



Reason for unemployment amongst young BMEs living in Westminster

Accredited Community Research Course

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The students group

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Contents Page

Aknowledgements 1

Contents page 2

Executive Summary 3

Chapter 1: 7

 (i) Central aim and research plan 7

 (ii) The purpose of this research 9

 (iii) Literature review 10

 (iv) Methodology 18

 (v) Ethical considerations 20

Chapter 2: Research findings 22

Chapter 3: Discussion 30

Chapter 4: 34

 (i) Conclusions 34

 (ii) Recommendations 34

 (iii) The strengths and limitations of research 35

Bibliography 37

Appendices 39

Executive Summary

Purpose of report:

The following report aims to explore and investigate some of the root causes or reasons behind the rise in unemployment rates amongst young BMEs aged 18-25 living in the areas of Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea. The report will aim to uncover some of the underlying challenges or barriers that prevent young people from an ethnic minority background find a suitable and sustainable job or work.

The report aims to identify and highlight some of the existing employability the problems encountered by these groups of young people and the kind of hurdles faced by the subjects i.e. young people in discussion.

Another objective, which this research will try to achieve, is to test the secondary literature which had been revised against the first hand findings. The central purpose of this will be to evaluate and test the correlation between the two types of sources and assess whether the direct link of cause and effect stating over the sources bare similar resemblances.

Methodology:

The preliminary stage of the data gathering exercise will be testing the validity of questionnaires and surveys as effective tools of research when seeking to understand and interpret complex quantitative data such as age, location, and ethnicity, number of weeks, months, and years unemployed. This form of research lends itself in many ways to a systematic or imperial approach based on facts, statistics and figures, aimed at purely studying the data gathered and categorising it to project a certain trend or pattern in the responses of the respondents.

The set of questions asked will mainly be focused on areas such as existing levels of support and provision available in local neighbourhoods and provided by i.e. local organisations such as recruitment firms, job brokerage firms, the job centre along with others, in helping to address the needs and problems which are playing a key role in preventing some of the young people of Black and Ethnic Minority background living in the boroughs of Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea from securing sustained and durable employment opportunity.

Thus the questionnaire will contain a mixture of multiple choice categories, which will allow for a more quantitative and systematic approach to be adopted along with more open-ended questions which allow each of the respondents to provide comments and express their views and opinions more openly.

The second part of gathering data will involve the use of case study or face to face interviewing methods. Here there is to be up to ten respondents selected, with five being male and five being female. The objective of this exercise will be to study each of the participants as personal subjects whom have been in long term unemployment and require a great need for maintained support and prevision.

Findings:

From my research the following sets of key findings can be drawn, including:

- Female respondents tend to experience great level of unemployment spells than their male counter parts.
- Majority of the respondents affected by lengthy unemployment spells are of ethnic minority background with only a few of the total respondents comprising of either White English or White Irish origin.
- Ward which has been most affected by unemployment is Harrow Road, where majority of the respondents have faced lengthy unemployment spells. Wards which have had experienced less unemployment in terms of number of people out of work include Portobello, Ladbroke Grove, Dalgarno gardens and Barlby Road , Sheppard's Bush.
- Females tend to go for jobs or employment which is based on skills and trade therefore requiring perhaps greater level of experience and qualification, with 9 females of the total 16 respondents citing jobs such as business admin, finance, retail, hospitality, reception, payroll and childminding, teaching assistant as their preferred employment. Males however tend to go for jobs that do not require necessarily that much experience, with 6 males citing jobs such retail, customer service, security, Barista, Plumbing, labour, cleaning, factory as their preferred employment.

- 10 females of the total 16 respondent feel experience, qualification, dress code and stigma is preventing them from finding job. The 6 remaining males cite experience, confidence in interviews, and discrimination due to past record.

Conclusion:

To conclude our study, it can be suggested that there are a lot of factors and causes pointing towards the underlying unemployment problems endured by young people of ethnic backgrounds. It can be argued that whilst the secondary research and reviews do make correct assertions in suggesting that one of the key problems towards some young people from ethnic communities finding work being primarily their attitude and overall demeanour toward finding themselves a job, the more primary surface data goes further in trying to uncover some of the reasoning as to why this problem in attitude occurs in the first place and goes to suggest that perhaps those who are responsible in providing the vital first line of employment support perhaps often neglect or do not go far enough in the way of support and employment provision to prepare those who are at most risk of facing lengthy unemployment spells in acquiring some of the more desired more 'soft' traits and characteristics employers need like good attendance, good team work, basic communication skills, to enable them to feel more determined in securing the right kind of opportunity for themselves.

Recommendation:

It is recommended as a result of the somewhat extensive level of research and investigation carried out, a number of key steps and stage solutions need to be taken in order to go some way in tackling what is a much more widespread and very often complex problem such as youth unemployment, these recommended include:

- 1- More improved employment service with increased focused on supporting the needs of the candidates instead of adopting a one size fits all approach aiming to provide a generic service, to those with clearly differentiated levels of needs and support.
- 2- Better and easier access to training courses.
- 3- Better quality of jobs advertised on the universal job match website, more jobs which are perhaps graduate-based or are career based rather than low level, low paid and rather unskilled jobs.

- 4- More collaborative work between central government, local authority, private recruitment firms and job centres to provide a more holistic approach and support to tackling the problem.
- 5- Greater level of work between job centre, recruitment agencies, employment support provider groups and local employer with the aim of understanding the needs of the employer with regards to workforce and the kind of skills they are after.
- 6- Early intervention in colleges and universities to prevent cases of young people leaving education and finding it difficult to seek out a career as they do not have enough knowledge about their desired career choices or not enough practical experience.

