An Evaluation of the Central Bank's Role in Promoting Financial Access and Protection for Youth in a Mid Income Country

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Abstract
Purpose: The purpose of the study was to evaluate the Central Bank's role in promoting financial access and protection for youth for the period 2020-2023. The Central Bank has a focus on financial inclusion for children in its strategy and sought to develop a financial inclusion strategy under strategic direction number five (5). **Materials and Methods:** Non-probability sampling technique was employed using a sample of 60 employees of the Bank of Zambia. A mixed method embedded design was applied. Data was gathered via a questionnaire and interviews. Descriptive analysis was employed to analyze quantitative data whereas thematic analysis approach was used to analyze qualitative data. **Findings:** The findings show that the Bank of Zambia has not done fairly well in offering digital financial services for the youth, except from engaging in financial literacy. Furthermore, another major discovery in this research is positive impact that financial technology had because of its services which made access to financial services easy and that people no longer needed to visit the bank branch but used Internet. In terms of interim performance of the Bank of Zambia, this study discovered that the bank has not done much. The barriers to financial inclusion for young people include lack of financial literacy and lack of appropriate financial products. **Conclusion:** An evaluation of the central bank's role in promoting financial access and protection for youth was done using an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design. This mixed-methods design provides interesting insights into establishing the state of implementation of Strategic direction 5. The conclusion drawn is that promotion of financial literacy and financial empowerment, particularly for children has not happened and as such the strategic direction has not complimented the National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFIS) objective to improve the quality and availability of financial products and services for minors. **Recommendations:** This study recommends among other things to increase financial capability in the provision and demand for young financial services and products, engage in increased sensitization and education of both supply and demand side players.
Keywords: Financial products and services, youth, children, financial literacy, financial inclusion.
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Background to study

The FinScope 2020 Survey was created to give accurate estimates for important indicators at the national and provincial levels as well as for the urban and rural domains for each of the 10 provinces, in addition to the data's dependability. The following topics were covered by the questionnaire: Access to infrastructure, payment systems with transfers, financial education, financial service organisations, other service providers, savings and investment opportunities making a loan. According to the Finscope (2020) survey findings, during the period 2017 to 2022, the total population of Zambia was estimated at 17.9 million which consisted of a total adult population of 9.5 million broken down as 53.4% of adults lived in rural areas while 46.6% in urban areas. These included 52.6% of adults who were female and 47.4% were male. Financial inclusion increased by 10.1 percentage points to 69.4% from 59.3% in 2015. Generally, 71.2% of males were said to be financially included compared to 67.9% of females. Out of this number, 83.8% of adults in urban areas were financially included compared to 56.9% of their rural counterparts. Formal financial inclusion increased to 61.3% from 38.2% in 2015. While this has been the case. Very little seemed to be done for minors – persons less than 16 years. In terms of age, there is no unified definition of youth. The Zambian youth policy (GRZ, 2015) defines a youth as someone between the ages of 15 and 35, but the UN defines youth as people between the ages of 15 and 24 for statistics purposes. The Finscope Survey thus shows that financial inclusion climbed by 10.1 percentage points to 69.4% from 59.3% in 2015, as indicated by this increase.

However, financial exclusion was most prevalent among youth and old people at 38 % and 43.3%, respectively (Figure 1). This presents a challenge in respect of the capacity for Children and youth to contribute to social and economic growth, poverty reduction and general economic welfare. The survey's findings point to an improvement in the availability and informed use of a wide range of high-quality and reasonably priced investment, insurance, and savings products and services that cater to the needs of both formal and informal companies.

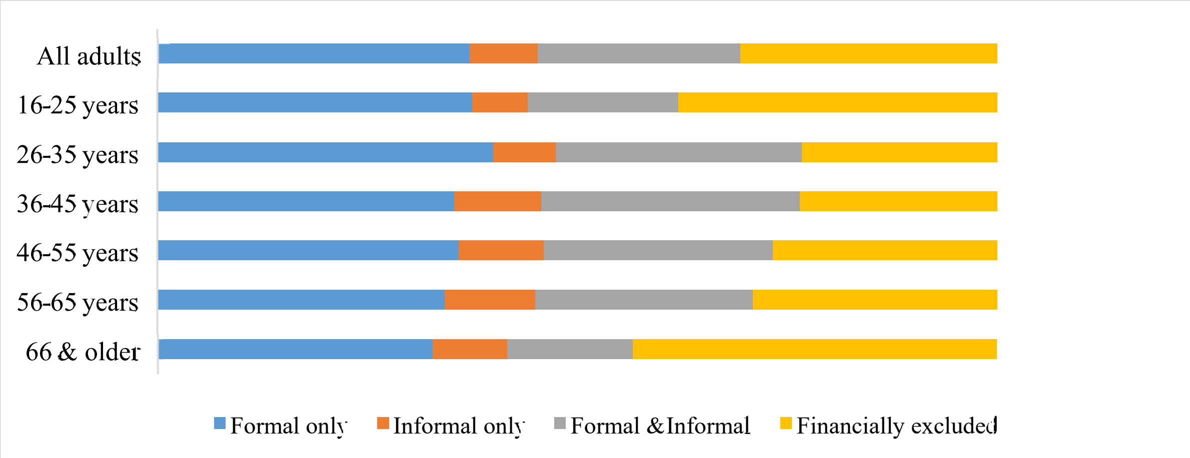

Figure 1: Financial access strand per age group (Percent), 2020
Source: FinScope Report 2020

From 66.5 percent in 2015 to 76.7 percent in 2020, financial inclusion among older youths aged 26 to 35 increased by 10.2 percentage points. This was higher than the rise of 7.1 percentage points for teenagers between the ages of 16 and 25 from 54.9 percent in 2015 to 62.0 percent in 2020. According to a study of the credit market, the amount of credit given to young people as a share of all disbursements climbed from 21.3 percent in the first quarter of 2016 to 57.6 percent in the fourth quarter of 2019. However, the share of young people hasn't gone above 19.0 percent in terms of the value of credit disbursements. Additionally, from 2016 to 2019 there was a falling trend in disbursements depending on the percentage of credit given to young people. Figure 2 shows the summary of financial exclusion by age group.

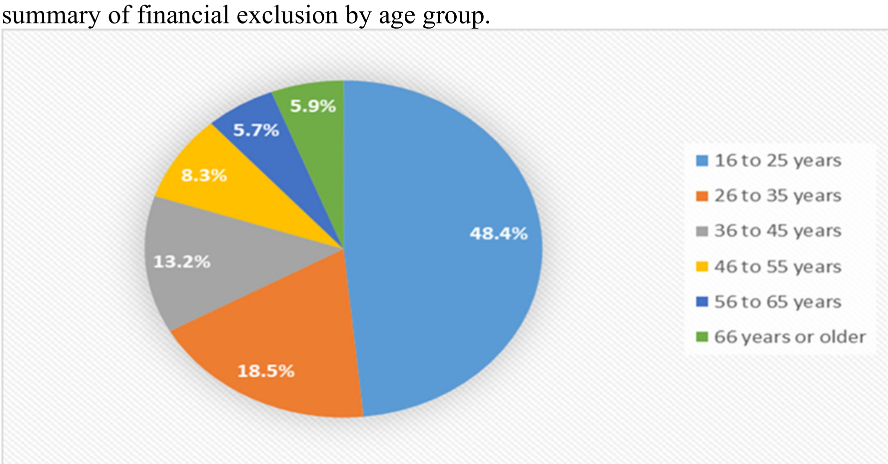

Figure 2: Financial Exclusion by Age Group
Source: FinScope 2020

Review of relevant Literature

Zambia has not remained static in this area. According to BoZ (2020), the adoption of this focus area of financial inclusion indicates the Bank's commitment to the advancement of financial inclusion in Zambia. The last FinScope survey conducted in 2015 revealed that only 59.3 percent of adult Zambians had access to financial services. Of these only 38.2 percent had access to formal financial services. The FinScope (2020) survey further revealed that women had less access to financial services compared to men (formal financial inclusion for men was at 43.2 percent while that for women was 33.3 percent resulting in a gender gap of 9.9 percent). Global research has revealed a positive correlation between being financially included and reduction in poverty levels as well as quality of life among individuals. Further, the transmission of monetary policy is affected by the level of financial inclusion. The Bank has adopted several initiatives in this Strategic Plan to contribute towards reducing the proportion of financially excluded individuals in Zambia. The measures adopted will focus on promoting formal financial inclusion, resolving the gender gap, resolving the urban-rural imbalance, paying particular attention to inclusion of Children as well as leveraging DFS in a bid to accelerate achievement of financial inclusion targets. The activities adopted by the Bank are aligned to the National Financial Inclusion Strategy (2017 – 2022).

