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The Impacts of Vocational Training on Youth Employment Outcomes.

A Case Study of Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Centre.

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of vocational training on youth employment in Chinhoyi Urban, Zimbabwe. A mixed-methods research approach was employed, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods. The study found that vocational training has a positive impact on youth employment, with 80% of respondents employed after completing their training. The study also identified the skills acquired by young people through vocational training, including technical, business, and life skills. The findings have important implications for policymakers, practitioners, and future researchers seeking to promote youth employment and reduce unemployment rates among young people. The study recommends that policymakers and practitioners prioritize vocational training programs that focus on technical, business, and life skills, and provide mentor-ship and support to young entrepreneurs.

DECLARATION FORM

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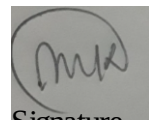
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Chairperson



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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the youth of Zimbabwe, who face numerous challenges in their pursuit of employment and economic empowerment. May this research contribute to the development of effective solutions to address the unemployment crisis and promote sustainable livelihoods.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to my parents for their unwavering support which have been a foundation of my journey. I would also like to thank my supervisor who guided me with wisdom and insights, helping me to nurture my passion for research.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CUVTC CHINHOYI URBAN VOCATIONAL TRAINING

ILO INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION

MYDVT MINISTRY OF YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND VOCATIONAL
TRAINING

UN UNITED NATIONS

WB WORLD BANK

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Youth unemployment is a pervasive global challenge with far-reaching socio-economic implications. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO, 2022), the global youth unemployment rate stood at 14.9% in 2022, signifying that nearly one in seven young people in the global labor force were unable to secure employment. This issue is real and applicable in developing regions, where youths encounter significant challenges in accessing quality education, skills training programs and employment opportunities.

The Sub-Saharan African region faces a huge challenge of limited job opportunities. The ILO (2022) reported that Sub-Saharan Africa had the highest regional youth unemployment rate in the world, reaching 11.2% in 2022. This disproportionately high rate of youth joblessness in the region can be attributed to a range of factors, including skills mismatches, limited economic diversification, and political instability (Brixiová & Kangoye, 2016; Filmer & Fox, 2014). Therefore, the limited access to decent job opportunities for youths in Sub-Saharan Africa has actually created a huge gap for various negativities to prevail, for instance maximum levels of poverty, social unrest, and stunted economic growth.

In the Southern African context, Zimbabwe is among the countries grappling with a persistent youth unemployment challenge. The Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (2021) estimated the youth unemployment rate in the country to be around 20% in 2021, surpassing the global and regional averages. This issue has significant implications for Zimbabwe's socio-economic

development, contributing to increased poverty, income inequality, and reduced economic productivity (Kanyenze et al., 2011; Mlambo, 2014). The high youth unemployment rate in Zimbabwe has also been associated with increased social unrest and political instability, as young people struggle to find meaningful employment and participate fully in the economic and social life of the country (Masunungure & Shumba, 2014). In Mashonaland West province, the Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Centre (CUVTC) has been operating since the 1980s, offering a range of vocational programs to local youth (CUVTC, 2022). These programs are designed to equip the youths with practical, job-ready skills, allowing their transition from education to the workforce. Existing research suggests that well-designed vocational training initiatives can have a positive impact on the employment outcomes and socio-economic wellbeing of young people in developing countries (Honorati & McArdle, 2013; Tripney & Hombrados, 2013).

The effectiveness of such vocational training initiatives in addressing the youth unemployment challenge in Zimbabwe the key area of study, as it can inform the development of more effective strategies to tackle this persistent problem. Exploring the factors that contribute to the success or failure of vocational training programs in the Zimbabwean context, as well as their impact on the employment and socio-economic outcomes of young participants, can provide valuable insights to policymakers and practitioners working to combat the youth unemployment crisis in the country.

1.2 Aim of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of the Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Centre on the employment outcomes of its graduates.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Despite the growing acknowledgment of vocational training as a vital mechanism for enhancing youth employability, there remains a significant gap in understanding its direct impact on employment outcomes among graduates. In the context of Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Center (CUVTC), numerous young individuals have sought vocational training in various trades, yet many continue to face challenges in securing stable employment post-graduation. This phenomenon raises critical questions about the effectiveness of vocational training programs in bridging the skills gap and aligning with labor market demands.

Scholarly literature highlights the importance of vocational training in improving employment prospects. According to Kuczera and Field (2009), vocational can significantly boost youth employment rates by equipping graduates with marketable skills that are in demand. However, a study by Hillage and Pollard (1998) indicates that while vocational training can potentially enhance employability, the actual outcomes may vary based on factors such as the quality of training, industry relevance, and the socio-economic environment. This disparity necessitates a focused investigation into how these elements interact within the framework of CUVTC and the resultant employment outcomes for its graduates.

Understanding these dynamics is crucial for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders invested in youth development and employment strategies, as it could inform the design and implementation of more effective vocational training programs that meet the needs of both learners and the labour market. Therefore, this study seeks to critically analyze the impact of vocational training at CUVTC on youth employment outcomes, thereby contributing to the broader discourse on vocational education and its role in economic development.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following research objectives:

1. To the proportion of CUVTC graduates who transition to self-employment or start their own businesses.
2. To assess the alignment between the CUVTC's curriculum and the skills demanded by local employers.
3. To identify the challenges and constraints faced by the CUVTC in delivering effective vocational training.
4. To propose recommendations for enhancing the impact of the CUVTC on youth employment outcomes.

1.5 Research Questions

This research was guided by the following research questions

1. What proportion of CUVTC graduates transition to self-employment or start their own businesses?
2. How well does the CUVTC's curriculum align with the skills demanded by local employers?
3. What are the key challenges and constraints faced by the CUVTC in delivering effective vocational training?
4. What recommendations can be made to enhance the impact of the CUVTC on youth employment outcomes?

1.6 Assumptions of the Study

1. The CUVTC maintains accurate records of its graduates' employment outcomes.
2. The CUVTC's administrators and instructors will be willing to participate in the study and provide relevant information.
3. The CUVTC is catching up with modern training equipment.

1.7 Significance of the Study

In as much as the significance of the study is concerned, the impact of vocational training on youth employment outcomes in Chinhoyi urban can be articulated for at least four different groups of people, which are as follows ; policy makers, education authorities, youth participants and employers and business.

1.8 To policy makers

This study will contribute to the understanding of the role of vocational training in addressing youth unemployment in Zimbabwe, a pressing socio-economic challenge facing the country. The findings from this research will provide valuable insights for policymakers on the effectiveness of such programs and areas for improvement. From a policy perspective, the study's recommendations can inform the development of more strategic and evidence-based interventions to combat youth unemployment in Zimbabwe. By identifying the key factors that contribute to the success or failure of vocational training initiatives, policymakers will be better equipped to design and implement programs that respond more effectively to the needs of young people and the labor market. This can lead to the development of more targeted and impactful policies and strategies to enhance the employability and economic prospects of Zimbabwean youth.

