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**ROLE OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH AUTHORITY IN SKILLS TRAINING
FOR EMPLOYMENT CREATION IN WA MUNICIPALITY**

NACHIM CEPHAS YAW-KA

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES



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**UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
FACULTY OF PLANNING AND LAND MANAGEMENT
DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT
MANAGEMENT**

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FOR EMPLOYMENT CREATION IN WA MUNICIPALITY**

BY

NACHIM CEPHAS YAW-KA

[UDS/MDM/0415/16]

**THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNANCE AND
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT, FACULTY OF PLANNING AND
LAND MANAGEMENT, UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT
STUDIES, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY
DEGREE IN DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT**

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES



SEPTEMBER, 2019

DECLARATION

Candidate's declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this University or elsewhere:

Candidate's Signature:..... Date:

Name: Nachim Cephas Yaw-Ka

Supervisor's declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University for Development Studies.

Supervisor's Signature: Date:

Name: Mr. Samuel Z. Bonye



DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my mother and to the memory of my late father.

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the role of the National Youth Authority (NYA) in employment creation in the Wa Municipality. The study adopted the relative deprivation and the empowerment theory as its theoretical foundation. A case study design was employed. Purposive, convenience and snowball sampling techniques were employed in selecting the respondents for the study. In all, 35 respondents were selected for the study. They included five NYA Officials and thirty youth (both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries). Tools employed for the data collection were interview guide and focus group discussion guide. The data was analysed and presented using content analysis, thematic analysis and document review. The main causes of youth unemployment are lack of skills or unwanted skills, erratic rainfall and bad weather, low investment and low economic growth, slow growth of SMEs, and lack of a comprehensive strategy to deal with the problem. The findings also show that Strategies identified and implemented by the NYA are mainly training and development, education and sensitization, logistics, and mentoring. The research established that most of the strategies are not effective in the Wa Municipality as most unemployed youth exhibit ‘deviant behaviours’ and attitudes which could also cause them to be “frustrated, hopeless and desperate”. The challenges the NYA faces in creating employment for the youth in the Municipality are financial constraints, inadequate human resource, inadequate logistics, low participation of youth on the programme, political interference, and lack of commitment from stakeholders. The study concludes that strategies for reducing unemployment by the NYA are not effective. It is recommended that government through the NYA should stimulate growth of the private sector (SMEs) and provide communities with dams and irrigational facilities for all year round farming.



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AfDB	African Development Bank
BACs	Business Advisory Centres
COTVET	Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training
DACF	District Assembly Common Fund
ERP	Economic Recovery Program
FCUBE	Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GLSS	Ghana Living Standards Survey
GLSS-4	Fourth Round of the Ghana Living Standards Survey
GPRS I	Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy I
GPRS II	Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy II
GSGDA I	Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda I
GSGDA II	Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda II
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
GYEEDA	Ghana Youth Employment and Entrepreneurial Development Agency
HIV/AIDS	Human immunodeficiency virus/Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
ICLS	International Conference of Labour Statisticians
ICT	Information Communication and Technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
ISSER	Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research
ITC/ILO	International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization





LI	Legislative Instrument
MMYE	Ministry of Manpower Youth and Employment
NaBCo	Nations Builders Corps
NBSSI	National Board for Small Scale Industries
NGO	Non-Governmental organization
NYA	National Youth Authority
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PNDC	Provisional National Defence Council
RD	Relative Deprivation
SHS	Senior High School
SIF	Social Investment Fund
SMEs	Small and Medium Scale Enterprises
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
STEP	Skills Training and Employment Placement
UK	United Kingdom
UDS	University for Development Studies
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNIFEM	The United Nations Development Fund for Women
US	United States
WHO	World Health Organization
YES	Youth Enterprise Support
YLSTI	Youth Leadership Training Institute

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

One of the major problems in the world is youth unemployment. The youth constitute the driving force of society and hope for the future. They are also the most socially active and productive sector in most economies in the world. In Ghana, youths constitute approximately 22.6% of the economically active population (GSS, 2014; National Youth Policy, 2010). This proportion of the youth in the Ghanaian population corresponds with their share of the unemployment rate in Ghana. For instance, Amankrah (2013) maintained that nearly 60% of the unemployed in Ghana are in their youthful age. This makes Ghana's youth unemployment rate one of the highest worldwide.

Unemployment is a situation whereby individuals are unable to find a paid job despite their readiness and willingness to work (Fajana, 2000). According to the International Labour Organization (ILO, 1982), unemployment occurs when individuals without paid job actively seek to find one. Unemployment has numerous negative consequences on those who are affected (Lorenzini and Giugni, 2010). A deprivation of paid job involves the risk of isolation and social exclusion (Paugam, 2004) as well as deteriorating effects on personal life and well-being (Poku-Boansi and Afranie, 2011). This is even made worse with a prolonged unemployment.

The inability of jobseekers to secure gainful employment tends to create disaffection among these people and cause some of them, especially the youth, to resort to social



vices such as robbery, prostitution and political unrest. Indeed, unemployment constitutes underutilization of human resources and the failure to prevent these resources going to waste does not only make them vulnerable to poverty but is also a loss of potential income tax revenue to the nation (African Development Review, 2013). The estimated annual turnover of over 30,000 of the universities and other tertiary institutions coupled with the limited absorption capacity of the economy and lack of required skills and competence of recent “tertiary educated” workforce owing to poor educational infrastructure give credence to the gloomy unemployment situation among tertiary graduates. Moreover, the failure of formal educational institutions to produce graduates with skills required by the labour market due partly to lack of effective linkages between educational institutions and industry has also contributed significantly to the increasing rate of unemployment among graduates in recent times (Baah-boateng, 2004).

Kudadjie and Aboagye-Mensah (2004: 117) stated that noted that in developing countries, “unemployment becomes particularly painful because the greater percentage of the population is made up of the young people”. A number of reasons may account for the level of unemployment in a country. These may include poor governmental policies, the kind of colonial legacy bequeathed to a people in relation to the people’s understanding of what may constitute a decent job, wrong location of industries, lack of capital, and wrong behavioural attitudes like laziness, gambling, and over dependence on others for support for one’s livelihood.

Furthermore, evidence suggests that exposure to negative life events, such as unemployment, impairs an individual’s psychological well-being (Poku-Boansi and



Afrane, 2011; Paugam, 2004) and may lead to suicidal thoughts (Osafu *et al.*, 2011). Dooley *et al.* (2000) opposed the idea of comparing the unemployed with the employed due to differences in the quality of paid jobs. They argued that poorer quality jobs have a greater tendency to impair an individual's mental health compared with better quality jobs. Thus, simply comparing the employed with the unemployed is likely to underestimate the impact of losing a good job. This included involuntary part-time work and low-wage work. They observed that both the unemployed and the inadequately employed were significantly more depressed than those who were adequately employed.

For the past decades, governments in Ghana have initiated policies, programmes and interventions for the creation of employment for the teaming graduates and non-graduates in Ghana. These include; GPRS I (2003-2005), Youth Employment Programme (2006), GPRS II (2006-2009), GSGDA I (2010-2013), GSGDA II (2014-2017), YES (2016), GYEEDA (2009 - 2014), Youth Employment Agency (2015) and NaBCo (2018). To coordinate the employment streams, the National Youth Authority (NYA) Act 2016, Act 939 was passed by Parliament to ensure that youth in Ghana acquire employable skills and attitude to work, make some income and contribute to national development.

Employment policies are deliberate action by government to influence employment levels in general or to improve access to employment for particular demographic group within the population such as youth and women. Ironically, Ghana has never had any comprehensive employment policy apart from various schemes undertaken to improve labour absorption such as the National Service Scheme (Baah-boateng,



2004). As a result, the unemployment situation increases on yearly bases. An Act of Parliament Act 2015 (Act, 887) was passed to establish the Youth Employment Agency for the purpose of development, coordination, supervision and the facilitation of employment for the youth and other related matters.

Similarly, the National Youth Authority Act 2016 (Act, 939) was passed with the sole objective to develop the creative potential of the youth, develop a dynamic and disciplined youth imbued with a spirit of nationalism, patriotism and a sense of propriety and civic responsibility and ensure the effective participation of the youth in the development of the country. To achieve the objective under section two (2), the Authority shall perform but not limited to the function of formulating policies and implementing programmes that will promote in the youth, a sense of creativity, self-reliance, leadership, loyalty to the country discipline and civic responsibility and establish and supervise youth leadership and skills training institutes and others (Act 2016, Act 939). The National Youth Employment programme started in 2006 aimed at creating jobs.

Unfortunately, those jobs are not sustainable as changes in governments have led to sacking and re-recruitment of party faithful's every eight years. The change of government come with change of name for the same programme with very little done to really create permanent employment. According to Baah-boateng (2004), the broad policy objective of the GPRS was to achieve a reduction in poverty through accelerated economic growth and employment creation. The broad pillars outlined in the GPRS included macroeconomic stability, production and employment, human



resource development and basic services, private sector development and special programmes for the vulnerable and the excluded including the youth.

To this end, one can conclude that the National Youth Policy which aimed at building the capacity of the youth to discover wealth creating opportunities in their backyards and environment, enabling the youth to have access to reliable and adequate labour market Information, creating opportunities for young people to take advantage of available jobs, and training and preparing the youth for the global market is challenged as most youth in the Wa Municipality remain unemployed. As opined by Osafo *et al.* (2011) that limited job openings available to the labour force suggest policy failure with socio-political and economic implications.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Youth unemployment in Ghana is a major canker. The Ghana Statistical Service reported that the total unemployment rate in Ghana is 11.9% and the youth unemployment rate is 12.1% (GSS, 2015). The national employment policy agenda under the GPRS considers employment as the core objective of the policy framework for poverty reduction. However, employment strategies in the GPRS emphasizes on the adoption of a holistic approach and treats employment as a cross cutting issue.

Employment creation emanates through the adoption of labour intensive technology, agricultural modernization, agro-processing, manufacturing, services, and non-traditional export development among others. Aside, special emphasis has been placed on micro and small-scale enterprises and employment (Baah, 2004). When



lack of employment exists the youth may engage in criminal web of armed robbery, stealing, drug peddling and human right abuses among others. When these happen, they overstretch the state security apparatus, where fund, meant to support the aforementioned institutions and projects are diverted to support security to provide protection for the numerous populations (Oppong and Sachs, 2015).

As a result of the unemployment situation in the Wa Municipality one can observe negative impacts such as, loss of self-worth, self-esteem and deterioration in well-being. The cumulative effect of these is the tendency for the youth to resort to ungodly and deviant behavioural patterns. The youth in Wa Municipality contend with unemployment resulting from inadequate and inappropriate training for job market, growing incidence of youth involved in violent conflicts, high vulnerability to hunger and poverty, high incidence of drug and substance abuse among others (GSS, 2014).

Sadly, despite numerous employment initiatives taken by the government to serve as solution to these problems, youth unemployment still persists in the Wa Municipality. This raises questions on the effectiveness of the National Youth Authority (NYA) which is a body established to provide the youth with employable skills in dealing with the unemployment canker. Also, although the consequences of unemployment are multifaceted (social, economic, political and psychological), earlier researchers in Ghana (ISSER, 2007; Poku-Boansi and Afranie, 2011; Yarquah and Baafi-Frimpong, 2012) have ignored the institutional strategies which when not addressed may be as devastating as the social, economic and political consequences.



Against this backdrop, this study seeks to examine the role NYA play in employment creation in the Wa Municipality of the Upper West Region of Ghana.

1.3 Research Questions

1.3.1 Main Research Question

How apt is the National Youth Authority in creating employment in the Wa Municipality?

1.3.2 Specific Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following questions:

- a. What is the youth unemployment situation in Wa Municipality?
- b. How effective are the strategies put in place by the NYA to promote youth employment in the Wa Municipality?
- c. What challenges does the National Youth Authority face in implementing these employment strategies?

1.4 Research Objectives

1.4.1 Main Research Objective

The main objective of the study is to examine the role of the National Youth Authority in employment creation in the Wa Municipality.



1.4.2 Specific Research Objectives

- a. To assess the unemployment situation in the Wa Municipality.
- b. To evaluate the effectiveness of strategies employed by National Youth Authority in promoting youth employment in Wa Municipality.
- c. To explore the challenges that the National Youth Authority face in implementing these employment strategies.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study seeks to inform policy makers and practitioners the causative factors of unemployment and the consequences thereof for the skilled youth, and to enable policy makers take pragmatic steps towards reducing unemployment in the Wa Municipality. The study reviewed the strategies used by the NYA over the years towards reducing unemployment and making useful findings and recommendations for addressing issues pertaining to youth unemployment.

It assessed the effectiveness of those strategies on employment creation and develops a holistic approach to solving the unemployment problem in the Wa Municipality. The findings from the study would make a significant contribution to various attempts by government, NGO's and other stakeholders in finding lasting solutions to the problems facing the unemployed youth. This research seeks to fill the literature gap on unemployment studies and this will serve as basis for future studies.



1.6 Scope of Study

The study was restricted to the Wa Municipality of the Upper West Region. The study location is chosen because it is the only Municipality in the region with the NYA office in place. Aside, majority of the youth in the Municipality are unemployed (GSS, 2014). The study focused on assessing the role of the National Youth Authority in employment creation in the Wa Municipality.

1.7 Operational Definition of Terms

Youth: refers to the number of people between age 15 and 24 years old in a country, region or area (ITC/ILO and ILO, 2011). The policy defines “youth” as “persons who are within the age bracket of fifteen (15) and thirty-five (35)” (National Youth Policy of Ghana, 2010). This research utilized the definition from the National Youth Policy document.

Employment: refers to those people who have worked more than one hour during a short reference period (generally the previous week or day) (ITC/ILO and ILO, 2011).

Labour force: consists of people who are either working or actively looking for work, and therefore does not include the economically inactive (ITC/ILO and ILO, 2011).

Unemployment: refers to “the proportion of the economically active populations who are not working but are available for work” (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014).



Unemployed persons: refers to those people who have not worked more than one hour during a short reference period (generally the previous week or day) but who are available for and actively seeking work (ITC/ILO and ILO, 2011).

Unemployment rate: is the fraction of the labour force that is unemployed, i.e. the number of unemployed divided by the total labour force (ITC/ILO and ILO, 2011).

1.8 Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five chapters. The introduction of the study which is Chapter One, constitutes the background, statement of the problem, research questions and objectives, significance, scope, operational definitions and how the entire work has been organized as well as the study limitations.

Chapter Two is dedicated to reviews of current literature on relevant works done. It examines the theoretical and empirical issues that relate to unemployment in Ghana.

Chapter Three constitutes the methodology of the study. This provides the various research methodological techniques that were employed to tackle the research questions raised. In this regard, this section discussed the following; the study area, research design, population, sample size and sampling techniques, sources of data, the data collection tools, data processing and analysis.

Chapter Four is dedicated to results and discussion. This entails analysis of the research questions raised based on the interview data; in this regard the author utilized thematic discussions as well as transcriptions and interpretations.



The Chapter Five (5) is the final chapter and it discusses the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

Getting information about for the questionnaire was delayed due to the perceived reluctant on the part of participants to share their thought concerning the programme. To overcome this challenge, the researcher served prior notice of engagement with focal persons of the programme. The researcher noticed a number of challenges including, non-existence of full list or data on trainees for sample. Even-though reports on relatively shorter skills training given to trainees were available. Lastly, financial and logistical constraints affected the study taking into consideration its scope. To overcome these, the study is restricted to the Wa Municipality. Despite the above challenges the study still covered the relevant areas in achieving its objectives.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews scholarly works on the research topic. It focuses on the overview of Employment, Youth Employment in Ghana, Causes of Unemployment, Effects of Unemployment, Theoretical Frameworks, Government Interventions, Challenges and summary of literature.

2.2 Overview of Unemployment

According to Amofo (2011), the meaning of unemployment has since 1954 been occasionally changed, its essential criteria notwithstanding, stays flawless, for example an individual is to be viewed as unemployed on the premise that he/she, amid a reference period, at the same time fulfils being: a) “without work” b) “right now accessible for work”, and c) “looking for work”.

The World Bank (1974:13) also characterizes unemployment as the condition of an individual who needs to work but unable to secure one. International Labour Organization (2011) characterizes unemployment as the quantities of the financially dynamic populace who are without work yet accessible for and looking for work, including individuals who have lost their positions and the individuals who have deliberately left work.

As per these definitions, the term does not allude to individuals who are not looking for work in light of age, sickness or a psychological or physical debilitation, nor does



it allude to individuals who are going to class or keeping house. Such individuals are delegated out of the work compel as opposed to unemployed. Oben-Tarkornoo (2009) shares a comparable view that young individuals, the underage, children and the physically challenged who by virtue of their conditions are not looking for jobs can't be considered as unemployed.

The three major kinds of unemployment are cyclical, structural, and frictional. Each type of unemployment has different causes and consequences, and so public policies designed to reduce each type of unemployment must be different, too. Cyclical unemployment refers to the recurrent unemployment occurring at particular phases of the business cycle, starting with the downturn from a boom. This unemployment is caused by a deficiency of aggregate demand and is associated with a fall in the number of job vacancies (ILO, 2011). Sometimes the government can use monetary or fiscal policies to increase spending by businesses and households, for instance by cutting taxes.

Structural unemployment is unemployment caused by a difference between the structure of employment vacancies and the structure of unemployment, usually brought about by technological change. Unemployed persons have different skills from those being demanded by employers or are located in a different place from a potential employer (ILO, 2011). Most policies designed to reduce structural unemployment provide training programmes for these workers, or subsidize education and training programmes available from colleges and universities, technical schools, or businesses.



On the other hand, frictional unemployment is a short-period of unemployment brought about by workers changing jobs. This minimum level of unemployment, which coexists with job vacancies, occurs even when an economy is at full employment and is a feature of all types of national economy. Labour market policies can reduce this type of unemployment by making job information more available and accurate and by subsidizing search costs (ITC/ILO and ILO, 2011).

Labour mobility is, in general, a good thing for workers and the economy overall. It allows workers to look for the best available job for which they are qualified and lets employers find the best-qualified people for their job openings. Because this searching and matching by employees and employers takes time, on any given day in a market economy there will be some workers who are looking for a new job, or waiting to begin a job.

However, full employment occurs when unemployment has fallen to an irreducible minimum, approximately the level of frictional unemployment (ITC/ILO and ILO, 2011). According to Chambers (2008), the phenomenon of youth unemployment in Africa today is critical and urgent steps should be taken to address it. Poku-Boansi and Afrane (2011) report that the youth in some African countries form about 36.9% of the working age or population between the period 1995 to 2005.

They further emphasized that Africa's workforce development was 29.8% and unemployment was 34.2% over this period. The work found that the relationship between development and unemployment rates is positive and unemployment itself is high in some countries (ILO, 2011). Youth unemployment affects labour output rate,



which in the long run affects the general GDP in a country. Its impact is estimated at 65.5% (Poku-Boansi and Afrane, 2011). Of recent occurrence in Ghana has been another form of unemployment, the graduate unemployment phenomenon which is the situation where some graduates after completing their National Service are unable to find work even though they are available for work.

Poku-Boansi and Afrane (2011) reckon the definition of unemployment in the Ghanaian economy as difficult since the concept is usually referred to those who are engaged in formal economy in wage employment. Consequently, although unemployment is quite high, only a relatively small proportion of the labour force is usually recorded as unemployed (Anyanwu, 2013). In fact, the relatively low recorded figures of unemployment problem mask the real level of the employment crises in the country.

In the light of the above, what is rather more visible about the unemployment problem in the country is underemployment which is generally characterized by low-productivity and low-income rates (Poku-Boansi and Afrane, 2011). Unemployment is a phenomenon of job-seeking resulting out of joblessness. The International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) of the ILO considers a person of working age (e.g. 15 years in Ghana) to be unemployed if during a specified reference period (either a day or a week), that person had been: 'without work', 'currently available for work', and 'seeking work'. In effect, a jobless person who is available for work but fails to make an effort to seek work is described as a 'discouraged worker' rather than unemployed. Additionally, a person who is working but engages in job-seeking for the purpose of obtaining additional income or diversifying his/her job portfolio



among other reasons as a moonlighter (Baah-Boateng et al., 2013) cannot be described as unemployed.