With Finscope statistics on youths, financial institution all over the world came up with strategic plans to help improve financial literacy among its stakeholders. Strategic decisions are the decisions that are concerned with whole environment in which an organization operates. This includes the entire resources and the people who form the company and the interface between the two (Mullins, 2005). Strategic decisions have major resource propositions for an organization as they concern possessing new resources, organizing or reallocating others. They deal with harmonizing organizational resource capabilities with threats and opportunities. They involve a change of major kind since an organization operates in ever changing environment. They are handled at the corporate level of an organization due to their complex, uncertain, futuristic and risky nature. According to Cole (2006:28), "The processes of strategic management take place in a complex environment of business, economic, technological, social and political influences. Understanding this external environment, or background, is crucial to strategic decision-makers, and must be taken into account alongside any assessment of an organization's own internal environment."

Zambia in 2011 under the Maya Declaration, committed to achieving 50 percent of the population to be financially included. Due to Zambia's resolve to enhance financial inclusion, by 2015 the financially included population increased to 59 percent from 37 percent in 2009, thereby surpassing Maya Declaration. To build on these gains, the Government of Zambia aims to achieve greater financial inclusion of above 80 percent by 2022. The implementation of the National Financial Inclusion Strategy launched in 2017 provides framework in which to achieve the set goal. The second

National Strategy on Financial Education builds on the gains recorded during the implementation of first National Strategy on Financial Education (2012– 2017). During the implementation of the first Strategy, there were some positive trends recorded in advancing financial literacy in Zambia.

However, there are still some gaps that need to be addressed. The second National Strategy on Financial Education (2019 – 2024) builds on the gains recorded during the implementation of the first strategy as well as address the gaps identified. The second Strategy sets out a framework and interventions for boosting financial literacy for all citizens through, among others: financial education for the youth provided through career guidance centres, entrepreneurship curriculum and drama; financial education for adults; and financial education for people of all ages. The ultimate goal of financial inclusivity is not only to produce documents, but to create change in the lives of all our people. This is an important milestone in enhancing financial inclusion in Zambia by ensuring that there is equal access to affordable financial services and products for every segment of the Zambian society (BOZ, 2022). Financial inclusion can also be gauged by the nature and quality of the financial services available to populations. Many communities, particularly in rural and remote locations, are forced to rely on informal financial services in the absence of formal ones, or because they cannot easily access or afford formal services. Yet the government have made deliberate policies to empower the youths with capital. According to FAO (2021:25), "… youth do not have, and cannot access this capital at an affordable rate."

According to Claessens (2006:210), financial access is "the availability of a supply of reasonable quality financial series at a reasonable cost." Khan (201:1) indicates that "Financial access is an important factor that acts as a mediator in gaining the benefits of financial inclusivity." Rojas-Suarez & Gonzales (2010) cited in Sabana (2014) define financial access as the ability of individuals, households, entrepreneurs and firms to access and utilize a range of financial services if they choose to do so. The availability of such services can be constrained by a range of factors, such as physical accessibility, affordability, eligibility, and legislative frameworks. In poorer economies, the challenges of access are accentuated. Remoteness, weak transportation links and underdeveloped communication infrastructure coupled with low population densities all combine to exacerbate supply difficulties.

The exponential growth in the uptake of digital payment technologies (mobile financial services) has had a significant impact on increasing access to financial services by addressing some of these "hard" infrastructure challenges. However, even where services are now available, certain population cohorts and businesses often still face difficulties in meeting the eligibility criteria stipulated by financial service providers, such as documentation and collateral requirements. Furthermore, high transaction fees or excessive interest rates also restrict access to finance for the working poor. Youth face the additional challenges of having minimal or no savings to serve as collateral for a loan, and a limited track record of engaging in business. It is important to appreciate that prudent management of people's personal and household finances is becoming increasingly important globally. For instance, low-income households need to be able to save some of their income, wherever practicable, to smooth income flows, to provide for future emergencies, and to avoid taking unnecessary risks with their finances. Further, people need knowledge, skills, and confidence to make effective use of financial products, (MOF,2019). World Bank., 2013. The New Microfinance Handbook: A Financial Market System Perspective. delineates that youth form stronger affiliates to mobile phones and mobile brands than to banking and this may be particularly appealing to increase financial inclusion among them.

Zambia's financial system is dominated by banks. Since 2017, banks accounted for more than 69 percent of total financial sector assets, with majority foreign-owned banks accounting for over 83 percent of total bank assets. The sector also comprises of non-bank financial institution (NBFI) sector dominated by pension funds of which the government-run National Pension Scheme Authority (NAPSA) accounted for over 67 percent. The sector has Microfinance institutions (MFIs) both deposit taking and non-deposit taking. To this effect, the government, financial sector and civil society institutions have all undertaken some financial education initiatives in Zambia, but their efforts have been largely uncoordinated, and with limited outreach and impact (World Bank, 2012). For instance, The Bank of Zambia has played a leading role in the development of a national financial education strategy and has been publishing limited information on financial charges. The Pensions and Insurance Authority (PIA) has organized consumer awareness activities through road shows, trade fairs, and the media. In line to aforesaid statement, the Bank of Zambia in its strategic plans both the 2017-2020 and 2020-2023 have stressed on the need to promote financial literacy in Zambia especially to the Children. According to BoZ (2020) the Bank has made a mindful decision to concentrate on two focus areas, namely, Financial Stability and Financial Inclusion. This is arising from the fact that while the Bank has made significant progress in building a firm basis for price stability, a lot more work is needed to build a similarly strong foundation for its financial system stability objective and financial inclusion. The Central Bank under Focus Area #2 "Financial Inclusion" had a vision of promoting financial access and protection for children and youth.

Research Design and Approach

We employed a mixed method approach. We opted for this approach so that we could broaden our investigation with adequate depth and breadth. We believed that in this way, we would be able to produce a holistic picture we were primed to obtain complementary or divergent views as we used different methods leading to new views on frameworks (Tashakkori and Teddlie 2003; Creswell and Clark, 2007; Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). We placed the mixed methods approach with a high value as we desired to stories behind the numbers –where the experiences and insights of the respondents under study were to inform how to improve the practice and outcomes of a strategic direction than in advancing knowledge *per se.* We employed an explanatory sequential design. An explanatory sequential design allowed us collect and analyse qualitative data.

We illustrate our explanatory sequential MMR design in Figure 3 This design includes two-phases of data collection and analysis conducted sequentially and emphasizes the quantitative approach. It is denoted Quan→Qual which represents the quantitative study occurs first and has equal weight in addressing our aim and the qualitative study follows to explain and support quantitative results. Phase I findings allowed us to design the short survey questionnaire so that we could connecting quantitative phase in two consecutive phases. This was to facilitate the integration of findings within one study, to explain quantitative results using qualitative findings. The rationale for this approach is that we wanted quantitative data it its findings to provide a general picture of the research problem (Bryman, 2006; Burke Johnson et al., 2007; Creswell, 2014). The qualitative data and their analysis refine and explain those statistical results by exploring participants' views in more depth (Tashakkori and Teddlie 1998 & Creswell 2003).