Chapter 1:

(i) Central aim and research plan

The following report aims to investigate and explore the reasons or the root causes preventing young people from BME communities aged 18-25 living in the boroughs of Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea from finding/securing sustainable and durable jobs and employment opportunities within the local area.

The objective of the research will be to uncover and discuss at length some of the key problems, challenges and barriers that this group of people within the community are encountering. Another key aim that the report seeks to address includes the role of the service provider (i.e. local recruitment firm, job brokerage and apprenticeship institutions and job centres) in supporting and addressing the employment needs of the group mentioned and helping them overcome the challenges they face.

Furthermore this report will also examine and understand how government programmes like the 'Universal Job Match Service', 'Youth Contract' or the 'Work programme' has been able to address the long terms unemployment problems of these groups and how effective have the programmes been in helping these groups to go back into the labour market or find sustainable jobs and employment.

As part of the research, a series of research tools aimed at generating both qualitative and quantitative data is to be adopted, to try and build the level of information extracted and to understand and analyse a variety of root causes or reasons of unemployment amongst young people from BME background living in those boroughs.

As part of the data gathering exercise, a questionnaire will be used to try and get a better understanding of the quick facts, figures and statistics projecting the extent and levels unemployment among young BMEs living in both boroughs.

The question will contain a series of open questions which will also look to understand some on the surface views, comments and attitudes towards unemployment amongst BME youth and perhaps explore some of the root causes to their own unemployment situation.

Once the questionnaires are designed and formulated, I will then be visiting selected venues like the Job Centre and Youth Clubs who work directly with young people from BME background looking for jobs and employment, as a way to gain access to the young people they support and be able to effectively engage my target audience.

A small selected sample of up to ten people, with five males and five females from the age range 18-25 from BME communities will be chosen and invited to take part in my study.

In addition to conducting a series of questionnaires, I plan to also conduct a series of case studies with the same ten participants invited as part of the original exercise.

The case study questions will be open-ended and will aim to explore further some of the root causes or problems which have prevented the chosen participants from finding and keeping jobs or employment and will also look at the type of support available from the local service providers and the how effect this support has been in addressing the needs of those unemployed.

Time Frame:

Throughout the course of my study, I have been fortunate enough to receive extensive feedback for my work and also plan ahead to give myself sometime to be able to conduct my study and finalise my findings in time to meet the deadline for the submission of my first draft. Having started the course early September, I had planned a gant chart time-frame along with the course tutor, detailing specific time-scales for different sections of the assignment to be completed by, for instance my preliminary introduction, research plan along with the aims and objective, as well as my literature review was set to be finalised by early October, with my methodology and ethics section to be finalised by end of October, early November and my Research findings discussion finalised by early to late December, the other part within my assignment including conclusion, recommendation and bibliography being finalised by early or late January. Having given myself this timeframe and agreed with my tutor, I was able to have a milestones to work towards and try to use these timeframes to have a better structure and more organised approach towards carrying out my assignment, whilst keeping in mind when I should be looking to start as well as finalised each of my sections, thus giving myself time to consult my tutor and get feedback before my first or final submission dates.

Aside from providing myself with a month by month milestone, I also provided myself with a longer milestone assessing my work over the course of my assignment leading up to the final deadline in March which totalled to 6 months.

With this being the case, I took it upon myself to allocate 2 months for part such as Aims and objectives, Research Plan and Literature Review. Another month was allocated towards the design and creation of my research methodology and tools for conducting my study. A further month was allocated towards gathering and capturing data as well as

engaging in extensive field work. 1 month was dedicated to presenting my findings and engaging in the write up work, along with discussion of the implication of my findings to my overall central research question. The final month of the total 6 was allocated to finalising my work, ensuring all the part had been completed to meet the criteria set out and also consulting my tutor to ensure I gave myself plenty of time to make amendments before the deadline in March.

(ii) The purpose of my research

The aim of the report is to establish the some of the reasons, factors and root causes which has resulted in the mass unemployment rates not only amongst young people in general but in particular those from and within the BME community groups from the ages of 18-25 living in boroughs of Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea.

The research will look at the topic area of unemployment from the perspective of young people from BME communities and highlight some of the challenges and barriers they encountered which reduce their prospects of securing employment or jobs opportunities. The research aims to put into some context the deep rooted and underlying implications or consequences both in the short and more long term that may be brought forth by unemployment gaps.

The research will be centralised around seeking the views, comments and personal accounts of a selected group of individuals from BME background. The age group targeted will be between 18-25 whom are living in the London boroughs of Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea. Also it should be noted that both borough are relatively young, in terms of age population and thus forth the issue of youth unemployment come to the foreground or is at the heart of the concern.

These two borough where selected, as they encompass a high proportion of economic and working migrant communities. Through selecting the two boroughs which are in many regards presumed as being wealth and affluent parts of London, the report will aim to provide a snap shot or an overview to the more complex topic area of youth unemployment and put into some context a problem or an area much more wide spread problem with regards to geographical proximity.

The purpose of the proposed research is to highlight and identify a number of elements at work, including:

- Firstly the existing levels of unemployment amongst young people from Black and Ethnic minority backgrounds.
- Secondly the reasons or causes behind their unemployment or joblessness.
- Thirdly the kind of jobs being sought after by the target group i.e. what kind of jobs are they looking to apply for and what kind of skills, knowledge, and experience they may or may not possess to meet the requirements of the jobs they are applying for.
- Fourthly where they feel the lack skills or knowledge which hindering their employment prospects or the prospect securing sustained employment which they are seeking.
- Fifthly the role that service providers like the job centre play in supporting these groups into work.
- Sixthly how effective service providers have proved in their role of helping young people from BME communities into work.
- Finally how effective government been with the introduction of initiatives like the youth contract and work programme in helping to support young people living locally secure local jobs with local employers and tackling mass youth unemployment.