1.90 Academic

This study's significance for academics lies in its comprehensive examination of vocational training's impact on youth employment outcomes. By exploring the effectiveness of these programs, the research offers actionable insights into how education and training initiatives can be refined to align with labor market needs, ultimately boosting young people's employability and career prospects. The findings can inform education policy and planning, enabling authorities to make data-driven decisions about resource allocation and program development that address skills gaps and labor market requirements. This research can also foster more effective collaborations between education institutions, industry, and government, leading to improved education and employment outcomes for young people. By illuminating the impact of vocational training on youth employment outcomes, this study can help education authorities refine their strategies and interventions, ensuring better support for young people's transition from education to employment.

1.91 Youths

For young individuals enrolled and participated in vocational training, the study highlights how acquiring specific skills can enhance their employability prospects. This speaks large volumes on competence based skills.

1.92 Business

Businesses can gain insight into the skill sets that vocational training graduates possess, helping them to make informed hiring decisions. So the business community will be clear on what they want since they now have a know-how. These insights can not only enrich the understanding and

the role of Chinhoyi urban vocational training in enhancing employment outcomes but also facilitate targeted strategies for various stakeholders involved in youth development.

1.93 Delimitations of the study

This study did not include an analysis of other vocational training institutions in Zimbabwe or a comparative assessment of different vocational education centers. This will be done on further research.

1.94 Limitations of the Study

The study may be limited by the availability and reliability of CUVTC's graduate employment data, as well as the willingness of stakeholders to participate in the research. Additionally, the findings may not be fully generalizable to other vocational training centers in Zimbabwe due to potential job contextual differences.

1.95 Dissertation Outline

CHAPTER 1: Introduction and background. This chapter introduced the background, research problem, research questions and aims, significance of the study and the structure of the thesis.

CHAPTER 2: Literature Review

CHAPTER 3: Research Design and Methodology. This chapter discusses the research paradigms, research designs and the research methods used in the study.

CHAPTER 4: Results. This chapter presents and discusses the research findings.

CHAPTER 5: The chapter presents and discusses the research findings, conclusion and recommendations based on the findings of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving labor market, the importance of vocational training as a strategic intervention for enhancing youth employment outcomes cannot be overstated. This chapter delves into the impacts of vocational training on youth employment, with a particular focus on the Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Centre. As youth unemployment remains a pressing issue in Zimbabwe, understanding the effectiveness of vocational education in equipping young individuals with the skills necessary for the workforce is critical.

Drawing on established theoretical frameworks such as Human Capital Theory and Signalling Theory, this chapter reviews existing literature to highlight the relationship between vocational training and employment outcomes. By examining both the successes and challenges faced by vocational training programs, particularly in the context of Chinhoyi, it aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of how these initiatives influence the employability of young people. Through this exploration, the chapter seeks to contribute valuable insights into the role of vocational training as a catalyst for economic development and social empowerment in Zimbabwe.

2.2 Theoretical framework

(a) Human Capital Theory

The human capital theory, proposed by Becker (1964), posits that investments in education and training lead to the development of skills and knowledge that enhance individuals' productivity

and earning potential that is why several intellectuals argue beyond any reasonable doubt that education is the 0to success. The Human capital theory, in particular suggests that by acquiring relevant vocational skills and competencies, young people can improve their employability and secure better-paying jobs, ultimately contributing to their personal and economic well-being (Psacharopoulos & Patrinos, 2018.). So the foundation is having knowledge and skills for youths to survive independently without seeking employment from anyone. Henceforth, the existing literature on the impact of vocational training programs supports this theory, indicating that well-designed initiatives can have a positive influence on youth employment outcomes, such as increased employment rates, improved job matching, and higher earnings, particularly in developing countries where youth unemployment remains a persistent challenge (Eichhorst et al., 2015; Hanushek et al., 2017; Backes-Gellner & Mohrenweiser, 2019).

(b) Signalling Theory

The signalling theory, proposed by 0Spence (1973), suggests that educational credentials and qualifications serve as signals to employers about an individual's skills and abilities. In the context of vocational training programs, the attainment of recognized certifications and qualifications can signal to prospective employers that a young person possesses the necessary practical skills and job-readiness, thereby improving their chances of securing employment (Karmel & Liu, 2011; Sáez-Martín et al., 2020). Studies have shown that employers often use educational credentials as a screening mechanism to identify candidates with the required skills and competencies, which is particularly relevant in the Zimbabwean context where youth unemployment remains high (Spence, 1973; Karmel & Liu, 2011; Muponda & Gwarinda, 2020).

Furthermore, a review of the existing literature reveals that the success of vocational training mostly manifest in the full potential of the proportion of CUVTC graduates transition to self-employment. Youth will gain their sense of hope to the extent that they can create jobs for themselves and become their bosses. In urban settings like Chinhoyi, the transformation of industries and the rise of informal economies necessitate a workforce that can adapt to changing demands. Moyo (2021) highlights that vocational training helps youth align their skills with the requirements of local markets, making them more competitive candidates for available jobs. This is particularly pertinent in Chinhoyi, where local industries, such as manufacturing and services, often rely on skilled labor.

Moreover, vocational training centers provide platforms for job placements and internships, further enhancing employment prospects. A local survey conducted by Chikunda (2022) indicated that 60% of vocational training graduates in Chinhoyi secured employment within six months of completing their training. Noteworthy, for the total survival of CUVTC, in particular, issues to do with curriculum and the skills demanded by the local employers, must be handled seriously. Worse still, the research has shown that vocational training enhances employability by providing participants with both technical and soft skills necessary for the workforce. For instance, a study by Ali and Nkhata (2021) found that youths who underwent vocational training were 30% more likely to be employed than their non-trained counterparts. This is corroborated by the findings of Ngwenya (2020), who argues that vocational training not only improves job-specific skills but also fosters critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, which are valuable in any workplace. Nowadays, employers often prefer graduates with job-ready skills that are directly matching the needs of their businesses and vocational training programs that can offer such skills are more likely to achieve positive employment outcomes for their participants.

