

*The Role of Social Capital in the Employability of University  
Graduates in Zambia: A Case of University of Zambia  
Graduates*

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BY

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**Thesis submitted to the University of Zambia in fulfilment of the  
requirements for the award of Doctor of philosophy in Sociology**

**The University of Zambia**

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## DECLARATION

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**APPROVAL**

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## ABSTRACT

The research presented in this thesis was designed to investigate the role of social capital in the employability of University Graduates in Zambia: A Case of University of Zambia Graduates. The study focused on the period between the years 2000 and 2015. The rationale for targeting this period was based on the following reasons. First, according to official statistics, formal employment in Zambia had declined to just about 10% of the labour force in 2001 from approximately 75% in 1975, due to two major factors, namely the economic decline the country experienced between 1975 and 1991, and the economic reforms of the new Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) Government between 1991 and 2001. Secondly, the liberalisation of higher education in Zambia, particularly university education, in the early 2000s, and the subsequent establishment of new public and private universities in the country to operate alongside the oldest universities in the country, namely the University of Zambia (UNZA) and the Copperbelt University (CBU). The thesis contends that the role that social capital plays in the employability of University of Zambia Graduates needed to be examined following the decline in formal employment coupled with the opening up of higher education in the country. Social capital was operationalised as social connections that can be used in search of jobs in the labour market. Employability was operationalised as special and individualised skills, abilities and attitudes which job seekers must possess to enable them obtain jobs in Zambia (*that is the ability to get a job in the labour market*). This research used a sequential mixed method research design to empirically examine the research problem. The study was carried out in the City of Lusaka. Accordingly, this approach incorporated both quantitative and qualitative methods in the sampling, collection and analysis of data. The study population included University of Zambia Graduates, male and female, who had graduated from the University between the years 2000 and 2015 inclusive. There was a total of **208** University of Zambia Graduates who participated in this study. The study participants were in formal employment at the time of the study. The sample was randomly picked using the University of Zambia Alumni register as a sampling frame. In addition, **16** employers or their representatives were purposefully picked from the private and public sectors, and Civil Society Organisations as informants for in-depth interviews; for richer insights into the role of social capital in the employability of University of Zambia Graduates. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used in the management and analysis of quantitative data while thematic analysis was applied in the analysis of qualitative data. The results from this study indicated that UNZA Graduates attach a lot of importance to the use of social connections in search of job opportunities in the labour market. However, the study revealed that only powerful social connections were effective in this process and were not available to everyone looking for a job. The study showed that socioeconomic status was a significant factor in the accumulation of social capital and its use in finding employment among University of Zambia Graduates, regardless of the field of study in which they specialised while studying at the University. The results also discovered that where such social connections were available, there were disparities in the effectiveness of these social connections depending on the type of people who were involved in the network. Social connections through close relatives and close friends were more effective in helping UNZA Graduates find jobs than social connections through acquaintances and potential employers. Social connections with potential employers were believed to be somehow difficult to build or create by UNZA Graduates as individuals on their own. In conclusion, this study showed that social connections facilitated by relatives and close friends through people of influence in society were more effective but depended heavily on one's social status.

## **DEDICATION**

To my children, Mwamba Samuel Machacha, Mapalo Marvis Machacha, and Annita Lulu Machacha, you are the sole reason I embarked on this journey in search of new knowledge....with love from your Dad.

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

### **1.1. Introduction**

This research study was designed to investigate the role of social capital in the employability of University of Zambia (UNZA) graduates in Zambia. The study focused on graduates who graduated from the University of Zambia between the years 2000 and 2015 inclusive. Questions concerning how people find jobs and how vacancies are filled up are claimed to be among the most under-researched topics within the labour market analyses. The extensive review of extant literature on social capital and the labour market revealed a dearth of prior studies on the role of social capital in the employability of university graduates in Africa in general and Zambia in particular. Therefore, there was a need to conduct a study on this topic and understand the extent to which university graduates use social capital to find jobs after completing their studies. In this study, the rationale for targeting the period between 2000 and 2015 was based on the following reasons. First, according to official statistics, formal employment in Zambia had declined to just about 10% of the labour force in 2001 from approximately 75% in 1975 largely due to the privatisation programme which was embarked on by the new Government of the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), as part of the market led reforms which they designed in the 1990s upon assuming office (AfDB/OECD, 2004). These MMD reforms included an initiative to slim down the oversized public service which led to massive losses of employment for many public service employees. During this same period the country experienced a further and steady decline in employment as many of the newly privatised companies started collapsing, while some of them started streamlining their labour force thereby pushing the number of the unemployed people higher (AfDB/OECD, 2004)

Second, the reforms of the MMD Government also included the liberalisation of higher education, particularly university education in Zambia, this liberalisation began in late 1990s, a situation which eventually led to the establishment of new private universities and more public universities in the country to operate alongside the University of Zambia (UNZA) and the Copperbelt University (CBU). It was against this background that this study was designed to address questions concerning how people find jobs and how vacancies are filled up, these are questions which a review of extant literature discovered to be among some of the most under-researched topics within

the labour market. In particular, the impact of graduates' social capital, which is generated through social connections or social networks, on the job search process is the single research gap most in need of filling up in the research agenda of labour market scholars in the world, and the Zambian context. According to sociological literature social capital is understood as “networks or social connections that are governed by shared norms, values, social obligations, exchanges and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups of people” (Halpern et al, 2005). In the case of employability as a variable of interest for this study, it is argued that graduate employability is more than just being able to find a job immediately after graduation, rather employability refers to the acquisition of personal attributes and achievements such as knowledge, skills, resourcefulness, resilience and abilities that make graduates more likely to be successful in gaining employment or their chosen occupations, whether paid employment or self-employment (Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, UK, 2019)

## **1.2. The Political and Socio-economic Context of Zambia**

Zambia is considered a stable country with successful democratic elections held every five years. Zambia's political stability can be assessed in terms of the number of times the country has ushered in new governments peacefully and democratically. According to the 2012 and 2017 Zambia Labour Force Surveys which were conducted by the Central Statistical Office, the political and socio-economic data indicates that Zambia became independent from the British Colonial government on 24<sup>th</sup> October, 1964. On this day, the United National Independence Party (UNIP) under the leadership of Dr. Kenneth David Kaunda was ushered in and formed the first Government of the Republic of Zambia. Geographically, Zambia is a landlocked country in Southern Africa. It covers a total area of 752,612 square kilometres, located between latitudes 8° and 18° south and longitudes 22° and 34° east. Its neighbours include the Democratic Republic of Congo to the north, Tanzania to the north-east, Malawi to the east, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia to the south and Angola to the west (CSO Labour Force Report, 2018).

### **Administration**

Zambia is located in Southern Africa and is bordered by Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Angola, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and Malawi. It is divided into ten (10) administrative provinces, namely, Central, Copperbelt, Eastern, Luapula, Lusaka, Muchinga,

Northern, North Western, Southern and Western. Currently the provinces are administratively subdivided into districts. In all Zambia has 118 districts, 150 constituencies and over 1,430 wards. Lusaka is the Capital City and seat of the government. The government comprises Central and Local Governments (CSO Labour Force Report, 2018). Each Province is administered by a Provincial Minister appointed by the President of the Republic of Zambia.

## **Population**

Zambia's population has been increasing at an annual average rate of 2.8 percent during the previous inter-censal period. The population was estimated at 7,383,097 in 1990, and increased to 9,885,591 in 2000 and to 13,092,666 in 2010. This represented a percentage increase of 33.9 percent in the 1990 - 2000 inter-censal period. Between 2000 and 2010, the percentage increase was 32.4 percent. The 2017 projected population was estimated at 16,405,229. Zambia has more people living in rural areas than urban areas. Rural population accounted for 60.6 percent in 1990, 65.3 percent in 2000 and 60.5 percent in 2010. Copperbelt and Lusaka Provinces are the highly populated provinces. In 2000, Copperbelt Province had 16.0 percent of the total population, while Lusaka Province had 14.1 percent. In 2010, Lusaka Province had 16.7 percent of the total population, while Copperbelt Province had 15.1 percent. Muchinga Province accounted for the lowest at 5.4 percent. Furthermore, Zambia has a young population. About 46.6 percent of the total population is below 15 years of age inclusive, while persons aged 65 years or older account for 2.6 percent of the total population (CSO Census Report, 2012).

## **Economy**

In terms of Zambia's economic outlook, the country achieved a middle-income status in 2011. However, Zambia's economic performance has stalled in recent years ([www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)). For instance, between 2000 and 2014, gross domestic product (GDP) averaged 6.8%. It slowed down to 3.1% in 2015, mainly attributed to falling copper prices and declines in agricultural output and hydroelectric power generation due to insufficient rains. A review of Zambia's history on the economic outlook paints the following picture; from the outset, copper played an immensely important role in the economy of Zambia. With the growth of copper-mining in the 1930s, foreign capital and multinational corporations developed one of the largest mining complexes in the world

on what was later to become Zambian territory ([www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)). By the end of the Second World War, Northern Rhodesia was among the foremost producers of copper in the world. The growth of the mining industry led to the creation of urban centres and by the time of independence, Zambia was one of the most industrialised and urbanised of Africa's new nation-states.

At independence in 1964, Zambia inherited a private sector driven economy dominated by the foreign-owned mining sector contributing almost 50% of GDP and even more of government revenues. With a Gross National Product (GNP) of close to 2 US\$ billion at independence in 1964, Zambia had one of the highest per capita incomes in independent Africa and at the time GNP was two times higher than South Korea's (World Bank 1991; McPherson 1995). Two decades later Zambia was reduced to one of the poorest countries on the African continent. From 1975 to 1991, Zambia's average per capita income declined by 2.5 per cent per annum. At the same time, the country's external debt rose from US\$ 627 million in 1970 to a staggering US\$ 7.2 billion in 1990. According to the UNDP's *Zambia Human Development Report* (1999/2001), Zambia is the only country in the world with data on the human development index available with lower human development indicators in 1997 than in 1975 (UNDP, 2001).

The defining event in Zambia's economic history was the collapse in copper export earnings *and* the government's response to this collapse. The argument here is that the UNIP government's failure to adequately address the economic decline is closely related to the government's political project and the creation of a developmental state where the main economic element was the nationalisation of the main industries. The economic decline was the defining factor that triggered the political opposition leading to the 1991 political transition.

Currently, Zambia's economy is driven by the Mining, Agriculture, Construction, Transport and Communication industries. However, recent economic data shows that the largest percentage share of the GDP is the Wholesale and Retail trade industry. Between 2015 and 2017, Zambia's real Gross Domestic Product was between K125,003.5 million and K134, 998.0 million. The Wholesale and Retail trade sector accounted for 22.9 percent in 2015, 22.1 percent in 2016 and 22.9 percent in 2017. The Mining and Agriculture industries accounted for 10.2 percent and 7.3 percent of the GDP, respectively. In 2010, the annual real GDP growth was 7.6 percent, the highest level ever recorded since 1972, while in 2017, the annual real GDP growth was 4.1 percent.

Zambia's annual inflation rate between 2015 and 2017 trended from 10.0 percent in 2015 to 18.2 percent in 2016 and to 6.5 percent in 2017 (Labour Force Survey Report, 2018).

### **1.3. Labour market trends in Zambia**

When independence and self-determination were attained in 1964, the government of Kenneth Kaunda adopted a socialist economic model, under which the then Government of the Republic of Zambia started implementing a large-scale nationalisation of the mining industry and the creation of large state owned conglomerates or parastatals such as Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines (ZCCM), Zambia Electricity and Supply Company (ZESCO) and so on, which were conveniently referred to as the parastatal sector. Under this economic structure, Zambia became one of the most heavily nationalised economies in Africa. The fundamental role of the parastatal sector was to act as the main agent of the state in fostering economic development of the country (Turok, 1981). These state controlled companies, even though not obliged, undertook government-favoured programmes such as the training and employment of Zambians. Under such an arrangement, the labour market was relatively stable; it was a stability that was guaranteed by a considerable degree of central planning by the government involving the setting up of a large civil service, as the government aimed at ensuring self-sufficiency. The parastatal sector was crucial to the government's employment creation and job security agenda. Zambians were guaranteed jobs as a way of tackling poverty via access to incomes. In the main, employment became a key development imperative and an artery of social policy. The policy of Zambianisation also reinforced the above mentioned.

The period between 1964 and 1975 was relatively prosperous as the earnings from mineral exploitation grew as copper prices increased. The labour market was also stable and very responsive to job seekers (ILO, 2008). However, in the period between 1975 and 1990 the level of real GDP per capita declined by almost 30 percent. Poor management and the inefficiencies of one-party rule soon led to the deterioration of the economy between 1975 and 1990. Excessive state controls and poor management of the economy made it difficult for the productive sector to generate adequate employment for all (World Bank, 2012). These economic events, coupled with political and social issues, led to the change of government in 1991. This change brought in the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) under the guidance of Frederick Chiluba. Beginning

in 1991 to 2001, the MMD government adopted a market-oriented economy under which they embarked on a massive privatisation of state-run companies and enterprises. Fredrick Chiluba's administration introduced a robust economic policy that focused on improving efficiency in both the public and private sectors through the creation of appropriate market conditions and implementation of market-enhancing policies. The cornerstone of this policy was liberalisation of the economy. The MMD's reform plans also included an initiative to slim down the oversized government administration and privatise government-owned companies. After an initial retrenchment of 15 000 government employees in 1992, the government halted the initiative, claiming that the social cost was too high. The government also tried to drag its feet with privatisation because of the high social and economic cost of its implementation. Nonetheless, under donor pressure it finally sold the copper giant, Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines (ZCCM) in 1999 (Bigsten & Kayazzi-Mugerwa, 2000). By 1999 the government had sold 208 of the 280 state-owned companies (Fashoyin, 2002). According to survey estimates almost two-thirds of wage employees worked for the public sector in 1993, but by 1998 this figure had dropped to 53%, due to the sale of parastatals (IMF & IDA, 2000); (Kani 2000; Mulindeti 2001). The privatization trend continued under the administration of President Levy Patrick Mwanawasa, which came to power in 2001.

While President Mwanawasa did little to change the privatisation policy, it was evident that the administration realised its disruptive effects on the social and economic fabric of the society. Indeed, as Zambia's minister of finance admitted in 2001, "In spite of the uninterrupted implementation of structural reforms, we have noted also a sharp increase in the incidence of poverty among the people of Zambia, a situation that is not politically and socially suitable" (Sampa, 2001). The economy also witnessed a steady decline in employment. Although some failing state run enterprises began to operate more effectively after being privatised, many companies collapsed and sent the number of unemployed people even higher (AfDB/OECD, 2004). Formal employment, which represented 75% of the labour force in 1975, had declined to 10.3% by 2001.

Records show that the decline in employment was more severe in such key sectors as mining, manufacturing and construction, where employment fell by proportions of between 33% and 62%.

However, employment grew in trade, finance and services, by between 16% and 58% during the same period (Kani 2000, Seshamani and Kaunga 1999). But the issue was that the majority of job increases was in the contingent employment category, also known in Zambia as casualization (Mulindeti, 2001). Formal sector employment growth was disappointing. National Accounts data show a contraction of formal employment of 15% between 1991 and 1998 (Bigsten & Kayazzi-Mugerwa, 2000). Table 1 below shows that the public sector was the only sector with growing employment levels. According to the records of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the number of job-seekers reporting at employment offices rose from 19 244 in 1990 to 34 104 by 1995 while the number of vacancies dropped from 24 291 to 11 947 (Fashoyin, 2002). Statistics from the Ministry of Labour and Social Security indicate that between 1996 and 1998 there had been almost 30 000 retrenchments and redundancies. This reflects only reported retrenchments and redundancies and is thus likely to be an underestimate (Fashoyin, 2002).

**Table 1: Paid employment by sector ('000')**

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
<b>Public</b>	159	162	171	168	174	173	176	170	168
<b>Industry</b>	142	140	136	126	108	108	95	92	83
<b>Agric.</b>	80	78	82	83	79	69	68	59	57
<b>Other</b>	162	164	158	143	136	135	140	155	157
<b>Total</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>546</b>	<b>520</b>	<b>484</b>	<b>484</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>465</b>

*Source: Central statistical Office, Quarterly Statistics (CSO, 2015)*

Concomitant with economic reforms was a public service reform programme. The main objective of this programme was to reduce the size of the public service and build capacity that was able to provide efficient, quality and cost effective service in support of economic development. Between 1997 and 2000, the size of the public service plunged from 139 000 to 101 000. Although the cut in the public service workforce represented just a 3% reduction when seen in the context of the prevailing job insecurity throughout the economy, the social effects on workers and trade unions,

as well as the operational difficulties in the employment relationship was destabilising (GRZ, 2005).

Today, Zambia is one of the many developing countries struggling to create adequate employment opportunities for its people, particularly in the formal economy (ZIPAR, 2013; 2015). The issue of employment is very important to all Zambians, and discussions about how to create jobs and reduce unemployment pervade the media, policy documents, and debates (World Bank, 2013). The problem of unemployment is particularly an urban problem and concentrated in the 15-35 age group, standing at about 27.4% in urban areas compared to just about 4.4% in rural areas (World Bank, 2008; ZIPAR, 2013; 2015).

#### **1.4. University Education in Zambia**

When Zambia became independent in 1964, the country had a total of only 107 university graduates. These were Zambians who attended university education in other countries since Zambia, as a country, had not established a university yet. According to the Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA, 2015), when the University of Zambia was established in 1966, it began with three schools: School of Education, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, and School of Natural Sciences. But as facilities developed and needs were recognised, new Schools were added: School of Law (1967), School of Engineering (1969), School of Medicine (1970), School of Agricultural Sciences (1971), School of Mines (1973), School of Business and Industrial Studies (1978, at Ndola Campus), School of Environmental Studies (1981, at Ndola Campus), and School of Veterinary Medicine (1983). In its first academic year, the university enrolled 312 students. The number climbed to 1000 in 1970, and ten years later it stood at 4000 ([www.sarua.org](http://www.sarua.org)). It was envisaged that the total enrolment would level off at about 8000 students. Since such a number could not be accommodated, academically and residentially at the main campus in Lusaka, it was decided in 1975 that the university would be developed on a federal basis and would comprise three constituent institutions; first one at Lusaka, second one at Ndola in the Copperbelt province, and the third one at Solwezi in the North Western Province. In anticipation of this development, and in response to the need to provide university training in accountancy and business administration, the University of Zambia at Ndola (UNZADO) opened in July 1978, with the establishment of a School of Business and Industrial Studies. This new

Constituent Institution of the University of Zambia was accommodated at the Riverside Campus of the Zambia Institute of Technology (ZIT) in Kitwe, where teaching and residential facilities were readily available. But it was intended that the stay in Kitwe would be only temporary, while physical planning, the mobilisation of resources and initial construction process got under way at the permanent site that had been acquired in Ndola.

However, in 1987 the Act that ushered in a federal structure for the University was reviewed and consequently it was decided to abolish the federal structure. Two Acts were passed establishing two autonomous universities, namely the University of Zambia in Lusaka, and the Copperbelt University in Kitwe.

By 1994, the two universities had a total enrolment of approximately 6,000 students – 4,592 at the University of Zambia, and 1,393 at the Copperbelt University - and cumulatively had awarded more than 16,000 degrees, diplomas and certificates by 1994 (Bloom, Cuning and Chan 2006). In January 2008, a third public university, the Mulungushi University, was established. The university, still in its development phase, started with just 1 000 students in 2008, with a projection that enrolments would reach 10 000 by 2018 (Hampwaye and Mweemba, 2012).

As at today in Zambia, university education is being provided by nine (9) public universities, and 53 private universities ([www.hea.org.zm](http://www.hea.org.zm)). The establishment of private universities in Zambia began when the Government of the Republic of Zambia repealed the University of Zambia Act of 1987 and the Copperbelt University Act of 1987 and replaced them with the University Act of 1992. This new Act was passed to provide for the establishment, regulation, control and function of public and private universities in Zambia (Zambia Legal Information Institute, 2015).

The University of Zambia, as it stands today in the midst of many other universities that have been established, is a world-class African university and the biggest of all universities in Zambia (UNZA alumini network, 2014). According to the UNZA Alumni network (2014), since its inception in 1966, it has produced more than 40,000 graduates and contributed to research and technological development for local and International communities. The current annual output of graduates is over 4,000. With a shrunken labour market and stiff competition from many other graduates coming from private universities, the question one may ask with regards to university

education is: “can the success of University of Zambia graduates on the labour market in finding jobs be attributed to their university education only?”

The value of a university degree, at least when it comes to finding a job, is not unique to any country anywhere in the world. The correlation between a university degree and the likelihood of finding a job can be seen around the world, said Hamermesh (2011), an international labour economist at the University of Texas in Austin. However, exactly how much university credentials pay off differs from country to country. According to data from Eurostat, the EU agency that tracks statistical data for member states located in Luxembourg (2012), that a university education, for instance, offers Europeans a significant boost on the labour market. In 2012, the 27 countries in the Euro zone had a total unemployment rate of about 10%, yet for university and college graduates, unemployment was about one-third lower, at 6% (Eurostat, 2012).

As extant literature on the socio-economic events of the 1990s through to 2000 in Zambia shows, these events caused far-reaching changes in both higher education and the labour market which fundamentally altered university graduates' relationships with the labour market and the structure of opportunities available to them. More universities were opened up during this period, which translated into more university graduates being offloaded onto the declining labour market in the country (Culkins, 2013).

It is overwhelmingly believed that finding a first job or simply changing jobs should be relatively easy for people with university education, because a university degree lends an advantage to job seekers who possess it over those that do not (Hamermesh, 2012). The labour market entry should be comparatively smooth for such a group of people, as they are well qualified (Blossfeld, 2008). However, far-reaching changes in both higher education and the labour market have fundamentally altered university graduates' relationships with the labour market and the structure of opportunities available to them. In Zambia, the decline in the labour market began towards the end of the Kaunda Administration, mid 1980s and the trend peaked in the 1990s when the Chiluba Administration took over the running of government in 1991 (ILO, 2008); this trend has continued to date. Competition for jobs in Zambia, like everywhere else in the world, has become intense leading to a widely held notion that university education is no longer a passport to secure employment for the 21<sup>st</sup> century graduates (Mwiya, 2015; Collins et al, 2004). Globally, the number of new

graduates is increasing, while available jobs are fewer (Culkins, 2013; Nabi and Holden, 2008). Given a situation like this, one would argue that whilst upward mobility for university graduates depends crucially on their educational qualifications, ‘other resources may be available to help them get employed in the labour market’ (Goldthorpe and Jackson, 2008). Therefore, understanding ‘other resources’ or factors that enhance chances of university graduates, University of Zambia graduates included, getting employed in the labour market becomes vital. The point of interest here is that ‘other resources,’ rather than their educational qualification,s may be available to help university graduates successfully land job opportunities in the labour market (Goldthorpe and Jackson, 2008). Such ‘other resources’ could refer to social capital. Conventional wisdom, born out of experience, informs us that close competition for jobs and contracts are usually won by those with friends in high places (Woolcock 1998).

The aim of this study was to investigate the role of social capital in form of social connections in the employability of University of Zambia graduates in the labour market in Zambia with a focus on the period between the year 2000 and 2015. In the past two decades, the concept of social capital has captured the imagination and attention of the social science researchers and policy-makers, with the number of scholarly publications in this area increasing exponentially (Halpern et al, 2005; Field, 2008). Social capital in sociological terms is understood as social connections, based on social obligations, social norms, values and exchanges among actors and these practices contribute to one’s success in life. In this definition, we can think of networks as real-world links between groups or individuals. In analysing this definition, we can think of networks of friends, family, networks of former colleagues, and so on. The concept of social capital is fundamentally concerned with resources embedded in social relations, and how individuals and communities resort to, or are constrained by, resources in their relations as they try to solve personal or collective problems (Halpern et al, 2005).

## **1.5. Statement of the Problem**

Compared with the experiences of University of Zambia Graduates in the 1990s and in earlier years, recent University of Zambia Graduates are facing a tough labour market in the wake of a rapid growth of both public and private universities, and the increase in labour market competition as a result of the increased number of graduates coming from recently established universities in Zambia. The greater number of university graduates seeking employment in Zambia, coupled with harsh economic conditions, have combined to create higher levels of graduate unemployment, thereby putting them under intense pressure to pull through in the labour market. Despite this rather negative observation, it remains the case that the labour market in Zambia, and many other countries allocates job opportunities to university graduates, not just on the basis of factors such as the type of university attended, the age of the graduate, ethnic background, and one's socioeconomic status but also on the basis of the much debated but empirically unproven social capital of job seekers in the labour market. Extant empirical literature on social capital and the labour market has provided ample, yet contradictory evidence on the role and effectiveness of social capital in form of social connections in the job search processes in many parts of the world. Whereas early research, mainly focusing on the U.S. labour market, found positive correlations between finding a job through social ties, most recent studies have reported inconclusive or at times even negative correlations. In addition, some research studies have revealed regional or country differences in the role and effectiveness of social capital in the labour market; the differences which probably could be explained by factors such the type of university one graduated from, the sex, ethnicity (tribe), or the socio-economic background of the job seekers and job search methods. Therefore, this study contributes to the existing literature by investigating the role of social capital in forms of social connections in the employability of University of Zambia graduates in the Zambian labour market. In analysing this problematic situation further, the paper points out the following aspects of the problem:

First, studies on the relationship between social capital (social connections) and finding a job in the labour market among job seekers have yielded mixed and inconsistent conclusions. Some studies indicate that social capital has a positive impact in the labour market outcomes among job seekers (Granovetter, 1973 in Easley and Kleinberg, 2010); Bartus Tamás ,1998), whilst others indicate that there is neither a discernible influence nor a negative influence of social capital on

the labour market for job seekers (Franzen & Hangartner, 2006; Portes, 1998; Schuller, T., Baron, S. & Field, J., 2008). Therefore, in order to clarify these seemingly contradictory findings, this study was needed in order to obtain a clearer picture of the extent to which social capital contributes to job seekers' success in the labour market.

Second, a large amount of empirical literature on social capital and the labour market shows that most of the studies on the role of social capital in the labour market have been conducted mainly in developed countries, including the United States of America (USA), Europe, Asia and Australia (Bram Lancee, 2012; Matloob Piracha et al, 2013; Stone, Gray, & Hughes, 2003). Most of these previous studies have tended to focus on migrants, while others have tended to take a general focus of job seekers without any specific reference to their educational qualifications and social capital plays a role in helping them to find employment. In addition to this problematic situation, much of the reviewed empirical literature indicates a shortage of studies on social capital and the labour market in Africa in general and Zambia in particular.

Third, in some studies it is generally observed that the success of university graduates in the labour market depends crucially on their educational qualifications; however, this argument may not be factually true in today's competitive labour market. In Zambia, with a shrinking labour market since the 1990s, and the numerous private and public universities that have been established in the last two decades, and which are fully operational, 'other methods and resources' may be needed to help university graduates successfully obtain job opportunities in the labour market (Goldthorpe and Jackson, 2008: 105). Such 'other resources' could refer to social capital, that is, people's 'involvement in social networks, and possibilities for less structured contacts, which can serve as channels of both information and influence' in achieving one's goals (Goldthorpe, 1987: 99). In the current state of affairs in Zambia, it has become very common to hear this aphorism among job seekers in the labour market; that "*It's not what you know, but **who** you know.*" It is wisdom born of experience that close competition for jobs and contracts are usually won by those with connections to people in advantageous places or positions. In line with this observation, it is not clear how University graduates in Zambia use social connections to get jobs in the labour, this is one of the previously overlooked and understudies research issues in the social capital research. This is an important issue that requires investigation. The implication of ignoring the plausible role

of social capital in the labour market in Zambia is that it might be a missed opportunity to generate knowledge about the concept of social capital as a driving force of social behaviour in the labour market in Zambia, and to understand whether or not it can undermine meritocratic action and efficient decision making (Adler and Kwon, 2002; Portes, 1998; Quibria, 2003).

In summarising the statement of problem, the review of extant literature for this study has revealed a gap in previous studies on the role of social capital among job seekers in the labour. This gap constitutes the following issues, first, inconsistencies and mixed conclusions on the role of social capital in the labour market among job seekers, second, extensive research on social capital and the labour market has been done elsewhere in the world, mainly in America; Europe; Australia and Asia but very little to nothing in the African and Zambian contexts, third, how university graduates use social capital to get jobs in the labour market had been one of the previously overlooked or understudied issues in social capital research, and finally in view of increased competition for job opportunities in the labour market in Zambia, due to the declining labour market and the rising number of university graduates in the country, this research was necessary to address this gap and contribute to the body of knowledge on the role of social capital in the labour market. Therefore, using a sequential mixed method research design, this research was carried out to investigate the role of social capital in form of social connections in the employability of University of Zambia graduates in Zambia with a focus on the period between 2000 and 2015.

## **1.6. Study Objectives**

### **1.6.1. Main objective**

- The main objective of this research was to investigate the role of social capital in the employability of University of Zambia Graduates in the labour market in Zambia by targeting Graduates who were already in fulltime formal employment from the year 2000 to 2015, the year when this study was instituted. In order to address this primary objective for this study, specific issues were clearly outlined in form of specific research objectives. The specific objectives stated below were concrete steps that were used in addressing the aim of this study.

### **1.6.2. Specific objectives**

- i. To investigate the types of job search methods which University of Zambia Graduates use in finding jobs in the labour market in Zambia.
- ii. To investigate how social connections influence the employability of University of Zambia Graduates in the labour market in Zambia.
- iii. To assess the effectiveness of social connections in the employability of University of Zambia Graduates in the labour market in Zambia.
- iv. To investigate how the use of social connections among female and male University of Zambia Graduates vary in the labour market.
- v. To assess the competitiveness of a University of Zambia Degree in the labour market since the year 2000.

### **1.7. Research Questions**

- i. What is the role of social connections in the employability of University of Zambia Graduates in the labour market in Zambia?
- ii. What type of job search methods do University of Zambia Graduates use in finding jobs in the labour market in Zambia?
- iii. How important is the use of social connections in the employability of University of Zambia Graduates
- iv. How effective are social connections in the employability of University of Zambia Graduates in Zambia, and how competitive is the University of Zambia Degree in the labour market today?
- v. How does the use of social connections in the labour market vary among female and male University of Zambia Graduates?

## **1.8. Significance of the Study**

The findings from this study are significant in the sense that the report has provided insight concerning social relations that University of Zambia Graduates use in the labour market in Zambia, and the extent to which they rely on such relations work in view of the changing labour market conditions for job seekers. In learning more about the role of social capital in the labour market outcomes among University of Zambia Graduates, findings of this study would lead to a better understanding of the impact of the much talked about social connections in the labour market and the pervasive use of such connections to find jobs in Zambia. This study helps in improving the job search behaviours among job seekers (University Graduates) and employers. Extant literature on social capital shows that social capital is of great importance in the wellbeing of individuals in society. Some aspects of the concept, such as inter-personal trust, are clearly desirable in themselves while other aspects are more instrumental in people's successes in their lives (Bankston and Zhou 2002). For instance, optimism, satisfaction with life, perceptions of government institutions and political involvement of people in national or community matters all stem from the fundamental dimensions of social capital (Narayan and Cassidy 2001).

In addition, information from this study would be crucial to our acquisition of knowledge of the concept of social capital and in learning that social capital can be charged with a range of potential beneficial effects including: facilitation of more efficient functioning of the labour market in Zambia; and improvements in the effectiveness of institutions in our society in as far as the recruitment and selection of job seekers is concerned. Feedback from this study could also be crucial in identifying a range of policy questions that can be informed by social capital data in such areas as employment, education and training for employers in the country so that social connections do not displace meritocracy in the recruitment and selection of employees for job openings. Understanding the interaction between the social and the economic characteristics and dynamics, as well as the public and private practices is crucial to more effective policy formulation, and recruitment and selection practices. Findings in this research also show that participation in voluntary organisations or associations and other civic activities both enhances people's skills and accords them opportunities to establish ties with other people. Finally, the study is very significant in understanding the strength of association between social capital, and educational and employment successes.

## **1.9. Scope and limitations of the study**

### **1.9.1. Scope of the study**

This sections sets the boundaries within which this studies was carried out. It defines all aspects that were considered in the study. The scope of this study covered specific parameters under which the study was conducted. The parameters were based on the following three central aspects:

*Knowledge:* Every study covers a given area of knowledge. This study endeavoured to investigate how social capital influences labour market outcomes among University of Zambia Graduates in the current era since the year 2000; It examined the extent to which social connections have been influencing the employability of University of Zambia Graduates in the labour market since 2000; and lastly, but not least, the study examined the effectiveness of such social connections where and when they are available among University of Zambia Graduates, and how they enhance their ability to secure job opportunities. In a nutshell, the focus of this study was on the positive side of social capital and how it can be used for positive ends and not the negative side or dark side of it. What is already known in the extant literature on the role of social capital in the labour market is that social capital works for various categories of job seekers in the labour market except university graduates. Therefore, the study endeavoured to generate a body of knowledge on the role of social capital in the labour in terms of the extent to which university graduates use social capital to find employment in the labour in spite of their educational qualifications in Zambia.

*Geographical delimitation and target population:* Every study is delimited in terms of geographical coverage. This study was conducted in Zambia in the City of Lusaka in Lusaka Province. The target population in this study were University of Zambia graduates, female and male, who had graduated from the University of Zambia between 2000 and 2015, who were in formal employment in the formal sector. The choice of this period, 2000 - 2015, was based on the 1991 social, economic and political events in Zambia which ushered in a new government and a new economic system. This was the time when Zambia witnessed a massive and drastic economic transformation from a planned economy to a market-led economy. The effects of this economic overhaul were still being felt at the time of this study, particularly in the labour market. This was also a period when the education sector went through massive transformation involving the establishment of more public and private universities to operate alongside the University of

Zambia, and the Copperbelt University. The study focused exclusively on University of Zambia Graduates who had completed the studies at the University between 2000 and 2015.

*Theory:* This study was guided by the social capital theory which formed the theoretical framework of this study. The social capital theory took a bias toward the *network perspective* of social capital. This perspective argues that social capital can be divided into three dimensions; *bonding, bridging and linking social capital*. The basic explanation of these dimensions is that social capital depends on an investment in relationships, and for this investment to occur people need to trust each other and to be able to reciprocate. Coleman (1988) considers that one form of social capital is “obligations and expectations”, which are based on trustworthiness and reciprocity. If someone does me a favour, that person trusts that I will return it in due time. ‘Credit slips’ are therefore pending between us: I have an “obligation” to that person, and that person has an “expectation.”

*Time:* This study was limited in terms of time. This research commenced in January 2015 and was estimated to be concluded before the end of 2018.

### **1.9.2. Limitations of the study**

This research on the role of social capital in the employability of UNZA Graduates encountered a number of limitations ranging from financial constraints to methodological challenges and have been outlined as follows:

First and foremost, funding is a very critical component in a research because it can influence how wide the study would be in terms of geographical coverage, the size of the sample and also the time the study can take. This study suffered from severe financial inadequacy which hampered the collection of data from a larger sample of respondents than the one that was taken in the study. This lack of finances was addressed by restricting the study to the city of Lusaka. It was fulfilling to note that, Lusaka, being the national capital, is a region that boasts of having more economic activities than other regions.

Second, a review of empirical literature for this study faced a lack of prior research studies on the issues of social capital and the labour market in Zambia. There was literally no relevant literature

on social capital and also the labour that could feed into this study. Literature review is a critical component in any research because it helps in laying the foundation for understanding the research problem being investigated clearly. Nevertheless, much as this lack of prior studies on social capital and the labour market in Zambia posed a big challenge in better understanding the research problem, it still served this researcher an opportunity to see a gap or a niche in extant literature and thereby providing a golden opportunity and the need for a study on social capital and labour market in relation to university graduates in Zambia.

Third, the sample of UNZA Graduates for this study was drawn from the updated register of the University of Zambia Alumni (2018). The register had been in existence for four years at the time this researcher accessed it. It was used as a sampling frame. While UNZA alumni had captured as many UNZA Graduates as possible, the register was skewed towards graduates who had graduated from the year 2010 onwards. In addition to this limitation, the generalisability of the findings was limited to University of Zambia Graduates in the period under investigation. The target population for the study consisted of UNZA Graduates who were residents of Lusaka and in formal employment at the time of the study, and so, the sample was limited to Lusaka region only.

Fourth and finally, considering the nature of this study which focused on the use of social connections to get employed among UNZA Graduates between 2000 and 2015, the empirical evidence of the use of social connections by UNZA Graduates relied on what we may term as “self-reporting” by the respondents. Self-reported data is limited by the fact that it can be difficult to verify independently. In other words, you have to take what people say in the study, whether in interviews, focus group discussions or on questionnaires. One of the major lapses of self-reporting is referred to as “attribution,” this is the act of attributing positive events or outcomes to one’s own agency, but attributing negative events or outcomes to external forces. The findings in this study may have suffered from this limitation whereby some respondents may not have honestly reported themselves as having been helped by social connections to get their jobs and instead reported that they found the jobs by themselves, without anyone’s help. However, this limitation was somehow taken care of by conducting interviews with employers.

## **CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF EMPIRICAL LITERATURE**

### **2.1. Introduction**

A doctoral dissertation is meant to be an original research and, consequently, it is important to consult the extant literature to see what has been done already on the topic under study. It is a way of helping to build an argument for addressing a particular problem, and it is also a way of finding information that might be helpful for conducting the research. The review of extant literature for this research is made up of a critical summary of published research literature relevant to social capital and the labour market, a topic under consideration for this research. Its purpose was to create familiarity with the current thinking and research on social capital and the labour market, and was meant to justify this study into previously overlooked or understudied issues on social capital and the labour market in Zambia. The literature was analysed at three levels, namely the global context, regional context focusing on the African situation, and lastly but not least, the Zambian context.

The purpose of section was:

- i. To describe and evaluate different methodologies that had been used in other studies that investigated the role and influence of social capital in the economic, political and social aspects of the patterns of people's interactions and social relationships in society.
- ii. To describe and evaluate the findings and conclusions which were drawn in previous research studies on social capital and its use in the labour market and other socio-economic activities, and also to evaluate the different theories that have been used to explain the role and influence of social capital in the life of different actors in society.

### **2.2. Global Context**

Granovetter (1973; 1974; 1995) in the United States of America (USA), a sociologist at Stanford University, is best known for his theory of 'The Strength of Weak Ties,' which focuses on the spread of information in social networks. Granovetter's work on the 'strength of weak ties' in the area of social capital laid the cornerstone for sociological literature on social capital and the labour

market. As part of his PhD thesis research in the late 1960s, Granovetter interviewed people who had recently changed employers to learn how they discovered their new jobs (David Easley and Jon Kleinberg, 2010). In keeping with earlier research, he found that many people gathered information leading to their current jobs through personal contacts. But perhaps more strikingly, these personal contacts were often described by interviewing subjects, as acquaintances rather than close friends. This is a bit surprising: your close friends presumably have the most motivation to help you when you are between jobs; so why is it that your more distant acquaintances are the ones who are actually supposed to be thanked for crucial information leading to your new job?

The answer that Granovetter proposed to this question is striking in the way it links two different perspectives on distant friendships — one structural, focusing on the way these friendships span different portions of the full network; and the other interpersonal, considering the purely local consequences that follow from a friendship between two people being either strong or weak. He was influenced by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century work of Stanley Milgram on social networks, and launched a study himself in the late 1960s and early 1970s of job seekers in Boston, USA. Granovetter's paper has been hailed as one of the most influential papers on social networks which generated abundant research studies in many disciplines.

In this study, over 80% of subjects found a job through a contact with who they 'did not have a close relationship'; more jobs were located via 'friends of "friends"' than directly through close friends. Weak ties (acquaintances) are more likely to be 'bridges' to outside networks than strong ties (emotionally close friends and family), and are, therefore, vital to gaining new information and ideas. Weak ties provide access to information and resources beyond those available in their social circle. Granovetter's study found that weak ties were more important in gaining information about new opportunities, since many strong ties knew the same people and had the same information as one another. Individuals with few weak ties will be deprived of new information from distant parts of the social system and will be confined to the provincial news and views of their close friends. However, individuals tend to consult with strong ties before acting on information received from weak ties, because strong ties tend to be more motivated to assist and are more easily available.

In conclusion, according to Granovetter, what matters in getting ahead is not how close you are to those you know but how many people you know to whom you are not particularly close. Social systems lacking in weak ties will be fragmented and incoherent, as new ideas spread slowly and groups separated by race, ethnicity, or geography will not have the same access to information. Cultural diffusion is made possible by small cohesive groups who share a culture that is not entirely closed and, therefore, can potentially share ideas via weak ties.

In a similar study which was conducted in the USA in 2003 by Michael B. Aguilera from Rice University and Douglas S. Massey from the University of Pennsylvania on Social Capital and the Wages of Mexican Migrants, in which the researchers set out to develop and test hypotheses about the ways in which network ties influence wages and the circumstances under which social capital assumes greater or lesser importance in the determination of migrant earnings. They tested the hypotheses using data on male Mexican migrants gathered by the Mexican Migration Project (MMP). At the time of this study by the two researchers mentioned above, the Mexican Migration Project had been running since 1987 where surveys were conducted annually on 4-8 Mexican migrant sending communities. The communities were selected using Simple Random Methods. The results of the study suggest that social capital had both indirect and direct effects on the wages earned by Mexican immigrants. For instance, in terms of the direct effect of social capital, it was discovered that having friends and relatives with migratory experience improved the efficiency and effectiveness of the job search which led to the yield of better jobs and higher wages (i.e. by providing greater information by those that had migrated much earlier). Indirectly, the research discovered that social capital influenced how a job was obtained and whether or not it was in the formal sector. Given their vulnerable position in the U.S. labour market, the researchers argued that undocumented migrants were more dependent on social capital, received higher returns for their social capital, and they benefited from different forms of social capital more than documented migrants. These results confirmed and extended the leading tenets of social capital theory and underscore the importance of social networks to the understanding of migrant job search and earnings.

Furthermore, drawing on social ties to relatives and friends who had migrated before, the researchers argued that prospective migrants gained access to knowledge, assistance, and other

resources that facilitated their international movement. Although ties of kinship and friendship, in and of themselves, provided few benefits to prospective migrants, once someone in an interpersonal network migrated, social ties to that person were *transformed* into a resource that could be used by friends and relatives to gain access to foreign employment. As Coleman (1990) notes, "social capital is *created* when the relations among persons *change* in ways that facilitate action." Given the norms of reciprocity, bounded solidarity, and enforceable trust that are associated with kinship and friendship, migrants draw on the social capital embedded in these relationships to lower the costs and risks of international movement and raise the benefits of foreign employment. The core benefit associated with foreign employment, of course, is earnings, and social connections to people with current or past migratory experience had been shown to increase foreign wages, at least those received by male migrants.

It was learned in this study that friends and relatives may assist migrants by providing them with useful information: where to look for jobs, how to present themselves to employers, how to behave on the job, what wages to ask for, and which sorts of jobs and worksites to avoid. If they have regular access to a large and diffuse network of weak, as well as strong social ties, they may also be in a better position to hear about job openings and employment opportunities. For example, Massey and colleagues (1987) found that immigrants from one Mexican community met each Sunday in a Los Angeles park to watch a community-sponsored soccer team compete. In addition to enjoying the match, townspeople gossiped, socialized, and exchanged information, thus providing migrants with a regular venue for the dissemination of information about employment opportunities.

Further analysis of the findings in this study, the research showed that social capital works in theoretically expected ways, as most Mexican migrants in this study clearly participated in and benefited from social networks. Participation in these social systems translates into improved labour market outcomes reflected in higher earnings, above and beyond what individual human capital endowments would provide. Aguilera and Massey's study showed that both documented and undocumented migrants received substantial economic rewards from their social capital, although the mechanisms differed between the two groups. They discovered that since the wages of both documented and undocumented migrants were affected by social capital, the findings

highlighted an important characteristic of the U.S. labour market that migrants encounter: migrant workers have unequal access to labour market information. Some Mexican migrant workers are privy to private information, which provides them with advantages such as increased access to jobs within the formal labour market. Regardless of their human capital endowments, other migrant workers without such information earn lower wages. Ironically, since some forms of social capital appear related to time spent in the U.S., undocumented migrants, the group most in need of the benefits of social capital, possess less social capital than documented migrants. However, for those possessing it, social capital constitutes a particularly important, indeed crucial, resource for achieving mobility in the U.S. labour market.