From the above assessment, one can therefore formulate set or series of questions, from the larger topic which would allow for a more guided form of research and data collection strategy to be devised or approached.

(iii) Literature review

In the following section, I aim to discuss in detail some of the key literature or publications and reports which have been discussed, written or debated by both media and academics with regards to the topic area of Youth Unemployment and in particular to unemployment amongst young people from Black or Ethnic Minority backgrounds. The former will firstly try to provide an overview of both boroughs being investigated to establish some of the key facts and figures regarding the scale and extent of unemployment and deprivation with each neighbourhood.

The latter segment of the literature review will aim to discuss some of the issues which can bring about long-term unemployment, analysing the consequences that can be brought about as a result of unemployment gaps within the perspective candidates CV including wage scarring and lack of trust and reservations which may prevent local employers from sourcing or employing young people living locally. The section will also look at some of the key government policies or programmes to help tackle the mass youth unemployment and reconnect disengaged young people to the service providers who then work closely with the perspective employer to provide a more effective matching criteria.

City of Westminster

Key facts:

As Extracted from the ONS Neighbourhood website:¹

<u>Measure</u>	<u>Westminster</u>	<u>London</u>	<u>England</u>
<u>Population Size</u>	219,396	8,173,941	53,012,456
<u>Economically Active Full-Time</u>	41.5 % of total population	39.8 % of total population	38.6 % of total population
<u>Economically Active Part-Time</u>	7.2% of total population	10.9 % of total population	13.7% of total population
<u>Economically Active Self-Employed</u>	12.6% of total population	11.7% of total population	9.8 % of total population
<u>Unemployed</u>	4.5% of total population	5.2% of total population	4.4% of total population

¹ ONS 2011, Westminster Figures, available at: <http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadKeyFigures>. Accessed 12th December 2013.

Claimant Table:

<u>Count</u>	<u>Westminster</u>	<u>London</u>	<u>England</u>
<u>Claimants aged 16-24</u>	4,820	209,380	1,152,620
<u>Claimants aged 25-49</u>	3,110	126,700	646,380
<u>Claimants aged 50 and Over</u>	780	32,610	178,200
<u>Claimants Male of all ages</u>	3,040	134,140	797,090
<u>Claimants Female of all ages</u>	1,780	75,250	355,530

Most economically deprived wards in City of Westminster

According to the Westminster Council website²

- 1- Queen Park.
- 2- Harrow Road.
- 3- Church Street.

Kensington and Chelsea

Key facts:

As extracted from the ONS Neighbourhood website:³

² City of Westminster 2012-13, Borough Profile, City of Westminster, available at: <http://www.volunteer.co.uk/Groups/116243/Volunteer_Centre_Westminster/Projects/Employer_Supported_Volunteering/About_Us/Local_statistics/Local_statistics.aspx>. Accessed 12th December 2013.

³ ONS 2011, Kensington and Chelsea Figures, available at: <<http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadKeyFigures>>. Accessed 12th December 2013.

<u>Measure</u>	<u>Kensington and Chelsea</u>	<u>London</u>	<u>England</u>
<u>Population Size</u>	158,649	8,173,941	53,012,456
<u>Economically Active Full-Time</u>	40.6 % of total population	39.8 % of total population	38.6% of total population
<u>Economically Active Part-Time</u>	6.8% of total population	10.9% of total population	13.7% of total population
<u>Economically Active Self-Employed</u>	15.4% of total population	11.7% of total population	9.8 % of total population
<u>Unemployed</u>	4.3% of total population	5.2% of total population	4.4% of total population

Claimant Table:

<u>Count</u>	<u>Kensington and Chelsea</u>	<u>London</u>	<u>England</u>
<u>Total Person</u>	3,320	209,380	1,152,620
<u>Claimants aged 16-24</u>	570	50,040	327,870
<u>Claimants aged 24-49</u>	2,130	126,700	646,380
<u>Claimants 50 and over</u>	620	32,610	178,200
<u>Claimants Males of all ages</u>	2,050	134,140	797,090
<u>Claimants Females of all ages</u>	1,270	75,250	355,530

Most economically deprived wards in Kensington:

According to London Poverty Profile website⁴, the most deprived wards with high pockets of both social deprivation and unemployment in the London Borough of Kensington and Chelsea include:

- 1- Earls Court.
- 2- Golburne - 8th Most Deprived ward in London out of the 627 wards in total within the region.
- 3- Redcliffe.
- 4- Cermome.

Root Causes or problems of Long-Term Youth Unemployment:

According to a recent report published by the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills on February 2013⁵, there are several root causes which lead to the long term and sustained period of unemployment amongst young people including those of ethnic minority or from a disadvantaged backgrounds, these are:

- Low Education attainment.
- Low levels of training and Experience.
- Lack of career based jobs and opportunities in the local area.
- Poor attitudes of those young people from disadvantaged backgrounds towards the labour market and employment world.

⁴ London Poverty Profile 2012-13, Borough Profile, Kensington and Chelsea, available at: <<http://www.londonpovertyprofile.org.uk/indicators/boroughs/kensington-and-chelsea/>>. Accessed 4th December 2013.