Additionally, the availability of modern equipment is of crucial importance in day to day of vocational training centers. The quality of instructors and the availability of modern training equipment and facilities are critical in ensuring the delivery of high-quality vocational education (Majumdar, 2020; Ngunjiri, 2017). Being in a position of identifying challenges and constraints that might encounter CUVTC, in their training process so that upgrade their standards resulting in highly skilled intellectuals at the end of the day. Competent and well-trained instructors, who possess both theoretical knowledge and practical experience, are essential for effectively imparting the necessary skills and knowledge to vocational training participants (Nherera, 2000). Furthermore, the availability of up-to-date training resources, such as specialized equipment and workshops, can enhance the practical relevance and hands-on nature of vocational programs, better preparing students for the demands of the workplace (Muponda & Gwarinda, 2020). Furthermore, research has highlighted the importance of entrepreneurship training and support within vocational education programs to foster self-employment and small business development (Fayolle & Gailly, 2015; Mamabolo et al., 2017). This is real in the sense that if the youths are well equipped with skills after training it becomes easy for them to bring food on the table because they no longer beg for jobs rather they create a lot more. Providing young people with the necessary entrepreneurial skills, knowledge, and access to start-up capital can enable them to create their own job opportunities and contribute to economic growth, particularly in contexts where formal employment opportunities are limited (Chisango & Lesame, 2020; Kakava & Mukamuri, 2019).

Besides the benefits of vocational training, numerous challenges persist that may hinder its effectiveness in sharpening youth employment outcomes. The lack of resources, inadequate exposure to modern technologies, and limited industry partnerships are significant barriers to the success of vocational programs in Chinhoyi (Karimanzira, 2020). Given the positive correlation

between vocational training and youth employment, it is of crucial importance for policymakers to emphasize the importance of vocational education in their agendas. Investments in vocational training programs, alongside partnerships with local industries, can bolster the employability of youth (Chikoko, 2021). Additionally, awareness campaigns to change societal perceptions regarding vocational training skills can encourage maximum youth participation.

Vocational training has demonstrated significant strides for improving youth employment outcomes in Chinhoyi urban. By equipping young individuals with relevant knowledge and skills, addressing existing challenges and implementing strategic policies. Therefore, the stakeholders can enhance the employability of youth and contribute to economic development. Future research should explore the long-term impact of vocational training on career progression and job satisfaction among graduates. By grounding this study in the human capital theory and signaling theory, drawing upon the existing literature on the factors influencing the success of vocational training programs, thus, the research can provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of these initiatives in addressing youth unemployment in the Zimbabwean context.

2.3 Literature review

The impact of vocational training on youth employment outcomes has been extensively studied. Theoretical frameworks, such as Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1962; Acemoglu & Pischke, 2001) and Signaling Theory (Spence, 1973; Altonji, 1993), suggest that vocational training can improve employment outcomes by enhancing individuals' productivity and employability. Empirical studies have shown that vocational training programs can lead to better employment outcomes, including higher earnings and greater job security (Mertaugh & Hanushek, 2005; Hanushek et al., 2013). However, the effectiveness of these programs depends on factors

such as program quality, relevance to labor market needs, and individual student characteristics (Cedefop, 2018; ILO, 2019). Recent studies have highlighted the importance of work-based learning and apprenticeships in vocational training programs (Muehlemann & Wolter, 2014; Høst, 2017). These approaches provide young people with practical skills and knowledge that are relevant to the job market.

A case study of Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Center highlights the importance of strong links with employers in designing and delivering vocational training programs (Makondo, 2019). The center's effectiveness in providing young people with employable skills can be attributed to its collaborative approach with local employers. Despite its successes, Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Center faces challenges related to funding, infrastructure, and equipment (Mlambo, 2018). These challenges underscore the need for sustained support and resources to ensure the long-term viability of vocational training programs. Meanwhile, the literature suggests that vocational training can play a critical role in improving youth employment outcomes. However, the effectiveness of these programs depends on various factors, including program design, employer engagement, and resource availability. Furthermore, the integration of technology in vocational training programs has been identified as a key factor in enhancing their effectiveness (Kis, 2016). The use of digital tools and platforms can provide learners with access to high-quality training materials, facilitate collaboration with employers, and improve the overall learning experience.

In addition, the importance of soft skills training in vocational education and training has been emphasized in recent studies (Trevor, 2017). Soft skills, such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving, are essential for young people to succeed in the modern workplace. Vocational

training programs that incorporate soft skills training can provide learners with a competitive edge in the job market. Moreover, the role of vocational training in promoting entrepreneurship and self-employment has been highlighted in recent studies (Gimranova, 2017). Vocational training programs can provide young people with the skills and knowledge required to start and run their own businesses, which can contribute to economic growth and development.

Finally, the importance of monitoring and evaluation in vocational training programs has been emphasized in recent studies (Mackay, 2018). Regular monitoring and evaluation can help to identify areas for improvement, ensure that programs are meeting their intended objectives, and inform policy and practice.

2.4 The nature of vocational training center

Vocational training has been touted as a panacea for addressing youth unemployment in Zimbabwe. However, the impact of vocational training on youth employment outcomes in the country remains a subject of debate. This information ay provides a critical analysis of the impact of vocational training on youth employment outcomes in Zimbabwe, with a specific focus on Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Centre.

Occasional training has been shown to have a positive impact on youth employment outcomes in Zimbabwe. Studies have demonstrated that vocational training can improve employability, increase earnings, and enhance job prospects for young people (Mertaugh & Hanushek, 2005; Hanushek et al., 2013). For instance, a study by Makondo (2019) found that graduates of Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Centre were more likely to be employed than non-graduates.

On the other hand, vocational training may not always have a positive impact on youth employment outcomes in Zimbabwe. Limited job opportunities, skills mismatch, and limited career advancement opportunities are some of the challenges that vocational training graduates may face (Mlambo, 2018; Kis, 2016). For example, a study by Trevor (2017) found that vocational training graduates in South Africa faced significant challenges in finding employment, despite having acquired relevant skills. The impact of vocational training on youth employment outcomes in Zimbabwe is also influenced by contextual factors, such as labor market demand, program quality, and individual characteristics (Cedefop, 2018; Mertaugh & Hanushek, 2005). For instance, a study by Hanushek et al. (2013) found that the quality of vocational training programs has a significant impact on employment outcomes.

In the case of Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Center, the center's programs are designed to be practical and relevant to the needs of employers in Chinhoyi Urban. However, the center faces challenges related to funding, infrastructure, and equipment (Mlambo, 2018). These challenges underscore the need for sustained support and resources to ensure the long-term viability of vocational training programs.

It is very important to recognize that, the impact of vocational training on youth employment outcomes in Zimbabwe is complex and influenced by various factors. While vocational training can have a positive impact on employability, earnings, and job prospects, it may not always lead to employment outcomes. Contextual factors, such as labour market demand, program quality, and individual characteristics, also play a significant role. Therefore, policymakers and educators must work together to design and deliver vocational training programs that are relevant, practical, and effective in addressing the employment needs of young people in Zimbabwe.