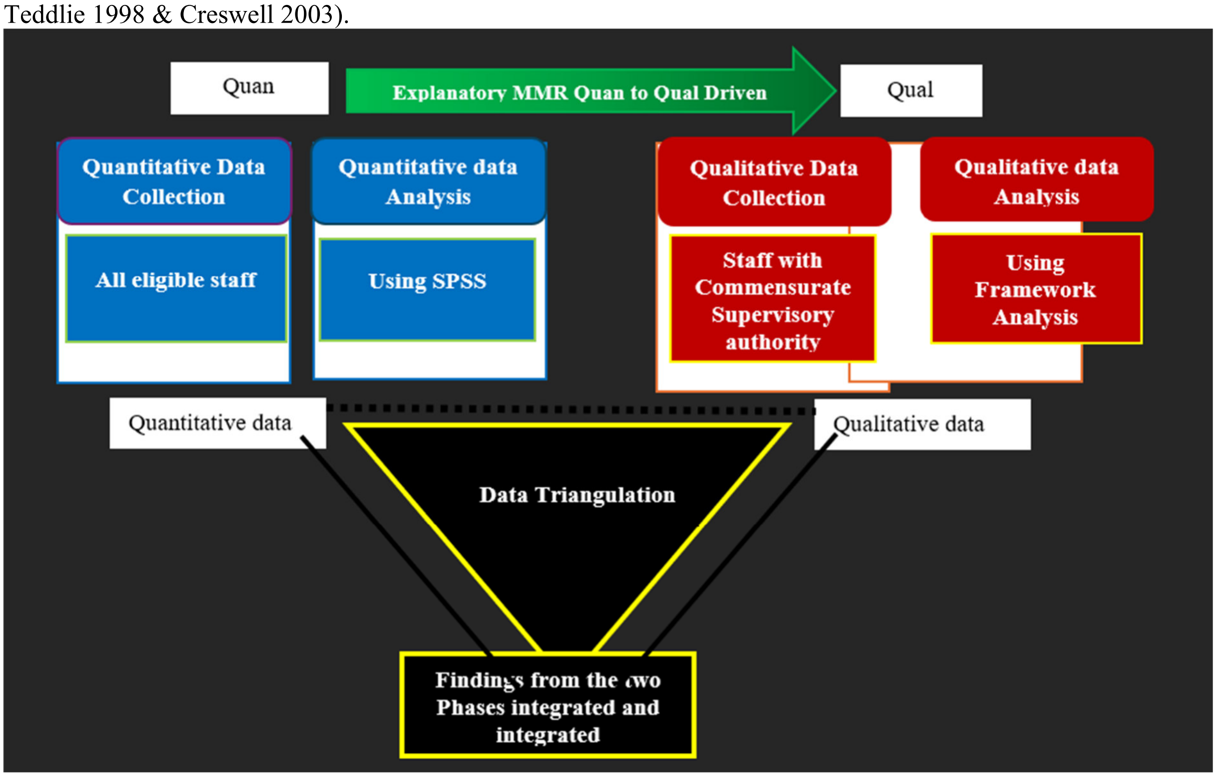

Figure 3: Illustration of the explanatory sequential mixed-methods design. Mixed-methods notation system taken from Morse (1991; 2003). The components are indicated as qual and quan. The arrows (→) refer to sequential implementation of components.

Target population and Sampling
The target population were staff who were assigned responsibilities during the strategic planning phase. These were staff who were linked to strategic direction 5 and those who were in charge of implementing the strategic plan. We drew respondents that cut across directors, staff who were part of the National Financial Inclusion Strategy Steering Committee (NFISSC) whose task was to provide overall guidance and supervise the National Financial Inclusion Strategy drafting, members of the Implementation Committee who were tasked to monitor the performance of the plan and the strategic direction. Staff of the bank's Non-Banks Financial Institution Department and Strategy and Change Management Department were also included because of the role they play in providing support on updates to the NFIS action plan, conduct data aggregation, report on results indicators, conduct M&E, research, support implementing agencies and conduct various administrative functions for the implementation Committee. All these were purposively chosen using criterion I sampling technique. Each of these respondents had the potential to provide information necessary for this research. Using criterion i sampling, we drew 60 respondents

Entry into the Setting and Data Collection
Ethical approval was obtained from the University's Research Ethics Committee. Before data collection, the researcher was granted permission to conduct this study by the bank. Data collection was facilitated by the human resource department that connected us to the heads of departments to have a meeting. The purpose of meeting them was to create rapport and share with them the purpose of the study. We shared with the heads of deferments the contents of the short survey questionnaire and structured interview schedules. This was done to have a buying into the contents

Data analysis
We analysed the data in phases. We began with the qualitative data. We employed thematic analysis used to analyse classification and present themes (patterns) that related to the data. It illustrates the data in great detail and deals with diverse subjects via interpretations (Boyatzis, 1998). In the case of thematic analysis, processed data can be displayed and classified according to its similarities and differences (Braun and Clarke, 2006; 2012).

We analysed our data using SPSS version 24. We used descriptive statistics to organize the data in such a way that it gives meaning and facilitate insight (Burns & Grove, 2001). Numerical descriptive measures have provided precise, objectively determined values that can easily be interpreted and compared. The description of the data was done by means of determining representative characteristics such as frequencies, percentages and means. The data has been organized and presented by means of frequency distribution tables and graphs.

We analysed our data using thematic analysis. We opted to use thematic analysis so that it could offer offers use outside of academia, such as in the policy or practice arenas of financial inclusion in the central bank. The choice of our analytic approach also depended on a cluster of factors, including what topic we were exploring and our intended audience(s) of the research who happened to policy makers and strategic planning practitioners in the central bank. The approach of thematic analysis we employed was that of conceptualizing themes understood as topical issues that we were able to categorise (what is shared and unites the observations in the theme is the topic). Our thematic analysis is to be conceptualized as meaning-based, interpretative stories. The themes as interpretative stories are built around uniting meaning cannot be developed in advance of analysis. They contain diversity, but they have a central idea that unifies the diversity. We employed a six-step systematic thematic analysis.

Step 1: Transcription, Familiarization with the Data, and Selection of Quotations
This is the initial phase of the thematic analysis process. It involves the transcription of data and familiarizing oneself with it. Researchers dive deep into the content to discern initial themes and important sections. They then select quotes that bring the data to life and aptly represent diverse viewpoints and patterns pertinent to the research objectives.

Step 2: Selection of Keywords
This phase involves close examination of the data, be it from interviews, focus groups, or visual content. Researchers identify recurring patterns, terms, or visual elements and designate them as keywords. These keywords encapsulate participants' experiences and perceptions and are directly derived from the data.

Step 3: Coding
In the third step, coding, short phrases or words, known as codes, are assigned to segments of data that capture the data's core message, significance, or theme. This step simplifies complex textual data by transforming it into a theoretical form and assists in identifying elements related to the research questions. Keywords play an essential role in coding as they form the backbone of the analysis and help to convert raw data into insightful, manageable units.

Step 4: Theme Development
Theme development involves organizing codes into meaningful groups to identify patterns and relationships, thereby offering insights into the research question. In this step, the researcher transitions from a detailed analysis

of codes and categories to a more abstract interpretation by creating themes. These themes go beyond merely recurring elements because they embody patterned meanings that link the research questions and data.

Step 5: Conceptualization Through Interpretation of Keywords, Codes, and Themes

This step, conceptualization, involves understanding and defining concepts emerging from the data. Researchers identify social patterns and refine them into definitions that align with their research. They utilize tools like diagrams or models to understand the relationships among these concepts. The quality of these definitions is assessed based on clarity, accuracy, reliability, applicability, and their contribution to theory and practice.

Step 6: Development of Conceptual Model

The final step in the thematic analysis is the development of a conceptual model. This process involves creating a unique representation of the data and it is often guided by existing theories. The model serves to answer research questions and underscore the study's contribution to knowledge. This step signifies the culmination of the analysis; it encapsulates all the findings and insights derived from the data.

