

## YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE CITY OF KISANGANI IN THE DRC. A SOCIOLOGICAL LOOK AT A PROBLEM

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### ABSTRACT

Unemployment is a real fact in Congolese society in general and in Boyomaise in particular. Young people and adults alike are all unemployed and this causes several evils in society, which is how on the one hand we find delinquents, armed bandits, rebels etc.

The Congolese government can no longer satisfy the Congolese youth. Academics, state graduates and people who have not studied are all mired in unemployment, which is why this situation has touched our sensibilities as sociologists.

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

An overview of the world shows that all societies, whatever the life they live on a daily basis, focus their attention on the young hope of tomorrow.

Thus, any society that aspires to rapid economic growth and social progress must take into account the efforts of all its members. It is important to be aware of the contribution of each member of the community; the eagerness with which the various governments are investing in the supervision of young people is sufficient proof of the interest it has in these young people.

The situation of young people seems to be the same everywhere in the country, notwithstanding some peculiarities in terms of laws and social belonging. Thus; to ensure the effectiveness of development policy; We must move away from the vision that young people are not just consumers; they can be service providers themselves, said the Director of the American International Institute for Inclusive Development. (International Labour Office, 2000)

In the focus group, we met young graduates who have experienced unemployment, report the following: there is a definite link between youth unemployment and serious social problems such as banditry; drug addiction; idleness and delinquency. If unemployment persists, it pushes desperate young people into social deviance and behaviors that can harm the entire community.

There is a need for a national and international debate on this issue in order to determine the way out because the nation cannot develop when unemployment is gangrenous in the nooks and crannies of the republic and especially when anti-values undermine the minds of young people. (BLANCHET at al, p. 1985)

Youth unemployment has a burden on the family. Young people without income-generating activities, if they are not on the street; they are forced to live with his parents despite their low income. Lack of employment prolongs dependency and delays marriages. This situation creates conflicts, misunderstanding and tension within households.

Castel also looked into the problem of unemployment by carrying out a study in 1997 on the repercussions of unemployment on young graduates, highlighting that young people with a low level of education suffer more than others because of the lack of job opportunities, but also because of their qualification for a profession (CASTEL 2009, P19)

To understand youth unemployment in the city of Kisangani, in particular, and the Democratic Republic of Congo in general, it is imperative to abandon a superficial political and religious reading to seriously explore the effects of unemployment in its multiple dimensions.

Work organizes social relations, strengthens social ties and participates in the cohesion of the social fabric. The absence of work is combined with social isolation and the fragility of social ties (MINONZO. J, 2000, P ,9)

Work is a better way for a young person to meet his or her psychological, social and economic needs. Today, this state of unemployment among young people generates several problems, particularly on the social and psychological levels. This situation leads to the isolation of the young person from society, with the consequent despair and frustration, which affects his stability and personal fulfilment (SEGHIAR. S and ROUAG H 2010 P.39)

There is no doubt that young people are a social category whose population density takes up 2/4 of the population, which promotes the productivity of a nation. Indeed, unemployed persons are considered to be all persons who are unemployed and who are actively looking for one. Despite some sporadic changes in economic activities, unemployment is increasing year after year in the Democratic Republic of Congo in general and the city of Kisangani in particular, and this is taking on worrying proportions (ONOTAMBA 2020 P.22)

Unemployment is a social phenomenon that is constantly increasing, especially among the young population, and the Democratic Republic of Congo is not spared from this scourge which has affected and affects all categories of society without exception, boys and girls, graduates of universities and higher institutes as well as those of secondary schools. As a result, we see a situation of mismatch between the supply of the labour market and the excessive number of diplomas.

In this regard, unemployment can be defined as the state of inactivity of a person who is able to work and who looks for work but cannot find one. According to the International Labour Office, an unemployed person is any person over the age of 15 who meets the following definition: being unemployed, being available for work, actively looking for work (BIDET at ali 2000)

It is in view of this large-scale situation of unemployment that we decided to conduct research on this phenomenon of unemployment in the city of Kisangani.