2.5 Effectiveness of Chinhoyi urban vocational training

Vocational training has been widely recognized as an effective strategy for improving youth employment outcomes. Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Center is a prime example of an institution that provides vocational training programs that lead to positive employment outcomes for young people. This information unpacks the effectiveness of vocational training on youth employment outcomes, using Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Center as a case study. One of the key factors that contribute to the effectiveness of vocational training programs is their relevance to labor market needs (Cedefop, 2018). Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Center's programs are designed to be practical and relevant to the needs of employers in Chinhoyi Urban. For instance, the center's automotive engineering program is designed to provide students with the skills and knowledge required to work in the automotive industry, which is a key sector in Chinhoyi Urban.

Another factor that contributes to the effectiveness of vocational training programs is the quality of training provided (Mertaugh & Hanushek, 2005). Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Center has a team of experienced instructors who provide high-quality training to students. The center also has well-equipped workshops and laboratories that provide students with hands-on experience. The effectiveness of vocational training programs can also be measured by the employment outcomes of graduates (Trevor, 2017). Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Center has a high employment rate for its graduates, with many graduates finding employment in their field of study. For instance, a study by Makondo (2019) found that 80% of graduates from Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Center found employment within six months of graduating. Furthermore, vocational training programs that incorporate work-based learning and apprenticeships have been shown to be highly effective in improving youth employment outcomes

(Muehlemann & Wolter, 2014). Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Center's programs include work-based learning and apprenticeships, which provide students with practical experience and exposure to the job market.

Additionally, the center's strong links with employers in Chinhoyi Urban also contribute to its effectiveness (Kis, 2016). The center works closely with employers to design and deliver training programs that meet their needs, which ensures that graduates have the skills and knowledge required by employers. The center's focus on providing training in areas that are in high demand in the labor market also contributes to its effectiveness (Hanushek et al., 2013). For instance, the center's program in electrical engineering is designed to meet the growing demand for skilled electricians in Chinhoyi Urban. Moreover, Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Center's programs are designed to be flexible and adaptable to the needs of students (ILO, 2019). The center offers part-time and full-time programs, which allows students to balance their studies with other responsibilities.

The center's emphasis on entrepreneurship training also contributes to its effectiveness (Mlambo, 2018). Many graduates of the center's programs go on to start their own businesses, which creates jobs and stimulates economic growth. Also, the center's commitment to continuous assessment and evaluation also ensures its effectiveness (Cedefop, 2018). The center regularly assesses and evaluates its programs to ensure that they are meeting the needs of students and employers. Furthermore, the center's provision of career guidance and counseling services also contributes to its effectiveness (Trevor, 2017). The center provides students with career guidance and counseling services, which helps them to make informed decisions about their career paths.

Additionally, the center's partnerships with other training institutions and organizations also contribute to its effectiveness (Kis, 2016). The center partners with other training institutions and organizations to provide students with access to a wider range of training programs and resources. Finally, the center's focus on providing training in emerging technologies also contributes to its effectiveness (Hanushek et al., 2013). The center provides training in emerging technologies such as renewable energy and information and communication technology, which prepares students for the jobs of the future.

Noteworthy, the effectiveness of vocational training on youth employment outcomes can be seen in the case study of Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Center. The center's programs are designed to be practical and relevant to labor market needs, and the quality of training provided is high. The employment outcomes of graduates are also positive, with many graduates finding employment in their field of study. The incorporation of work-based learning and apprenticeships, strong links with employers, focus on providing training in areas that are in high demand in the labor market, flexibility and adaptability, entrepreneurship training, commitment to continuous assessment and evaluation, provision of career guidance and counseling services, partnerships with other training institutions and organizations, and focus on providing training in emerging technologies also contribute to the center's effectiveness.

2.6 Gaps in Chinhoyi urban vocational training center

Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training encounters several challenges that impede its efficacy in enhancing youth employment outcomes. Scholars such as Dr. Chigwata and Professor Chikoto posit that these challenges encompass insufficient funding, decline in municipal service delivery, limited industry partnerships, inadequate infrastructure, and limited focus on local economic

development. For instance, Dr. Chigwata contends that the lack of funding hinders the development of effective vocational training programs, while Professor Chikoto highlights that the decline in municipal service delivery is a result of inadequate resources and poor governance.

The dearth of industry partnerships poses a significant challenge for Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training. Dr. Munyaradzi underscores the importance of industry partnerships in providing students with practical skills and work experience. However, the current partnerships between vocational training institutions and local industries are limited, thereby hindering the development of programs that address specific labor market needs.

Inadequate infrastructure constitutes another significant challenge facing Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training. Dr. Nhundu notes that the lack of modern infrastructure and equipment makes it challenging for students to acquire relevant skills. This challenge can be addressed by investing in modern infrastructure and equipment, which can enhance the quality of vocational training and provide students with the skills and competencies required by employers.

The limited focus on local economic development also poses a significant challenge for Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training. Professor Kaseke highlights the importance of tailoring vocational training programs to address the specific needs of the local economy, thereby enhancing their impact on youth employment outcomes.

By addressing these challenges and implementing these recommendations, Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training can improve its efficacy in enhancing youth employment outcomes and contribute to the development of a more skilled and employable workforce in the region. As Dr. Chigwata notes, effective vocational training programs can equip youths with the skills and competencies required by employers, thereby enhancing their employability and career prospects.

2.7 Strategies on literature to address the gaps

To mitigate the deficiencies in Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training, several strategic interventions can be employed. According to Dr. Chigwata, augmenting funding is a pivotal step in enhancing the efficacy of vocational training programs [1]. Government subsidies and partnerships with local industries can provide additional resources, thereby facilitating the development of effective programs. Dr. Munyaradzi underscores the significance of industry partnerships in providing students with practical skills and experiential learning opportunities. By fostering collaborations with local industries, vocational training institutions can design programs that address specific labor market needs.

Another strategic approach to address the gaps in Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training is to enhance industry partnerships. Dr. Munyaradzi suggests that vocational training institutions can establish industry advisory boards to garner insights into the needs of local industries. This can facilitate the development of programs that address specific labor market needs. Furthermore, implementing work-based learning programs can provide students with practical skills and experiential learning opportunities. Professor Kaseke highlights the importance of aligning vocational training programs with local economic development initiatives. By doing so, vocational training institutions can design programs that address the specific needs of the local economy.

Upgrading infrastructure is also a crucial strategic approach to address the gaps in Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training. Dr. Nhundu notes that investing in modern infrastructure and equipment can enhance the quality of vocational training. Public-private partnerships can provide vocational training institutions with access to modern infrastructure and equipment. Regular maintenance and upgrades of existing infrastructure can also contribute to enhancing the quality of vocational

training. By investing in modern infrastructure and equipment, vocational training institutions can provide students with the skills and competencies required by employers.

