existences of Biased Negative Religious Beliefs

Religion is any cultural system of worship, including designated behaviours and practices, world text, places, ethics, or organization that relates humanity to the supernatural or transcendental. Religious practices may include rituals sermons, commemoration or veneration (of deities), sacrifices, festival, feasts, trances, initiations, matrimonial services, meditations, prayers, music, dance, art, public services and or other aspects of human culture (Bennett, 2001).

Table 3.1 suggests that a significant number of respondents in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda and Burundi perceived that existence of conflicting and biased negative religious beliefs or attitudes have high probability of limiting employment for youths with and without disabilities in EA countries. The perceived religious discrimination refers to an individual's perception that he/she is unfairly treated based on his/her religious membership. Religious discrimination has valued or treated a person or group differently because of what they do or do not believe or because of their feelings towards a given religion (Douglas, 2004).

Within the context of equal employment opportunities, religion has caused bias, negative beliefs and practices and thus influencing employment processes. For example, an employer may not refuse to hire an applicant because of that person's faith (belief), (Bennett, 2001). Also, an employer may not fire a youth because of religious practices, such as breaks for prayer time during official working hours (practice). Moreover, these beliefs and practices should be sincerely held, which means that laws

are not confined to organized religions such as Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Judaism. Wiccans, Pagans, and Atheists are legally protected against religious discrimination in the workplace as well.

Religious affiliation and its biased negative attributes have been viewed to be an important determinant of youth unemployment in Tanzania and Uganda. Negative religious beliefs are due to lack of adequate knowledge and information on the religious matters, poverty, tolerance, and unity among communities. For instance, in areas or firms which are dominated by Muslims it is not easy for a non-Muslim youth to be employed, this is due to misconception and misinterpretation of Quran verses. Also, in areas and firms where Christianity is dominant it is not easy for a Muslim youth to be employed this is due to terrorist image created upon Islam (Ellis and Ter Haar, 2004).

Fear to employ religious youth and religious discrimination may be associated to high and increasing costs connected to potential employees in practising their religious beliefs in workplaces. Just as there are many religions in these countries, there are many forms of religious expressions tied to a person's faith that employers may be asked to accommodate in the workplace. Some employees may request time during the day to practice prayer. They may need to avoid contact with members of the opposite sex and they may not be able to work on certain days of the week. Whatever the requests, organizations may be prepared to provide employees with a policy and or procedural path to follow when such requests are made. There are additional costs connected to religious tolerance and accommodations (Bennett, 2001; Douglas, 2004). Ignorance of religious practices may lead to misunderstandings and conflicts among employees and foster prejudice and discrimination. First, conflicts in the workplace can adversely affect job performance and lead to turnover. Valuing workers' religious feelings may foster a more productive and profitable work environment. Second, the growing diversity of the workforce necessitates an openness to diversity in the recruitment and selection process in order to attract and retain the best employees.

Consultations suggest that the likelihood of employment is lower for Catholics, Seventh Day Adventists and Muslim women compared to other peers in these EAC countries. However, the

influence of religious-conservative values may well change as society and economy transform. A changing society might imply changes in biased attitudes, or changes in child upbringing technology and household duties – either might pose internal and external restrictions on labor market access for married women, (Douglas, 2004).

CONCLUSION

This section is a conclusion that presents major study findings and policy recommendations on the equal opportunity for youth unemployment in the EA region:

Major Study Findings

The paper found that lack of equal opportunities contributes to youth unemployment. The main equal opportunity attributes include limited open access application, unfair judgment, high and increasing corruption and prevalence of tribalism in the EA societies. Other equal opportunity factors include complex social, cultural factors and existences of biased religious beliefs. An increased unequal employment opportunity leads to an increase of incidences of workplace conflict; demoralize people and reduce the working morale and decreases workers' retention; attracts "worse" job applicants; liable for open legal actions and minimizes investment funding from financial institutions.

Recommended Policies on the Employment Equal Opportunities

Equal opportunity in employment ensures that all men and women are valued, respected, and put free from all forms of discrimination and harassment. The paper recommends for EAC states to put in place policies with an objective of ensuring equal opportunities in employment. The specific policy strategies include the need to enhance open access application in the labor market systems; institute fair judgment system; ensure corruption free employment processes; minimize negative effects of tribalism on employment; enhance gender mainstreaming in employment efforts; consider positive social and cultural attributes in employment processes and uphold religious systems that are pro-employment on equal opportunity basis. EAC countries that will have national equal

employment opportunity policy typically will be able to attract a more diverse pool of qualified youth applicants. These employment policies ensure that fair consideration is given to qualified youth applicants, regardless of non-job-related factors such as race, sex, disability, ethnicity, or colour. The following is a brief exposition of these specific policy objectives and strategies for enhanced employment equal opportunities.

Enhance Open Access Application

The governments should ensure that all youth candidates get free access and apply for the available employment opportunities. This will create equal chances of getting right candidates and advocates for transparency in employment systems. It is also important to ensure that available positions bring superior advantages to all applicants; jobs should be open for competition to all candidates with qualifications.