Findings

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The demographics of the study participants have been shown in this section. The demographics of the respondents in this survey were regarded crucial since they provided insight into the situation on the ground. This knowledge served as a foundation for addressing study topics and allowed for the analysis and discussion of factors. All research participants were questioned in the first section of the questionnaire about their background information, including their gender, age, and the number of years they had worked for the institution.

Age and Gender of Respondents

This research considered the aspect of age and gender to play an important role in analysing of the Central Bank's promotion of financial access and protection for Children in Lusaka, Zambia. The results of this study revealed that both genders were represented, the majority n = 24 (40%) were females while their male counterpart were n = 36 (60%). Their age groups were structured as follows; 18-25, 26-30, 31-35, 36-40, 41-45, 46-50, and over 50 years. There was one (1) respondent who was aged between 36 to 40 years whereas the age group between 41 to 45 years was represented by 26; (43.3%) of the total study sample. The age group between 46 to 50 years comprised of 26 participants represented by 43.3%. In addition, there were seven (7); 11.6% participants in the age group between 50 years while no participants were in the age groups of 18-25, 26-30 and 31-35 years among the sampled group. For those interviewed, there were five (5) in total including four (4) men and one woman. The findings imply that the majority of those involved in carrying out the Central Bank's promotion of financial access and protection for Children in Lusaka, Zambia, were between the ages of 36 and 50. This age range may have the experience necessary to carry out the service in a proactive and mature manner. Table 1 shows the summary of the age and gender distribution of respondents.

Table 1 : summary of the age and gender

	Gender		**Total**
	Male	**Female**	
36-40 Years	1	0	1
41-45 Years	10	16	26
46-50 Years	10	16	26
Above 50 Years	7	0	7
Total	**28**	**32**	**60**

Participant's Work Experience Demographics

The length of time participants had spent working for the Bank of Zambia was important information since it could be used to compare respondents' experiences before and after the National Financial Inclusion Strategy. According to the data collected from the participants, 14 (23.3%) had worked between 11 and 15 years, whereas 24 (40%) had worked for between 6 and 10. In addition, 22 people, or 36.7%, reported having job experience between 16 and 20 years, including 12 people who claimed to have worked for the Bank of Zambia for 16 to 20 years.

Financial products or services for the youth that have been implemented

A review of the midterm evaluation report shows that children do not have access to personal digital devices earlier in life. Commercial banks and mobile money providers do not allow for minors as young as 17 years old to open accounts. This brings no new prospects for existing financial institutions, such as banks, credit unions or microfinance institutions as well as new Fintech companies to allow children to transact even when there could be well developed digital products, alongside traditional financial products, and services that adults and youth older than 17 years.

Interviews further showed that the Central bank has not developed any measures in this area. One staff made the following observation.

When you look at our country context, our children's circumstances, available infrastructure, and resources, do not permit us to allow children as early as 7 years to be financially included. They have no national registration to allow then have a sim card and even open an account. Therefore, we could have thought through this as the central bank by developing a range of solutions that may have been considered to remove barriers to digital financial inclusion of our children.

Manager 1 stated that a lack of child policy as a barrier to developing financial products for children

We need a number of suggested policy options to advance the appropriate and safe financial inclusion of children and young people. These policy options ought to relate to child protection laws and the recognition of the special importance of appropriate protections for children. We have not examined these in the implementation phase of our plan.

Manager 4 was hoping that the framers of the plan could have learnt elsewhere

Within Africa, I think in Uganda, some Fintech firms have been developed specifically to serve children, to start them on the path of financial acumen, through offering services such as savings and payments through mobile tools. Parents have access to an application through which they can top up their children's account through an allowance. The child can then decide how much of it to save and what to save for. The card is blocked for certain merchants and parents can easily enable or disable the possibility of online spending.

Promoting financial Access and protection for youth

This section is about answering the second research question "What has the Bank of Zambia done to promote financial access and protection for youth?" The plan under strategic direction 5 desired to underrate two main activities to enhance financial services for children. There were matters related to enhancements to the existing financial services and financial literacy. First, we are going to examine what relates to financial services for children. Seven activities were documented as shown in Table 2a.

Table 2a: Descriptive Profile for Financial Services for Children

Financial services for children	Not done at all	Done very little	Done little	Done Much	Done Very Much
Financial empowerment through savings	16	23	21	-	-
Promoting the development of child-friendly financial products for Minors	31	29		-	-
Promoting the development of child-friendly financial services for minors	21	23	16	-	-
Encouraging uptake of financial services at an early age.	33	27	-	-	-
Reviewing current regulations to provide FSPs with guidelines that promote safer banking (savings and payment) products for minors	18	17	13	12	-
Safeguarding minors' savings accounts	26	34	-	-	-
Addressing issues related to dormant accounts for minors	45	15	-	-	-

The central bank did not do well in developing financial services for children as there were more responses on the left (Not done at all plus done very little) when compared to the right (Done Much plus Done Very Much). This is further confirmed by the scores of the statistical mean that is lower than the true mean (20). The ideal score ought to have been ≥ 20

Table 2b: Descriptives of Financial Services

Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Min	Max
12.1	13.5	14.0	2.7	7	16

Most of the respondents thought of DFS as the one the main element to financially include children. Young people were reportedly unable to investigate financial services because of both economic and educational barriers. For instance, Manager 2 stated:

In terms digital tools. Now we are talking about them being able to access financial services using digital tools and these digital tools we are talking about a mobile phone mostly and a computer, basically electronic. They're able to transact through mobile money, making payments online and then there's also mobile banking. So, these tools are very much available to them, but mostly it will be to the youths. But for the Children, I'm sure you are *obviously aware most of us parents what you've done is registered the mobile phones in your name, but your child is using it.*

Senior manager 1 had the similar answer and said:

Digital financial services which, you know relies on Fintech on technology has been the main driver of financial inclusion. And it's it still presents the best opportunity for the country or for the bank.

In adding the voice to the discussion, Manager 4 stated:

From the Bank of Zambia, we don't have any, but I think with these ones I think one would have to check with the financial institutions what they are offering because our literature is really just limited to monitoring banks.

Manager 5 noted:

So the Children currently are able to access a financial service through their guardians. In that they can open accounts for their Children. Our mandate is not really to promote our financial products and services. So, that becomes the preview of our financial service providers themselves, one reason we don't do that, it's because we don't want to come out as if we are favouring one institution when you do assess the entire market.

Access

The Bank had claimed that it would enhance access to financial products and for this, the bank followed the Zambia National Strategy on Financial Education (NSFE), which had phase 1 from 2012 – 2015 and phase 2 from 2019 to 2024. It recognised children and youth as key target groups. When respondents were asked about youth and Children products which they can access, none of the respondents covered customer centric products instead they mentioned things that were distant from the strategic plan.

As a Central Bank, we do not implement financial literacy programmes directly but instead, we leave it to commercial banks and other private financial institutions.

Ideally access to financial services for Children could have covered the extending financial inclusion by improving access to basic financial services. Such an approach may offer a number of economic benefits, especially among those children whose parents have limited financial resources. Policy innovations that make savings accounts widely available to Children may be a valuable tool to trigger increased savings behaviour that can continue into adulthood and lead to improved financial outcomes over the long-term.

BOZ in covering access its role could have been facilitatory with the commercial banks as it cannot impose the type of business and products which commercial banks ought to have for the youth. The Central Bank failed in this objective. In this case, the bank should have extensive documentation on the financial behaviours and needs of young people, in both rural and urban areas. Young people do save, but they want safe places to save and control over their money; they also need credit to help them start or grow a business. In addition, financial services need to be appropriate to the life stage of young people as well as tailored to the business cycle of a young entrepreneur. Utilizing a life cycle approach to financial inclusion can help ensure services are adequate for key life transitions. For rural youth, these life stages, including different activities that contribute to the family income, may take place at an earlier point in life than for urban youth.

Furthermore, the Bank needed the direct support of technology to facilitating access and use of financial services, especially mobile banking and financial education text messaging to promoting technology and digitalized financial services that can help bridge the physical distance to the nearest bank, which is one of the most significant challenges people in rural and some urban areas face.