⁵ Department of Business, Innovation and Skills, 2013, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/70226/bis-13-608-youth-unemployment-review-of-training-for-young-people-with-low-qualifications.pdf>. Accessed 5th December 2012.

Consequences of Long Term Youth Unemployment:

The report published by the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills on February 2013⁶, goes to argue that there are several negative impacts or results which may arise from a long period of unemployment or disengagement from the labour market including:

- 1- Wage Scar and sustained unemployment spells - The BBC recent article on entitled Future Cost of Youth Unemployment published on 14 December 2011⁷ argues that those who spend a longer period out of employment or unemployed, would experience more time out of work later in life and would as a direct consequence obtain relatively lower wages than those who experience shorter spells out of employment. The article goes on to suggest that those spending an extra month out of work before they are of the age of 25, may experience length unemployment spells later in life at around the aged of 26 and 30. "The evidence suggests that an extra month out of work before age 25 raised the proportion of time out of work between age 26 and 30 by 0.75%".
- 2- Employers would often opt to recruit candidates from other areas instead of local as there is poor quality available to meet job criteria.

Solutions towards addressing Youth Unemployment Crisis:

Universal Job Match Programme

According to the Department of Work and Pension website⁸, the Universal Job Match service is aimed at helping to support the job seekers obtain a more streamline approach to his/her job search, but allowing them to create and put together a good CV, be able to choose and select jobs which closely match their skills and work knowledge and provide employers with perspective local candidates that closely match vacancies which they post.

⁶ Department of Business, Innovation and Skills, 2013, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/70226/bis-13-608-youth-unemployment-review-of-training-for-young-people-with-low-qualifications.pdf>. Accessed 5th December 2013.

⁷ BBC, Future Cost of Youth Unemployment, 2011, available at: <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-16156849>>. Accessed 9th December 2013.

⁸ Department of Work and Pension, 2012, available at: <<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/universal-jobmatch-faqs.pdf>>. Accessed 14th January 2014.

The idea of the Universal job match services, in this instance is to create a much closer and more aligned link between the jobseeker, the jobs posted and the employers who post them, therefore reducing the chances or risks of jobs not going to the right candidate and helping employer recruit more locally.

Youth Contract:

In response to the recent waves and mass youth unemployment, the government had launched several policies to help tackle and address the issue. The policies are mainly aimed at encouraging private business and local employers to take on the candidate from local neighbourhood in and around the UK, and provide them with sustain employment opportunities and experience.

The key to the government's policy of the Youth Contract is that this policy is primarily centred on providing training support and experience to those living locally and to help elevate the pressures and cost of business recruiting or taking on candidates that they would otherwise perceive as lacking experience and skills to fill the posts or vacancy advertised.

According to the Department for Work and Pensions website⁹ the Youth contract is aimed at enhancing the employment prospects of those young people unemployed by offering businesses:

1 - Wage incentives - Businesses or employer would receive up to £2,275 for taking on young person aged 18-24 year old who would be considered as eligible through the Job Centre Plus or from the Work programme.

The Job Centre Plus, Work Programme and Work choice providers will provide employers with information and guidance in identifying those 18-24 years eligible for support as part of the Youth contract.

Offering young people employment opportunities including:

1- Work Experience: Providing the young person age 18-24 with first-hand experience industry experience.

⁹ Department of Work and Pension, 2012. available at: <<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/youth-contract-faq.pdf>>. Accessed on 11 December 2013.

- 2- Sector based academy training- providing the young person aged 18-24 eligible for the programme the necessary training whilst on the job giving them insight of the required level of knowledge needed to pursue a career in the industry.
- 3- Apprenticeships opportunities.

Work Programme:

In accordance with the Department for Work and Pensions website **“the Work Programme was launched throughout Great Britain in June 2011 and is part of a number of welfare to work reforms aimed at getting unemployed people into sustained work”**.

“The Work programme uses private and public companies, called providers, to find work for claimants transferred to them from Jobcentre Plus at specified points in their claim. The providers are primarily paid for defined outcomes related to sustained employment”.¹⁰

The work programme is therefore a government pay by result incentive designed to encourage local, regional and national service providers to go further in supporting to place those out of work into finding and retaining sustainable jobs and employment opportunities.

The aim of the programme is to encourage recruitment agencies like Reed in partnership or maximum along with others to reach out and help to place those hard to reach groups i.e. young people from disadvantage background or those who can be considered as graduates whom have experienced lengthy spells away from the labour market. The pay by result model ensure that the service provider only gets paid through ensuring the those on the work-program are placed into sustainable and durable job or employment opportunities with various local employers, as opposed to just paying paid to sign up participants onto the program.

¹⁰ Department of Work and Pension, 2012, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/work-programme-statistics--2faq.pdf>. Accessed on 11th December 2013.

(iv) Methodology

Definition of Research Question

For purpose of this research exercise the term of unemployment will be defined to put into context to gain a greater appreciation for the complexities that may arise or stem from exploring such a broad topic area in some level of depth.

What is unemployment?

According to an article which has been published to politics.co.uk entitled '**What is Unemployment**'¹¹, unemployment can be defined as the economic indicator that refers to the number or portion of people in an economy who are willing or able to work but are unable to get a job or an employment opportunity. A person therefore who finds themselves in this situation can therefore be categorised as unemployed.

It is argued on the website that unemployment in this sense differs by its very definition from the term of economic inactivity, which can be defined as people's inability or unwillingness to work or secure jobs and employment opportunities.

The wider term of Unemployment in this context can be grouped into four various categories or cycles.