2.3 Historical Perspectives on Unemployment

Unemployment was not invented; it existed, whether society or the individual was conscious of it or not (Perry, 2000). It did not emerge as a category until the transition from pre-industrial to industrial society took place. Anyanwu (2013) characterizes this transition as the emergence of the male chief earner supporting his' dependent family, the socialization of workers, and the breaking down of pre-industrial customary forms of behaviour into the time disciplines of industrial capitalism.

In the midst of these changes, a new social category 'the unemployed' surfaces (Anyanwu, 2013). Dependence on wage work as opposed to agricultural labour made unemployment to surface, creating the sense of frustration and exclusion that cause unemployed people to describe their situation as a 'nightmare'. Therefore, unemployment can be seen as the child of industrial capitalism. Even though wage-labour had existed from ancient times, it acquired an increasingly important role in Western Europe starting in the 17th century (Perry, 2000).

The history of unemployment makes it clear that unemployment' is not a timeless category with universal characteristics. Unemployment is a social invention that has been continually revised. Numerous historical studies recount how unemployment as a distinct and important social problem emerged alongside industrialisation. It was



only created as a conceptual and linguistic category with the emergence of certain kinds of industrial employment, and only when the state began to regard it as a social rather than purely individual problem.

Studies such as unemployment indicate that unemployment has economic, social, political and psychological costs. Its economic costs include: the reduction of economic well-being, the decline in output, and the erosion of human capital. In terms of social costs, unemployment leads to social exclusion, the deterioration of family life, and an increase in grievances and cynicism, which may be responsible for the supposed link between unemployment and crime.

The hardships of unemployment are not limited to income loss, but also include the far reaching negative effects it may have on self-confidence, work motivation, basic competence, social integration, racial harmony, gender justice, and the application and use of individual freedom and responsibility (Sen, 1997). In addition to economic and social challenges, unemployment also invites psychological trials as it has been confirmed that employment is very important for identity construction.

The phenomenon of youth unemployment has been clarified from alternate points of views in the monetary or financial studies. Inside the neoclassical structure, the phenomenon is considered as related to adaptable wages or salaries and influenced by available or existing data. In the event that this standard is compromised by compensation inflexibility because of institutional components or policies, (for example the lowest pay permitted by law enactment) challenges in the labour market may not be solved, making it difficult for the youth to secure employment.



Joblessness is said to exist if people can't get work regardless of whether they are set up to acknowledge lower genuine wages or more unfortunate conditions than comparative qualified labourers who are employed in present in business (Akerlof, 1982).

Joblessness likewise emerges when firms choose to pay higher wages over the acceptable wage as motivating force to expand productivity of employees. As indicated by the efficiency wage, compensations are kept higher over the market wage with the view to change evading conduct of representatives (Shapiro and Stiglitz, 1984) or decreasing work turnover (Stiglitz, 1974). Efficiency wage is likewise paid by firms to keep away from antagonistic choice of employment candidates or as an endowment of trade for high efficiency from specialists (Akerlof, 1982). Inside the effectiveness wage system, it causes problems for jobseekers to verify work since the expanded bills and specialists' high efficiency would not make it interesting for firms to connect more hands, in this manner leading to joblessness.

The insider model of wage-setting conduct of firms additionally gives institutional clarification of automatic or involuntary unemployment (Bentolila et al., 2011). The model contends that unemployment emerges when compensation are controlled by considering just the interests of those utilized (insiders), without respect to the interests of those trying to be utilized alluded to as the untouchables (Bentolila et al., 2011). The actions of firms to lessen cost of work turnover which keeps them some sort of protection security from insiders even amidst their higher pay requests, making it extremely difficult for outsiders to get employment. In addition, insiders may oppose rivalry with outsiders by declining to coordinate with or by making



things difficult for outsiders who endeavour to underbid the wages of existing labourers to escape joblessness or unemployment.

From the Keynesian point of view, unemployment generally emerges from lacks in total interest or challenges with aggregate demand over specific periods in the business cycle with the end goal that employments made or created are insufficient for everybody who needs to work (Keynes, 1936). This kind of unemployment is cyclical and involuntary in light of the fact that the jobless or unemployed are compelled by constrained by fewer availability of jobs. Identified with demand deficient unemployment is seasonal or periodic unemployment, caused by changes in climatic seasons or condition associated with jobs in the country.

Unemployment could likewise happen when there is clear way in the labour market. This is alluded to as deliberate or voluntary unemployment arising because of the time it takes the person to discover and move into another activity or the time and assets it takes a business to distinguish and enrol qualified labourers to fill opportunities. This kind of unemployment is called frictional unemployment.

The empowerment theory has been utilized to understand the complexities of frictional unemployment coming about because of unemployment by some labourers (Bentolila et al., 2011). As opposed to the neoclassical case of perfect or flawless market data, jobseekers put resources into quest for new employment because of blemished data over one's best opening for work while businesses additionally look for accessibility of wanted ability. Structural unemployment arises due to a disparity between demand for the workforce or labour and the skills and competencies of



jobseekers is another kind of unemployment. It is commonly identified with unemployment made by technology that makes abilities of certain specialists out of date or obsolete.

Unemployment has additionally been explained under the implied contract system or framework. The theory contends that a reasonable labourer will opt for a job with higher payoff or salary prospects, if that activity or job offers higher wages than pick a work which is stable however lower compensation or pay, in a circumstance where unemployment protection or insurance benefits, different types of social security exist to increase lifetime earnings. Subsequently, unemployment may be caused in an insecure work environment if such advantages (social wellbeing nets for the jobless) are expanded (Burdett and Hool, 1983). The fundamental reason for unemployment as indicated by the implicit contract theory may be relative risk changes of employees who work for both public and private sectors. Jobseekers who are rational would opt for higher wages over the short-run to low yet stable pay spread well into the future.

Empirical research on the causes of unemployment has regularly centred around the supply-side of the market. A portion of the empirical studies on unemployment has demonstrated that unemployment in general is higher for the youth than the old (AfDB et al., 2012, UNECA, 2005). This may reflect work shopping by more youthful labourers and the absence of openings for work as labourers get to the retiring age (Sackey and Osei, 2006). Sackey and Osei (2006) contended that more youthful individuals are bound to be jobless because of the way that they have lower labour market skills and competencies in respect to more established associates.



Anyanwu (2013) emphasized on a number of reasons that lead to the labour market inequalities about work against young people in addition to the reality that the young are less expensive to dismiss due to their inexperience; they are probably going to confront the brunt of layoffs and turnovers because of the apparent lower cost to dismiss them in respect to their more established partners.

Unemployment is additionally identified to be an urban phenomenon (Dickens and Lang, 1995; Sackey and Osei, 2006). As indicated by AfDB et al. (2012), in certain nations in Africa, the urban youth unemployment rate is assessed to be six times higher than the rate in rural parts of Africa. For the most part, staying in an urban setting or regions increases the probability of becoming jobless in Ghana (Sackey and Osei, 2006). Kingdom and Knight (2004) perceived an expansion in the likelihood of urban occupants getting to be jobless by 8.6 rate points in South Africa. Gender differences of unemployment have likewise been set up in Sri Lanka by Dickens and Lang (1995) who found higher unemployment rates among women than men. In Ghana, be that as it may, Baah-Boateng et al. (2013) observed unemployment to be a higher labour market challenge for men than women from 1960, until 2000 when the turn-around happened. The author ascribed the higher unemployment rate among women than men since 2000, to the expanding interest of women in the labour market as a result enhanced education among women. Naudé and Serumaga-Zake (2001) discovered sexual orientation as one of the critical determinants of unemployment in South Africa's North-West territory.

Another rising worrying phenomenon about unemployment is the expanding or increasing unemployment rate among those educated than the uneducated. For



instance, Dickens and Lang (1995) observed unemployment to be high among the exceedingly educated Sri Lankan youth (matured 15– 24) and declining quickly from that point. More so, AfDB et al. (2012) observed joblessness to be high among the educated than the uneducated especially in center salary nations than low pay nations. In any case, they fight that the informed jobless are bound to in the end escape joblessness than those with lower dimensions of capability. Sackey and Osei (2006) additionally observed that essential and senior optional dimensions of training are related with generally greater joblessness in Ghana due to the moderately lower dimensions of such instruction contrasted with those with tertiary training.

Furthermore, Okun's assertion of connecting unemployment to changes between the actual GDP gives some understanding of the demand-side clarification to unemployment. There is a direct relationship between the rate of GDP gap (for example differences in the potential and real GDP) and unemployment rate more than the normal rate of unemployment (Stiglitz, 1974). Notwithstanding, the moderate reaction of employment to GDP in certain nations has rendered Stiglitz's contention to some degree out-dated since development, driven by high capital and technology probably won't cause business development in accordance with GDP development.

Anyanwu (2013) utilized existing cross-sectional information over a time of 1991– 2009 in Africa to demonstrate the increasing impact of a country's investment rate on youth employment and by suggestion a diminishing impact on youth unemployment in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) with the opposite revealed in North Africa. The author further found a measurably positive effect of real GDP changes on youth



unemployment in SSA and North Africa proposing a diminishing or reduction impact of monetary development on youth unemployment in Africa.

Valletta and Kuang (2011) using the information from the Population Survey, arrived at results that vehemently propose that powerless or weak labour demand plays a pivotal role in delayed unemployment period or youth unemployment for very long time. While inequalities may make accessible occupations go unfilled and in this manner hold down business development, Valletta and Kuang (2011) couldn't straightforwardly discredit clarifications identified with the supply of work, for example, befuddles between specialist abilities and manager expertise needs.

A number of studies report a significant association between unemployment and poor mental and physical health, as well as unfavourable health habits (Cohen *et al.*, 2007; Paul and Moser, 2009). However, Schaufeli (1997) noted that the strength of the association is rather weak. Approximately, unemployment accounts for only 10 to 15% of the variance in psychological distress (Fryer and Payne, 1986). Second, Schaufeli (1997) argued that though unemployment causes psychological distress, high levels of distress may as well cause prolonged unemployment, implying that the relationship may rather be mutual.

Winefield (1995) reported that poor self-esteem and depressed mood were both antecedents and effects of unemployment. Thus, poor mental health may cause unemployment; a situation termed as reversed causation or selection hypothesis. Whilst the causation hypothesis deals with the negative impact of unemployment on



mental health, the selection hypothesis refers to the factors that predict occupational success.

People are distinguished by two principle statuses in work classes, ie. paid employment and independent or self-employment. Thus recognizing two main classes or groups, people at work, and individual with an occupation or a venture yet not at work or having employment. Those unemployed are characterized or defined in the levels as including or consisting of all people over a predefined age who amid the reference time frame were: (a) “without work”, that is, were not in paid job or employment or self-employment; (b) “currently accessible for work”, that is, were accessible or available at large for paid employment during the time frame and; (c) "looking for work", ie. had made explicit strides in a predefined period to look for paid work or employment (ILO, 2013).

The prioritisation of employment creation is informed by a prevalent assumption that employment has a positive impact on both poverty reduction and stability. It is assumed that employment creation reduces poverty directly by increasing household incomes, and indirectly by stimulating the economy through the creation of demand. It is assumed that employment creation promotes stability by reducing incentives to participate in conflict, and by legitimising the state, as well as supporting the institutions and processes critical for the effective functioning of a state, for example through tax revenue (ILO 2009, World Bank, 2011), thereby promoting increased economic activity and further employment growth. In this way employment creation can contribute to a virtuous cycle of poverty reduction and improved stability, with mutually reinforcing outcomes. Employment creation is a priority for donors (World



Bank, 2011). Employment creation remains a major priority in the country's development agenda and it is the goal of Government to provide the youth with opportunities for employment and labour market information (National Youth Policy of Ghana, 2010).

2.4 Youth Unemployment in Ghana

Ghana's present population consists of about 57% youths (GSS, 2012). This means Ghana has a youthful population structure. Over the past fifty years, the number of youths in the total Ghanaian population has increased from 1.1 million in 1960 to 2.3 million in 1984, to 3.5 million in 2000 (Amankrah, 2005) and to 13.7 million in 2010 (GSS, 2012). As indicated by Amankrah (2005), Ghana's population structure is very youthful with the youth (characterized between age 15-24 years), comprising around one out of four of the populace. The author expressed further that in the last forty years the quantity or number of those who fall within the youthful bracket in the overall population of Ghana has expanded from 1.1 million in the year 1960 to 2.3 million in the year 1984, and to 3.5 million in the year 2000 (1960-2000 Censuses of Ghana).

The youth in the country are made up of about 22.6% of the working force. The proportion of the youth in the nation is also reflected in the proportion of them who are unemployed or jobless. For the most part, the extent or proportion of those who are jobless reduces with age. For instance, in 2010, 42.7% of those who are unemployed were between 15-24 years, 46.2% aged 25-44 years, and 9.9% were



between 45-64 years and 1.3% aged 65 years and above. This makes the youth unemployment rate in Ghana as one of the highest globally.

Nsowah-Nuamah and Amankrah (2005) noted that, around 230,000 youth join the workforce or labour force each year. Their findings further revealed that the percentage of females who are unemployed are higher than their male counterparts for the last forty years. Also, both the fourth round of the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS-4) by the GSS and the 2000 Ghana Population and Housing Census demonstrate that the joblessness among the youth is largely dominant in the urban settings of the country and this phenomenon is as high as 31% in Accra alone, comparable with 11.5% in the rural parts of Ghana and 23.5% in other urban zones or areas.

The World Bank (2011) demonstrates that training one receives from school or education in general is positively related to unemployment. These indicators are also related to the likelihood of the youth to secure gainful employment. As a result of this, a distinction is generally made between those educated and the uneducated who are also youth in the unemployment circle and more so, it is within this circle that graduate unemployment ought to be comprehended. For the most part, unemployment or joblessness is very high among those who have gone to school and hence educated than the uneducated (UNECA, 2010). For example, in 2003, the unemployment rate was 8.5 percent for the previous and 6 percent for the present in Ghana.



As per the 2010 statistics, the unemployment rates were very high among those who have had secondary education in the years 2000 and 2010 remaining at 9.6% and 19.7%. The following group which recorded generally high unemployment rates was people with tertiary education: representing 2.7% in 2000 and 9.1% in the year 2010. At large, female unemployment rates were higher than that of their male counterparts at every educational level in the country.

Unemployment rates were most reduced among those with no formal training or education (representing 17.0% in 2010) with comparative examples for men and women. This is against the backdrop that the educated are used to selecting in the midst of different job opportunities with myriad of variables or indicators but the uneducated or those who have not been to school do not (UNECA, 2010). This type of unemployment is what individuals now refer to as graduate unemployment in which people who have tertiary degrees cannot find jobs for themselves.

In the assessment of Boateng and Ofori (2002), graduate joblessness or unemployment is certainly not a recent issue in Ghana. The critical question that normally emerges from this reality is why Ghana is unable to resolve this issue? Or then again why has this circumstance been so persistent in various manifestations? While trying to address this phenomenon, many intriguing perspectives have been shared. Some persons are of the opinion that successive governments have not done what's needed while others shift the blame to Universities and colleges for insignificant educational curricular. However, others also blame graduate from these Universities for not preparing themselves appropriately before graduating from these



institutions. So far, it appears the discussion has to a great extent been a blame game where everyone is pointing fingers.

According to the ILO (2008), youth comprise approximately 40% of total unemployment worldwide although they only account for one quarter of the total working age population (ages 15 and over). In the decade between 1997 and 2007, unemployment of youth worldwide increased from 10.9% to 11.9% while the global adult unemployment rate stayed level at 4.2% from 1997 to 2007 (ILO, 2008). “The youth are approximately three times more likely to be unemployed than adults, youth-to-adult unemployment rate was 2.8% in 2007, up from 2.6% in 1997” (ILO, 2008, p. 3). O’ Higgins (2001, p. 11) noted that youth unemployment rates are generally observed to be higher than adult unemployment rates for every country for which statistics are available.

From 1997 to 2007, worldwide youth participation rates decreased, while youth inactivity rates (non-participation in the labour force) increased (50.5% to 55.2% and 44.8% to 49.5% respectively). These changes are explained by increased participation in full-time education (ILO, 2008). The decline in youth labour force participation rates for the standard definition of the youth age group, 15–24, does not hold true for the age group, 25–29 (ILO, 2008). The labour force participation rate for this group remains constant over time, indicating that “the decline in youth labour force participation rates [for the former group] is mainly a passive side-effect of longer education terms, namely the postponing of labour force entry beyond the years which define ‘youth’” (ILO, 2008, pp. 6–7).



The report, thus, suggested that there is strong evidence for expanding the standard definition of youth from 15–24 to 15–29 years of age for research purposes (ILO, 2008, pp. 6–7). O’Higgins (1997) illustrated that, between the early 1980s and mid-1990s, the labour force participation for youth across European countries has decreased largely due to increased participation in full-time education (O’Higgins, 1997, p. 20). He also showed that the rates for teenagers (15–19) and young adults (20–24) are different. Unemployment is one among many issues that youth face in the labour market (ILO, 2006). In both developing and industrialized countries youth are more susceptible to issues such as “long working hours, work with short-term and/or informal contracts, low pay and little or no social protection” (ILO, 2004).

Over the past forty years, the number of the youth in the total population of Ghana has increased from 1.1 million in 1960 to 2.3 million in 1984, and to 3.5 million in 2000. The latter constitutes about 22.6% of the economically active population (Ghana Statistical Service, 2000).

Table 2.1: Share of the Youth in the Economically Active Population of Ghana

Age Group (years)	1960%	1970%	1984%	2000%	2010%
Both Sexes					
15-19	11.4	9.5	10.7	9.1	19.1
20-24	15.2	14.5	16.0	13.5	
Total	26.6	24.0	26.7	22.6	19.1
Males					
15-19	10.0	9.1	10.0	9.2	
20-24	14.5	13.6	14.8	12.7	18.7
Total	24.5	22.7	24.8	21.9	18.7
Females					
15-19	13.5	10.1	11.3	9.0	
20-24	16.2	15.7	17.1	14.3	19.4
Total	29.7	25.8	28.4	23.3	19.4

Source: Computed from the 1960-2010 Censuses of Ghana.



The share of the youth in the population is also reflected in a corresponding share of the youth in unemployment. Generally, the proportion unemployed decreased with increasing age. In 2010, 45.6% of the unemployed population was aged 15-24 years, 42.0% aged 25-44 years, 9.0% aged 45-64 years and 3.4% aged 65 years and older. In all the four years examined, the proportion of unemployed persons was highest among the youth except for 2000.

In 1984, these proportions were nearly three quarters, and with the same levels for both males and females (Table 2.2). These results are expected as the 15-24 year-olds are those who have completed one level of education or the other and are entering the job market for the first time (Ghana Statistical Service, 2010).

Table 2.2: Percentage Distribution of Unemployed Population by Age and Sex in Ghana

Age Group	Sex	1960	1970	1984	2000	2010
Total N	Both Sexes	163,643	198,571	157,646	863,740	632,994
	Male	109,093	141,467	87,452	421,722	283,346
	Female	54,550	57,107	70,194	442,018	349,648
15-24 (%)	Both Sexes	63.8	71.7	74.5	36.1	45.6
	Male	59.9	67.5	70.5	35.8	45.5
	Female	71.7	82.0	79.5	36.5	36.9
25-44 (%)	Both Sexes	28.2	24.6	21.8	38.4	42.0
	Male	32.5	28.2	25.9	37.0	41.8
	Female	19.5	15.6	16.7	39.7	42.2
45-64 (%)	Both Sexes	6.4	3.2	2.6	15.6	9.0
	Male	6.3	3.8	2.8	16.0	9.5
	Female	6.6	1.8	2.4	15.3	8.6
65+ (%)	Both Sexes	1.6	0.6	1.1	9.8	3.4
	Male	1.4	0.5	0.8	11.2	3.2
	Female	2.2	0.6	1.3	8.6	3.6

Sources: Ghana Statistical Service, 1984, 2000 and 2010 Population Censuses

The data further show that the proportion of the unemployed among the youth is higher for females than for males over the past forty years. In addition, data from



both the Fourth Round of the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS-4) and the 2000 Ghana Population and Housing Census show that the youth unemployment is largely concentrated in the urban areas (Table 2.3). The data show that the youth unemployment rate was as high as 30.8% in Accra, compared to 11.5% in the rural areas and 23.5% in other urban areas.