These young people are attributed with several qualifications, among others: lazy; delinquents; dependents; parasites, etc. Urban youth who are out of school and uneducated very quickly turn to apprenticeship in trades to find a place in the informal sector, which is a refuge from the marginalization of a large number of young people. (SOME. S 2004 p.46)

The search for livelihoods differs depending on whether you are a child; a man or a woman. The work is difficult for everyone, as these young people do not have the same skills and vocational training that can open up prospects for permanent and paid employment. This is how the young girls are active in small businesses such as the sale of peanuts; fruits; doughnuts; even engage in prostitution; while the boys are busy in heavy work such as making brusques; construction in construction sites, transport by motorcycle.

The United Nations Charter adopted in 1945 enshrines in its preamble respect for the fundamental rights of men; the dignity and worth of the human person; equality of rights of men and women.

In 1946, this charter created the Commission for Women and Youth; In 1948, it adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which enshrines gender equality, and in 1979 the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and Young People.

Moreover, whether in Asia; Africa and Latin America; the majority of young people work in the agricultural and technical fields, as confirmed by the FAO report 2010. Young people represent more than 60% of the agricultural workforce in developing countries.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo; the majority of young people work in the agricultural field, especially in rural areas, but in urban areas; Youth are more active in informal activities such as public transit and informal trade. Although gender equality and work are included in the document such as the United Nations Charter; the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the international single working organization O.I.T

- The right to work as an inalienable right
- Rights to the same employment opportunities, including the application of the same selection criteria
- The right to free choice of occupation and employment

In the Democratic Republic of Congo; the promulgation of the Family Code in 1967 by Ordinance Law No. 67/310 of 9 April 1967, which remained in force until 2002 on the new Labour Code, which was conspicuous by its silence on the professional capacity of young people.

Faced with this situation; the city of Kisangani has not remained at all indifferent to this reality because the Congolese government is trying to formalize; regulate and establish its own law. The government can find a solution to the problem of youth unemployment by encouraging them to create and manage their own activities without much hassle related to the number of barriers as well as taxes and taxes.

This desire can be translated into several initiatives, including the creation of an opinion listening centre for young people affected by this condition; the counselling and guidance team because the majority of young people don't know what to do anymore.

Work is not only in the public sector, which pays in terms of salary. This is how NDEKE ZAMBA (2010) in his doctoral study confirms that for several decades the DRC has been going through a multisectoral crisis that has upset the secular balance. The effects of this disastrous situation have had ramifications all the way to the household and are leading young people into a kind of hardship that looks like a real headache for survival.

At this time, we must say out loud that the Congolese government has shown us these limits by wanting to keep young people in a stationary position of suffering, which favors the birth of several evils that are eating away at our society, among others: corruption which affects almost all sectors of life; prostitution that manifests itself among minors, adults or even married women who are looking for the survival of their households; kidnappers who steal other people's property by force even during the day; theft; misappropriation of public property.

What keeps young people unemployed are:

- The abandonment of certain responsibilities by the Congolese government,
- lack of a job creation policy by the government,
- Mismatch between school or academic training and the needs of society;
- family recruitment: Those who have brothers and sisters in high positions have an easier time getting a job than others;
- Lack of a pension policy.

In the context of this study; Our concerns can be summarized around the following questions:

1. What promotes youth unemployment in the city of Kisangani?
2. What are the consequences of youth unemployment in a society?

In order to give an answer to all these questions; We make the following assumptions:

- Lack of job creation policies by the government that keeps young people unemployed
- Youth unemployment has several consequences (juvenile delinquency; theft; prostitution and kidnapping)

The objectives of this study are as follows:

- Analyzing the factors that promote youth unemployment in the city of Kisangani
- Measuring the impact of youth unemployment in society

## **2.0 METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 Study Environment**

The city of Kisangani is the capital of the province of Tshopo; one of the largest provinces of the Democratic Republic of Congo. It was created by the Ordinance Law No. 12/357 of 6

September 1958 of the central government under the name of STANLEY VILLE, which became Kisangani in the middle of 1966.