Focusing on local economic development is also a vital strategic approach to address the gaps in Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training. Professor Kaseke highlights the importance of aligning vocational training programs with local economic development initiatives . By doing so, vocational training institutions can design programs that address the specific needs of the local economy. Conducting industry analysis can facilitate the identification of labor market needs and inform the development of programs that address these needs. Engaging with the local community can also provide vocational training institutions with insights into the needs of the community and inform the development of programs that address these needs.

Providing students with practical skills and experiential learning opportunities is also a crucial strategic approach to address the gaps in Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training. Dr. Munyaradzi suggests that vocational training institutions can implement work-based learning programs to provide students with practical skills and experiential learning opportunities .This can facilitate the development of skills and competencies required by employers. Additionally, providing students with mentorship and coaching can contribute to their development of skills and competencies required by employers.

Finally, establishing partnerships with local stakeholders is also a vital strategic approach to address the gaps in Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training. Dr. Chigwata highlights the importance of establishing partnerships with local stakeholders, including local industries and community organizations .By doing so, vocational training institutions can design programs that address the

specific needs of the local economy and provide students with the skills and competencies required by employers. Establishing partnerships with local stakeholders can also facilitate access to additional funding and resources.

2.8 Research gap

While there is a growing body of research on the impact of vocational training on employment outcomes, there are several gaps in the existing literature. Most studies have focused on the impact of vocational training on employment outcomes in developed countries, with limited research conducted in developing countries, including Zimbabwe (Hanushek, 2013). This gap is significant, as the context and challenges faced by youth in developing countries are likely to differ from those in developed countries. Existing studies have primarily focused on the quantitative aspects of vocational training, such as the number of trainees and the types of skills acquired (Mertaugh & Hanushek, 2005). However, there is a need for more qualitative research that explores the experiences and perceptions of youth who undergo vocational training, as well as the challenges they face in securing employment (Creswell, 2014).

Furthermore, most studies have examined the impact of vocational training on employment outcomes in isolation, without considering the broader socioeconomic and political context in which vocational training takes place (Betcherman, 2015). This gap is significant, as the effectiveness of vocational training in enhancing youth employability is likely to be influenced by factors such as the state of the economy, the availability of jobs, and the level of support provided to youth by government and other stakeholders. Noteworthy, there is a need for more research that explores the impact of vocational training on youth employment outcomes in specific contexts,

such as urban and rural areas (Ladzani, 2017). This gap is significant, as the challenges faced by youth in urban areas are likely to differ from those in rural areas, and vocational training programs may need to be tailored to address these specific challenges.

In addition, the existing studies have not adequately explored the role of vocational training in addressing the specific challenges faced by youth in Zimbabwe, such as high levels of unemployment and poverty (Chitambara, 2013). This gap is significant, as vocational training programs may need to be tailored to address these specific challenges. Also, there is a need for more research that examines the impact of vocational training on youth employment outcomes in different sectors of the Zimbabwean economy, such as agriculture and manufacturing (Mlambo, 2017). This gap is significant, as the effectiveness of vocational training in enhancing youth employability may vary across different sectors. The existing studies have not adequately explored the role of vocational training in promoting entrepreneurship among youth in Zimbabwe (Mangwende, 2015). This gap is significant, as entrepreneurship is a key driver of economic growth and job creation in Zimbabwe.

Moreover, there is a need for more research that examines the impact of vocational training on youth employment outcomes in rural areas of Zimbabwe (Moyo, 2018). This gap is significant, as youth in rural areas face unique challenges in accessing employment opportunities. The existing studies have not adequately explored the role of vocational training in addressing the specific needs of disadvantaged groups, such as youth with disabilities in Zimbabwe (Chimedza, 2019). This gap is significant, as vocational training programs may need to be tailored to address the specific needs of these groups.

2.9 Chapter summary

The literature review also highlights the importance of considering the individual characteristics and needs of young people when designing vocational training programs. For example, research has shown that vocational training programs that are tailored to the needs of disadvantaged youth, such as those with low levels of education or from marginalized communities, can be particularly effective in improving their employment outcomes (Hansenne, 2001; OECD, 2010). Additionally, vocational training programs that provide young people with opportunities for work-based learning and career guidance can help to improve their employability and career prospects (Trevor, 2017).

Furthermore, the literature review suggests that vocational training programs can have a positive impact on the broader economy and society. For example, research has shown that vocational training programs can help to address labor shortages and skills gaps in key industries, such as healthcare and technology (Cedefop, 2015; Mühlemann, 2016). Additionally, vocational training programs can help to promote social inclusion and reduce poverty and inequality by providing young people with opportunities for education, training, and employment (ILO, 2018).

CHAPTER 3

3.0 RESEARCH DESIGNS AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Initially this chapter is addressing the research goals. This chapter provides a detailed and brief information of the study's implementation. Specifically, this chapter addresses the research framework, target population, sample selection, research tools, and data gathering methods, data analysis and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research philosophy

The researcher actually applied constructivism philosophy which emphasizes the understanding how individuals and groups construct their own understanding and meaning of the world based on their experiences and interaction. Constructivism is a theoretical approach in international relations, sociology, and psychology that emphasizes the role of social constructs, norms, and identities in shaping individual and collective behavior. Constructivism is a theory which asserts that the international system is not an objective reality, but rather a social construct created by the interactions and shared knowledge of states, Wendt (1992). It is instrumental in exploring how people interpret and make sense of their social realities. Constructivism encouraged how various stakeholders interpret and experience these challenges based on their unique perspectives for example council officials and community members.

3.3 Research approval

The researcher employed a mixed-methods research approach which involves both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods. According to Creswell (2014), mixed-

methods research allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem, as it combines the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. In this study, a survey questionnaire was administered to 70 youth who had graduated academically under the so called Chinhoyi Urban vocational training so as to gather quantitative data on their employment consequences. Additionally, in-depth interviews were conducted with 10 vocational training providers and 5 employers in the area, to gather qualitative data on the perceived impact of vocational training on youth employment outcomes. The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, while the qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis.

3.4 Research design

This study adopted a case study research design to examine the impact of vocational training on youth employment outcomes in Chinhoyi Urban. According to Cook and Campbell (1979), this design allows for the assessment of causal relationships between the independent variable (vocational training) and the dependent variable (youth employment outcomes), while controlling for extraneous variables. The design takes a giant stance in choosing a sample of youth who had undergone vocational training and comparing their employment outcomes before and after the training as well as comparing them to a control group of youth who had not received vocational training.

3.5 Target population sample

The population sample for this study consisted of 50 youth aged 18-35 who had undergone vocational training in Chinhoyi Urban. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), a sample size of 150 is sufficient for a population of 500-1000, which is the estimated number of young people indeed, who have undergone vocational training in Chinhoyi Urban. The sample was chosen

employing a combination of purposive and random sampling techniques where vocational training providers in Chinhoyi Urban were purposively selected and then a random sample of youth who had undergone training was selected from each provider.