In a nutshell, the researchers were able to argue that social capital indeed had both direct and indirect effects on the wages of both documented and undocumented migrants. However, the indirect effect of job search technique is significant only for undocumented migrants. For them, access to social capital increases the odds of getting a job through friends or relatives, which, in turn increases the probability of formal sector employment, which finally increases the U.S. wages they ultimately earn. In other words, for undocumented migrants, entering the formal labour market is a critical juncture. Their analysis showed that 29% of undocumented Mexican workers were employed within the informal labour market as compared with only 70% of documented Mexican workers. Jobs within the informal labour market were of low quality and offering few benefits, low wages, job instability, and little upward mobility. However, since social capital works indirectly to increase wages by leading undocumented migrants to jobs within the formal sector, undocumented migrants finding jobs through friends and family members were able to escape the informal labour market. Without the assistance of social capital, many superior jobs located within the formal sector would not be available to undocumented migrants.

Finally, the researchers in this study concluded that the direct effects of social capital were generally stronger, more consistent, and more manifold for undocumented migrants than their legal counterparts. Because of their precarious legal status, undocumented migrants were limited in their ability to market themselves. They were blocked from actively gathering labour market information and freely seeking jobs. In other words, labour market information cannot and does

not flow freely between potential employees and employers, as undocumented migrants could not effectively relay their information to all potential employers without jeopardizing themselves.

In Australia, Matloob Piracha et al (2013) conducted a longitudinal research study in Australia in which they analysed the role of social capital on immigrants' labour market outcomes. They used the "principal component analysis" (PCA) to build an index of social networks and explore its impact on the probability of getting a job and on wage levels using the Households Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (Wilkins et al, 2013). In their analysis, they found a positive effect of social capital on migrants' employment outcomes and wages, especially for women. Distinguishing employment into blue and white-collar jobs, they discovered that social capital only affects the probability of getting a white-collar job. These results suggest that promoting opportunities to create social capital has a beneficial effect on migrants' integration in the host country (Wilkins et al, 2013).

In another study which was done by Lancee Bram (2012) on immigrants' performance in the labour market in reference to bonding and bridging social capital, as well as their ability to find jobs, the analysis showed that one of the approaches to explain the labour market outcomes of immigrants is to use social capital theory. In this study the researcher used German and The Netherlands as case studies. Social capital implies that people well equipped with social resources – in the sense of their social network and the resources of others they can call upon – succeed better in attaining their goals (Flap & Völker, 2004). In other words, one's social network can be used as capital. Researchers have suggested that possessing social capital contributes to economic outcomes such as access to the labour market (Aguilera, 2002; Granovetter, 1995), wages (Massey and Michael, 2003; Boxman et al, 1991) and occupational status (Lin et al, 1999; Lin et al, 1981; Franzen & Hangartner, 2006).

Especially for immigrants, social networks are important to make headway on the labour market. In Germany, for example, almost 50 per cent of the immigrants find their job through networks; this percentage is even higher for the young and the low-educated (for German native residents, this percentage is around 30; see Drever & Hoffmeister, 2008). The use of networks may be an efficient strategy for job-seeking in the face of potential discrimination (Mouw, 2002).

Furthermore, social capital provides access to host country-specific human capital and job opportunities.

However, other research studies suggest that, although immigrants rely heavily on their social network for finding a job, this ends up in lower-quality jobs (Kazemipur, 2006; Falcon & Melendez, 2001) and lower wages (Green, Tigges & Diaz, 1999). By 1992, Wilson (1992) had argued in “*The truly disadvantaged*” that living in an isolated ghetto has two negative consequences for urban blacks: the loss of role models and exclusion from job networks. Stainbach (2008) finds in the United States that using interethnic contacts reduces the ethnic matching of employees, but he does not find any difference in wages with regard to the different types of contacts used. Reviewing the empirical literature on social capital, Mouw (2006) concludes that the major part of the effect of social capital on finding a job reflects the tendency for similar people to become friends. According to McPherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook (2001), ethnic homophily is the biggest divide in social networks.

A possible approach to better understand these diverging findings is to examine the different forms of social capital. Recent discussions on social capital distinguish between ‘bonding’ and ‘bridging’ (Gitell & Vidal, 1998; Putnam 2000; Woolcock & Narayan, 2000; Leonard & Onyx, 2003; Schuller 2007). Loosely defined, bonding refers to within-group connections, while bridging social capital refers to between- group connections. It has been argued that returns depend on the different forms of social capital that people possess (Beugelsdijk & Smulders, 2003; Putnam, 2000; Portes, 2000). It is often assumed that, whereas bonding social capital is to ‘get by’, bridging social capital is to ‘get ahead’ (Narayan, 1999; Putnam 2000). The dilemma is perhaps more accurately described by Flap and Völker (2004: 15): ‘A relevant question regarding social capital is to what extent do ties remain within social groups, or to what extent are they also crosscutting and connect the resource-rich with the resource-poor?’ In other words, to better understand the returns of social capital, it is necessary to tear apart its different forms. Distinguishing between different forms of social capital seems especially important for immigrants. For instance, bridging social capital is expected to yield positive returns for immigrants. Building bridges to the native population is, therefore, an effective strategy to gain access to host country specific resources and to circumvent

discrimination. Researchers find indeed that interethnic relations can be associated with better labour market outcomes (Kanas, Van Tubergen & Van der Lippe, 2009; Lancee & Hartung, 2012).

Second, the 'lack' of returns may not be that straightforward with respect to bonding. Ethnic minorities are repeatedly characterised as having a tight social network (Fernandez-Kelly, 1995). This can have advantages, as well as disadvantages. On the one hand, networks of immigrants are often characterised as being isolated and, therefore, hindering economic integration (Portes & Sensenbrenner, 1993; Portes, 1998, 1995b). That is, being embedded into ethnic networks may impede successful upward mobility due to social obligations, pressure to conformity or downward levelling norms. On the other hand, immigrants' social networks are often said to provide security, high solidarity and opportunities, for example with respect to the ethnic economy (Menjivar, 2000; Patacchini & Zenou, 2008). For instance, family-based and ethnic-based networks are found to be contributing to the performance of immigrants on the labour market (Sanders, Nee & Sernau, 2002; Greve & Salaff, 2005).

In Australia there is an emphasis upon paid work as a primary means for achieving economic independence, alleviating poverty and avoiding welfare dependency. Much of this attention focuses on an individual's skills and attributes (human capital), or upon characteristics of the labour market. In this study, the researchers (Stone et al, 2003) extended these analyses, by investigating the extent to which an individual's 'stock' of social capital relates to labour force outcomes, over and above more well established determinants. In particular, the study examined how family and kinship networks, friends and neighbours relate to individual labour market outcomes, compared with the role of civic ties and institutional networks. Using data collected from a national random sample of 1500 Australians, they used both a network and typology approach to social capital to investigate the relative impact of trust, bonding, bridging and linking relationships upon labour force status and successful job search method. In doing this, the researchers were able to examine what social capital adds to established understandings of labour market determinants and job search.

In this study it was found that social capital does matter, but that its effects are uneven, and in some cases may reflect existing inequalities in the labour market. For example, whereas family and other informal relationships are relied on by those with more limited involvement in or access

to paid work, professional contacts act to support and reinforce the labour market status of those with the strongest attachment to paid work. These findings lend some support for Granovetter's (1973, 1974) strength of weak ties theory - but show that the relative advantage of weak ties is not universal.

In their analysis, Stone et al (2003) concluded their findings by pointing to several key conclusions. First, the analysis indicated that social capital does have some role to play in determining labour force status, but perhaps not in ways that might be expected. For example, their second key finding was that whereas trust is often thought to be the aspect of social capital that is critical to achieving a range of outcomes, they discovered it was the characteristics of networks that are more important in predicting labour force status and job search method.

These findings were in part consistent with the 'strength of weak ties' theory (Granovetter 1973, 1974). Most notably, professional contacts were an important means of finding employment. However, this was not the case for everyone. In fact, the paper suggests that the 'strength of close ties' is particularly important for those with limited social capital and more vulnerable ties to the labour market, where friends and family were relatively important in finding employment.

Restated in terms of the bonding, bridging and linking social capital classification, these findings point to the important role both bonding and bridging forms of social capital can play in determining labour force outcomes. Bonding ties appear more important for those with limited connections, whereas for others bridging ties (such as professional ties) are useful. An exception relates to network diversity; here, informal networks comprised members with diverse levels of educational qualifications appear to increase the bridging capabilities of social capital, and increase the likelihood of successful job search through friends and family.

However, what they also found was that it is not one type of network or network characteristic that alone predicts labour force outcomes. Rather, their findings suggest that it is the combination of various types of social capital that is important in determining labour market outcomes rather than the core dimensions of social capital in informal, generalised and institutional realms treated separately.

Related to this was a further finding. It was that when one uses the social capital typology, you would find an interaction effect between a person's socio-economic status and the types of social capital they have, and the impact of these two factors on labour market outcomes.

Pursuing this argument further, the researchers were able to draw a final key point. While social capital does relate to both the labour force status and the job search methods people use, it does this unevenly (Stone et al, 2003). Social capital may act to mirror or exacerbate existing inequalities or differences between people from higher and lower socioeconomic circumstances, in terms of their labour force outcomes. As already mentioned, it is likely that the use of friends and family connections by those from low socio-economic backgrounds for finding jobs is less likely to result in high quality work, than for those from higher socio-economic circumstances, who would be more likely to use professional contacts. Similarly, those out of the labour force are less likely to have existing ties to paid work.

In conclusion, the study indicated that the extent of these differences and inequalities is a topic worthy of further research. What this paper has shown is that people's social capital varies, and that these different social capital profiles relate to different types of labour force outcomes.

In a study conducted by Bartus Tamás (1998), titled *Social Capital and Earnings Inequalities in Hungary on school leavers who completed secondary vocational education in 1998 who were living in large cities*. This research used both longitudinal design, on one hand, and cross-sectional design, using retrospective network questions, on the other.

This research provided important insights about the conditions under which social networks contribute to inequalities. According to this study, the use of personal contacts can be evaluated in both negative and positive terms. On the one hand, personal contacts can be considered as an irrational phenomenon. The existence of friendship ties creates incentives to hire a friend instead of even better but personally not known other applicants (*particularism*). On the other hand, the use of contacts is a necessary consequence of an important information problem in labour markets: employers are uncertain about the abilities and the prospective behaviour of applicants and these uncertainties are reduced by informal recruitment (*intensive search*).

Tamas (1998), argued that the recent history of post-communist countries shows the importance of understanding the causes of network effects. The state-socialist political and economic system created a society where arranging things through personal contacts was necessary to promote individual wellbeing. Although the transition to capitalism eliminated the particular political and economic system that induced networking, inherited contacts and the culture of networking might be useful to cope with a problem induced by the transition itself: the decrease in living conditions. Additionally, due to changes in educational and labour market institutions, firms find themselves in a more uncertain labour market. Not surprisingly, based on the ideas of path-dependence, the general hypothesis was put forward that network resources are extremely useful in postcommunist societies.

The research was restricted to the Hungarian labour market. In order to assess the importance of personal contacts, the researcher posed two questions. The first question was whether network resources were helpful to find job opportunities through personal contacts. The second question was whether better jobs can be obtained through personal contacts than through other channels. The research questions were examined using data about young job seekers who left vocational secondary schools in 1998 in Hungary. The data were from a survey with two measurement points. Data about network resources, job finding methods, and several labour market outcomes were collected in the period starting with December 1998 and ending with February 1999. The research design was limited to the extent that it did not include a survey of firms, which would increase the quality of firm and job level information.

The *first research question* was whether *network resources increase the chances of finding a job through either a high status contact or through an employee referral*. The study found two processes that work in opposite directions. On the one hand, high status family members decrease the probability of finding a job through personal contacts. On the other hand, among those who found a job through contacts, high status family members are helpful to find a job through high status contacts. These opposite effects imply that *network resources do not have an influence on the chances of finding a job through high status persons or employee referrals*.

The *second research question* was whether *high status contacts or employee referrals help one to find a good job*. The findings were fully consistent with accumulated evidence on contact effects.

According to this research in Hungary (Tamas, 1998), personal contacts in general do not lead to better jobs than formal job finding methods, but they often lead to better jobs than direct job finding methods. The effects of personal contacts become apparent when we take into account the characteristics of the contact person. Both high status contacts and employee referrals are helpful to find jobs in firms and occupations which are likely to provide long-term earnings advantages. Additionally, high status contacts inform job seekers about opportunities that are associated with better earnings opportunities. Finally, employee referrals increase the chances of keeping the job.

In China, in 2002 a study was done by John Knight and Linda Y. Yueh (Oxford University, Department of Economics, 2002) on the role of social capital in the labour market. The Chinese variant of social capital is known as *guanxi*. It is argued that the social relationships that constitute *guanxi* are pervasive in both economic and non-economic life.

The main objective in this study was to discover whether social capital plays a role in the urban labour market in China. The researchers of this study used the data set to test their hypotheses based on an urban household survey designed by the Institute of Economics, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in collaboration with foreign scholars, and conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics of China (NBS) in February/March 2000; it pertains mainly to 1999. The total sample size was 4,000 urban households. The survey covered six provinces and 13 cities. The provinces were Beijing (chosen to represent the four cities that are independently administered municipal districts), Liaoning (to represent the northeast), Henan (to represent the interior), Gansu (to represent the northwest), Jiangsu (to represent the coast), and Sichuan (to represent the southwest). The capital of each province was chosen as a city within the sampling frame – a total of three cities were chosen in Sichuan and Henan and two in each of the others, in addition to Beijing (Knight and Linda, 2002).

They found persuasive evidence in support of their basic hypothesis. Both their measure of social network and their measure of associational social capital, Communist Party membership, raise the incomes of employed persons. Social capital appears to be important by comparison with human capital. Remarkably, one additional reported contact contributes more to earned income than an additional year of schooling. It is possible that their measures are correlated with unobserved personal characteristics, such as sociability. However, the researchers argued that it was likely that

such personal characteristics enhance income through their effects in expanding social networks and encouraging associational memberships. Thus networks and memberships play an economic role – which accords with the findings of others who have investigated social networks and reached a similar conclusion (for instance, see Granovetter 1995 [1974] and Rebeck 2000).

Furthermore, their secondary objective was to identify the mechanisms by which social capital has its effects. They discovered a potential role for it both in an administered labour system, where jobs are allocated and wages are institutionally determined, and in a market-oriented system – especially an underdeveloped one – where labour market information is poor and transaction costs are high. However, it should be noted that researchers' measure of network is more important for the middle than for the youngest or the oldest age cohorts, possibly because the forms of social capital relevant to the other two groups are different: parental Communist Party membership was important under central planning and parental social networks may be important for labour market entrants. It was also established in the study that social capital was more valuable for the majority of workers who have never been retrenched than for the minority who have recently been. The latter appear to be in a tough labour market in which jobs which match their skills, or for which their social networks can help, are very scarce. In addition, the researchers showed that social networks appear to be more beneficial in the private sector than in the state or urban collective sectors. Since this is the rapidly expanding sector, the expectation must be that *guanxi* will continue to play an important role in the Chinese labour market (Knight and Linda, 2002).

In the final analysis, the researchers presented that their study made a contribution to the literature on social capital, both for China and the world at large. For China, it is the first to create and use a successful quantitative measure of social network. Placed within the social capital literature generally, it is unusual in providing an individual-level measure, in contrast to community-level or binary measures of whether an individual has or does not have social capital. Nevertheless, it was pointed out that future researches should explore the multiple facets and dimensions of social capital.

### **2.3. African Context**

The extensive review of extant literature on the role of social capital in the employment of job seekers in Africa revealed a dearth of prior studies on this subject. However, this researcher was able to find a few studies which this researcher could relate to, on social capital, that had been done in Africa. For instance, Anthony Gewer carried out a study in South Africa for his PhD on the features of social capital that enhance the employment outcomes of Further Education Training Colleges (FET) in 2009, in which he sought to problematise the notions of bonding and bridging social capital in the South African context and understand how social capital operates for young people who pass through the FET College system. This research took into consideration the structural inequalities in the South African society, and made an attempt to assist in better understanding the interaction between vocational education and the economy in a developing context and also in exploring the factors that enhance the employment outcomes of young people.

It was highlighted in this research that job creation remains a critical challenge for South Africa. Despite strong achievements in macro-economic stability and increases in employment, the growing labour force had outstripped the capacity of the labour market to absorb young people. The state of the country's skills base, rendered inadequate by the legacy of apartheid, contributed to sustained inequalities in the labour market. This had an impact on the capacity of the economy to grow in an increasingly competitive global environment. In this context, Vocational Education and Training (VET) is viewed as an important mechanism for building the necessary intermediate technical skills to support key sectors of the economy. However, international experience demonstrates that expanding the VET system and developing human capital more broadly would not, in itself, lead to increased job creation. The alignment of skills supply and demand can only be achieved through a well-developed understanding of the factors that support or inhibit the transition of young people into the labour market. The study investigated these factors through the lens of social capital theory. Through tracing 1,532 individuals who graduated from FET Colleges in the Gauteng province in 1999, the study interrogated the role of bonding and bridging social capital in supporting the transition into colleges and from colleges into the labour market (Gewer, 2009).

This study drew on empirical data from three quantitative surveys, involving large numbers of respondents. In the first instance the researcher carried out a secondary analysis of existing data (first survey) in 2001 on graduates who had achieved an engineering qualification in 1999 from FET Colleges in the FET band (Levels 2-4 on the National Qualifications Framework). The survey sought to identify employment patterns of FET engineering graduates from FET colleges, assess the graduates' levels of satisfaction with the college's provision, and investigate the link between college provision and employment outcomes. In the second instance, a follow-up survey (Second Survey) which was conducted in early 2003, with a sample of the 1999 cohort of engineering graduates from Gauteng, as identified through the original national database from the initial survey. Finally, an In-college survey (third survey) of a separate cohort of students was conducted towards the end of 2003. This survey asked key additional questions that had not been tackled in the first two surveys and was conducted in six large Gauteng colleges.

The findings from this study were in conformity to the three hypotheses which the researcher had set out to test: 1) Poor socio-economic family contexts appear to offer little information from which to make effective educational choices. Young people generally make such choices on the basis of perceived long-term value of post-school education, rather than short-term economic considerations. 2) FET colleges are ineffective agents of bridging social capital and, therefore, have limited impact on the rate of employment, in particular the rate of relevant employment. 3) Personal networks are critical, but in impoverished environments are ineffective for finding meaningful employment on initial entry into the labour market. Therefore, restricted social networks have the potential to further entrench social inequality. The study contributes to a greater understanding of the challenges facing the youth in navigating through the transition from school to work and the implications for FET policy in pressurising colleges to create access to effective social networks for their students and thereby meaningfully contribute to job creation.

In West Africa, a review of extant literature reveals a study by Christophe J. Nordman and Laure Pasquier-Doumer (2014) on the role of Family Networks in transitions in West African Labour Markets which was conducted in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, in 2014. The researchers in this study used a first-hand survey conducted on a representative sample of 2000 households. The aim of this study was to shed light on the role of family networks in the dynamics of workers on the

labour market of a West African country. The main issue which was tackled in this research was the extent to which one's network was essential in labour market transitions, in particular from unemployment to employment, from wage employment to self-employment, or from self-employment to wage employment. In addition, this study investigated which dimension of the family network had the main effect on these transitions, by distinguishing the resources embedded in the network from its structure and the strength of the ties. In order to establish this, the researchers used an original survey conducted in 2009 in Ouagadougou on a representative sample of 2000 households. This survey provided event history data and very detailed information on the workers' social networks. In addition, the researchers conducted qualitative interviews of a sub-sample of the workers having responded to the event history questionnaire. To estimate labour market transitions and changes in the workers' employment status, the study relied on a survival analysis that makes use of proportional hazard models for discrete-time data. The study found that family networks had a significant effect on the transitions of individuals on the labour market, even if this effect was less robust for the transition from wage- to self-employment. In addition, the results differed, depending on the type of transition and on the dimension of the family network considered, i.e. the sibling network size, the resources available in the network, and the strength of ties.

The family network size, approached by the sibling size, appeared to not matter much in the labour market dynamics. Size was far from being the most important dimension of family networks in the transition from unemployment to employment. This was an important finding with regard to the existing literature, which mostly focuses on developed countries and highlights the efficient role of network size in job search. One of the reasons why this contradiction may exist is that the safety net function of the family network could dominate its informative function in a context where there is no formal safety net scheme for unemployed workers. Regarding the strength of ties, strong ties seem to play a stabilising role in labour market dynamics. Indeed, having a network endowed in strong ties, in particular strong family ties, increases the probability to remain in the same status of activity for self-employed and unemployed workers. Strong ties seem to be of little use for access to wage employment, except access to the public sector. During the job search, unemployed workers having strong ties in their family networks may tend to limit their effort to find a job. These results reinforce the idea that the safety net function of strong ties dominates their

informative function. Strong ties facilitate transitions in only one case, the transition from wage employment to self-employment, but this effect is not robust. Strong ties may help self-employed workers face uncertainty or invest in a small business, but as they go hand in hand with homophily, they do not seem to help get away from a precarious status in the labour market. In the same way, resources embedded in the network are a factor of occupational immobility: They have a negative effect on occupational transitions and this effect is reinforced when resources are combined with strong ties. The greater the network resources, the weaker the incentive to find a job, and the more profitable it is to evolve within the self-employment status or within wage employment, albeit to a lesser extent. In drawing a conclusion of this research, what it actually points out is that family networks, and more broadly social networks, have to be addressed taking into account their three explored dimensions. If not, the effect of social networks on labour market dynamics and labour market outcomes may well be misunderstood, in particular if network size is solely considered. This study advocated the development of theoretical approaches that would take into account the coexistence of both the informative and safety net functions of social networks, which is particularly essential in a developing country context. Another fruitful research agenda would be to deepen the understanding of social networks, as factors of social immobility. However, data scarcity on the formation and development of social networks in developing countries is a concern as, ideally, what one would like to observe are the dynamics of personal networks across generations.

In a nutshell, this study found that family networks had a significant effect on the dynamics of workers in the labour market and that this effect differs, depending on the type of transition and the considered dimension of the family network. The network size appeared to not matter much in the labour market dynamics. Strong ties, however, played a stabilising role by limiting large transitions. Their negative effect on transitions is reinforced with high levels of resources embedded in the network.

In Kenya, Manyasa carried out a study on social capital and rural economic development for his PhD thesis in 2009. He gathered information on the determinants of social capital and its impact on rural economic development. The overall objective of this study was to examine the formation of social capital and its role in rural economic development in Western province of Kenya. The

study used a survey design in which both primary and secondary data were collected from household heads, officials of organized community groups, selected opinion leaders in the study area and official records, between August 2006 and February 2007. Questionnaires, personal interview and focus group discussions were used to collect primary data, while secondary data were obtained from relevant government departments and governmental and non-governmental organizations' records. The data were analysed, both qualitatively and quantitatively. Parametric and non-parametric methods were employed in quantitative analysis. First, indices for both social capital and rural economic development outcomes were non-parametrically computed, using weighted responses to specific questions. Then their determination was analysed using the ordinary least squares method. A linear regression model was used to examine the determinants of social capital, while log-linear regression models were used to analyse the relationships between social capital and the three disaggregated outcomes of economic development, as well as the aggregate economic development outcome. The results from this study showed that household social capital was determined by ethnocentrism (clannishness), witchcraft beliefs, sub-location social capital, social interaction and community group activity. The aggregate household economic development was determined by household labour, sub-location physical capital, household social capital, household physical capital, probability of accessing financial capital, sex of the household head and social taxation. All outputs, as well as the aggregate outcome of the household economic development process, yielded positive elasticities with respect to household social capital. This implies that social capital was an important input into the rural economic development process.

Manyasa made several conclusions from the findings of this study: First, was the fact that household social capital stock matters in household welfare. All the outputs of the economic development process in this study returned positive elasticities with respect to household social capital stock. Secondly, social capital stocks (household and community level) facilitate other factors of production to enhance the level of output realized. High stocks of social capital on their own cannot improve the welfare of a household, as demonstrated by the fact that female-headed households generally had higher stocks of social capital, but also generally achieved less economic development. Thirdly, social capital was accumulated through deliberate investment by individuals. This was attested to by the fact that households with similar social and economic characteristics in the study still had different stocks of social capital. This variation can only be

explained by variation in the efforts made by members of the households to acquire social capital. Fourthly, the stock of household social capital within a given society was influenced significantly by culture-related beliefs such as witchcraft and ethnocentrism. These can fracture social capital as an asset and adversely affect households' willingness to invest in social capital. Fifthly, community level social capital was a function of individual/household level social capital. As such, factors that affect household social capital inevitably affect community social capital stock. Thus, it was possible to facilitate creation of social capital both at the household and community levels by providing incentives to households. This could also be achieved through provision of opportunities for organized community groups to participate in the community's social and economic life, and for networking with organizations beyond their immediate neighbourhood. Sixthly, low levels of human capital at community level mitigate against returns to human capital at household level and may thus discourage households from investing in human capital accumulation. There seemed to be O-ring effects in rural areas of Western province of Kenya with regard to investment in human capital, especially education.

In Botswana, Ama N.O from the Department of Statistics at the University of Botswana commissioned a study in 2008 on the transition of social science graduates from higher education to employment. The study targeted the 1,253 graduates from the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Botswana between 1997/1998 and 2003/2004 academic sessions; the subjects were either in employment then or were unemployed. This period represented eight years after the government's withdrawal of the automatic employment for graduates from tertiary institutions in Botswana. The target population was stratified according to the six departments in the faculty: Economics, Law, Political and Administrative Studies, Population Studies, Social Work, Sociology and Statistics. Psychology (only a year old at the time of this study) was not included in the study, as it was yet to turn out its first batch of graduates (Ama, 2008).

A sample size of 550 graduates was selected. This sample size was higher than 406 recommended by the Survey Systems (2003), which allows one to attain a 95% certainty that the result obtained from the sample would be the same as what it would have been if the entire population were to be surveyed, allowing a 4% error margin. The additional sample was substituted for those on the primary list who might not have been willing to participate or could not be located during the

period of study and a sample from those who graduated in an earlier period (1986- 1995/1996) to the study period (Ama, 2008).

The proportionate stratified random sampling method was employed in this study. It was indicated in the study report that stratification was necessary to ensure a better representation of all programmes into the sample and more statistical precision than simple random sampling. The target population was stratified by the programme of study. The total sample of graduates was allocated among the programmes according to the population and distribution of graduates from each programme. The simple random sampling was then used in selecting the number of allocated graduates for the study from the programmes. This study used three instruments for data collection, namely, documentary analysis, snowball techniques and questionnaires.

The findings from this study indicated that some of the ways that people used in securing employment had been through responding to advertised positions, informally contacting employers through personal visits or recommendations to employers by relatives and friends (bonding social capital). Unlike before the abolishment of automatic employment, when graduates used to fill in or complete only one application form, for employment in the public sector and the subsequent allocation of employment positions in their preferential departments, the period that followed after abolishing automatic employment saw the graduates contacting employers to determine if there were any vacant positions. They would subsequently apply for those vacant or advertised positions, and if vacancies were available the graduates would then be subjected to interviews.

The study also found that the mean number of contacts made by the graduates with employers before getting their first employment was 13.5, with a standard deviation of 0.5. This number of contacts varied over the years, increasing over the period 1997 to 2004. For instance, the 1997-2004 cohorts of graduates made more contacts than the 1986-1996 cohorts. This result would be expected because over the period before 1997, quality and performance were sacrificed for quantity in considering who should be employed but became major concerns as the automatic employment was abolished. Employers, including the public sector, had to scrutinise the employees for quality and performance, as well as available vacancies before considering the graduates for employment. The study found out that although male graduates made less contact

with employers than female graduates before getting their first employment, the difference was not statistically significant. However, further research was needed in this area to ascertain the reasons for this disparity (Ama, 2008).

The study also revealed transition time between graduation and finding employment. Transition time which is defined as the time between graduation and obtaining the first employment by graduates is a crucial index of the systems' preparedness to absorb graduates into the world of work. The study showed that graduates had to wait on average 4.6 months before getting their first employment. This figure is much smaller than those reported by Teichler (2007) who gave the average search time period as 6 months. In fact, slightly more than half the graduates got their first employment within the first 9 months with men mostly affected. The transition time continued to increase as the nation moved away from the period of automatic employment by the public and private sectors.

#### **2.4. The Zambian Context**

An extensive review of extant literature on social capital in relation to the labour market in the Zambian context revealed a critical shortage of studies in this area. However, some research studies have been conducted on social capital in relation to completely different subject matters. Some of such studies are discussed below:

The study which is most closely related to the investigation in this study was conducted by Moonga Mumba for his PhD in 2014, in which he analysed the role of informal networks in youth self-employment in Zambia.

The study set out to answer the underpinning research question: '*do informal networks play a role in influencing self-employment among the youth*', by hypothetically arguing that to some extent informal networks do influence self-employment among the youth in Zambia. Findings from this study showed how different informal connections help the self-employed youth to access different business related resources such as information, finances, skills, customers and space. The study also revealed that informal networks play a role in aiding the discovery of business opportunities for some youth. From the findings, we saw the dominant reliance on strong ties (mostly one's family and friends) among the self-employed youth, as the main source of support. Given their

circumstances, findings revealed that most self-employed youth usually started by seeking help within strong ties before looking elsewhere for support. Besides the use of strong ties, findings also revealed some evidence on the use of weak ties as channels through which the self-employed youth mobilised support. Furthermore, the study showed that sometimes drawing a clear demarcation between strong ties and weak ones can be challenging.

In addition, this study did not just reveal the positive outcomes of informal networking among the youth in Zambia but it also provided empirical evidence on challenges some self-employed youth faced (even within strong ties) in obtaining support in relation to self-employment. The study revealed instances where informal networks played a significant role in facilitating self-employment, as well as situations where ties acted more as a barrier to entrepreneurial activity among young people. Results in a way imply that informal networks should not be taken for granted. The overall conclusion that was drawn from this study was that, depending on the context and circumstances, informal networks can enable or constrain entrepreneurial activity among the youth in self-employment. As such, informal networks cannot solely be relied upon as a basis for sustaining self-employment among the youth in the country. In a nutshell, the argument was that informal networks were, to a great extent, simply used as survival mechanisms given the socioeconomic environment the youth find themselves in.

In a study on social capital, the Department of Nature Conservation, Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria in South Africa, and the Directorate of Research at Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) carried out an evaluation of social capital in a Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) in the Luangwa Valley, eastern Zambia (Nyirenda et al, 2010). It assessed the relationships between social capital and community responses and how this has transcended through multi-dimensional dynamics of the local community as influenced by emergent internal and external factors. Qualitative field data was collected from six traditional Chiefdoms using generic semi-structured questionnaire surveys, focus groups, and key informant interviews. Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis was conducted to determine progression of the social capital from the six selected criteria parameters. The researchers determined that weaknesses in local leadership, conditions for entrenched corruption, and losses in human capital were the key determinants of the change in growth of social capital. For furtherance of social capital, it was

posited that additional capacity development through training and awareness creation was needed, institutions of power for natural resources management were to be re-aligned in recognisance of local traditional leadership, and power and authority were to be devolved beyond structural requirements to local communities. This study underpinned that social capital embroidery should form the backbone for the implementation of community-based natural resources management to provide a remedial solution to conservation challenges. Future studies are required to further investigate the relational role of innovations and indigenous knowledge in enhancing social capital.

Findings in the study also revealed that the local organizational structures and processes of the social capital in the Luangwa Valley, from the pre-colonial times to date, had periodically gone through transient phases of destruction and re-organisation. During these turbulences, some social capital elements had been sustained and new opportunities pursued, rendering social capital growth. For instance, traditional mitigation countermeasures against wildlife crop raiders evolved through the times. Different forms of social capital, bonding, bridging, and linking, among others, were enhanced. Nevertheless, new determinants of changes in the social capital have been identified. They are: Leadership; Conditions for entrenched corruption; and Functional human capital (skills and experiences) at the base levels. These determinants need to be addressed firmly if the social capital is to be enhanced. The determinants may not be constant with time, but they may change and so may the discursive emergent forces (internal and external factors). Ascribing to the concept of resilience, adaptive management and governance should be the norm for building social capital. Building of the social capital encompasses maintenance of skills transfer and absorption, enabling policy and legislative environment, functional local base governance structures with viable horizontal and vertical social connectedness (informally and formally), and processes, including respect to laid down guidelines for accountability and transparency, and within the democratic environment.

Similarly, a study was conducted in Zambia in Southern Province by a group of researchers from the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature (RIHN), and the Graduate School of Fisheries Science and Environmental Studies, Nagasaki University, Japan. The study focused on social capital among small-scale farmers in Zambia in relation to the usage of mobile phones. Research was conducted from July 2009 to January 2011 in six villages located in rural Sinazongwe,

Southern Province, Zambia. Questionnaires were recorded by 12 mobile phone owners, administered on alternating weeks, for a total of 291 days. The authors conducted supplemental interviews. Other mobile phone users included 78 members of phone owner households and 298 members of other households. These users contacted 1296 people. Thus, the objects of questionnaires were only 12 mobile phones, but recorded usage behaviour was collected from 388 users (Ishimoto, et al, 2011).

Ecological factors cause food production and income fluctuations for rural villagers in the Southern Province of Zambia. People in this area have little or no access to insurance markets or administrative social security systems, and social capital is thus an important source of social security. In the past, acquaintances and relatives at distance did not send cash or goods; support was provided only after face-to-face negotiation. Beginning in 2000, mobile phone subscriptions increased dramatically. This study examined how small-scale rural farmers are utilizing rapidly spreading mobile phone technology to receive support from, and take advantage of, social capital in Southern Province. The paper analysed the influences of mobile phones on operation of social capital in terms of transformability of resilience, the capacity to create a fundamentally new system. The topics of interest were call details and short message service (SMS) messages, including the reason for a call or message and information about the person contacted.

Results revealed several key findings. 1) People with insufficient funds to make calls were able to talk on their mobile phones by encouraging others to call them by beeping" other person's phones. Beeping" is the calling but hanging up before the recipient can pick up; the number of the caller's phone is recorded on the recipient's phone. 2) Mobile phone owners often shared their phones with members of other households that had no phone. 3) Mobile phones were used to request remittances from close relatives living far away. 4) Phones were used to facilitate borrowing and lending between neighbours. Cash support was shared between close relatives, and livelihood activities support was shared between neighbours. 5) The success of support requests via mobile phones was affected by the closeness of the relationship, monetary value requested, urgency of the request, and economic condition of the requestee. By accepting mobile phones and enabling communication with others, both near and far, rural people in southern Zambia have activated social capital and transformed the social safety net.

**Table 2: Summary of literature review: matrix**

<b>Author/date</b>	<b>Region/ Country</b>	<b>Theoretical framework</b>	<b>Research questions/hypotheses</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>Analysis and results</b>	<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>Implications for further research</b>
<b>Mumba Moonga (2014), PhD Thesis</b>	Zambia	Social capital theory	Does social capital play a role in supporting self- employment;  What is the nature and relative influence of informal networks on self- employment among the youth in Zambia?	Urban survey	Findings reveal strong ties, particularly family and friends, playing a significant role and making it possible for most self-employed youth to achieve certain ends.	Informal networks exist in the Zambian context, but only serve as a fall back mechanism for survival and cannot solely be relied upon as a basis for sustaining self- employment among the youth in the country	Informal networks in the labour market for various categories of actors
<b>Christophe J. Nordman and Laure Pasquier- Doumer, 2014</b>	Burkina Faso	Social Capital theory	Transitions in a West African Labour Market: The Role of Family Networks	Household Survey	Event history data and proportional hazard models for discrete time data	Family networks have a significant effect on the dynamics of workers in the labour market and that this effect differs depending on the type of transition and the dimension of the family network considered.	Role of family networks or social connections in the labour market for new labour market entrants
<b>Matloob Piracha, Massimiliano Tani, and Matias Vaira Lucero (2013)</b>	Australia	Social capital theory	The role of social capital on immigrants' labour market outcomes in Australia	Longitudinal survey data	Principal component analysis" (PCA)	Promoting opportunities to create social capital has a beneficial effect on migrants' integration in the host country;	Specific characteristics of people who get white collar job through social capital; Targeting university

						social capital only affects the probability of getting a white-collar job	graduates other than immigrants
<b>Bram Lancee (2012)</b>	Netherlands; German	Social capital theory	Bonding and bridging social capital in relation to immigrants 'ability to find jobs	Dutch Social Position and Use of Utilities Immigrants Survey (SPVA) for the cross-sectional analysis	Logistic and ordinary least squares (OLS) regression	That for immigrants, social networks are important to make headways on the labour market.	Are social networks important for other categories of job seekers to make headways in the labour market?
<b>Manyasa Emmanuel (2009), PhD Thesis</b>	Kenya	Social capital theory	<p>The determinants of social capital and its impact on rural economic development.</p> <p>The overall objective of this study was to examine formation of social capital and its role in rural economic development in Western province of Kenya.</p>	A survey design	<p>Ordinary least squares method;</p> <p>A linear regression model;</p> <p>log-linear regression models;</p>	<p>That social capital was an important input into the rural economic development process.</p> <p>The results show that household social capital was determined by ethnocentrism (clannishness), witchcraft beliefs, sub-location social capital, social interaction and community group activity.</p>	Can the conclusion on social capital remain the same in urban areas and when it comes to employment of university graduates?

<p><b>Anthony Gewer, 2009</b></p>	<p>South Africa</p>	<p>Social Capital theory</p>	<p>Features of social capital that enhance the employment outcomes of Further Education Training Colleges (FET)</p>	<p>Three quantitative surveys:  First survey (2001)  Follow-up survey (2003)  Third survey (In-college survey, 2003)</p>	<p>1) Poor socio-economic family contexts appear to offer little information to young people from which to make effective educational choices.  2) FET colleges are ineffective agents of bridging social capital and therefore have limited impact on the rate of employment.  3) Personal networks are critical, but in impoverished environments are ineffective for finding meaningful employment on initial entry into the labour market.</p>	<p>The study contributes to a greater understanding of the challenges facing the youth in navigating through the transition from school to work. Restricted social networks have the potential to further entrench social inequality</p>	<p>The role of social capital in addition to human capital in finding employment among graduates</p>
<p><b>Njoku. O. Ama, (2008)</b></p>	<p>Botswana</p>	<p>Job search theory</p>	<p>understanding how changes in the graduate employment policy by the Government of Botswana has affected the employability of graduates from the faculty of social sciences at the University of Botswana, and the waiting time to secure their first employment</p>	<p>National survey</p>	<p>Descriptive statistics;  Inferential statistics using chi-square</p>	<p>The study showed that graduates had to wait an average of 4.6 months before getting their first employment, with differing experiences between male and female graduates</p>	<p>There is need to contextualise the experiences of university graduates in relation to the use of social capital in the labour market in different countries. Can the conclusion be the same for the Zambia context?</p>

<b>Wendy Stone, Matthew Gray, and Jody Hughes, (2003)</b>	Australia	Social capital theory	How family and kinship networks, friends and neighbours relate to individual labour market outcomes, compared with the role of civic ties and institutional networks.	National survey	Network and typology approach to social capital and used data from a national random sample	It was the characteristics of networks that are more important in predicting labour force status and job search method	This study has shown that people's social capital varies, these differences and inequalities is a topic worthy of further research
<b>Michael B. Aguilera and Douglas S. Massey (2003)</b>	USA and Mexico	Social Capital Theory	Social Capital and the Wages of Mexican Migrants: Influence of Network ties on migrant wages and earnings	Data from the Mexican Migration Project (MMP) and Simple Random Sampling	The results of the study suggest that social capital had both indirect and direct effects on the wages earned by Mexican immigrants	Social capital indeed had both direct and indirect effects on the wages of both documented and undocumented migrants. However, the indirect effect of job search technique is significant only for undocumented migrants	Are network ties important for people who do not fall the category of migrants?
<b>John Knight and Linda Y. Yueh (2002)</b>	China	Social capital theory	The role of social capital in the labour market in China	Urban household survey	ordinary least squares (OLS)	Indeed, social capital may be just as important as human capital: remarkably, one additional reported contact contributes more than one additional year of education.	Social capital in China may be influenced more by the political situation than other aspects of social life (e.g. sociological issues such as family, kinship, education etc.)

<b>Bartus Tamás (1998), PhD Thesis</b>	Hungary	Social capital theory	Social Capital and Earnings Inequalities in Hungary on school leavers	Longitudinal design/ cross-sectional design	Multivariate regression techniques	The study documents the importance of personal contacts in getting a good job	It was conducted on high school graduates. Since this category of job seekers are of lower qualifications, they may rely on social capital more than other categories of job seekers such as university graduates.
<b>Granovetter (1973, 1974), PhD Thesis</b>	United States of America (USA)	'Strength of weak ties' theory	How interpersonal networks provide the most fruitful micro-macro bridges?  How information flows in the networks involving weak' ties and 'strong' ties?	Random sample of professional, technical and managerial job changers	Network analysis	What matters in getting ahead is not how close you are to those you know but, how many people you know to whom you are not particularly close	Job seekers are not a homogeneous group. Further research on variant populations of job seekers such as those with university education

## 2.5. Conclusion

The review of relevant research studies related to this study, it has shown that over the past several decades, researchers have attempted to determine and understand through rigorous investigations the role of social capital in influencing people's successes and achievements in their lifetime, including finding jobs in the labour market. For instance, Granovetter (1973; 1974; 1995), in a random sample of professional, managerial and technical job changers, his proposition was confirmed in his study and also in many subsequent studies, that a substantial proportion of individuals find their jobs via their contacts with friends, relatives, colleagues, or acquaintances. One major missing link in this study, and in many others, was their omission of the level of educational qualifications of job seekers in their studies, which presumably is an important variable in as far as studying labour market processes is concerned. Matloob Piracha and a group of other researchers (2013), conducted a longitudinal study in which they analysed the role of social capital on immigrants' labour market outcomes in Australia. Their conclusion, just like Granovetter, was that social capital works, and for Matloob and colleagues (2013), social capital is particularly important for immigrants, but it only affects the probability of getting a white-collar job. Once again, there was no reference to educational levels of the research subjects so as to check their influence in finding such jobs in the labour market. In the same vein, a study by Bartus, Tamás (1998) also discovered, through a longitudinal and cross-sectional study, a positive relationship between social capital and getting a good job among secondary school leavers in Hungary. But of course, one would argue that this category of job seekers may indeed rely more on social capital to find jobs in the labour markets than their educational qualifications compared to university graduates who, probably may not need such 'other resource' to assist them in getting a job, because they are probably adequately qualified to obtain any job that suits them on merit compared to secondary school leavers.

In the African context, a review of extant literature on the role of social capital in the employment of job seekers revealed a dearth of prior studies on this subject. However, this researcher was able to find a few studies which this researcher could relate to, on social capital, that had been done in Africa. For instance, Anthony Gewer carried out a study in South Africa for his PhD (2009) on the features of social capital that enhance the employment outcomes of Further Education Training Colleges (FET) in 2009, in which he sought to problematise the notions of bonding and bridging

social capital in the South African context and understand how social capital operates for young people who pass through the FET College system. This study reported that personal networks were critical in the employment of young people in South Africa, but they tend to be ineffective in impoverished environments for finding meaningful employment on initial entry into the labour market. This had a potential to further entrench social inequality in the country.

Similarly, in West Africa, Christophe J. Nordman and Laure Pasquier-Doumer (2014) in their study on the role of Family Networks in transitions in West African Labour Markets in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, in 2014, endeavoured to shed light on the role of family networks in the dynamics of workers on the labour market of a West African country. The main issue which was tackled in this research was the extent to which one's network was essential in labour market transitions, in particular from unemployment to employment. In their findings they learned that family networks had a significant effect on the dynamics of workers in the labour market and that this effect differs, depending on the type of transition and the considered dimension of the family network. The network size appeared to not matter much in the labour market dynamics. Strong ties, however, played a stabilising role by limiting large transitions. Their negative effect on transitions is reinforced with high levels of resources embedded in the network. In the Zambian context, Moonga Mumba for his PhD in 2014, conducted a study of role of informal networks in youth self-employment in which he analysed the role of informal networks in youth self-employment in Zambia in which the researcher learned how different informal connections help the self-employed youth to access different business related resources such as information, finances, skills, customers and space. There tended to be dominant reliance on strong ties (mostly one's family and friends) among the self-employed youth, as the main source of support.

