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**ABSTRACT**

The research examined the socio-economic empowerment of the youth by local governments in Rwanda: a case study of Rwimbogo Sector, Gatsibo District. This was done with an aim of suggesting mechanisms aimed for enhancing youth development as ingredient of national development. The general objective of the study were: to investigate the various youth empowerment programmes, impact of the youth empowerment programs on various youth categories and any hindrances to youth empowerment in Rwimbogo sector, Gatsibo district. The study adopted an exploratory research design. The sample consisted of 100 youths. Primary data were collected using questionnaire which were administered to randomly select youths. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data generated by the study. The findings of the study revealed that youth empowerment had made significant contributions towards improving the standards of living of the respondents in the study area. Among the respondents, 37% were satisfied with the performance of youth empowerment programmes by the district. In addition the limitation of empowerment included lack of access to loans, inadequate training centers and equipments and illiteracy. The study findings indicated that they got self employments through personal initiatives, family support and support networks. They also indicated the better access one has to social networks the higher chances she/he become self employed quickly. Research results on the constraints youth encounter in empowerment programs were: limited confidence and experience in the labour market, lack of motivation, lack of recognition of their qualification, lack of financial support for their self employment. The study recommended availing loan facility with minimal interest rate, establishment of additional training centers with efficient equipments and adequate training for participants; introducing active labour market policies in Rwanda.