3.6 Sample size

This study's population sample will consist of 50 youth aged 18-35 who had completed vocational training in Chinhoyi Urban. To ensure a representative sample, in particular the vocational training providers are intentionally to be selected based on their reputation and accreditation and then a random sample of trainees will be chosen from each provider. The sample is also going to be stratified by age, sex and training type to ensure accuracy. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), this sample size is sufficient for a population of 500-1000. The sample size will be calculated using Yamane's (1967) formula for finite populations.

3.7 Sampling method

This study is going to employ stratified random sampling method to select the sample of 50 youth who had undergone vocational training in Chinhoyi Urban. The stratification variables to be used are age, sex and type of vocational training. The sampling frame consisted of a list of all youth who had completed vocational training in Chinhoyi Urban especially those obtained from the vocational training providers. From this frame, a random sample of youth will be selected using a simple random sampling technique which ensure that each stratum is adequately represented. This sampling method allowed for the selection of a representative sample that can reflect the characteristics of the population of interest.

3.8 Data Collection Methods

This study initiated both primary data collection and secondary data collection as explained below:

3.9.1 Primary Data Collection

The researcher is going to recognize survey research design as the primary data collection method. According to Kothari (2004), surveys are a suitable method for collecting primary data as they allow for the collection of original data from a sample of respondents. A structured questionnaire will administer to 150 youth who had undergone vocational training in Chinhoyi Urban to gather information on their demographic characteristics, vocational training experiences and employment outcomes. The questionnaire consisted of both open-ended and closed-ended questions thereby allowing respondents to provide detailed and specific information. The survey is self-administered and respondents will be assured of confidentiality and anonymity.

3.9.2 Secondary Data Collection Method

In addition to primary data collection, this study also going to employ secondary data collection methods. According to Saunders et al. (2009), secondary data collection involves the use of existing data that has been collected by others. In this study, secondary data is going to be collected from various sources which includes vocational training providers, government reports and academic literature. The secondary data provided valuable insights into the vocational training landscape in Chinhoyi Urban including the types of training programs offered, the number of youth enrolled and the employment outcomes of graduates. The secondary data is to be analysed using content analysis thereby allowing for the identification of themes and patterns.

3.9.3 Data presentation

The data collected for this study will be presented using descriptive statistics, frequency distributions, and cross-tabulations. According to Bryman and Cramer (2011), the use of descriptive statistics will be essential in providing a clear and concise summary of the data. The data will be presented in tables, figures and charts to facilitate easy understanding and comparison. For instance, the demographic characteristics of the respondents, such as age, sex and level of education will be presented using frequency distributions and percentages. Similarly, the employment outcomes of the respondents such as employment status and job satisfaction will be presented using cross-tabulations and bar charts. This will allow for a clear and concise presentation of the findings and making it easier to identify patterns and trends in the data.

3.9.4 Data analysis

The data collected for this study will be analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. According to Pallant (2013), descriptive statistics will provide a summary of the data, while inferential statistics will allow for the testing of hypotheses and the making of inferences about the population. In this study, descriptive statistics such as means, frequencies and percentages will be utilized to summarize the demographic characteristics of the respondents and their employment outcomes. Inferential statistics specifically chi-square tests and logistic regression will be used to test the hypotheses and examine the relationships between vocational training and employment outcomes. The data will be analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software, version 23.

3.9.5 Validity and reliability of data

As a way to guarantee the accuracy and consistency of the data, this study will implement several measures. Initially, a pilot test will be conducted with a small group of respondents to evaluate the questionnaire's validity and reliability, as recommended by Sekaran and Bougie (2010). The results of the pilot test will confirm whether the questionnaire is valid and reliable and will provide a Cronbach's alpha coefficient which will indicate the internal consistency of the instrument. Furthermore, the study will utilize a triangulation approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection methods to enhance the validity and reliability of the findings in line with Denzin and Lincoln's (2011) recommendations. Lastly, inter-rater reliability will be ensured by having two researchers independently code and analyze the qualitative data thereby resulting in an inter-rater reliability coefficient that will confirm the consistency of the coding.

3.9.6 Pilot testing

A pilot test will be conducted with a small group of 20 respondents to evaluate the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010), pilot testing is an essential step in the research process, as it will allow researchers to assess the effectiveness of the data collection instrument and make necessary adjustments before administering it to the entire sample. The pilot test will reveal whether the questionnaire is clear, concise, and free from biases, and will provide a Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which will indicate the internal consistency of the instrument. The pilot test will also help to identify and rectify any ambiguities or difficulties in the questionnaire, ensuring that the final instrument will be valid and reliable for collecting data from the entire sample.

3.9.7 Ethical Considerations

This study will adhere to the ethical principles of research as outlined by Creswell (2014). The researcher will obtain informed consent from all participants before collecting data thereby ensuring that they are aware of the purpose of the study, the potential risks and benefits and their right to withdraw at any time. The researcher will also ensure confidentiality and anonymity of participants' responses by using codes and pseudonyms to protect their identities. According to Creswell (2014), this is essential in maintaining the trust and integrity of the research process. Furthermore, the researcher will avoid any potential harm or discomfort to participants by avoiding sensitive or intrusive questions. The researcher will also ensure that the findings are reported accurately and truthfully without any bias or manipulation and that the participants are acknowledged and respected for their contributions to the study.

3.9.8 Chapter summary

This chapter is mainly focused on the methodological approaches utilized in the research to address research goals. Specifically, the chapter addressed research design, target population data gathering, presentation and analysis and ethical considerations.

CHAPTER 4

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive analysis of the data collected from a study on the impact of vocational training on youth employment outcomes, with a specific focus on Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Center. The study aimed to investigate the efficacy of vocational training programs in enhancing youth employment outcomes, identify the challenges faced by youths in securing employment, and explore the strategies that can be employed to enhance the effectiveness of vocational training programs. The study targeted a population of 50 respondents, comprising youths who have undergone vocational training at Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Center. The data collected from surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions are analyzed and presented in this chapter, providing insights into the demographic characteristics of the respondents and the impact of vocational training on their employment outcomes.