On the contrary, some studies, though not explicit, indicate that there is neither a discernible influence nor a negative influence of social capital on the labour market for job seekers (Franzen & Hangartner, 2006; Portes, 1998; Schuller, T., Baron, S. & Field, J., 2000). In his study on the promise and pitfalls of social capital and its role in development, Portes (1998) argues that there is a common tendency to confuse the *ability* to secure resources through networks with the resources themselves. This can easily lead to tautological statements, where a positive outcome necessarily indicates the presence of social capital, and a negative one its absence. In fact, an actor's

capacity to obtain resources through connections does not guarantee a positive outcome. Given the unequal distribution of wealth and resources in society, actors may have trustworthy and solidary social ties and still have access to limited or poor quality resources. Saying that only those who secure desirable goods from their associates have social capital is tantamount to saying that only the successful succeed. This is a very important observation with a somewhat contradictory perspective of social capital and its influence in one's achievements.

Finally, the evaluation of data from the reviewed extant literature on social capital and the labour market shows that there is no concrete information on how individuals graduating from universities might or might not entirely rely on their educational qualifications to get jobs in the labour market. The question that arise from the literature is, besides their educational qualifications from university; how do university graduates use social capital (understood as social connections) to find jobs in the labour market? In addition, the review of literature in this paper has to a large extent established that most of research studies that have already been carried out on social capital and the labour market have been done in developed countries, focusing particularly on migrants in the United States of America, Europe and Australia. However, there is a lack of empirical data on how, specifically, university graduates may rely on social capital other than their education to find jobs in the labour market, particularly in the context of developing countries, such as Zambia.

## CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

### 3.1. Introduction

A theoretical framework is the ‘blueprint’ or guide for a research (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). It is a framework based on an existing theory in a field of inquiry that is related and/or reflects the hypothetical position of a study. It is a blueprint that is often ‘borrowed’ by the researcher to build his/her own house or research inquiry. It serves as the foundation upon which a research is constructed. Sinclair (2007), as well as Fulton and Krainovich-Miller (2010), compare the role of the theoretical framework to that of a map or travel plan. Thus, when travelling to a particular location, the map guides your path. Likewise, the theoretical framework guides the researcher so that s/he would not deviate from the confines of the accepted theory or theories to make his/her final contribution scholarly and academic.

The aim of this study was to describe the role of social capital, in form of social connections in the employability of University of Zambia Graduates in Zambia. The theory within which this study was embedded and conducted was the **social capital theory**. This theory explains social connections, based on social obligations, social norms, values and exchanges among actors and how these practices contribute to one’s success in life. Social capital is embedded in a set of socially situated and culturally defined relations ((Portes, 1998; Putnam, 2000, 2002; Lin, 2001, 2006, and 2008)

### 3.2. Social Capital Theory

#### 3.2.1. Social capital in the labour market

Individual skills and experience, often referred to as human capital, have traditionally been considered to have a heavy influence on participation and progress within the labour market. In recent years social capital defined in terms of the level of trust and cooperation experienced between individuals or within groups, has also been recognised as having a role to play in helping job seekers to find jobs in the labour market (Brook, 2005). Social capital means the “capacity of individuals to command scarce resources by virtue of their membership in networks or broader social structures. The resources themselves are not social capital; the concept refers instead to individuals’ and groups’ ability to mobilize them on demand’ (Portes, 1995:120). Hence, social capital is embedded in a set of socially situated and culturally defined relations.

These connections and commitments acquire particular significance once they are activated by specific actors in cooperation and/or competition with others in seeking to gain access to critical resources, or in attempting to deny or block access to others. Such resources encompass, not only material or tangible benefits, but also less tangible properties such as knowledge, skills, trust, shared values, organizational principles and representations. The idea of the social embeddedness of economic and political life and the significance of the mobilization and deployment of social and organizational resources for the pursuit of economic and political goals is as old as the disciplines of Economics, Sociology and Anthropology themselves. It boasts of a distinguished pedigree that stretches back to the founding fathers (Adam Smith, Max Weber and Emile Durkheim), as well as a long list of twentieth century social theorists who have used the concept of which Bourdieu (1980), and Coleman (1988, 1990) are perhaps the best known.

As Coleman (1994) explains, the term social capital first appeared in response to what were seen as the deficiencies of mainstream neoclassical economics in development which accorded very “little” place for social organizational elements, treating them merely as empirical disturbances to theoretical predictions. Social capital, it can be argued, facilitates the workings and reproduction of the economy and political institutions, but unlike economic capital, it cannot be consumed or depleted merely through use; instead, activating it is likely to increase its potency and generate increased possibilities for its continued utilization.

Social capital has re-emerged as a central concept for exploring the workings of the social fabrics of various opportunities in markets, enterprise and other avenues. Social capital is embedded in a set of socially situated and culturally defined relations. The connections and commitments acquire particular significance once they are activated by actors in cooperation with others in seeking to gain access to critical resources. Such resources encompass, not only material or tangible benefits, but also less tangible properties such as knowledge, skills, trust, shared values and so on. Information, social support, and other resources typically spread through social networks. People who are bound together by interaction and a common identity form social groups ([www.brymsociologycompass2.nelson.com](http://www.brymsociologycompass2.nelson.com)).

### 3.2.2. Social Capital and the concept of Social networks

The two concepts, social capital and social network are closely connected to one another in the sense that the occurrence of one gives rise to the occurrence of another. Let us begin with the conceptual definition of social capital and then afterwards present social networks. Loosely defined, social capital describes the value of all the social connections of an individual or group of individuals. This includes friendships, professional relationships and family connections or relations. In line with this definition of social capital, this study investigated the role of social capital in the employability of University of Zambia Graduates in the Zambian context.

There are three forms of social capital that have been proposed. These include bonding, linking, and bridging social capital (Lin, 2008; McGonigal, 2007; Woolcock, 2000):

**Bonding social capital** refers to the interaction between similar types of people such as family members and close personal friends. It links to people based on a sense of common identity (“people like us”) – such as family, close friends and people who share the same culture or ethnicity. Bonding social capital is described as the strong relationships that develop between people of similar background and interests, usually include family and friends, provide material and emotional support, and are more inward-looking and protective. Bonding social capital refers to networks with a high density of relationships between members, where most, if not all, individuals belonging to the network are interconnected because they know each other and interact frequently with each other (Beugelsdijk, 2003).

Friendships are often considered to be bonding social capital, in that they are frequently formed between people who share common characteristics or interests. Friends are people that we turn to when we are in a crisis, and with whom we feel close. However, friendships may also act as bridging relations, in that they may be between people of different cultural backgrounds, socioeconomic backgrounds, or ages, who may in turn provide access to information and other groups or individuals not previously known to the other (Halpern, 2005).

**Bridging social capital** is a type of social capital that describes connections that link people across a cleavage that typically divides society (such as race, or class, or religion). It is associations that ‘bridge’ *between* communities, groups, or organisations. Bridging social capital is different from

bonding social capital, which is *within* social groups and is characterised by dense networks with people feeling a sense of shared identity and belonging. The bonding/bridging distinction has roots in network analysis based on methodological individualism and rational choice theory. These distinctions have been criticised for amalgamating a variety of contradictory aspects of both networks and norms into single categories. A different approach involves the distinction between structural and cognitive dimensions of social capital (Granovetter, 1973; 1985). Bridging describes social relationships of exchange, often of associations between people with shared interests or goals but contrasting social identity.

Although friends are normally considered bonding social capital, friendships may also act as bridging relations, in that they may be between people of different cultural backgrounds, socioeconomic backgrounds, or ages, who may in turn provide access to information and other groups or individuals not previously known to the other (McGonigal, 2007).

**Linking social capital** refers to connections with organisations and institutions and assists in accruing support from people in authority. For instance, active membership of social, education, political, religious, and voluntary organisations, both within and outside the workplace, may also contribute to an individual's social capital. Participation in such groups may help an individual to develop skills or strengthen and extend networks which may assist in acquiring a job. Some authors have suggested linking social capital as a third type of social capital which is needed to capture the power dynamics of vertical associations. Michael Woolcock (1998; 2000) called this *linking* social capital and conceptualised it as a subset of bridging social capital. If linking social capital is included, then bridging social capital is an intermediate step between bonding and linking social capital. Under a bonding/bridging/linking taxonomy bridging would be defined somewhat differently compared to a bonding/bridging binary taxonomy.

Michael Woolcock (2000), suggested that bridging social capital can be horizontal or vertical so a single category misses the important aspect of the exercise of power that is important in vertical associations. Thus linking social capital refers to relations between individuals and groups in different social strata in a hierarchy in which power, social status and wealth are accessed by different groups.

Therefore, human interaction results in social connections – social networks – that work to make life more fulfilling and that make our economic efforts more productive. These social connections are critical in our social world and they range from micro or small groups to large scale bureaucratic organisations (Ballantine, 2006). Social capital, then, is the value that is derived from belonging to networks, based on the idea that access to resources is cultivated through connections among and between people. The social connections that develop networks are built up over time through repeated exchanges (of information, emotions, or favours) and are linked to other forms of capital. In contrast, reductions in levels of social capital may contribute to feelings of disconnectedness and loss of trust, control, autonomy, and belonging. Social capital is, at least for Coleman and Putnam, a good thing: it can be transformed into all kinds of resources, from jobs to information to better health (Briggs, 2007).

In addition, Putnam (2002) provides a number of reasons to explain why social capital has a positive impact on health. First, people who are connected to others in social networks provide social and practical support that may reduce stress and suffering. Second, social networks help to reinforce social norms that are perceived to have health-inducing or -promoting effects, and therefore they minimize the potential for damaging conduct. Third, connected communities are more likely to be well organized and, therefore, capable of challenging issues around health-related services or issues.

Given the emphasis on relationships, it is not hard to see how social networks are important to an understanding of how social capital functions. Access to social capital is determined by opportunities to interact with others, the characteristics of the individuals who compose the social network, and the configuration of the network itself (Offer & Schneider, 2007). Social networks matter because they create and sustain relationships that can be cultivated into social support, itself a form of social capital. For purposes of this study, the major objective is to learn the extent to which social capital plays a role in university graduates' success in landing job opportunities on the labour market, because essentially it is expected that since such individuals have a high level of education (human capital) they can only be aided to a much lesser extent by their social capital.

### **3.2.3. Measuring social networks**

Social networks can be categorised into three types (Stone, 2001; Stone and Hughes, 2002). The first type of social network is 'informal ties', which include relationships with members of household, family and family in-law, friends, neighbours, and workmates. The second type is 'generalised relationships', which are community based, and 'societal' relationships people have with those they do not know personally, including local people, people in general, and people in civic groups. The third type of social network is 'institutional relationships', which are the ties individuals have with institutions, including the legal system, the police, the media, unions, governments, political parties, universities, and the corporate world.

The quality of social relationships refers to the extent to which they are characterised by norms of trust and reciprocity. Clearly, trust and reciprocity mean different things in each of these types of networks. For example, trust and reciprocity in informal networks involve network members who know one another personally, whereas in the generalised realm, they concern the extent to which trust and reciprocity are extended to strangers, often on the basis of expectations of behaviour or a sense of shared values. Within the institutional realm are the norms governing people's confidence in institutions. These norms concern trust in the formal institutions of governance and markets and include, for example, fairness of rules and official procedures (Uslaner 1999). Social capital theory also argues that the structure of networks is important. Structural characteristics of networks include the size of the network, the density of social ties within the network, and the diversity of the backgrounds and social situations of the network members.

The degree to which networks are dense or closed is also argued to have implications for the quality of the relationships they embody, and their productive output (Coleman 1988). A dense network is one in which network members overlap and know one another, and a closed network is one in which social relationships exist between all parties. Dense, closed networks are argued to better facilitate the enforcement of group norms and sanctions. Heterogeneity of group or network membership is argued to influence the levels of trust within networks, the extent to which trust of familiars translates into generalised trust of strangers, and the extent to which norms within networks are shared. Heterogeneity of social ties may promote linkages with a diverse range of

networks and hence access to a broad range of resources or opportunities (Grootaert 1998; Narayan 1999). On the other hand, heterogeneity of social ties may limit the extent to which social relationships are characterised by high levels of trust and reciprocity (Stolle 1998).

### **3.3. Conceptual framework**

This component presents the conceptual framework and hypothesised relationships emerging from the proposed framework of the study. The basic proposed model looked at the effect of social connections on the employability of University of Zambia graduates in today's competitive labour market in Zambia.

A conceptual framework is a structure which the researcher believes can best explain the natural progression of the phenomenon to be studied (Camp, 2001). It is linked with the concepts, empirical research and important theories used in promoting and systemising the knowledge espoused by the researcher (Peshkin, 1993). It is the researcher's explanation of how the research problem would be explored. The conceptual framework presents an integrated way of looking at a problem under study (Smith & Liehr, 1999). In a statistical perspective, the conceptual framework describes the relationship between the main concepts of a study. It is arranged in a logical structure to aid provide a picture or visual display of how ideas in a study relate to one another (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). Interestingly, it shows the series of actions the researcher intends to carry out in a research study. The framework makes it easier for the researcher to easily specify and define the concepts within the problem of the study (Luse, Mennecke & Townsend, 2012). Miles and Huberman (1994) opine that conceptual frameworks can be 'graphical or in a narrative form showing the key variables or constructs to be studied and the presumed relationships between them.

#### **3.3.1. Social connections**

The two concepts, social capital and social connections, which can also be referred to as social networks are closely connected to one another in the sense that the occurrence of one gives rise to the occurrence of another.

Let us begin with the conceptual definition of social capital and then afterwards present social networks. Loosely defined, social capital describes the value of all the social connections of an individual or group of individuals. This includes friendships, professional relationships and family connections or relations. This study explored the role of social capital on the labour market among University of Zambia graduates.

There are three forms of social capital that have been proposed. These include bonding (this through close relatives and friends), bridging (looser ties with casual friends, colleagues or associates), and linking (connections with organisations and institutions) (Keith, 2005). In this study social capital was operationalised as social connections that people have with other people around them. When a person is socially connected to another person, it simply means that they have a social relationship with one another. These connections can be wide and diverse or narrow and limited in nature. Therefore, taking advantage of such social connections, people can rely on these connections for support and help in various ways, including help to find a job.

### **3.3.2. Employability**

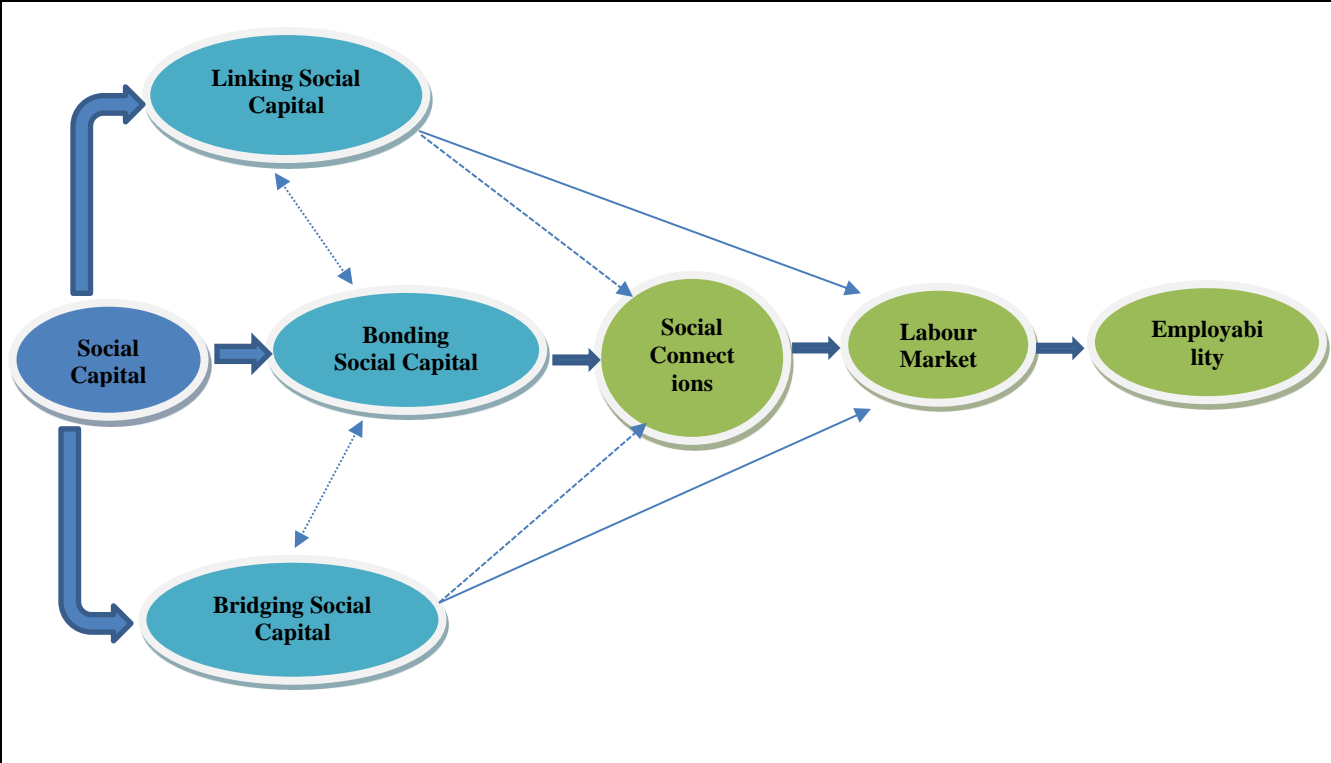
Employability, as a variable of interest for this study, is argued that graduate employability is more than just being able to find a job immediately after graduation, rather employability refers to the acquisition of personal attributes and achievements such as knowledge, skills, resourcefulness, resilience and abilities that make graduates more likely to be successful in gaining employment or their chosen occupations, whether paid employment or self-employment (Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, UK, 2019). For the individual, employability depends on: the knowledge and skills they possess, and their attitudes; the way personal attributes are presented in the labour market; the environmental and social context within which work is sought; and the economic context within which work is sought.

### **3.3.3. Labour market**

The concept of "labour markets" has many connotations. It has been used to denote geographical areas or occupational and industrial groups, as well as groups of workers defined by ethnicity, race, sex, and levels of education and skill. We define labour markets abstractly, as the arenas in

which people exchange their labour power in return for wages, status, and other job rewards. The concept, therefore, refers broadly to the institutions and practices that govern the purchase, sale, and pricing of labour services. These structures include the means by which workers are distributed among jobs and the rules that govern employment, mobility, the acquisition of skills and training, and the distribution of wages and other rewards obtained contingent upon participation in the economic system.

**Figure 1: Dimensions of social capital, Labour Market and Employability**



*Source: Derived by Researcher*

## **CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents a justification of the methodology which was used in this study. The research design and analytical path of any research should have a specific methodological direction based on its research objectives, research questions and theoretical framework. The chapter begins with an outline of the research goals and research questions of the study. Then, the chapter continues by giving the description of the study, research design, sample determination and selection, data collection instruments, and data management and analysis techniques. This chapter is simply a presentation of how the study was conducted in order to obtain answers to its research questions.

### **4.2. Research goals and research questions**

This research had two goals: the first and main goal was to investigate if there was any relationship between social capital and the prospects of finding a job in the labour market among University of Zambia Graduates. The second goal of this research was to contribute to the discussion on the theory and the forms or dimensions of social capital as a concept.

A thorough review of empirical literature on social capital revealed that the majority of studies investigating social capital on the labour market had been employing purely quantitative research strategies and were mainly conducted in developed countries with a specific focus on immigrants to Europe and United States of America (Matloob et al, 2013); other studies had been conducted on social capital and the employability of university graduates in China, Europe and Australia (Stone, 2003) and China (Knight, Linda Y. Yueh, 2002). This study used a sequential mixed methods research design to investigate the role of social capital in form of social connections among University of Zambia graduates in the labour market, focusing on the period between 2000 and 2015. A study of this nature, on social capital, can adequately answer research questions when it employs a mixture of positivistic (addressing the ‘what’ questions) and interpretivistic (addressing the ‘why’ and ‘how’ questions) approaches to the study; this is critical in understanding in-depth research questions (Mwiya, PhD Thesis 2014). The methodology is explained in detail in the following sections.

### **4.3. Research Design**

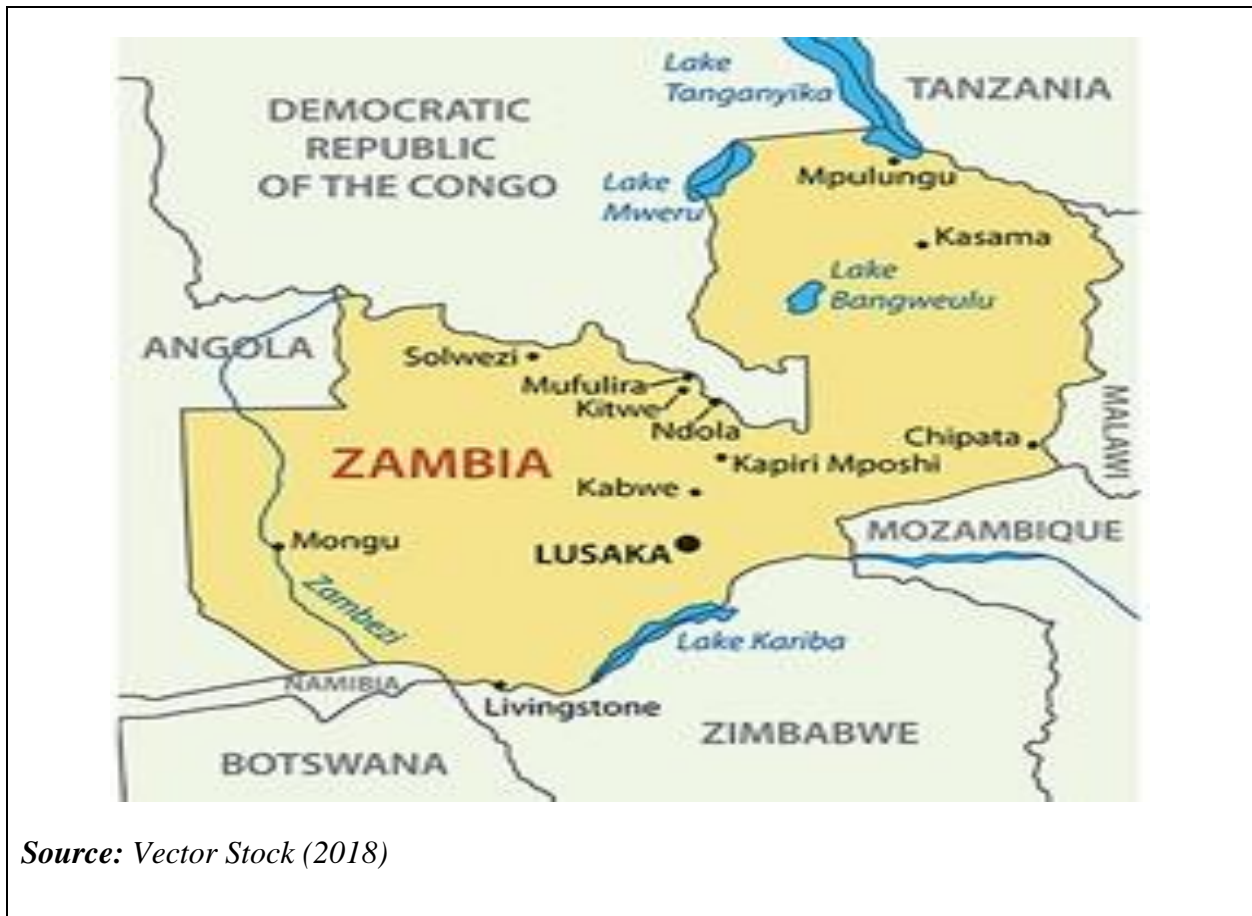
This study aimed at answering the question of how University of Zambia Graduates use social connections to find jobs in Zambia. The unit of analysis of the study was a University of Zambia Graduate between the year 2000 and 2015. This study employed the sequential mixed method research design. According to Bryman (2012), a research design represents a structure that guides the execution of a research method or a set of research methods and the analysis of the subsequent data. It is a framework that provides for the collection and analysis of data. In this case, a mixed methods research is a research design with philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry. As a methodology, it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems that either approach alone cannot adequately explain (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). Mixed methodology has become the corner stone of research within social sciences. It no longer restricts the researcher to particular paradigms that have been traditionally the case and is considered a legitimate means of undertaking research in social sciences. Using mixed methodology can help understand the research problem in greater depth. It can help increase confidence in findings, providing more evidence while offsetting possible shortcomings from using a single approach. Whereas undertaking research using mixed methodology can be time consuming it can help to address broader questions adding insight that could otherwise have been missed (Creswell, 2007). The justification of the choice of the mixed method research design is provided in detail later in this chapter.

Research study about the role of social connections and networks in labour markets can be a very tedious and complicated undertaking. Data generation in such a study should be able to fulfill certain requirements, one of which is that the researcher should implement measures to rule out confounding causal interpretations of observation evidence. To rule out this confounding explanation, data must show that a job seeker had prior social connections before the job search. This can be achieved by collecting information from the research subjects themselves and key informants (in this case employers).

#### 4.4. Study Areas: Location of study areas

This study was conducted in Lusaka City in Lusaka Province of Zambia: The selection of this study area was based on the understanding that the labour market in Zambia is larger and concentrated in large cities like Lusaka City. It is generally understood that cities are usually the centres of economic activities and opportunities. In addition, the restriction of the study to Lusaka City was attributed to limited resources which could not permit the expansion of the study to other areas in the country.

**Figure 2: Lusaka City on the Zambian Map**



#### 4.5. Study Population: UNZA Graduates (2000 - 2015)

Study participants included male and female University of Zambia (UNZA) students who graduated between 2000 and 2015, from the nine Schools which make up the University of Zambia, across all fields of study that are offered at the University; resident in the city of Lusaka;

and who were in formal employment. Focusing on university graduates provided the study with an advantage of satisfying the requirement of increasing statistical strength of the research in the sense that university graduates have similar characteristics with respect to human capital such as number of years of education and labour market experiences, and demographic characteristics (age, marital status). In addition to the group of UNZA graduates, this researcher sought to interview key informants who work as recruiting staff in various organisations in the public and private sectors in the study area in order to provide an in-depth and confirmatory understanding of the use of social connections to obtain jobs among UNZA graduates in the labour market.

Why did this researcher choose to study University of Zambia Graduates? The researcher's motivation to focus on UNZA Graduates was first of all driven by the fact that UNZA is the oldest University in Zambia which has produced more graduates in the country than any other University. The other motivating factor was the easy access this researcher had to the target population in form of the UNZA Alumni database or register. This made it much easier for the researcher to create a sampling frame and be able to pick a sample. Finally, the researcher's interaction with former students during which they shared their experiences in search of employment gave this researcher an opportunity to learn about their experiences and challenges in the labour, and one major challenge that kept on coming out the discussion was the reliance on the use social connections in finding employment in the country.

**Table 3: UNZA Graduates aggregated statistics (2000 - 2015)**

School	Male	Female	Subtotal
<b>Agriculture</b>	704	308	<b>1,012</b>
<b>Education</b>	8,899	8,387	<b>17,286</b>
<b>Engineering</b>	968	81	<b>1,049</b>
<b>Humanities and Social Sciences</b>	3,348	2,874	<b>6,222</b>
<b>Law</b>	608	456	<b>1,064</b>
<b>Medicine</b>	2,266	1,351	<b>3,617</b>
<b>Mines</b>	433	32	<b>465</b>
<b>Natural Sciences</b>	929	718	<b>1,647</b>
<b>Vet. Medicine</b>	234	104	<b>308</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>18,389</b>	<b>14,311</b>	<b>32,700</b>

*Source: Department of Academic Affairs, UNZA (2018)*

#### **4.6. Sample size**

In planning a survey, one needs to know how big a sample they should draw in order to obtain reliable findings. The answer to this question depends on how accurate the researcher wants the estimate to be. This study collected data from a total of **208** University of Zambia Graduates. This sample size was determined using published statistical tables which provide a variety of sample sizes for a given set of criteria necessary for given combinations of precision; confidence level; and variability (Yamane, 1967). In addition to this sample of **208** UNZA Graduates, **16** employers were interviewed for qualitative data in order to obtain an in-depth understanding of the use of social connections in the labour market by university graduates. Employers were drawn from institutions that provide formal employment to job applicants. These were the key informants for this study. The institutions from which employers were drawn were public, private and civil society institutions. One important principle to keep in mind in a research, in as far as determining the size of the sample is concerned - **is the principle of saturation**. It is understood, in a study that the collection of new data is not going to give the researcher any new additional insights into the issue being investigated. There is usually a point of diminishing return with larger samples; more data does not necessarily lead to new information which would be different from what the researcher has already collected. It simply leads to the same information being repeated (saturation).

##### **4.6.1. Sampling Frame**

Sampling frame refers to the listing of all units in the population from which a sample is selected (Bryman, 2012). The University of Zambia Alumni which was set up in 2014 is a thriving alumni association leveraging on a network of more than 60,000 members around the world. The association has a comprehensive register of former University of Zambia graduates from as far back as the 1970s. The strength with this register is that it contains contact details of all the members in the form of phone contacts; email addresses and physical addresses. This information made it much easier for the researcher to contact participants that were included in the sample. This study used this register as the sampling frame, excluding every member that graduated before 2000 and after 2015; all those who were not in formal employment at the time of the study, and all UNZA Graduates who were not Lusaka residents.

#### **4.6.2. Sampling procedure**

Simple Random Sampling with replacement from the UNZA alumni register (Sampling frame) was implemented in picking the sample for the study. This method of sampling guarantees the aspects of internal and external validity of the study. Simple random sampling is the basic selection method, and all other random sampling techniques can be viewed as an extension or adaptation of this method. These other, more complex, designs generally aim to increase the efficiency, i.e. to improve the estimates, but practical and economic considerations can also play a part in choosing a design. However, in all types of sampling, each element of the target population must have a positive and known probability of being included in the sample, which is referred to as the inclusion probability. This research was like a trace study, which involved tracing UNZA graduates in locations where they could be found in Lusaka. Therefore, simple random sampling with replacement was an appropriate method in this case because it provided the researcher with a chance to replace respondents that could not be located using the contacts they had provided on the alumni register.

#### **4.7. Data Collection, Management and Analysis**

The type of data in this research included both quantitative and qualitative data (QUANT + qual.), with unequal weights in terms of the amounts of data that were collected; whereby quantitative data were more heavily weighted than qualitative data. Quantitative data were collected using a questionnaire, which contained both closed-ended questions and a few open-ended questions, from study participants (UNZA Graduates). The questionnaire was administered to study participants (UNZA Graduates) either in person or through email depending on their preference. Data that were collected from employers or their representatives (*key informants*) using an interview guide were purely qualitative in nature. Questionnaires administered to study participants (UNZA Graduates) also generated quite a good amount of qualitative data from open-ended questions.

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was the tool that used in the management of quantitative data, and the analysis was done by generating descriptive statistics, presented in tabular and graphical representations. Descriptive statistics provide insights and numerical summaries of data that anyone can handle and understand more efficiently; when generating

descriptive statistics during the analysis, the Chi-Square Test of Association or independence was used in testing any association between or among categorical variables. The Chi-Square Test of Association determines whether there is an association between categorical variables (that is whether variables are independent of one another or related). It can only assess the association between categorical variables and cannot provide inferences about causation. Thematic analysis (TA) was used to analyse qualitative data which were collected from key informants (employers or their representatives) and study participants (UNZA Graduates). This method involved closely examining the data to identify the main themes and patterns in the data set that had been transcribed. In doing this, summaries were made from the information which the informants and study participants provided in the interviews and questionnaires, respectively, in relation to the role of social connections in the employability of UNZA Graduates in Zambia, in particular from the point of view and experience of employers as recruiters of UNZA Graduates. The summaries were useful in making sense from the data in order to identify shared meanings of the participants' views and experiences. These were used in the discussion and interpretation of research findings.

#### **4.7.1. Quality of the data**

In order to ensure quality for this study, this researcher maintained rigour by having his work peer reviewed by the supervisor throughout the research journey. This helped in improving the consistency and quality of the study. During thematic analysis the researcher also relied on what is called *member-checking process* whereby *some* transcripts were sent back to some participants (*not all of them*) for them to confirm that the transcripts represented what they really said. The aim is to establish credibility of the findings.

#### **4.7.2. Positionality and reflexivity**

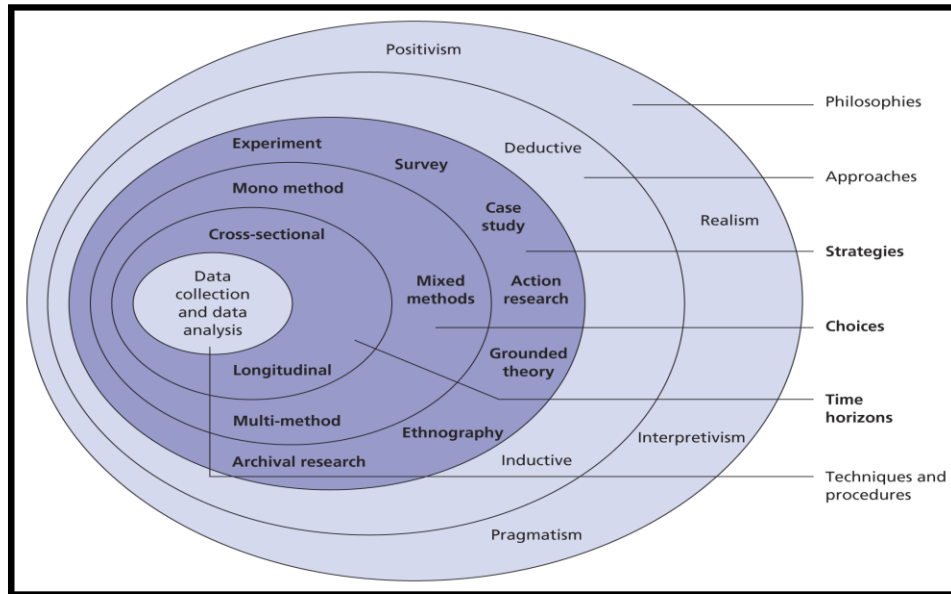
In dealing with informants (employers) for qualitative data, this researcher recognised the fact that being a University of Zambia Graduate himself, he was part of the subjects he was studying. And also the fact that he is working for the University of Zambia, he was aware that his *ontological and epistemological beliefs on the employability of University of Zambia Graduates could influence this research*. For instance, his personal values, beliefs and opinion about the employability UNZA Graduates could affect the way he would collect data, analyse and interpret

it. Therefore, it is particularly important for researchers to acknowledge and describe their entering beliefs and biases early in the research process to allow interviewees to understand their positions, and then bracket or suspend those researcher biases as the study proceeds.

#### **4.8. Research Philosophy: Pragmatism**

In order to understand the research process, Mark Saunders et al (2007) developed a research onion which describes the stages through which a researcher must pass when formulating an effective methodology, as shown in figure 3. The process starts with a research philosophy. A research philosophy refers to the set of beliefs concerning the nature of the reality being investigated (Bryman, 2012). It is the underlying definition of the nature of knowledge. The assumptions created by a research philosophy provide the justification for how the research will be undertaken (Flick, 2011). Research philosophies can differ on the goals of research and on the best way that might be used to achieve these goals (Goddard & Melville, 2004). These are not necessarily at odds with each other, but the choice of a research philosophy is defined by the type of knowledge being investigated in the research project (May, 2011). Therefore, understanding the research philosophy being used can help explain the assumptions inherent in the research process and how this fits the methodology being used. Pragmatism is the philosophical choice for this study. This philosophical approach is seen by researchers as one that provides an epistemological justification for mixing research methods (Onwuegbuzie et al, 2012). Pragmatism is generally regarded as the philosophical partner for the mixed methods approach. It provides a set of assumptions about knowledge and inquiry that underpins the mixed methods approach and distinguishes the approach from purely quantitative approaches that are based on a philosophy of positivism and from purely qualitative approaches that are based on a philosophy of interpretivism or constructivism (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Maxcy, 2003; Rallis & Rossman, 2003). While in pragmatic research, research paradigms can remain separate, they can also be mixed or combined into another research design. Hence, pragmatism views the mixing of quantitative and qualitative data in a single study not only as legitimate, but in some cases necessary. The period during which many commentators viewed quantitative and qualitative research as based on incompatible assumptions is often referred to as the 'paradigm wars' (Oakley, 1999) or the 'paradigm debate' (Creswell and Plano Clark 2011). The growing popularity of mixed methods research would seem to signal the end of the paradigm wars, as it is sometimes represented as having given way to pragmatism.

**Figure 3: The research onion**



*Source: ©Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis and Adrian Thornhill (2011)*

#### **4.8.1. Justification and Interpretation of Pragmatism**

The nature of the research problem for this study justifies the choice of pragmatism for carrying out the study. Most studies on social capital and the labour market are not only positivistic but have also been largely conducted in developed countries. This scenario has practically diminished generalisability of the findings of such studies to other regions elsewhere. In view of this predicament, studies that use mixed methods to address the gaps highlighted in the statement of the problem are needed. It is for this reason that the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods was required in this study. Furthermore, in justifying the choice of pragmatism for this study, it is possible to discern four facets of the way in which pragmatism underlies the practice of mixed methods research. These aspects of pragmatism are not necessarily mutually exclusive options. In practice there might well be a degree of overlap between them. However, the identification of four aspects of pragmatism, as used within the mixed methods approach, does serve to warn that the approach does not actually operate on the basis of a unitary, agreed vision of pragmatism.

On some occasions, (a) pragmatism provides a fusion of approaches. Seeking to challenge what are regarded as sterile and unproductive dualisms, some mixed methods researchers favour a

search for common ground—some compatibility—between the “old” philosophies of research (Maxcy, 2003; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, 2003). On other occasions (b) pragmatism provides a basis for using mixed methods approaches as a third alternative—another option open to social researchers if they decide that neither quantitative nor qualitative research alone will provide adequate findings for the particular piece of research they have in mind (Johnson et al., 2007; Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007b). Contrasting with this, there are times when (c) pragmatism is treated as a new orthodoxy built on the belief that not only is it allowable to mix methods from different paradigms of research but it is also desirable to do so because good social research will almost inevitably require the use of both quantitative and qualitative research to provide an adequate answer (Greene, Benjamin, & Goodyear, 2001; Greene, Kreider, & Mayer, 2005; Rocco et al., 2003). And then there are occasions when (d) pragmatism is treated in the common-sense way as meaning “expedient.” There is a common-sense use of the word pragmatic that implies a certain lack of principles underlying a course of action. There is the danger then that the mixed methods approach gets associated with this understanding of the word and thus comes to be regarded as an approach in which “anything goes.” It should be stressed that this is not the philosophical meaning of pragmatism and it is not a meaning that should be associated with the mixed methods approach.

#### **4.9. Research Strategy: Mixed Methods approach**

The research strategy is how the researcher intends to carry out the fieldwork (Saunders *et al.*, 2007). The strategy can include a number of different approaches, quantitative and qualitative.

##### **4.9.1. The Quantitative strategy**

As the name suggests, this approach is concerned with quantitative data (Flick, 2011). It holds a number of accepted statistical standards for the validity of the approach, such as the number of respondents that are required to establish a statistically significant result (Goddard & Melville, 2004). Although this research approach is informed by a positivist philosophy, it can be used to investigate a wide range of social phenomena, including feelings and subjective viewpoints. The quantitative approach can be most effectively used for situations where there are a large number

of respondents available, where the data can effectively be measured using quantitative techniques, and where statistical methods of analysis can be used (May, 2011).

#### **4.9.2. The Qualitative strategy**

The qualitative approach is drawn from the interpretivist paradigm or constructivist paradigm (Bryman, 2012). This approach requires the researcher to avoid imposing their own perception of the meaning of social phenomena upon the respondent (Banister *et al.*, 2011). The aim is to investigate how the respondent interprets their own reality (Bryman, 2012). This presents the challenge of creating a methodology that is framed by the respondent rather than by the researcher. An effective means by which to do this is through interviews, or texts, where the response to a question can be open (Feilzer, 2010). Furthermore, the researcher can develop the questions throughout the process in order to ensure that the respondent further expands upon the information provided. Qualitative research is usually used for examining the meaning of social phenomena, rather than seeking a causative relationship between established variables (Feilzer, 2010).

The field of social capital research has been dominated by quantitative analysis using survey data, and therefore, contexts, meanings, and motivations to create and sustain social capital are not fully explored. In order to understand these contexts, meanings, and motivations, it is important to include qualitative techniques in the study (Neves and Amaro, 2012). In this research, in the first instance, quantitative methods were employed to address the relationship between social capital and finding jobs in the labour market, through a survey of a random sample of 208 University of Zambia Graduates, who graduated in the years between 2000 and 2015, and who were in employment in the formal sector at the time of the study, and who were living in the City of Lusaka. In the second instance, qualitative methods, namely semi-structured interviews with selected employers and employment agencies, were used to explore more in depth the relationship between social capital and finding jobs in the labour market among the participants in this research.

**Table 4: Quantitative and qualitative assumptions**

Quantitative Assumptions	Qualitative Assumptions
<i>There is one objective reality</i>	<i>There are as many realities as there are actors</i>
<i>Context is less important in examining a phenomenon</i>	<i>Context is of paramount importance in examining a phenomenon</i>
<i>The researcher's biases are controlled through statistical methods</i>	<i>The researcher's biases are a necessary component of results interpretation</i>
<i>Research results are more valuable when analysing large samples whose results can be generalised to the larger population</i>	<i>Research results give us more depth and meaning when analysing smaller samples</i>

*Source:* ©UKaid (DFID), United States Institute of Peace, Search for Common Ground (2009)

#### **4.9.3. Purpose and justification of Mixed Methods approach**

Mixed methods research has developed rapidly in recent years. Championed by writers such as John Creswell (2006), Abbas Tashakkori (2003), Burke Johnson (2006), Anthony Onwuegbuzie (2006), Jennifer Greene (2006), and Charles Teddlie (2006), the mixed methods approach has emerged in the last decade as a research movement with a recognised name and distinct identity. It has evolved to the point where it is “increasingly articulated, attached to research practice, and recognized as the third major research approach or research paradigm” (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007). The origins of mixed methods research can be traced to its use among fieldwork sociologists and cultural anthropologists early in the 20th century (Creswell, 1999); (Johnson et al., 2007).

Mixed methods research is a systematic integration of quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study for purposes of obtaining a fuller picture and deeper understanding of a phenomenon. Mixed methods can be integrated in such a way that qualitative and quantitative methods retain their original structures and procedures. Alternatively, these two methods can be adapted, altered, or synthesized to fit the research and cost situations of the study (Johnson et al, 2006). Reviews of published mixed methods studies reveal the diversity of ways in which social researchers use mixed methods (Bryman, 2012; Greene et al., 2006; Rocco et al, 2003), with Collins et al. (2006) identifying four broad rationales existing within the extensive range of mixed methods research that they reviewed. Synthesizing the various typologies that arise from reviews of existing mixed

methods research, (a) some researchers use mixed methods to improve the accuracy of their data, whereas (b) others use mixed methods to produce a more complete picture by combining information from complementary kinds of data or sources. Sometimes (c) mixed methods are used as a means of avoiding biases intrinsic to single-method approaches—as a way of compensating specific strengths and weaknesses associated with particular methods. Mixed methods have been (d) used as a way of developing the analysis and building on initial findings using contrasting kinds of data or methods. And mixed methods approaches have often been (e) used as an aid to sampling with, for example, questionnaires being used to screen potential participants for inclusion in an interview program. This study employed a mixed method approach in the collection of data based on the reasons alluded to in the preceding sections in this chapter.