Among the unemployed persons were those who had ever worked, of that proportion, 32.4% were previously employed in service and sales work, 16.7% were in craft and related trades workers while 9.9% were engaged in elementary occupations. The nature of unemployment varied by rural-urban location and by sex. For the unemployed males who ever worked, the highest proportion was 19.7% for those who were in craft and related trades followed by those in services and sales. Among females, half of the total unemployed persons were in service and sales, with the proportions being 48.9% in urban areas and 31.7% in rural areas (see Table 2.3). The lowest unemployment rates were among those in skilled agriculture, forestry and related occupations. These are areas where people were more likely to be self-employed (Ghana Statistical Service, 2010).



Table 2.3: Percentage distribution of unemployed persons in 2010

Both Sexes				Male			Female		
Occupation	All Localities	Urban	Rural	All Localities	Urban	Rural	All Localities	Urban	Rural
Managers	5.5	6.0	4.2	5.7	6.4	3.7	5.4	5.7	4.6
Professionals	5.4	6.0	3.9	7.7	8.4	5.8	3.9	4.4	2.7
Technicians and associate professionals	2.5	3.0	1.1	4.3	5.2	1.8	1.2	1.5	0.7
Clerical support workers	2.8	3.5	0.9	2.7	3.4	1.1	2.8	3.5	0.7
Service and sales workers	32.4	36.1	22.7	14.9	17.1	9.1	44.1	48.9	31.7
Skilled agriculture, forestry and fishery workers	18.3	10.1	39.8	22.1	13.2	45.9	15.8	8.0	35.9
Craft and related trades workers	16.7	17.3	15.2	19.7	21.4	15.2	14.7	14.5	15.1
Plant and machine operators	6.4	6.7	5.6	14.9	15.9	12.5	0.7	0.6	1.0
Elementary occupations	9.9	11.3	6.5	7.7	8.8	4.9	11.4	12.9	7.5
Other occupations	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
All occupation	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	236,009	170,534	65,475	94,639	68,624	26,015	141,370	101,910	39,460

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Source: Ghana Statistical Service, 2010 Population and Housing Census

So as to help address the issue of youth unemployment, opportunities need to be created for the youth in the country to find jobs. This was settled by the prerequisite for the enrolment of jobless and underemployed youth in the nation in 2001 (Nsowaah-Nuamah and Amankrah, 2005).

2.5 Theoretical Framework

According to Vitahl et al., (2013) theoretical framework is a well-developed, coherent explanation of an event/phenomenon. Theories assist in interpreting and understanding events in the world. Similarly, the purpose of a theory is to provide tools for the interpretation of collected data, prevent the fragmentation of knowledge by ordering, giving the inquiry a focus, and providing theoretical explanations and deeper understanding of what is being investigated. This study adopted the theory of relative deprivation as the main theory and the empowerment theory as supporting theory to examine the role of the NYA in creating employment for the youth.

2.5.1 Relative Deprivation Theory

In his clarification of ‘why men rebel’, Gurr (1970, p.37) explains Relative Deprivation (RD) as performing actors “saw inconsistency between their value expectations and their esteem or value capacities or capabilities”. Value expectations are the states of life to which individuals trust they are legitimately entitled. Value capacities or capabilities are the products and conditions they think they are fit for getting and keeping. The disparity among desires and capacities can develop in connection to any individual for esteem, which can be financial, mental or political



and in this way lead to frustration or dissatisfaction when not met. He contends that when individuals feel they are in a deprived state – as compared to what they ought to really have, the tendency of conflict is high (Gurr, 1970).

He utilizes relative deprivation to exhibit that the danger of conflict is associated with frustration-aggression. Thus, in times of general dissatisfaction and deprivation, some people are frustrated and by so doing are compelled to render their displeasure in a form of aggressive action. The more serious and prolonged a sentiment of disappointment, the more prominent the likelihood of hostility. To Gurr (1970), dissatisfaction or frustration aggression produced by relative hardship or deprivation is the “main cause of the human capacity for conflict or violence” (p.36). This theory enabled the researcher to perceive the absence of employment opportunities as threats to societal stability.

2.5.2 The Theory of Empowerment

The theory of empowerment was adopted to serve as support to the relative deprivation theory. Power play is ubiquitous in daily household relationships but power is most of the time concealed making it quite difficult to isolate for exploration (Kabeer 2004, 134). Hence, a person may be dispossessed of power without being conscious of it. According to Kabeer (2005, 13-14), “empowerment refers to the processes by which those who have been denied the ability to make choices acquire such ability”. Mosedale (2005: 252) defines empowerment as “the process by which people redefine their roles in ways which extend their possibilities for being and doing”. From the above definitions, empowerment can be said to be an



ongoing change process that involves self-determination through the making of choices that can improve a person's wellbeing.

UNIFEM on the other hand suggests that economic empowerment should be defined as “having access to and control over the means to make a living on sustainable and long term basis and receiving the material benefits of this access and control...” (Mosedale 2005: 247). It has been argued that for a development body like the NYA training programme to engender change, it should “...contribute to youths' sense of independence, rather than simply meeting survival needs” (Makoshori, 2013). This may enable people to make “choices” that act against structures or individuals that draw back the pursuit of their interests and potentials. Kabeer (2005, 14) argued that for an individual to make meaningful choices “there must be alternatives and these alternatives must be seen to exist”. Eventually, people should be free to make their choices and be responsible for the choice they made.

Further, Kabeer (1999; 2005) suggested that empowerment could be examined through three interrelated dimensions: “*agency*”, “*resources*”, and “*achievement*”. Resources may entail all material and non-material things that are necessary for the maintenance and development of the person or wellbeing of a group (for example capital, knowledge, labour, etc.), which “are the medium through which agency is exercised” (Kabeer, 2005). According to Kabeer (2005:14) *agency* “entails a person's ability to make choices and being able to put them into action even in the face of others' opposition”. For a person to exercise his/her agency, the person must be conscious of the immediate circumstances, have the desire for change and the resources to effect the change. In other words, *resources* plus *agency* makes



achievement (otherwise called “capabilities”) possible. *Achievement* is defined as the potential for a person to live a life the person wants (Kabeer, 2005:15). In sum, the three dimensions: *resources, agency and achievements* are interdependent. Thus, “changes in anyone dimension can lead to changes in others” (Kabeer, 2005:15).

In practical terms, achievement involves the exercise of agency that is facilitated by access to resources and the outcome thereof. These “resources” may not only strengthen the youth’s socio-economic position but also make them conscious of their conditions. The youth may then be motivated to take actions (agency) to determine the use of their labour and capital. If they succeed through their action to take control of use of their labour and capital; then we say that there is achievement. From this backdrop, this study examined the achievement of the youth through their exercise of agency. For this study, the theory of empowerment helped to explore the extent to which these resources (NYA support) have enhanced employable skills of the youth and how they are able to exercise their “agency” in their communities.



2.6 Conceptual Issues on Youth Unemployment in Ghana

Youth unemployment in Ghana is a reflection of the differences between the demand and supply sides of the labour market in Ghana (Poku-Boansi and Afrane, 2011). To these authors, there are two principle issues to be considered on the supply side-the amount and nature of work. There has been a more than triple increment in the youthful population over the past forty years as indicated by the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment (2006). The World Bank (2006) reported that,

the development in youth labour supply between the year 1984 and the year 2000 was estimated to be 3.5% every year.

Notwithstanding, between the year 2000 and the year 2005, it expanded to 6.5% per annum. Out of a total of 230,000 individuals who look to enter the workforce each year, the formal economy can offer employments to around 2% or around 4,600 of them (ISSER, 2004). The rest of the 98% of those looking for jobs are left on their own volition to discover or find job in the informal economy where the dimensions of compliance with work benchmarks or standards are non-existent or stay jobless.

The second issue on the supply side has to do with the nature of those looking for jobs. Most of the unemployed youth either have no capabilities or at worse, have undesirable skills. This will render them unemployed in the formal labour or work environment where the expectation is on qualification and mastery, where there is formal preparatory training for the unemployed, there is an issue of gap between training in the schools and industry training needs and all these trainings put together have doubled the challenges that the youth faces (Poku-Boansi and Afrane, 2011).

The current educational system in Ghana continues to train graduates whose trainings do not match that of the industry or what the industry requires. Furthermore, the universities and colleges produce around 68,000 graduates per annum. Recently, the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER) has shown that about half (50%) of graduates from 2011 graduating year may need to hold on or wait to 2014 without securing jobs.



For Poku-Boansi and Afrane (2011), the curriculum of the courses that students learn in our colleges and universities, polytechnics and different establishments of higher learning ought to be relooked at to give as much practical training that are needed in the 21st century. To him, instructing through these courses that would not bring prompt advantage(s) to the country and where work prospects in the nation are non-existent ought to be suspended. For him, the focal point of our education ought to be re-structured to underscore the preparation of inventive, imaginative and critical thinkers and graduates who will be able to look for answers for societal issues and hence, create work for themselves. He trusts that by this, individuals who are burdened with issues will be ever prepared to patronize their services and by so doing graduate unemployment will be dealt with.

For Boateng and Ofori (2002), the phenomenon of quality is determined by the possession of some critical but relevant skills by individuals. As indicated by them, employers of businesses don't really require certificates but the capability to perform and this has prompted expanding requests for these characteristics or qualities like analytical, technical, managerial among others. For instance, in 1995 just 13.4% of jobs available requiring college or university education or training also requested for computer skills; 0.4% additionally requested communication skills, 1.5% additionally requested individual qualities or individual qualities. The interest in these qualities increased in 2000 to 45.7% for individual abilities, 38.6% and 41.8% for communication skills and individual qualities accordingly (Boateng and Ofori, 2002).



The expectations and goals of the youth are likewise factors that add to the unemployment discussions. The job requirements or expectations of graduates mostly do not match wage offers that are given by employers. A research survey undertaken using 450 final year students of the premier university of Ghana in the year 2000 found that over 80% expected significant wage increase by different sectors (Boateng and Ofori, 2002). At the demand side, low levels of investment in the educational and other sectors are the main issues that needed attention as far as youth unemployment is concerned in the country.

Above all, a developing country like Ghana faces the issue of capital deficiency. This can be blamed on low reserve funds and savings in developing countries. For advancement of any nation to occur, there must be satisfactory measure of capital (both domestic and foreign) (Amofo, 2011). It is significant that no nation has developed with just foreign capital or funding from the west.

At the point when new projects, for example, roads, airports, sanitation, power plants and so on are developed, they require a huge pool of labour, in this way, absence of or limited cash-flow to attempt these undertakings will be a major source of unemployment. It might likewise be contended that the youth unemployment challenge in Ghana is a result of the poor macroeconomic indicator performance in the past 50 years (Amankrah, 2005). Majority of the youth are roaming in the streets of urban cities having migrated from the rural areas searching for jobs that are non-existent. These persons usually settle for jobs with low wages.



According to a report by the GSS (2014:36), a large part of Ghana's labour force are into sole proprietorship or self-employment thereby earning average incomes per day, while majority of those at the rural areas live on less than eighty pesewas (GH¢0.80p) daily. This low salary levels converted into deficiency of capital and a bad financial condition that leads to breakdown of numerous organizations and businesses. In this manner, the unemployment rate in Ghana keeps on increasing because of the unfavourable monetary or fiscal atmosphere that is in the country.

In spite of the fact that unemployment situation in this nation has not been great throughout the years, the situation has compounded over the past two decades on account of basic monetary changes brought into the economy. Indeed, unemployment levels began an upward pattern at the commencement of the second phase of the Economic Recovery Program (ERP) in 1986 when redeployment and retrenchment policies were launched by the PNDC government because of conditions recommended by the World Bank and different organizations to provide answers for the serious monetary difficulties experienced by the country at the time.

The high population growth rate averaging 2.7% per annum in two decades has mounted pressure on the workforce. It has been recognized as the primary cause of high unemployment in Ghana (Poku-Boansi and Afrane, 2011). According to Amofo (2011), the connections between population growth and development have been recognized within the boundary of the population and resources in the country. As indicated by the author, traditional economists like Malthus, Hoover, Coale among others were sad about the high growth in population amidst fixed resources and developmental growth.



With the rise of environmental movements in the mid-1970s, the entire narrative changed to the connections between population growth, environmental issues and today, it envelops practical improvement. However, a clear approach ought to be laid out that will take into consideration an agreeable population growth and monetary development that could prompt reasonable advancement for the formation of job openings for the youth.

There are numerous ventures or industries which produce products occasionally like those in the agro-processing industry. These enterprises work just for a couple of months and stay shut for the rest of the year. So majority of people who are occupied and work in these industries become jobless amid the shutdown periods. This seasonal unemployment happens in light of the fact that many developing nations including Ghana rely upon rain-fed and subsistence cultivation to support their industries.

There is sufficient proof worldwide to show that SMEs have incredible potentials to advance financial improvement, socio-economic development and employment creation. Cohen et al. (2007) who looked into the commitment and contribution made by SMEs to economies in 76 nations, realized a connection between these contributions that SMEs provide for Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and national income for the state.

They uncovered that 51% of GDP was contributed by SMEs in high-income nations, 39% in medium-income nations and just 16% in low income nations. Newberry (2006) demonstrated a positive and significant relationship between a nation's



general income level and the quantity of SMEs per 1000 people. He demonstrated that low-income nations are attributed with low number of SMEs per 1000 persons in the population and that the increase in the income level is corresponding to the rise in the quantity of SMEs per 1000 persons in that country.

Regardless of the positive commitment and contribution of SMEs to the world economies, Ghana's efforts to elevate their development to retain most workforce have not yielded the ideal outcomes. This might be because of a few variables or factors including high loan costs, challenges in getting loans, unreliable and weak infrastructure and so forth. Majority of the youth are not appropriately guided and motivated enough to seek after the correct vocation or career path. Most of these students from the universities are made to select careers that do not directly fit their nature and personalities and hence, leading to failure in their professional lives as youth.

According to the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization (2011), a decisive economic misunderstanding that often motivates labour market policies is the lump-of-labour fallacy. Whenever unemployment is high, people often think that the solution lies in spreading existing work more evenly among the labour force. For example, Europe in the 1990s suffered extremely high unemployment, and many labour leaders and politicians suggested that the solution was to reduce the working week so that the same number of working hours would be spread among many more workers.



This view, which considers that the amount of work to be done is fixed, is called the lump-of-labour fallacy. Work is not a lump that must be shared among the potential workers. Labour market adjustments can adapt to shifts in the supply and demand for labour through changes in the real wage and through migrations of labour and capital. Obviously, in the short run, when wages and prices are sticky, the adjustment process can be lubricated by appropriate macroeconomic policies.

The school-leaving age is the minimum age at which a person is legally allowed to leave compulsory education. In some countries, there is a difference of several years between the school-leaving age and the legal minimum employment age, thus preventing any early transition from education into employment. On the one hand, countries which have their employment age set below the school-leaving age (mostly developing countries) risk giving children the opportunity to leave their education early to earn money for their families. On the other hand, a low school-leaving age can increase the number of young people looking for jobs (an increase in the supply).

We assume that a longer-educated population is more skilled: in general more-educated young people should be able to find a first job faster, (ITC/ILO and ILO, 2011).

The macro-economic environment refers to how the economy of a country is faring as a whole. In a nutshell low economic growth, which is manifested in low economic activity and low investment entail low overall job creation both for young people and for adults. On the contrary, when countries' economies perform better, unemployment levels tend to be low because output is high and employers need more workers to keep up increased production. Therefore, employment growth for all age



groups is as a result of socio-economic development and is only possible in the right macro-economic conditions. A fertile macro-economic environment leads to economic growth, which refers to an increase in the production of goods and services, and therefore an expansion of national income (ITC/ILO and ILO, 2011).

A business environment where entrepreneurs can easily start-up their business can make a substantial contribution to employment creation. Self-employment creates jobs directly, but successful businesses, if they are able to expand, also create jobs for others as the demand for labour increases. In many ways entrepreneurship drives economic development. It breeds competitiveness and innovation. Innovation, through the use of new technologies, increases productivity and further expands existing market opportunities, which in turn strengthens incentives to innovate. Small businesses therefore contribute to one of the key pillars of sustained economic growth: technological progress. In fact, the strength of the small business sector is often a decisive factor in determining an economy's ability to achieve GDP growth and a fair distribution of wealth.

Nonetheless there exist a range of key constraints and barriers to entrepreneurship in general and to enterprise start-ups by young people in particular. The most prominent (at least most talked about) impediment to young people seeking to create their own business is the lack of adequate start-up finance. Young people are often seen as particularly risky investments because of the absence of a substantive credit history, sufficient collateral or guarantees to secure loans or lines of credit. Another key concern when lending money to young entrepreneurs is the lack of experience and business skills. Because of their age, young people are unlikely to have the type of



business experience, track record or business skills that banks or other financial institutions would look for in assessing creditworthiness (ITC/ILO and ILO, 2011).

High wages can contribute to unemployment. This is even truer in case of youth labour market. In manual occupations, workers with fully qualifying work experience often receive entry wages not significantly different from entry wages received by workers with no previous work experience (and performing different tasks). This place the inexperienced, less productive workers at a disadvantage: the employer will normally prefer to hire experienced workers than hire young workers without experience.

In clerical occupations, where there is more wage differentiation on the grounds of previous experience, there is no systematic relationship between the proportion of workers at various skill levels and the number of new hirings or the supply of experienced workers. Wage differentiation (lower wages for new entrants to the labour market) can be an effective way to tackle youth unemployment and reduce the disadvantage of less experienced workers. Wages should be based on the value of the work performed, irrespective of the worker's age, but wage differentiation can be justified for people performing different jobs or work of different value inside a company (normally experienced people have different tasks (ITC/ILO and ILO, 2011).

The proficiency of the workforce environment are fundamental in ensuring that the labour force are utilized at the optimal level in the country and given the needed incentives to work efficiently. Numerous labour market policies and regulations can



contribute negatively to youth employment. Opponents of labour market flexibility claim that it puts all the power in the camp of the employer, allowing firms to hire and fire at will and leaving workers unprotected. Another argument in favour of more labour laws and regulation is that these make workers feel more secure and therefore encourage them to invest in acquiring job and Company specific skills that enable them to do their current job better but that would not be useful in a job in another company. In countries with a social welfare system, the unemployed are financially supported by the state (with workers and employers usually contributing a percentage of wages and the wage bill, respectively) through unemployment benefits, also called unemployment insurance (ITC/ILO and ILO, 2011).

Human capital is a key determinant of economic growth. It affects the income of the economy as a whole, and of the individual. Continued economic growth is not possible without human capital. Businesses need skilled and educated workers: they are the key factor to make profit and expand. Low educational attainment has been linked to higher unemployment rates. In addition, education appears to pay off. Higher education levels lead to higher wages, which in turn lead to increased spending and saving, leading to growth.

Majority of the universities and the colleges in the country mostly teach theories rather than impacting employable skills. In addition, a scholastic and academic way to training supports and develops abilities that are suitable to the working environment in both public and private sectors or large organizations in the country. Very low education and capability levels will in the long run lead to skills mismatch



that can affect youth development at the school level negatively (ITC/ILO and ILO, 2011).

A mismatch between the skill sets of the unemployed (labour supply) and the needs of employers (labour market demand) is the key reason behind structural unemployment. The mismatch comes about because the unemployed are unwilling or unable to change skills or to move to a location where their skills are in demand. As a result, it becomes very costly to match workers with jobs and unemployment is often prolonged. For example, businesses in a certain area may require young people with advanced ICT skills.

