

ABSTRACT

This study is a review of youth rights information regarding its relationship to socio-economic development. In order to achieve the aim of the study, information was sought from Youth Alive Zambia, Human Rights Commission, the 2006 National Youth Policy, various published materials inform of books and from the internet, as well as through a quantitative survey and interviews.

The study specifically sought to:

1. Establish the influence that human rights have on the fight against socio-economic hardships which the youths in Zambia face.
2. Analyse the available sources of youth rights information and how they affect youths' participation in development.
3. Find out if youths are fully aware of their rights and whether they know that human rights are important to both development and peace in the land.

The literature review highlights several factors concerning how issues of youth participation in development have impacted on youth development itself. Available literature also shows that there is an inseparable relationship between sustainable development and human rights.

Several documents, reports and studies dealing with the rights of youths from various continents, regions and countries in the world have been analysed in this thesis.

The study recommends that youth rights should be integrated in development programmes and projects at all levels of the society; social, political, economic, cultural and religious spheres.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my dear father, Reuben Mudenda, and my dear mother, RosinahMunsanje-Mudenda, for all their love, support and sacrifice for me over the years and also for always being there for me. This dedication is extended to our beloved daughter, Batupha Martina Mudenda, who has brought heavenly joy into our home.

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Another vital source of information, to which I am greatly indebted, is the Zambia Daily Mail, where I am currently working. Certain information was obtained from published articles and columns by individual journalists who exhibited some interest in youth rights and gender issues. Many thanks, too, to my immediate supervisor at the workplace, Mr. Benedict Tembo, for his encouragement, and my colleague Augustine Mwashingwele for his understanding while maintaining the scheduled shifts to enable me attend to my academic work.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Abstract	iv
Dedication	v
Acknowledgements	vi
List of figures	xi
List of symbols	xii
List of abbreviations	xiii
Preface	xiv
CHAPTER ONE	
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Problem Statement	4
1.3 Rationale	4
1.4 Objectives of the Study	5
1.4.1. General Objective	5
1.4.2. Specific Objectives	5
CHAPTER TWO	
METHODOLOGY	
2. Introduction	6
2.1. Research Questions	6
2.2. Research Methodology	6

2.2.1. Focus Group Discussion	6
2.2.2. Quantitative Survey	7
2.2.3. In-depth Interviews	8
2.2.4. Participant Observation	8
2.3. Sampling Procedure	9
2.4. Data Gathering	11
2.5. Data Analysis	11
2.6. Limitations	12

CHAPTER THREE

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3. Introduction	14
3.1 Conceptual and Operational Definitions	14
3.2. Main Theories	17

CHAPTER FOUR

LITERATURE REVIEW

4. Introduction	20
4.1. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)	20
4.2. Understanding Positive Youth Development in the USA	21
4.3. Youth Sourcebook on Sustainable Development	25
4.4. Human Rights and Youth in North America: A Struggle for Human Dignity	26
4.5. Youth Development Challenges in Bulgaria and Romania	28
4.6. Building a Human Rights Justice System: Australia	29
4.7. Declaration from the Second African University on Youth Development	31
4.8. Youth Development in Zambia	32

4.9. Conclusion	34
CHAPTER FIVE	
PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS	
5. Introduction	35
5.1. Focus Group Discussion	35
5.2. Quantitative Survey	39
5.3. In-depth Interview	106
CHAPTER SIX	
DISCUSSION OF RESULTS	
6. Introduction	113
6.1. Research Question 1: Youths' rights, self-worth and self-esteem	113
6.2. Research Question 2: Channels of youth rights knowledge, attitudes & practice	113
6.3. Research Question 3: Behavioural patterns needing change	116
6.4. Research Question 4: Barriers to effective communication	118
6.5. Research Question 5: Human rights as a basis for development	119
6.6. Research Question 6: How rights aid in decision-making	119
CHAPTER SEVEN	
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
7. Introduction	122
7.1. Conclusion	122
7.2. Recommendations	124
7.3. Area(s) for future research	127

Endnotes	128
Bibliography	129
Appendices:	
Appendix 1: In-depth Interviews/ focus group discussion	132
Appendix 2: Questionnaire	133
Appendix 3: United Nations HumanRights Declaration (1948)	140

List of figures

Data representing various variables under study through diagrams and tables:

Tables: 1:p.10; 2-7:pp.8-9;pp.47-48; 10; p.50; 11-12:pp. 52-53; 13:p. 55; 14-15:pp.57-58; 16:p. 60; 17:p.62; 18:p.64; 19:p.65; 20-21:pp.67-68; 22-23:pp.70-71;24-25:pp.73-74;26-27;pp.70-71;28-29:pp.79-80;30-31:pp.82-83;32-33:pp85-86;35:p.90;36:p.92;37-38:pp.94-95;39;97;40:p.99;41:p.101;42-43:pp.103-104

Charts: 1-7: pp.41-47; 8:p.9-10:pp.51-52; 11:p.54; 12-13:pp.56-57; 14:p.59; 15:pp.61; 16-17:pp.63-64; 18-19:pp.66-67; 20-21:pp.69-70; 22-23:pp.72-73; 24-25:pp.75-76; 26-27:pp.78-79;28-29:pp.81-82;30-31:pp84-85;32:p.87;33:p.89;34:p.91;35-36:pp.94-95;37:p.96;38:p.98;39:p.100;40:p.10241:p.10542:p.117

List of Symbols

@ -at

- representing number

% - percent

& - and

= - equals

+ - plus sign

X – multiplication sign

/ - division sign.

List of abbreviations

ACT –Australian Capital Territory

AIDS – Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

CEEF – Citizens Economic Empowerment Fund

CEPAL – Economic Commission for Latin America

E.g. – Example given

Etc.– Etcetera

EU – European Union

FGD – Focus Group Discussion

HIV – Human Immunodeficiency Virus

i.e. – That is

MDG – Millennium Development Goal

NGO – Non-governmental organisation

NYP – National Youth Policy

SNDP – Sixth National Development Plan

SPSS – Statistical Package of Social Sciences

UN – United Nations

UNDHR – Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UNFPA – United Nations Population Fund

UNICEF– United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund

ZNS – Zambia National Service

Preface

Ife (2008, p.228) says “a human rights discourse is, by nature, a discourse of hope, which concentrates not only on what is wrong, but also articulates a vision of what is right, of where we can be heading, of the human ideal.” Young people have a huge interest in participating in the world around them, especially if given chance to meaningfully express themselves on issues affecting them. That should be the basis for youth rights advocacy in relation to their participation in socio-economic development.

However, several serious obstacles to advocating for youths’ rights through the media and other channels remain; among them the lack of funding and political will, cultural differences, and the need for far more training for young people and others who produce materials about and for youthful audiences.

Since human rights and development are strongly interlinked, recognition of young people’s rights to participate in policy formulation and decision-making processes on issues that affect them is of vital importance. Therefore, it is, in turn, important to consider the growing awareness of human rights through the development of specific legislation, resulting from dialogue and awareness-raising.

It is true that participation brings positive outcomes; among them a sense of pride, power, self-worth and self-esteem for the youths as a result of feeling that their voices are worth listening to, that they are part of the community, and that they have achieved an understanding of others and of their own culture. These attributes can only be achieved through genuine and effective participation. This entails creating an environment in which youths are involved in every step of the process from planning to evaluation. Both at home and school, participation should really be serious and encouraged. Cultural norms which dictate that ‘youths should be seen and not heard’ must be overcome.

This research is aimed at finding the best strategies in advocating for, as well as integration of, youth rights in development projects and programmes in Zambia.