

The term unemployment is defined by the International Labour Organization (2010) as the scenario where people are without jobs and have been actively looking for work within the past four weeks. Unemployment has been a bone of contention the world over but due to its high prevalence in Zimbabwe, its effects have been grossly perceived in the various age groups ranging from 18-60 as citizens' fall far below the daily living wage in the country due to unemployment (ZimStat, 2012). The effects of unemployment are severely negative and this is further worsened by the high inflation rates in Zimbabwe thus leaving unemployed citizens living in squalor or abject poverty unable to afford food, cover school and hospital expenses making unemployed youths' resort to crime such as theft and prostitution. The writing below will vividly portray the costs of unemployment in Zimbabwe from an individual, social and socio-political perspective.

The effects of unemployment in Zimbabwe are utterly conspicuous at an individual level. Due to the fall of the Zimbabwean dollar and economy in 2008, many organisations resorted to retrenching or shutting down operations in Zimbabwe which led to a sharp spike in unemployment which the country has been unable to recover from to date (Mudonzvo, 2015). Consequently, those that lost their jobs were unable to meet financial obligations such as basic accommodation and had to resort to finding cheap housing which led to the erection of informal settlements or make shift houses made from zinc sheets or wooden cabins along the Harare-Chitungwiza highway while other hundreds of people were left homeless due to evictions. The life of the ordinary unemployed Zimbabwean became diminished to nonentity as they had to suffer from being degraded to living in inhuman environments without water and sanitation and being chased down by the Murambasvina police operation further leaving thousands homeless and all this being the cost of unemployment in Zimbabwe.

More so, the costs of joblessness in Zimbabwe from an individual level are seen where the unemployed citizens are forced to take jobs that do not meet their skills set in a desperate attempt to fend for their families. Unemployment, lack of financial resources, and social responsibilities are the push factors that make unemployed workers take jobs that do not fit their skills making them resort to informal work such as vending, money changing, prostitution or manual work in Tobacco industry companies as they pay foreign currency which is of greater value compared to the Zimbabwean dollar. This affects the unemployed individual as such risky or illegal behaviour can create a criminal record for them destroying their hope of ever getting formal employment in Zimbabwe. The girl child opting for prostitution as a survival strategy has subjected their gender to sexually transmitted diseases, 7HIV and AIDS which will only worsen their situation and this all being an effect of unemployment in Zimbabwe.

At a societal level, the costs of unemployment in Zimbabwe have been seen to manifest themselves in the form of tribalism, xenophobia and protectionism in attempt for different provinces to spare the little jobs available for their ethnic minorities. This has also seen a great deal of corruption and nepotism in Zimbabwean workplaces as society has abandoned formal recruitment and selection procedures to place their friends and families into job positions this further killing the chance of the unemployed populace with no relatives in high places in government and other organisations. This has been noticed in the City of Bulawayo as the society ensures that Ndebele ethnic people get vacancies that come up in the city over Shona ethnic people and the Bulawayo City Council is one such organisation which has faced scrutiny from the populace as they speculate that it only employs Ndebele people. The many unemployed citizens that then opt to migrate from Zimbabwe in search of greater pastures then suffer xenophobia from other countries such as South Africa in an attempt to preserve jobs for domestic and native workers.

Socially, the costs of unemployment in Zimbabwe are also witnessed in the number of abandoned children left behind by parents seeking employment in the diaspora. The lack of employment opportunities in Zimbabwe drove huge masses of people to go and find employment overseas in countries such as Australia and the United Kingdom forcing them to uproot their lives from Zimbabwe to go and start afresh in foreign lands leading to many spouses being left alone for life and having to fend for their children on their own in these broken homes. The children left with one parent or a relative are considered fortunate as many are left homeless and abandoned with nowhere and no one to turn to. This social cost of unemployment in Zimbabwe has led many juveniles into imprisonment as they grow up suffering and neglected as they have no role models to learn from and get emotional support.

From a socio-political perspective, the costs of unemployment in Zimbabwe are evident in the amount of civil unrest in the country. The high levels of unemployment have often prompted the masses to take to the streets and demonstrate against the failing Zimbabwean government both under the leadership of Mugabe and Mnangagwa. This is not in totality an attempt to topple the government but an endeavour for a restructure of political, economic, and legislature reforms such that the economy can expand and create new jobs (Kanyenze, 1997). One such movement that fights for unemployment in Zimbabwe is the Tajamuka group of citizens that are in constant battle with government protesting for a better future for tomorrow's generation filled with jobs and other business opportunities. The

Zimbabwean government then reacts with a heavy hand on the unemployed protestors which consequently leads to the death of some ordinary citizens and this further worsening the plight of the unemployed in Zimbabwe.

More still, the socio-political costs or effects of unemployment in Zimbabwe are that it creates a poor nation or economy as there is no labour to drive the country forward. Few job opportunities are a reflection of minimum foreign and domestic investment in the country and this creates a severe burden for the government due to loss of tax revenue and high government borrowing from international banks such as AFREXIM and World Bank. To help the unemployed, the Zimbabwean government under Mnangagwa's leadership resorted to subsidising basic human needs such as transportation through providing cheap Zupco buses and food through providing cheap roller maize-meal. This creates a weak socio political system within the country which disables it from economic growth and expansion and this being the cost of unemployment in Zimbabwe (International Monetary Fund, 2013).

To recapitulate the above writing, it can be deduced that the costs of unemployment in Zimbabwe are grossly negative and this has been highlighted from an individual, social and socio-political perspective. Unemployment can be a degrading experience as the individual is forced to devalue themselves and do any form of work or crime in an attempt to put food on the table and have a roof above their head. At a social level unemployment has left Zimbabwean ethnic groups divided amongst themselves due to corruption and nepotism. The country's socio-political situation is upside down as unemployed citizens protest and demonstrate against the government regularly which lead to the use of aggression by the army and police and all this emanating from the high unemployment in Zimbabwe.

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