A young person living in this area but without these skills will have difficulty finding a job – his/her skills are not matched to the demand. Down a similar line of reasoning, a young person with the required skills set but living in an area where these are not in demand because employers are looking for agricultural workers, will have an equally difficult time finding work or may become underemployed. An important trend in labour markets in more developed economies, influenced to a large extent by globalization, has been a steady shift in demand away from the less skilled toward the more skilled. This is the case however skills are defined, whether in terms of education, experience, or job classification. The result of the changing composition of labour demand has led, and is leading, to a reduction in the number of entry-level, unskilled jobs, resulting in a mismatch for young people with low education and skills levels. Cyclical unemployment can also influence skills mismatches. If workers are unemployed for a long time, their skills may become rusty' and even obsolete in a rapidly changing labour market.



It can be difficult for young people to make the transition between work and school, leading to increased unemployment among new entrants to the labour market but not necessarily because there are no jobs available. In many countries lack of business and education linkages, relationships between educational institutions and the business community (school industry partnerships, combination of classroom learning and structured on-the-job experience) do not exist or are poorly developed.

Available evidence indicates that youth unemployment in Ghana is as a result of a number of factors. These factors have direct and indirect effect on the economy. According to the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment (MMYE, 2007) the factors that contribute to this phenomenon of unemployment are skills mismatch, lack of opportunities, changes in the curricula such as Junior High education system to a Senior High system among others.

Relating to the national economy, the strong improvement in employment in the services sector from 26% to 44% of total employment between 1984 and 2010 emanated largely from trade employment which also reported strong GDP growth. Indeed, the limited output expansion of high labour absorption sectors as against higher growth of sectors with low job creation potential explains one angle of the problem of unemployment in particular and joblessness in general in Ghana.

On the supply-side of the labour market, an increasing labour force relative to lower employment opportunities also explains the problem of unemployment in the country. Between 1984 and 2010, the Ghanaian labour force almost doubled from 5.6 million to 10.9 million representing average annual growth of 2.6% compared with



an average annual increase in employment of 2.48% over the same period. The resulting average annual shortfall of 0.12 percentage points is a measure of unemployment. The number of jobseekers surged from 157,624 in 1984 to 863,740 in 2000 before dropping subsequently to 632,994 in 2010 suggesting 5.5% annual growth of unemployment on average between 1984 and 2010.

In addition, the low quality of the labour force or lack of it in relation to the skill requirement in the labour market also explains the phenomenon of unemployment in Ghana. Less than a quarter of the working age population in 2010 has acquired secondary education or better compared with more than a quarter with no formal education. Additionally, about half of the working age population have acquired just basic education which only enables them to read and write with no employable skills to secure employment in the formal segment of the labour market.

2.6.1 Effects of Youth Unemployment

Studies have found that unemployment, if prolonged, may have negative consequences for a person's working life in terms of lower wages and/or longer spells of unemployment (O'Higgins, 2001). The author used the term "scarring" to explain this phenomenon. Authors showed that for youth in Bosnia, for example, jobless spells take a higher toll on youth with more education (Fares and Tiongson, 2007). Arulampalam et al., (2001) have illustrated empirically that a significant dimension of scarring is depreciation of skills during the periods of unemployment (Arulampalam et al., 2001). The phenomenon of scarring signifies that unemployment is much more costly for the individual and the society than the initial loss of earnings (Arulampalam, et al., 2001).



The prevalence of unemployed youth in the country coupled with the underdevelopment of their potentials and overall empowerment have for some time now been an issue that deserve urgent attention by stakeholders and policy makers in Ghana. It is therefore not surprising that the issue of youth joblessness or unemployment has been a thistle in the flesh of the Ghanaian government. The circumstance is so sad to the point that the youth have turned out to be so vulnerable to the demands of some politicians (Arulampalam, et al., 2001).

This encompasses a general low level of job creation efforts; given the general population growth rate as the overall population is youthful, the labour market is unable to absorb the upsurge of new unemployed. The impact of unemployment can be described as multi-dimensional as it has impact on the economic, physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing of individuals in the country. Therefore, unemployment may lead to serious challenges for the youth and the society at large.

In the view of Poku-Boansi and Afrane (2011) the youth unemployment situation has led to serious hopelessness, frustration and desperation among the vulnerable who are of youthful age. According to the authors, boredom and frustration is now the bane for most of the youth in the country as they spend most of their time idle. The mental or psychological effects of being bored is leading most of the youth to engage themselves in social vices such as drug addiction, sex work, teenage pregnancy and disregard of the elderly. The resultant impact of these is the on-going increase in sex-related ailments especially HIV/AIDS, among the youth. Problems such as mental or psychological issues are likewise on the rise.





To the family, prolonged unemployment of the youth may affect family consumption and expenditure. This circumstance emerges on the grounds that the youth appreciate and indulge in adult privileges without related responsibility in a form of rent payment, food and clothing. This outlandish nature of opportunity is generally used by the youth leading to embarrassment of the family and society. Stott (1984) states that unemployment brings embarrassment, strain and violence in family lives. It likewise results in pessimism, depression, bitterness to the victim and lastly brings shame to the family and person in question. This shame turns out to be articulated when their wards yield to peer pressure and engage in social vices that land some of them in mental emergency clinics and prisons. Unemployment problems/issues and the progressive breakdown of social intervention partnerships have additionally exposed the youth to anti-social practices and behaviours (Poku-Boansi and Afranie, 2011).

Customarily, in Ghana, the youth regardless of tribe and religion were perceived to take instructions from the elderly as a result of their inexperience. This mindset that they must be taken care of characterized a condition of inter-dependency with established rules and regulations that regulates the behaviour and relationship of these actors. According to Abrefa (2003), unwritten guidelines about the conduct and behaviour of the youth in the society introduced predefined behaviours for those of diverse ages in the society.

For the past two decades, this understanding or perception changes as young people attend schools and become more assertive in their thinking. Youth education and empowerment was profoundly improved by the rise in information mainly from the

proliferation of media such as the radio, television, mobile phones and the internet. The way of life of dependency between adults and the youth due to unwritten code of ethics for the regulation of human behaviour and societal patterns are still recognized. Notwithstanding, however, these qualities appear to have failed because of the increase in the media and technology.

Just as employment functions in many positive ways to maintain economic, social, and psychological well-being, unemployment detracts from overall health in all of these categories. Indeed, all types of unemployment have negative consequences and it affects not only the individuals, but also the society at large. The following can be listed as the main consequences of unemployment (Sen, 1997): A loss of current output and a fiscal burden: Unemployment involves wasting productive power since a part of the potential national output is not realised because of unemployment.

Unemployment affect the income of countries in two distinct and mutually reinforcing ways: it cuts down the national output and increases the share of the output that has to be devoted to income transfers. Loss of freedom and social exclusion: Taking a broader view of poverty, the nature of the deprivation of the unemployed includes loss of freedom that goes well beyond the decline in income. Unemployment can be a major causal factor predisposing people to social exclusion. The exclusion applies not only to economic opportunities, such as job related insurance, and to pension and medical entitlement, but also to social activities, such as participation in the life of the community, which may be quite problematic for jobless people.





- i. Skill loss and long-run damage: Just as people learn by doing they also unlearn by not doing. Unemployment may generate a loss of cognitive abilities as a result of unemployed person's loss of confidence and sense of control.
- ii. Psychological harm: Unemployment can play havoc with the lives of the jobless, and cause intense suffering and mental agony.
- iii. Ill -health and mortality: This can, to some extent, be the result of loss of income and material means, but the connection also works through dejection, a lack of self-respect and a collapse of motivation generated by persistent unemployment.
- v. Motivational loss and future work: The discouragement that is induced by unemployment can lead to a weakening of motivation and make the long-term unemployed more resigned and passive. The motivational loss resulting from high levels of unemployment can be very detrimental to the search for future employment.
- . Loss of human relations and family life: Unemployment can be very disruptive of social relations. It may also weaken the harmony and coherence within the family. To some extent these consequences relate to the decline of self-confidence, but the loss of an organized working life can itself be a serious deprivation.
- vi. Racial and gender inequality: When jobs are scarce, the groups most affected are often the minorities, especially immigrant communities. Unemployment feeds the politics of intolerance and racism. Gender divisions too are hardened by extensive unemployment, especially because the entry of women into the labour force is often particularly hindered in times of general unemployment.

- vii. Loss of social values and responsibility: People in continued unemployment can develop cynicism about the fairness of social arrangements, and also a perception of dependence on others.
- viii. Organisational inflexibility and technical conservatism: In a situation of widespread unemployment, when displacement from one's present job can lead to a long period of joblessness, the resistance to any economic reorganisation involving job loss can be particularly strong.

It is clear that the case of unemployment will affect different people in different ways. Unemployment is really not a problem of statistics or economics; it is a problem about people. Unemployment is very important for everyone but it is especially important for young people. Since young people lack work experience, seniority, a lobby, and networks, they have experienced higher rates of unemployment than have other age groups. Thus, in almost all countries, youth unemployment is recognised as a serious societal problem.

Over the last 30 years, unemployment in general and youth unemployment in particular has been a major problem in many countries. Increasing unemployment is connected with negative impacts on the unemployed person's perspectives of life, political opposition and integration problems, but also with increasing readiness to resort to violence and delinquency (World Bank, 2011). Hence all types of unemployment have negative consequences and it affects not only individuals, but also society at large. In almost all countries, young people have experienced higher rates of unemployment than other age groups. For young people, unemployment particularly means failure to obtain independence and selfhood, failure to experience



one's value and social competence, difficulties in establishing the structure of daily time, restrictions in social interaction, and difficulties in forming plans for the future, frustration, direct and covert aggression, and deviant behaviour.

Additionally, youth unemployment leads not only to social problems on the personal level, but also to wider societal issues such as lack of orientation, hostility towards foreigners and the State, drug abuse, homelessness and crime. Finally, unemployment surfaces in the arena of politics as well, resulting in a decrease of political interest, blaming of the respective government, intensified identification with clientele ties, or a turn towards extreme parties or movements.

The lack of employment opportunities in poor economies is known to have a lot of social implications. Youth unemployment promotes rural-urban migration and a wide range of social vices. It has been reported that the lack of jobs and the fear of a bleak future contribute considerably to crime and deviant behaviours among the youths (Sommers, 2003). The increase in crime, drug addiction and prostitution are among the negative social consequences of youth unemployment. According to the ILO (2008), in Africa, unemployment has led many girls and young women to become social sex workers.

Yarquah and Baafi-Frimpong (2012) examined the social cost of educated youth unemployment in Ghana and reported that educated youth unemployment led to streetism and other social vices such as stealing, drug abuse and prostitution. In their investigation of the link between unemployment and crime, Carmichael and Ward (2001) revealed that youth unemployment and the different types of crime such as



theft, burglary, fraud and forgery in England and Wales are positively correlated. Suicidality may be counted among the negative consequences of unemployment. Many of the existing studies on the correlates of suicide risk identify a variety of situational factors (Pena *et al.*, 2008; Wadsworth and Kubrin, 2007). Negative life events exceptionally contribute to suicide risk (Chang *et al.*, 2010). Among these negative life events or situational factors is unemployment.

According to World Health Organization (WHO, 2000), there are fairly strong but complex relationship between unemployment and suicide. In their examination of the association between exposure to unemployment and suicidal behaviours, Cordoba-Dona *et al.* (2014) observed among New Zealand youths that, at all ages, prolonged unemployment predicted increased risks of suicidal ideation and suicide attempts. Cordoba-Dona *et al.* (2014) noted that the economic crisis in Europe led to a significant increase in suicide rates in many of the European countries. In Andalusia, the most populated region of Spain, Cordoba-Dona *et al.* (2014) discovered a significant increase in suicide attempt rates after the onset of the economic crisis. There was a significant association between suicide attempt rates and unemployment rates in men, accounting for nearly half of the cases in the early years of the crisis. Whilst women were impacted by the economic crisis, the increase in their suicide rates could not specifically be attributed to unemployment. The study of Cordoba-Dona *et al.* (2014) provides impetus for the current study.

Studies reveal that many unemployed youths feel marginalized, pessimistic and lacking in control over their lives. In meta-analyses on the impact of unemployment on mental health, Paul and Moser (2009) noted that individuals who are unemployed



show more distress than employed individuals. Compared to the employed, unemployed individuals had poorer subjective well-being, lower self-esteem and higher levels of depression, distress, anxiety and psychosomatic symptoms. Just as Cordoba-Dona *et al.* (2014) noted in relation to suicide rates, Paul and Moser (2009) also observed that the adverse impact of unemployment on mental health was greater in countries with weak unemployment protection systems, weak economic development and unequal income distributions.

Reine *et al.* (2013) maintained that long term youth unemployment could have various health implications in men and women. In a longitudinal study, Reine *et al.* (2013) observed a significant association between unemployment and suboptimal self-rated health among women and unemployment and high alcohol consumption among men. Breslin and Mustard (2003) examined differences in mental health among younger and older adults with an extensive analysis of longitudinal data from the National Population Health Survey in Canada. They assessed both causation and selection effects of unemployment. Their analyses revealed that unemployment predicted a higher chance of mental distress for older adults within the ages of 31-55, but less likelihood for younger adults within the ages 18-30. Their finding is in agreement with the observation of Reine *et al.* (2013) that the effect of unemployment on psychological distress is greatest for adults within the ages of 30-49.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2008) examined the impact of the labour market on mental health using longitudinal data obtained from Australia, Canada, Korea, Switzerland and the United Kingdom



(U.K.). The findings showed that a movement from employment to unemployment was accompanied with a significant adverse effect on mental health, with men experiencing worse conditions of mental health than women. In Australia, Canada, Switzerland and the U.K., a change from employment to inactivity due to illness was accompanied with a greater increase in psychological distress.

A movement from employment to unemployment equally had a significant negative impact on mental health. The OECD further discovered that when the status of individuals changed from unemployment to employment, their mental health improved significantly with exceptions for women in Korea and Switzerland and men in Australia. Both men and women in Canada experienced significant gains in mental health with a change from unemployment to employment, with somewhat greater gains for men. Whilst duration of unemployment mattered, the impact differed across countries.

2.6.2 The National Youth Authority of Ghana

The National Youth Authority is mandated among other responsibilities to provide opportunities for education and skills training and to provide the youth with information on labour market for employment. The objects of the Authority are to (a) develop the creative potential of the youth; (b) develop a dynamic and disciplined youth imbued with a spirit of nationalism, patriotism and a sense of propriety and civic responsibility; and (c) ensure the effective participation of the youth in the development of the country (National Youth Authority Act, 2016, Act 939).



2.6.2.1 Functions of the Authority

To achieve the object under section 2, the Authority shall (a) formulate policies and implement programmes that will promote in the youth (i) a sense of creativity, self-reliance, leadership, loyalty to the country, discipline and civic responsibility; and (ii) a sense of friendship and co-operation through exchange of ideas with recognised youth organisations in other countries in Africa and the world; (b) develop the capacity of the youth to participate in decision making at all levels; (c) establish and supervise youth leadership and skills training institutes; and (d) in collaboration with the Ghana Youth Federation, organise annual youth conferences at the national, regional and district levels (National Youth Authority Act, 2016, Act 939).

Education and Skills training that meets the needs of the job market is crucial for the youth to get employed. It is expected that with right education and skills training given to the youth, they will be able to create their own jobs and employ themselves and with time employ others thereby reducing unemployment. It is again a fact that with the right education and training given, other organizations can hire the youth to work for them.

The youth may acquire the education and skills training but if they lack information on labour market it can take them a very long time to get employed especially when they are interested in getting employment from other organisations. Therefore, information on labour market is necessary for any youth seeking for job. Timely and right information can help the youth to appropriately identify which kind of job to apply for. It therefore behoves on government to resource the National Youth Authority (NYA) and the Youth Leadership Training Institute (YLSTI) with funds to



enable them perform their core functions of providing skills training in order to realize employment creation.

Cognizant of the youth unemployment phenomena as a developmental challenge in Ghana, a number of measures have been introduced to enhance the employability of the youth. First, in order to send the message with respect to the crucial role of employment generation in the nations human resource development agenda, the Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare was restructured and renamed as Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment in 2001 and later modified as Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment.

The restructuring was aimed at refocusing policies and programmes to support youth employment. Second, a labour market policy was put in place with the introduction of the Skills Training and Employment Placement (STEP) Programme, as a response to the results of the registration exercise of 2001. The programme, which was fully funded by government, trained a total of 27,500 people at a cost of ₵26.4 billion (US\$3 million) during the two phases of the programme implementation from 2003 to 2005. The second phase of the programme implementation had a micro finance component of ₵11.5 billion (US\$1.31 million) to support enterprise development for the graduates of the training programme (Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment, 2006).



Table 2.4: Skills Training and Employment Placement (STEP) Programme 2003 - 2005

Implementation Phase	Number of People Training	Budget Training Micro Finance
Phase 1 (Pilot) February – August 2003	3,500	GH¢901,500 (USD1.04m)
Phase 2 November 2003 – March 2005	24,000	GH¢1,702,500 (USD 1.96m)
Total	27,500	GH¢2,604,000 (USD 3m)
Microfinance component		GH¢1,100,500 (USD 1.31m)
Grand Total		GH¢3,704,500 (USD 4.31m)

Source: Adopted from Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment, 2006



Third, an amendment of the instruction area change program was attempted with the goal to build access and interest in training by the youth. Moreover, different activities were embraced, including the presentation of the National Youth Volunteer Program by the Ghana National Service Scheme; the foundation of the Youth Venture Capital Fund; the establishment of another Labor Law (Act 561) to guarantee an increasingly adaptable work showcase condition; the institution of the Disability Bill to address the business needs of youthful people with incapacity and the order of an interest driven law for specialized and professional training. Moreover, it was normal that general arrangement activities, for example, the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Programs (GPRSP II) be implemented.

Framework Project (VIP) and activities executed by the Social Investment Fund (SIF) would help bolster the procedure. Despite these endeavors, youth joblessness keeps on being a worry as a result of the expanding hole between work supply and the open doors for compensation work at the firm dimension. Similarly aggravating is the

expanding marvels of youthful people who live, rest and work in the city, in this manner developing the frequency of destitution.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

This section presents the conceptual framework of the study. Figure 2.1 presents the conceptual framework for the study. Government in collaboration with the private sector is able to reduce youth unemployment through initiatives of the National Youth Authority. The National Youth Authority's mandate is to provide the needed resources for operations, provide opportunities for education and skills training or financial or logistical support to the youth and provide the youth with information on labour market for employment. As indicated in the framework, the National Youth Authority plays a critical role in promoting the growth of the Municipality by liaising with the private sector to create employment opportunities for the youth.