These findings on access suggest that digital financial services are linked and associated with financial literacy. In this case, for the Bank of Zambia to enhance digital financial services, they need to invest more in financial literacy. In addition, the moderate positive correlation results saving, and Digital financial services imply that an increase in offering digital financial services by the Bank of Zambia would results in promoting more saving among young people and Children. Furthermore, moderately negative correlation between saving and financial literacy implies that an increase in financial literacy would mean an increase in saving among young people.

Protection

The findings point out that objectives and activities set by the Bank of Zambia in relation to financial access and inclusion by youths were not understood clearly by the framers, or they included this objective for the sake of it. This argument has been supported by the midterm review report, which did not cover the aspects of protection.

The Central Bank did not fair very well in ensuring protection of Children. The bank did not operationalize protection clearly, and this perhaps explains why the mid-term report did not cover this aspect and why the interviewees expressed contradictory and inconsistent views as they could not vouch for their responses. Going forward protection ought to cover, and it should be adapting youth-centred client protection principles. This approach also requires identifying a “youth champion” within the organization who can ensure the principles are adopted and implemented throughout the organization (Linder, Perdomo, Muñoz and Cea, 2012). The guidelines should be based on the Smart Campaign Client Protection.

In addition, designing a strategy for involving trusted mentors in opening accounts for young people who do not want parental or spousal involvement. Such an approach would require implementation of adequate risk-monitoring tools to ensure protection of youth, especially among vulnerable segments such as adolescent girls.
Other strategies to promote protection as adopted in other countries may include, the financial institution offering youth-sensitive and appropriate products integrated with non-financial services, in particular financial education, that promote the use of those services based on informed decisions. Financial education sessions could be offered to youth, without the sessions being a "marketing opportunity" for the institution and does not offer products that produce negative value for the clients.
For instance, respondent manager 3 stated:

Protection of youths in the promotion of financial inclusion and access has been through the bank policy of customer protection. The bank does not have a specific youth centred protocol.
According to the information obtained through a questionnaire from Bank of Zambia employees were directly involved in the implementation of the National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2017-2022, the majority indicated that financial literacy activities by the Central Bank as tenets of Child and Youth financial inclusion for youth were fairly done with the scale four (4) out of five. These results agree with the findings of the National Institute of Banking and Finance in Pakistan (National Institute of Banking and Finance, 2020) that launched the National Financial Literacy Program for youth (NFLP-Y) and in-school Children. Like the current study, the objective of NFLP-Y was to strengthen young people's money management knowledge and skills, while also connecting them to financial institutions. In addition, the findings present another common element in national financial education strategies which is entrepreneurship components. In 2019, the Malaysian Government launched the National Strategy for Financial Literacy that included initiatives specifically targeting youth, one of which is Social Enterprise Literacy for Youth (SELFY). This annual program focused on students in higher learning institutions and offered participants financial education and seed money to start an enterprise (Financial Education Network, 2019).

Follow up interviews to find out what the most preferred media used by the Central Bank to promote financial products and services was, the findings show that several educational initiatives have been undertaken, including financial literacy weeks, outreach to youth and schools, and media awareness programs. For example, respondent one (1) explained:
For the Bank of Zambia, it's not so much promoting financial services or promoting and enhancing financial education. Because if you talk about promoting financial services and so on, it's usually the financial service providers themselves that would answer that question properly, but in terms of financial inclusion.
Respondent two (2) added:
The Bank of Zambia undertakes sensitization using radio, they also undertake physical sensitization in provinces where they go on this road trips or shows to promote financial education. I know that they also have the yearly, weeks were they deliberately target the youth as well beyond that also at various fora when we have governor meeting or addressing members of the public. We also have driven specifically by the payment systems, Department where they have specific initiatives. They are in collaboration with our communications team who are using various social media, but I think we have the three-test space our own Facebook and YouTube.
Respondents 3 had similar views in responding to the interview question on what the most preferred media is used by the Central Bank to promote financial products and services.
The respondents said:
Most young people are on social media, so our messages relating to financial literacy, financial education and educating them about the importance of using this form of financial products and we communicate via social media campaigns. When we are conducting financial literacy campaigns, we target schools.
The findings in this section reveal that financial literacy activities by the Central Bank as tenets of Child and Youth financial inclusion for the youth were fairly done with the scale of four (4). Many media have been used to enhance financial literacy such as road shows, social media, radio, public addresses and school visits.

Child Accounts
Interviews and the review of the rules and regulations governing the financial sector was done to evaluate the impact of the Bank of Zambia's provisions for the financial inclusion of children. Regulatory frameworks and social biases that favour older, more stable demographic segments are only two examples of the many factors that might have an impact on Children's and youth's access to financial services. The regulatory framework may unintentionally act as a barrier to the creation and delivery of financial services and products that could serve the requirements of young people. Interviews focussing on reviews show several barriers.

Manager 1 stated that the bank had tried to look at the financial regulatory framework and how that affects access to finance by youth and one of the things that was clear was the requirement for NRC's. The manager further clarified that it was a requirement to have a guide. It was noted that if one was below a certain age was acting as a barrier and other KYC issues, for instance for the youth.

Children cannot directly open accounts or use financial products. If they are below 16 years, they will need to go through their guardians.
Respondent three (3) had a different view and added:
There's a circular we did some time back, which just leaves it open like there's no restriction. So, it really from infants up to about when they reach the age of 16, when they can get there NRC, then you find maybe some banks who migrate, teenagers who have reached the age of 16 into an account that they can then operate. But otherwise, it's a circular we did for the bank accounts for young people.
Manager 4 answered the question on the regulatory requirement relating to age and other qualifying criteria by stating the following:
This plan was for pupils and students, so that leaves it open for primary and secondary school Children. They can open an account and then the KYC requirements are less stringent. They can get their reference letter from their school authority, a community leader to open the accounts. So those ones would normally be operated on their behalf by their parents and then once they reach the age of 16, they can then open, there is a regulation for that.
The findings shown above show that financial products for young people need to be developed. However, studies and real-world experience show that opening a bank account at a formal financial institution can be difficult for kids and young people. Contrary to the findings of the current study, for instance, CYFI, 2014. Children, Youth and Finance 2014: Action for Sustainable Outreach. Available at: https://issuu.com/childfinanceinternational/docs/2014_Children__youth__finance_2014 [Accessed 5 July 2017]. discovered that national laws may make it difficult for young people to save. In fact, in many countries, youth under the age of majority cannot open and operate a bank account without the supervision of a legal guardian. Moreover, some Children might be excluded from the financial services, because they do not have the required documentation, such as an ID, passport or birth certificate to open a bank account. The availability of financial services for children can be a problem too. In the case of Zambia, Table 3 shows the status of the regulatory provisions.

Table 3: Impact of Provisions in the Banking and Financial Services Act on Child and Youth Financial Inclusion

THE BANKING AND FINANCIAL SERVICES ACT, 2017	
Part I – Preliminary Provisions	No issues, except to note that there are no definitions relating to minors, child or youth. This is understandable given that the Act does not make any specific reference to these terms and therefore defining them is not required.
Part II – Licensing of Financial Service Providers	This Part deals principally with licensing and does not affect minors.
Part III - Ownership and Control of Financial Service Providers	This Part deals principally with ownership and control of a FSP and does not limit ownership or control by minors. The part recognizes that proxies may exercise rights on behalf of beneficial owners, which includes guardians or representatives of minors.
Part IV Corporate Governance	The part contains a provision that prohibits a person who is below the age of 21 from being a Director of a FSP
Part V – Business Operations	This part provides for operational elements of the FSP. There are no provisions that are specific to minors.
Part VI – Prudential Regulation & Supervision	This Part provides for prudential aspects of FSP operations. The Part does not contain any provisions specific to child and youth issues. Further, there are no provisions that specifically or unduly impair child and youth financial inclusion.
THE BANKING AND FINANCIAL SERVICES ACT, 2017	
Part VII -Restrictions on transactions of financial service providers	None of the restrictions in this Part have a bearing on youth and child financial inclusion.
Part VIII – Financial Statements & Accountability	This Part has no bearing on child and youth financial inclusion
Part IX – Anti-Competitive Activities and Consumer Protection	The CPMC provisions are supportive of protection of all consumers, including youth. There are no provisions that unduly impede financial inclusion for youth.