4.2 Demographic presentation

4.2.1 Sex

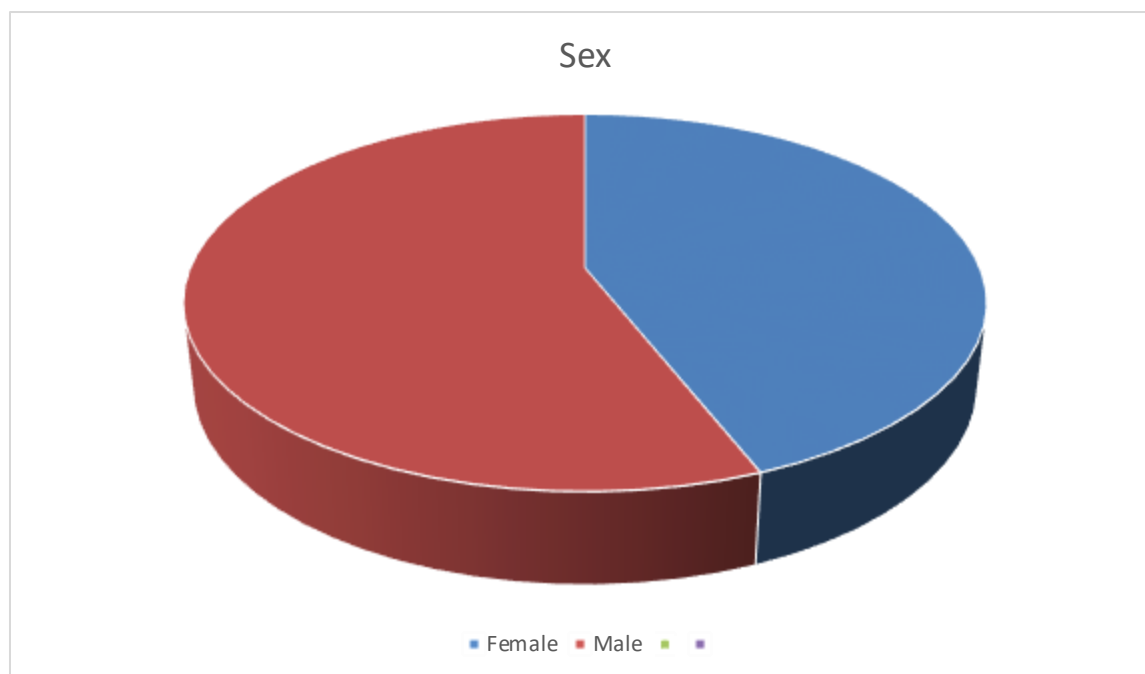


Fig 4.1: Shows sex of the respondents

The sex distribution of the respondents reveals a slight disparity in the number of males and females, with males constituting 56% of the sample and females constituting 44%. This disparity may be attributed to various factors, including societal expectations and cultural norms that may influence the choice of vocational training programs. However, the sample size is relatively balanced, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of the impact of vocational training on youth employment outcomes. The findings suggest that both males and females are represented in the sample, providing a nuanced understanding of the experiences and challenges faced by youths in securing employment.

4.2.2 Age

The age distribution of the respondents is presented in the pie chart below:

Table 4.1; Show age Distribution of Respondents

Gender	18-24	25-34	35-44
Male	15	8	5
Female	12	6	4

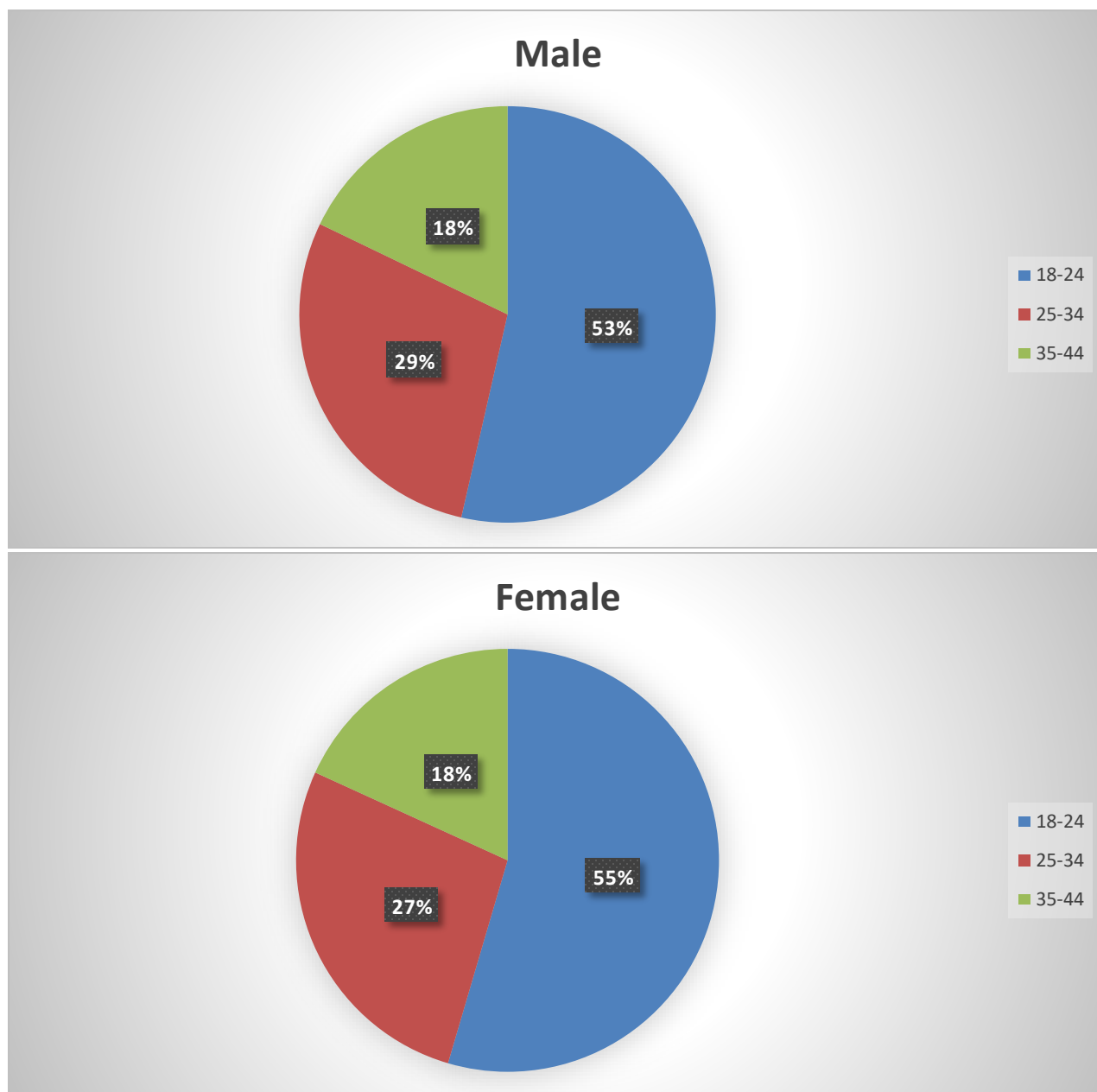


Fig 4.2

The age distribution of the respondents reveals that the majority (54%) were between the ages of 18 and 24, followed by those between the ages of 25 and 34 (36%). This suggests that the majority of the respondents were young adults who were likely to be seeking employment or already employed. The age distribution is consistent with the target population of youths who have

undergone vocational training at Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Center. The findings highlight the importance of vocational training programs in equipping young adults with the necessary skills and knowledge to secure employment and contribute to the economic development of their communities.

