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 in the form 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, Rosinah Munsanje-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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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.