THE BANKING AND FINANCIAL SERVICES ACT, 2017	
Part X – Insolvency, dissolution & Liquidation of Financial Service Providers	The winding up provisions are supportive of protection of all consumers, including youth. There are no provisions that unduly impede financial inclusion for youth.
Part XI – Complaints and Appeals Process	There are no provisions that unduly impede financial inclusion for youth.
Part XII – General Provisions	There are no provisions that unduly impede financial inclusion for youth.

Source:BoZ (2022).

The second is financial literacy. The central bank did not do well in developing financial services for children as there were more responses on the left (Not done at all plus done very little) when compared to the right (Done Much plus Done Very Much).

Table 4a: Descriptive Profile of Financial Literacy

Financial literacy for children	**Not done at all**	**Done very little**	**Done little**	**Done Much**	**Done Very Much**
Encouraging long-term savings for future needs (higher education, start-up capital)	38	7	11	2	2
Promoting financial literacy for minors through Financial Education for activities with Children and Youth	21	6	5	25	3
Has employed dissemination techniques to Children and Youth (Flyers, pamphlets)	12	16	14	18	-
Has focused on disseminating aspects of financial knowledge to Children and Youth.	27	10	9	14	-
Has focused on disseminating aspects of financial behaviour to Children and Youth	28	8	16	8	-
Has focused on disseminating aspects of financial attitude to Children and Youth	30	10	11	9	-

Table 4b: Descriptives of Financial Literacy

This is further confirmed by the scores of the statistical mean that is higher (13.7) than the true mean (12). The ideal score ought to have been ≥ 12.

Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Min	Max
13.7	14	14	2.4	8	20

Interim Performance of the bank

This is linked to the research question "What is the extent of the interim performance of the Bank of Zambia's strategic plan in the achievement in formulating financial products for children?" The interim performance of the Bank of Zambia strategic plan for children could be stated to be less satisfactory. Though the Central Bank was doing well in financial literacy, this is of no use when there are no sources and products which children could use. The findings reveal that there were no customer centric products for Children as the bank had envisaged. It was expected that Children customer-centric products and cost and affordability of financial transactions. Every strategic plan has measures of performance, regarding the BoZ the following were deemed to be measures:

- Conduct baseline survey of Children and youth accounts held with FSPs by December 2020. The baseline was not done
- Submit for approval Policy Paper on Child and youth friendly banking principles by end 2022. The policy paper was not developed since there were no financial products for children.
- Develop dormant accounts regulations for Children and youth accounts by end 2021. This was not done since only commercial banks would admit children to have accounts.

The findings show that these measures are too distant from the expectation of the strategy as no products for Children are available hence, the extent of performance for this leaves much to be desired it is very clear that the development of this strategic pillar and others although they were not assessed, was a problem, there was a problem of construct validity. In this case, there was a possibility of analysis not measuring what it intended to measure as the content is not fully representative of youths and content does not appear to be suitable to its aim. Soon after measures and indicators have been agreed upon during strategic planning, this seems to have been ignored by the framers of the strategic plan. On the other hand, to probe the interim performance of the Bank of Zambia with regards to the two strategic plan for Children and youth namely: Digital financial services and promotion of financial access and protection. Employees from the responsible departments were asked how the Central Bank measure the implementation of financial literacy among Children and youth.

Interviews revealed that most of respondents were not privy to the question but respondent three (3) stated in response to the question that:

Well, from the Bank of Zambia, the program is under the framework of the national strategy on financial education, which is led by the Ministry of Finance. So that's where the secretariat is and measurement would be done through the department responsible. Normally what is done is that like at the end of a given strategy like the previous one which is a financial capability survey.

It was not possible to employ technological innovations of financial services for children. The inputs the strategic plan players demonstrate how technology advancements and to some extent child policy related financial inclusion have affected financial services.

Senior manager 1 said:

There has been a difference in the payment systems. We have lagged in terms of infrastructure development, so if you're talking about technological development, especially in the form of telecoms, electronics. Technological innovation has made it easier for people to communicate. First of all, between the businesses and the customers. It's made it also easier for people to bank beyond banking as we know it. Others include, tapping into markets that were not previously able to tap without technology and enhanced transparency.

Senior manager 3 answered the question on how technological innovations has impacted financial services by stating the following:

Digital financial services which, you know relies on fintech on technology has been the main driver of financial inclusion and it still presents the best opportunity for the country or for the bank. Financial technology has been the main driver of financial inclusion and the mostly it's mobile money. Because mobile money from 2015, I think it was about 14%, but in 2020 it went to 58%. Now we can imagine overall financial inclusion is at 69%. But you are saying. 58.4% of adults, that's 16 years and above actually using mobile money.

Director 4 reported pointed out how Part XII of the Banking and Financial Services Act (BFSA) contains a provision that addresses the treatment of unclaimed funds.

There has been some discussion regarding unclaimed funds and personal property as they relate to youth accounts. The treatment of unclaimed funds and personal property is provided for in Section 160 of the BFSA.

In summary, the concern has been that child and youth funds are more susceptible to being dormant and therefore subject to provisions dealing with dormant accounts and unclaimed funds.

Table 5: A Review of Financial Sector Statutory Instruments

Banking and Financial Services Statutory Instruments	
Instrument	**Specific Child/Youth Related Issue**
SI 57: Foreign Exchange Risk Management	No impact
SI 96: Large Loan Exposure	No impact
SI 97: Insider Lending	No impact
SI 142: Classification & Provisioning	No impact
SI 179 Cost of Borrowing	No impact
SI 180 Payment of Fees	No impact
SI 181 Return of Unclaimed Funds	No impact
SI 182 Reserve Account	No impact
SI 183 Disclosure of Deposit Charges	The minor’s guardian is required to be availed all deposit costs related information on behalf of the minor
SI 184 Capital Adequacy	No impact
SI 185 Fixed Asset Investments	No impact

Source: BoZ (2022).

The BFSA and the statutory instruments are aimed primarily at ensuring financial stability in the financial sector. Hence, they were designed and developed with the financial stability objective in mind. The review of the BFSA and the statutory instruments reveals that the provisions do not serve as undue impediments to child and youth financial inclusion. However, the provisions do not serve to facilitate or incentivize innovation in the development of child and youth centric products and services.

Discussion

The main findings are that under strategic direction number 5.4, the Central bank did formulate a financial inclusion strategy for the bank. However, the bank has so far not promoted the development of child-friendly financial products. There is no empirical evidence that uptake of financial services at an early age has taken place. In this Strategic Plan, the Bank hoped to review current regulations to provide FSPs with guidelines that promote safer banking (savings and payment) products for minors; safeguard minors' savings accounts; address issues related to dormant accounts for minors; encourage long-term savings for future needs (higher education, start-up capital); and promote financial literacy for minors. These efforts were expected to result in greater access and usage of safer financial products by minors.

Financial Services for Children that the Bank of Zambia may have implemented
While digital financial services (DFS) have increased financial inclusion for the underserved adult population in Africa, it cannot be said to be the same for Zambia. Gaps persist in youth accessing financial services. DFS offers great potential for youth, as they are generally more inclined towards digital trends and are starting to use mobile money services for basic transactions. The central bank did not come up with DFS for Children and young people to have access to personal digital devices earlier in life. These DFS are commonly referred to as "digital natives".

The Central bank did not recognise that access to digital financial services ought to be supported by digital and financial education and ought to provide DFS in an appropriate financial consumer protection framework, in the context of broader child protection policies. These were absent in the midterm report. Encouraging mobile savings among children could have been a precursor for children to pursue other digital products and services.