The first category is known as 'cyclical unemployment', which is the redundancies that are carried out by an organisation or businesses, as it undergoes structural changes. This form of unemployment therefore occurs, when those who are employed are terminated from their posts, to help ease some of the structural and economic challenges that business faces, as a result of the shift in the external and more wider social and economic climate.

The second form of unemployment is what is known as structural unemployment, which occurs when the jobs available do not meet the skills or experience of the workforce and vice versa.

The third category is known as fractional unemployment and occurs when people are often working in between different jobs i.e. two or even three.

¹¹ Politics, 2004-201, available at: <<http://www.politics.co.uk/reference/unemployment>>. Accessed on 12th December 2013.

The fourth category is classified as seasonal unemployment, which is often linked to the type of jobs available on a given season including Christmas work or temporary work e.t.c.

Research Methodology

The data that is to be collected will adopt an interdisciplinary approach with the purpose of validating, testing and evaluate the consistency levels and accuracy of the information gathered and assessing the correlation between the more secondary sources to those of the primary.

The first research tool will look into the effectiveness of using questionnaires when looking to investigate our research question and analysing some of the given statements indicating the root causes of unemployment amongst young people within the BME community.

The questionnaire in this sense will provide us with the basis or surface upon which to pursue further in depth research, as it will touch upon and highlight some of causes that may have contributed to the unemployment of the sample group of participants selected. The questionnaire will also provide us with a more systematic or imperial approach which weighs more towards a quantitative interpretation being adopted, this will in many way help provide a good foundation upon which the data extracted can be cross referenced with the secondary figures and stats to see where the gaps or if indeed there is a strong correlation between both sets of data. The questionnaire script will contain a mixture of multiple choice, close question and open ended questions, therefore an semi-structured approached in this regard will be used.

To some degree also the questionnaire will enable us to also cross reference the more naturalist data gathered which weighs towards a more qualitative approach and compare it alongside the more secondary data sources which try to provide some views or commentary as to the root causes of unemployment amongst young people from BME communities.

The second tool will evaluate the use of case studies, as a method of generating a thorough in-depth or insight when evaluate a question that lends itself more to qualitative approach. The case studies in this sense will act as tools which allow a more individual analysis to be achieved using the experiences, accounts or stories of individuals to try to give the topic area a more person based context and understand the extent to which unemployment is affecting those individuals in question. The question will be open ended inviting the participant to disclose at length their personal views and feelings, allowing us to probe

further any views which need to be explored in further detail, due to the nature of the case study being conducted a semi-structured approach is to be utilised.

(v) Ethical considerations

There are several issues which must be taken to account with regards to the piece of research I am hoping to conducting, regarding the root causes of unemployment amongst young people from BME community groups living in Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea.

Confidentiality and Identity of Participants:

The first issue of any given research is to consider those subjects or individuals who form much of the rich data collected or extract and take into some great consideration the both confidentiality and identity of the of the participants involved whom have provided consent to be part of the research study. To ensure that my research fulfils its obligation in maintaining the privacy of identity and complete confidentiality of the participants, I will omit any recognisable identifiers which could put into jeopardy the identity and anonymity of those involved, so I will not be using full names. Even in the use of first name, I will simply try to use it as a way to contextualise the discussions of my findings but nothing more.

Sensitive Questions:

Looking at some of my questions which are to be asked, most of them are designed in a way that engages those part of the research to open up and talk at length about their unemployment experience. Unemployment in itself is a very distressing and unfortunate situation which many young people face or encounter in tough economic times with few jobs around, some of my participants therefore may feel aggravated in recollecting or sharing at length their personal stories of unemployment. This was perhaps why I felt it was more useful and benefit if I was to provide a more personal and private form were they could feel at ease when discussing their personal cases, as oppose to sharing it with the rest of the participants taking part in the research.

Role of Evelyn Oldfield Unit and Ethic Board:

Prior to distributing and conducting my primary research, the first step or preliminary stage of my design process involved worked through my questionnaire and case study scripts along with my other components such as the information sheets containing the consent form to be overseen and approved by both my tutor at the Evelyn Oldfield Unit and Ethics board, who would provide a more objective and balanced view on the set of questions which I have included and would provide better and more clearer guidelines as to the questions they would to be unethical, sensitive in nature and would in many ways evoke an unethical response from those participating in the study. Having been able to submit my work to both my tutor and the board, I have been able to gain good level of knowledge and feedback in assessing whether my set of questions and overall script design was balanced and ethical.

Upon also finalising and collecting my research data, I aim to provide all of the work conducted to the Evelyn Oldfield Unit for secure storage, in order to assure that my study has been conducted under professional and a safe environment and also to ensure that the data collected is protected in terms of access.

Chapter 2: Research findings & discussion

Kensington and Chelsea:

Key Findings:

From my research the following set of finding can be drawn including:

Gender

- 10 Females of the total 16 respondents have experienced a more prolonged period of unemployment, compared with just 6 males experience relative lower period of unemployment.
- 10 Females cite specific employment support including attending of accredited courses focused on training and experience are the main solutions to their unemployment problems, whilst 6 males cite that experience and perhaps on the job and pre-employment support as major components to landing the right job opportunity.

Age

- Majority of the respondent facing unemployed are aged 18-19, accounting for six of the total 16 respondents.
- Four individuals of the total 16 respondent are between the ages of 19-20.
- Four individuals of the total 16 respondents are aged between 24-25.
- Two individuals of the total 16 respondents are aged between 22-23.

Ethnicity

- Three individuals out of the total 16 respondents are of African origin, comprising of 1 African male and 2 African female.