**Table 5: Purposes of Mixed Methods Approach**

Purposes of Mixed Methods Research	
<b>Triangulation</b>	<i>The use of multiple methods concurrently and with equal weight to test the validity of a finding</i>
<b>Complementarity</b>	<i>The use of multiple methods concurrently and preferably with equal weight to clarify the results of a finding</i>
<b>Expansion</b>	<i>The use of multiple methods sequentially or concurrently and with equal or unequal priority or weight to enhance the richness of a finding</i>
<b>Development</b>	<i>The use of mixed methods sequentially preferably with equal weight to shape future research processes</i>
<b>Initiation</b>	<i>The use of multiple methods concurrently and preferably with equal weight to stimulate new questions</i>

*Source:* ©UKaid (DFID), United States Institute of Peace, *Search for Common Ground* (2009)

#### **4.10. Empirical model**

Based on the conceptual and theoretical framework of this research, social capital is understood through three dimensions: bonding, bridging, and linking. These dimensions are measured separately in the quantitative phase of the research, and then aggregated to create a single social capital variable, through *Latent Class Model* estimation (LCM) (Fonseca and Neves, 2015). Social capital is a latent variable measured through its proxy dimensions (bonding, bridging, and linking resources). The specifics of the LCM method are tackled in the section that pertains to the quantitative data analysis.

#### **4.11. Measurement of social capital**

Social capital is a multidimensional concept that can be assessed only through a set of different measures. Social capital is operationally defined as the resources that can be drawn from our social connections. It has three main components: bonding social capital, bridging social capital, and linking social capital. We follow Flap's claim (2001; 2013) that to measure social capital, we need to measure:

1. Number of persons within one's social network available when the individual needs them
2. Strength (closeness) of connections indicating readiness to help
3. Resources of the people who are ready to help (e.g. information about an opportunity)

#### **4.12. Ethical considerations**

Participation in this study was voluntary. Participants were at liberty to decline participation and had the freedom to opt out at any point in the survey. In the latter option their answers would be destroyed. Those who decided to participate, their individual responses, including any contact information they provided, were kept confidential and were not shared with anybody other than the purpose for which the study was intended.

**Informed Consent:** Great care was taken to ensure that study participants and informants were willing to participate in the study. All the participants were provided with information in writing concerning the nature and basis for carrying out the research, and this was meant to allay any concerns they may have had. The researcher explained to potential participants the purposes of the study and how he was going to use the data that were going to be collected. The researcher endeavoured to let study participants decide if they wanted to take part in the project.

## CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH FINDINGS

### PART I: CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS

#### 5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the research findings on the demographic data and socio-economic characteristics of the study participants. These data focus on the issues as such the age distribution of study participants; their nationality; marital status; family's socio-economic situation; religious affiliation; parents' level of education and employment status; and finally the fields of study which participants specialised in while studying at the University of Zambia, including the schools from which they graduated. The terms '*study participants and respondents*' have been used interchangeably in this paper to refer to *UNZA Graduates*. The data have been summarized, organised and depicted in tabular representation in the following sections.

#### 5.2. Demographic and Socio-economic profile of study participants

The findings on the background information on the respondents is presented in table 6. The discrete data on the age of respondents and years of graduation were grouped in class intervals at an interval of five (5). The total number of participants in the study was 208, with a 100% response rate. The 100% response rate on some variables was obtained because in instances where some respondents were unable to fill up the questionnaires, such respondents would be replaced with other respondents on the register. The summary was based on the sex of respondents; their age, areas of residence at the time of the study; type of Degree obtained from the University of Zambia (UNZA); years of their graduation, the various fields of study they specialised in while studying at UNZA; their marital status at the time of the study; and lastly but not least there was a question on whether or not the study participants had any children at the time of the study.

**Table 6: Demographic profile of Study Participants (N = 208)**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Index</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Sex</b>	Male	138	66
	Female	70	34
<b>Age</b>	20 – 24	13	6.3
	25 – 29	133	63.9
	30 – 34	34	16.3
	35 – 39	18	8.7
	40 – 44	7	3.4
	No Response	3	1.4
<b>Area of residence</b>	High Cost	60	28.8
	Medium Cost	130	62.5
	Low Cost	16	7.7
	No Response	2	1
<b>Degree obtained</b>	Bachelor's Degree	202	97.1
	Master's Degree	6	2.9
	PhD	0	0
<b>Year graduated</b>	2001 – 2005	17	8.2
	2006 – 2010	28	13.4
	2011 - 2015	163	78.5
<b>Study Programmes</b>	Arts/Humanities	112	53.8
	BA (Edu)	30	14.4
	BALIS	15	7.2
	BSc (Agric.)	6	2.9
	BSc (Edu)	20	9.6
	BSc (Eng.)	9	4.3
	BSc (Env. Health)	8	3.9
	BSc (Med.)	5	2.4
	LLB	3	1.4
<b>Marital status</b>	Married	59	28.4
	Engaged	21	10.1
	Cohabiting	5	2.4
	Never married	114	54.8
	Separated	7	3.4
	Divorced	1	0.5
	No Response	1	0.5
<b>Do you have children</b>	Yes	55	26.4
	No	153	73.6

**Key:** Arts = Bachelor of Arts (Social Sciences); Humanities = Literature and Languages; BA (Edu) = Bachelor of Arts with Education; BALIS = Bachelor of Arts in Library and Information Science; BSc (Agric.) = Bachelor of Agriculture Science/Agricultural Economics; BSc (Edu) = Bachelor of Science with Education; BSc (Eng.) = Bachelor of Science in Engineering; BSc (Env. Health) = Bachelor of Environmental Health; BSc (Med) = Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery; LLB = Bachelor of Laws

**Source:** Survey data (2018)

### **5.2.1. Age of Study Participants**

According to the summarised data as indicated in table 6 on the 208 study participants, the findings show that 6.3% of respondents fell within the age range of 20-24, the majority of the respondents (63.9%) fell within the range of 25-29, approximately 16.3% fell in the age range of 30-34, while 8.7% of the respondents were in the age range of 35-39. Those who were in the range of 40-44 represented 3.4%, and about 1.4% did not respond to the question.

### **5.2.2. Sex or Gender of Study Participants**

On the question of gender or the sex of study participants, the results of the study show that 66% of the participants were males, and 34% were females as indicated in Table 6.

### **5.2.3. Residential Areas of Study Participants**

On the question of respondents' residential areas, table 6 shows information on the types of residential areas of respondents, that is, the residential areas where their homes were located at the time of the study. The results revealed that 28.8% of the respondents had their homes located in high costs residential areas; 62.5% had their homes located in medium costs residential areas; 7.7% had their homes located in low cost residential areas; while 1% did not respond to the question.

### **5.2.4. Marital Status of Study Participants**

On the question of marital status, the distribution of respondents is shown in table 6. The data show that the marital status of the study participants was dominated by those who were still unmarried or single at the time of the study. Approximately 54.8% indicated that they were single and had never married before, 28.4% were married, 10.1% were engaged to be married, 2.4% were living with their partners (Cohabitation), 3.4% were on separation from their spouses, 0.5% were divorced, and another 0.5% did not respond to the question as shown in table 6.

### **5.2.5. Study Participants' children**

Study participants were asked to indicate if they had any children at the time of the study. The results show that 26.4% indicated that they had children, 73.6% indicated that they did not have children.

### **5.2.6. Type of Degree obtained from UNZA**

As shown in table 6 above, respondents were asked to indicate the type of Degree(s) they obtained from the University of Zambia (UNZA) on graduation. The results show that 97.1% of the respondents obtained Bachelor's Degrees, while 2.9% of the respondents obtained Master's Degrees from the University of Zambia as shown in Table 6, and the results show that none of the study participants were in possession of a PhD qualification.

### **5.2.7. Year of graduation from UNZA**

According to the findings summarised in table 6, respondents were asked to indicate the year/month in which they graduated from UNZA with their Bachelor's Degree. The results show that 1.4% of the respondents graduated in November 2001, 1% of the respondents graduated in December 2003, 0.5% graduated in June 2004, 5.3% graduated in June 2005, 0.5% graduated in July 2006, 1.4% graduated in July 2007, 3.8% graduated in July 2008, 6.7% of the respondents graduated in August 2009, 1% graduated in September 2010, 1.9% graduated in August 2011, 6.3% of the respondents graduated in September 2012, 8.2% graduated in December 2013, 23.6% graduated in October 2014, and finally 38.5% of the respondents graduated in December 2015.

### **5.2.8. Field of specialisation of Study Participants at undergraduate**

Respondents were asked to indicate the field of study in which they specialized or majored at undergraduate level while studying at the University of Zambia. The results show that 14.4% of the respondents specialised or majored in the Arts-based Degree programmes with Education such as Bachelor of Arts with Education programmes such as Adult Education, Civic Education, Education Psychology, Environmental Education, and Special Education. In addition to the Arts-based Degree programmes with education, approximately 9.6% of the respondents specialised or

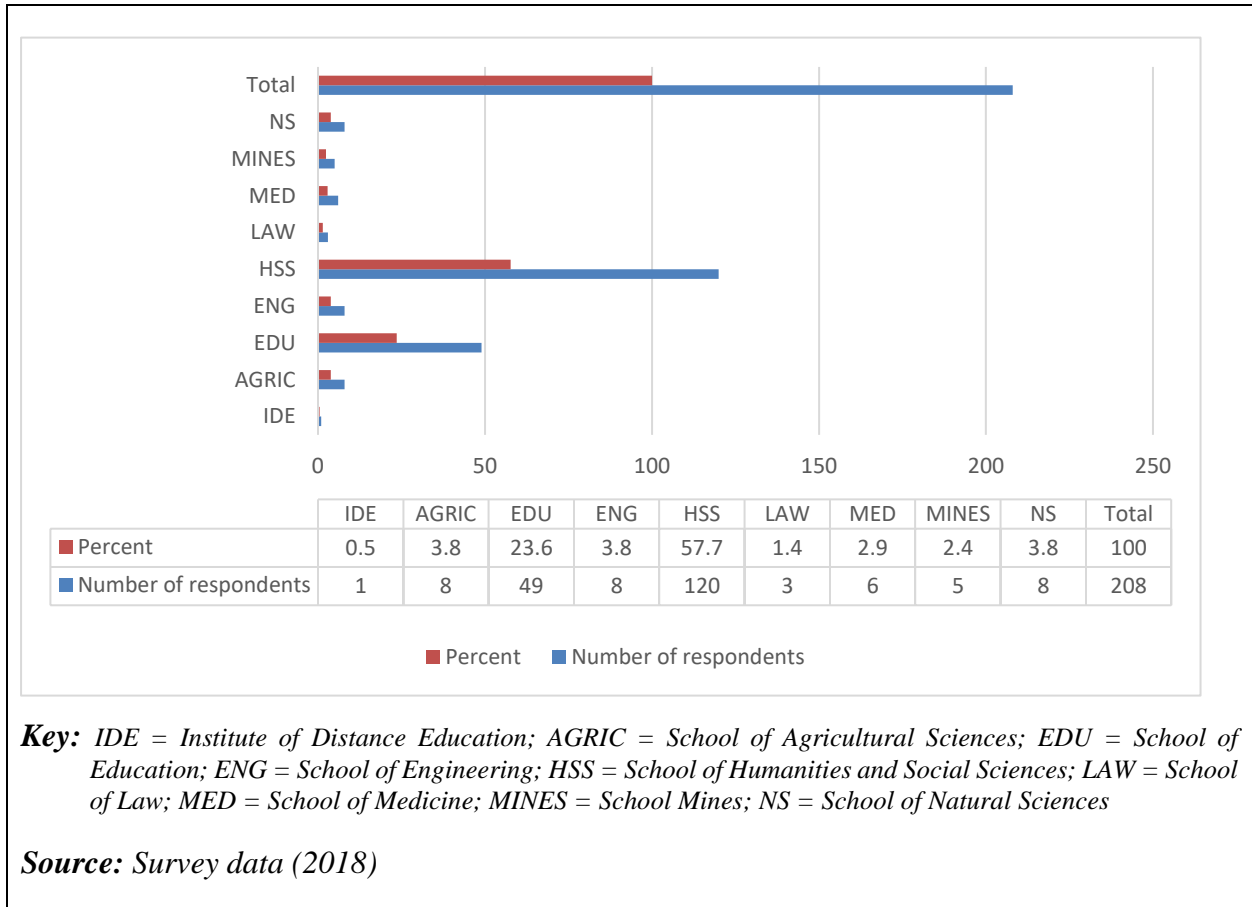
majored in Bachelor of Science with Education programmes such as Physics, Mathematics, Chemistry, Geography and Biology. In the Bachelor of Arts and Humanities Degree programmes, there were approximately 53.8% of the respondents who indicated that they had specialised or majored in the programmes such as Demography, Development Studies, Economics, French, Gender Studies, History, Mass Communication, Psychology, Public Administration, Social Work, and Sociology.

Furthermore, 1.4% of the respondents indicated that they specialised or majored in the Bachelor of Laws, and another 1.4% respondents specialised or majored in the Bachelor of Science with Environmental Health Sciences, 2.4% specialised or majored in the Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery. More findings indicate that 4.3% of the respondents specialised or majored in the Bachelor of Science with engineering programmes such as Power Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Geomatic Engineering, and Mining Engineering, 2.9% specialised or majored in the Bachelor of Science with Agriculture programmes such as Agricultural Economics, Agronomy, and Soil Sciences; 7.2% of the respondents indicated that they specialised or majored in the Bachelor of Arts with Library and Information Studies (BALIS) programme who also took a second major in the Arts programmes such as Demography, Development Studies, Economics, Public Administration, and so on as shown in table 6 above.

### **5.2.9. Study Participants' School(s) or Institute at UNZA**

Respondents were asked to indicate the name of the school(s) or institute(s) at UNZA in which they pursued their studies. The results show that 0.5% of the respondent pursued their studies at the Institute of Distance Education (IDE), 3.8% pursued their studies in the School of Agricultural Sciences, 23.6% were in the School of Education, 3.8% were in the School of Engineering, 57.8% of the respondents graduated from the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, 1.4% pursued them in the School of Law, 2.9% were in the School of Medicine, another 2.4% of the respondents pursued their studies in the School of Mines, and 3.8% did their studies in the School of Natural Sciences as shown in figure 4.

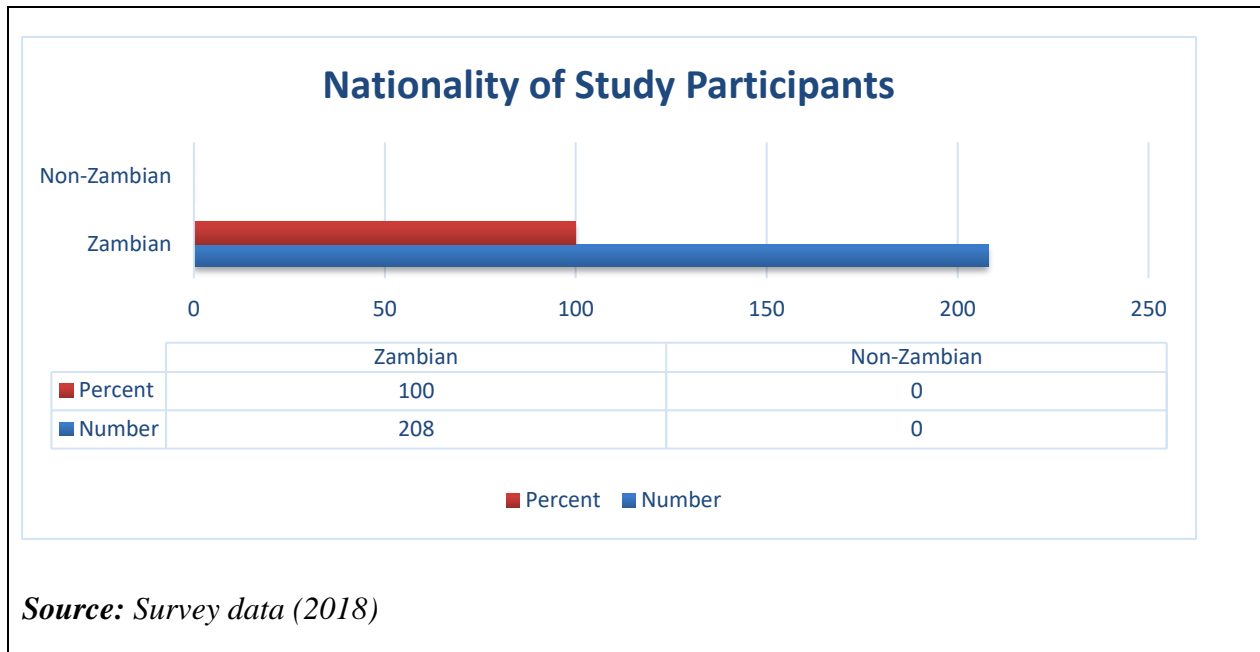
**Figure 4: School(s) or Institute(s) at UNZA**



### 5.2.10. Nationality of Study Participants

According to the results in figure 5 on the next page, respondents were asked to indicate their nationality and it was revealed that all the 208 respondents representing 100%, were Zambians by nationality.

**Figure 5: Nationality of Study Participants**



*Source: Survey data (2018)*

**5.2.11. Religious Affiliation of Study Participants**

On the question of religious affiliation, respondents were asked to name the religion they belonged to or affiliated to. The results show that 94.7% of the respondents were affiliated to Christianity, 2.9% were affiliated to Orthodox Christianity, and 2.4% of the respondents did not have any religion as indicated in table 7 below.

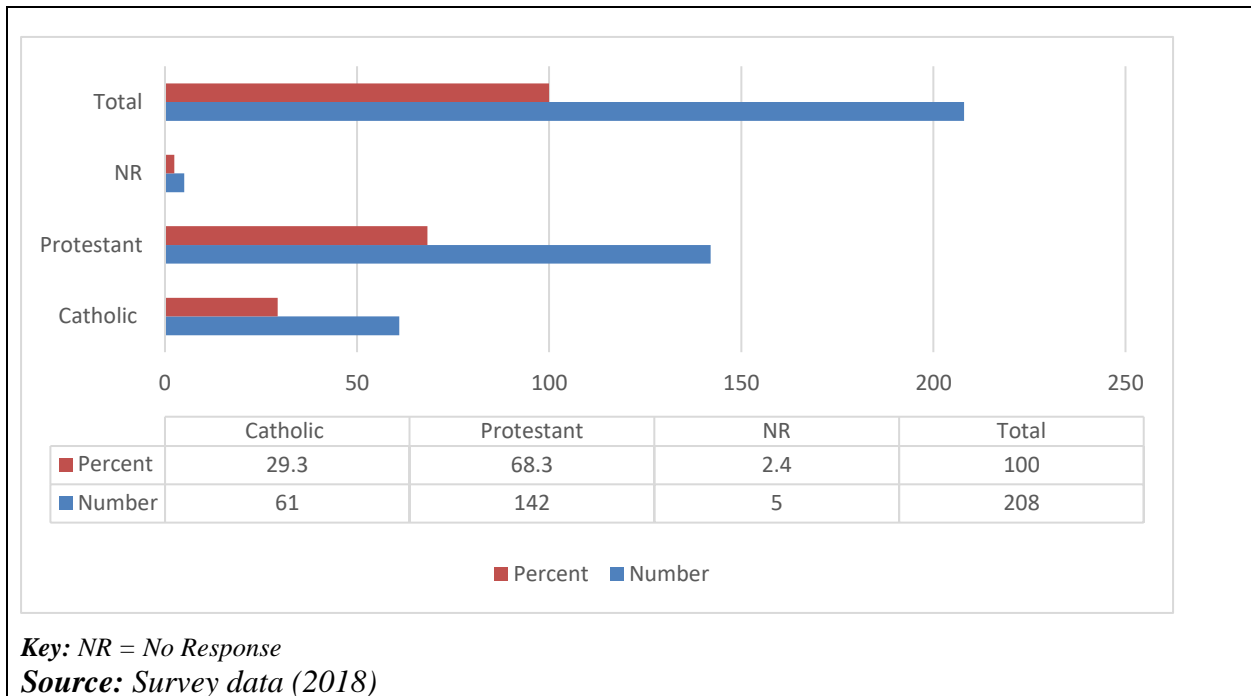
**Table 7: Religious Affiliation of Study Participants**

	<b>Religion</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
	Christian	197	94.7
	Orthodox Christian	6	2.9
	No religion	5	2.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Field data (2018)*

A follow up on the question of religious affiliation, respondents were asked to indicate the type of religious organization or denomination they belonged to. The results show that 29.3% of the respondents were Catholics, the majority (68.3%) of the respondents were Protestants, and 2.4% did not respond to the question as shown in figure 6.

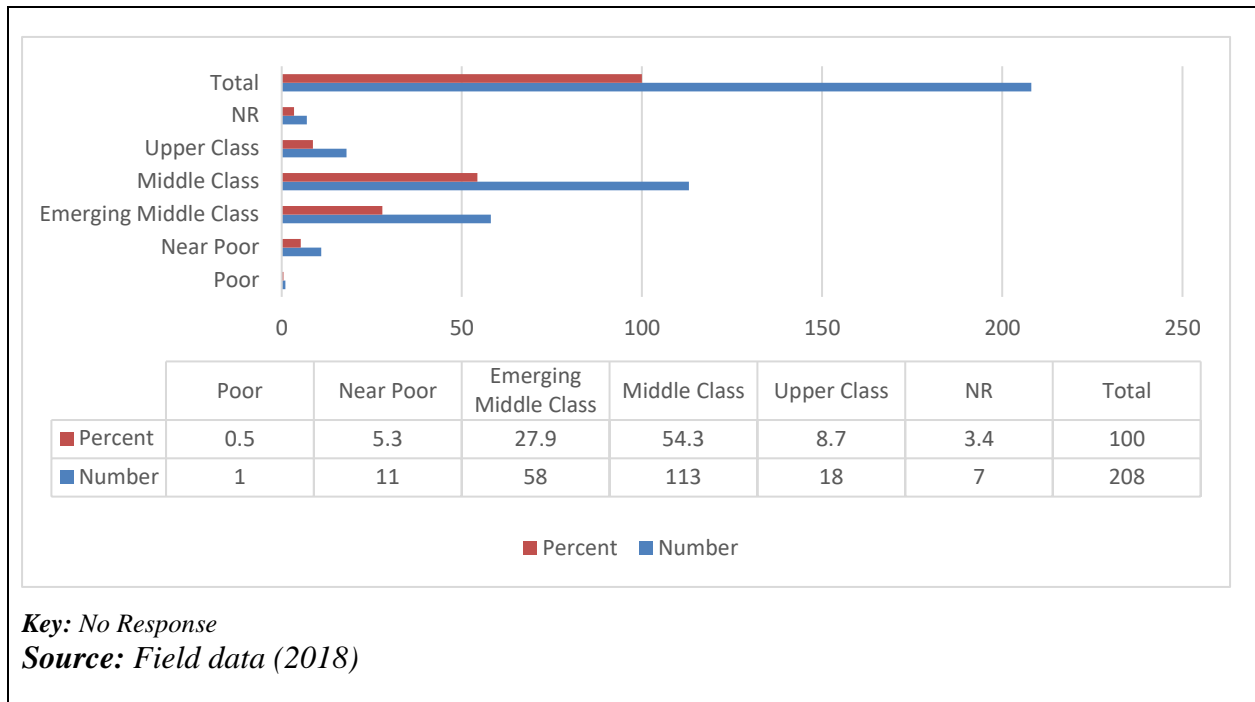
**Figure 6: Type of religious organization Study Participants belong to**



### 5.3. Socio-economic situation of Study Participants' families

The socio-economic situation of one's family can affect one's life chances in society. Therefore, in this study there was a provision for respondents to indicate their thinking on their family's socio-economic situation, this refers to the family which respondents were staying with at the time of the study. The data on the socio-economic situation are summarised in figure 7 on the next page. The study revealed that 0.5% of the respondent indicated that they were poor (0 - 2 USD/Day), 5.3% indicated that they were near poor (2 - 4 USD/Day), 27.9% of the respondents indicated that they were living in an emerging middle class (4 - 10 USD/Day), the majority (54.3%) of the respondents indicated that they were living in middle class families (10 - 20 USD/Day), 8.6% indicated that their families were in the upper class (20 + USD/Day), and 3.4% of the respondents did not respond to the question.

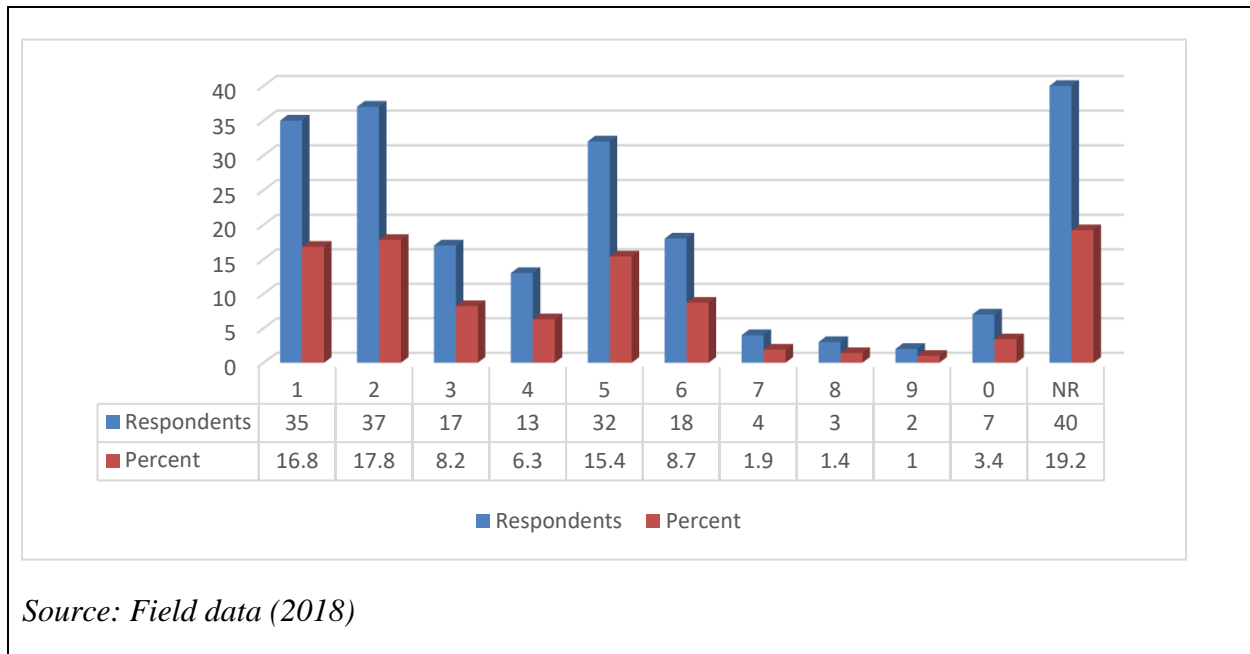
**Figure 7: Study Participants' family socio-economic situation**



### 5.3.1. People living with Study Participants

In the study, information was collected on the number of people who were living with the respondents at the time of the study. Table 10 is a summary of the information on the number of people living with the respondents at home. The results show that 16.8% indicated that they were only living with one (1) person at home, 17.8% were living with two (2) people, 8.2% were living with three (3) people, 6.3% of the respondents were living with four (4) people, 15.4% were living with five (5) people, 8.7% were living with six (6) people, 1.9% of the respondents were living with seven (7) people, 1.4% were living with eight (8) people, 1% respondents were living with nine (9) people, 3.4% were just living alone at their homes while 19.2% did not respond to the question.

**Figure 8: Number of People Study Participants Live With**

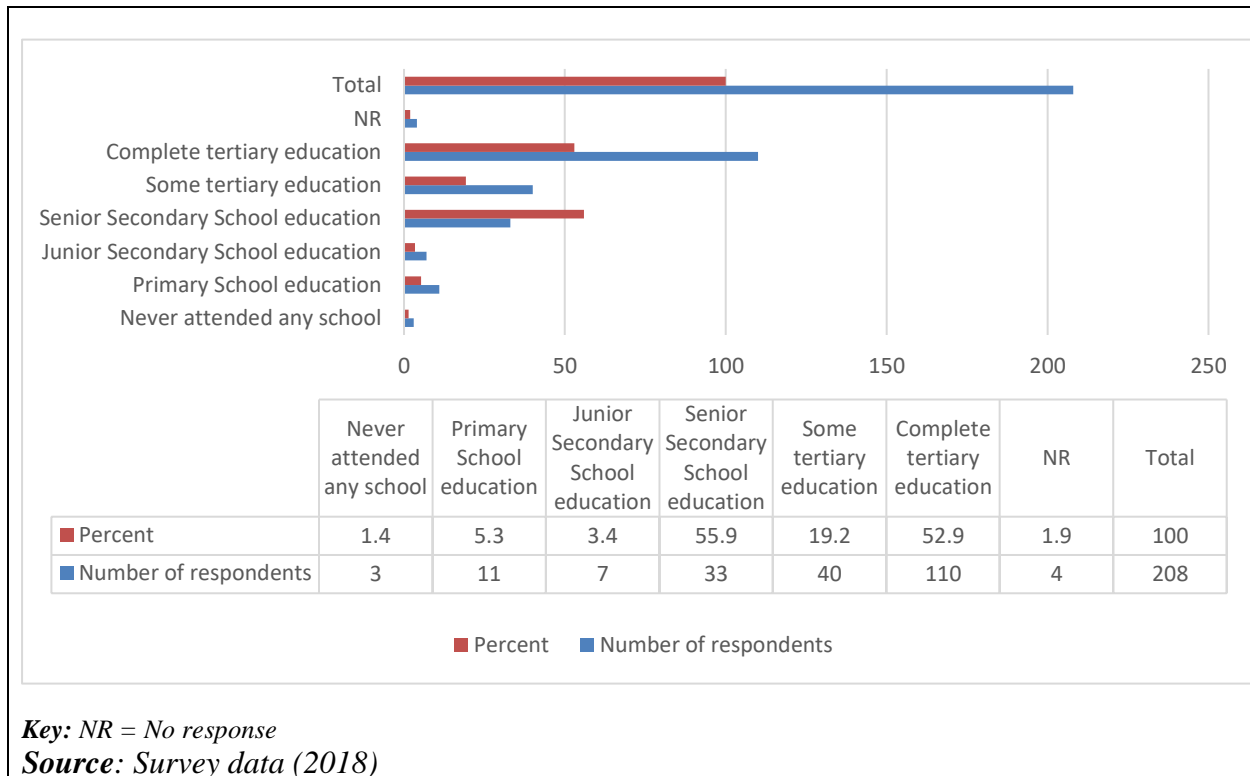


### 5.3.2. Study Participants' Parents' level of Education

Traditionally, family status variables such as parents' level of education and career have been regarded as predictors of children's academic and career achievement. Therefore, in this study respondents were asked to indicate the highest level of education their parents had attained.

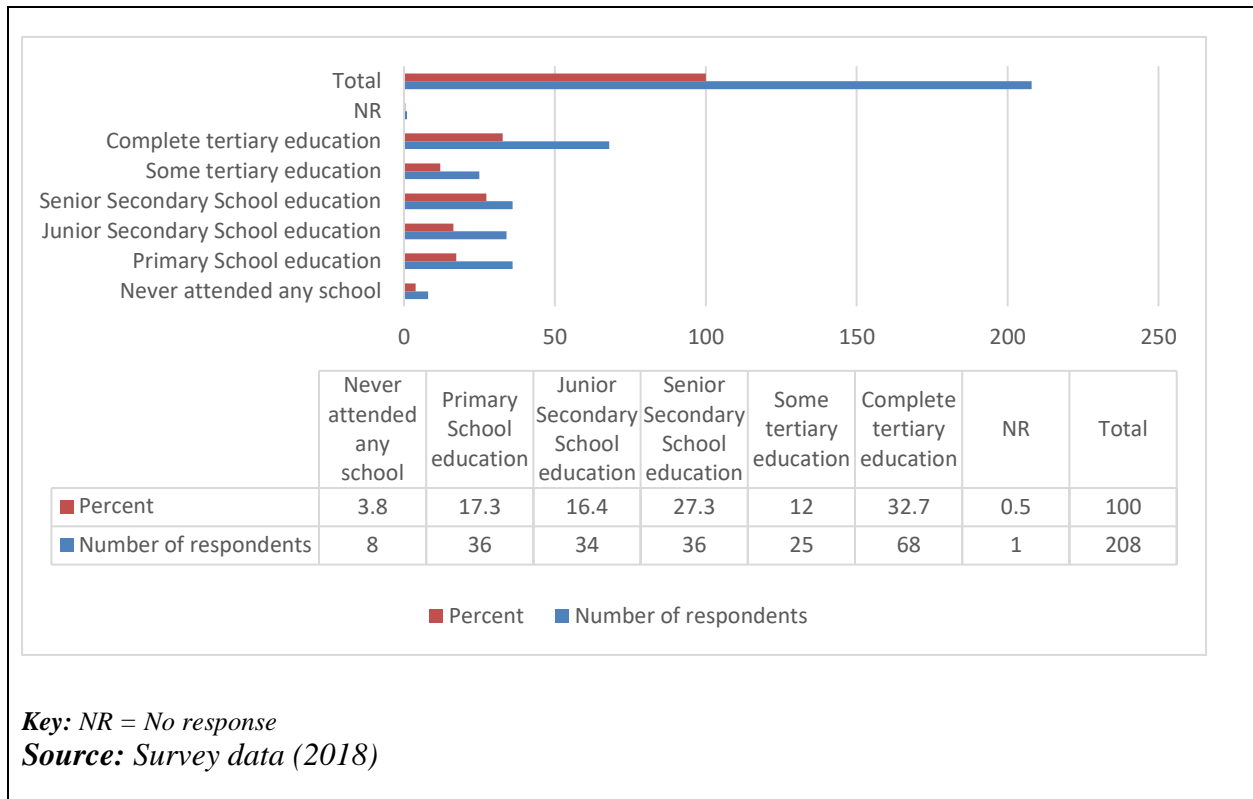
**Father's highest level of education:** On their fathers' highest level of education, the results show that 1.4% of the respondents indicated that their fathers had never attended any school, 1.9% indicated that their fathers had completed some primary/elementary school education, 3.4% indicated that their fathers had completed primary/elementary school education (Grade 1 – 7), another 3.4% of the respondents indicated that their fathers had completed junior high/secondary school education (Grade 8 – 9), 4.8% indicated that their fathers had completed some senior high/secondary school education, 11.1% of the respondents indicated that their fathers had completed senior high/secondary school education (Grade 10 – 12), 19.2% indicated that their fathers had completed some tertiary education, 47.6% respondents indicated that their fathers had completed tertiary education (e.g. Diploma or Bachelor's Degree), 5.3% of the respondents indicated their fathers had completed postgraduate level of education, while 1.9% did not respond to the question as shown in figures 9 and 10 below.

**Figure 9: Father’s highest level of education completed**



**Mother’s highest level of education:** On their mothers’ highest level of education, figure 10, respondents were asked to indicate the highest level of education their mothers had attained. The results show that 3.8% of the respondents indicated their mothers had never attended any school, 4.8% indicated that their mothers had completed some primary/elementary school education, 12.5% of the respondents indicated that their mothers had completed primary/elementary school education (Grade 1 – 7), 8.2% indicated that their mothers had completed some junior high/secondary school education, 8.2% indicated that their mothers had completed junior high/secondary school education (Grade 8 – 9), 7.2% of the respondents indicated that their mothers had completed some senior high/secondary school education, 10.1% indicated that their mothers had completed senior high/senior secondary school education (Grade 10 – 12), 12% of the respondents indicated that their mothers had completed some tertiary education, 32.7% indicated that their mothers had completed tertiary education (e.g. Diploma or Bachelor’s Degree) while 0.5% of the respondent did not respond to the question as below.

**Figure 10: Level of Mother’s highest education completed**



**5.3.3. Parents’ current employment situation**

Traditionally, family’ socio-economic status such as parents’ level of education, type of employment, income and type of residential area have been regarded as predictors of children’s academic and career achievement. Therefore, in this study respondents were asked to indicate the current employment situation of their parents. The data on the employment situation for the parents of respondents are depicted in the following tables. Table 8 is a tabular representation of the father’s current employment situation at the time of the study. Table 9 is showing the mother’s current employment at the time of the study.

**Table 8: Father's current employment situation**

<i>Father's current employment situation</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Employed full time	29	13.9
Employed part time	6	2.9
Never been employed before and not looking for work	4	1.9
Unemployed and not looking for work	8	3.8
Laid off and looking for work	1	0.5
Laid off and not looking for work	4	1.9
Self-employed (including business ownership)	24	11.5
Disabled and not able to work	3	1.4
Deceased	77	37.0
Retired	46	22.1
Non-Response	6	2.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Survey data (2018)*

Table 8 show information on the respondents' fathers' current employment situation. The results show that 13.9% of the respondents had fathers who were employed on full-time basis, 2.9% had fathers who were employed on part-time basis, 1.9% had fathers who had never been employed before and were not looking for work, 3.8% had father who were unemployed and not looking for work, 0.5% of the respondents' fathers were laid off and were looking for work, 1.9% indicated that their fathers were also laid off and were not looking for work, 11.5% had father who were self-employed (including business ownership), 1.4% of the respondents said they had fathers who were disabled and not able to work, 37% indicated that their fathers were deceased, 22.1% of the respondents indicated that their fathers were retired, while 2.9% respondents did not respond to the question.

**Table 9: Mother’s current employment situation**

<i>Mother’s current employment situation</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Employed full time	35	16.8
Employed part time	2	1.0
Never been employed before and not looking for work	17	8.2
Never been employed before and looking for work	1	0.5
Unemployed and not looking for work	10	4.8
Laid off and looking for work	1	0.5
Laid off and not looking for work	4	1.9
Self-employed (including business ownership)	57	27.4
Disabled and not able to work	2	1.0
Deceased	44	21.2
Retired	35	16.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Survey data (2018)*

In table 9 above shows a tabular representation of data on the study participants’ mothers’ current employment situation. The results show that 16.8% of the respondents had mothers who were employed on full-time basis, 1% said their mothers were employed on part-time basis, 8.2% had mothers who had never been employed before and were not looking for work, 0.5% of the respondents had mother who had never been employed before and were looking for work, 4.8% indicated that they had mothers who were unemployed and were not looking for work, 0.5% of the respondents had mother who were laid off and were looking for work, 1.9% had mothers who were laid off and not looking for work, 27.4% had mothers who were self-employed (including business ownership), 1% of the respondents’ mothers were disabled and not able to work, 21.2% indicated that their mothers were deceased, and 16.8% indicated that their mothers were retired.

## **PART II: UNZA GRADUATES AND EMPLOYMENT SITUATION**

### **5.4. Introduction**

This chapter presents both quantitative and qualitative findings of the study on a wide range of research variables, including; work and employment history of the study participants; job search methods which are used by job seekers in the labour market; membership of study participants to associations or clubs or organisations while studying at the University of Zambia; Opinions on the importance of a University of Zambia Degree today; and an aggregate of factors that influence the employability of UNZA graduates today. The quantitative data are presented first and have been summarized, organised and depicted in tabular representation as stated below. The second presentation in this chapter is on qualitative data, these data were collected using interviews with purposefully selected employers or their representatives, and also through open-ended questions in the questionnaire for University of Zambia graduates. This study employed a mixed-method approach in the collection of data. Qualitative data facilitated the exploration and gaining of a deeper understanding of social connections and employability of University of Zambia Graduates in recent years following the liberalisation of University education in Zambia. Qualitative data aim to understand how participants derive meaning from their surroundings, experiences and how their meaning influences their behaviour and social interaction.

### **5.5. Work and employment history**

On the question of study participants' work and employment history or situation table 10 is showing a tabular representation of the number of full time jobs the respondents had held after graduating from the University of Zambia. According to the results, respondents indicated the number of full-time jobs they had had after graduating from the University of Zambia, that is, where they worked for at least 6 months or longer. The results revealed that half of the respondents 49.5% had had only one full-time job since graduating from UNZA, 22.6% respondents had had two (2) full-time jobs since graduating from UNZA, 4.8% of the respondents had had three (3) full-time jobs since graduating, 1.4% of the respondents had had 5 full-time jobs, 0.5% had had nine (9) full-time jobs, and another 0.5% of the respondents said they already had a full-time job after graduating from the University, 5.8% respondents did not have any job while 15.4% of the respondents did not respond to the question.

**Table 10: Number of Full-Time Jobs after Graduating from UNZA**

<i>Number of Full-Time Jobs</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
1	103	49.5
2	47	22.6
3	10	4.8
5	3	1.4
9	1	0.5
Non-Response	32	15.4
Already have a job	1	0.5
No job	12	5.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Survey data (2018)*

In table 11 below, respondents were asked to indicate the number of part-time jobs they got or had after graduating from the University of Zambia where they worked not more than 35 hours per week or less than 6 months. These were part time jobs they may have had before going into full time or formal employment in various organisations they were currently working. The results revealed that 16.3% of the respondents only had one (1) part-time job, 1% had ten to 15 (10 to 15) part-time jobs, 26.4% had two (2) part-time jobs, 9.6% had three (3) part-time jobs, 5.3% of the respondents had four (4) part-time jobs, 0.5% had six (6) part-time jobs, 1.9% of the respondents had seven (7) part-time jobs, 3.8% had five (5) part-time jobs, 0.5% of the respondents already had a full-time job, 11.1% did not had had no part time job before gaining full time employment, while 23.6% did not respond to the question..

**Table 11: Number of Part-Time Jobs after Graduating from UNZA**

<i>Number of part time jobs</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
1	34	16.3
2	55	26.4
3	20	9.6
4	11	5.3
5	8	3.8
6	1	0.5
7	4	1.9
10 to 15	2	1
Non-Response	50	24.1
No job	23	11.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Field data (2018)*

### **5.5.1. First full time job of Study Participants after Graduating from UNZA**

Respondents were asked to indicate their first full time job after obtaining their Bachelor's Degree from the University of Zambia. The findings of the study show that 4.8% of the respondents were first employed as administrative officers, 0.5% were first employed as an admission advisor at a University, 1.4% of respondents were first employed as project Officers in the Civil Society Organisations, 5.8% were first employed as Monitoring and Evaluation Officers, 4.8% of the respondents were first employed as Survey Engineers, 0.5% were first employed as a project coordinator, another 0.5% were first employed as Assistant voter registration officer, 4.3% were first employed as Bank Clerks, 0.5% were first employed as a business advisor.

In addition, 6.3% of the respondents were first employed as Data Entry and Analysts, 1.4% were first employed as Tutors a University, 0.5% were first employed as Electrical Engineer at a Mining Company, 4.8% were first employed as Research Assistants for a Research Organisation, 1.2% were first employed as Hospital Pharmacists, 4.3% of respondent were first employed as interns pending full time employment, 0.5% of the respondent were first employed as Internal Control Officer at a Bank, another 0.5% were first employed as Legal Assistant at a Law Firm, 2.4% were first employed as Lecturers at a University, 1% of the respondents were first employed as Loan Consultants at a Financial Institution, 1% were first employed as Production Officers at Zambia National Service (ZNS), 0.5% were first employed as Program Assistant at an International Non-Governmental Organisation, and 1% of the respondents were first employed as Project Mineralogists at a Mining Company.

Furthermore, 1.9% were first employed as Project Officers in the private sector; 0.5% of the respondent were first employed as Regulatory Affairs Assistant Officers, 9.1% were first employed as Teachers in the Ministry of Education, 0.5% were first employed as Retail Service Executive, 1% of the respondents were first employed as a Software Developer, 1% of the respondents were first employed as Social Welfare Officers, 2.4% respondents were first employed as Tax Consultants, 0.5% of the respondent was first employed as TEVET Officer, another 0.5% of the respondents were first employed as Video Producer for Choose for a Television and Broadcasting Company, 0.5% were first employed as a Graduate Trainee for an Insurance

Company, and 2.9% were first employed by the in the Marketing department of a Parastatal Corporation.