Governments should put in place effective and efficient means of communications and transportations through which youth can be informed and access available job opportunities. Support youth to visit public notice boards on which many job adverts are posted. They should also expand facilitative instruments, such as wheelchairs to assist youths with disabilities. They should further facilitate the youth to get various means of information such as smart phones and computers which are connected to internet services. EA countries may establish youth employment centres for disseminating employment opportunities together with helping youth with and without disability to prepare for interviews and to write CVs and creation of Job Desks (JD) through which youths can access information about employment opportunities and are free to apply through directed websites and emails.

Institute Fair Judgment System

The governments should ensure that all youth applicants for a particular position are given equal chance of winning the interview regardless of the age, sex, location, and other kinds of discrimination (Peters, 2009); and they should be judged on their merits with procedures designed to identify those best-qualified. The evaluation of the applicant must be in accord with the laws of

the country, job description, and requirement. Also, there should be fair recruitment system and process that focuses on each candidate's ability to perform the essential job duties. Also, the decision-making processes are uniform, consistent, transparent, unbiased, comprehensive and objective. There should be zero tolerance with respect to tribalism in the recruitment and employment processes.

Ensure Corruption Free Employment Processes

There is a need for adherence to principles and practices of good governance in employment and labor markets. The EAC governments must enhance good governance in labor market systems and administration; promote a culture of compliance with principles of good governance and strengthen the existing anticorruption agencies. Also, it is important to put in place the effective legal systems and law enforcements institutions, management systems procedures and practices, and professional integrity, transparency, and accountability.

Countries should remove all forms corruptions such as dishonest or unethical conduct by all persons entrusted with human resource or recruitment positions that often use the positions to acquire personal benefits. Ensure that these human resource development managers are not selfish. There is a need of enhancing an enabling governance environment that is aware of and responsible to the needs of both employers and employees during employment processes.

Minimize Negative Effects of Tribalism on Employment

Minimize negative effects of tribalism on employment and income generating processes. The positive features and impacts of tribalism may be retained as additional factor in guaranteeing effective employment or award of contract in public service. Meritocracy, professionalism, and equality should provide a basis for equal opportunities and not based on fellow tribesperson who is in authority. Tribalism should not remain a social phenomenon associated with the identity of members of a competing communal group(s) seeking to protect and advance their interest in social, economic, and political systems. This must be supported by

good governance, equal opportunities, and free open access to all.

All EA countries must cooperate in ensuring that globalization, technological development, and the improved way of life in African cultures must be effective in changing tribalistic mentality. Therefore, to develop the economies of the EA countries and reduce poverty to a minimum level it is important to bring the societies together by maintaining the well accepted cultures and ignoring any kind of tribal discrimination.

Enhance Gender Mainstreaming in Employment Efforts

EA countries must increase the share of women in the employment market to about 50 - 60 per cent in wage employment. Also, efforts must be geared towards increasing a number of women who get into top posts in public and private sectors, hence increasing representation of women in managerial positions. The countries should also reduce gender stereotyping by ensuring that there is an equal treatment between male and female. This can be done through gender mainstreaming efforts such as dissemination, sensitization, and advocacy on gender aspects. In practice, gender-related issues must aim at ensuring women empowerment in social, political, and economic positions.

All EA countries must implement social economic development plans that explicitly articulate the gender issues as means to increase equality between male and females. More gender mainstreaming in employment efforts is needed in order to remove bias and attain true candidate while holding a principle of equality at main target. The EA governments shall ensure implementation of national economic empowerment strategies for women; enhance women's empowerment in decision making occupations; enhancement of women's legal capacity and to ensure women's access to health, finance and ICT systems and facilities.

Consider Positive Social and Cultural Attributes in Employment Processes

Consider positive social and cultural factors in employment processes. This can be done through instilling good governance, equality and fair judgement behaviour and preferences of employers and employees in employment conditions. These social and cultural factors must

reduce social tension, discrimination, minimize wage gap between male and females, and help people get rid of tribalism, religion, and other social cultural backgrounds in employment processes. People should be well-educated to understand that youth with disabilities are potential in the society and should not be subjected to any negative social and cultural beliefs.

Uphold Religious Systems That Are Pro-Employment on Equal Opportunity Basis

Within the context of equal opportunities, religion is defined as both beliefs and practices that are sincerely held. It is necessary that all employers do not hire an applicant based religious affiliation (belief). These beliefs and practices should be sincerely held, which means that laws are not confined to organized religions and atheists must be legally protected against religious discrimination in the workplace as well. Religion and spirituality must remain as a private matter with little or no place in public employment opportunities. EA countries must embrace religious tolerance; good global and regional culture and reduce insecurity due to fundamentalism. People should be free to express their religious feelings in a workplace and employers may be asked to accommodate all religious inclinations in the workplace.

Whatever the request, organizations may be required to provide employees with a policy and or procedural path to follow when such requests are made. There should be minimum costs connected to religious tolerance and accommodations. It is important to provide a work culture and environment that recognize the needs and challenges of employees and build on employee engagement in order to attract and retain the best talents.

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