- Four of the total 16 respondent are of either White English or Irish origin, comprising of 1 English Female and 2 English Males and 1 Irish Male.
- Nine of the total 16 respondents are other ethnicity background such as Bengali (1 Male and 1Female) Moroccan (2 Females), Kurdish (1 Female), Caribbean (1 Female), White and Caribbean (2 Female) and (1Male).

Ward

- 5 of the total 16 respondents live in the ward of Harrow Road in the borough of Westminster have been affected by unemployment.
- 4 of the total 16 respondents live in other ward namely Portobello, Ladbroke Grove, Dalgarno gardens & Barlby borough of Kensington and Chelsea and Shepherds Bush part of Hammersmith and Fulham borough

Length of Unemployment

- Females have suffer longer unemployment spells than their male counterparts with 10 females of the total 16 respondent having experienced workless-ness for a period of up to 1-4 and in many cases from 3-6 month and even beyond for up to 2-4 years.
- Comparing this with the 6 remaining males the unemployment spells tend to be somewhat shorter, with five males having been unemployed for a period of up to 3 months and more and only 1 having been unemployed for a longer period of up to 1 year and more.

Type of jobs applied

- Females tend to go for jobs or employment which is based on skills and trade therefore requiring perhaps greater level of experience and qualification, with 9 females of the total 16 respondents citing jobs such as business admin, finance, retail, hospitality, reception, payroll and childminding, teaching assistant as their preferred employment. Males however tend to go for jobs that do not require

necessarily that much experience, with 6 males citing jobs such retail, customer service, security, Barista, Plumbing, labour, cleaning, factory as their preferred employment.

Challenges or barriers encountered

- 10 females of the total 16 respondent feel experience, qualification, dress code and stigma is preventing them from finding job. The 6 remaining males cite experience, confidence in interviews, and discrimination due to past record.

Type of support/effectiveness of support?

- 10 females out of the total 16 respondent cite that they require support whilst they did receive the basic support, they require further support provision in enabling them to become more job ready i.e. sent to training courses, capacity building for them to build their experience and knowledge. The 6 males cited that whilst they did receive some support, like their female counter parts they too require further support provision in enabling to help build their level of confidence to go about searching for the right career prospect. All the 16 participants are in agreement that whilst the basic support is provided they feel more could be done in the way of employment support and that not much has changed in terms of their own unemployment situation.

Case studies

Q1) Tell me about your experience with unemployment and looking for work?

Key responses:

Disheartened

F2 "I have been applying and been rejected. This has affected my confidence".

F3 "Hard and difficult".

Frustrated with the support given

F5 “I am frustrated with the lack of help and support given. Not having the right qualifications to get into the field that I want”.

F4 “At present my job set back is a waiting for my husband to get a DBS check. It has been 3-5 months, I have been waiting. As I am setting up my own home based business as a childminder and the DBS is causing the delay”.

Reliant on self for support

M1 “I have two gateway accounts to help me search for jobs and indeed account”.

Aiming for low skilled work

M4 “Been looking for retail, cleaner and factory work but have found it difficult”.

Q2) How long have you been unemployed?

Key Responses:

Long spells of unemployment endured

F1 “I have been unemployed for 4 months”.

F2 “Since I left Secondary school so for 3 years almost”.

Males suffering somewhat shorter length of unemployment compared to females.

M1 “I have been unemployed for up to three weeks”

M2 “Forever meaning since leaving secondary school, so 8 years approximately has not been able to find a job”.

Q3) What kind of jobs, employment or career opportunities have you been seeking?

Key Responses:

Interested in skilled jobs but lack the experience or qualification needed.

F1 "I am looking for opportunities in recruitment and business Admin".

F2 "I am looking for opportunities in childcare and retail".

Looking for low paid work/jobs

M1 "I am looking for customer service assistant job".

M2 "I am looking for Labour, plumbing, person trainer jobs".

Q4) What do you feel are some of the challenges or barriers which you're encountering with regards to either the knowledge or experience, that have prevented you from securing your ideal job, employment or career opportunity?

Key Responses:

Lack of Experience

F7 "Just experience, a lot of jobs ask for experience".

Learning difficulties proving to be a stigma

F3 "ADHA proves to be the barrier".

Process of application to start childminding business/Dress Code

F4 “DSB being delayed”. “Sometimes Dress and head scarf some employers are open and unprejudiced and some find it as a barrier to hiring someone”.

More holistic approach and cohesive work between employer and employment support provider.

F6 “Communication between both parties i.e. job centre and local employer in-depth knowledge of exactly what they require”.

Age/lack of experience /Lack of further employment support.

M4 “Age, experience and lack of support”.

Criminal Record stigma/lack of experience

M3 “Criminal background and experience”.

Q5) How are groups like the job centre addressing those barriers and challenges you’re facing and what difference has their support made?

Key Responses:

Training Course

F1 “They put me on a 6 week course which made me a lot more confident”.

Withdrawing some employment support for candidate

F2 “They are not really. My adviser Christopher suggested that I attend a course (2 weeks) to improve my interview skills and learn other skills but the man was very rude so I am complaining and won’t be able to attend. I’ve been told many people have complained about this one man”. The manager and the staff are also rude and unprofessional”.

Some support provided through training courses and work experience.

M4 “Providing CV support and help with interview techniques”.

Q6) The government has recently introduced schemes like the youth contract and the work programme to encourage employers in the local areas to take on young people living locally. What difference has this scheme made and how has it helped address your job needs and improving your employment prospects?

Key Responses

Gov policy helped in some way.

F1 “It has enabled me to get a job”.

Provides some support for those who lack of experience.

F6 “I think this scheme would help people who lack experience in the required job rather than knowledge”.