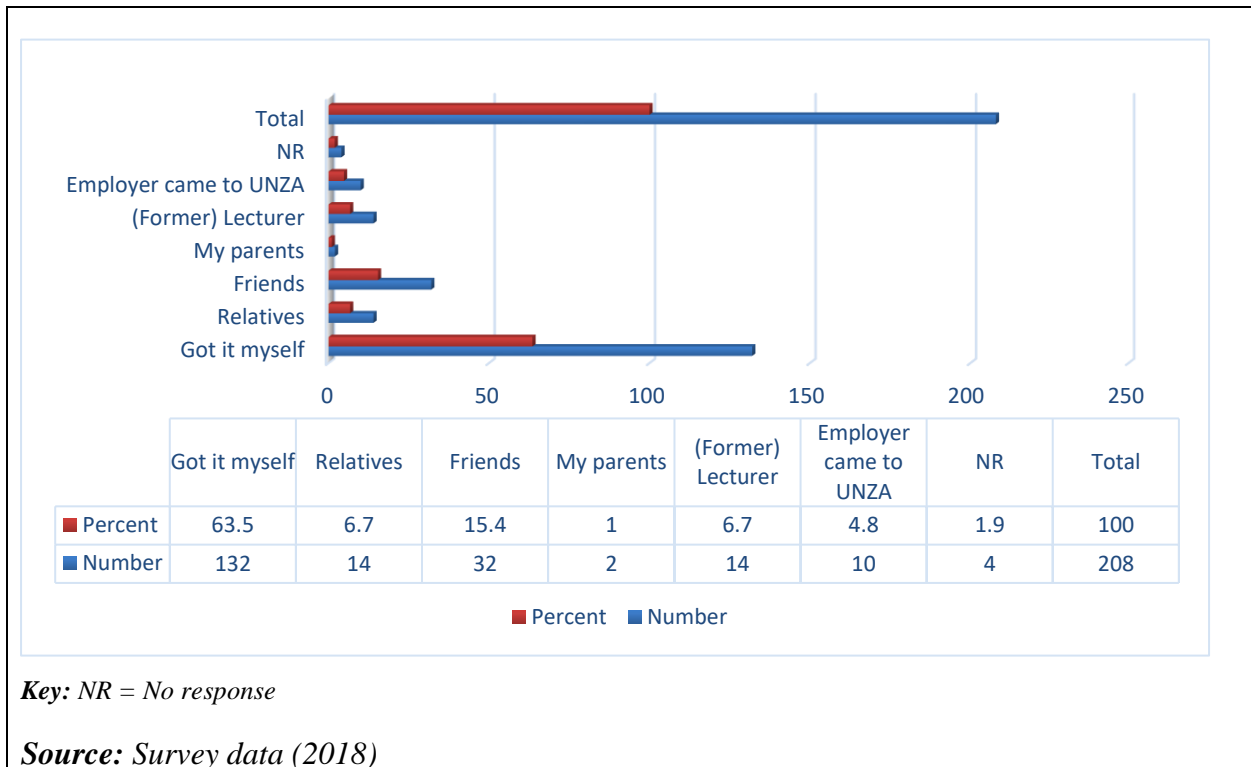
### **5.5.2. Time it took to obtain the first full time job**

Study participants or respondents were asked to indicate the number of months or years it took them to get their first full-time job after obtaining their Bachelor's Degree at UNZA. The results show that 1.9% of the respondents indicated that it took them less than a month to get their first full-time job, 56.3% took 1 to 6 months to get their first full-time job, 14.4% took 7 months to 12 months (one year) to get their first full-time job, 10.6% took about 18 months (1.5 years) to get their first full-time job, 2.9% took about 2 years to get their first full-time job, 1% of the respondents to 2 years and 6 months to get their first full-time job, another 1% took about 3 years to get their first full-time job, and 0.5% of the respondent said that it took them about 3 years 6 months to get their first full-time job. In addition, 2.4% respondents indicated that they already had a job the time they were obtaining their bachelor's degree at UNZA, 4.3% respondents indicated that they were out of employment at the time of the study, while 4.8% of the respondents did not respond to the question.

### **5.5.3. How Study Participants found their full time first job**

Study Participants were asked to indicate how they found their first jobs by indicating the people that helped them to get those jobs after obtaining their Bachelor's Degree from UNZA. The results show that 63.5% indicated that they got it themselves, 6.7% were helped by their relative(s), 15.4% were helped by their friends, 1% were helped by their parents, 6.7% were helped by their former lecturers, 4.8% were employed by employers who came to UNZA to look for graduates, and 1.9% of the respondents did not respond to the question as shown in figure 13.

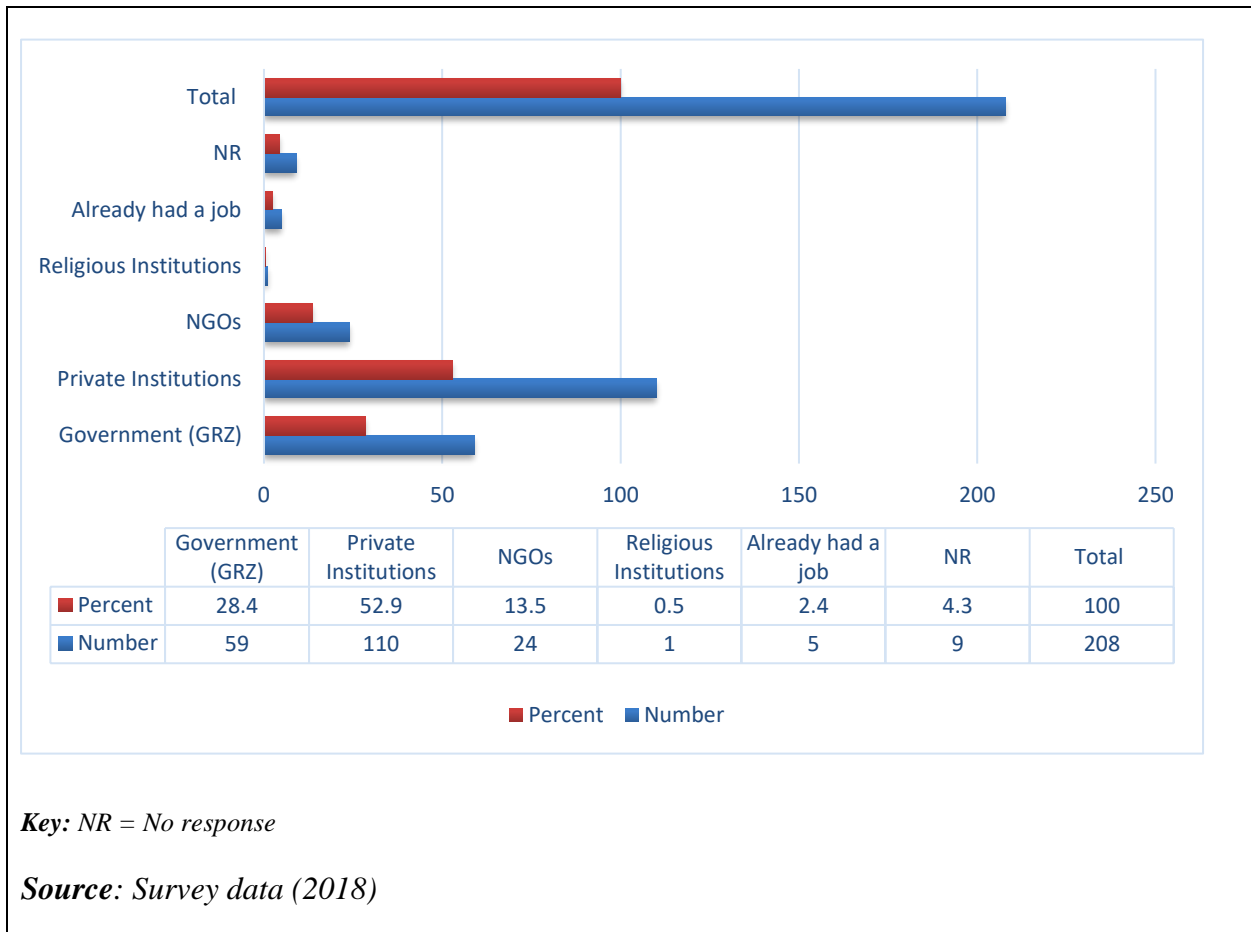
**Figure 13: People that helped to find the first job**



#### 5.5.4. First employer after Graduating from UNZA

Respondents were asked to indicate their first employer after obtaining their Bachelor’s Degree from the University of Zambia. The results show that 28.4% were first employed by the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ), 52.9% were first employed by Private Institutions, 13.5% of the respondents were first employed by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), 0.5% were first employed by a Religious Institution, 2.4% already had jobs at the time of their graduation from the University of Zambia, and 4.3% did not respond to the question as shown in figure 14.

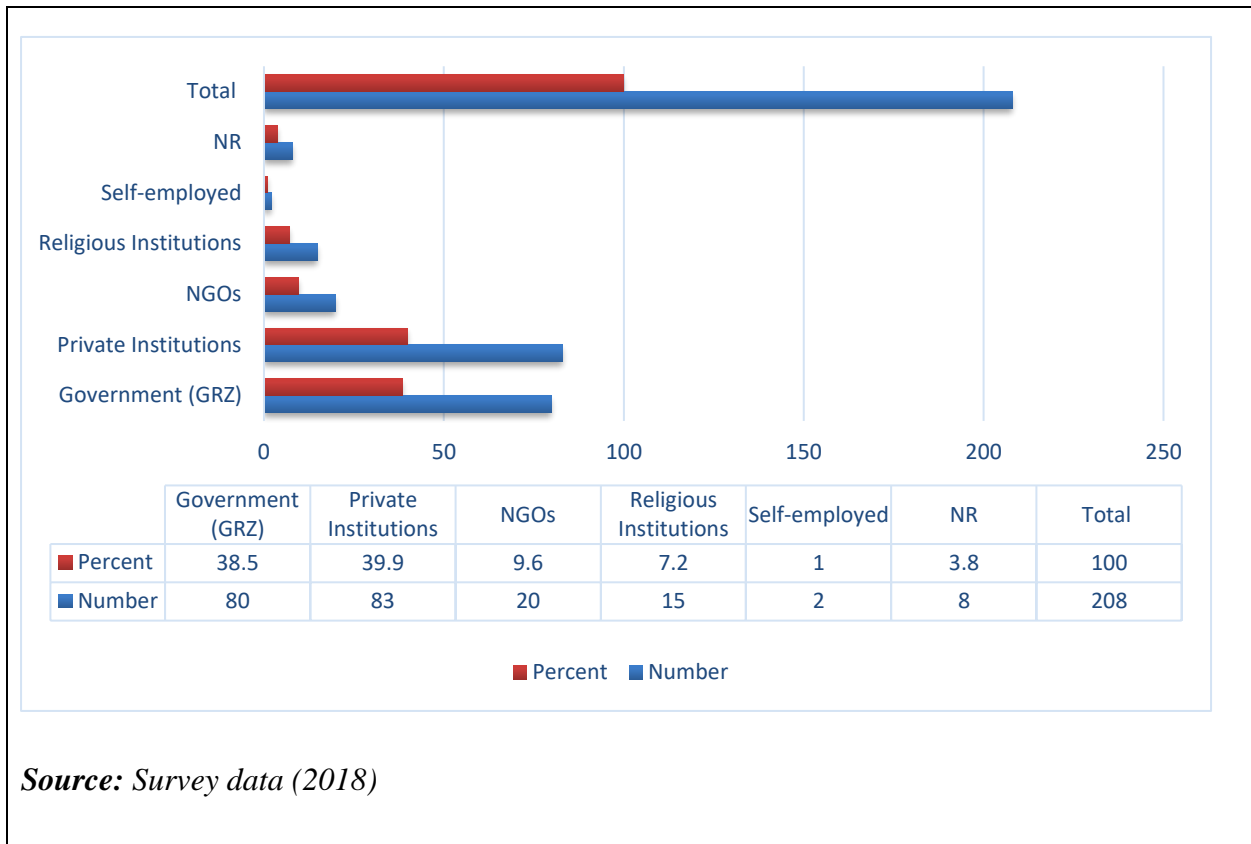
**Figure 14: First employer after obtaining a Bachelor’s Degree**



**5.5.5. Name of Study Participants’ current employer**

When asked about the names of the current employer of respondents or the employer at the time of the study, the results revealed that 38.5% of the respondents were employed by the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ), 39.9% were employed by institutions in the Private Sector, 9.6% of the respondents were employed by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), 1% were in Self-employment at the time of the study, 7.2% of the respondents were employed by the Religious Institutions, and 3.8% of the respondents did not respond to the question as shown in figure 15 below.

**Figure 15: Name of the current employer of Study Participants**



*Source: Survey data (2018)*

**5.5.6. Study Participants’ specific current main job**

Respondents were asked to indicate the main current paid job at which they were spending most of their time. The results showed that 3.4% of the respondents were working as Administrative Officers, 0.5% were working as Agricultural Research Officer, 1% were Outreach Social Work Specialist, 0.5% of respondent were working as Bank Clerk, 1.4% of the respondents were working as Chief Survey Engineers in-charge of all engineering, construction and mining surveys, 1.4% were working as Chiefs and Traditional Affairs Officers at the Ministry of Chiefs and Traditional Affairs, 0.5% were working as Credit Officer, another 0.5% of the respondent were working as Customer Service Consultant, and 1.4% of the respondents were working as Data Entry Officers.

In addition, 1.9% of the respondents were working as Directors at Captain Electrical Limited, 1% were working as Food Assistant Information Officers, 0.5% were working as Geographical Information Officer (GIO), 0.5% were working as Government Legal Practitioner, another 0.5%

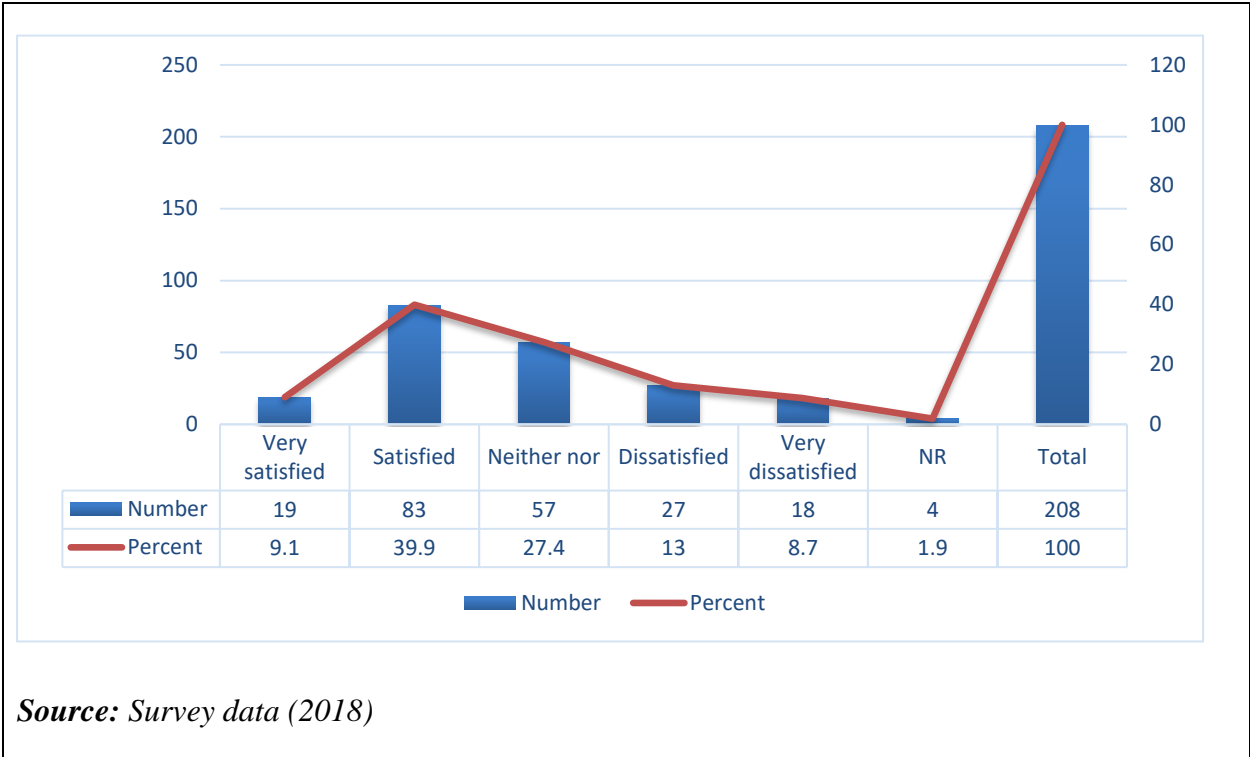
were working as Graduate Assistant-Student Outreach Coordinator, 0.5% of the respondents were working as Head of Department, 1.9% were working as Health Information Officers, 0.5% of the respondents were working as Insurance Underwriter, another 0.5% were working as Internal Control Officer at a Bank, 2.9% of the respondents were doing internship pending employment, 0.5% of the respondents were working as Information Technology Security Officer, 0.5% were working as Junior Analyst at a Parastatal Corporation, 1% of the respondents were working as Practicing Law in a Law Firm, and 2.9% of the respondents were working as Lecturers at a University.

Furthermore, 1% of the respondents were working as Loan Consultants at a Financial Institution, 0.5% were working as Maintenance Engineer, 1.4% of the respondents were working as Managers for Risk and Compliance at a Bank, 0.5% were working as Manager for an Outreach Programme, another 0.5% of the respondent were working as Market Segment Specialist, 1% of the respondents were Mineralogists, 8.7% were working as Monitoring and Evaluation Officers, 1% of the respondents were working as Project Coordinators, 1.4% were working as Project Officers, 1% were working as Regulatory Affairs Assistant Officers, 5.8% of the respondents were working as Research Assistant Officers, and 0.5% of the respondents were working as Research Project Coordinator, 2.4% of the respondents were working as Research Consultants, 0.5% were working as Sales Support Agent, 1% of the respondents were working as Structural Adjustment Programme Consultants, 1% were working as Senior Agricultural Officers, 0.5% were working as Senior Credit Assistant for a Bank, 1% of the respondents were working as Senior Mine Planning Engineers, 1.9% of the respondents were working as Statisticians, 8.7% were working as Teachers, 0.5% were working as Territory Sales Manager, another 0.5% of the respondents were as Treasury Sales manager, 1.4% of the respondents were working as Tutors at a University, and 3.8% did not respond to the question.

#### **5.5.7. Study Participants' job satisfaction**

When asked about how satisfied the respondents were with their current job, the results show that 8.7% were very dissatisfied, 13% were dissatisfied, 27.4% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied while 39.9% were satisfied and 9.1% were very satisfied. However, 1.9% of the respondents did not respond to the question as shown in figure 16.

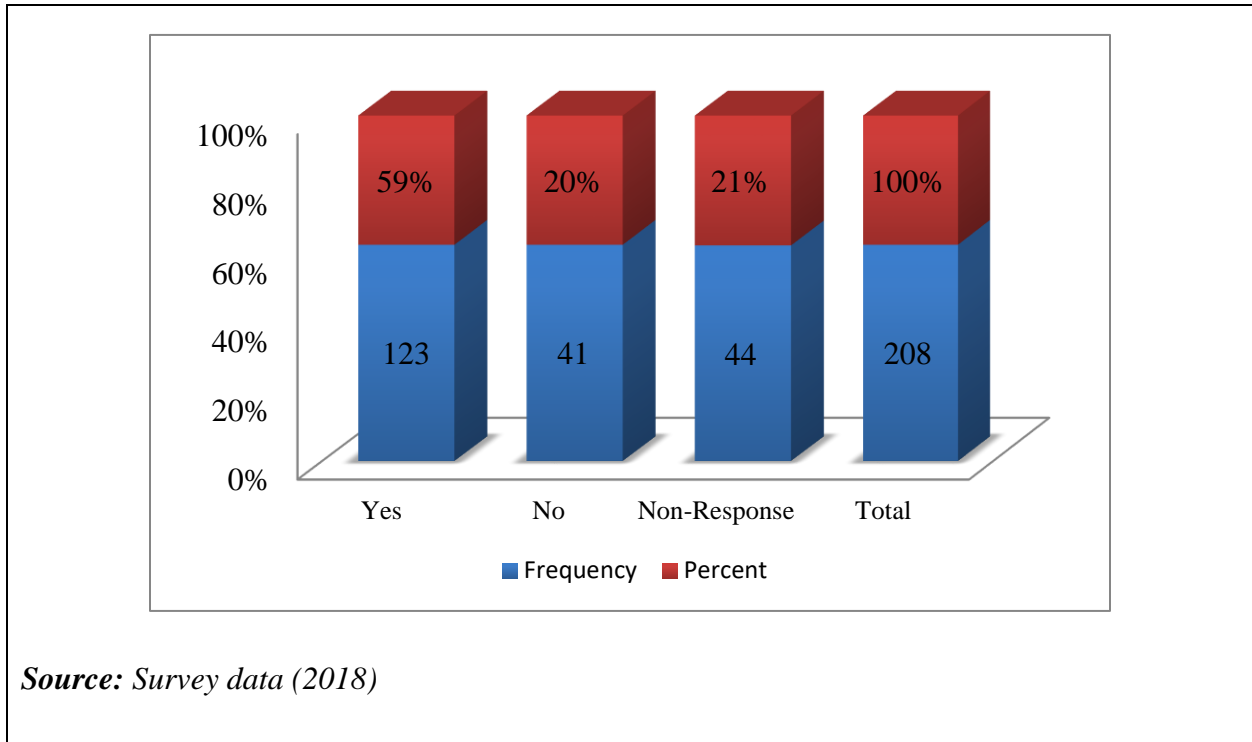
**Figure 16: Level of Satisfaction with their current job**



**Membership in clubs or associations at UNZA**

As indicated in figure 17 below, respondents were asked to indicate whether they belonged to any association or club or organization while studying at UNZA as undergraduates.

**Figure 17: Membership to any Association while studying at UNZA**



The results revealed that the majority of respondents, 59% agreed that they belonged to an association when they were still studying at the University of Zambia, while 19.7% did not belong to any association. However, 21% of the respondents did not respond to the question as shown above.

**Table 12: Name of respondents' Association/Club/Organisation while at UNZA**

Name of the Association/Club/Organisation	Frequency	Percent
Church Group Association	20	9.6
Field of Study Student Associations	130	62.5
Junior Chambers in the show Grounds	6	2.9
Young Women in Action	3	1.4
Youth Action Movement and Planned Parenthood Association of Zambia	3	1.4
Non-Response	46	22.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Survey data (2018)*

On belonging to any association or club while studying at UNZA, the respondents were asked to indicate the names of their association/club/organisation. The results show that 62.5% of the

respondents were members of associations aligned to their fields of study, 9.6% were member of Religious associations such as the University of Zambia Seventh Day Adventist Forum and the University of Zambia Catholic Community (e.g. Catholic Bible Study Group, CARITAS UNZA and Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement), 2.9% of the respondents were members of the Junior Chambers in the show Grounds, 1.4% were members of the Young Women in Action, and another 1.4% were members of the Youth Action Movement and Planned Parenthood Association of Zambia, while 22.1% of the respondents did not respond to the question as shown in table 12 above.

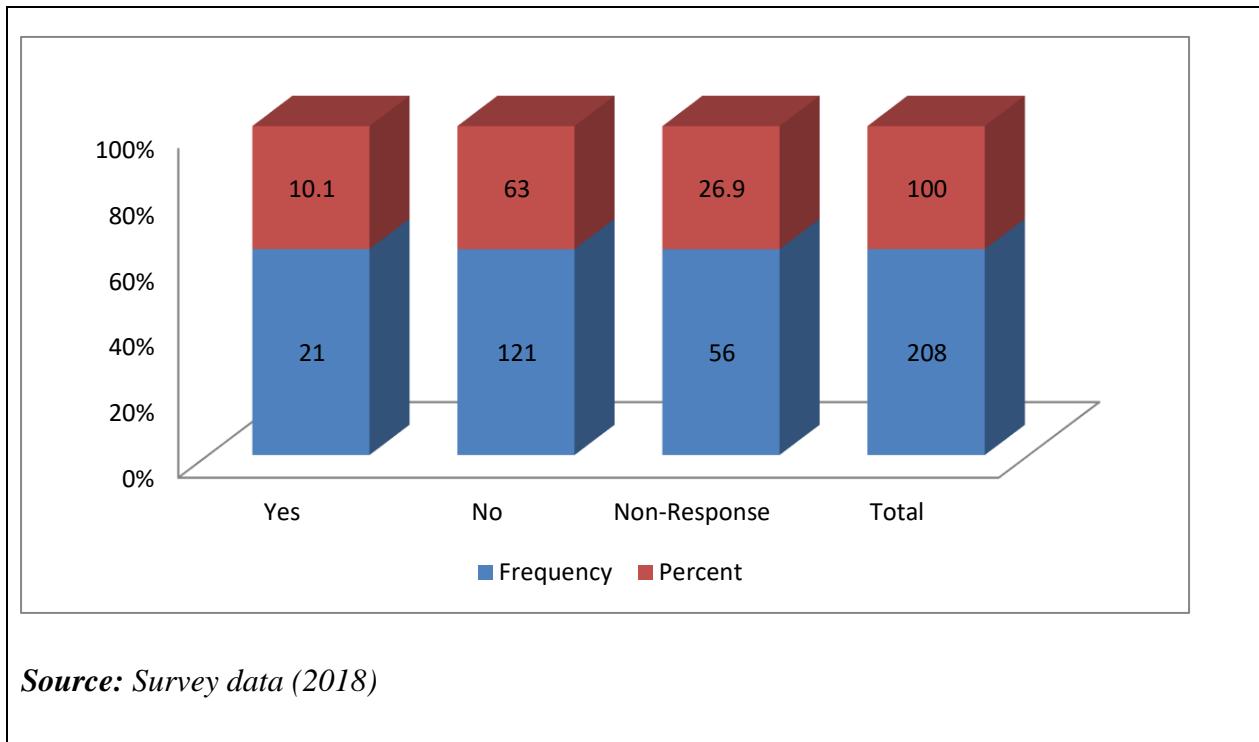
**Table 13: Rate of Study Participants' participation in the association**

<i>Participation</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Not active at all	20	9.6
Somewhat active	55	26.4
Active	43	20.7
Very active	39	18.8
Non-Response	51	24.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Survey data 2018*

In table 13 above, respondents were asked to indicate how they would rate their participation in the activities of the association/club/organisation as a member. The results revealed that 9.6% of the respondents were not active at all, 26.4% indicated that they were somewhat active, 20.7% of the respondents were active, 18.8% were very active, and 24.5% of the respondents did not respond to the question as shown above.

**Figure 18: Role of membership to the association in finding a job**



In figure 18 above, respondents were asked to indicate whether their membership to the association/club/organisation played any role in helping them to find a job after graduation. The results show that 10.1% of the respondents agreed that their membership to the association/club/organisation played some role in helping them find a job after graduation, 63% indicated that their membership to the associations or clubs did not play any role in their employment, while 26.9% of the respondents did not respond to the question as shown above.

**Table 14: Study Participants involvement in their community's activities**

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
Very often	33	15.9	15.9
Often	48	23.1	38.9
Sometimes	36	17.3	56.3
Rarely	28	13.5	69.7
Not at all	18	8.7	78.4
Non-Response	45	21.6	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

*Source: Survey data (2018)*

In table 14 above, respondents were asked to indicate how often they involved themselves in any groups of people who get together to do an activity or to talk about different issues in local or community groups. The results show that 15.9% of the respondents did involve themselves very often, 23.1% did involve themselves often, 17.3% did involve themselves sometimes, 13.5% of the respondents rarely involved themselves in such groups, and 8.7% of the respondents did not involve themselves at all, while 21.6% did not respond to the question as shown above.

**Table 15: Study Participants’ involvement in any national groups or organization**

<i>Level of involvement</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Very often	2	1.0
Often	28	13.5
Sometimes	51	24.5
Rarely	28	13.5
Not at all	56	26.9
Non-Response	43	20.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Survey data (2018)*

According to the findings as indicated in table 15 above, respondents were asked to indicate the number of times they involved themselves in any national groupings or organisations such as political groups and national associations. The results show that 1% of the respondents did involve themselves very often, 13.5% did involve themselves often, 24.5% of the respondents did involve themselves sometimes, and 13.5% indicated that they rarely involved themselves, 26.9% of the respondents did not involve themselves at all, and 20.7% of the respondents did not respond to the question as shown above.

## **5.6. UNZA Graduates’ Job search methods and Social connections**

In this section the objective was to establish the number of people that respondents were roughly in contact with on an ordinary day and also the type of job search methods which they used in obtaining their first employment after graduating from the University of Zambia.

The results show that 1% of the respondents, on average, they were usually in contact with one (1) person in an ordinary day, 13% on average were in contact with ten (10) people in an ordinary day, 1% on average were in contact with twenty (20) people in an ordinary day, 2.4% of the

respondents, on average were in contact with eleven (11) people in an ordinary day, 2.9% on average were in contact with twelve (12) people in an ordinary day, 4.8% were in contact with fifteen (15) people in an ordinary day on average, and 3.4% on average were in contact with two (2) people in an ordinary day.

**Table 16: Knowledge of Study Participants of people they were in contact with**

<i>People respondents' were in contact with</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Know almost all of them well	27	13.0
Know most of them well	56	26.9
Know about half of them well	63	30.3
Don't know most of them well	57	27.4
Know almost none of them	5	2.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Survey data (2018)*

In table 16 above, respondents were asked to indicate how well they knew the people they were in contact with in an ordinary day. The results show that 13% of the respondents knew almost all of them well, 26.9% knew most of them well, 30.3% of the respondents knew about half of them well, 27.4% did not know most of them well, and 2.4% knew almost none of them as shown in the table above.

**Table 17: Types of influential People Study Participants Knew**

<b>Influential Persons You May Know</b>		<b>Responses (N = 208)</b>	
		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>(a)</b>	owns a business	73.6%	26.4%
<b>(b)</b>	is a professional such as a Lawyer, Manager, Teacher or Doctor	75.5%	24.5%
<b>(c)</b>	is a politician such as a Member of Parliament (MP), Councillor or any Senior Political Party Official etc.	39.9%	60.1%
<b>(d)</b>	is a senior government official such as a Director, Permanent secretary, Minister etc.	31.7%	68.3%
<b>(e)</b>	is a local government official (e.g. Town Clerk ,or Director, etc.	45.2%	54.8%

*Source: Survey data (2018)*

In table 17, respondents were asked to indicate the types of people in influential positions whom they knew in the course of their life. The results revealed that 73.6% of the respondents knew someone who owned a business while 26.4% did not know any person who owned a business, 75.5% knew someone who was a professional such as a Lawyer, Manager, Teacher or Doctor while 24.5% did not know anyone in this category, 39.9% of the respondents knew someone who was a politician such as a Member of Parliament (MP), Councillor, and so on, while 60.1% did not know anyone in this category, 31.7% of the respondents indicated that they knew someone who was a senior government official such as a Director, Permanent secretary, Minister and so on, while 68.3% did not know any in that category, and 45.2% of the respondents indicated that they knew someone who was a Local Government official (such as Town Clerk ,or Director, etc.) while 54.8% did not know any this category as shown above.

**Table 18: Methods Study Participants used to get their first job**

<b>Method of getting first full time job</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Through social connections	71	34.1
Made unsolicited or direct applications	54	26.0
Responded to Newspaper adverts	28	13.5
Responded to Television adverts	6	2.9
Responded to Radio adverts	1	0.5
I already had a job	1	0.5
Campus interviews	2	1.0
I was nominated by UNZA	1	0.5
I was nominated by my School at UNZA	2	1.0
I was nominated by Department at UNZA	15	7.2
Job advert discovered through social media	21	10.1
Through Internship	6	2.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Survey data (2018)*

According to table 18 above, respondents were asked to select one method through which they successfully obtained or got their first job after obtaining their Bachelor’s Degree from UNZA. The results revealed that 34.1% of the respondents used social connections to obtained their first job, 26% indicated they made unsolicited or direct applications to obtain their first job, 13.5% said that they responded to Newspaper job advertisements to obtain their first job, 2.9% of the respondents responded to Television job advertisements to obtained their first job, 0.5% of the

respondent responded to a Radio advertisement to obtain his/her first job, and another 0.5% indicated that they already had a job the time they were obtaining their Bachelor’s Degree from UNZA.

Furthermore, 1% of the respondents indicated that they attended campus interviews (conducted by their current employer on campus) to obtained their first job, 0.5% were nominated by UNZA to obtained their first job, 1% were nominated by their School at UNZA to obtained their first job, 7.2% were nominated by their Departments at UNZA to obtained their first job, 10.1% responded to a job advertisement through social media and the internet (such as Facebook; LinkedIn etc.) to obtain their first job, and 2.9% of the respondents used internship to get their first job as shown above.

**Table 19: Most favoured job search method in the labour market in Zambia**

<i>Most favoured job search method</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Social connections	124	59.6
Unsolicited or direct applications	20	9.6
Newspaper adverts	17	8.2
Radio adverts	1	0.5
Social media (e.g. Facebook; LinkedIn; emails etc.)	34	16.3
Employment agencies	9	4.3
Campus interviews (conducted by an organisation on campus)	1	0.5
University connections (through Schools or Departments)	2	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Survey data (2018)*

In table 19 above, respondents were asked to indicate what they believed or what they thought was the most favoured job search method or strategy generally in the labour market in Zambia. The results show that 59.6% of the respondents believed that Social connections were the most favoured job search method generally in the labour market in Zambia today, 9.6% of the respondents believed that unsolicited or direct applications was the most favoured job search method in the labour market in Zambia, and 8.2% believed that responding to Newspaper advertisements was the most favoured job search method in the labour market in Zambia. Furthermore, 0.5% of the respondent believed that radio advertisements were the most favoured

job search method in the labour market in Zambia, 16.3% of the respondents believed that social media (such as Facebook; LinkedIn; emails etc.) was the most favoured job search method, 4.3% believed that employment agencies were the most favoured job search method, 0.5% of the respondents believed that campus interviews (conducted by an organisation on campus) were the most favoured job search method in the labour market in Zambia, and 1% believed that university nominations (through Schools or Departments) were the most favoured job search methods in the labour market in Zambia as shown above.

**Table 20: Importance of social connections among UNZA Graduates**

<i>Importance of social connections</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Definitely Not important	6	2.9
Somehow important	32	15.4
Important	61	29.3
Definitely important	105	50.5
No opinion	4	1.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Survey data (2018)*

According to the findings in table 20 above, respondents were asked to indicate their opinion on the importance of social connections or social networks of UNZA graduates' in search for job opportunities in the labour market nowadays. The results revealed that 2.9% of the respondents were of the opinion that social connections of UNZA graduates in search for job opportunities on the labour market nowadays were definitely not important, 15.4% were of the opinion that social connections or social networks of UNZA graduates in search for job opportunities were somehow important, 29.3% were of the opinion that social connections or social networks of UNZA graduates in search for job opportunities on the labour market nowadays were important, 50.5% of the respondents were of the opinion that social connections or social networks of UNZA graduates in search for job opportunities were definitely important, and 1.9% of the respondents had no opinion on the importance of social connections or social networks of UNZA graduates in search for job opportunities in the labour market as shown above.

**Table 21: Effectiveness of social connections in getting a job**

<i>Effectiveness of social connections</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Definitely Not effective	7	3.4
Somehow Not effective	22	10.6
Not sure	13	6.3
Somehow effective	66	31.7
Definitely effective	96	46.2
No opinion	4	1.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Survey data (2018)*

In table 21 above, respondents were asked to indicate their opinion on the effectiveness of social connections or social networks in search of job opportunities in the labour market among UNZA graduates. The results indicate that 3.4% of the respondents were of the opinion that social connections or social networks in search of job opportunities in the labour market among UNZA graduates were definitely not effective, 10.6% held the opinion that social connections or social networks in search of job opportunities among UNZA graduates were somehow not effective, 6.3% were not sure about the effectiveness of social connections or social networks in search of job opportunities in the labour market among UNZA graduates, 31.7% of the respondents were of the opinion that social connections or social networks in search of job opportunities among UNZA graduates were somehow effective, 46.2% were of the opinion that social connections or social networks in search of job opportunities among UNZA graduates were definitely effective, while 1.9% of the respondents had no opinion on the effectiveness of social connections or social networks in search of job opportunities among UNZA graduates as shown above.

**Table 22: It's who you know, and not what you know**

<i>"It is who you know, and not what you know"</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
I agree very much	102	49.0
I agree a little	72	34.6
I disagree a little	20	9.6
I disagree very much	14	6.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Survey data (2018)*

Table 22 above shows respondents' responses on the assertion that in the labour market today: *“it's who you know, and not what you know.”* The results show that 49% of the respondents agreed very much with the assertion, 34.6% agreed a little with the assertion, 9.6% disagreed a little with the assertion, and 6.7% disagreed very much with the assertion.

**Table 23: Factors affecting finding a job in the labour market in Zambia**

OPINION STATEMENT	Agree very much	Agree a little	Disagree a little	Disagree very much
There is discrimination in the offering of job opportunities in Zambia nowadays	78 (37.5%)	100 (48.1%)	16 (7.7%)	14 (6.7%)
Black Zambians have as many job opportunities as Zambians of other races	60 (28.8%)	52 (25%)	52 (25%)	44 (21.2%)
There is a practice of tribalism in the labour market in Zambia nowadays	50 (24%)	90 (43.3%)	47 (22.6%)	21 (10.1%)
UNZA graduates' socio-economic background does not determine their chances of finding a job in Zambia today	55 (26.4%)	51 (24.5%)	67 (32.2%)	35 (16.8%)
Nepotism ( <i>i.e. giving jobs to relatives and friends</i> ) is rampant in Zambia regardless of one's educational qualifications	108 (51.9%)	74 (35.6%)	20 (9.6%)	6 (2.9%)
Being in possession of a UNZA Degree is what determines UNZA graduates' success in the labour market and not any other factor	7 (3.4%)	22 (10.6%)	79 (38%)	100 (48.1%)
UNZA graduates have higher chances of getting a job in the labour market than graduates from other universities in Zambia ( <i>e.g. CBU or University of Lusaka</i> )	20 (9.6%)	66 (31.7%)	59 (28.4%)	63 (30.3%)

*Source: Survey data (2018)*

In the findings, as indicated in table 23, respondents were asked to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with some factors that may have affected a job seeker in obtaining a job in the labour

market in Zambia. The results revealed that 37.5% of the respondents agreed very much and 48.1% agreed a little that there is discrimination in the offering of job opportunities in Zambia, while 7.7% disagreed a little and 6.7% disagreed very much with the statement. On the question of whether or not race plays any role in the employability of job seekers in Zambia, 28.8% agreed very much and 25% agreed a little that black Zambians have as many job opportunities as Zambians of other races, while 25% disagreed a little and 21.2% disagreed very much with the statement.

Furthermore, on the practice of tribalism in the labour market in Zambia, 24% of respondents agreed very much and 43.3% agreed a little that there is a practice of tribalism in the labour market in Zambia, while 22.6% disagreed a little and 10.1% disagreed very much with the statement. Respondents were also asked to indicate their opinion on the assertion UNZA Graduates' socio-economic status or background does not determine one's chances of finding a job, 26.4% agreed very much and 24.5% agreed a little that UNZA Graduates' socio-economic background does not determine their chances of finding a job in Zambia today while 32.2% disagreed a little and 16.8% disagreed very much with the statement. When the question of nepotism in the offering of jobs in the labour market was brought up, 51.9% agreed very much and 35.6% agreed a little that nepotism (that is, giving jobs to relatives and friends) is rampant in Zambia regardless of one's educational qualifications, while 9.6% disagreed a little and 2.9% respondents disagreed very much with the statement.

Furthermore, 3.4% of the respondents agreed very much and 10.1% agreed a little that being in possession of a UNZA Degree is what determines UNZA Graduates' success in the labour market and not any other factor, while 38% disagreed a little and 48.1% disagreed very much with the statement, and 9.6% agreed very much and 31.7% agreed a little that UNZA Graduates have higher chances of getting a job in the labour market than graduates from other universities in Zambia (e.g. CBU or University of Lusaka), while 28.4% disagreed a little and 30.3% disagreed very much with the statement as shown above.

The findings, as indicated in table 24 are showing how respondents felt about people helping their relatives to obtain jobs in the labour market in Zambia. The respondents were asked to indicate how much or to what extent they agreed or disagreed with statements indicated in the table below. The results indicated that 3.4% of the respondents agreed very much and 23.6% agreed a little that if someone had a chance of helping a person get a job, it is always better to choose a relative than a friend, while 35.6% disagreed a little and 37.5% disagreed very much with the statement. 1.4% agreed very much and 4.8% agreed a little that when someone has a serious problem, only relatives can help while 23.1% disagreed a little and 70.7% disagreed very much with the statement. When looking for a job, a person should find a job in their home district or town even if it means losing a better job somewhere else; 1.4% agreed very much and 1.9% agreed a little with the statement, while 6.3% disagreed a little and 90.4% disagreed very much with the statement as shown in the table below.

**Table 24: Opinion on helping relatives only**

<b>OPINION STATEMENT</b>	<b>Agree very much</b>	<b>Agree a little</b>	<b>Disagree a little</b>	<b>Disagree very much</b>
If someone has a chance of helping a person get a job, it is always better to choose a relative than a friend	7 (3.4%)	49 (23.6%)	74 (35.6%)	78 (37.5%)
When someone has a serious problem, only relatives can help	3 (1.4%)	10 (4.8%)	48 (23.1%)	147 (70.7%)
When looking for a job, a person should find a job in his/her home district, even if it means losing a better job somewhere else	3 (1.4%)	4 (1.9%)	13 (6.3%)	188 (90.4%)

*Source: Survey data (2018)*

### **5.7. Importance of a University of Zambia Degree**

Table 25 below, shows the opinion of the study participants on the importance of a University of Zambia Degree in the employability of UNZA Graduates. The respondents were asked to indicate whether a person holding a Bachelor's degree from UNZA finds it easier to get a job than a person with a Bachelor's degree from another university in the country.

**Table 25: Importance of a UNZA Degree versus other Degrees**

<i>Importance of a UNZA Degree</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Definitely Not important	25	12.0
Somehow not important	29	13.9
Not sure	6	2.9
Somehow important	78	37.5
Definitely important	63	30.3
No opinion	7	3.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Survey data 2018*

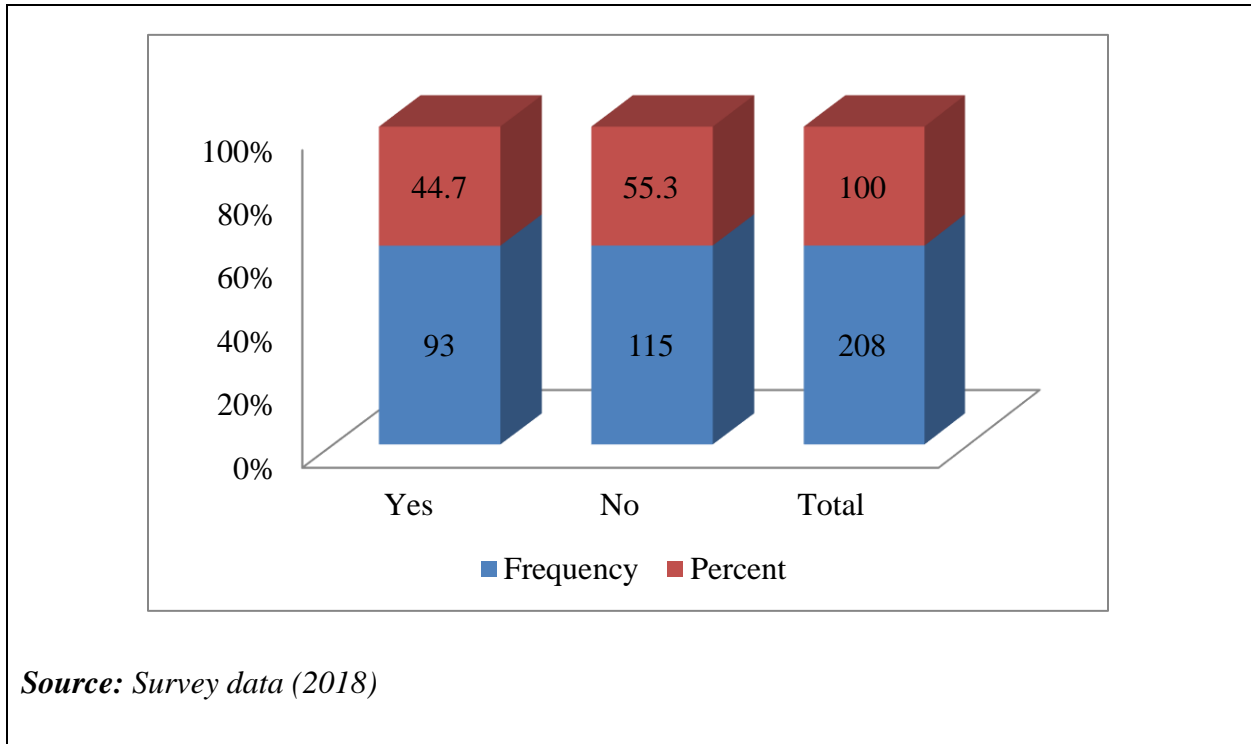
The results revealed that 12% of the respondents indicated that a Bachelor’s Degree from UNZA was definitely not important, 13.9% indicated that a Bachelor’s Degree from UNZA was somehow not important, 2.9% indicated that they were not sure whether a person holding a Bachelor’s Degree from UNZA finds it easier to get a job than a person with a Bachelor’s Degree from another university in Zambia. On the other hand, 37.5% of the respondents indicated that a Bachelor’s Degree from UNZA was somehow important, 30.3% indicated that a Bachelor’s Degree from UNZA was definitely important while 3.4% indicated that they had no opinion whether a person holding a Bachelor’s Degree from UNZA finds it easier to get a job than a person with a Bachelor’s Degree from another university in Zambia as indicated above in table 25.