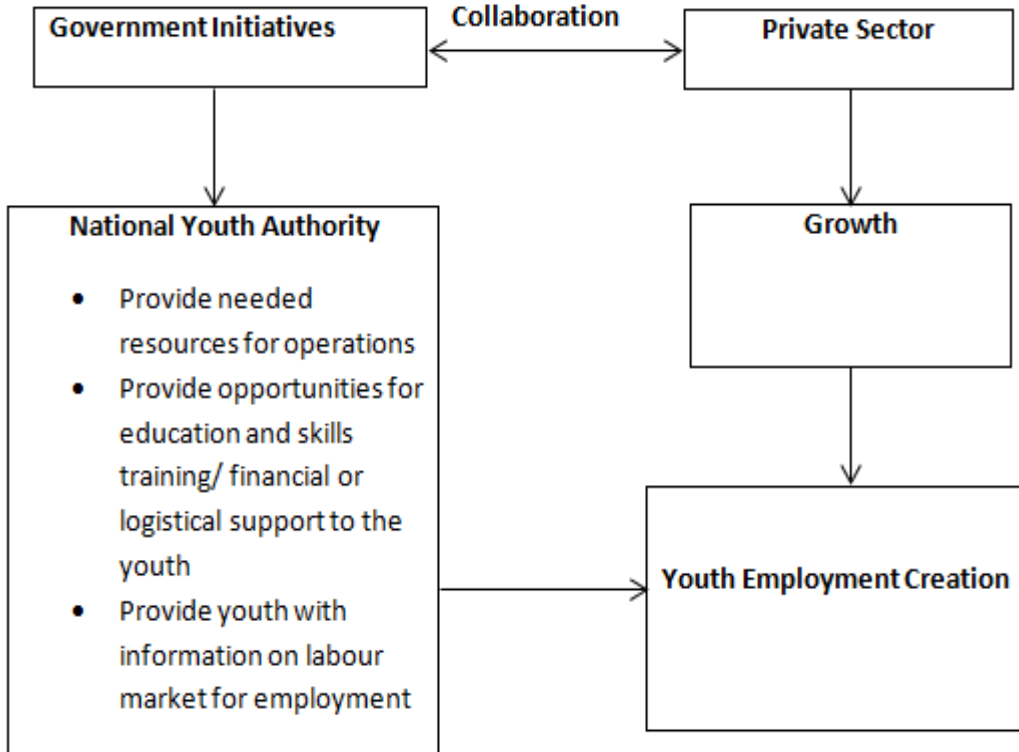


Figure 2.1 Solving Youth Unemployment in the Wa Municipality

Source: Author's Construct, 2018

2.8 Government Initiatives to Address Youth Unemployment

Government has the power, authority and resources to transform the economy by taking decisions that can potentially generate employment. Government is expected to take certain initiatives by creating an enabling or conducive environment for the private sector to thrive. This can be done by collaborating with the private sector. The private sector is referred to as the engine of growth because it is the sector that propels growth and development in an economy anchored on the support from government.



2.8.1 Youth Employment Policies

As youth unemployment rates are projected by the ILO to remain essentially unchanged in 2012, and most regions face major youth employment challenges, youth employment policies warrant the highest priority. To address these challenges, countries have already enacted a wide range of policies targeted specifically at first-time jobseekers to tackle the youth unemployment crisis successfully. These measures need to be stepped up and extended also to those countries that have not yet enacted policies in this respect (ILO, 2012).

Macroeconomic and growth policies: ultimately, job growth will not come from labour market interventions alone. Macroeconomic and fiscal policies should include or enhance measures that support employment generation, bring about a sustained job recovery and finance the necessary investments in youth employment promotion. Youth employment is a rising priority in national policy agendas but often it is insufficiently translated into action, and funding is often limited and resources underestimated. Globally, progress in rebalancing world demand based on effective measures by the G20, and stability in the euro area are essential for paving the way to stronger output and employment growth.

In this respect, austerity measures currently implemented in a wide range of developed economies augur well for a quick recovery of youth labour markets (ILO, 2012). Growth policies can also influence youth employment by encouraging economic diversification and productive transformation through sectoral strategies, removing constraints on private sector investment and growth, in particular for small



enterprises. A series of different active labour market programmes and policies can be tailored for specific needs of the youth.

2.9 Challenges in Addressing Youth Unemployment in Ghana

Youth unemployment is a serious cancer as identified in the literature. To address this, structural transformation needs to be done in the Ghanaian labour market be it technology or availability of opportunities: after several decade of structural adjustment programmes and policies, the labour market in Ghana has undergone a structural transformation through a government dominated workforce market to a private sector-centred market (Amankrah, 2013; Baah-Boateng et al., 2013).

These effects or changes have positive and negative implications for the labour market outcomes that affect the prospects in addressing youth unemployment phenomenon in the labour market of the country. Available data from the fifth Rounds of the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS) show that the Ghanaian labour market is changing speedily from a wage or salary centred sub-market into non-agricultural or self-employment one.

This transformation has brought about an evolution of four sub-markets for labour which pose challenges in dealing with unemployment in Ghana: the wages sub-market where decent jobs are available and three other sub-markets where decent jobs are lacking, namely agriculture, non-farm self-employment and unpaid family sub-markets.



2.10 Summary

From the forgoing, it is quite clear that Ghana faces a formidable task in addressing the unemployment challenge just as any other country. The effects of unemployment on people especially the youth is enormous and require concerted effort to deal with it. From the discussion the key emerging issues in addressing youth unemployment challenge in Ghana are; recognizing that the prospect for job creation lies in the private sector and hence the need for policies to be directed towards that area. The following chapter presents the methodology adopted for the study.



CHAPTER THREE

THE STUDY AREA AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents procedures employed in assessing the role of the National Youth Authority in employment creation. Specific areas are: study setting, research design, study population, sample size and sampling procedure, sources of data, data collection instruments, data analysis as well as ethical considerations. According to Sarantakos (2005), methodology refers to research strategies that provide guidelines that show how research is to be conducted on a particular situation. It is the greatest means by which the research is carried out and thus occupies a central position in the research process.

3.2 Study Setting

This study focused on the Wa Municipality of the Upper West Region of Ghana. The region is the tenth (10th) to be created in the Ghana. Administrative procedures and policies are carried out by the Wa Municipal Assembly. The Wa Municipal Assembly was created out of the then Wa District in 2004 with legislative instrument (L1) 1800 in pursuant of the policy of decentralization which started in 1988.

Under section 10 of the Local Government Act 1993 (Act 426) now Act 2016 (Act 936), the Assembly exercises deliberative, legislative and executive functions in the District. By this Act, the Assembly is responsible for the overall development of the Municipality. The implication of the location of the municipality for development is



enhancing bilateral trade and commerce with Franco phone countries. The Wa town has the potential to grow and be upgraded into both an industrial and commercial hub for the north-western corridor of Ghana.

According to GSS (2012), the Wa Municipality had a total population of 107,214 in 2010. In 2012, the total population of the municipality stood at 127,284 (male: 61,826 and female: 65,458) with an urbanized population of 71,051 representing 66.3% (GSS, 2012) compared to the national urbanized share of 50.9% and the regional urbanized share of 16.3%. This also implies that the Wa Municipality alone accounted for a 62% share of the region's urbanized population in the year 2010.

The Municipality is also reported as having an urban population growth rate of 4% as compared to the national urban growth rate of 3.4% (Wa Municipal Assembly, 2014; GSS, 2014). The population structure of the Wa municipality revealed a preponderance of the youth over the aged and females (51%) over males (49%). The youth form 49% of the total population with a potential working population of 47% and 4% aged. This means there is a high dependency ratio since the economically active population is 47% compared to dependent population of 53%.

The economy of the Wa Municipality has been dominated by agricultural activities. However, in the 2010 Population and Housing Census, it came out that the service sector employs about 51.3% of the working population, followed by agriculture 30.2% and industry 18.4% (GSS, 2010). The state of agricultural production in the Wa Municipality is not different from that found in other parts of northern Ghana. In the whole area, about 86% of the population is engaged in agriculture as a source of livelihood dominated by crop production (Inkoom and Nanguo, 2011).



The average annual income of households is often small, which is not sufficient in meeting the basic necessities of life (food, shelter and clothing). Poor households therefore, find it difficult in meeting the required educational expenditure for themselves (heads) and their children. It is, therefore, anticipated that such poor households will rely heavily on government interventions like the NYA programme amongst others to access training programmes and subsidise the cost of education. Youth employment can be a relief through enhancing access to education at all levels.

Meanwhile, despite the subsistence nature of production and the existence of natural resources as aforementioned and a number of developmental interventions in the Municipality, yet mass unemployment exists particularly among the youth (GSS, 2014). The existence of educational institutions at all levels suggests that the youth can have the opportunity of getting access to basic education that will give them employable skills in the Wa Municipality. Aside, unemployment in the region particularly in the rural areas may be the main reason underlying rural-urban migration by indigenes.

3.2.1 Context of the Case

The study took place in the Wa Municipality. It drew beneficiaries from all parts of the Municipality. Half of those interviewed were beneficiaries of the programme. About 60% of the youth in the Municipality are unemployed and approximately 25% were students (GSS, 2014). As well, many students lived without parents or guardians. Support was seen through case management, counselling and youth facilitator training programmes. By providing practical and realistic skill and career



education and experience, at least the youth could potentially see the worth of training and gain some real world experience working with others in the municipality and other communities. As a resident, the researcher had heard of the workshops and strategies utilized by the NYA and therefore aware of the programme. The trainers agreed to participate in this study and it was arranged for the researcher to observe their trainings.

3.2.2 Location and Size

The Municipality shares administrative boundaries with Nadowli/Kaleo District to the north, the Wa East District to the east and the Wa West District to the west. The Municipality lies between latitudes 9°50'N to 10°20'N and between longitudes 9°40' W and 10°15'W. It has an area of approximately 234.74 km², about 6.4% of the area of Upper West Region.

The implication of the location of the municipality for development is enhancing bilateral trade and commerce with Franco phone countries. The Wa town has the potential to grow and be upgraded into both an industrial and commercial hub for the north-western corridor of Ghana. The Figure 3.1 (map) below shows the location of the Wa Municipality with some of the peri-urban communities that fall victim of the rapidly urbanizing process in the municipality.



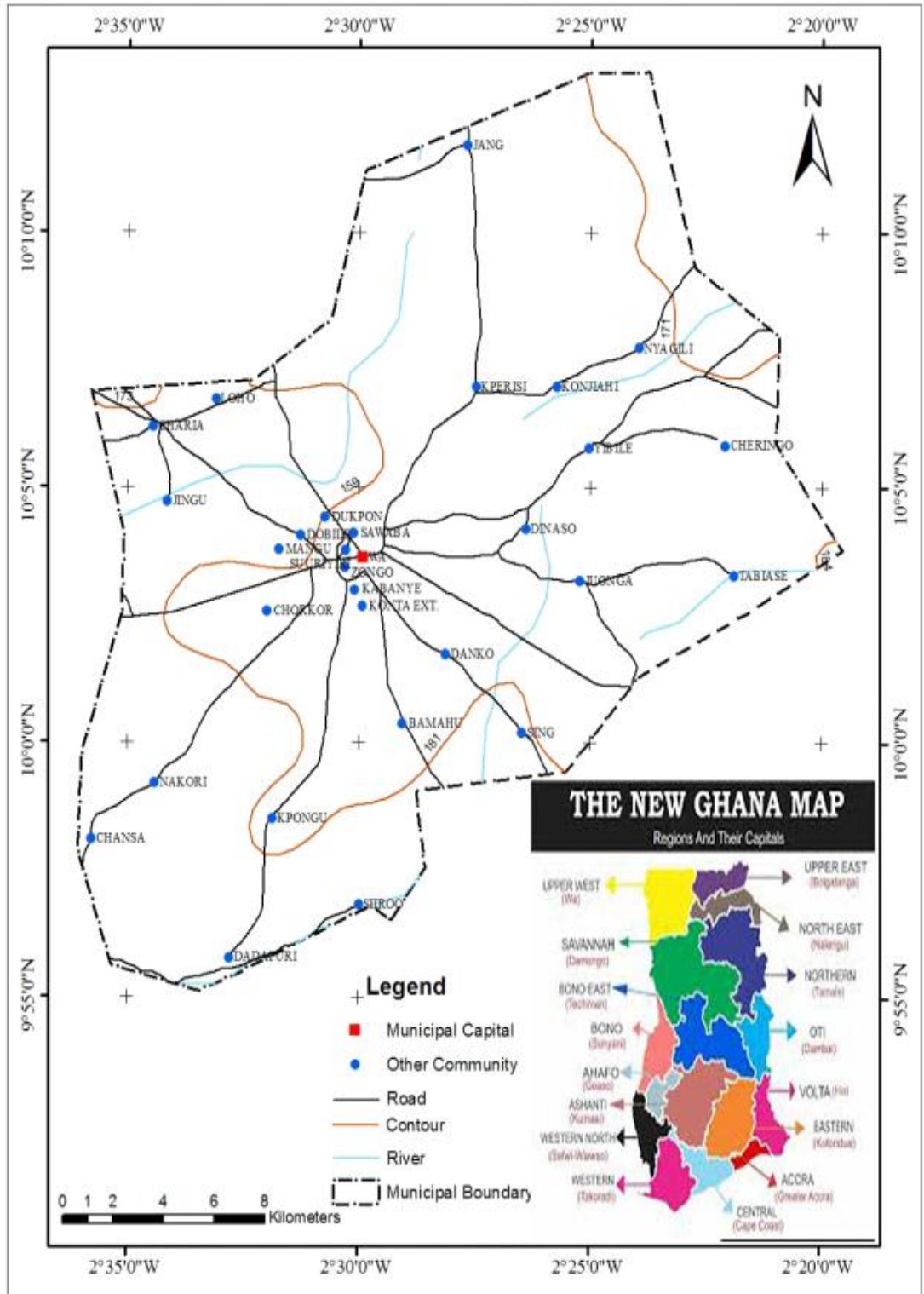


Figure 3.1 Map of Wa Municipal

Source: Wa Municipal Assembly, 2018

Figure 3.1 depicts the major communities in the Wa Municipality. They include the Wa township, Nakore, Chansa, Kpongu, Dandafuro, Piisi, Bamahu, Danko, Sing, Boli, Busa, Jonga, Konjehi, Chegli and Kperisi. All these communities have basic educational infrastructure and hence have access to basic education. The Wa Township serves as both the Municipal and Regional headquarters that has a lot of educational infrastructure. It contains several educational units under the Municipal Assembly; Islamic, Catholic, Presbyterian, Anglican, the Methodist and Ahmadiyya units.

3.3 Study Methodology

3.3.1 Study Design

Research design is a blue print which indicates how data relating to a given problem should be collected and analysed (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2000). Bryman (2008) noted that the research design provides a framework for data collection and analysis. This was a qualitative case study, “an intensive, holistic description and analysis” (Merriam, 1998: 27). The case study, according to Creswell (1998), explores a bounded system or case over time “through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context” (p. 61). It focuses on the bounded system under natural conditions, usually, so as to understand that habitat (Merriam, 1998, p. 256). Once a case has been identified, the researcher should proceed, first of all, with an extensive collection of data through interviews,



observations (direct and participant) and documents reviews, to gather information about the case (Creswell, 2014).

The data collection should take place over a prolonged period of time (Merriam, 1988). From the data collection, a thorough, rich description of the case should appear from which an analysis of themes and an interpretation of the case can be done by the investigator (Creswell, 2014). The analysis should be “rich in the context of the case or setting in which the case presents itself” (p. 63). Then the researcher will narrate the study, including major events and a detailed look at a few incidents. Case study is “an ideal design for understanding and interpreting observations of educational phenomena” (Merriam, 1998: 2). A descriptive case study is appropriate for such study as it helped to bridge the research gap (Merriam, 1998: 38) such as this thesis’ research focus and it is the most appropriate choice for this study.

Research “focused on discovery, insight and understanding from the perspectives of those being studied offers the greatest promise of making significant contributions to the knowledge base and practice of education” (Merriam, 1998: 3). Therefore, the case study method was chosen to examine the NYA programme and its contribution to beneficiaries. Although subjective in nature, it seemed more appropriate as this helped to understand complex issues through analysis of a number of events or conditions and their relationships. Participants selected for the interviews and Focus Group Discussions were the unemployed.



3.3.2 Target Population

The target population comprised the youth (15-35 years, trained and untrained by the NYA) in the Wa Municipality as well as staff of the NYA and the Issa Youth Leadership Training Institute (YLSTI). The category of the youth included Junior High School, Senior High School and Tertiary graduates. The youth for this study are the unemployed whether trained or untrained. The strategies of the NYA in creating employment and the effectiveness of those strategies were the focus. These focal persons were targeted due to their experiences and knowledge of the subject under consideration.

3.3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

Neuman (2012) opined that when you sample, you select some cases to examine in detail, then you use what you learn from them to understand a much larger set of cases. The study utilized a sample of 35 respondents. Thirty (30) of the respondents were unemployed youth who are beneficiaries (15) and non-beneficiaries (15) of the NYA programme in the Wa Municipality including YLSTI past trainees living in the Municipality. The remaining five (5) respondents were staff of National Youth Authority (NYA) and Issa Youth Leadership Training Institute (YLSTI) staff. The 30 respondents were selected based on the following reasons; time constraint and cost, saturation (duplication of response) and supported by the opinion of Yin (2011) as discussed in the following paragraphs.

According to Bryman (2008), most of the time, decisions about sample size are affected by considerations of time and cost. This is mainly because of duplication of



responses also known as saturation (Bryman, 2012). According to Yin (2011: 91), “the number of interviewees, practices, policies, or actions included in a study can easily fall in the range of 25 - 50 ...” This, the author indicated depends on, “the complexity of your study topic and the depth of data collection for each unit”. Therefore, invariably decisions about sample size represent a compromise between the constraints of time and cost, the need for precision, and a variety of further considerations that will now be addressed.

To select the sample; purposive, convenient and snowball sampling techniques were used. The purposive sampling technique ensures that participants are selected based on specific characteristics or traits that best suit a study. Here, the researcher selected focal persons who are staff of NYA and the Issa YLSTI. According to Neuman (2012), purposive sampling is a valuable kind of sampling for special situations. It is usually used in exploratory research or in field research.

In this type of sampling the judgment of an expert or prior knowledge is used to select cases. These focal persons include the Director, two staff as well as the Principal and a staff of Issa Youth Leadership Training Institute known for their expertise on the subject or topic of employment creation for the youth. The Issa Youth Leadership Training Institute is one of the eleven training centres across the country being managed by the NYA. The Institute is responsible for the training of youth in various skills and is under the direct management and supervision of NYA.

In order to reach the unemployed youths, the researcher adopted the convenience and snowball sampling techniques. The study targeted those who have been trained by



the NYA and those who are unemployed but have received no training from the NYA. First, the researcher visited the office of the NYA in the Municipality and interviewed beneficiaries of the programme. This was because they were organized at one point for some critical information. Therefore, the researcher utilized the opportunity to interview beneficiaries on the programme. The respondents were therefore selected based on suitability or accessibility hence the use of convenience sampling.

Second, the snow-ball sampling procedure was adopted for the non-beneficiaries of the programme. This technique requires a researcher to first identify one or two members of a group and then use them as informants to reach other members of the group. Since unemployed youths are likely to establish friendship among themselves (Russell, 1999), the researcher used unemployed friends to identify and select 15 unemployed youth who were not beneficiaries of the NYA Programme. In all 30 unemployed youths (beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries) were selected using the convenience and snow-ball sampling techniques.

3.3.4 Sources of Data

The study utilized both primary and secondary data. Twumasi (2001) identified two sources of data for social research; primary and secondary data sources. They refer to primary data as that generated by the researcher from respondents during the research and secondary data as that already in existence for some other purpose(s) but found to be relevant to the study. Based on this, the primary data was collected from the individual youth, the National Youth Authority staff and the Issa Youth Leadership Training Institute staff using semi-structured interview guide.





Secondary data was also collected from already existing documents from National Youth Authority (NYA), Issa Youth Leadership Training Institute and the Wa Municipal Assembly in a form of assessment report, published books, articles and journals and online news to enrich the study. Reports on programmes and trainings organised for beneficiaries of the NYA, the NYA Act 2016 (Act 939), the Youth Policy and the Implementation Plan documents with information on mandate, function and activities of NYA were sourced from the NYA and the Issa YLSTI. The map and profile of the study area emanated from the Wa Municipal Assembly Medium Term Development Plan (2014-2017). Again, information on employment, unemployment, governments' intervention, population, sampling methods and techniques among others were sourced from published books, articles and journals and online news. In research on more contemporary issues, as pointed by Nachmians (2008), incorporating secondary data enables one to search through a wider range of materials covering larger areas and longer periods of time than would be possible using only primary data. With the aid of such secondary sources, one can better understand the historical context by analyzing data collected in different time on similar issues and describe patterns of change and attempt to explain their determinants.

3.3.5 Data Collection Procedures

The data were collected using semi-structured interview and focus group discussions. The techniques are summarized as follows;

i. Semi-structured Interview

An interview guide was developed and used in collecting the data. The questions were fashioned to solicit the needed information to draw conclusion on the subject matter as per the research questions. The researcher conducted the interview in English language and did not require the service of an interpreter. The setting of the interviews considered respondents' choice and environmental friendliness in order to generate adequate and relevant data for the study. The interviews were conducted over a period of one month.