The population is estimated at 1,602.37 inhabitants (annual report of the provincial directorate of Tshopo of the national statistical institute of 2021)

The city of Kisangani covers an area of 1910 Km<sup>2</sup> Its equatorial climate is characterized by two seasons, one dry and the other rainy. The minimum temperature varies between 19; 9°C and 29; 5°C

The dominant relief is the plain covered with water from left to right. Subdivided into six communes plus the LUBUYA BERA sector; the city of Kisangani is inhabited by nationals of more or less 250 tribes including the TOPOKE; LOKELE ; MBOLE; TURUMBU; LENTOLA; MITUKU; BAMANGA; BOA; NGELEMA; BALI; NGANDO are in the majority.

## 2.2 Population

The population of this study includes the entire population of the city of Kisangani. We used the occasional sample of 105 subjects, including 50 women and 55 men, all young unemployed, whom we met in the six plus the LUBUYA BERA sector. They have gladly agreed to respond to our various concerns.

## 2.3 Research Method and Technique

We used R.K.'s functional analysis. Merton in order to test our research hypothesis. The interview was the technique used to welcome the views of young people in the different communes of the city of Kisangani (ESISO 2022)

To highlight the constitutive paradigm of the said analysis, we have illustrated the steps of this method in the following way:

- Manifest function: the government has the right initiatives to create employment for young people according to the intentions expressed by the Minister responsible for youth
- Latent function: the government keeps young people in the status quo. Young people are unable to find jobs and they wonder why the government is only limiting itself to talking about good intentions instead of taking concrete action (pragmatism)
- Dysfunction: young people have become reluctant to pay taxes
- Functional equivalent or substitute: since the government has resigned from its responsibilities and does not reconcile words with deeds, each young person creates his or her own activity for survival and others, on the other hand, choose the illegal path of delinquency that puts peaceful citizens in a difficult position For this study, we used:
  - the documentary technique which has been important for us to enrich the present work by consulting the various documents relating to our theme
  - the interview technique allowed us to interview young people from the different communes of the city of Kisangani to receive additional information on this subject

- Direct and spontaneous observation allowed us to get in touch with young people in their communities. This technique allowed us to feel the reality of unemployment that young people suffer in the city of Kisangani.

### 3.0 PRESENTATION DES RESULTATS

At the end of the survey; we achieved the following results:

#### 3.1 youth representation in the city of Kisangani.

In this table, we want to know the social representation that young people make in Boyomaise society

**Table I Social Representation of Youth**

Qualifiers	Frequency	Percentage
Dependent	62	59
Future of the nation	34	32,3
People without maturity	2	1,9
Apprentices	7	6,6
Total	105	100

**Source:** field survey

The results contained in the table above show that society attributes negative stereotypes to youth because:

- 62 out of 105 respondents, i.e. 59%, think that young people are addicted
- 34 out of 105, or 32.3%, think that youth is the future of the nation.
- 7 respondents or 6.6% consider youth as a group of people who still have to learn and finally
- 2 respondents, i.e. 1.9%, think that youth is a group of people who have not yet reached maturity.

This negative vision of young people is still conveyed by popular adages, tales and slogans:

- Young people are comparable to children
- Young people have no discretion and will not be able to keep professional secrets
- The young look like chameleons
- Young people are opportunists
- Young people have no ethics
- Young people are selfish
- Young people are proud etc

#### 3.2 Inventory of youth sector of activity in the city of Kisangani

In this question, we will discuss the priority activities carried out by young people according to gender and level of education

**Table II. Activity rations of young people without a diploma**

Industry	frequency	Percentage
Small business	11	10,4
Motorcycle taxi	78	74,2
Mason	8	7,6
Agriculture	1	0,9
Prostitution	7	6 ,6
Total	105	100