As indicated in figure 19 below, on the question of whether or not all university graduates in Zambia had an equal opportunity of getting a job regardless of which university they graduated from, respondents were asked to indicate their thoughts on this question. The results show that 44.7% of the respondents agreed that all university graduates, regardless of which university they graduated from, had an equal opportunity of getting a good job in Zambia while 55.3% disagreed.

As a follow up question, respondents were asked to give reasons, as part of qualitative data, for their answers to whether all university graduates, regardless of which university they graduated from, had an equal opportunity of getting a good job in Zambia. In the analysis of these qualitative data, several themes were generated from the responses and these were; (i) **all university graduates** had equal opportunities of getting a good job in Zambia; (ii) **graduates from the University of Zambia** had more opportunities of getting a good job in Zambia; (iii) **graduates from the University of Zambia and Copperbelt University** had more opportunities of getting a

good job in Zambia; and (iv) **social connections or social networks determine** whether or not one would get a good job in Zambia. The themes are discussed in detail in the chapter six on discussion.

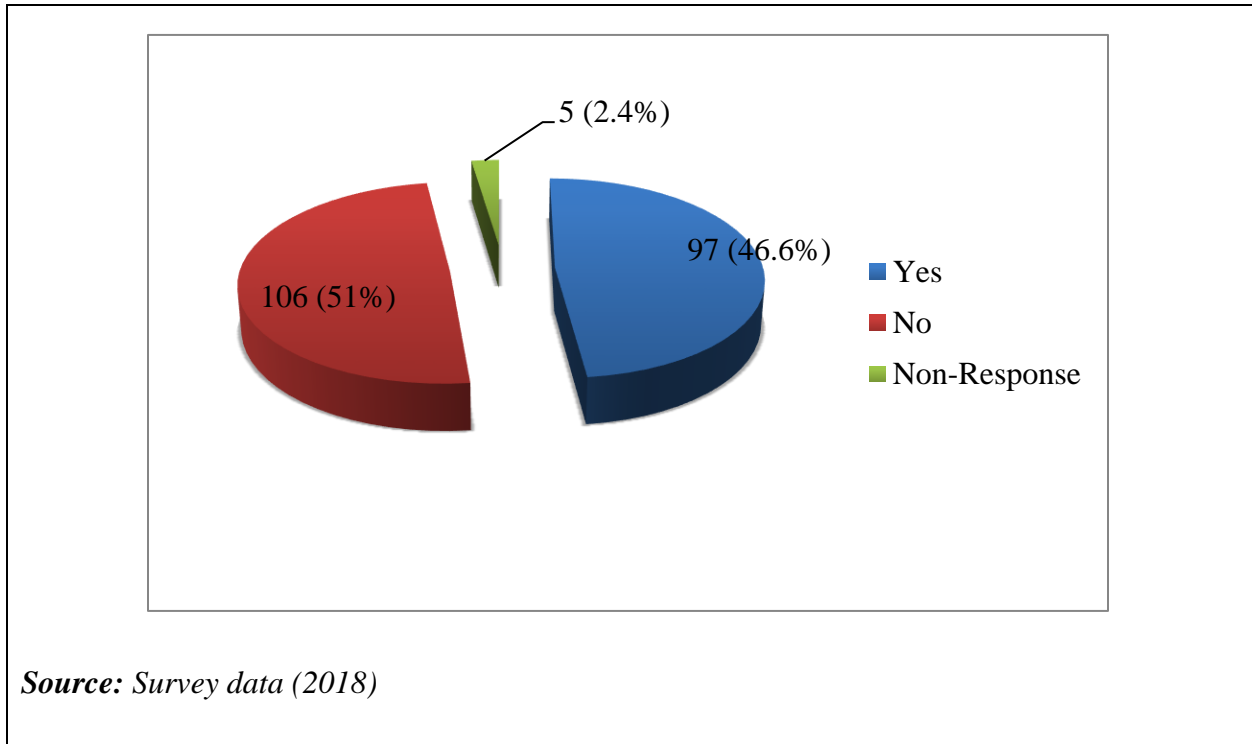
**Figure 19: All university graduates have an equal opportunity of getting a job**



Respondents were further asked to indicate their thoughts on whether one’s sex (that is, being male or female) made a difference in getting a job. The results of the findings show that 46.6% of the respondents agreed that one’s sex makes a difference in getting a job, 51% disagreed with the statement, while 2.4% did not respond to the question as shown in figure 20 below.

As a follow up question on the influence of sex in one getting a job, respondents were asked to give reasons, as part of qualitative data, for their answers on whether they thought that one’s sex (that is, being male or females) makes a difference in getting a job. In these qualitative data, two themes were generated and these were; **(i) sex makes a difference; and (ii) sex does not make a difference in getting a job in Zambia.**

**Figure 20: Study Participants' thoughts on the influence of one's sex in getting a job**



### **5.8. Factors influencing the employability of UNZA Graduates**

In view of the shrinking labour market in Zambia, coupled with the rising number of both private and public universities now operating alongside the University of Zambia and Copperbelt University, the two older universities in the country, leading to more and more people getting university degrees, respondents were asked to indicate the factors they thought were more likely influence their employability or their chances of finding a job. The respondents were asked agree or disagree to whether or not the following factors had any influence. The age of a university graduate; the name of a university on attended; type of university attended (private or public); one's social class (socio-economic status); social connections through close friends; social connections through relatives; social connections through acquaintances; social connections through potential employers; and one's field of study or specialisation (e.g. sociology). The results are summarised in table 26 on the next page.

**Table 26: Factors Influencing Employment of UNZA Graduates**

Factors Influencing Employment		Responses	
		Yes	No
(a)	Age of a job seeker	60 (28.8%)	148 (71.2%)
(b)	Name of University attended	99 (47.6%)	109 (52.4%)
(c)	Type of University attended ( <i>e.g. Public University or Private University</i> )	90 (43.3%)	118 (56.7%)
(d)	One's social status ( <i>e.g. one from a high socio-economic class</i> )	75 (36.1%)	133 (63.9%)
(e)	Social connections or social networks through close friends ( <i>Bonding social capital</i> )	136 (65.4%)	72 (34.6%)
(f)	Social connections or social networks through relatives ( <i>Bonding social capital</i> )	141 (67.8%)	67 (32.2%)
(g)	Social connections or social networks from acquaintances ( <i>Bridging social capital</i> )	78 (37.5%)	130 (62.5%)
(h)	Social connections with potential employers ( <i>Linking social capital</i> )	120 (57.7%)	88 (42.3%)
(i)	One's field of study or specialisation at the university ( <i>e.g. Economics, Education etc.</i> )	122 (58.7%)	86 (41.3%)

*Source: Survey data 2018*

The results show that 28.8% of the respondents agreed that the age of a university graduate does influence who gets employed while 71.2% disagreed with the statement, 47.6% agreed that the name of University a graduate attended influences who gets employed while 52.4% disagreed with the statement, 43.3% agreed that the type of University one attended (*such as a Public University or a Private University*) influences who gets employed while 56.7% disagreed with the statement, and 36.1% agreed that one's social status (*such as one from a high socio-economic class*) influence who gets employed while 63.9% disagreed with the statement.

Furthermore, 65.4% of the respondents agreed that social connections or social networks through close friends positively influences who gets employed in the labour market, while 34.6% disagreed with the statement, 67.8% agreed that social connections or social networks through relatives influence who gets employed, while 32.2% disagreed with the statement, 37.5% agreed that Social connections or social networks through acquaintances (*distant friends*) influences who gets employed, while 62.5% disagreed with the statement, 57.7% agreed that social connections with

potential employers influence who gets employed, while 42.3% disagreed with the statement, and 58.7% agreed that one's field of study or specialisation at the university (*such as Economics, Education, sociology etc.*) influences who gets employed while 41.3% disagreed with the statement as shown in table 26 on the preceding page.

**Table 27: Thoughts about the employability of UNZA Graduates**

<i>Employability of UNZA graduates since 2000s</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
It has declined	144	69.2
Somehow it has remained the same	10	4.8
Not sure	44	21.2
Somehow it has improved	1	0.5
It has improved	6	2.9
Non-Response	3	1.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Survey data 2018*

In the study, respondents were asked to indicate their thoughts about the employability of UNZA Graduates this era of competition for job opportunities compared to the period before the 2000s. The results show that 69.2% of the respondents indicated that the employability of UNZA Graduates had declined, 4.8% said that somehow it had remained the same, 21.2% indicated that they were not sure of whether it had declined or remained the same, 0.5% indicated that somehow it had improved, 2.9% said that it had improved, and 1.4% did not respond to the question as shown in table 27 above.

**Table 28: Chances of being employed in Zambia in a short period of time after graduation**

<i>Who stands a better chance of being employed.....?</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Graduates from public universities (e.g. UNZA)	67	32.2
Graduates from private universities	2	1.0
Graduates from foreign public universities	22	10.6
Graduates from foreign private universities	12	5.8
Everyone has a chance	86	41.3
Not sure	14	6.7
Non-Response	5	2.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Survey data 2018*

On the question of what makes a graduate stand a better chance of being employed in a relatively short period of time after graduation in Zambia. According to the findings indicated in table 28 above, the results show that 32.2% respondents indicated that graduates from public universities (e.g. UNZA) stood a better chance of being employed in a short period of time after graduation, 1% indicated that graduates from private universities stood a better chance of being employed, 10.6% indicated that graduates from foreign public universities stood a better chance of being employed, 5.8% said that graduates from foreign private universities stood a better chance of being employed, 41.3% indicated that everyone had a chance of being employed, 6.7% indicated that they were not sure and 2.4% did not respond to the question as shown in table 28 above.

**Table 29: Study Participants' thoughts on the influence of UNZA Graduates' Gender**

<b>Opinion Statement</b>	<b>Agree very much</b>	<b>Agree a little</b>	<b>Disagree a little</b>	<b>Disagree very much</b>
There is discrimination in the offering of job opportunities between sexes ( <i>female or male</i> ) in Zambia	51 (24.5%)	57 (27.4%)	36 (17.3%)	64 (30.8%)
Female job seekers and male job seekers have equal chances of getting jobs in Zambia	71 (34.1%)	45 (21.6%)	51 (24.5%)	41 (19.7%)
Female UNZA graduates are more likely to be employed in a short period of time than male UNZA graduates	33 (15.9%)	55 (26.4%)	58 (27.9%)	62 (29.8%)
Male UNZA graduates are more likely to be employed in a short period of time than female UNZA graduates	10 (4.8%)	29 (13.9%)	94 (45.2%)	75 (36.1%)
One's sex does not determine one's chances of finding a job in Zambia	71 (34.1%)	41 (19.7%)	64 (30.8%)	32 (5.4%)

*Source: Survey data (2018)*

When asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with the statements on the employability of UNZA Graduates in their time based on their sex. The results revealed that 24.5% of the respondents agreed very much and 27.4% agree a little that there was discrimination in the offering of job opportunities between sexes (female or male) in Zambia while 17.3% disagreed a little and 30.8% disagreed very much that there was discrimination in the offering of job opportunities between sexes (female or male) in Zambia. In addition, 34.1% of the respondents agreed very much and 21.6% agreed a little that both female and male UNZA Graduates had equal chances of

getting jobs in Zambia while 24.5% disagreed a little and 19.7% disagreed very much that both female and male UNZA Graduates had equal chances of getting jobs in Zambia.

Furthermore, 15.9% of the respondents agreed very much and 26.4% agreed a little that female UNZA Graduates were more likely to be employed in a short period of time than male UNZA Graduates while 27.9% disagreed a little and 29.8% disagreed very much that female UNZA Graduates were more likely to be employed in a short period of time than male UNZA Graduates, 4.8% agreed very much and 13.9% agreed a little that male UNZA Graduates were more likely to be employed in a short period of time than female UNZA Graduates, while 45.2% disagreed a little and 36.1% disagreed very much that male UNZA Graduates were more likely to be employed in a short period of time than female UNZA Graduates. In the same vein, 34.1% of the respondents agreed very much and 19.7% agreed a little that one's sex did not determine one's chances of finding a job in Zambia while 30.8% disagreed a little and 15.4% disagreed very much that one's sex did not determine one's chances of finding a job in Zambia. This information is presented in the table 29 on the preceding page.

### **5.9. Qualitative Data on UNZA Graduates' Labour Market experiences**

In the questionnaire which was administered to UNZA Graduates, there were some open-ended questions which required them to reflect upon and provide their final opinion on the role of social connections in finding jobs in the labour market nowadays; to express their opinion on the role of gender in the employability of UNZA Graduates; and to indicate whether or not all university graduates, regardless of which university they graduated from, have an equal chance of getting employed in Zambia. The responses to this question was part of the qualitative data for this study. The qualitative data was transcribed using verbatim and edited forms of transcriptions. Verbatim transcription involves reporting the words exactly as recorded in the interview or in the response, and edited transcription involves editing the words of the interviewee for readability, conciseness and clarity. The views from respondents are presented with quotation marks. The quotes from each respondent who expressed their views are in quotation marks as presented below:

### **5.9.1. Role of gender in finding a job in Zambia.**

*The question on this issue was:*

***“Do you think one’s sex (i.e. being male or female) makes a difference in getting a job in Zambia?”***

#### **Theme 1: Employers do not favour any job applicant based on their sex.**

In terms of respondents’ experiences and opinions on the issue of one’s sex or gender when it came to finding a job in Zambia, the study found that many UNZA Graduates believed that employers do not favour applicants for job vacancies on the basis of sex. There were 26 respondents who shared their experiences and views on whether or not the gender of an applicant plays a role in their likelihood of being hired by potential employers. 38.5% of the 26 respondents argued that getting employed depends on one’s skills and qualifications and not necessarily one’s sex or gender. They were of the view that when a person graduates with a bachelor’s Degree, there is an equal opportunity of getting employed regardless of sex or gender. It all goes down to how a job applicant presents himself or herself during the interviews, and if such an applicant is able to show that they can perform and deliver then they had a higher chance likelihood of getting employed. The views from respondents are presented with quotation marks.

**The quotes from each study participant who expressed their views were indicated in quotation marks as presented below:**

*“Most of the employers are more interested in ones skills and not their sex. Getting a job is usually a matter of selling one’s skills right. Being male or female plays a very little”*

*“It all depends with the kind of qualification one has and how well one has performed during the interview unless specific adverts which stress that they prefer females”*

*“What is important is the qualification and skills that one holds besides most organisations now are equal opportunity employers”*

*“When you graduate with a bachelor’s degree, opportunities tend to be equal to either gender, unlike with the people who are uneducated whose job hunt and major description and nature are gender tailored”*

*“It’s about who is able to do the job, be it male or female, if you have what it takes to do that job, you will get the job that’s what I believe in”*

*“Employers care about qualifications and not gender”*

*“Nowadays employers do not focus on the sex of an individual. There are equal opportunities for all in almost all the organizations”*

*“It is not a factor in finding a job, employers want people who can deliver and not the gender, qualifications is what matters and not the sex of an individual”*

*“They have equal opportunities especially that Zambians are now promoting women participation in development”*

## **Theme 2: Gender is a factor when employers are hiring applicants for a particular job**

On the same issue of gender, 61.5% respondents of 26 who were asked to share their opinion on whether or not the gender of an applicant plays a role the hiring by potential employers believed that sex or gender of a job seeker or an applicant plays a role in one’s chances of getting a job. Some respondents in the study were of the view that the employment of UNZA Graduates depended on the industry in which the organisation employing applicants is operating, for example, the mining industry usually favours males in the recruitment process because of the nature of work in the industry. In certain organisations they use what is called “affirmative action” where female applicants are favoured over male applicants because females are believed to be under represented in such organisations. Whereas, in some organisations, employers deliberately avoid employing women as a way of avoiding maternity issues, fearing that if they employed a female applicant, she may fall pregnant in the course of her work, which then can affect the process of work. Another issue that came out was the issue of females offering sexual favours to potential male employers or potential male employers demanding sexual favours from female applicants, and this usually gives female job seekers an upper hand compared to their male counterparts.

**The opinions of the respondents were recorded as indicated below:**

*“Yes, it does, depending on the job type. Some jobs require a certain sex to achieve the goals in as much as they would say there is no discrimination of gender”*

*“Again it depends with the industry or profession, some professions are tailored to favour certain sexes for instance jobs in the mines favour males while front office jobs in most firms may favour ladies”*

*“Females are most favoured when it comes to recruiting possibly because they are underrepresented in most positions (affirmative action) or they employer (if male) offers employment in exchange for sex”*

*“Yes to some extent but it is all dependent on the position available. I feel ladies have a kind of positions that fit them and when such opportunities are created, sex plays a major role”*

*“The gender equality and equity phenomenon has deprived many males who are better suited and professionally more apt than females to lose out on opportunities because of such company policies. While in some others instances females lose out because some female folks have dented the image of females in some professional circles. It cuts both ways I feel though males have been greatly disadvantaged”*

*“Gender discrimination has not ended in Zambia. People have a negative view of women who have to go on maternity leave when there is so much work to be done”*

*“It is hard to get a job with a lot of responsibilities i.e. managerial positions when you are young female because companies feel that a young lady might get pregnant which might slow down the company’s objectives”*

*“In most cases, men stand high chances of getting a job than women because they are believed to be more ‘productive’ than women”*

*“In some engineering departments like automotive garages women are usually not preferred just because of sex and secretarial jobs are normally given to women...etc.”*

*“Females have had more opportunities of late because of trying to increase motivation and inspiration to the girl child by employers”*

*“Yes due to gender discrimination. Females are more vulnerable to be sexually abused by the employers to get a job. Hence many loss out the opportunity to be employed and remain chaste”*

*“Most females I graduated with have jobs”*

*“Many organisations are biased towards female applicants. In some cases, males have to work at least twice as hard as their female counterparts to be accorded the same opportunities”*

*“Women are favoured especially in the mines and engineering field, never met a jobless female engineer”*

*“Some organizations prefer certain sex for particular job e.g. most office or front office secretaries are female. Hence a particular job has a bias towards particular sex, however some jobs sex isn't an issue”*

*“Most key positions in Zambia are held by Males, thus females stand better chances of getting jobs in organisations either as an exchange for sexual favours or through affirmative action”*

### **5.9.2. All university graduates in Zambia have an equal chance of getting employed**

*The question on this issue was:*

***“Do you think that all university graduates in Zambia, regardless of which university they graduated from, have an equal opportunity of getting a good job?”***

#### **Theme 1: Employers are more comfortable hiring graduates from the University of Zambia, and also the Copperbelt University than graduates from other universities**

There were 34 respondents who provided their opinion on this matter. 44% of respondents whose views are recorded below were of the view that employers are more comfortable hiring graduates from the University of Zambia, and also Copperbelt University, because of the good quality of graduates that the University of Zambia produces. The University of Zambia, being the oldest

university in Zambia, has built itself a reputation of producing graduates of good quality. Some of the respondents believed that the major interest of private universities is profit and not the quality of graduates they produce. Some respondents also expressed reservations on the quality of education offered in private universities compared to public universities such as UNZA and CBU. The experience of some respondents in this study indicated that in organisations where they had worked, preference is given to UNZA graduates first, and then later CBU and Mulungushi University.

**The responses from study participants were recorded as indicated below:**

*“University of Zambia, being the highest learning institution in Zambia, makes it a fountain of knowledge for the other universities, and it has produced quality graduates who have contributed to the economic growth of the Nation, therefore priority is given to University of Zambia Graduates”*

*“I really do not know. For example I believe UNZA and CBU graduates are on equal footing and could be at an advantage compared to privately run universities in Zambia. That said, I see a lot of graduates from South African and other foreign universities which seem to have an advantage over local ones, regardless of whether they are UNZA or CBU. It is difficult to state”*

*“No in the sense that currently we have universities with very questionable status in terms of the quality of education and graduates from such have to a greater extent challenges in getting jobs”*

*“UNZA and CBU graduates have a better chance than the other universities. In my experience, though all students from any reputable university would be shortlisted for interviews, UNZA and CBU students are generally much better prepared and more in touch with the employers’ requirements making them have an edge in the job search”*

*“With the mushrooming of private universities in the country most employers are of the view that these universities care less about the quality of their graduates but rather are in the business of making money. Hence, they would rather get someone from the public universities mostly UNZA than CBU”*

*“There is a general feeling that UNZA offers better quality education than other institutions”*

*“Graduates from UNZA have better chances of getting a good job in Zambia because of the rating of the University and the international recognition of its programmes”*

*“Some companies internally do not pick graduates from other universities not very well known to avoid the risk of employing a substandard graduate”*

*“The quality produced by other universities is compromised. Some universities are only interested in the money and not ensuring that they deliver as expected, besides the quality of students the select for admission is critically compromised”*

*“It is a well-known fact that UNZA graduates are considered well trained in their fields of studies as compared to graduates from other universities, the university rankings attest to this fact and employers would look to that”*

*“I think priority is first given to graduates from public universities. The platform is not levelled. This is what has actually created an issue with ‘it’s about who you know and not what you know’ in the labour market because people feel the platform is not levelled. In the end we have social connections, corruption and nepotism at play”*

*“It seems UNZA graduates have an upper hand because their training is intensive and the university has a very good academic reputation at least locally”*

*“Usually, in the two organizations I have worked, they first consider UNZA graduates first, then CBU and Mulungushi”*

*“No in the sense that some Universities have a reputation of offering high quality education/skills to their students. Thus inculcating in them competencies/skills and confidence required to deliver services with excellence. However, on the other hand, some institutions, do not offer quality education/training to their students, thus disadvantaging them and leaving their reputation questionable”*

*“Some Universities produce half-baked graduates. This is evidenced by graduates from some universities who always ask UNZA graduates to help them with work and this habit starts way*

*before graduating with assignments of which some UNZA graduates are now earning a living out of helping students from other institutions with assignments”*

**Theme 2: All university graduates, regardless of which university they graduated from, have an equal chance of being employed.**

The respondents whose opinions are recorded here were of the view that all university graduates in Zambia, regardless of which university they graduated from, have an equal opportunity of getting a good job. 56% of the respondents out of the 34 respondents who gave their opinion on this matter believed that in today’s labour market everyone, regardless of which university they graduated from, has an equal opportunity of getting employed. According to some respondents, these days job seekers find jobs through connections, that is for as long they have someone who can push for them, they stand a better chance of getting a job, especially graduates from private universities who tend to come from well to do families, because such type of families tend to have well-connected parents or guardians and other relatives. Some respondents lamented that UNZA Graduates nowadays were being disregarded due to nepotism or social connections. They argued that university education in Zambia has evolved, and the quality of education everywhere else has reached the desired standards which UNZA has been credited for, therefore all other graduates are equally being given the same regard and opportunity as UNZA Graduates. In fact, a lot of universities are producing a number of graduates in different fields, some of which are not offered at the University of Zambia. This indicates that all have equal opportunities since all are qualified in various courses incorporated in their educational qualifications or degree papers.

**The views of some study participants were recorded verbatim as indicated below:**

*“Nowadays everyone has an equal chance irrespective of the university one studied from”*

*“People find jobs today through connections. As long as one has a paper and knows someone who can push for them for a job, they have a very high chance of getting a job. Most private universities have students coming from well-to-do families with well -connected parents or guardians. This greatly influences their chances of finding a job”*

*“It depends with the current job adverts and qualifications”*

*“Moreover, in Zambia University qualifications are not considered when employing due to corruption and moral decay”*

*“Depending on how the university is viewed in the job market can cause one to either land a chance to attend an interview or not at all”*

*“As long as one has a degree, they have an equal chance of getting a job just like a graduate from UNZA. The secret lies in how one presents themselves during interviews and how hardworking they prove to be during internship. It depends on ones skills, values and teamwork”*

*“Employers have come to the understanding that there are a number of public universities in Zambia and outside Zambia that can produce performers. My understanding of the labour market is that the employer is looking for performers and not necessarily a degree from UNZA. The other thing is, we have a fair share of Zambians that have been educated outside Zambia from universities that have even a better ranking than UNZA. However, employers are a little bit more sceptical about employing people from private universities in Zambia”*

*“There are some universities that concentrate more on making money and not building the capacity of students to be better citizens in the future, we have a lot of low standard higher learning institutions that shouldn’t be running in the first place because of failing to reach standards for a university or college”*

*“Every graduate stands an equal chance, it’s how you apply yourself and respond to adverts as well as social networking that matters, regardless of where you obtained your qualification”*

*“Employers these days don’t consider the universities but the experience and what you can do. Therefore, the paper and where obtained doesn’t really matter in my opinion”*

*“University education in Zambia has evolved throughout different institutions and the quality of education everywhere else has reached the desired standards the UNZA has been credited for, therefore all other graduates are equally being given the similar regard and opportunity”*

*“A lot of universities are producing a number of graduates in different fields as same as the university of Zambia. This indicates that all have equal opportunities since all are qualified with various courses incorporated in their degree papers”*

*“The only thing that matters is how intelligent one is, how good their grades are, whether or not he/she can respond favourably in an interview and who they know”*

*“Nowadays due to nepotism UNZA degree is being disregarded and you find a situation where an UNZA graduate is left out and the job is given to an individual from a private university”*

*“It depends more on your network (relatives, friends etc.) and how close they are to job opportunities”*

*“Yes they do because employers only focus on the degree than were it was got from”*

*“Everyone has an opportunity, only hindering aspect is that you have to know someone to get a job”*

*“Speaking from my field, the ministry of general education recruits teachers who graduated from any university so long it’s registered with higher education authority. Many times graduates from UNZA are even left out and those from other universities are recruited. Everyone has an equal opportunity in spite of the university they graduated from”*

*“The graduates have equal chances of being employed regardless of which University they attended, as long as it is a well-recognised institution. Social connections also play significant roles in helping most of the graduates in finding jobs. Today most of the people says that, “it is about who you know and not what you know”*

### **5.9.3. Role of social connections in finding jobs in Zambia**

*The question on this issue was:*

***“Do social connections or social networks among UNZA graduates nowadays play any role in finding jobs in the labour market compared to the period before the liberalisation of higher education in Zambia and the eventual establishment of more universities in the country?”***

**Theme: Social connections play a role in the employability of UNZA graduates.**

In responding to this question, participants took a unanimous position on the role of social connections in the employability of University of Zambia graduates in the 2000s era compared to earlier years before the establishment of private Universities that are now operating alongside the University of Zambia and the Copperbelt University. The belief was that finding a job in Zambia today has nothing to do with one being a UNZA Graduate, it has more to do with “*who you know*,” through relatives and ‘honest’ friends who forward information on job vacancies to their unemployed friends. Study participants believed that social connections play a crucial role in finding employment among UNZA Graduates. Those that have relatives in influential positions get employed very easily, such relatives in influential positions even advise students who are related to them which fields of study to pursue in the university so that when they graduate, those well connected or influential relatives can find employment for them. The arguments that came out from many other respondents were that social connections or networks among UNZA Graduates have become much more important nowadays in finding jobs in the labour market than in the period before the liberalisation of the economy and higher education. This importance has been necessitated by competition created by the shrinking labour market and the expansion of the higher education sector through the establishment of more private universities in the country. The establishment of more universities has resulted in a huge number of graduates being offloaded on the labour market every year. Unlike in the pre-liberalisation era where UNZA Graduates were guaranteed of getting a job almost immediately after graduation, but this time an UNZA Graduate has to have much more than just a ‘paper’ in order to secure a job. One has to have social connections in the labour market. This is not to say that a qualification alone is not sufficient to enable someone to get a job, but in most cases, social connections play a more significant role in the labour market than the qualification itself. Some respondents felt that in the 1990s and before, social connections were not very much necessary because there used to be very few university graduates then, that is from UNZA and CBU, so finding a job was relatively easy for UNZA Graduates compared to the current situation where there are more public and private universities that have been established and are producing more graduates onto the labour market. Furthermore, many respondents felt that social connections or social networks play a very key role in finding a job now than before due to the collapse of the labour market. It is about *who you know that matters*

*and not what you know.* For instance, “political cadres without any sufficient educational qualifications are getting jobs at the expense of the well qualified UNZA Graduates. *This can easily be proved by checking the qualifications of ZESCO employees and seeing how many qualified engineers are roaming the streets.*” The implication of these findings is that the role of social connections has become even more important due to two important factors. First, the static or even shrinking labour market in Zambia, and secondly the liberalisation of the education sector in the country which led to the establishment of more Universities and the production of many more graduates thereafter, in addition to the ones produced by UNZA and CBU. In the 1990s and before, there were only two universities and that meant few graduates and in return more jobs were available for the graduates then, unlike today where we have thousands of graduates competing for very few job opportunities.

**The study participants’ responses were recorded verbatim as indicated below:**

*“Finding jobs in Zambia has nothing to do with one being an UNZA graduate. People get jobs based on who they know and honest friends who always forward job adverts and employment chances to the unemployed UNZA graduates”*

*“Strongly feel social Connections have become a major determining factor in the Labour Market when it comes to obtaining Jobs almost rendering Submission of unsolicited Job applications useless”*

*“The establishment of more universities has made the labour market very competitive hence social connections play an important role for UNZA graduates to find jobs in the labour market”*

*“Social connections are vital in today’s job market because jobs are limited in Zambia. There are more people graduating than the jobs created. So there is a discrepancy”*

*“Some it works but it depends much on the position of the known. Though sometimes it does not work. Generally everyone have equal access when it comes to acquiring jobs. Nowadays it is by chance either from UNZA or any other institution can be given a job or not”*

*“Now more than ever, social connections and social networks have become very important in finding a job in the labour market and I don't think qualifications are considered much nowadays, people are not employed on the basis of merit”*

*“To some extent, others have been fortunate enough to find employment through the same social connections or social networks. So it has been a positive effect”*

*“Social connections play a crucial role in finding employment. People in influential positions can easily help their relatives and friends to get jobs. Moreover, they can also influence which field a relative would study so that they can easily be helped to get jobs once they graduate”*

*“Social connections among the graduates play an important role. I am one particular case who got my current job through social networks. Though it isn't that this person pushed for me to get this job, he just gave me information about the vacancy and how best to respond to the advertisement”*

*“Social connections are extremely important and have come to play a more prominent role in the job market. In my case, my first job was as professional as it gets. We did aptitude tests and interviews, where the employer picked the best four of us from UNZA. It meant the rest of over one thousand graduates, allowing for a few already employed while at UNZA had to scrap it out in the labour market, and more often than not, those with “connections” stand a better chance of being employed”*

*“This has not been helped by the fact that there are not enough jobs to go round. As such many jobseekers begin to rely on their connections than their competence and academic qualifications”*

*“The role of social connections or social networks has gained more prominence now than it was in the 1990s. This is mainly due to the fact that there are fewer Job openings available against a backdrop of an increased number of University graduates. Graduates with good social networks have more information about available job opportunities and since they are equally qualified as their counterparts, this works to their advantage. Thus while a University degree is good to have,*

*it is even better when you have a wider and richer social network that can expose you to available openings in the market”*

*“Currently, there is a scramble for jobs in Zambia, as compared to the aforementioned period because the population has grown and people are now keen to get an education. Hence, we have a lot of educated individuals on the streets but with little jobs as a result social connections or social networks become vital in one landing a job”*

*“Social connections are definitely very important in finding employment. If you know and socialize with individuals who have ability to influence things, then you are more likely to get a job”*

*“It is natural that connections will relatively remain among peers from the same universities and it will still remain. The emergence of various universities has created cliques of social connections. This is evident even in the legal fraternity where qualified lawyers from a certain university will associate with each other as well as bring to light with each other job opportunities available”*

*“Graduates mostly rely on their social connections especially relatives to get Jobs, therefore, those without connections find it hard to get jobs in the labour market. Universities that have come up has made the job market more competitive making it hard to enter into employment”*

*“Social connections or social networks among UNZA graduates play a major role nowadays in finding jobs in the labour market compared to the period before the liberalisation of higher education in the late 1990s and the eventual establishment of more universities in the country”*

*“I can’t tell, the reason being that I am not aware of how the situation was in the late 1990s. My final analysis is that there is more tribalism in job allocations in Zambia than ever before. It is not about what you studied, your values or principles you acquired, but your social connections with those who give jobs. The situation has further deteriorated into a moral quagmire of women selling their bodies in order to get a job. Furthermore, UNZA graduates are not favoured than others in getting a job”*

*“Social connections and social networks are very important to a job seeker nowadays because there is too much competition among job seekers than in the past”*

*“Nepotism and cronyism are the order of the day in Zambia. It is no longer about qualifications but about who one knows in the higher offices. It is about assisting a friend’s daughter or son get a good job than it is about giving jobs to the right applicants”*

*“Social connections among UNZA graduates are useful because most graduates are competing for the same jobs as compared to the 1990s, the number of graduates has increased. The establishment of new universities has actually increased the competition in the labour market, additionally the new universities have introduced new courses that are more attractive in most private and NGOs”*

*“I think, from what has been, that in the late 1990 social connections were not necessary as there few graduates who were just produced by UNZA and CBU. So finding a job then was relative easy for graduates as compared to the current situation Where More Public and Private Universities are being established. Nowadays social connections are an important factor in finding a job for UNZA graduates”*

*“The role of social connection is quite vital in the labour market, I found one of the jobs in a bank via a recommendation by a former course mate and my current job via a social network. I definitely recommend recent graduates to explore these two methods in addition to the traditional methods of job search”*

*“Social connections and social networks play a very big role in helping graduates to find jobs. The establishment of more universities in the country has made it very difficult for all graduates to get into employment as the labour market is infiltrated by graduates. Most jobs nowadays are based on who one knows or who one is connected to”*

*“These days, we have very little job adverts and thus it’s up to who you know and how well exposed you are with potential employers. I have seen people who failed to graduate but got good jobs and*

*on the other hand, people who graduated with good grades of course and have failed to get a job to date. Your network matters more than your qualification”*

*“In the late 1990’s the number of graduates were not as many as they are now, currently due to the numerous number of university’s the number of students graduating every year is enormous which makes job hunting the most competitive task that graduates have to face, instead of using the right channels of applying directly or responding to a job advert people have resorted to using social networks and connections which is making it easier to get a Job due to the high unemployment levels”*

*“Social connections are very important nowadays because jobs are difficult to find compared to the 1990s. And there is need for associations in universities to work up and work towards increasing social connections unlike the associations’ executives benefiting alone”*

*“The role of the social networks was very simple due to the number of Universities and graduates in the country. There were few Universities and that meant few graduates and in return more jobs available for graduates unlike today where we have a lot of universities producing thousands of graduates. The social connections plays a big role today in providing the graduates with equal opportunities for all”*

*“Nowadays there are a lot of graduates from both public and private universities against the limited job opportunities as compared to the 1990s as a result social connections are playing a bigger role in one getting a job”*

*“In the late 90s there were somewhat fewer graduates and the demand was very high. Currently with the employment freeze it is difficult to get employment with social connections or buying the human resource officer”*

*“I think social connections or social networks play a very important part in finding jobs nowadays due to the fact that there are less employment opportunities in Zambia being competed for by many University/College Graduates either from Public or Private Institutions. As a result, besides*

*having a qualification, having a social connection ends up being a factor in getting a job especially in a situation where several qualified candidates are competing for one position. This is much worse for institutions that are not transparent and with weaker guidelines”*

*“Now that we have a number of universities, more people are graduating each year and yet we have a few limited work slots. And because we are all fighting for the same jobs, this is where social connections come in and play a huge role in job search. It becomes about who you know. Some jobs are advertised for formality and yet are already offered to friends and family”*

*“Social connections or social networks play a very key role in finding a job now than before due to the collapse of the labour systems. It is about who you know that matters and not what you know. Cadres without any education are getting jobs at the expense of the well qualified graduates. This can easily be proved by checking the qualifications of ZESCO employs and see how many qualified engineers are roaming the streets”*

*“The Zambian systems have been infiltrated with all sorts of corruption. The labour market, public or private is no exception on this list. Now we are all aware of the high unemployment rate in Zambia which has made the situation worse. At times you don’t need money to buy someone to help you or a relative to be in a high position and employ you on nepotism basis. At times all you need is social connections. Friends help in spreading good news to your ears too”*

*“The establishment of more universities has brought about competition among graduates but also society is not fully ready to absorb the fresh graduates hence the new trend of depending on social connections.”*

#### **5.10. Qualitative Data from Employers**

In order to provide key insights into the use of social connections among University of Zambia Graduates in the labour market, interviews were conducted with a total of 16 employers from the public, private and Civil Society Organisations sectors. The goal was to gain a better and balanced understanding of how social connections influence the recruitment and selection processes involving university graduates from the perspective of employers. The employers consisted of people who are involved in the hiring of job applicants for job openings that fall vacant in their

organisations. Six employers or their representatives were interviewed from public institutions, including parastatal companies (government owned corporations), and another six from private institutions while four interviewees were drawn from Civil Society Organisations. There were 10 males and 6 females, the average age of the informants was 35 years. In terms of the educational qualifications, 10 of them indicate a Bachelor’s Degree as their highest level of qualifications while 6 indicate a Master’s Degree as their highest level of qualifications. The findings from these key informants are indicated below.

**Table 30: Background characteristics of Key Informants (N = 16)**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Index</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Sex</b>	Male	10	62.5
	Female	6	37.5
<b>Average Age</b>	35	16	100
<b>Sector</b>	Public	6	37.5
	Private	6	37.5
	CSOs	4	25
<b>Qualifications</b>	Bachelor’s Degree	10	62.5
	Master’s Degree	6	37.5
	PhD	0	0
<b>Experience in the organisation</b>	2 – 5 years	3	18.75
	6 – 10 years	9	56.25
	11 – 15 years	4	25

*Source: Survey data (2018)*

### **5.10.1. Recruitment and Selections Methods**

In the findings, almost all of the key informants revealed that the most popular methods of recruiting people including UNZA Graduates for job vacancies involve what are referred to as ‘traditional’ or ‘formal’ methods. The commonest method among these methods is the use of advertisements in the media (print and electronic media), and the most popular method is the newspaper advertisement. In addition to this long standing tradition of recruiting job applicants or job seekers, where there was special need in terms of human resource development, some employers indicated that they select certain tertiary institutions offering certain Degree programmes, and engage such institutions to select graduating students in specific fields of study

to be employed in their organisations. After receiving applications from qualified applicants, the study discovered most employers use interviews as a method for selecting the most qualified individuals to fill up the vacancies. Some of them use interviews in combination with other techniques such as aptitude tests and other types of tests. Employers were also asked to indicate if factors such as social connections of job seekers, the gender of job applicants, UNZA Degree, and the type of university one attended play a role in the hiring of such job seekers or applicants. The responses that came out are presented in the following narrations:

*“It is generally believed that nowadays job seekers rely on social connections with potential employers, either through friends or acquaintances or relatives to get employed in Zambia.”*

***(Employer 1)***

**Theme: Job seekers rely on social connections to get hired for a job vacancy**

This was what was prevailing in the labour market. Employers stated that if you were not connected by someone who knows you, even though you may have the right qualifications and required experience, the employer would not pick you. Though some employers argued that they felt this method of looking for employment is retrogressive to human resource development, as it had become very common in the hiring of people for job opportunities. The problem with this trend is that most institutions end up engaging wrong employees for the right job because they have people backing them, and they leave out the right candidates for the job.

Some informants were of the opinion that there is a strong reliance on social connections that come through friends, acquaintances and political affiliations for one to easily find a job on the market. Interviews are usually held just for the sake of writing reports whereas actual offers are based on who is known to the powers that be. Despite one having the right qualifications with very good results nowadays without social connections, they find it difficult to find a job. This is not to say that social connections had really taken over the process of hiring people for jobs, recruiters always make an effort to put merit on the table when hiring people for jobs.

*“It is very true. I say so because we have seen that some adverts are just done for formality but in the actual sense they already know or have already selected who to employ, especially through relatives. You will find that the people on the panel already know who to pick because they receive instructions from their superiors which in this case is related to the person attending interviews.”*

**(Employer 2)**

***“Does a person holding a Bachelor’s degree from UNZA find it easier to get a job in your institution than a person with a Bachelor’s degree from another university if there is a vacancy?”***

**Theme: UNZA Degree holders are facing stiff competition from other university graduates**

Some employers were of the view that based on their experiences, all candidates are given an equal opportunity of employment regardless of the university they graduated from. But they still believed, based on their experience, that in a competitive labour market today, what matters most now is “who you know, and not what you know”, and the right qualified persons usually end up being disadvantaged because they are not connected. Other employers argued that at the moment it is very difficult for a graduate from UNZA to be employed. There is so much hand picking these days, it’s about who you know for a graduate to get a job. These employers pointed out that the other factor is that there are many graduates now from other institutions who are giving UNZA graduates stiff competition in the labour market.

*“Nowadays UNZA graduates are relying mostly on social connections. We have UNZA graduates who are roaming the streets without employment, maybe for five years or more.”* **(Employer 3)**

*“We don’t look at which university a person graduated from but we look at the competences an individual has in terms of knowledge and skills.”* **(Employer 4)**

There was still another set of employers in the study who felt that UNZA still comes first in the mind of many people, including employers, as it is the oldest and most popular university in the country. In this regard, UNZA tends to have a slight edge over other universities in the recruitment

of university graduates. They argued that from their experiences dealing with job applicants, they have observed that it is easy for a person holding a Bachelor's degree from UNZA to get a job in their institution than a person with a Bachelor's degree from another university, if there is a vacancy in the organisation because their organisations consider UNZA to be an institution that provides university education of good quality compared to other institutions.

*“Do you believe UNZA graduates are still relying on their education to get employed or are social connections more reliable nowadays in finding jobs on the labour market compared to the period before the liberalisation of higher education in the late 1990s and the eventual establishment of more universities in the country in the 2000s?”*

**Theme: UNZA Graduates are still relying on their educational qualifications to obtain jobs, with a combination of social connections for some of them**

The findings indicate that a combination of being an UNZA graduate laced with strong social connections leads higher chances of employability than a graduate in possession of just one of the two attributes. In addition, findings show that generally, UNZA graduates are still relying on their educational qualifications to get employed. While of course, for some of them, it goes with a combination of both social connections and educational qualifications in finding jobs. All the same, it is indeed an undeniable fact that in the labour market nowadays compared to the period before the economic reforms of the MMD government, and also the liberalisation of higher education in the late 1990s and the eventual establishment of more universities in the country in the 2000s, social connections have become more significant in the employability of job seekers.

*“Many UNZA graduates are relying on social connections because these days there are a lot of universities as compared to the late 1990s when UNZA was one of the most reliable universities in Zambia. We are now in a global village where things have evolved.” (Employer 5).*

*“Do you think one’s sex (i.e. being male or female) makes a difference in getting a job in your institution?”*

**Theme: Gender does not matter, many organisations are equal opportunity employers**

The findings revealed that many organisations are equal opportunity employers in as far as gender or sex of job seekers is concerned. Many organisations support people of all kinds of backgrounds regardless of their sex or gender.

*“Gender or sex does not really matter when recruiting in my organisation. Equal opportunities are given to both males and females. What matters is one’s qualifications. My organisation actually promotes gender parity. It is a 50/50 gender balance. Our institution has three quarters female employees, so the selection is biased toward female applicants.” (Employer 6)*

*“Not really, in my organisation we treaty all job seekers equally as long as they graduated from a recognised university.” (Employer 7)*

## **CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND FURTHER RESEARCH**

### **6.1. Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to do the following:

- Discuss significant findings from the research presented in this thesis
- Discuss implications of the findings in this study
- Discuss limitations of the study and possible future directions

This chapter brings together the findings from the study presented in this thesis in an attempt to gain a broad understanding of the results obtained, and explain any inconsistencies.