A voice recorder was used in recording responses from the interviewees. The interviews were used to explore the views, experiences and motivations of individual respondents. The length of each in-depth interview varied, between 38 minutes and one hour, and the interviews were audio recorded and immediately transcribed to avoid any misunderstandings. A semi-structured questionnaire was used during the interviews. The recording time for the interviews was approximately nineteen hours. After transcribing, a report was developed which followed the themes and objectives outlined for the study.

Additionally, data was collected from some focal persons of the NYA and the Issa Youth Leadership Training Institutes after an official letter from the University for Development Studies was presented to them. The youths were also contacted with the help of focal persons for their views and permission for the data to be collected. This gave the researcher the privilege to have easy access to data on the topic.

ii. Focus Group Discussions

Focus-group discussions were employed by the researcher to also elicit data in a group setting. According to Patton (1990) this tool helps to collect data in a group



setting. This method of data collection permits the exchange of experiences by discussants. It involves 8 to 12 individuals in the group and not less or more than that (Patton, 1990). Focus groups are particularly useful when there are power differences between the participants and decision-makers or professionals, when the everyday use of language and culture of particular groups is of interest, and when one wants to explore the degree of consensus on a given topic (Morgan and Kreuger, 1993).

Focus groups can help to explore and develop questions or concepts for questionnaires and interview guides. They are however limited in terms of their ability to generalize findings to a whole population, mainly because of the small numbers of people participating and the likelihood that the participants will not be a representative sample.

Organizing focus group interviews usually requires more planning than other types of interviewing as getting people to group gatherings can be difficult and setting up appropriate venues with adequate recording facilities requires a lot of time. The recommended number of people per group is usually six to ten (MacIntosh, 1993), but some researchers have used up to fifteen people (Goss and Leinbach, 1996) or as few as four (Kitzinger, 1995). Due to this, four (4) focus group discussions were held with the youth both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. Two groups each of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries were interviewed. Each of the focus groups was between 8 and 11. The researcher conducted the interview in English language and did not require the service of an interpreter. The setting of the interviews considered respondents' choice and environmental friendliness in order to generate adequate and



relevant data for the study. The interviews were conducted over a period of six weeks.

A voice recorder was used in recording responses from the focus group discussion. The focus group discussion guide was used to explore the views, experiences and motivations of individual respondents. The length of each in-depth interview was between one hour and one hour 30 minutes, and the interviews were audio recorded and immediately transcribed to avoid any misunderstandings. The recording time for the interviews was approximately six hours. After transcribing, a report was developed which followed the themes and objectives outlined for the study.

3.3.6 Data Analysis and Presentation

Initial organization of the data occurred as field notes were written in longhand, reflective comments and questions recorded in a journal and audio tapes of interviews made and reviewed. The researcher began reflecting on events as they occurred and began to identify emerging themes; this is called “interim analysis” (McMillian and Schumacher, 1997: 507). Audio tapes and field notes were transcribed into word processed form and coded by date. Next, all information was read through to “get a sense of the whole” (Patton, 2002, p. 440). The analytic strategy of sketching ideas was done by jotting down ideas in the margins of the text (Creswell, 1998). The researcher followed Creswell’s suggestion of writing out the findings in the form of summaries of field notes.



Feedback was obtained from the focal persons on the summaries. Categories by which to group data were then developed, based on the research purpose and questions. Patton (2002) described the close look at the data as one of inductive analysis searching for themes, patterns and categories to emerge, also known as “open coding” (p. 453). This was done by clustering margin comments into themes and further linking the themes with verbatim example. This began the process of reducing the data. By this point, as Patton suggested, the researcher had reflected deeply enough on the experience to feel “grounded” or immersed in the data. The researcher was then able to organize and write a description of the case, as guided by Creswell (1998). The researcher then made use of content analysis in order to summarise and interpret the data collected. This was done by finding relationships and themes that emerged from the data collected. The narrations or statements from respondents in the focus group discussion were analysed and triangulated with the results.



3.4 Ethical Considerations

Research ethics is one very important consideration a researcher must not overlook. The researcher in accordance with the above took steps to make sure that no respondent in this research work was affected in any way in the study. First of all, the researcher ensured that permission was sought and the aim and objective of the research made known to the respondents through an informed consent form. Respondents were also assured of the fact that the study is only for the purpose of academic work and not for any purpose or use. Respondents or participants were not

coerced but rather encouraged to voluntarily participate in the study. The researcher again made sure that personal information was kept confidential.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results and discussions of data obtained from the field. The results and discussions have been organised along the lines of the research questions. The results have been presented under the following sub-headings: demographic characteristics of respondents; unemployment situation in the Wa Municipality; effectiveness of the strategies adopted by NYA; and the challenges the NYA faces in implementing strategies for employment creation.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Youth unemployment is a major challenge and need to be dealt with. This is more serious as support to young people is often seen as particularly risky investments because of the absence of a substantive credit history, insufficient collateral or guarantees to secure loans or lines of credit. In the Upper West Region, the National Youth Authority (NYA) and the Issa Youth Leadership Training Institute (YLSTI) under the NYA are public institutions established by the government to deal with this menace.

However, to fully understand the situation of unemployment in the Wa Municipality, there was the need to assess the demographic characteristics of respondents selected for this study. Specific areas are marital status, gender, age, educational status and



physical characteristics (disability status) as indicated by Anyango et al. (2006).

Table 4.1 presents findings on this.

Table 4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Description		<i>Beneficiaries</i>		<i>Non-Beneficiaries</i>	
Variable	Description	<i>f</i> No	%	<i>f</i> No	%
<i>Gender</i>	Male	9	60.0	7	46.7
	Female	6	40.0	8	53.3
<i>Marital Status</i>	Married	7	46.7	8	53.3
	Single	5	33.3	5	33.3
	Divorced/Separated	3	20.0	2	13.3
<i>Age of Respondents</i>	15-20 years	6	40.0	8	53.3
	21-35 years	9	60.0	7	46.7
<i>Educational status</i>	Basic	3	20.0	2	13.3
	Secondary.	4	26.7	6	40.0
	Tertiary	8	53.3	7	46.7

Source: Field Survey, 2018



4.2.1 Gender

Findings from the study show that majority of the beneficiaries who have received training are males constituting 60% while their female counterparts represent only 40%. Nevertheless, for non-beneficiaries of the programme, most of them were found to be females and this represents 55%. The implication of this is that, questions may be raised regarding gender balance as far as the programme is concerned and the opportunities that are available to males and females as well.

4.2.2 Marital Status

On marital status, the study found that majority of the beneficiaries were married representing 46.7% while 33.3% were not married. For non-beneficiaries, the study found that 53.3% were married while 33.3% were not married. In relation to these findings, there was the need to explore how the marital status of these respondents affects their prospects for a job opening or opportunities for start-ups. Responding to this, one respondent from Wa indicated that:

“... it is important to work so all of us wish we have a good job. This is because I have a boy (child) and need to send him to school and support my wife as well. But I have no job although I have received training from the National Youth Authority (NYA) through the YLSTI. So my joblessness is really worrying my marriage”.

Another respondent asserted that:

“... where I come from most of the youth are unemployed and I am also part, but thanks to this programme (NYA training) I have benefited a lot. I don't have a job but I hope to secure one soon”.



This implies that although the training given to these respondents don't link them to direct jobs, they are given the necessary skills training for opportunities in future or create their own jobs.

For non-beneficiaries, a respondent from the Wa Municipality had this to say:

“I have not benefited from the youth training programme but I am an apprentice at my brother's shop. I am single and I hope to benefit from the NYA training programme someday”.

The researcher then asked respondents whether the youth have heard of the programme. In response, they responded in the affirmative but emphasize on lack of opportunity to participate in the programme.

4.2.3 Age of Respondents

The study also found that most of the beneficiaries (60.0%) of the programme are between the ages of 21 to 35 years. On the other hand, 53.3% of non-beneficiaries are between ages 15 to 20 years. This shows that both beneficiary and non-beneficiary respondents fall within the youthful bracket of this study and they need support for either their private enterprise or other job opportunities. This confirms the GSS (2014) report that most of the people in the Wa Municipality fall within the youthful bracket.

Again, the findings revealed that, although the programme targets every youth not everyone can participate due to logistical constraints as confirmed by an NYA staff in Wa. According to him, despite the fact that many of the people in the Municipality



fall within the youthful age bracket, all of them cannot be beneficiaries of the programme. He said:

“... it is progressive and we hope very soon everyone in the municipality will enrol”.

Overall, findings on the age of respondents serves as an indication that, economically active persons in the selected areas are middle-aged, possessing the ability to engage in various income generating activities.

4.2.4 Educational Status

The study further revealed that 53.3% of the beneficiary respondents are graduates from the various tertiary institutions, 26.7% from secondary and only 20% have attained basic education in the Municipality. Despite the fact that the Wa municipality is far from the national capital, the Municipality was not exempted from the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education policy by the government and other social intervention programmes like the Livelihood against poverty programme, the School Feeding Programme and the Free Senior High School. As a result of this, it was expected that having attained education and support such as these, one will contribute their quota to national development through the creation of jobs and working in any private organization.

The educational status of a respondent whether informal or formal plays a significant role in the success of their various business ventures. The effect of lack of education on enterprising youth will lead to challenges such as, inability of one to keep proper business records and/or the misapplication of profits on trivial things in case they



own businesses. This finding is consistent with the GSS (2014) report on education in the Wa Municipality.

Findings from the field also show that some of the unemployed youth are persons with some form of Disability (both males and females). These disabilities include; blind, loss of limbs among others. For instance, a respondent asserted that:

“As you can see, I am not able to move unless someone helps me to do so. We the physically challenged are left out from most developmental activities which shouldn't be so. I am willing to participate in any programme when I am called. In fact, I am unemployed simply because of this”.

However, other respondents who were also in the same or similar situation indicated that they have not heard of the programme at all and will like to participate when given the opportunity.

Another physically challenged person who was a beneficiary of the programme indicated that:

“... it was a friend that introduced me to this programme so I had no option than to take advantage of the opportunity. Though not employed but I now have the requisite skills to start my own business instead of begging on the street or stealing”.

This agrees with Kabeer (2005) report in her empowerment theory that resources in a form of support system (NYA Programme) can empower the beneficiaries despite challenges with the system. Based on these findings, it is imperative to further explore the unemployment situation in the Municipality.



4.3 The Unemployment Situation in the Wa Municipality

This section of the study presents findings on the unemployment situation in the Wa Municipality. Exploring the unemployment situation in the Wa Municipality is important as it helped the current study to be placed within the right perspective in terms of success of the National Youth Authority in Wa. To begin with, the study found that, the unemployment levels are high (70%) due to some causative factors. These factors according to focal persons interviewed and other respondents whether beneficiaries or non-beneficiaries have serious consequences on the overall development of the youth in the Municipality.

According to them, the situation of unemployed is as a result of these factors and cannot be treated as independent issues without recourse to these critical factors. A woman in her early thirties (30s), a non-beneficiary who resides at the Wa-Zongo maintained that:

“The youth in this country and in this Municipality are hardworking. The devil finds work for the idle hands and we need to take queue from this. If I have a job why will I steal or fornicate....hmmm, our leaders must consider us small”. Also, another non-beneficiary reported that, *“unemployment of the youth is not just the main issue. We wouldn't be talking about it if there are jobs”*.

Conclusively, these views agree with reports from the implementers of the programme who maintained that other factors are imperative. This shows that the situation of unemployment in the Municipality can be linked to other factors. These factors are discussed below.



4.3.1 Causes of Unemployment

The causes of youth unemployment as found by this study are erratic rainfall and bad weather, mismatch between academia and the demands of the job market (Education and training have no link to the needs of the important sectors of the economy), low educational level, lack of commitment by government in creating more industries, inadequate funding and support mechanisms for entrepreneurship, lack of coherent national policy and comprehensive strategy to deal with the unemployment problem. Others are unrealistic aspirations and hopes of the youth as well as lack of employable skills.

4.3.1.1 Erratic Rainfall and Bad Weather

Erratic rainfall and bad weather have resulted in lack of interest in agriculture within the development agenda of Northern Ghana which has contributed to huge numbers of unemployed youth. It is expected that the limited number of public sector employment coupled with slow growth of the private sector will urge the unemployed youth to go into agriculture in order to ameliorate their situation. Unfortunately, the finding from the study does not give credence to this line of thinking. Agriculture is important to the development of any nation, Ghana being no exception. This development must include the youth, yet the agricultural sector remains unattractive to young graduates and the youth even though our economy is structurally agrarian. A beneficiary of the NYA programme stated that:

“These days, the youth like myself cannot venture into agriculture because it is not lucrative. There are no supports for the farmers. Also, during the dry season we are



unable to make some income to cater for our families. I prefer to work in other areas where throughout the year I can earn some income”.

Others were of the view that, agriculture is for the aged and not the youth. For them it is simply not lucrative and one cannot survive from it. The implication of this situation is that food nutrition is likely to be low. As a result of the unemployment situation in the Municipality, the youth have no option than to venture into agriculture which can also enable them enhance their livelihoods. Additionally, this cannot take place without support from the NYA or government at large.

A focal person from the NYA said that:

“The poor image of persons in agriculture, especially in the Wa Municipality needs to be changed and the youth are the ideal catalyst for such change given their greater propensity and willingness to adapt to new ideas, concept and technology which are all important to changing the way agriculture is practiced and perceived by the youth. We have initiated the planting for food and jobs programme as part of our activities to get the youths some job, and the youth who have participated are finding life a bit comfortable”.

In effect, increased productivity in the agricultural sector depends on the youth who form the active population in the region. Their sheer numbers and energy provide tremendous opportunities for increasing agricultural productivity.

4.3.1.2 Mismatch between Academia and Demand of Job Market

Some respondents maintained that the unemployment in the municipality is as a result of the mismatch between the skill sets of the unemployed (labour supply) and



the needs of employers (labour market demand). A focal person from the National Youth Authority lamented that:

“My brother [referring to the researcher] the situation of unemployment is a critical one and the government is making several efforts to reduce its impact by introducing social intervention programmes like the Nations Builders Corps (NaBCo), extension on National Service with partner organizations, employment in the public sector among others. In fact, the government is trying but the typical problem is lack or mismatch between what graduates have by way of skill and what the industry requires”.

According to him, the mismatch comes about because the unemployed are unwilling or unable to change skills or to move to a location where their skills are in demand especially for those who are not trained as professionals such as teachers and nurses.

As a result, it becomes very costly to match workers with jobs and unemployment is often prolonged. For example, businesses in a certain area may require young people with advanced ICT skills. This renders school-to-work transitions for young people more difficult. Another respondent asserted that:

“...we have tried over the last few months to help our graduates to secure jobs. I am referring to those who we are yet to train and the feedback is not positive. Employers always complain of insufficient skills of the youth. I wish I can pool everyone along but its difficult. This is why I think the programme is there to provide these skills”.



One respondent also asserted that:

“Our educational system as introduced by the colonial masters prepared people for white-collar jobs (formal), but job opportunities in that sector are not many. Few people are absorbed and the remaining roam about having no jobs to do. Educational policies like the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) and the free Senior High Schools (SHS) create the opportunity for everybody to go to school and also encourage many schools to be opened whilst not many jobs were or are created to absorb them”.

He further explained that, graduates were more prepared for the formal sector employment where there were enough job vacancies in the public sector. Governments needed to study population increase and develop programmes in partnership with the private sector to deal with the increasing unemployment situation which has become a canker today. For him, well established technical institutions which are supposed to train people for industries are few and thus add to the unemployment problem. He further added that, graduates from technical and vocational institutions are not even trained with the entrepreneurial mind-set to come out and start their own businesses.

This implies that, the programme as it stands now is not providing a comprehensive training and hence, can be improved. This finding agrees with the ITC/ILO and ILO (2011) position on the mismatch between what employers want and skills that the youth possess. This certainly has the potential of making the situation of unemployment worse.



4.3.1.3 Low Educational Level

Low education in some skill areas according to respondents is another cause of the unemployment situation. A young person living in this part of the country but without education will find it difficult securing ‘white colour’ jobs as indicated by some focal persons from the office of the NYA. Education plays a critical role in every economy and this issue from the study is related to the mismatch of skills between industry demand and skills that the youth possess. According to a respondent in a focus group discussion:

“There will be difficulty finding a job if his/her skills are not matched to the demand mostly due to education”.

Others gave examples such as difficulty in following instructions from superiors at the work place, inability to read and write among other. Another respondent asserted that; *“... it will sadden you to know that, most of the youth do not have basic IT skills to meet the job demands. Some cannot even write reports because of poor communication and writing skills”.*

Down a similar line of reasoning, a young person with the required skills set and education but living in an area where these are not in demand because employers are looking for agricultural workers, will have an equally difficult time finding work or may become underemployed.

An important trend in labour markets in more developed economies has been a steady shift in demand away from the less skilled toward the more skilled. In this case however, skills are defined whether in terms of education, experience, or job



classification. The result of the changing composition of labour demand has led, and is leading, to a reduction in the number of entry-level, unskilled jobs, resulting in the inability of young people with low education and skills levels to acquire jobs. Resulting from this, the affected youth can exhibit immoral acts in the society as a result of their frustrations. For instance, a lady in her late 20s who had attained only basic education reported that:

“At my age, I am still unemployed. I have made several efforts to maintain a job but men always demand for sex before they grant me what I want. They think I am cheap because I have no education compared to others of my age. It is a very difficult situation for me. If I had tertiary education all these wouldn’t happen because I would be better off than someone who has not gone to school. ...hmmm [she reflects], for now it’s really difficult and sometimes although I want to give in to demands from men but I feel frustrated. Last year my aunty introduced me to one business but when we went they said I haven’t obtained tertiary education so I can’t do the job meanwhile I know I can do it...hmmm”.

Another non-beneficiary reported that:

“They said education is important but I have gone to school and still no job... I am just fed up”.

This makes such persons get aggrieved and exhibit negative behaviours in the society as indicated by the relative deprivation theory.

Other respondents revealed that the tertiary institutions are to be blamed for these problems. Some respondents were of the view that, the contents of the courses that



are taught in our universities, polytechnics and other institutions of higher learning should be redesigned to provide as much practical training as theoretical. In their opinion, the teaching of courses that would not bring immediate benefit to the nation and region as a whole and where job prospects in the country are non-existent should be suspended. To them, the focus of our education should be redefined to emphasize on the training of creative, innovative and critical thinking graduates who will have the ability to search for solutions to societal problems and hence create employment for them. This finding is consistent with the views of Amoako (2011).

4.3.1.4 Lack of Commitment by Government in creating Industries

Lack of commitment by government in creating more industries is yet another factor. The study found that in the Wa Municipality there is inadequacy of industries where these youth (trained and untrained) can gain employment. The only juice factory in the municipality located around Kumbiahen is non-operational and many of the youth who were employed there have no jobs now. As a result, a respondent lamented that:

“... why won't we go to Accra and Kumasi to look for greener pastures, I can't just travel to those areas for nothing. Governments need to fulfil their promises of citing more industries here”.

Another respondent who is a non-beneficiary of the NYA programme also said:

“For me government is just not committed to solving our situation. At least they can revive the defunct industries that were established by the previous governments. This will be costly but we will get jobs in the long run”.



This agrees with ISSER (2004) report on the role of government in providing employment in Ghana.

4.3.1.5 Inadequate Funding Support Mechanisms for Entrepreneurship

Inadequate funding and support mechanisms for entrepreneurship was also found by this study to have contributed to the unemployment in the municipality. There is enough data to support the claim that small and medium enterprises can provide financial support for the youth and their families (Reine, 2013). Also, researchers such as Newberry (2006) demonstrated a positive connection between a nation's level of income or salary of persons and the quantity of SMEs per 1000 people. The study observed that the Wa Municipality is associated with low number of Small and Medium scale Enterprises (SMEs) per 1000 population. A respondent from Mangu said “... *We do not have jobs, no entrepreneurial training for we the unemployed youth and we are aqully not supported by the government to set –up our own businesses to earn some income. That is the situation we the youth here find ourselves in*”.