Overall, the findings sis show there is potential in the market for children financial services in Zambia and other parts of the Sub-Saharan Africa. Findings show that receiving, sending, and storing money - as well as purchasing airtime or cell phone data - are the main products used by children. This can provide a possible template for types of mobile banking services that should be offered to children,

i.e. savings accounts; checking or prepaid accounts, and micro lending accounts, to support children's financial lives. Prioritizing the creation and marketing of these products could lead to increased use of digital financial services and ultimately to greater financial inclusion for the future of inclusive economic development in Zambia (World Bank, 2018). The following are lessons we could pick from OECD (2020).

In 14 jurisdictions amongst those that participated in the stocktake exercise, a data protection framework includes special provision for youth and minors. The EU has adopted a data protection framework, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which includes special provisions in relation to child's consent, defined as any person below the age of 16 years. European countries have adopted these regulations into national legislation. The directive also establishes that:

a) Recital 38: Children merit specific protection with regard to their personal data, as they may be less aware of the risks, consequences and safeguards concerned and their rights in relation to the processing of personal data. Such specific protection should, in particular, apply to the use of personal data of children for the purposes of marketing or creating personality or user profiles and the collection of personal data with regard to children when using services offered directly to a child. The consent of the holder of parental responsibility should not be necessary in the context of preventive or counselling services offered directly to a child.

b) Recital 58: Given that children merit specific protection, any information and communication, where processing is addressed to a child, should be in such a clear and plain language that the child can easily understand.

In Australia, two sections of the Privacy Act 1988 give special provision for youth (sections 20C and 21D). These sections prohibit the collection or disclosure of credit information if the individual is under 18 years of age. Schedule 1 to the Privacy Act 1988 sets out the principles used by entities while handling personal information, in age-appropriate language. The more complex wording of the legislation is also supplemented by plain language summaries of the content of the Privacy Act found on the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner. According to the Brazilian General Data Protection Law (LGPD), Article 14, Paragraph 1 of Law 13,709 of 2018, the processing of personal data of children and teenagers must be carried out with the specific and prominent consent given by at least one parent or legal guardian.

The Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) in Canada requires organisations to limit the collection of personal information to that necessary for their identified purposes. The following passage is available as guidance to businesses operating in Canada in relation to youth:

a) The ability for youth to provide meaningful consent for the collection and use of their personal information depends greatly on their age, and their cognitive and emotional development. Thus, businesses should consider the target audience for their service and explain the practices – and their potential risks – in a manner that they can fully appreciate.

b) If the audience includes younger children, this may not be possible, so businesses should find a way to communicate, in language that the user will understand, the requirement to involve a parent/guardian in the process.

In Thailand, the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society has produced a short, animated video explaining briefly and, in a child, friendly language about the Personal Data Privacy Act effective as of 28 May 2020. The nonexistence of financial products and policies is not engaging enough to young people yet, despite the potential for higher uptake as younger people use their mobile phones regularly. The children segment should be approached with tailored marketing strategies and appropriate financial products and services to meet their needs. A critical facilitator for several of the Sustainable Development Goals, financial inclusion promotes inclusive development. Nearly half of the world's young people (ages 15 to 24) are still not financially included, despite advances in this area (OECD, 2020). Children, regardless of their exact age, are often considered to be in a transitional stage of life. Young individuals may find it exceedingly challenging to make the shift from socioeconomic dependency to higher financial stress and financial independence, particularly if they are unable to satisfy their necessities. The neighbourhoods with lower incomes and a history of poverty are the ones most touched by this experience.

Findings from Uganda show that remittance transfers are a popular financial product for youth. At least 50 percent of children and youth surveyed in Uganda said that they use their mobile accounts to receive money from family members and friends, compared to 30 percent who reported using their mobile money accounts to send money to family members and friends (World Bank, 2018). The findings demonstrate the necessity for financial products tailored to Children. Nonetheless, research and practical experience indicate that Children and teenagers may find it challenging to obtain a bank account at a formal financial institution. In contrast to the current study's findings, CYFI, 2014. Children, Youth and Finance 2014: Action for Sustainable Outreach. Available at: https://issuu.com/childfinanceinternational/docs/2014_Children__youth__finance_2014 [Accessed 5 July 2017]. found that national rules might make it more difficult for young people to save money. In fact, opening and maintaining a bank account without the supervision of a legal guardian is prohibited for minors under the age of majority in many nations. Furthermore, some kids might not be able to access the financial services because they lack the necessary paperwork to open a bank account, like a birth certificate, ID, or passport.

According to these findings, responsible digital finance would offer consumers a wider range of financial products and services at lower costs, expanded speed, convenience, and security, and can ultimately increase the efficiency of financial services providers' operations by fostering competition. It also facilitates greater access to financial services and may positively impact the financial inclusion of excluded and underserved individuals.

We make a case that one of the main benefactors of the financial sector' digitalization could have been young people. The Fintech Adoption Index (Ofcom, 2020), for instance, emphasises that young people are driving overall Fintech adoption. The financial system is evolving due to technology. Therefore, it is the responsibility of policymakers to guarantee that this transition is both safe and inclusive, leaving no one behind. However, given that those who are financially excluded are frequently also more vulnerable and less likely to have access to digital tools (such as people with disabilities), traditional financial services providers have a crucial role to play. This research falls under the umbrella of the role that conventional financial services and their providers, along with other financial and non-financial youth and children support programmes, such as coaching or mentoring, education, employment, and training, play in ensuring inclusive youth and children development.

What the Bank of Zambia has done to promote financial Access and protection for Children

Financial inclusion is becoming a goal for more governments and Central Banks around the world. National strategies are being designed with the help of international organizations and are being implemented in coordination with a wide range of governmental agencies. Most of these strategies include financial education as one of the pillars for ensuring higher financial inclusion. Research has shown that there is a strong correlation between financial literacy and financial inclusion. People who are aware of at least five financial products tend to have higher levels of financial literacy than those who are less aware (Atkinson and Messy 2013). When facilitating access to and usage of financial services, regulators and policymakers must incorporate consumer protection policies for young people, as well as mechanisms to protect the financial viability of financial providers—a concept known as responsible finance (McKee, Lahaye and Koning, 2011). Low financial literacy leaves people ill-equipped to make appropriate financial decisions that could have tremendous adverse effects, not only in their personal financial lives, but ultimately for global financial resilience (OECD, 2009).

We have discovered that the Bank had planned to perform a number of initiatives to drive improved uptake of products and services by children through enhancing their financial literacy levels. These included financial Literacy Framework: A Framework for financial literacy was released by the Central Bank in 2013. The Framework draws from a baseline survey which identifies segments of the population, and their peculiar literacy needs and prescribes appropriate models to drive improved financial literacy and build their financial capabilities. In addition, the current findings of Curriculum Development as an intervention were the Bank has collaborated with the ministry of education are similar to the case of Nigeria were the Federal Ministry of Education through the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Centre to develop a stand-alone financial education curriculum which was infused into several topics for Basic and Senior Secondary schools. The curriculum is currently being pilot tested in several schools.

Our findings on strategies to improve financial access and inclusion among young people reviews that the Bank of Zambia does not take direct implementation of financial literacy for children but lives the responsibility to commercial banks. These findings are contrary to the findings of Kapparov (2018) who revealed that at that time, the National Bank of Kazakhstan (NBK), together with some commercial banks and MFIs, was carrying out financial education in Kazakhstan. However, these efforts were not regular and lacked coordination. Therefore, it was hard to estimate the impact of these measures. Till that time, the NBK's activities in financial education for school Children and students had included the following:

a) In 2013, broadcasting the television programs "Kyzykty karzhy" and "Fascinating Finances," incorporating elements of a television journal and aimed at Children's cognitive development.

b) Broadcasting the television program "Smart game" (2012), an intellectual quiz for students. The jury included employees of the NBK and its subsidiaries. The main prize was studying on the NBK's Master Program.

c) Publication of special editions in the Republican newspapers "Ulan" and "Druzhnye rebyata" for Children on financial topics in 2012–2013.

d) In 2013, release of an animated film on the history of the tenge.

e) In 2013, publication of "The History of Money," a book for Children with vivid illustrations.

f) In 2013, a competition for the best design of coins among Children, held throughout the country.

g) Conducting a number of educational events for students and school Children jointly with the Republican Children's Library, including meetings and lectures on financial literacy.