M3 “Has helped young people gain experience”

Q7) What more do you think in the way of employment support can be done by both the government and service providers like the job centre plus to further address your needs and that of young people from Black and Ethnic Minority Backgrounds who are out of work?

Key Responses:

More holistic approach and collaborate between government, employment service provider and employer when tackling the issue.

F2“Working with businesses to give young ethnic people opportunities/chances. The government joining with services to tackle the issue”.

F6 “More in-depth help, as in the government getting more involved and helping then they are now and also government more backing in helping centres which help unemployed people”.

Gov despite help could do more/Employer needs to be more open to inexperience and give young people a real chance.

F4 “Employers need to give them (i.e. young people) a first break. More experience given to young people and funding to give more support”.

Chapter 3: Discussion

The following section will try to point towards some of the key findings and use these set of data collected to try and reinforce or reject much of the second hand research engaged in and also to try and see the why in which the key aims set out as part of the research fit in with much of the research conducted and what may be the key issues which have arisen as a result of extensive engagement with the group in question.

Main Findings in discussion:

Primary:

People:

When looking at our primary findings and discussing them in relation to our central question, one cannot escape but to discuss the central role that the subjects in question play to our overall research motivation. Looking at the primary data for instance through selecting a sample of 16 respondents both male and female, I am able to create a framework upon which I can begin to answer some of reasoning behind the unemployment amongst young BME's within the borough and explore the issues at work in more details. Through selecting this sample of young people, I can create a study which aims to appreciate the complexities of those young people in question and begin to have a more direct experience and knowledge as to the reasons behind the unemployment of this group.

Context:

By selecting an area and in the case of this study two boroughs, again a framework is being designed to assess the impact of unemployment not only on those specific areas, but also the people i.e. young people living in those areas, how they are being affected by the lack of employment opportunities. Selecting those areas gives us a better and more comprehensive understanding of the kind of environment the subjects find themselves and how this environment is in turn affecting their perceptions on the issue of unemployment.

Problem:

The problem of unemployment amongst young BME's aged 18-25 can only be studied in great detail if there is a sample framework i.e. people and context, upon which the study can be conducted. Therefore the central question can be answered and some of the root causes can be detailed as the subjects selected can provide their own causes for being unemployed, therefore acting as a specific sample or case studies the more general situation of unemployment amongst young BME's can be established. Through selecting our sample, a lot of issues can be studied including root cause to unemployment amongst the target group, length of unemployment as a result of the root causes and affect that young people experience more physiologically from lengthy unemployment spells.

Role of the service provider/support provision/central government:

The study also provides us to some extent a location upon which to conducted our study, in this sense one must also study the significance of the location under which the results are gathered and the impact or role that the service provider plays in helping to address the localised issue of unemployment amongst those who are most distant from the labour market needs, in this particular case being young BME's aged 18-25 living in the London boroughs of Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster. Through studying the role of the service provider and central government, a more clearer understanding can be made assessing the impact and effectiveness of the service provider in relation to our central question i.e. is the service provider contributing towards further deepening the issue or actually providing a service aimed at helping to solve perhaps some of the causes of unemployment encountered by the subject group in discussion.

Secondary:**Context:**

The Secondary findings also provide us with a breakdown of the two chosen borough, providing us statistics and figures allowing us to assess the overall and study the unemployment situation. Through having a general snap shot of both Borough, we have a starting point or a platform upon which to go about our research and go further in conducting a more in depth analysis. Looking at the general picture of unemployment within those borough gives us a clear indication of the group most in need of great level of unemployment support and allows us to assess the key reasons for the mass

unemployment within those boroughs, whilst studying perhaps what had borough about the mass unemployment in the first place amongst young BME's living within those neighbourhoods.

Root Causes:

The secondary findings to major extent provide us with some of the key reasons as to why employers in the labour market often turn down the chance of taking on a young person for employment opportunities within their businesses. Through studying some of the key underlying reasons or causes behind why some employers may fail to give work opportunities with the local area to young people, I was able to devise a set of question which would assess the role of the service provider in helping those young people overcome what many employers feel are barriers to them securing employment and also use some of these reasons to see whether the young people who have been selected as my sample would cite similar causes to the ones which have been uncovered, thus being able to see the commonalities and similar patterns developing when studying a complex issue such as root causes of unemployment amongst young BME's.

Policies:

Looking at our secondary findings and answering them in relation to our central question, one point towards some of the key or preliminary information which could be used and addressing when going about conducting our study. One of the preliminary or key issues which was being assessed with regards to understand the role of the government in tackling those causes of unemployment experienced by young people from BME communities, was the policies that had been put into place and exercised by the service provider on behalf of central government. Whilst the central government have created new policies centralised on helping to tackle national, regional and more local unemployment problems for young people.

The government for instance have tried to look at contracts and programmes to try and encourage or incentivise the local employer to take on more young people for roles with their businesses, therefore through selecting a sample of 16 respondents and asking them the effectiveness of a policy such as this in aiding to find a job, we can determine the impact played by the introduction of this initiative or perhaps the lack of it.

Comparing both the secondary to the more primary data therefore a couple of similarities can be noted:

- 1- Both sets of data project or attach some kind of significance to image of candidate.
- 2- Both sets of data point towards it being important that candidates possess some kind of a stable working history or experience.

The differences are:

- 1- Whilst the secondary data touches upon the surface on the issues which require further analysis including roots causes of unemployment, consequences of prolonged unemployment and policies to help tackle the issue. The primary research allows us to further investigate these issues and to uncover the more specific problems by using our specific sample framework.
- 2- Whilst the secondary data does go some way into explaining the reason for young BME's suffering prolonged unemployment spells, the more primary data also points to the lack of support in preparing the candidates for the job market in being perhaps the root cause to a lack of confidence and attitude problems.