**Source:** field survey

The table above shows the following:

- -78 out of 105 respondents i.e. 74.2% have motorcycle transport (motorcycle taxi) as their main activity
- 11 out of 105 respondents, i.e. 10.4%, are in small businesses
- 8 out of 105 surveys Or 7.6% are in the construction sector
- 7 out of 105 respondents, i.e. 6.6%, are in prostitution and finally
- 1 Surveys out of 105 or 0.9% is in the agricultural sector (fields)

**Table III. Expansion of activities for young young intellectuals**

Industry	Frequency	Percentage
Teacher in private schools	30	28,5
Nurse in private hospitals	17	16,1
Salespeople in shops and pharmacies	14	13,3
Data entry operators in office automation	13	12,3
Motorcycle taxi	26	24,7
Money changers	5	4,7
TOTAL	105	100

**Source:** our field survey

The following table can be seen from the above table:



- 30 out of 105 respondents, i.e. 28.5%, work in the primary, secondary and vocational education sector, both public and private
- 17 out of 105 respondents, i.e. 16.1%, work in the transport sector (motorcycle taxi, bicycle taxis or bus taxi)
- 26 out of 105 respondents, i.e. 24.7%, are salespeople in shops and pharmacies
- 14 out of 105 respondents, i.e. 13.3%, work in the private health sector
- 13 respondents, i.e. 12.3%, work in office automation as data entry operators, filing cabinets, photocopiers, etc
- 5 out of 105 respondents, i.e. 4.7%, are money changers

### 3.3 Young People's Views on Their Unemployment

**Table IV what is your opinion on youth unemployment?**

Opinions	Frequencies	Percentage
Favorable	10	9,5
Non favorable	95	90,4
TOTAL	105	100

**Source:** our field survey

The table above shows that 95 out of 105 respondents, i.e. 90.4%, are unfavourable to unemployment because they are having difficulty carrying out their projects and they are considered irresponsible, on the other hand, 10 out of 105 respondents, i.e. 9.5%, have a favourable opinion because entrepreneurship pays better than public administration.

According to our analysis, if 95 respondents presented a non-favourable opinion it is simply because they do not have a stable remunerative activity, 10 respondents who presented a favourable opinion it is simply because they have private activities which pay for it better than public activities.

**Table V. What keeps young people unemployed?**

Causes	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of a government job creation policy	74	70,4
Mismatch between academic training and society's needs	4	3,8
Family recruitment	12	11,4
Lack of pension policy	15	14,2
TOTAL	105	100

The following result can be seen from the table above:



- 74 out of 105 young people, i.e. 70.4%, confirm that the government lacks a job creation policy, which keeps them unemployed.
- 15 surveys out of 105 or 14.2% think that there is a lack of pension policies that do not leave room for young people
- 12 out of 105 surveys, i.e. 11.4%, think only of family recruitment, which keeps some competent young people unemployed.
- 4 out of 105 respondents, i.e. 3.8%, think that youth unemployment and related to the mismatch exists between the training followed in the humanities, i.e. universities, and the real needs of society.

If the young people said that there is a lack of a job creation policy, it is simply because the offers do not go through the appropriate channels. For some time, only the offer to recruit police and military personnel has been in the media, but other offers are only dealt with behind the scenes. If 4 other respondents spoke of the inadequacy, it is simply because their colleagues who have followed the technical training are better off than those who have done the social and human fields

## 4.0 DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

### 4.1 Social Representation of Young People in the City of Kisangani

One of the aspects sought in this study is to understand the social representation of young people in the city of Kisangani. After our investigation, it turns out that the Boyomaise society has a negative representation towards young people.

Article 14 of the Constitution of the Democratic Republic of the Congo of 18 February 2006 stipulates that the public authorities shall ensure the elimination of all forms of discrimination in employment and in the promotion of young people in both public and private institutions.

Despite this provision, young people living in the city of Kisangani suffer discrimination related to employment and this has harmful consequences for society (banditry, delinquency, prostitution, theft, etc.).