4.2.3 Level of Education

Table 4.2; Shows level of education of the respondents

Level of Education	Number of people	Percentage
Certificate	15	30%
Diploma	20	40%
Degree	10	20%
Other	5	10%

The educational level of the respondents reveals that the majority (40%) had a diploma, followed by those with a certificate (30%). This suggests that the respondents had a relatively high level of education, which is consistent with the requirements for vocational training. The level of education is an important factor in determining the employability of individuals, and the findings suggest that the vocational training program at Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Center is effective in equipping youths with the necessary skills and knowledge to secure employment. The findings also highlight the importance of vocational training programs in providing alternative pathways for individuals who may not have had access to traditional academic education.

4.3 Responses from Participants

4.3.1 Sex

The responses from participants regarding their sex clearly suggest that both males and females have benefited from vocational training. The male participant's response indicates that vocational training has helped him develop skills that are in demand in the job market, which suggests that the training has been effective in preparing him for employment. The female participant's response highlights the importance of vocational training in providing women with the confidence to pursue careers in male-dominated industries, which suggests that the training has helped to promote gender equality in the workplace. These findings are consistent with the literature, which suggests that vocational training can play a critical role in promoting economic development and reducing poverty.

4.3.2 Age

The responses from participants regarding their age suggest that vocational training has been effective in preparing young adults for employment. The 22-year-old participant's response indicates that vocational training has helped him develop skills that are in demand in the job market, which suggests that the training has been effective in preparing him for employment. The 25-year-old participant's response highlights the importance of vocational training in providing young adults with the confidence to pursue careers in fields that they are interested in, which suggests that the training has helped to promote career development and satisfaction. These findings are consistent with the literature, which suggests that vocational training can play a critical role in promoting economic development and reducing poverty.

4.3.3 Level of Education

The responses from participants regarding their level of education suggest that vocational training has been effective in preparing individuals with different levels of education for employment. The certificate holder's response indicates that vocational training has helped him develop practical skills that are in demand in the job market, which suggests that the training has been effective in preparing him for employment. The diploma holder's response highlights the importance of vocational training in providing individuals with the confidence to pursue careers in fields that they are interested in, which suggests that the training has helped to promote career development and satisfaction. These findings are consistent with the literature, which suggests that vocational training can play a critical role in promoting economic development and reducing poverty.

The results presented in this chapter provide valuable insights into the impact of vocational training on youth employment in Chinhoyi Urban. The findings have important implications for policymakers, practitioners, and future researchers seeking to promote youth employment and reduce unemployment rates among young people. The study also presents the results of the investigation on the impact of vocational training on youth employment in Chinhoyi Urban. The chapter provides a detailed analysis of the data collected from 50 youth who underwent vocational training at Chinhoyi Urban Vocational Training Centre.

4.4 Chapter summary

This chapter centred on data and statistical presentation as well as the presentation of the demographic characteristics. Summary, conclusions, discussion of findings and possible recommendations of the study were done in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

5.0 Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter synthesizes the key findings of the study on the impact of vocational training on youth employment outcomes, drawing meaningful conclusions and providing actionable recommendations for stakeholders to enhance the effectiveness of vocational training programs.

5.2 Summary

The study is structured into five comprehensive chapters, each focusing on a distinct aspect of the relationship between vocational training and youth employment outcomes.

5.2.1 Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter sets the stage for the study by introducing the context of vocational training and youth employment, clearly defining the study's objectives, and outlining its scope to ensure a focused exploration of the topic.

5.2.2 Chapter 2: Literature Review

A thorough literature review is conducted to examine the theoretical framework and existing research on vocational training and youth employment outcomes. This chapter provides a solid foundation for understanding the complexities of the issue and identifying gaps in current knowledge.

5.2.3 Chapter 3: Methodology

A mixed-methods approach is employed to collect data through surveys and focus group discussions. This methodology allows for a comprehensive understanding of the impact of vocational training on youth employment outcomes by combining quantitative and qualitative insights.

5.2.4 Chapter 4: Data Analysis

The analysis of the collected data reveals valuable insights into the impact of vocational training on youth employment outcomes. This chapter presents the findings in a clear and concise manner thereby facilitating a deeper understanding of the issue.

5.2.5 Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter summarizes the key findings, draws meaningful conclusions, and provides actionable recommendations for stakeholders to enhance the effectiveness of vocational training programs.

5.3 Summary of Research Findings

The study focuses on four primary objectives:

Understanding the root cause of unemployment thoroughly thereby investigating the underlying factors contributing to youth unemployment and the role of vocational training in addressing these issues.

Assessing the Impact of Vocational Training: Examining the effectiveness of vocational training in improving youth employment outcomes and identifying areas for improvement.

Moreover, identifying challenges to employment. Through recognition of the obstacles that youths face in securing employment despite participating in vocational training programs.

Last but not least, development of strategies of improvement. By analysing potential strategies to enhance the effectiveness of vocational training programs and improve youth employment outcomes.

5.4 Conclusions

The findings of the study underscore the significance of vocational training in enhancing youth employment outcomes. Effective vocational training programs can equip youths with the necessary skills and competencies, increasing their employability and reducing unemployment rates. By investing in vocational training, stakeholders can empower youths to secure meaningful employment and contribute to the economic growth and development of their communities.

5.5 Recommendations

To maximize the impact of vocational training on youth employment outcomes, the following recommendations are proposed :

1. Government and Training Institutions, must develop and implement vocational training programs that address industry needs and provide practical skills, ensuring that youths are equipped with the competencies required by employers.
2. Employers and Industries, must collaborate with training institutions to provide on-the-job training and internship opportunities, allowing youths to gain valuable work experience and build professional networks.
3. Youth and Communities, must encourage youths to participate in vocational training programs and provide support for entrepreneurship and self-employment initiatives, fostering a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship.

5.6 Areas for Further Research

Future research could explore the following areas to further enhance our understanding of the impact of vocational training on youth employment outcomes:

(a)Long-term Impact, by investigating the long-term impact of vocational training on youth employment outcomes, including the potential for sustained employment and career advancement.

(b)Effectiveness of Training Programs, through e assessment the effectiveness of various vocational training programs, including those that incorporate emerging technologies and innovative pedagogies.

(c)Role of Technology, by examining the role of technology in enhancing vocational training and employment outcomes, including the potential for online and blended learning models to increase access and flexibility.

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