This situation is serious as the rise in the income level of a country is proportional to the increase in the number of SMEs per 1000 individuals (Newberry, 2006). However, this is made possible due to the absence of jobs in the municipality. According to some respondents, there are inadequate funding and support mechanisms for entrepreneurship in the municipality. As a result, despite the positive contribution that SMEs bring to economies of the world, attempts to promote their growth to absorb excess labour has not yielded the desired results.



4.3.1.6 Lack of Coherent National Policy and Comprehensive Strategy

Lack of coherent national policy and comprehensive strategy to deal with the unemployment problem was also identified. A respondent stated that, “... *there is unemployment because every government will come out with new programmes and policies that are not sustainable enough and without any appropriate fund source to deal with this menace. Again, the lack of continuation of policies aimed at resolving the unemployment problem by successive governments have also worsened our plights as youth. Since 2006, policies targeted at the youth have changed. New names are given by successive governments and the youth employed under previous governments have their appointments terminated. How can we be solving a big problem such as unemployment like this?*”. This statement is in reference to the change in policy intervention programmes with different names under different regimes of governments starting with youth employment programme in 2006 to NaBCo 2018. Some also attributed the unemployment situation to lack of guidance for the youth in their career path and not necessarily the absence of a comprehensive policy. A great number of the youth are not properly guided and motivated to choose or pursue the right career path. Some respondents who are students reported that some of their colleagues are made to choose career courses that do not benefit them leading to failure in professional life as well as their inability to find suitable jobs that is if they find one.

4.3.1.7 Unrealistic Aspirations and Hopes of the Youth among others

Other causative factors that were identified are unrealistic aspirations and hopes of the youth, lack of access to training and development and lack of effective link



between the National Youth Authority and the unemployed youth. Although some respondents are trying to secure jobs, they lack the right skills due to the quality of training given to them. As opined by Boateng and Ofori (2002) that, the issue of quality borders on the possession of some specific skills considered relevant to job performances.

Youth unemployment in the municipality is a reflection of the imbalances between expectations and service provisioning as well as lack of training and development (Poku-Boansi and Afrane; 2011). A respondent from the Wa Town indicated that:

“For me the issue of unemployment is that, if you are young and your focus is the formal sector, it is better than the informal sector which pays less”.

This makes the youth have hope of employment in the formal labour market where emphasis is on qualification and expertise but with better pay and yet difficult to find.

Another non beneficiary respondent who is a professional nurse had this to say:

“I have been trained as a professional nurse since 2013, to date, I do not have job and still depend on my parents for survival. Yet there are clinics and hospitals with inadequate nursing staff”.

This implies that youth who find themselves in this category may not desire any job outside the formal sector.



4.3.2 Effects of Unemployment

The study found the following as effects of the unemployment situation in the municipality; skill loss and long-run damage, frustrations, hopelessness and desperation, ill-health, loss of human relations and family life, loss of social values and responsibility and psychological harm.

4.3.2.1 Skill Loss

The study found that the absence of employment for the youth in the municipality leads to skill loss and damages to vital areas of life in the long term. Just as people learn by doing they also unlearn by not doing. The tertiary and second cycle institutions in the region do not only prepare the youth for exams but for the job market as well (GSS, 2014). Although the educational institutions have received criticisms on how these skills are imparted onto the youth, this cannot be underestimated. The youth are given relevant skills to improve upon their cognitive and psychological competencies. Based on this, unemployment may generate a loss of these cognitive abilities as a result of unemployed person's loss of confidence and sense of control. A respondent said that:

“I finish school some three years ago from the Nandom Senior High School but have no job. I am not interested in going to the University because I want to create job for myself. I only need some training and can do the rest myself. However, I am still waiting to be called by the NYA to participate in their training programme”.

Another beneficiary said that:

“I have remained at home for a long time and always have problems with my parents since they think I am lazy and I have nothing to offer. Just last week I thought of



moving away from home for my peace of mind. Hmmm... its all because I don't have a job".

This shows how important skills are being wasted in the country and region.

4.3.2.2 Frustration

Frustration was another challenge revealed in this study. Most of the respondents, whether trained or untrained, lamented that they feel frustrated without jobs. According to them unemployment has really affected them negatively. One beneficiary, who was a breast feeding mother, said in the focus group discussion that:

"I feel depressed sometime. This is because I am a woman and must support my husband but I have no job. I feel worried as my husband usually thinks I demand so much from him".

Other respondents also shared similar views and urged the government to speed up proposals such as the NaBCo programme and the One-District, One-Factory Initiative. They believe this will enable them get jobs and contribute their quota to national development rather than sitting at home. As reported by the relative deprivation theory, it is the frustrations of the human aspirations that lead individuals to confront the actors they believe are in control of whether or not they can fulfil their desires. In relation to this, urgent steps need to be taken to avert this situation from happening in our society.

4.3.2.3 Hopelessness and Desperation

The findings from the field also revealed hopelessness and desperation as yet another negative effect of unemployment in the Municipality. The psychological impact of





fatigue and boredom is driving numerous youth to perpetrate or engage in social vices such as sex work, drug use, teenage pregnancy and lack of respect for the elderly. A respondent mentioned that “... *I am a matured person and need to feed myself and not to depend on my parents at this age. What do you expect me to live on? Weekly I send not less than six applications seeking for jobs whether it is in line with the programme I offered at university or not, yet I do not receive any favourable response even when I am among the few shortlisted for interview. I am even now depressed when it comes to applying for job. If not for the support of my parents, how do I survive? My other unemployed colleagues who have no such support are left with no choice than to engage in prostitution and robbery as you hear on daily basis in the municipality. They simply must eat in order to survive*”. The resultant impact of these is the increase in sex-related infections especially HIV/AIDS, among the youth. In the view of Poku-Boansi and Afrane (2011) the youth unemployment phenomenon is serious and urgent steps need to be taken to address the menace. As a result of this, the study found that ill-health is on the increase as a result of unemployment. This can, to some extent, be the result of lack of income and material means, but the connection also works through dejection, lack of self-respect and collapse of motivation generated by persistent unemployment.

4.3.2.4 Loss of Human Relations and Family Life

Loss of human relations and family life was another effect that was established in the study. To the family, persistent unemployment of the youth means bigger family expenditure. This situation arises because the youth enjoy adult privileges without the commensurate measure of responsibility in terms of payment for rents, clothing

and food. The study found that there is motivational loss and threat to the future. The motivational loss resulting from high levels of unemployment can be very detrimental to the search for future employment.

Most of the respondents reported that they experience loss of human relations and family life because they find it extremely difficult to approach people for help. A respondent indicated that *“As the first born of the family who has completed university through the effort of a single mother, I am unable to approach her for help because she has paid my school fees from primary to the university level and I am expected after completion to support her care for my siblings since she is now overburdened with the responsibilities of paying their fees in other tertiary institutions. Most often I lock myself in the room without showing my face, until I notice she has left the house. I feel really bad about this situation of unemployment which is tearing a once united family apart”*. This implies that unemployment can be very disruptive of social relations. It may also weaken the harmony and coherence within the family. To some extent these consequences relate to the decline of self-confidence, but the loss of an organized working life can itself be a serious deprivation.

4.3.2.5 Loss of Social Values and Responsibility

Loss of social values and responsibility is another effect revealed through this study. When jobs are scarce, the groups most affected are often the youth. Unemployment feeds the politics of intolerance and racism. In a focus group discussion, a respondent indicated that *“I am not regarded in the family because the other family members think I am unemployed and have nothing to offer in terms of financial support. So my*





presents or absents does not matter in any discussion since my value has only been reduced to only what I can contribute financially” In the municipality, it can be observed that gender divisions too are affected by extensive unemployment, especially because the entry of women into the labour force is often particularly hindered in times of general employment. Another respondent stated that *“my inability to acquire a job has reduced me to a second graded person in the family, even though I have one of the highest certificates. The mere reason that I am a woman has further worsened my situation”*. People in continued unemployment can develop cynicism about the fairness of social arrangements, and also a perception of dependence on others.

4.3.2.6 Psychological Harm

Psychological harm is yet another effect found from the study. Unemployment can cause mental disorder in the lives of the jobless, which can lead to intense suffering and mental agony. In a situation of widespread unemployment, when displacement from one’s present job can lead to a long period of joblessness, the resistance to any economic reorganisation involving job loss can be particularly strong. A respondent believes that:

“Unemployment affects the totality of the life of the individual youth in that, it affects him physically, psychologically, emotionally and spiritually and decreases his self-worth and self-confidence”.

There is the tendency of the moral life of the individual to be affected because according to him *“the affected individual is not in charge of himself/herself”* and can

therefore become vulnerable to those who want to take advantage of the situation to exploit him/her. Apart from bringing economic hardship, the individual may be prone to deviant behaviours such as, prostitution and armed robbery. This may have negative consequences for a person's working life in terms of lower wages and/or longer spells of unemployment as indicated by Fares and Tionson (2007).

The preponderant growth in the number of unemployed youth (over 60%) coupled with the seemingly lack of attention to youth empowerment and youth development have for decades been an issue of grave concern to policy makers and other stakeholders in the country. It is therefore not a surprise that the issue of youth unemployment has been a thorn in the flesh of the government of Ghana. In the Wa Municipality, the situation is so appalling to the extent that the youth have become so vulnerable to the machinations of some Ghanaian politicians and other self-aggrandizing individuals. A respondent in the focus group discussion lamented that: *"... it is not easy at all to stay without job. Almost everybody wants to take advantage of the unemployed. Specially, politicians ... hmmm"*.

This is due to low job creation. The effect of unemployment can be said to be multi-dimensional as it has an effect on the physical, emotional, spiritual, economic as well as the social well-being of the individual. Unemployment therefore, may involve serious problems for both the individual and society as a whole.

4.3.2.7 Poverty

Poverty which is prevalent among the youth as a result of unemployment was another consequence raised. In relation to this, the study found that most of the youth





who are willing to start their own businesses have no initial capital to do so. In addition to the above, a focal person from the NYA agreed to the fact that there is not enough job opportunities in the country, those who are not willing to learn some trade and start their own businesses could be encouraged to do so but resource to start with is a challenge for them. One non-beneficiary of the NYA programme stated that; *“My parents are poor. I went through hell in educating myself in school. I had to labour in order to pay my school fees. Here I am without job after completion. How do I finance a business of my own under such condition where how to feed is even a problem for me. If my parents were financially okay, I am sure they could have helped me start a small business of my own to earn some income and support myself and also contribute to the development of the municipality through the tax I will pay to the Assembly”*.

To finance youth development and reduce the impact of unemployment in Ghana and the Upper West Region, the Youth Fund was established in 2008 by government. But currently, the government has added the District Assembly Common Fund (DACF) to perform this function. More importantly, the mandate of the NYA is to coordinate, facilitate, implement youth development policies and programmes on skills training, leadership training and volunteerism, civic education and self-reliance. Sadly, the study found that the NYA is not achieving their objectives as stated in the policy document. For instance, they are supposed to provide opportunities for education, skills training and logistical support to the youth and also provide the youth with information on labour market for employment.

To reduce unemployment in the municipality, some of the respondents in a focus group discussion indicated that, there is the need to provide incentives for firms to grow and hire more workers, education and skills supplied by workers should conform to the education and skills required and training providers should respond to the needs of employers with regard to additional requirements being demanded in the changing labour market in Ghana, promote measures to stimulate and sustain the dwindling interest of the youth in agriculture, Promote measures to link rural and urban labour markets, develop an inclusive labour market to enhance job creation.

From the above, it will not be an over-statement that youth unemployment poses a real challenge. It was also noted that although the youth go through various well-designed programmes, not much is done to tackle the unemployment problem and a lot still needs to be done to address the imbalance. The National Youth Authority therefore must as a matter of urgency mobilise resources, educate its members and introduce relevant programmes to deal with the unemployment challenges of the youth.

4.4 Effectiveness of Strategies Employed by the National Youth Authority to Create Employment

The strategies employed by the National Youth Authority (NYA) are vocational and technical skills trainings such as Online Digital Marketing training, Bead and Soap making, Batik Tie and Dye, Yogurt, Fabric necklace, Android Apps Design (ICT), Planting for food and jobs, business start-up strategies. To establish whether these



strategies are effective or not, the researcher employed the following indicators: the strategies are relevant to youth needs and cover the entire municipality, the duration and frequency of training is adequate for skills acquisition, the strategy provides adequate logistics after training for start-up, there is partnership for internship provided to trainees and the strategy employs self-assessment.

According to focal persons from the NYA, job vacancies are announced or communicated through the radio stations in the Wa Municipality. According to him, about 70% of the youth from the training have been employed. The study found that, in all, two (2) training sessions were organized in 2018 on online marketing and beads making. Another respondent who was a focal person said some capacity building programmes are also given to the youth in the first and fourth quarters. According to him, best strategy to deal with the unemployment situation is the establishment of youth training centres to equip them to train other people too and to focus on vocational and technical training.

Specifically, from the Issa YLSTI, the NYA has trained 750 students in the last five years in Agriculture, Dress-Making, Catering, Electrical Installation, Masonry, Carpentry & Joinery, Metal Works and Computer Studies. The NYA also trained over 250 youth in Online Digital Marketing and provided them with tablets this year. In bead and soap making, more than 300 have been trained and they are currently supporting their education in schools such as the Universities and Polytechnics now Technical Universities. Furthermore, the focal persons explained to the researcher that the NYA focuses on skills to deal with youth unemployment, but the modules are for the National Youth Employment to develop. For this study, the strategies used



by the National Youth Authority (NYA) were referred to as training modules in order to assess how effective they are as a collective solution to the problem of unemployment.

The findings reveal that, majority of the respondents asserted that the strategies are not effectively implemented. For instance, most of them disagreed that the training modules address the needs of the youth, covers the entire municipality, the duration and frequency of training is adequate for skills acquisition, there is partnership for internship programmes provided to trainees and the strategy employs self-assessment. However, some of the respondents agreed that the strategies provide adequate logistics after training for start-up by the National Youth Authority. Overall the majority of the respondents hold the view that the programme is not effective in its implementation. A beneficiary had this to say:

“For me I don’t have any job anywhere. I thank the NYA for bring us this training programme. Although it has helped me, I cannot say it is effective because the implementers are few and are sometimes challenged with funding”.

4.4.1 Relevance of the Programme and Coverage

Relevance of the programme and coverage in addressing the needs of the youth was the first indicator considered to examine the effectiveness or otherwise of the NYA strategies for dealing with unemployment. On this, majority of the respondents indicated that the programme itself is good. Some were of the view that adding other programmes as new strategies will be helpful. This was reiterated by a respondent who said, *“A review of the programme is necessary. Because we are in the 21st century interesting programmes can be added”*. He further explained that, a



downward review of expectation on the part of jobseekers in terms of wage or earning expectation has the effect of improving their chances of securing a job and reduce the incidence of unemployment particularly the tertiary graduates.

In a Focus Group Discussion, the researcher further enquired from beneficiaries whether or not they have received the relevant skills to deal with this menace. Responding to this, a respondent espoused that:

“I am a beneficiary of the NYA programme. It is a good programme but I didn’t receive training on what I am interested in. I was taken through bead making whiles I wanted ICT training... I cannot say its not good but I am not okay and looking forward for training on ICT”.

Yet, another respondent also said:

“The programme is a fantastic one but more can be done about it. I am still unemployed because I was not trained on the online digital marketing which I think can be helpful”.

Another respondent indicated that:

“The programme is relevant but not effective. Some of my colleagues I completed school with are still at home without jobs. I can say that if it were effective like all of us will get jobs after enrolling in it”.

Still some were of the view that despite the fact that some people are trained, the programme does not cover every body.

In the Wa township, a pregnant lady who is not a beneficiary had this to say:



“I cannot say the programme is effective or not. All I can say is that I am unemployed and need help. My current condition is not easy at all and caring for the family too. So I find everything difficult”.

She also added that some of her friends who have remained unemployed for a long time engage themselves in all forms of social vices that are not good for the development of the society. She gave examples of some of her friends who had to sleep with unknown and known men from various places just for jobs. These findings agree with earlier studies that unemployment, if prolonged, may have negative consequences for a person’s working life in terms of engaging in social vices, lower wages and/or longer spells of unemployment (Fares and Tiongson, 2007).

Also, some focal persons in an interview with the researcher maintained that,

“... like the Ghana Youth Employment and Entrepreneurial Agencies (GYEEDA), the programme is one of the major interventions put forward by the government to address the youth unemployment challenge of the country. Hence, the programme addresses the needs of the youth in terms of employment generation”.

The youth in the Wa Municipality and the country at large have so many needs that require urgent interventions like the NYA programme. According to one of them, though the programme does not offer direct or permanent employment, it prevents boredom and also gives the youth some job experiences that prepare them to search for permanent employment. A focal person from the NYA explained that *“the government’s aim is that the programme should benefit both the literate and the illiterate youth, so modules have been designed to address their needs accordingly”.*



Some respondents were also of the view that the strategy of training the youth, is effective as it addresses the needs of the unemployed youth.

In line with the relevance of the training to youth needs, the researcher assessed the effectiveness of the programme in terms of overall coverage (geographical, gender and level of education). According to Poku-Boansi and Afranie (2011) as well as Abrefa (2003) these are relevant areas to explore when examining the effectiveness of social or government interventions for youth unemployment. Hence, it was considered imperative to explore the areas as special case. The results show that, the NYA's programme document does not restrict beneficiaries in terms of geographical, gender based or ones educational level.

However, the study revealed that, the training is normally held at the Wa Municipality and sometimes in other locations outside the municipality. Considering the vast nature of the region and the distance from the rural areas to the urban area like Wa, it was difficult for persons who have even met the basic requirement and now beneficiaries to attend training programmes. Some of the non-beneficiaries indicated to the researcher that because of the distance and transportation fares, they had no option than to quit. This implies that, not everyone who is a non-beneficiary was of such status as the programme's beneficiary status commenced. This finding was also confirmed by the programme's officer who doubled as a facilitator as well.

4.4.2 Logistical provision after Training for Start-ups

In relation to Logistical provision after Training for Start-ups, the study found that after their training, the government in some instances through the programme provide them with basic tools and equipment to help them open their own businesses.



Therefore, some respondents indicated that although not much support has been received but they can say that in terms of logistical provision, the NYA programme is not entirely effective. For instance, the youth who took part in the Online Digital Marketing Training were supposed to receive Data every month for six months to make them established. This has not happened since the training ended in June, 2018 even-though the tablets were given. A respondent stated that; *‘I received a tablet from the NYA and I am happy for this support but I am unable to use it for the purpose due to lack of data. We were trained with the promise to get data for six consecutive months. As I speak, it has been six months now, nobody has said anything’*. They expressed appreciation for the support that they have received but indicated that the NYA and the government can do more.

4.4.3 Duration and Frequency of Training

The NYA has trained many young people have been able to acquire employable skills and have become self-employed while others have had the opportunity to work in government and private establishments to better their lot, according to a focal person. Although it is the mandate of the National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI) to provide entrepreneurial development and skills acquisition training to people who express the need for vocational training or are eager to start their own businesses, this was not the case in the Wa Municipality.

Focal persons from the youth authority further explained that, their programmes are geared towards the unemployed youth and also the youth already in self-employment. This they execute through the Business Advisory Centres (BACs)



which are located in some districts. Their services are offered to groups such as churches and associations who express interest and approach them for such services.

They emphasized that their programmes to a large extent offer training in soap making, yoghurt, and bead making among others to train the youth in that sector.

They also collaborate with the NBSSI and other organizations and institutions like the Wa Polytechnic and University for Development Studies (UDS) to train the youth and graduates with entrepreneurial skills to prepare them for self-employment. The higher probability of the youth seeking a specific type of employment as against those seeking any type of job all impact on unemployment status. It was also found that, the greater likelihood of youth seeking full-time jobs resulting from unemployment is also an indication of limited job opportunities for many jobseekers.