The first objective in this chapter is to summarise significant findings from the research presented in this thesis. Findings from the study are discussed in terms of how they help contribute to our understanding of the effects of social capital on the employability of University of Zambia graduates in the years or period under consideration.

The second objective is to discuss the implications of the research presented in this thesis. In particular, it discusses the methodological and practical implications of the findings.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge any shortcomings of the research when interpreting the results. Therefore, the third objective is to discuss the limitations of the study, together with ways in which the research may be improved upon.

### **6.2. Summary of research findings**

We begin this chapter with a summary of empirical findings of the study. The research presented in this thesis was designed to investigate the role of social capital, in the form of social connections, in the employability of University of Zambia graduates in Zambia. The study focused specifically on the period between the years 2000 and 2015; the reason for targeting this period was due to the following reasons. First, the official economic statistics on Zambia show that formal employment in Zambia had declined to just about 10% of the labour force in 2001 from approximately 75% in 1975. This economic situation was largely attributed due to the economic reforms which were embarked on by the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), which took office in 1991

(GRZ, 2005; AfDB, 2003). These reforms by the MMD included an initiative to slim down the oversized public service, a situation which led to massive losses of employment for many public service employees in the country. Economic literature also shows that during this same period, the country experienced a further and steady decline in employment as many of the newly privatised companies started collapsing, while some of them started streamlining their labour force and thereby pushing the number of the unemployed people higher (AfDB, 2003).

Secondly, the reforms of the MMD government also included the liberalisation of higher education in the country, particularly university education, a situation which eventually led to the establishment of private universities and more public universities in the country to operate alongside the University of Zambia in Lusaka and the Copperbelt University in Kitwe. Therefore, this was a novel research study on University of Zambia graduates' employability in Zambia. A sequential mixed method study was employed in this research which was carried out in the City of Lusaka. Accordingly, this approach incorporated the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods and data. The empirical findings from quantitative data showed there is a relationship between social capital and the employability of University of Zambia graduates, and qualitative data provided a deeper understanding of the role of social capital by adding quality to the interpretation of the subject matter of this study. The study population included University of Zambia graduates, male and female, who had graduated from the University between the year 2000 and 2015, inclusive. Primary data were collected from a sample of 208 University of Zambia graduates who had obtained their respective Degrees between the years 2000 and 2015, and who were in employment at the time of the study. This sample was picked using a Simple Random Sampling. In addition, 16 interviews were conducted with employers or their representatives in the private and public sectors to add in-depth and richer insights into the role of social capital in the employability of University of Zambia graduates. The sample of employers or their representatives was purposefully picked. Quantitative data was managed and analysed using SPSS while thematic analysis was applied to qualitative data.

The results from this study indicate that the importance and use of social connections in the employability of UNZA graduates in the labour market is significant. The study also discovered that socioeconomic status is a significant factor in the accumulation of social capital and also in

the employability of University of Zambia Graduates, regardless of the field of study in which they specialised while studying at the University of Zambia. The results also revealed that where such social connections are available, there are disparities in the effectiveness of these social connections depending on the type of people involved in the network or connection. The results reveal that social connections through close relatives and friends are more effective in helping UNZA graduates find jobs in the labour market than social connections through acquaintances and potential employers. Social connections accumulated through close relatives and close friends are referred to as bonding social capital, whereas social connections accumulated through acquaintances and former Lecturers are referred to as bridging social capital, social connections through potential employers fall in the category of linking social capital. In addition to the revelations stated above, the study revealed that there is a significant relation between one's social class and the length of time it takes for a graduate to find their first job after graduating from the University of Zambia. In conclusion, we have learned from the study that the socio-economic situation of one's family plays a crucial role in determining their social connections and the ability to activate such connections in obtaining a job. The study revealed that UNZA graduates from the high socioeconomic bracket take a relatively shorter time to find employment than those coming from the low socioeconomic bracket. There is also a universal recognition of the influence and importance of social connections in finding employment in today's competitive labour market in Zambia among UNZA graduates regardless of their field of specialisation they pursued while studying at the University.

### **6.3. Demographic and socio-economic situation of Study Participants**

This study investigated University of Zambia Graduates' entry into the labour market and the use of social connections to obtain employment opportunities for themselves. The study population comprised participants, male and female, who had graduated from the University between the year 2000 and 2015. Primary data were collected from a sample of 208 graduates who were in employment at the time of the study. The overall response rate was 100% owing to the fact that non-responses were being replaced with the readily available sample units on the sampling frame. There were more male participants in the study who represented about 66% of the sample, while female participants represented about 34% of the sample. The average age of the respondents was just slightly below 30 years, and more than half of the participants, about 55%, were single and

had never married before at the time the survey was being carried out. About 41% were either married or engaged to be married or were cohabiting. On the question of whether or not they had any children, about 74% reported to have no children while 26% reported to have children at the time of the study. These demographic variables indicate the degree of family responsibility and economic dependence which may have affected the respondents' job search activity in the labour market. The survey reveals that the majority of study participants (about 79%) graduated from the University of Zambia in the years from 2011 to 2015, and about 21% in the years from 2001 to 2010. The majority (54%) of the graduates obtained their Degrees in the Arts-based fields of study from the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, and School of Education. This number of graduates in the Arts-based fields of study also caters for the Institute of Distance Education (IDE).

In terms of their parents' educational levels, more than half (53%) of the participants in the sample had a father with higher education, that is, either college education or university education, while about 33% of the participants in the sample had a mother with higher education, either college education or university education. It can be seen here that the educational level among mothers is obviously increasing in the current generation, reflecting the increase in study rates among females than in previous generations.

In terms of the respondents' employment status at the time of the study, it was revealed that approximately 95.2% were in formal employment with GRZ and private institutions being the largest employers where most of them were doing office work as administrators and specialists. The figures are broken down as follows, 38.5% of the respondents were employed by the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ), 39.9% were employed by the Private Institutions, 9.6% were employed by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), 1% of the respondents were Self-Employed, 7.2% were employed by the Religious Institutions, and 3.8% did not respond to the question. Some of the respondents who did not respond to the question on their employment status at the time of the study are those who were already in employment while studying for their Degrees at the University of Zambia (UNZA). On the question of their first formal employers after they finished their studies at UNZA, the largest number of respondents indicated institutions in the private sector as their first employer after they graduated from UNZA, the percentage standing at 53% in the private sector, 28% in GRZ, and 13.5% in NGOs. In Zambia today, the Government

of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) is one of the largest employers of University Graduates. It became so following the massive privatisation of the parastatal sector beginning in the mid-1990s going into the 2000s by Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) government which had taken over from the United National Independence Party (UNIP) in 1991. While the private sector expanded as a result of the privatisation process, the public sector which was dominated by parastatal companies shrunk in size leaving the government as the major player in providing employment to University graduates. The fundamental role of the parastatal sector was to act as the main agent of the state in fostering economic development of the country (Turok, 1981). These state controlled companies, even though not obliged, undertook government-favoured programmes such as the training and employment of Zambians. Under such an arrangement, the labour market was relatively stable; it was a stability that was guaranteed by a considerable degree of central planning by the government involving the setting up of a large civil service as the government aimed at ensuring self-sufficiency. The parastatal sector was crucial to the government's employment creation and job security agenda. Zambians were guaranteed jobs as a way of tackling poverty via access to incomes. In the main, employment became a key development imperative and an artery of social policy. However, beginning in 1991 to 2001, the MMD government adopted a market-oriented economy under which they embarked on a massive privatisation of state-run companies and enterprises. Fredrick Chiluba's administration introduced a robust economic policy that focused on improving efficiency in both the public and private sectors through the creation of appropriate market conditions and implementation of market-enhancing policies. The cornerstone of this policy was liberalisation of the economy.

On the question of the methods study participants used in finding their first jobs after graduating from the University of Zambia, as shown table 18 in chapter 5. The results revealed that 34.1% of the respondents used social connections to obtained their first job, 26% indicated they made unsolicited or direct applications to obtain their first job, 13.5% said that they responded to Newspaper job advertisements to obtain their first job, 2.9% of the respondents responded to Television job advertisements to obtained their first job, 0.5% of the respondent responded to a Radio advertisement to obtain his/her first job, and another 0.5% indicated that they already had a job the time they were obtaining their Bachelor's Degree from UNZA.

Furthermore, 1% of the respondents indicated that they attended campus interviews (conducted by their current employer on campus) to obtain their first job, 0.5% were nominated by UNZA to obtain their first job, 1% were nominated by their School at UNZA to obtain their first job, 7.2% were nominated by their Departments at UNZA to obtain their first job, 10.1% responded to a job advertisement through social media and the internet (such as Facebook; LinkedIn etc.) to obtain their first job, and 2.9% of the respondents used internship to get their first job as shown above.

Study participants were also asked to indicate the time it took them to find their formal employment after graduating from the University of Zambia. The study revealed that the majority of UNZA Graduates in the period under consideration took in the range of 7 to 12 months to land their first formal job (approximately 73%), with about 1.5% outliers who indicated it took them about 3 and half years to get their formal job after graduating from UNZA. The approximately 73% who found their first job within seven to twelve months were falling with the normal range of the time that a job seeker is expected to find employment. Globally, labour market experts believe that it should take a job seeker approximately three to six months to land their first employment, of course after making many applications to various organisations (ILO, 2008). The implication of these findings was that, the Zambian labour market was still doing fairly well in the sense that it could absorb such a large number of graduates within a period of twelve months, even though the figure was not telling us anything about the quality of the jobs these UNZA Graduates were getting in that period. We could not categorically tell whether or not these jobs were commensurate with the educational qualifications of the graduates.

When it comes to their level of satisfaction with their current jobs at the time of the study, the results of the study show that 8.7% were very dissatisfied, 13% of respondents were dissatisfied, 27.4% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied while 39.9% indicated that they were satisfied and 9.1% of the respondents were very satisfied. This means approximately half of the respondents, 49% were actually satisfied with their current jobs at the time of the study while 21.6% were not satisfied with their current jobs, 27.4% were undecided about their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their jobs, 2% of the respondents did not respond to the question on job satisfaction. The level of dissatisfaction can only be explained in a situation where such

respondents had different educational backgrounds but had found themselves working in different professions or jobs. When there are fewer job opportunities in the labour market against hundreds of thousands of job seekers, job seekers become desperate to get a job and they end up getting any job opportunity that comes their way, this is what leads to job dissatisfaction in addition to other factors. These data are reflected in figure 16 showing the level of satisfaction and dissatisfaction among study participants.

**A quote from one study participant:**

*“Currently, there is a scramble for jobs in Zambia as compared to the aforementioned period (1990s and earlier years) because the population has grown and people are now keen to get an education. Hence, we have a lot of educated individuals on the streets but with few jobs as a result social connections or social networks become vital in one landing a job.”*

**6.4. UNZA Graduates’ Job Search Methods**

Labour market entrants are able to choose within a wide range of job search methods. They may send direct applications to employers, they may respond to job advertisements through various media such as newspapers, magazines, television, radio and internet, they may search through employment agencies, or utilise informal search methods such as connections through relatives, friends, acquaintances and potential employers. According to the findings, it was revealed that job seekers use varying methods or techniques when they are looking for employment in the labour market. In this study a significant number of participants, that is 34% of the 208 participants, had relied on the use of social connections in getting employed following their graduation from the University of Zambia; refer to table 18 in chapter five. Social connections resulting from one’s social capital are usually referred to as “informal job search methods.” These methods involve the use of relatives, friends, acquaintances and other people’s help to look for jobs. The study revealed that making direct applications or unsolicited applications for a job is quite a popular method among UNZA graduates as indicated by the findings, as 26% of the respondents indicated they made unsolicited or direct applications to obtain their first job. Newspaper advertisements, for a long time, had been a very popular method among potential employers to recruit qualified personnel, but over the years this method has been losing much of its ground against other methods, mainly due to advancements in communication and technology such as the internet, mobile phones

and social media. This is the reality to some extent as it has been supported by the findings from this study which indicated that only 13.5% of the respondents said that they responded to Newspaper advertisements to obtain their first job following their graduation from the University of Zambia. The findings suggest that the formal approach to searching for jobs is the most common job search method for university graduates, which is usually used in combination with social contacts or personal contacts. Social media in the era of information technology has also become a very common and effective method of searching for jobs in every part of the world; the findings have shown that 10.1% of the respondents responded to a job advertisement which was discovered through social media, such as Facebook and LinkedIn, to obtain their first job following their graduation from the University of Zambia. Internship is also another way of getting a permanent job in an organisation for graduates who get an opportunity of working as interns in organisations, in this study 2.9% indicated that after graduating from UNZA, they started as interns in the organisations where they got their first full time job. On the same point of internship, almost all the study participants who indicated obtaining their job through internship also revealed that they started working as interns through attachments or field work, which was part of their study programmes at UNZA as a requirement for the award of a Bachelor's Degree. The use of Television and radio as methods of searching for a job in the labour market in Zambia is not all that common and is insignificant among job seekers as indicated by the findings that 2.9% of the respondents responded to Television adverts to obtained their first job, while 0.5% responded to Radio adverts to obtain his/her first job.

In certain instances, potential employers looking for University graduates may opt to follow graduating students to their respective Universities and conduct what are referred to as campus interviews. This method, as a way of obtaining a job upon graduation from the University, is very rare, just as the findings were indicating, that only 1% of the respondents indicated that they attended campus interviews (conducted by the employer on campus) to obtain their first job after graduating from UNZA. In certain cases, potential employers engage tertiary institutions to identify from among graduating students that is outstanding students, who can be employed in their organisations as part of their training programmes. Findings from this study indicate that 0.5% of the respondent were nominated by UNZA for their first job, 1% were nominated by their specific Schools at UNZA to obtained their first job, 7.2% were nominated by their Departments

at UNZA for their first job. However, the findings revealed that social connections were the most favoured method of finding a job in the labour market as indicated in table 19, preferred by almost 60% of the study participants. This number includes UNZA graduates who may not have used social connections to find their first jobs in the labour market but held a strong view that social connections are actually were preferred by many job seekers in the labour market because they are perceived to be very effective in helping job seekers get a job in Zambia.

#### **6.4.1. Factors influencing the choice of UNZA Graduates' job search methods**

In analysing this findings through a bivariate analysis on the job search methods and their effect on one getting employed, it was discovered that responding to employers' job advertisement is actually not a common job search method in the current labour market situation, these are advertisements that are communicated through different media (e.g. newspapers, radio and television advertisements), used by only about 17% of graduates in the study, and falling far less that number of graduates, 26% who used unsolicited or direct methods of applying for a job; refer to table 18. The importance of what we can call 'non-traditional' job search methods or 'informal job search methods' can be seen in the number of graduates who utilised such job search methods compared to the 'traditional' ones or formal job search methods to obtain their employment. It can be argued here that the use of formal job search methods is not common due to high levels of unemployment among university graduates in Zambia nowadays. When job opportunities are fewer, the graduates are prompted to use alternative job search methods in order to get a job. Job seekers do not have the luxury of time to wait for job vacancies to be advertised, they make attempts by making direct applications or using social connections where they can. Furthermore, the study revealed that in most cases 'informal job search methods' were used in combination with 'formal job search methods.' If a job seeker is connected to a job vacancy by either a relative or a friend, he or she would be required to make a formal application for the job by the potential employer. The understanding is that the employer would want to formalise the employment of a job seeker and cover their tracks.

Furthermore, in a multivariate analysis, it was discovered that parents' level of education, especially the father, had a positive effect on the use of social connections in searching for a job as indicated in the table below, while the mother's level of education had a marginal effect on the

strength and use of social connections. This is in line with a substantial body of empirical literature, which generally finds that the educational level of parents has a larger effect on children's development in life and careers.

**Table 31: Parent's level of education and strength of social connections**

Parent	X <sup>2</sup> obs	df	p-value	decision
<b>Father</b>	81.624 <sup>a</sup>	45	.001	Significant Association
<b>Mother</b>	61.344 <sup>a</sup>	45	.053	Marginal association

**Source:** Survey data 2018

The use of social connections created through relatives and friends, and direct applications to firms are not only most frequently used but also most of the time intensively as well. They are also the most productive in generating job offers and acceptances. It is argued that the low cost of social connections justifies the use of this job search method.

### **6.5. Importance and effectiveness of social connections in the labour market**

Study participants' opinions on the importance and effectiveness of social connections among UNZA graduates in finding jobs in the labour market revealed that job seekers have an almost unanimously held belief that in the current labour market conditions, social connections have a critical role to play in the employability of UNZA graduates compared to the period before the liberalisation of higher education in the late 1990s and the eventual establishment of more universities in the country. Table 32 below is showing the level of importance of social connections in the employability of UNZA graduates.

Most of the respondents, based on their assumptions, thought that in the late 1990s social connections were not necessary as there were only few graduates from UNZA and CBU. So finding a job then was relatively easy for graduates, as compared to the current situation where more public and private universities are being established and more University graduates are being churned out onto the labour market. The liberalisation of higher education has really increased the number of graduates hence increasing the competition for limited job offers. Employability in the period under consideration in the study, was to a large extent, influenced by UNZA Graduates notifying their fellow graduate on job openings or vacancies or relatives helping them in finding jobs for their siblings, children, and cousins and so on. The sharing of information and tips on the

availability of job opportunities has been made easy mainly due to the improvement and easy access to communication technologies such as mobile phones as well as the social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, WhatsApp and other social media platforms. The respondents further argued that in the current era social connections or social networks among UNZA Graduates play a very important role in finding jobs due to the fact that there are limited employment opportunities in Zambia being competed for by many university/college graduates either from public or private institutions. As a result, besides having educational qualifications, having social connection was an added huge advantage in getting a job especially in a situation where many other qualified candidates are competing for one position. Furthermore, graduates mostly rely on social connections that are harnessed through relatives, in particular, to get jobs and those without such connections find it hard to get jobs in the labour market. The quotes stated below from three study participants can be used as a testimony as to how social connections have become important and effective in helping UNZA graduates get jobs in the labour market:

**The views on the experience of some study participants are stated below:**

*“The role of social connection is quite vital in the labour market, for example, I personally found my first job in a bank via a recommendation by a former course mate and my current job I found it through social networks. I definitely recommend recent graduates to explore these two methods in addition to the traditional methods of job search”*

*“Now that we have a number of universities in the country, more people are graduating each year and yet we have very limited work opportunities. And because we are all fighting for the same few job opportunities, this is where social connections come in and play a huge role in getting employed. It comes down to who you know and not your papers. Some jobs are advertised for formality and yet are already offered to friends and family”*

*“I think social connections or social networks play a very important part in finding jobs nowadays due to the fact that there are few employment opportunities in Zambia being competed for by many University/College Graduates either from Public or Private Institutions. As a result, besides having a qualification, having social connection ends up being a factor in getting a job especially*

*in a situation where several qualified candidates are competing for one position. This is much worse for institutions that are not transparent”*

**Table 32: Importance of social connections and employability**

Importance of social connection	X <sup>2</sup> obs	df	p-value	Decision
<b>Importance of social connections in getting a job</b>	59.926 <sup>a</sup>	30	.001	Significant Association

*Source: Survey data 2018.*

**Quoting a study participant as indicated below:**

*“The role of social connections or social networks has gained more prominence now than it was in the 1990s. This is mainly due to the fact that there are fewer Job openings available against a backdrop of an increased number of University graduates. Graduates with good social networks have more information about available job opportunities and since they are equally qualified as their counterparts, this works to their advantage. Thus while a University degree is good to have, it is even better when you have a wider and richer social network that can expose you to available openings in the market.”*

In addition, some study participants have argued that finding jobs in Zambia has nothing to do with one being an UNZA graduate. People get jobs based on who they know and helpful friends who always forward job advertisements and employment opportunities to their unemployed friends. However, effective social connections or social networks are not very common or available to all UNZA Graduates, because although job advertisements may be put up, usually only those who are connected to influential people or potential employers get employed. The advertisements are usually put up for formalities. Graduates with good social connections or networks tend to have more information about available job opportunities and since they are equally qualified as their counterparts, this works to their advantage. Thus, while a university degree is good to have, it is even better when you have wider and richer social connections that can expose the person to available openings in the labour market.

## **6.6. UNZA Graduates' Socioeconomic status and social connections**

Substantial evidence in sociology shows that socioeconomic status (SES) is tied to tangible advantages and outcomes in one's life. Socioeconomic status refers to characteristics such as wealth, income, education, occupation and social networks. In this study, it was discovered that SES was very critical in the determination of UNZA Graduates' chances of finding a job. The findings show that UNZA Graduates from high SES bracket have better and more effective social connections, through family and other close relatives, than graduates from low SES bracket. The reasoning in this case is that families in high SES have access to people in influential or powerful positions. These networks confer benefits that include employment opportunities. Social capital is generally unevenly distributed among job seekers such that social connections or social networks may be weaker or smaller for the lower social class because they lack family connections to institutions or individuals that are critical for upward economic mobility.

### **6.6.1. Bonding, bridging and linking social capital among UNZA Graduates**

There are three forms of social capital that have been proposed in the sociological literature. These include bonding, linking, and bridging social capital (Keith, 2005).

- Bonding social capital refers to the interaction between similar types of people who include family members, relatives and close personal friends. It connects people based on a sense of common identity ("people like us") – such as family, close friends and people who share the same culture or ethnicity.

This study revealed that UNZA Graduates who used social connections of their relatives were very successful in finding jobs for themselves. For example, parents' level of education has an effect on the strength of social connections among UNZA Graduates looking for employment, especially one's father's level of education. Parents who had tertiary education tended to have strong social connections compared to those who had lower levels of education. This applies to study participants' parents' employment status. UNZA Graduates whose parents were in formal employment, especially white collar employment, or running a business of their own tended to have a higher chance of getting employed faster than their cohorts. The implication of parents' employment status was that such parents who were in good employment were able to create social

connections over the years which enabled them to help their children find employment in the labour market.

**Two study participants had the following views:**

*“Social connections play a crucial role in finding employment. People in influential positions can easily help their relatives and friends to get jobs. Moreover, they can also influence which field a relative would study so that they can easily be helped to get jobs once they graduate”*

*“Graduates mostly rely on their social connections especially relatives to get Jobs, therefore, those without connections find it hard to get jobs in the labour market. Universities that have come up has made the job market more competitive making it hard to enter into employment”*

When a Chi-square test of association was done to see if at all parent’s level of education determines the strength of social connections. Evidence show that there was a strong association between the father’s level of education and the strength of social connections, because the p-value (0.001) was less than 0.05, while there was a marginal association between the mother’s level of education and the strength of respondents’ social connections because the p-value (0.053) was slightly greater than 0.05.

In addition to that, when a Chi-square test of association was done to see if at all one’s parent’s employment status had any influence on the respondents’ chances of getting a job. Evidence shows that there was an association between parents’ employment status and likelihood of getting employed because the p-values was less than 0.05.

- Bridging social capital refers to looser ties with casual friends, colleagues or associates and, while weaker and more diverse than bonding relationships, it is believed to be more important than bonding relationships in helping people to “get ahead” in life (Granovetter, 1973; 1985).

In this study, respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they had received any help from anyone in getting their first job in Zambia after obtaining their Bachelor’s Degree from UNZA. The results show that 63.5% of the respondents said they got it themselves, 7.7% indicated that they were helped by their close relative(s), 15.4% were helped by their friends, 6.7% of the

respondents were helped by their former lecturers, 4.8% were given jobs by the employer who came to UNZA, and 1.9% did not respond to the question, as shown in figure 13 and supported by findings presented in table 26. Although the number of participants who were helped by their relatives to get their first jobs appear insignificant, it can still be argued that such help was based on the social connections which UNZA Graduates themselves had at their disposal through relatives.

- Linking social capital refers to social connections with organisations and institutions and assists in accruing support from people in authority. For instance, active membership of social, education, political, religious, and voluntary organisations, both within and outside the workplace, may also contribute to an individual's social capital. Participation in such groups may help an individual to develop skills or strengthen and extend networks which may assist in acquiring a job (Keith, 2005).

As indicated in the findings in terms of the help that UNZA Graduates received in getting their first jobs after graduating from the University, about 4.8% of the respondents, were given the jobs by their employers who had engaged the University of Zambia to identify recent graduates who were suitable for the job openings in their respective companies. This is an example of linking social capital. This study disclosed that this type of social capital is difficult to build and is not common among fresh graduates on the labour market. On the question of belonging to a club or association while studying the University of Zambia, and whether or not this membership had played any role in influencing their employment, figure 6 show that approximately 10% said their membership to a club or association while studying at UNZA helped them in getting employed after graduation, while 63% said their membership to a club or association did not play any role whatsoever in getting their job after their graduation. The remaining 27% of the respondents did not respond to the question implying that probably they did not belong to any club or association while studying at the University of Zambia.

### 6.6.2. Social connections determine who gets a job in good time in Zambia

Study participants argued that that regardless of the University one attended, it usually depended on the social connections one has which enables them to get a good job in Zambia. They added that, for instance some graduates are usually employed as graduate trainees very easily, where they are trained while on the job, and while others with the same qualifications would have to struggle to look for employment. They argued that getting a good job in Zambia depends more on your networks with relatives and friends and how close they are to influential people or potential employers. As long as one has a paper and knows someone who can push for them for a job, they have a very high chance of getting a good job. For instance, most private Universities have students coming from well-to-do families with well-connected parents or guardians. This guarantees them employment when they graduate even though their Degree qualifications are not highly rated. Though the findings in the study are showing that very few UNZA Graduates between the period 2000 and 2015 had used social connections in finding their first jobs after graduating from UNZA, one very important factor that has come out of this study is that the effectiveness of such social connections can be tied to the time graduates who are well connected take in finding their first job in the labour market after graduating from the University. Graduates with social connections, either through their parents or close relatives usually just take a few months before they get their first job, even less than one month. The time it takes someone to land their first job in the competitive labour market is what makes many University of Zambia Graduates, even those that managed to find jobs on their own with their own effort, almost unanimously believe that social connections are the most important and effective method of finding a job in Zambia. In fact, the socio-economic status of job seekers is very important in the creation of social capital (social connections). Respondents in the study were of the view that UNZA graduates from well-to-do families have what we can refer to as '**rich social capital,**' meaning such graduates have high levels of social connectedness in various forms such as informal networks (bridging social capital), organisations and institutions (linking social capital), while UNZA Graduates from poor backgrounds have what we can refer to as '**poor social capital,**' who have small informal networks, few or no social connections at all with low levels of trust and reciprocity.

**Table 33: Factors that may affect UNZA Graduates' employability in Zambia**

Factors	X <sup>2</sup> obs	df	p-value	Decision
<b>Family's socio-economic situation</b>	54.253 <sup>a</sup>	25	.001	Significant Association
<b>UNZA Degree</b>	33.112 <sup>a</sup>	15	.005	Marginal Association
<b>Field of study at UNZA</b>	4.921 <sup>a</sup>	5	.426	No Association
<b>University attended</b>	3.653 <sup>a</sup>	5	.600	No Association

*Source: Survey data 2018*

**One of the employers had the following views:**

*“Social connections or networks among UNZA graduates have become much more important nowadays in finding jobs in the labour market than in the period before liberalization of higher education. This importance has been necessitated by competition enhancement in the higher education sector through establishment of many private universities in the country. This has resulted in a huge number of graduates being offloaded on the labour market every year. Unlike in the pre-liberalization era where UNZA graduates were guaranteed of a job almost immediately after graduation, nowadays an UNZA graduate has to have much more than just a qualification in order to secure a job. One has to have social networks in the labour market. Not to say that a qualification alone is not sufficient to enable someone to get a job, but in most cases, social connections play a more significant role in the labour market than the qualification itself.”*

Sociological literature of social capital explains that human interaction results in social connections – social networks – that work to make life more fulfilling and that make our economic efforts more productive. These social connections are critical in our social world and they range from micro or small groups to large scale bureaucratic organisations (Ballantine, 2006). Social capital, then, is the value that is derived from belonging to networks, based on the idea that access to resources is cultivated through connections among and between people. The social connections that develop networks are built up over time through repeated exchanges (of information, emotions, or favours) and are linked to other forms of capital. In contrast, reductions in levels of social capital may contribute to feelings of disconnectedness and loss of trust, control, autonomy, and belonging. Social capital is, at least for Coleman and Putnam, a good thing: it can be transformed into all kinds of resources, from jobs to information to better health (De Souza Briggs, 1997).

Putnam (2002), provides a number of reasons to explain why social capital has a positive impact on health. First, people who are connected to others in social networks provide social and practical support that may reduce stress and suffering. Second, social networks help to reinforce social norms that are perceived to have health-inducing or promoting effects, and therefore they minimize the potential for damaging conduct. Third, connected communities are more likely to be well organised and therefore capable of challenging issues around health-related services or issues (Law, 2008). Given the emphasis on relationships, it is not hard to see how social networks are important to an understanding of how social capital functions. Access to social capital is determined by opportunities to interact with others, the characteristics of the individuals who compose the social network, and the configuration of the network itself (Offer & Schneider, 2007). Social networks matter because they create and sustain relationships that can be cultivated into social support, itself a form of social capital.

## **6.7. Current Status of a University of Zambia Degree**

### **6.7.1. All University Graduates have equal opportunities of getting a job in Zambia**

On the question of the importance of a University of Zambia Degree study participants expressed varying opinions based on their experiences in the labour market. Some respondents on this question were of the view that all University Graduates have an equal opportunity of getting a good job in Zambia regardless of which University they graduated from as long as they are capable of convincing the potential employer that they can deliver. They argued that all universities in Zambia are regulated by government bodies such as the Zambia Higher Education Authority (HEA) hence, higher education qualifications from recognized universities are recognised in the market. Therefore, a lot of universities are producing a number of graduates in different fields in the same way as the University of Zambia is doing. This indicates that all have equal opportunities since graduates are qualified in various courses that are incorporated in their degree programmes. The respondents further argued that the quality of education in most universities has been improving and competitive. In addition, the respondents said that job advertisements do not specify whether or not they are looking for graduates from UNZA specifically or any other specific institutions. As long as one has a degree, they have an equal chance of getting a job just like a graduate from UNZA. The secret lies in how one presents themselves during interviews and how

hard working they prove to be if they are offered the opportunity. The following quotes have been reproduced to substantiate this argument.

**The following were views from some UNZA Graduates indicated as separate quotes:**

*“Speaking from my field, the ministry of general education recruits teachers who graduated from any university so long it’s registered with higher education authority. Many times graduates from UNZA are even left out and those from other universities are recruited. Everyone has an equal opportunity in spite of the university they graduated from.”*

*“People find jobs today through connections. As long as one has a paper and knows someone who can push for them for a job, they have a very high chance of getting a job. Most private universities have students coming from well-to-do families with well -connected parents or guardians. This greatly influences their chances of finding a job”*

*“The graduates have equal chances of being employed regardless of which University they attended, as long as it is a well-recognised institution. Social connections also play significant roles in helping most of the graduates in finding jobs. Today most of the people say that, “it is about who you know and not what you know.”*

*“The only thing that matters is how intelligent one is, how good their grades are, whether or not he/she can respond favourably in an interview and who they know.”*

*“Nowadays due to nepotism UNZA degree is being disregarded and you find a situation where an UNZA graduate is left out and the job is given to an individual from a private university.”*

*“It depends more on your network (relatives, friends etc.) and how close they are to job opportunities.”*

*“Employers have come to the understanding that there are a number of public universities in Zambia and outside Zambia that can produce performers. My understanding of the labour market is that the employer is looking for performers and not necessarily a degree from UNZA. The other thing is, we have a fair share of Zambians that have been educated outside Zambia from universities that have even a better ranking than UNZA. However, employers are a little bit more sceptical about employing people from private universities in Zambia.”*

*As long as one has a degree, they have an equal chance of getting a job just like a graduate from UNZA. The secret lies in how one presents themselves during interviews and how hardworking they prove to be during internship. It depends on ones skills, values and teamwork.”*

### **6.7.2. Graduates from the UNZA have more opportunities of getting job in Zambia**

Some respondents on the question of the importance of a University of Zambia Degree in comparison with Degrees from other Universities thought that graduates from the University of Zambia, including Copperbelt University, stand a better chance and have more opportunities of getting job in Zambia than graduates from other universities because UNZA’s standards of learning are highly ranked in the country. Graduates from UNZA and CBU have better chances of getting a good job in Zambia because of the rating of the Universities and the international recognition of their programmes. Furthermore, with the mushrooming of Private Universities in the Country most employers are of the view that these universities care less about the quality of their graduates but rather are in the business of making money. The quality of education produced by other universities is compromised because they are only interested in the money and not ensuring that they deliver as expected. Hence, employers would rather get someone from Public Universities mostly UNZA and CBU in order not to compromise the standards of the company or organization.

#### **More quotes below from UNZA Graduates as study participants:**

*“UNZA and CBU graduates have a better chance than the other universities. In my experience, though all students from any reputable university would be shortlisted for interviews, UNZA and CBU students are generally much better prepared and more in touch with the employers’ requirements making them have an edge in the job search.”*

*“With the mushrooming of private universities in the country most employers are of the view that these universities care less about the quality of their graduates but rather are in the business of making money. Hence, they would rather get someone from the public universities mostly UNZA than CBU.”*

### **6.7.3. UNZA Graduates have an edge over other University graduates**

Another set of respondents thought that graduates from the University of Zambia have more opportunities and stand a better chance of getting a job in Zambia. They argued that UNZA being the highest learning institution in Zambia makes it a fountain of knowledge compared to other universities in the country and it has produced quality graduates who have contributed to the economic growth of the Nation, therefore potential employers give priority to University of Zambia graduates whenever they are recruiting. The respondents stated that it is a well-known fact that UNZA graduates are considered well trained in their fields of studies as compared to graduates from other universities. The university rankings attest to this fact and employers would always look to that because people generally and employers specifically in Zambia still have more trust in a Degree from the University of Zambia than Degrees from other universities. Furthermore, some respondents argued that UNZA graduates have an upper hand in beating other graduates in the labour market because their training is intensive and the university has a very good academic reputation, at least locally. There has always been a belief that UNZA is the best University in Zambia because of the quality of its graduates in terms of being practical and they adopt work environments very easily. However, on the other hand, some other institutions do not offer quality education/training to their students, thus disadvantaging them and leaving their reputation questionable.

**The opinions of study participants in form of quotes are indicated as follows:**

*“Graduates from UNZA have better chances of getting a good job in Zambia because of the rating of the University and the international recognition of its programmes.”*

*“Some companies internally do not pick graduates from other universities not very well known to avoid the risk of employing a substandard graduate.”*

*“The quality produced by other universities is compromised. Some universities are only interested in the money and not ensuring that they deliver as expected, besides the quality of students the select for admission is critically compromised.”*

*“It is a well-known fact that UNZA graduates are considered well trained in their fields of studies as compared to graduates from other universities, the university rankings attest to this fact and employers would look to that.”*

The findings on the opinion of respondents in relation to their views on the importance of a University of Zambia Degree on the labour market in the period under consideration, in which case respondents were asked to indicate whether a person holding a Bachelor’s degree from UNZA find it easier to get a job than a person with a Bachelor’s degree from another university in Zambia. In the findings it was learned that 12% of the respondents felt that the Bachelor’s degree from UNZA was definitely not important, 13.9% indicated that the Bachelor’s degree from UNZA was somehow not important, 2.9% indicated that they were not sure whether a person holding a Bachelor’s degree from UNZA find it easier to get a job than a person with a Bachelor’s degree from another university in Zambia. On the other hand, 37.5% of the respondents indicated that the Bachelor’s degree from UNZA was somehow important, 30.3% indicated that the Bachelor’s degree from UNZA was definitely important while 3.4% of the respondents indicated that they had no opinion whether a person holding a Bachelor’s degree from UNZA find it easier to get a job than a person with a Bachelor’s degree from another university in Zambia as indicated above.

*“Some Universities produce half-baked graduates. This is evidenced by graduates from some universities who always ask UNZA graduates to help them with work and this habit starts way before graduating with assignments of which some UNZA graduates are now earning a living out of helping students from other institutions with assignments.”*

*“No in the sense that some Universities have a reputation of offering high quality education/skills to their students. Thus inculcating in them competencies/skills and confidence required to deliver services with excellence. However, on the other hand, some institutions do not offer quality education/training to their students, thus disadvantaging them and leaving their reputation questionable.”*

## **6.8. Gender and employability of UNZA Graduates**

Although many people use terms “sex” and “gender” as synonyms and interchangeable, they have different meanings. We use the term sex for classification based on human biology. Biological sex depends on a person’s chromosomes and is expressed in reproductive organs and hormones. Gender, in contrast, refers to a classification that people construct that typically shows differences between females and males. In this study we are using the term gender to indicate the difference between female UNZA graduates and male UNZA graduates.

Study participants were asked to express their opinion on whether they thought that one’s gender (that is, being male or females) makes a difference in getting a job with or without one’s social connections. Two major arguments emerged from this study; first things was that “gender makes a difference in the employability of UNZA Graduates,” and the second was that “gender does not make a difference in getting a job in Zambia.” The findings showed that 51% of the study participants believed that one’s gender has no influence on the employability of UNZA Graduates in the labour market compared to approximately 47% who believed gender does make a difference in one’s employability. The implication of these figures is that there is still a significantly good number of UNZA Graduate who believe the gender of a job seeker can influence whether or not they can get hired.

### **6.8.1. Gender and employability of UNZA Graduates: Gender matters**

The study also made an attempt to establish the influence of gender in the employability of UNZA Graduates with or without one’s social connections, and so the question of whether or not gender has any influence on the employability of UNZA Graduates, some study participants thought that gender makes a difference in getting a job in the labour regardless of whether one is connected or not, depending on the type of job in the industry or organization one is looking for. Study participants argued that some jobs require graduates of a particular gender or sex to achieve the goals in that particular job in as much as they would say that there is no discrimination of job applicants based on gender. For instance, jobs in the mines favour males while front office jobs in most firms may favour females. In the industry such as the mining industry in Zambia, the division of labour between men and women has been changing over time in the sense the number of women

taking up what used to be men's jobs is steadily increasing. The University of Zambia, for example, between 2000 and 2015 had produced a total of 32 female graduates from the School of Mines and a total 81 female graduates from the School of Engineering (UNZA, 2015), all of them obviously going into the jobs that were previously a preserve of men. In addition, some employers prefer male employees to avoid issues such as maternity leave for women. Sometimes females are favoured when it comes to recruitment possibly because they are underrepresented in organisations and some positions. In some cases, based on their experienced study participants revealed that, if the employer is male, he may offer employment to a female applicant in exchange for sex. The participants also indicated that in the past, males job seekers had a higher chance of getting employed but nowadays things have changed because of widespread advocacy on gender equality and equity. So females are enjoying higher chances of getting a job than males because many organisations, including the government, have put in place a deliberate policies (affirmative action) to empower women in order to attain gender equality in as far as employment opportunities are concerned. These policies are usually done to inspire and motivate the girl child, since women and girls have endured marginalisation in society for a very long time. Other arguments from respondents in this study are that the gender equality and equity phenomenon has deprived many males who are better suited and professionally more apt than females to lose out on opportunities because of such company policies on affirmative action. They feel that males have been greatly disadvantaged because of the gender equality movement. In the same vein, even as female job seekers enjoy the benefits of affirmative action policies, some female job seekers still lose out one employment opportunities because certain female folks, due to misconduct, have dented the image of females in some professional circles.

**Study participants' opinions as quoted by the researcher:**

*“Females have had more opportunities of late because of trying to increase motivation and inspiration to the girl child by employers.”*

*“Yes due to gender discrimination. Females are more vulnerable to be sexually abused by the employers to get a job. Hence many lose out the opportunity to be employed and remain chaste.”*

*“Most females I graduated with got employed before me.”*

*“Many organisations are positively discriminating against male applicants. In some cases, males have to work at least twice as hard as their female counterparts to be accorded the same opportunities.”*

*“In most cases, men stand high chances of getting a job than women because they are believed to be more ‘productive’ than women.”*

*“In some engineering departments like automotive garages women are usually not preferred just because of sex and secretarial jobs are normally given to women...etc.”*

*“When you graduate with a bachelor’s degree, opportunities tend to be equal to either gender, unlike with the people who are uneducated whose job hunt and major description and nature are gender tailored.”*

*“Females are most favoured when it comes to recruiting possibly because they are underrepresented in most positions (affirmative action) or they employer (if male) offers employment in exchange for sex.”*

*“Yes to some extent but it is all dependent on the position available. I feel ladies have a kind of positions that fit them and when such opportunities are created, sex plays a major role.”*

*“The gender equality and equity phenomenon has deprived many males who are better suited and professionally more apt than females to lose out on opportunities because of such like company policies. While in some others instances females lose out because some female folks have dented the image of females in some professional circles. It cuts both ways I feel though males have been greatly disadvantaged.”*

*“Gender discrimination has not ended in Zambia. People have a negative view of women who have to go on maternity leave when there is so much work to be done.”*

*“It is hard to get a job with a lot of responsibilities i.e. managerial positions when you are young female because companies feel that a young lady might get pregnant which might slow down the company’s objectives.”*

### **6.8.2. Gender and employability of UNZA Graduates: Gender does not matter**

On the question on gender and employability of UNZA Graduates, some respondents held different views, they thought that gender does not make a difference in getting a job in Zambia because both sexes are given equal chances of hired. The respondents argued that gender is not a factor and it all depends on the kind of qualification one has and how well one has performed during the interviews. When people graduate with a Bachelor's Degree, opportunities tend to be equal to either sex and employers have come to the understanding that being male or female is not an issue at all in terms of performance. It also depends on the suitability of the candidate for a particular job/position and what the employer is looking for from him/her prospective employee. Although at times it depends on one's social connections with relatives or friends or acquaintances and so on, nowadays it is not about being male or female but more of who is qualified for a particular job.

**The views of study participants were recorded verbatim as indicated below:**

*“It's about who is able to do the job, be it male or female, if you have what it takes to do that job, you will get the job that's what I believe in.”*

*“Again it depends with the industry or profession, some professions are tailored to favour certain sexes for instance jobs in the mines favour males while front office jobs in most firms may favour ladies.”*

*“Employers care about qualifications and not gender.”*

*“Nowadays employers do not focus on the sex of an individual. There are equal opportunities for all in almost all the organizations.”*

*“It is not a factor in finding a job, employers want people who can deliver and not the gender, qualifications is what matters and not the sex of an individual.”*

*“They have equal opportunities especially that Zambians are now promoting women participation in development.”*

*“What is important is the qualification and skills that one holds besides most organisations now are equal opportunity employers.”*

*“It all depends with the kind of qualification one has and how well one has performed during the interview unless specific adverts which stress that they prefer females.”*

## **6.9. Employers’ views and experiences**

From the employers’ standpoint and practice, in relation to new university graduates’ employability, the study has shown that employers focus on employability skills because such skills indicate individuals’ long-term productivity and organisational performance. Hence new graduates who can demonstrate the possession of employability skills during the recruitment process are not only employable but they can also significantly contribute to organizational performance. The study revealed that when recruiting new graduates, employers tend to focus on certain skills and abilities, behavioural attitudes and educational qualifications. This is because new graduates are less likely to have work experience and such abilities and skills signal individual’s work performance. This study further showed that in certain instances, a weak relationship exists between a job seeker’s specialisation and employability. In this regard, high percentage of graduates become employed in occupations different from their study disciplines. This trend is especially common in the service industry such as banking institutions who employ any job applicant regardless of their field of specialisation and then put such new employees on graduate management training for a specific period of time.

The study established that the most popular methods of recruiting people in organisations, including UNZA Graduates are what are referred to as ‘traditional’ or ‘formal’ methods. The commonest method among these methods is the use of advertisements in the media (print and electronic media), and the most popular method is the newspaper advertisement. In addition to this long standing tradition of recruiting job applicants or job seekers, where there was special need in terms of human resource development, some employers indicated that they would select certain tertiary institutions offering certain Degree programmes, engage such institutions to select graduating students in specific fields of study to be employed in their organisations. After receiving applications from qualified applicants, the study discovered most employers use interviews as a method for selecting the most qualified individuals to fill up the vacancies. Some of them use interviews in combination with other techniques such as aptitude tests and other types of tests. Employers were also to indicate if factors such as social connections of job seekers, the gender of

job applicants, UNZA Degree, and the type of university one attended plays a role in the hiring of such job seekers or applicants. The responses that came out are presented in the following narrations:

### **6.9.1. Job seekers rely on social connections to get hired**

This is what is prevailing in the labour market. Employers stated that if you are not connected by someone who knows you, even though you have the right qualification and required experience, the employer will not pick you. Though some employers argued that they feel this trend of social connections, which has become very common in the hiring of people for job opportunities, is retrogressive to human resource development. The problem with this trend is that most institutions end up engaging ill-qualified employees for certain jobs because they have people backing them, and they leave out the right candidates for the same jobs. The informants were able to confirm this trend in the recruitment and selections processes that indeed, there is a strong reliance on social connections among job seekers, including UNZA Graduates, to get jobs in organisations. The informants also confirmed that some job interviews, are usually held just for the sake of writing administrative reports when in fact job offers have already been done and given to connected job seekers through the powers that be. This is not to say social connections have really taken over the process of hiring people for jobs, recruiters always make an effort to put merit on the table when hiring people for jobs.