Chapter 4

(i) Conclusions

To conclude our study, it can be suggested that there are a lot of factors and causes pointing towards the underlying unemployment problems endured by young people of ethnic backgrounds. It can be argued that whilst the secondary research and reviews do make correct assertions in suggesting that one of the key problems towards some young people from ethnic communities finding work being primarily their attitude and overall demeanour toward finding themselves a job, the more primary surface data goes further in trying to uncover some of the reasoning as to why this problem in attitude occurs in the first place and goes to suggest that perhaps those who are responsible in providing the vital first line of employment support perhaps often neglect or do not go far enough in the way of support and employment provision to prepare those who are at most risk of facing lengthy unemployment spells in acquiring some of the more desired more 'soft' traits and characteristics employers need like good attendance, good team work, basic communication skills, to enable them to feel more determined in securing the right kind of opportunity for themselves.

(ii) Recommendations

- 1- More improved employment service with increased focused on supporting the needs of the candidates instead of adopting a one size fits all approach aiming to provide a generic service, to those with clearly differentiated levels of needs and support.
- 2- Better and easier access to training courses.
- 3- Better quality of jobs advertised on the universal job match website.
- 4- More collaborative work between central government, local authority, private recruitment firms and job centres to provide a more holistic approach and support to tackling the problem.

- 5- Early Intervention in colleges and university providing employment and career advice to students educating them about their career choice and getting them to think more openly about their future whilst encouraging them to seek out experience and opportunities as early as possible perhaps through more work experience and work placement initiatives.

(iii) The strengths and limitations of research

Strengths

Throughout the course of my study, I have been fortunate enough to receive extensive feedback for my work and also plan ahead to give myself sometime to be able to conduct my study and finalise my findings in time to meet the deadline for the submission of my first draft. Referring back to my research plan, I must say that whilst I did encounter some challenges with regards to gaining access to the Job Centre which I had planned to visit in order to source my respondents, on the whole I feel that having given myself quite a bit of time or a window and planning ahead had provided me with some alternative solution including visiting libraries and youth centres to try and gage my target group. I was also fortunate enough to get approval from the Job Centre manager, who I have previous sent the course detail over to and was able to conduct my research in good time.

Having chosen questionnaires and case studies, I was able to carry out my research in a fairly straight-forward and direct manner. I felt that these two methods provided me with an easier way to approach the sample of young people I have chosen to select, as the questions were relatively short and direct in nature and did not require a great deal of time to be spent answering or provide reasoning behind answers, as would have been required if a focus group for instance was to be conducted.

I felt that also given the private nature that both sets of exercises allowed also made it more encouraging for the sample of young people to be willing participants, many of whom would not have felt comfortable or at ease a more collective or group setting had been devised instead.

Limitations

Whilst I did conduct my study on time and managed to source out my target group in a relatively simple way, much thanks to the Job Centre, I did encounter some limitation to my research one of which was that it was easier for me to attract more females for my study. One of my key intentions when seeking to conduct my research was to obtain an equal number of males and females, in order to achieve a balance and to fairly reflect that concerns of both sets of gender groups. I feel that the females were more easier to speak with and more understanding in terms of relating to my study, than the males I had encountered, who perhaps felt that providing their own understanding on the topic would mean that they would be in discussion at length so felt less inclined to participate. I initially aimed to conduct a research consisting of 10 participants 5 females and 5 males, however due to more females participating I end up with 10 females and 6 males.

Another limitation was perhaps that whilst I did manage to spend some sufficient time with my respondents, I was not able to conduct my research in a more private setting i.e. a room, where the participants would have perhaps felt more comfortable discussing their own unemployment matters instead of looking over their shoulders in case they said anything that would put them under scrutiny amongst job centre staff. I felt that many of the young people I spoke to perhaps wanted to speak in some length but were restricted due to the watchful environment they had been a part of.

Further Research

One area I could look into for future study would perhaps include assessing the role of the employment support groups and the impact they have on reducing and addressing problems of local unemployment amongst young BME's.

Whilst my study was primarily focus on analysing the reasons behind the prolonged spells of unemployment amongst young BME's, I did touch up on the role of the service providers, but I feel that a questionnaire designed to analyse more in-depth about the work carried out by this group would be more helpful, to understand the significance. Another area for further research also would be to analyse more in-depth the role and responsibilities of the employer in not only taking on young people for posts in their organisation but the criteria they set when putting out a job advert and how realistic these specifications are to the skills and knowledge base of the local work force i.e. perspective young candidates.

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Appendices

Purpose of Research

The issues that the research will try to investigate in some level of depth including examining some of the challenges or problems encountered by young people from Black and Ethnic Minority Background in today's labour market. The research will look into the contributing elements preventing young of Black and Ethnic Minority background living in the London Boroughs of Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea from finding or securing sustainable jobs or employment.

It is hoped therefore that by consulting and seeking the views of up to 10 young people from ethnic communities, Five males and Five females a much greater framework of understanding and appreciation is developed or created around the more wide scale and often complex topic area of youth unemployment.

To gain a better grasp of some of the key elements at work it will therefore be of great significance to define our research question in a bit more detail. The research aims to look at, the reasons or root causes for the high unemployment figures amongst young people from Black or Ethnic Minority backgrounds. This key topic area, bring about the main question of what are the key reason or root causes which prevent young people from BME communities finding sustainable and durable employment opportunities.