Effective design and implementation of such training policies to promote investment in the high labour absorption sectors of agriculture and manufacturing to promote employment generation and address the challenge of unemployment is imperative.

These sectors would also benefit from continuing high growth in agriculture and manufacturing which are found to have low direct employment generation capacity, if resources generated from these activities are invested in infrastructure. Also, the observation of higher youth unemployment in the Wa Municipality requires the need for targeted policy intervention to remove the constraints facing them particularly at the entry point of the labour market.

A respondent who was a beneficiary suggested that the provision of regular entrepreneurial training and start-up support would attract these young secondary



school leavers into setting up small enterprises and grow them gradually. Based on this, some respondents maintained that the NYA programme strategies are not entirely effective as programmes are not regularly organized. For some, it takes regular and effective programming to transform someone or persons like the unemployed. A respondent from Chansa indicated that,

“Most of the time I have to travel to Wa for the training as you have observed today. It is not organized well for us because for us to grasp the training concepts, we have to undergo this training every day for a period of time in order to be fully abreast with the nature of the work. Unfortunately, the period is normally less than a month which is relatively shorter for us to grasp the training concepts properly because it is non-residential”.

Another respondent also lamented on the duration and frequency of the training programme. According to him, the duration of the programme is too short. Normally, the training takes a day or two which is too short for skills acquisition.

“A duration of a week or more and the frequency of twice or more a year to refresh trainees skills and update them on new skills will help” He said.

4.4.4 Partnership for Internship Programme

The study explored partnership for internship as another indicator to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme since duration for the trainings are relatively shorter (normally not up to a week). Some respondents indicated the critical role of partnership or internship programmes by the NYA and its partners and noted that the absence of this affects the programme. For them, for the strategies employed by the



NYA to be effective, there is the need to link up with other relevant bodies for internships. Against this backdrop, a respondent from Nakori maintained that,

“We are taken through various modules and training activities at school. I think it would be better if through the NYA partnership, relevant institutions can give us the opportunity to undertake hands-on training in their organizations. This will bridge the mismatch between academic work and the practical”.

Others share similar views on the affiliation with other institutions for further practical training. This is the reason why some respondents expressed dissatisfaction on the overall effectiveness of the NYA programme. Some of these programmes are bead making and vocational training in tie and dye.

4.4.5 Self-Assessment of the NYA Programmes

Self-assessment on the training programmes by beneficiaries was yet another indicator of effectiveness employed by the researcher. At least, for one to embrace the effectiveness or otherwise of a project or programme, a self-assessment is imperative (ILO, 2013). In relation to this, a respondent who had completed training college and was unemployed reported that,

“While on campus, we were given opportunities to assess our tutors through assessment forms and ourselves through termly examinations. I believe this programme is sponsored or supported by government and we need to be given the opportunity to assess ourselves and the facilitators too. This I believe will enable we the trainees to be serious on the training and the programme will also be enhanced through our recommendations or suggestions”.



Another respondent from the Wa municipality asserted that,

“Because we are not able to assess ourselves, we are also unable to indicate whether or not we can cope in the real working environment. I remember when we started some of the facilitators gave assignments for us to examine our understanding of the modules but now am sure due to high in-take, this is not done. I am saying this based on my observation”.

This implies that the assessment mechanism and strategy of the programme needs to be relooked at.

4.5 Challenges that the National Youth Authority face in Implementing Employment Creation Strategies

The researcher solicited information on the challenges the National Youth Authority (NYA) faces in creating employment for the youth in the Municipality. Responding to this, inadequate Human Resource or technical staff, financial constraints, lack of clearance from government to recruit additional staff to augment the efforts of three permanent staff, inadequate of logistics, low participation of youth on the programme, political interference and lack of commitment from stakeholders were some of the issues raised.

4.5.1 Inadequate Human Resource or Technical Staff/Lack of Clearance to Recruit Staff

The study found that inadequate human resource or technical staff at the regional office was a critical issue. One of the focal persons explained that, due to the nature



of this problem their scope is limited. He also explained the difficulty they have to endure in securing financial clearance for new staff to be recruited. He said that

“Currently, we are working with only three (3) permanent staff the rest are volunteers and service personnel. The situation is sad and only those at the top can do something about this. Reducing youth unemployment requires a collective effort and these challenges really hamper efforts in dealing with this menace. Sometimes some of the volunteers stop coming because they feel they are wasting their time here”.

The study found that, currently there are three permanent staff for the NYA who were focal persons for the study. This was the main reason why these officials of the NYA highlighted limited staff capacity as critical issue that requires urgent attention as they hamper the effective implementation of the training programme in the Municipality. A focal person further added that the lack clearance to recruit addition staff has further exacerbated the staffing situation at the Authority.

4.5.2 Financial Constraints

Financial constraint was another challenge that the NYA is faced with. The District Assemblies Common Fund has allocated only 5% of the fund for youth development and this has been captured in the annual report of the NYA. When asked how this is shared and whether it is sufficient, the focal person of the Authority at the Wa office recounted how he had to go the extra mile to get additional support for beneficiaries.



He said that:

“... this money [referring to the DACF] is not enough. We deal with large numbers and what can 5% of that do to us. The situation can properly be dealt with if we have adequate funds to organize more training programmes for the youth in the Municipality and beyond. I had to use my own pocket money to buy refreshment and give allowances to a group of youth who travelled from far places to partake in our programme. Hmmm...sometimes it is sad”.

The study uncovered that government subvention to the Authority is too meagre to meet the NYA budget and also come late for implementation of activities. This explains why they have to organise programmes for the youth in only two out of the four quarters of the year.

4.5.3 Inadequate Logistics

The study identified means of transport as a challenge the Authority is struggling with. The study found that, the NYA office uses only one pick-up vehicle for the entire region. This finding agrees with Baah-Boateng et al. (2005) that efforts to reduce unemployment through programmes like the NYA programme in some districts and municipalities are faced with major logistical constraints that negatively impact on the work. According to the focal persons, the regional office has no means of transport for other staff to serve all the beneficiaries and visit communities as well as conduct monitoring and evaluation. The office relies solely on one pick-up for this hectic task. This negatively affects that mandate of the NYA as stipulated in the



National Youth Authority Act, (2016, Act 939) to coordinate and organize employment related programmes for the youth. He further asserts that:

“... in fact it is difficult here, as you can see we have to join one pick-up van for all tasks including visiting communities and beneficiaries for monitoring. This problem affects the delivery of the programme since there are sometimes delays leading to the postponement of critical programmes for some beneficiary communities in the Municipality” (Key informant, Wa).

An interview with the focal person also revealed that the department has limited office space to accommodate the huge number of youth that pay visit to the office. This is due to the fact that some of the youth that have peculiar problems do visit the NYA office for their problems to be solved with the help of the NYA officials.

The focal person who is responsible for the implementation of the programme in the said:

“We are over stretched. We cannot perform all these roles by ourselves. Volunteers and casual workers are supposed to help but they have other obligations as well and are also challenged logistically. Sometimes they do not come to work at all. It is indeed difficult to implement these wonderful programmes when these challenges still exist” (Focal person NYA, Wa).

Also, another challenge discovered from the study was ineffective monitoring of the programme. Effective monitoring and evaluation of the programme will help the



programme to achieve its set objectives. However, ineffective monitoring is a major challenge with the Authority as they are constrained logistically as a result of having only one pick-up vehicle for the performance of all activities.

4.5.4 Low Participation and Co-operation from Trainees

Low participation and lack of co-operation during skills development or training sessions was discovered as another challenge to the implementation of the NYA programme. A focal person mentioned that trainees do not show seriousness during the training session and added that there is the need to review the programme to issue certificates after each skills training, based on performance and active participation. The study again found that some participants report late and claim to know more than the trainers.

One respondent said that:

“I come from far place so most at times I cannot join them early for training. There are no means of transport and I always have to trek for more than an hour to the next community for vehicle to come here. Sometimes even if I secure the vehicle it will always be full before I enter and had to compete for seat”.

Another respondent who is also a beneficiary indicated that they are not given the necessary information to participate in the programme. This opinion was equally shared during the focus group discussion with non-beneficiaries.

4.5.5 Inadequate Documentation of Information

The study also discovered that, no conscious effort was made to document baseline information on beneficiaries with regard to the number of youth who have received



the various kinds of skills training. Again, certain basic indicators on unemployment and well-being such as income levels, new businesses created, and the number of people employed by beneficiaries among others were not documented.

On the question of an exit strategy for beneficiaries, the programme's implementation strategy proposes that beneficiaries are to be connected to other training programmes and supports such as micro credit and support for physically challenged persons programme under the District Assemblies Common Fund at the local level. However, there is a weak relationship between these supports and the training offered. The cumulative effect is that, beneficiaries are not able to obtain self-sufficiency in the medium term to be self-reliant as the programme seeks to attain. This was emphasized by the focal person from NYA that;

“The recent youth training marks the 10th training since the municipality became a beneficiary. Most communities in the municipality and beyond have been beneficiaries of the programme for almost five years without many graduating from the programme. Only six persons are self-reliant.”

(Focal person NYA, Wa).

The study revealed that there was no evidence of documentation of reports of some crucial programmes organised for the youth within the last two years.

4.5.6 Political Interference

Political interference and lack of commitment from stakeholders were some of the challenges identified as hindering proper implementation of the NYA programme. Some of the respondents who are non-beneficiaries think that they are not part due to



political interference that characterises the programme. *“It is important to mention that political interference is not helping us, some of the NYA programmes that are lucrative and attract so many youth have limited number of youth that should be trained at a point in time. In situations like this, the inclusion of a youth depends on who you know in politics”.* (A respondent, Wa).

Some also lamented that, they were asked to pay monies to some agents before they can participate in the programme and because they have no money they couldn't make such payments to be part of the programme. One respondent who is a non-beneficiary indicated that:

“A friend told me of this training but when I enquired further on how I can be a beneficiary, I was told to bring 100 cedis to facilitate some documents before I benefit. I felt sad because I am not employed myself and need support. Where can I get such an amount from”.

Drawing from these, a large number of respondents opted for an increased coverage rather than just training a section of youth when asked. It is most important that *“all can be trained”* said one beneficiary. This perception was shared by many and suggests an awareness of the importance of reducing unemployment and strengthening social capital amongst beneficiaries, who on the whole felt that they were the ‘lucky ones’ out of many other eligible youths in the municipality.

This is echoed by the suggestions of respondents on measures to improve the programme as some of the beneficiaries suggested that the coverage should be increased, government should intervene and allowances should be added particularly to those coming from far places for training.



4.6 Conclusion

This chapter revealed the deleterious effects of unemployment on the youths in the Wa Municipality. The causes are lack of skills or unwanted skills, erratic rainfall coupled with bad weather, low investment and low economic growth, slow growth of SMEs and lack of a comprehensive strategy to deal with the problem. The effects of unemployment are breakdown of social network and family cohesion, enlarged family budget and it brings tension and conflicts in the family.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter dealt with the results and discussions of the study. This chapter presents the summary and conclusions on the research findings and recommendations that would help address the problems identified. Areas for further studies have also been stated in this chapter.

5.2 Summary of Major Findings

The study examined the role of the National Youth Authority in employment creation in the Wa Municipality. Having reviewed related literature, the methodology was linked to the theoretical framework which is hinged on the relative deprivation and empowerment theories. Respondents were selected through a purposive, convenience and snowball sampling procedure. The data were collected through interviews and Focus Group Discussions. Analyzed data were presented using content analysis and document review.

The causes of youth unemployment as found by this study are erratic rainfall and bad weather, mismatch between academia and the demands of the job market (Education and training have no link to the needs of the important sectors of the economy), low educational level, lack of commitment by government in creating more industries, inadequate funding and support mechanisms for entrepreneurship, lack of coherent



national policy and comprehensive strategy to deal with the unemployment problem and unrealistic aspirations and hopes of the youth.

On the effects of youth unemployment on the family and society, it came out clearly from the study that the topmost effect is deviant behaviours. This brings embarrassment to the family and society. Others like breakdown of social network and family cohesion, enlarged family budget and the fact that it brings tension and conflicts in the family were of less effect.

The research also revealed that the strategies employed by the NYA were ineffective. For example, the trainings covered mostly youth in Wa township and some of the skills trainings were not relevant to the youth. This is because, the youth received trainings in skills they were not interested in. Moreover, the training duration (number of days) and frequency (number of times) were both insufficient to enable the youth acquire appropriate skills for employment. Again, there was inadequate logistics for the youth after most of the training sessions. There was also no partnership with other organisations in relation to the various skills training for the youth to be attached to refine their skills before engaging in self -employment. Finally, the NYA did not have a form of assessment to assess its performance of skills training over the years and the youth they have trained.

The study further found the following challenges; inadequate Human Resource or technical staff, financial constraints, lack of clearance from government to recruit additional staff to augment the efforts of three permanent staff, inadequate logistics, low participation of youth on the programme, political interference and lack of



commitment from stakeholders were some of the issues raised. The main findings are summarized in line with the themes as follows:

5.2.1 High Youth Unemployment in the Wa Municipality

The research explored factor resulting in the high youth unemployment situation and further discovered the consequences on the youth in the municipality. It was visibly to see youths in groups idling without engaging themselves in any meaningful activity. The study found that the unemployment situation in the Wa Municipality is high (74%). This was largely due to poverty and lack of employable skills coupled with inadequate industries. This view was espoused by 26 respondents representing 74% of the total respondents. This situation gives an indication that youth unemployment is increasing since a similar research conducted by the Ghana Statistical Service in 2014 established that 60% of the youth in Wa Municipal are unemployed.

The results reflect very little work done by NYA and other stakeholders to eliminate the ‘canker’ called youth unemployment in the municipality. These issues as discussed in the major findings on the cause and effects of youth unemployment, requires urgent attention.

5.2.2 In-effective Strategies Employed by National Youth Authority

Strategies identified as implemented by the NYA are mainly training and development, education and sensitization, provision of logistics, mentoring among others. The indicators explored including relevance of the programme to the youth, logistical provision after training, duration and frequency of training, partnership for



internship and self-assessment of the programme. These indicators were all revealed to be ineffective except in the case of logistical provision where 58% of the youth received logistics to start their own businesses. The research therefore established generally that most of the strategies are not effective in the Wa Municipality as most unemployed youth dissatisfied with the kind and nature of training given. The research again showed that the youth exhibit deviant behaviours and attitudes which could also cause them to be “frustrated, hopeless and desperate”.

This notwithstanding, others like “psychological effects of boredom and worthlessness”, and “poverty” were also enough as factors that could significantly affect them as a result of their continued unemployment status. Hence, there is the need for these strategies to be re-considered.

5.2.3 Limitations of National youth Authority

The youth unemployment in Ghana is a challenge and a reality that cannot be glossed over. The research established that the challenges the National Youth Authority (NYA) faces in providing the youth skills for employment in the Municipality are financial constraints, clearance from government to recruit additional staff, inadequate logistics, low participation of youth on the programme, political interference and lack of commitment of stakeholders.

5.3 Conclusions

The study revealed the deleterious effects of unemployment on the youths in the Wa Municipality. The youth in Wa Municipality are faced with numerous factors and



consequences in their state of unemployment which require immediate attention. Factors which account for the unemployment situation as well as the consequences or effects resulting from the youth inability to acquire jobs require urgent attention.

Again, the strategies employed by National Youth Authority are to a large extent not effective as they neither have jobs nor given logistics to operate with as start-up after training.

Furthermore, the National Youth Authority is faced with copious challenges and need support to execute its mandate. This can only be dealt with if all stakeholders perform their duties timeously.

Additionally, youth unemployment leads to higher levels of depression and cognitive distortions. These observations suggest that unemployment, in itself, devastates the mental life of young people in society. Moreover, as unemployment continuously lingers, its devastating effects on mental health are also sustained and even worsened. This means that young people do not habituate the negative psychological consequences of unemployment with time. Instead, they live it in an increasingly disruptive and destructive manner. Given the negative consequences of youth unemployment in the Wa Municipality, it can be concluded that the NYA is not planning and implementing its programmes effectively.

5.4 Recommendations

From the findings, the following recommendations are proffered:





- The National Youth Authority (NYA) should increase the number of skills development training programmes or courses on current employment trends for the youth in the Municipality. This will enable interested persons to choose from other course of training options offered by the NYA.
- The National Youth Authority should increase the duration and frequency in organizing skills development programmes in the municipality. This will enable the youth to partake regularly in the programmes and develop their skills better in order to engage in meaningful and competitive businesses.
- Technical and vocational institutes in the municipality need to be equipped by government for apprenticeship in both the formal and informal industries. In addition, there is also the need to make apprenticeship and trade more attractive to the youth through registration of apprenticeship providers, standardization of content, specification of training duration and certification, conformity with industry and identifiable trade associations. This, no doubt, will be a significant boost to the local industry, expand the production and employment base of the economy and, in the long run, increase national productivity.
- Credit facilities should be provided by banks to Small and Medium scale Enterprises in the municipality. Competitive lending rates will help to create an enabling environment for employment creation. This will help SMEs owned by the youth to expand. By implication, other unemployed youth can also gain employment through this.

5.5 Areas for Further Studies

Future researchers can assess the psychological effects of unemployment. This can be done by comparing the unemployed with those who are adequately employed and inadequately employed. Adequately employed individuals should comprise youths whose jobs and salaries commensurate with their qualifications and who are satisfied with their jobs. Inadequately employed individuals should comprise youths whose jobs and salaries do not commensurate their qualifications. Such individuals are dissatisfied with their jobs and may be seeking alternative jobs where they can find satisfaction.

Similarly, in order to clearly determine the effect of the size of youth unemployment, there is the need to distinguish two categories of unemployment ‘never employed before’ and ‘previously employed’. The former refers to individuals who have never had any chance to work for salary or who have never been engaged in a job that provides regular income. The latter refers to individuals who were previously employed but have lost their jobs. This is necessary because previous jobs could provide certain accumulated benefits for the unemployed and this is likely to obscure the effects of youth unemployment.

Finally, future research can also focus on examining the determinants of entrepreneurship in Ghana. This research should focus on districts that lie low on the poverty ladder in Ghana. Critical relationships such as income level, education and age should be considered as indicators as this current study only explored the effectiveness of interventions and general issues relating to the unemployment phenomenon.



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APPENDIX I

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Semi-Structured Questionnaire for the Youth (Beneficiary & Non-beneficiary)

A. Demographic Characteristics

1. Age: a. 15– 20yrs [] b. 21 – 35 yrs []

2. Educational Level Attained: a. Primary [] d. Secondary [] c. Tertiary []

Marital Status: a. Married [] b. Single [] c. Divorced []

Household size of the Respondent (Number).....

The Unemployment Situation in the Wa Municipality

What is the unemployed situation in the Municipality?

.....
.....
.....



6. Causes of unemployment. What is your view:

Disability

Effects on females.....

7. Effects of unemployment.....

C. Effectiveness of Strategies Employed by National Youth Authority

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From the following, indicated whether you agree and assign reason(s)

indicate	
The relevance of the programme to the youth and coverage	
The strategy provides adequate logistics after training for start-up	
The duration and frequency of training is adequate for skills acquisition	
There is partnership for internship programmes provided to trainees	
The strategy employs self-assessment	

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your views on the above:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



Challenges that the National Youth Authority Face

What are some of the constraints that impede the implementation of the programme?

.....

What are some of the ways that you will suggest for these problems to be solved?

.....

APPENDIX II

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This research instrument is designed to solicit for empirical data for the conduct of academic exercise on the above mentioned topic for the award of Mphil. degree in Development Management, UDS. Your support and cooperation is very much anticipated as information given will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Interview Guide for Focus Group Discussion and Focal Persons

ore the following:

- . The unemployment situation in the Wa Municipality
- . Effectiveness of strategies employed by National Youth Authority
- . Challenges that the National Youth Authority face