### **6.9.2. The competitiveness of a University of Zambia Degree**

On the question of whether or not a graduate from UNZA has an edge over other university graduates in getting hired, about 62% of the employers confirmed UNZA comes first in the minds of many people as it is the oldest and most popular university. They indicated that a Degree from UNZA is still important in the selection process. Therefore, for UNZA there would always be a slight edge over graduates from other universities. They argued that from their experience, it is easy for a person holding a Bachelor's degree from UNZA to get a job in their institution than a person with a Bachelor's degree from another university if there is a vacancy because their organisations still believe and consider UNZA as one institution that provides quality education compared to other institutions, then followed by CBU. On the other hand, 37% of employers

thought that the worthiness of a Degree from UNZA has declined in the face of competition it is facing from other universities operating in the country. So the University of Zambia no longer has an edge over other universities in Zambia. As a matter of fact, there are some universities which are offering specialised Degree programmes that may not be available at UNZA. Interestingly, the observation of the researcher of this study was that the rating of the University of Zambia Degree heavily depended on the university at which the interviewees themselves studied and graduated from. For some interviewees, there was an element of biasness in how they rated the competitiveness of the University of Zambia Degree. The interviewees who graduated from UNZA believed that a Degree from UNZA still had an edge over Degrees from other universities in the midst of the competition UNZA is facing, while interviewees who studied and graduated from other universities believed that the importance or worthiness of a Degree from UNZA had declined in the face of the competition the highest institution of learning is facing. The findings also indicate that a combination of being an UNZA Graduate laced with strong social connections leads more to employability. Nonetheless, UNZA Graduates were still relying on their education to get employed although for some of them, it goes with a combination of both social connections and their educational qualifications in finding jobs on the labour market, especially in the current situation compared to the period before the liberalisation of higher education in the late 1990s and the eventual establishment of more universities in the country in 2000s.

### **6.9.3. There is equal opportunity employment in organisations**

This study revealed that many organisations are equal opportunity employers in as far as gender or sex of job seekers is concerned. Many organisations support people of all kinds of backgrounds including gender. Gender does not really matter when recruiting in many organisations because equal opportunities are given to both males and females. When employers are considering potential employees or applicants for a job vacancy, what matters is one's qualifications and not their gender. As a matter of fact some organisations actually promote what is referred to as "affirmative action" or gender parity in which case female applicants are given first priority or where an organisation strives to strike a 50/50 gender balance.

## **6.10. Conclusion**

This section presents the conclusion and reflections of the study. It uses the evidence presented in the findings to demonstrate the study's contribution to our understanding of the role that social capital can play in the employability of University of Zambia graduates. The research presented in this thesis makes an original and significant contribution to the knowledge about the conditions under which social connections among University of Zambia Graduates contribute to their employability in the labour market in Zambia, with a focus on the period between 2000 and 2015. This study was the first of its kind in Zambia to study how University of Zambia Graduates in the current era can activate their social capital and make use of social connections, as part of what we can refer to as 'informal' job search methods, to find employment in the competitive labour market in the country. Social connections have always been a common feature among human beings for as long as humanity has existed on earth. People turn to social connections and activate them when faced with a challenge or a problem or a need which may require a solution from other people or when they are in a vulnerable position. Over the past several decades, researchers have attempted to determine and understand through rigorous investigations the role of social capital in influencing people's successes and achievements in their lifetime, including finding jobs in the labour market. This researcher has joined this group of researchers who have attempted to understand this social phenomenon.

We have learned in this study that the labour market is believed to be an employer-controlled process. It is the employer who demands that a curriculum vitae (CV) should be submitted by a job seeker, and decides when to hire, who to interview, and who not to interview, who to offer the job, and how much money to offer to the new employee. The employer, therefore, is always in the driver's seat in the labour market. It is a fact that the average job seeker in Zambia relies largely on his or her CV to find a job and subsequently may not be successful. One major reason is that the job seeker is competing with thousands of other job seekers. In such circumstances, the job seeker needs to be equally creative either in writing the CV, or skip it altogether and become an aggressive job seeker.

Many studies have conceptualized the way people search for a job into two categories; that is "formal and informal" search methods. Formal job search methods are those that involve formal

intermediaries such as the use of advertisements, employment agencies, college interviews and many others. Informal job search methods are those that do not involve formal intermediaries, but may be based on people's social relations with friends, relatives and employers (Wanberg, Zhu & Van Hooft, 2010). This study focused on the role that social connections play in the employability of University of Zambia Graduates in the 2000s era. These social connections can be created through families or friends or both, and they fall in the category of informal job search methods. The study has revealed that the reliance on the use of social connections in search of employment among university graduates was very common in the period understudy and most likely beyond the period understudy, a social phenomenon that can be attributed to a labour market that had reduced in size since 1975, and also to the large number of university graduates that are being produced by many other universities now operating in Zambia alongside the University of Zambia. The University of Zambia (UNZA) is the oldest university in the country, established in 1965 by an Act of parliament number 66 (UNZA, 2015), it was followed by the establishment of the Copperbelt University (CBU), established in 1987 by an Act of parliament of 1987. These two public universities enjoyed the privilege and monopoly of producing university graduates into the labour market for a very long time, until the government promulgated a policy to establish several more public universities by transforming some public colleges into universities. The colleges that were transformed into universities included Mulungushi, Mukuba, Kwame Nkrumah and Chalimbana colleges. This public policy was supplemented by the liberalisation of the higher education sector, a move which led to the establishment of private universities to operate alongside the public universities. According to the Higher Education Authority (HEA) website ([www.hez.org.zm](http://www.hez.org.zm)), in 2019 Zambia had not less than nine fully operational public universities and not less than 53 fully operational private universities. Therefore, it can be deduced that there are thousands and thousands of graduates that are being offloaded onto the labour market from these public and private universities, a trend that has made finding a job by university graduates difficult. When faced with such a situation, undoubtedly any job seeker would try to devise alternative means of obtaining a job. Therefore, social connections have become an effective means of obtaining employment in Zambia, according to this study.

When one uses the social capital typology, you would find an interaction effect between a person's socio-economic status and the types of social capital they have, and the influence of these two

factors on labour market outcomes. The researcher was able to draw a final key point. While social capital does relate to both the labour market outcomes and the job search methods people use, it does this unevenly (Stone et al, 2003). Social capital may act to mirror or exacerbate existing inequalities or differences between people from higher and lower socioeconomic circumstances, in terms of their labour market outcomes or employability.

Students come to UNZA from a variety of socioeconomic trajectories, determined either by their parents' educational and occupational circumstances or by their own occupational histories. Some students delay higher education in order to earn and save money, gain professional experience, or support their families. Socioeconomic background is a largely "invisible" but an important factor that influences students' life chances. For instance, rural or urban origins; growing up in a white-collar or blue-collar family; being raised by a single, struggling parent or in a very large family; high or low family income; and family employment situation are all factors that can put students at a disadvantage or advantage.

In this study, we learnt that there is a strong connection between one's social connections and socio-economic class. It was discovered that there is an element of social inequality in the possession of social connections and the ability to activate them in the labour market. People with high social positions or with a high socio-economic status tend to have more social connections than those in lower socio-economic positions. In sociology, studies have shown that certain groups of people systematically experience advantages in society while other groups of people are systematically disadvantaged in society. This patterned inequality affects people's life chances. Life chance can be explained as opportunities that individuals do or do not have because of where they are located in the social hierarchy and this can affect their accomplishment of certain goals in life. For example, children born in well-to-do families may have better life chances than children born into poor families. The profile of students at the University of Zambia indicates that the majority of UNZA entrants come from urban areas, including Lusaka and Copperbelt (Academic Office, 2015). There are disparities in terms of the socio-economic status of these students. Some of them come from well-to-do families, while others come from poor families. A minority of the students are drawn from rural areas as their areas of residence where they were born and brought up. Rural areas in Zambia are generally poor, and the people that are based in rural areas have a

lower socioeconomic rank than people in urban areas. In many instances, such students coming from poor backgrounds tend to be the first ones to attain university education in their families and their families begin looking up to them as breadwinners.

It was discovered in this research that a small number of the 208 UNZA graduates who participated in the study indicated that they came from upper class families (8.7%). The majority indicated coming from middle class families, approximately 54.3%, and 27.9% of the study participants said they were coming from lower middle or emerging middle class families, and the rest (12) 0.06% participants indicated coming from poor families. The study established a significant association between the socio-economic situation of the families where UNZA Graduates came from and the strength of social connections, thereby playing a major role in helping them find employment in a relatively short period of time. Some of these graduates were able to find a job in not more than one month after graduating from the University of Zambia. This was particularly noticeable among graduates whose parents had tertiary of education. UNZA Graduates from high socio-economic status tend to have relatives and friends with good connections who then give them a push in life. Although the study discovered that only a small number of UNZA graduates got their first job using social connection through relatives and friends, there was a unanimous view that social connections have been very important and effective in the employability of UNZA graduates in the period under investigation for this study (2000 – 2015). This view was shared by those who indicated that they found employment on their own without any help from anyone; for this category landing their first employment was taking them for as long as three and half years after graduating from UNZA because they did not have people with connections or people in influential positions in society to help them.

Indeed, it can be argued that in the period under investigation in this study (2000 – 2015) it has been very difficult for a graduate from UNZA to be employed in Zambia, partly due to the fact that there are thousands of University graduates in the country from many other universities competing for the same job opportunities as UNZA graduates. Job seekers are now relying on social connections with potential employers, either through relatives or friends or acquaintances to get employed in Zambia. Advertisements for job opportunities are sometimes done for formality

when in the actual sense employers already know or they have already selected who to employ through connections.

Furthermore, as already mentioned, the use of friends and family connections (bridging and bonding social capital) by those from low socio-economic backgrounds for finding jobs is less likely to result in high quality work, than for those from higher socio-economic circumstances, who would be more likely use professional contacts. We can, therefore, conclude that there are UNZA Graduates whom we can be referred to as “**social capital rich,**” these are people who have levels of connectedness across the board - to informal networks, organisations and institutions, as well as high levels of generalised trust and reciprocity from high socio-economic class, and the **social capital poor,**” those with small informal networks, few connections with the wider community or with institutions mainly from low socio-economic class.

When the concept of gender is brought into the picture of UNZA Graduates’ employability, the study revealed that gender may, on few instances, be considered by employers depending on the nature of a job one is applying for or when the organisation that a graduate is intending to join has a policy that promotes gender equality. In such cases the employer may give preference to a female job seeker as part of the company’s policy to promote gender equality and as a way of giving more opportunities to women to take up decision making positions. Therefore, in such instances, sometimes females would be favoured over males possibly because they are underrepresented in certain positions. However, the study can conclusively state that gender does not influence one’s chances of getting a job in Zambia because both sexes are given equal chances of getting hired for a particular job. Almost all organisations in the country are equal opportunity employers. And so gender is not a factor and it all depends on the kind of qualifications one has and how well one performs during the interviews. When people graduate with a Bachelor’s Degree, opportunities tend to be equal to either sex and employers have come to the understanding that being male or female is not an issue at all in terms of performance. It also depends on the suitability of the candidate for a particular job/position and what the employer is looking for from the prospective employee. Although social connections play a role in the employability of graduates, which are usually activated through relatives or friends or acquaintances, in the period under investigation the issue is not about being male or female but more about who is qualified for a particular job.

### **6.11. Implications and Contribution of the Study**

The major aim of a PhD study is to contribute new scientific knowledge to the existing body of knowledge in the field in which the study has been undertaken, based on its originality and lessons learned. The originality and contribution of this study in the field of sociology is reflected in the following critical areas.

**Research Area:** A detailed and critical evaluation of existing literature revealed that this was the first empirical study that focused on the role of social capital in the employability of University Graduates in Zambia. The review of extant literature showed that there had never been a study that investigated the strategies used by university graduates in search of jobs in the labour market in the country. Using the social capital theoretical perspective, we learned that being in possession of a university degree alone cannot be a guarantee to one's good chances of getting a job in Zambia. One needs social relations, which for purposes of this research were defined as social connections. These social relations or social connections have benefits that can be far reaching for an individual. These include relationships that people develop through their families, friends and organisations that can provide them with the capacity to gain access to valuable resources, ideas and information from formal institutions beyond their communities. Findings of this study and a review of literature showed that there are things that are common across the developed and developing countries, for example, when looking for employment, side by side with formal job search methods, university graduates rely on informal job search methods such as their reliance on help from families and friends, and influential people in society. Much as these features were common across the developing and developed countries, they were mediated by local variations and other structural factors, including different national cultures (values, norms and practices), politics, and the socio-economic situation of university graduates in as far as searching for employment is concerned in such countries. This thesis therefore, acts as a threshold study and makes a bi-fold scholarship contribution at national and global level.

**Methodology:** The extensive review of literature on the role of social capital in the labour showed that most of the earlier studies that had been conducted in this area had predominantly taken a purely quantitative methodological approach. This study employed a mixed methodological approach to address the research problem at hand. The originality of this mixed methods approach

lies in it being the first to investigate the influence of social capital among university graduates in the labour market in Zambia. The strength of the mixed method study is embedded in the fact that when both quantitative and qualitative data are used together, they provide a better understanding of the research problem than either type of method by itself can provide. It is pragmatic in terms of its practicality; provision of multiple viewpoints; biased and unbiased views; subjective and objective positions. This type of research produces a more complete picture of a problem under investigation. This research on *the role of social capital in the employability of University Graduates in Zambia* had enabled me to describe the nature of their lived experiences in the labour market based on their own narratives in a unique and distinctive ways. In this fashion, the study contributes to the current scholarship at both methodological and epistemological levels. This study therefore, demonstrates that scholars can not only develop an awareness of the strategies employed by university graduates to get jobs but can also contribute to the body of knowledge using appropriate theoretical and methodological approaches. These should allow for a greater focus on the perspectives of the participants while being reflective of the whole research process.

**Theory:** The research problem in this study fitted very well in the social capital theory by focusing on the overlooked actors in the labour market and how they use social capital to find jobs. At a theoretical level, what emerged from the study was that the role of social capital in the employability of university graduates and its effectiveness is heavily influenced by the rich-poor graduates' differences. People in the rich bracket tend to have more social capital which in turn leads to increased chances of finding a job very easily, and good job status attainment (Lin et al.1981; Lin 2001). Whereas those from the poor bracket tend have little social capital which in turn leads to reduced chances of finding a job, and when a job is found it is usually one that does not fit one's educational qualifications, perhaps in part due to a lack of social capital in their lower social status.

**Solving the problem:** This study has attempted to answer a very common belief and aphorism among job seekers that finding a job in Zambia usually depends on one's social connections rather than one's qualifications. Findings of this study provided an account of the joys and challenges university graduates experienced and provided a nuanced understanding of employability within the Zambia context. One of the most striking findings in this study which cuts across the socio-

economic divide was the belief in the power of social connections in helping job seekers to find jobs after their graduation. Furthermore, we learned from this study that social connections that work and are more effective are people's connections to people with power, that is, people who can provide someone with the capacity to gain access to resources and opportunities from formal institutions beyond one's community. These powerful connections are only available to very few people. And so some University Graduates do not have much social capital because they do not know the right people.

### **6.12. Further Research Directions**

In the scientific world, a research study is not free from limitations and these may relate to the research aim, objectives, data collection challenges, sampling and other nagging issues. And so a researcher can propose future research suggestions. In this study we have learned that there are still gaps in our findings and knowledge around social capital research in Zambia and this concept would benefit from future research. Our suggestions for future research include the following:

- We have learned from the study that social connections which people use to get ahead in life, including getting job opportunities may not be available to everyone. There is an element of social inequality in the availability and use of such social connections. Therefore, there is a need for a study on social capital and inequality. For example, does social capital have any bearing on social inequality and social exclusion in society? This can be a very important study that might show how social connections or networks characterised by ties between similar individuals exacerbate social inequality and social exclusion in society.
- This research on social connections and employability of UNZA Graduates focused on the period between 2000 and 2015. A research could be initiated to compare the use of social connections among university graduates between the period UNZA started offloading graduates onto the labour market up to the time when the higher education sector was liberalised, and followed by the establishment of other universities in Zambia to operate alongside the University of Zambia. This study can contribute to our understanding of the extent to which UNZA graduates then, that is in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s were using or relying on social connections to get jobs in comparison to graduates in the 2000s.

- The findings in many research studies on social capital indicate that while social capital has many beneficial effects with respect to opportunities, there are also a host of less beneficial or negative aspects to the utilisation of social capital which are under explored in the current empirical literature. For example, the use of capital in criminal activities, including organised crime and corruption, tribalism, nepotism, illegal migration etc. This is potentially a dark side of social capital. A study to investigate and address the negativity of social capital will be very critical to the literature on social capital.
- In this study it was discovered that the socio-economic situation of UNZA graduates has a bearing on their access to social connections. It was learned that graduates who come from high socio-economic categories have more access to social connections than graduates who have a low socio-economic background. There is need to conduct a study and establish whether or there is a relations between one's socio-economic status and the size of their capital. Further studies can also be conducted on these two important areas: (i) the socio-economic characteristics of students in private and public universities (ii) the employability of graduates from private and public universities in Zambia.

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[www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)

## APPENDICES

### 1.1. Questionnaire for UNZA Graduates

#### *The Role of Social Capital in the employability of University Graduates in Zambia: A Case of University of Zambia Graduates (2000 – 2015)*

#### *Survey Questionnaire*

##### **What it's about --**

You are one of the University of Zambia graduates from 270 graduates invited to collaborate in this study. The study is on “*The role of Social Capital in the employability of University Graduates in Zambia: A Case of University of Zambia Graduates (2000 – 2015)*.” You will be asked a number of background questions about your parents’ education and about your age, gender, marital status, and race, ethnicity (tribe) in order to compare your responses to those of other respondents in the study. The findings in this study are purely for my PhD Thesis at the University of Zambia.

##### **Things you should know about participating in this study**

Your participation is voluntary. You may decline participation and you may stop at any point in the survey. In either case your answers will be destroyed. If you do decide to participate, your individual responses, including any contact information you provide, are confidential and will not be shared with anybody in the departments, or any college, or university. No one will use the information in any way that could harm or cause problems for you.

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact **Eliphias Machacha** at the University of Zambia by: e-mailing to any of the following email addresses:

[eliphias.machacha@unza.zm](mailto:eliphias.machacha@unza.zm), [mceliphas@yahoo.com](mailto:mceliphas@yahoo.com), [mceliphas@gmail.com](mailto:mceliphas@gmail.com);

Calling any of the following mobile numbers:  
+260966418925/+260978698950/+260955220025.

For each question, please check the box that best describes your response. The survey should take about 15 minutes to complete.

Thank you very much for your participation.

**A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**(LET ME BEGIN BY ASKING YOU SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION OR BACKGROUND INFORMATION)**

1. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is your sex?

	<b>TICK</b>
Male	
Female	

3. What is your nationality?

<b>NATIONALITY</b>	<b>Zambian</b>
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4. Where do you live; that is, where do you stay most often?

	<b>TICK</b>
My Parents' home ( <i>Father and Mother</i> )	
My single father	
My single mother	
My own home ( <i>This refers to a house you either built or bought</i> )	
I stay in a rented house	
In an institutional house ( <i>i.e. a house owned by your company etc.</i> )	
My relative(s)' home	
My friend(s)' home	
Group home or group quarters	
Other (Specify):	

5. In which type of residential area is your home located?

<b>RESIDENTIAL AREA</b>	<b>TICK</b>	<b>SPECIFY (E.G. KAMANGA COMPOUND)</b>
High Cost Residential		
Medium Cost Residential		
Low Cost Residential		

6. What do you think of your family's socio-economic situation? (*This refers to the family you stay with or family in the same household you are staying*)

<b>SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION</b>	<b>INCOME LEVEL</b>	<b>TICK</b>
Poor	0 - 2 USD/day	
Near poor	2 - 4 USD/day	
Emerging Middle Class	4 - 10 USD/day	
Middle Class	10 - 20 USD/day	
Upper Class	20+ USD/day	

7. How many people live with you? Number of people (*not including yourself*)

--	--

8. What is your current marital status (*Please mark one response only*)

<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>	<b>TICK</b>
Married	
Engaged to be married	
Living with Partner (Cohabiting)	
Never married	
Separated	
Divorced	
Widowed	
Abandoned	
Other (Specify)	

9. Do you have any children

	<b>TICK</b>
YES	
NO	

If YES, how many \_\_\_\_\_

10. What is your religion?

<b>RELIGION</b>	<b>TICK</b>
Christianity	
Orthodox Christianity	
Islam	
Buddhism	
Hinduism	
Judaism	
No Religion	
Other (Specify):	

11. If you are Christian, which religious organisation do you belong to?

<b>RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION</b>	<b>TICK</b>
Catholic	
Protestant ( <i>This refers to any religious organisation or denomination other than the Catholic; Please specify</i> )	
Other (Specify):	

12. What is your father's highest education he completed? (*Mark one response only*)

Never attended any school	
Some primary/elementary school education	
Complete primary/elementary school education (Grade 1 – 7)	
Some junior high/secondary school education	
Complete junior high/secondary school education (Grade 8 – 9)	
Some senior high/secondary school education	
Complete senior high/secondary school education (Grade – 12)	
Some tertiary education	
Complete tertiary education (e.g. <i>Diploma or Bachelor's Degree</i> )	
Other (Specify):	

13. What is your mother's highest education she completed? (*Mark one response only*)

Never attended any school	
Some primary/elementary school education	
Complete primary/elementary school education (Grade 1 – 7)	
Some junior high/secondary school education	
Complete junior high/secondary school education (Grade 8 – 9)	
Some senior high/secondary school education	
Complete senior high/secondary school education (Grade – 12)	
Some tertiary education	
Complete tertiary education (e.g. <i>Diploma or Bachelor's Degree</i> )	
Other (Specify):	

14. What type of Degree(s) did you obtain from the University of Zambia (UNZA)? (*If more than one, mark all that you have obtained so far*)

<b>HIGHEST UNZA EDUCATION ATTAINED</b>	<b>TICK</b>
Bachelor's Degree	
Master's Degree	
Doctoral Degree (e.g. JD, DBA, PhD etc.)	
Other (Specify):	

15. In which School(s) or Institute(s) at UNZA did you pursue your Bachelor's Degree?

<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>TICK</b>
Institute of Distance Education (IDE)	
School of Agricultural Sciences	
School of Education	
School of Engineering	
School of Humanities and Social Sciences	
School of Law	
School of Medicine	
School of Mines	

School of Natural Sciences	
School of Veterinary Medicine	

16. What was the field of study in which you specialised or majored (*e.g. sociology; engineering*) at undergraduate level?

(Specify):General

17. When did you graduate from UNZA with your Bachelor's Degree?  
 Month/Year \_\_08\_\_ / \_\_2009\_\_

**B. WORK AND EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**

**(NOW, ALLOW ME TO ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR PARENTS' EMPLOYMENT HISTORY AND ALSO YOUR OWN EMPLOYMENT HISTORY)**

18. What is your current employment situation? (*Mark the response that best describes your situation*)

<b><i>YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYMENT SITUATION</i></b>	<b><i>TICK</i></b>
Employed full time	
Employed part time	
On Internship	
Self-employed (including business ownership)	
On maternity / parental leave	

19. What is your father's current employment situation? (*Mark the response that best describes his situation*)

<b><i>FATHER'S CURRENT EMPLOYMENT SITUATION</i></b>	<b><i>TICK</i></b>
Employed full time	
Employed part time	
Never been employed before and not looking for work	
Never been employed before and looking for work	
Unemployed and not looking for work	
Laid off and looking for work	
Laid off and not looking for work	
Self-employed (including business ownership)	
Disabled and not able to work	
On maternity / parental leave	
Deceased	
Other (Specify):Retired	

20. What is your mother’s current employment situation? (*Mark the response that best describes her situation*)

<b>MOTHER’S CURRENT EMPLOYMENT SITUATION</b>	<b>TICK</b>
Employed full time	
Employed part time	
Never been employed before and not looking for work	
Never been employed before and looking for work	
Unemployed and not looking for work	
Laid off and looking for work	
Laid off and not looking for work	
Self-employed (including business ownership)	
Disabled and not able to work	
On maternity / parental leave	
Deceased	
Other (Specify)	

21. Since graduating from the University of Zambia, how many full time jobs have you had where you worked at least 6 months or longer (*If you already had a job while at UNZA, please state “clear”*)

No. of full time Jobs	
-----------------------	--

22. When you graduated from the University of Zambia, how many part time jobs did you get or have you had where you worked not more 35 hours per week or less than 6 months (*if you already had a job while at UNZA, please state “clear”*).

No. of part time Jobs	
-----------------------	--

23. What was your first full time job, after obtaining your Bachelor’s Degree from UNZA? (*Please specify and describe clearly; if you already had a job while at UNZA, please state “clear”*)


24. Who was your first employer after obtaining your Bachelor’s Degree from UNZA? (*Please specify and describe clearly; if you already had a job while at UNZA, please state “clear”*)


25. Currently, what is your main job, that is, the paid job you spend the most time at?  
*(Please be specific and describe clearly)*


26. Who is your current employer?


27. Who helped you get your first job in Zambia after obtaining your Bachelor’s Degree from UNZA?

<i><b>SATISFACTION</b></i>	<i><b>TICK</b></i>
Got it myself	
Relative(s)	
Friend(s)	
My Parents	
My (former) Lecturer	
Employment agency	
Employer came to UNZA	
I was already in employment while at UNZA	
Other ( <i>Specify</i> ):	

28. How satisfied are you with your current job, as a whole? (*Mark one response only*)

<i><b>SATISFACTION</b></i>	<i><b>TICK</b></i>
Very dissatisfied	
Dissatisfied	
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	
Satisfied	
Very satisfied	

**C. ASSOCIATION/CLUB/ORGANISATION MEMBERSHIP**

***(LET ME NOW ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR MEMBERSHIP TO ANY ASSOCIATION/CLUB/ORGANISATION WHILE AT UNZA)***

29. While studying at UNZA at undergraduate, did you belong to any association/club/organisation?

	<b>TICK</b>	
YES		
NO		<i>If 'NO,' to this question go to section D</i>

If 'YES' to question 30 above; what is or was the name of the association/club/organisation?

University of Zambia Law Association

30. How would you rate your participation in the activities of the association/club/organisation as a member?

<b>LEVEL ACTIVITY</b>		<b>TICK</b>
Not active at all	<b>1</b>	
Somewhat active	<b>2</b>	
Active	<b>3</b>	
Very active	<b>4</b>	

31. Did your membership to the association/club/organisation you have mentioned above play any role in helping you to find a job after graduation?

	<b>TICK</b>
YES	
NO	

32. How often do you involve yourself in any groups of people who get together to do an activity or to talk about things in local or community groups? (*These could include sports, support groups, gymnasium, religious groups, parent-teacher associations, local pubs, etc.*)

<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>TICK</b>
Very often	
Often	
Sometimes	
Rarely	
Not at all	

33. How often do you involve yourself in any national groups or organisations? (*These could include political groups, national associations (e.g. LAZ, Zambia National Farmers Union, or Political Party etc.)*).

<b><i>FREQUENCY</i></b>	<b><i>TICK</i></b>
Very often	
Often	
Sometimes	
Rarely	
Not at all	

**D. SOCIAL CONNECTIONS AND JOB SEARCH METHODS**

***(NOW, ALLOW ME TO ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS ON THE JOB SEARCH METHODS THAT YOU USED IN LOOKING FOR A JOB)***

34. Number of people you meet daily and how you know them:

(i) In an ordinary day, how many people are you roughly in contact with?

How many people	
-----------------	--

(ii) How well do you know these people or persons?

<b><i>HOW YOU MAY KNOW THEM</i></b>	<b><i>TICK</i></b>
Know almost all of them well	
Know most of them well	
Know about half of them well	
Don't know most of them well	
Know almost none of them	

35. Thinking now about the people that you know, do you know anyone who:

<b><i>PERSONS YOU MAY KNOW</i></b>	<b><i>TICK</i></b>
owns a business	
is a professional such as a Lawyer, manager, teacher or doctor	
is a politician such as a Member of Parliament (MP), Councillor etc.	
is a senior government official such as a Director, Permanent secretary, Minister etc.	
is a local government official (e.g. Town Clerk ,or Director, etc.	
Other (Specify):	

36. How many months or years did it take you to land your first full time job after obtaining your Bachelor's Degree at UNZA? *(if you already had a job while at UNZA state "clear")*

No. of months	
---------------	--

37. Select one method below indicating how you successfully obtained or got your first job after obtaining your Bachelor's Degree from UNZA.

<b><i>JOB SEARCH METHOD</i></b>	<b><i>TICK</i></b>
Social contacts or social connection	
Made unsolicited or direct applications	
Responded to Newspaper adverts	
Responded to Television adverts	
Responded to Radio adverts	
I already had a job	
Engaged Employment agencies	
Campus interviews ( <i>conducted by my current employer on campus</i> )	
I was nominated by UNZA	
I was nominated by my School at UNZA	
I was nominated by Department at UNZA	
Job advert discovered through social media/networks (e.g. Facebook; LinkedIn etc.)	
Other (specify)	

38. Currently which one of the following do you believe is the most favoured job search strategy generally in the labour market in Zambia?

<b><i>JOB SEARCH METHOD</i></b>	<b><i>TICK</i></b>
Social contacts or social connection	
Unsolicited or direct applications	
Newspaper adverts	
Television adverts	
Radio adverts	
Social media (e.g. Facebook; LinkedIn; emails etc.)	
Employment agencies	
Campus interviews ( <i>conducted by an organisation on campus</i> )	
University connections (through Schools or Departments)	
Other (specify)	

39. Indicate your opinion on the importance of social connections or social networks of UNZA graduates' in search for job opportunities on the labour market nowadays.

<b><i>IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL CONNECTIONS</i></b>	<b><i>TICK</i></b>
Definitely Not important	
Somehow important	
Important	
Definitely important	
Not sure	
No opinion	

40. Indicate your opinion on the effectiveness of social connections or social networks in search of job opportunities on the labour market among UNZA graduates nowadays.

<b><i>EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL CONNECTIONS</i></b>	<b><i>TICK</i></b>
Definitely Not effective	
Somehow Not effective	
Not sure	
Somehow effective	
Definitely effective	
No opinion	

41. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with this assertion: “*In the labour market today, it’s who you know, and not what you know.*”

<b><i>“IT’S WHO YOU KNOW”</i></b>	<b><i>TICK</i></b>
I agree very much	
I agree a little	
I disagree a little	
I disagree very much	

42. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements (***mark as many right boxes as you can***)

<b>OPINION STATEMENT</b>	<b>Agree very much</b>	<b>Agree a little</b>	<b>Disagree a little</b>	<b>Disagree very much</b>
There is discrimination in the offering of job opportunities in Zambia nowadays				
Black Zambians have as many job opportunities as Zambians of other races				
There is a practice of tribalism in the labour market in Zambia				
UNZA graduates’ socio-economic background does not determine their chances of finding a job in Zambia today				
Nepotism ( <i>i.e. giving jobs to relatives and friends</i> ) is rampant in Zambia regardless of one’s educational qualifications				
Being in possession of a UNZA degree is what determines UNZA graduates’ success in the labour market and not any other factor				

UNZA graduates have higher chances of getting a job in the labour market than graduates from other universities in Zambia (e.g. CBU or University of Lusaka)				
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--	--	--	--

43. Please indicate how you feel about the following statements

<b>OPINION STATEMENT</b>	<b>Agree very much</b>	<b>Agree a little</b>	<b>Disagree a little</b>	<b>Disagree very much</b>
If someone has a chance of helping a person get a job, it is always better to choose a relative than a friend				
When someone has a serious problem, only relatives can help				
When looking for a job, a person should find a job in his/her home district, even if it means losing a better job somewhere else				

**E. IMPORTANCE OF A UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA DEGREE**

***(FINALLY, LET ME ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF A UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA BACHELOR'S DEGREE NOWADAYS)***

44. Indicate your opinion on the importance of a University of Zambia Bachelor's degree on the labour market nowadays. The question here is; ***does a person holding a Bachelor's degree from UNZA find it easier to get a job than a person with a Bachelor's degree from another university in Zambia?***

<b><i>IMPORTANCE OF A UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA BACHELOR'S DEGREE</i></b>	<b><i>TICK</i></b>
Definitely Not important	
Somehow not important	
Not sure	
Somehow important	
Definitely important	
No opinion	

45. Do you think that all university graduates, regardless of which university they graduated from, have an equal opportunity of getting a good job in Zambia?

	<b><i>TICK</i></b>
YES	
NO	

Please elaborate on your answer

--

46. Do you think one's sex (*i.e. being male or female*) makes a difference in getting a job?

	<b>TICK</b>
YES	
NO	

Please elaborate on your answer

--

47. With a large number of private universities in Zambia now operating and more people getting university degrees nowadays, what factors do you think influence who gets employed? (*Mark as many right boxes as you can*).

<b>FACTORS INFLUENCING EMPLOYMENT</b>	<b>TICK</b>
Age of a job seeker	
Name of University attended	
Type of University attended ( <i>e.g. Public University or Private University</i> )	
One's social status ( <i>e.g. one from a high socio-economic class</i> )	
Social connections or social networks from friends	
Social connections or social networks from relatives	
Social connections or social networks from acquaintances ( <i>distant friends</i> )	
Social connections with potential employers	
One's field of study or specialisation at the university ( <i>e.g. Economics, Education etc.</i> )	

48. What do you think about the employability of UNZA graduates these days compared to the period before the 2000s?

<b>EMPLOYABILITY OF UNIVERSITY GRADUATES</b>	<b>TICK</b>
It has declined	
Somehow it has remained the same	
Not sure	
Somehow it has improved	
It has improved	

49. Which one of the following do you think stands a better chance of being employed in a relatively short period of time after graduation in Zambia?

<b><i>EMPLOYABILITY OF UNIVERSITY GRADUATES</i></b>	<b><i>TICK</i></b>
Graduates from public universities ( <i>e.g. UNZA</i> )	
Graduates from private universities	
Graduates from foreign public universities	
Graduates from foreign private universities	
Everyone has a chance	
None of them have a chance	
Not sure	

50. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements (*mark as many right boxes as you can*)

	<b>Agree very much</b>	<b>Agree a little</b>	<b>Disagree a little</b>	<b>Disagree very much</b>
There is discrimination in the offering of job opportunities between sexes ( <i>female or male</i> ) in Zambia				
Female job seekers and male job seekers have equal chances of getting jobs in Zambia				
Female UNZA graduates are more likely to be employed in a short period of time than male UNZA graduates				
Male UNZA graduates are more likely to be employed in a short period of time than female UNZA graduates				
One's sex does not determine one's chances of finding a job in Zambia				

51. What is your final opinion on the role of social connections or social networks among UNZA graduates nowadays in finding jobs in the labour market compared to the period before the liberalisation of higher education in the late 1990s and the eventual establishment of more universities in the country?

--

**THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE SURVEY**

## 1.2. Interview Guide for Employers

### *The Role of Social Capital in the Employability of University Graduates in Zambia: A Case of University of Zambia Graduates (2000-2015)*

#### **INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS**

##### **What it's about --**

You are one of the interviews invited to participate in this study. The study is on “*The Role of Social Capital in the employability of University Graduates in Zambia: A Case of University of Zambia Alumni (2000-2015)*.” You have been selected as an employer or prospective employer of University of Zambia Graduates. The findings in this study are purely for my PhD Thesis at the University of Zambia.

##### **Things you should know about participating in this study**

Your participation is voluntary. You may decline participation and you may stop at any point in the survey. In either case your answers will be destroyed. If you do decide to participate, your individual responses, including any contact information you provide, are confidential and will not be shared with anybody in the departments, or any college, or university. No one will use the information in any way that could harm or cause problems for you.

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact **Eliphas Machacha** at the University of Zambia by: e-mailing to any of the following email addresses:

[eliphas.machacha@unza.zm](mailto:eliphas.machacha@unza.zm), [mceliphas@yahoo.com](mailto:mceliphas@yahoo.com), [mceliphas@gmail.com](mailto:mceliphas@gmail.com)

Calling any of the following mobile numbers:  
+260966418925/+260978698950/+260955220025.

For each question, please check the box that best describes your response. The survey should take about 15 minutes to complete.

Thank you very much for your participation.

**F. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**(LET BEGIN BY ASKING YOU SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION OR BACKGROUND INFORMATION)**

1. Your current organisation/institution -----

2. Sector:

	<b>TICK</b>
Public Sector	
Private Sector	

3. What is your position in this institution/institution? \_\_\_\_\_

4. How many years have you worked for this institution? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What is your sex?

	<b>TICK</b>
Male	
Female	

6. What is your religion?

<b>RELIGION</b>	<b>TICK</b>
Christianity	
Orthodox Christianity	
Islam	
Buddhism	
Hinduism	
Judaism	
No Religion	
Other (Specify):	

7. If you are Christian, which religious organisation do you belong to?

<b>RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION</b>	<b>TICK</b>
Catholic	
Protestant ( <i>This refers to any religious organisation or denomination other than the Catholic; Please specify</i> )	
Other (Specify):	

8. What is your current highest level education you completed

<b>HIGHEST UNIVERSITY EDUCATION ATTAINED</b>	<b>TICK</b>
Diploma	
Bachelor's Degree	
Master's Degree	
Doctoral Degree (e.g. JD, DBA, PhD etc.)	
Other (Specify):	

9. From which University or College or Institute?

10. What did you study at University or college?

11. When did you graduate from University or College?

Month/Year \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

12. What is your nationality?

<b>NATIONALITY</b>	
--------------------	--

**RECRUITMENT AND SELCTIONS METHODS IN YOUR INSTITUTION**

***(NOW, ALLOW ME TO ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS ON THE RECRUITMENT METHODS THAT YOU USE HERE)***

13. What methods do you use in recruiting people in your institution?

14. Which methods do you believe are the best recruitment methods in your institution?

15. Which selection method(s) do you commonly use in your institution?

16. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with this assertion: “*Many people say in the labour market today, it’s who you know, and not what you know.*”

17. What is your opinion on this statement? *It is generally believed that nowadays UNZA Graduates rely on social connections through relatives or friends or acquaintances to get employed in Zambia.*

<i><b>OPINION</b></i>

18. What is your opinion on the use and importance of social connections among UNZA Graduates in getting employed these days?

--

19. Indicate your opinion on the effectiveness of social connections in searching of job opportunities in Zambia nowadays.

--

**IMPORTANCE OF A UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA DEGREE**

***(FINALLY, LET ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF A UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA BACHELOR'S DEGREE NOWADAYS)***

20. Does a person holding a Bachelor's Degree from UNZA find it easier to get a job in your institution than a person with a Bachelor's degree from another university if there is a vacancy?

21. Indicate your opinion on the importance of a University of Zambia Bachelor's Degree in the selection of applicants for a job opening in your organisation.

22. Do you think that all university graduates, regardless of which university they graduated from, have an equal opportunity of getting a job in your institution?

23. Do you think one's sex (*i.e. being male or female*) makes a difference in getting a job in your institution?

24. With a large number of private universities in Zambia now operating and more people getting university degrees nowadays, what factors do you think influence who gets employed in your institution? (*mark as many right boxes as you can*)

<b><i>FACTORS INFLUENCING EMPLOYMENT</i></b>	<b><i>TICK</i></b>
Age of a job seeker	
Name of University attended ( <i>e.g. University of Lusaka</i> )	
Type of University attended ( <i>e.g. Public University or Private University</i> )	
One's social status ( <i>e.g. one from a high socio-economic class</i> )	
Social connections through friends	
Social connections through relatives	
Social connections through acquaintances ( <i>distant friends</i> )	
Social connections with potential employers	
One's field of study or specialisation at the university ( <i>e.g. Economics, Education etc.</i> )	

25. What do you think about the level of employability of UNZA Graduates in your institution these days compared to the period before the 2000s? Has it declined or remained the same or it has increased?

26. Which one of the following do you think stands a better chance of being employed in your institution?

<b><i>EMPLOYABILITY OF UNIVERSITY GRADUATES</i></b>	<b><i>TICK</i></b>
Graduate from a public university in Zambia ( <i>e.g. University of Zambia</i> )	
Graduate from a private university in Zambia ( <i>e.g. University of Lusaka</i> )	
Graduate from a foreign public university ( <i>e.g. University of Zimbabwe</i> )	
Graduate from a foreign private university ( <i>e.g. Women's University in Africa</i> )	
Graduates from public universities ( <i>i.e. both local and foreign</i> )	
Graduates from private universities ( <i>i.e. both local and foreign</i> )	
Everyone has a chance	
None of them have a chance	
Not sure	

27. Finally, do you believe UNZA Graduates are still relying on their education to get employed or social connections are more reliable nowadays in finding jobs on the labour market compared to the period before the liberalisation of higher education in the late 1990s and the eventual establishment of more universities in the country in 2000s?

**THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY**

### 1.3. UNZA Graduates Statistics (2000 - 2015)

#### UNZA GRADUATE STATISTICS (2000 - 2015)

Academic Year	AGRIC		EDUCATION		ENGINEERING		H.S.S.		LAW		MEDICINE		MINES		NAT.SCIENCE		VET.MED.		Grand Total
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	
20001			1	4							10	35							50
20002											18	24							42
20011			1	7		7		3						1	7	7			33
20012	3	37	102	170	4	81	44	92	19	45		1		36	15	56	2	14	721
20021											11	33							44
20022											31	53							84
20031		1	1	7		6				2	15	61		1	8	20			122
20032	7	53	161	261	6	76	80	114	28	54	31	62	3	31	11	35	5	7	1,025
20041		2	5	8		2	1	8			16	50		2	4	3			101
20042	5	27	236	276	3	57	313	265	36	61	33	68	1	30	28	50		9	1,498
20051	2	3	2	7		5	5	6	3		29	46		2	6	9			125
20052	18	57	278	283	1	54	135	209	34	81	28	57		26	41	65	1	5	1,373
20061		1	16	10		8	6	8		4	35	76		2	5	4			175
20062	14	42	364	436	3	54	157	193	44	46	32	61		20	40	54	6	7	1,573
20071		2	13	18		7	1	5		1	31	81		3	5	3			170
20072	14	48	393	481	7	63	165	295	28	44	29	59		18	46	66	7	14	1,777
20081			13	16		2	2	10			26	73		1	2	7			152
20082	21	64	487	564	5	65	204	222	24	36	40	85		21	65	71	5	14	1,993
20091		3	17	32		6	5	15	1	3	39	72		3	9	7			212
20092	35	79	596	606	5	68	223	190	34	41	53	90	3	38	59	85	2	7	2,214
20101		1	14	29		4	9	43	1	2	53	92			5	5			258
20102	49	57	900	1,120	8	62	195	178	37	34	63	99	4	45	74	77	12	17	3,031
20111	1	4	36	61		9	4	48		1	43	84		3	4	6			304
20112	32	61	892	889	16	55	225	245	61	47	62	114	7	49	86	95	14	18	2,968

20121			47	64		9	5	6			129	179		3	12	11	2	16	483
20122	41	61	1,065	1,122	5	85	349	372	47	33	31	52	3	50	57	55	9	24	3,461
20131	36	46	1,161	1,109	13	116	390	388	23	35	174	245	6	19	72	62	20	55	3,970
20132			1	1															2
20141	30	55	1,581	1,317	5	67	356	433	36	38	289	314	5	29	57	76	19	27	4,734
20142			4	1															5
<b>Grand Total</b>	308	704	8,387	8,899	81	968	2,874	3,348	456	608	1,351	2,266	32	433	718	929	104	234	32,700

**Source: Academic Office (University of Zambia), 2015**