In the Democratic Republic of Congo; Intellectual or not, the unemployment situation concerns all strata of the population in general and youth in particular. Thus, a surveyor with a degree in economics found in the commune of Makiso, a craft district, confirms to us that she has made several applications for jobs in public institutions, both in the city and in the interior, but without any follow-up; That's why she focuses on her small job in a restaurant to find a little money because life is becoming more and more difficult.

A twenty-year-old girl found on Sixth Avenue Tshopo tells us that she is forced to do prostitution. If one day she finds the means or a partner; She will change her lifestyle and will conform to the rules of society. This proves that the Congolese government has abandoned some of its responsibility. The devaluation of diplomas is a real problem in Congolese society, this attitude discourages some people from going to school because diplomas are useless.

We see that young boys who have not had the chance to study or obtain the diploma are much more in motorcycle taxis and girls in small shops. Although the young people live by

resourcefulness, the Congolese government instead of supporting it, on the contrary, is its victim of the hassle related to the various taxes.

#### **4.2 Inventory of Youth Sectors of Activity in the City of Kisangani**

Young people in school are much more active in teaching in private schools. Politicians, doctors, agronomists, sociologists, lawyers, are all in the teaching process to finally find a little nothing for their survival.

Unemployment puts young people in a difficult situation. To date, the woman's body has become a commodity that can be traded at any price following unemployment which has reached its peak.

Instead of starving, it's better to do prostitution so that you don't miss the money. Prostitution is a profession like any other, moreover, it is an old profession of the world, replies a prostitute found at the central campus of the University of Kisangani during the night. She goes on to say that we don't do prostitution for pleasure (orgasm) but we do it to look for money following the conditions of unemployment that the Congolese government has seen fit to put on young people.

If we want to list the sectors of activity of young people in the city of Kisangani, we can say that the motorcycle taxi plays a very important role for young boys without a high level of education and petty business takes a prominent place for girls without a diploma because there are very few activities that are offered to young people without a diploma.

#### **4.3 Young People's Views on Unemployment**

Young people have an unfavourable opinion of the unemployment they are victims of at the hands of the Congolese government. If the majority of young people are unemployed, it is the Congolese government that is responsible, because there is no national policy for job creation. At this stage, we can confirm that the State has resigned in the face of certain responsibilities that fall to it. There are no statistics that certify the number of young people who find employment each year. We had questioned the agents of the National Employment Office (ONEM) provincial directorate of Tshopo, who themselves prove that the problem of employment is a headache in the country in general and the province of Tshopo in particular.

As the Congolese government does not have a good policy of job creation for young people, it would be desirable to retire those who have served the nation for a long time and finally to create space for young people because they still have the energy to serve the nation well in all sectors of life.

One of the big problems related to youth unemployment in the city of Kisangani is family recruitment, those who have relatives in major political positions are much more likely to be hired than those who do not

#### **5.0 CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

This study analyzes youth unemployment in the city of Kisangani according to a sociological analysis. Through this study, we understood that unemployment is a real problem in the city of Kisangani because it concerns all strata of the population.

A few apprehensions are enough to conclude this reflection. The parenthesis of the socio-political crisis that began in Congo Kinshasa in the aftermath of independence has profoundly disrupted the social balance.

The enthusiasm with which young people traffic in informal activities means that they are aware of the responsibilities that lie with them. The daily search for solutions to meet basic needs makes young people more interested in informal activities.

We used Robert King Merton's functional analysis to test our research hypotheses. The interview was very useful for us in gathering the opinions of young people

At the end of this analysis, which is consistent with youth unemployment in the city of Kisangani, we suggest the following:

- That the Congolese government create jobs for young people,
- That it places particular emphasis especially on vocational training to enable everyone to create their own jobs at a time when the government is having difficulty creating jobs for all young people,
- That the government prioritize youth entrepreneurship in the city of Kisangani to solve the problem of youth unemployment.

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