Interim performance of the Bank of Zambia strategic plan for Children based on the two strategic initiatives

We are contending that despite all the improvements in the nation's financial inclusion, significant progress has not been taken into account by the survey since it did not assess the ways in which the Central Bank has supported Children's financial safety and access from 2020 to 2023. In this instance, an individual under the age of sixteen is considered a kid as per the National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2017–2022. The definition of an adult as someone who is 16 years of age or older, which was the primary demographic of the study, lends credence to this claim. Given that Children are the research's target inquiry group. As such nothing tangible was available for those below 16. The findings show that there were no kid-focused products available. It was anticipated that Children would be drawn to customer-focused items and that financial transactions would be inexpensive. For the BoZ performance of strategic pillar number 4.5—which is to develop a financial inclusion strategy with a focus on digital financial services, rural finance, and Children—no initial indicators of achievement were set. However, the mid-term review identified the following measures: By December 2020, conduct a baseline study on the accounts of teens and Children with FSPs; by the end of 2022, submit a policy paper outlining child- friendly banking concepts for approval. By the end of 2021, develop regulations for inactive accounts for children.

In addition, we have observed a mismatch between strategy formulation and implementation. Because there are no items accessible for Children, our study contends that the strategic was not attained as expected due to measures that are too dissimilar from the expectations of the strategy; as a result, the performance for this leaves much to be desired. It is evident that a construct validity issue arose throughout the development of this strategic pillar and others, even though they were not evaluated. Since the content in this instance is not entirely typical of teenagers and does not seem to be appropriate for its intended purpose, there was a chance that the analysis would not measure what it was supposed to. Not long after strategy planning has determined which metrics and indicators to use, this seems to have been ignored by the framers of the strategic plan.

Numerous obstacles were found in the current study; some of them are age-specific, while others have an impact on a larger segment of the community, including young people. These more extensive obstacles typically have a bigger effect on children services, children access to digital financial services, and financial literacy promotion. The Bank of Zambia's strategy plan for Children is based on providing access and protection for them. The plan calls for financial inclusion for Children, financial literacy and financial empowerment, particularly through savings. The findings on barriers to financial inclusion for youths are as follows: lack of demand side (children do not have enough knowledge, access to, or use of financial products); lack of collateral; and lack of appropriate financial products. These barriers have made it nearly impossible to achieve strategic direction number 5 of BOZ to formulate a financial inclusion strategy for the bank to focus on financial services for Children (BoZ: 12).

Because the Bank of Zambia implemented the FinScope 2020 Survey in partnership with Financial Sector Deepening Zambia (FSD Zambia), Rural Finance Expansion Programme (RUFEP), German Savings Banks Foundation for International Cooperation (SBFIC), United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), Ministry of Finance, Pensions, and Insurance Authority (PIA), and Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), it had the potential to provide the current study with reliable and valid findings. While the Zambia Statistics Agency (ZamStats) offered technical know-how and the framework for data collecting, the Fin-Mark Trust provided advising help. The major goal of the survey was to ascertain how much adult population had access to and used financial products and services, as well as to offer necessary policy data for the evolution of the financial environment.

The findings show that the bank has not done much in facilitating the availability of capital for youths, in addition, the Bank has not done much in areas such as developing guidelines for activation and use of dormant accounts and determining the age of a child youth customer for the child friendly financial products and has not done much in ensuring availability of child friendly financial products for Children and Youth.

Barriers of financial inclusion for youths and Children

We have identified a number of barriers, some of which are age-specific while others affect a broader swath of the population, including youth. These broader barriers tend to have a greater impact on youth provision and access to digital financial services for Children and youth, as well as promotion of financial Access and protection for Children and youth are a basis of performance of the Bank of Zambia strategic plan for Children and youth. The findings on barriers to financial inclusion for youths and Children are in tandem with the youth financial inclusion survey conducted by the Alliance for Financial Inclusion (AFI) in 2020, which also cited the most barriers to child and youth financial inclusion as lack of financial literacy, followed by a lack of collateral and lack of appropriate financial products. Children and youth face many barriers in accessing financial services that arise from limitations in the regulatory environment (policies and regulations), supply side (financial sector) and demand side (Children and youth do not have sufficient awareness, access to, and usage of financial products).

It has been found that the Bank of Zambia has not done much to disseminate financial knowledge to Children and youth, as evidenced by the amount to which it has used dissemination strategies (flyers, pamphlets). The AFI YFI Survey also found that lack of financial knowledge, a lack of collateral, and a lack of suitable financial products are the most frequently mentioned barriers to young financial inclusion (OECD, 2020). The age at which a person is considered an adult and capable of entering a legally binding contract is the main restriction. When it comes to financial institutions, this restriction prevents minors from opening and using a bank account or obtaining credit until they are of legal age, which is normally 18 years old and, in some circumstances, 21 years old. For young person wanting to access credit, KYC rules have extra ramifications, particularly in nations without reliable national identity systems.

The development of credit histories, which financial institutions rely on to make credit evaluations, might be hampered by a lack of trustworthy information about individual identity, raising the need for collateral (UNESCAP, 2017). Young people lack the means and assets necessary to satisfy collateral requirements because they are unlikely to have a credit history. Youth are thus denied access to loans for this secondary reason when problems with national identity led to higher collateral requirements. All the barriers of financial inclusion for youths and Children obtained from respondents through an interview have been summarised in table 5.1

Table 5.1: Barriers to Youth Financial Inclusion

REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT	SUPPLY SIDE	DEMAND SIDE
Minimum age	Limited knowledge and capacity to serve youth	Lack of proof of ID/ documentation for KYC
KYC requirements	Limited financial infrastructure	Lack of traditional collateral or guarantees
Credit reporting	Low-value and low-margin products	Lack of experience and knowledge of the formal
		financial system
Limited proportionate financial regulation		Biases against financial institutions
		Socio-economic situation

Source: Primary Data (2023)

The National Financial Inclusion Strategy's (NFIS) goal to increase the calibre and accessibility of financial goods and services for Children and youth and is intended to be complemented by the promotion of these products. However, since the introduction of the strategy in 2020, information on the bank's efforts to promote the creation of Child-friendly financial products and promote early adoption of financial services has been scarce. Thus, the investigation.

Using the public good theory with its products divided in three categories from the perspective of consumption characteristics: pure public goods, quasi-public goods, and private goods. The study discovered and identified some of the financial needs as: Early-stage youth could be wholly devoted to their education and are likely to require money for both their fundamental necessities and their schooling. Later-stage participants have growing financial demands, including having to contribute to their parents' household income and eventually supporting their own homes, families, and Children's schooling.

The implication of this is that young people's needs for financial products change over time depending on their age, personal circumstances, stage of life, and sociocultural influences. Young people under the age of majority typically aren't allowed to access official financial services, or they can only do so under the supervision or authorization of a parent or guardian. For children and young people aged 7 to 19, savings and payment solutions are the most pertinent and widely accessible financial products.

With regards to the potential and difficulties associated with improving young digital financial inclusion, the findings show that the Bank of Zambia has done fairly well in offering digital financial services for Children and youth based of the responses, standard deviation and means, except from undertaking technological innovations to enhance access to financial products for children. From the scale of 1 to mean 'not done' and 'Done much', most of the responses from all the statements revealed that responded ranked all the statement at four (4), meaning fairly done. In addition, our study discovered that the Bank of Zambia provide a wide variety digital financial service such payments, credit, savings, and remittances that can be accessed and provided online. Mobile financial services are included in the idea of digital financial service. In this case, the Bank of Zambia in the 2017 to 2022 strategic plan proposed to implement digital financial services for children and according to a study of financial service providers, there are few products available for Children, and those that are available are often of a generic type and targeted at a broad audience.

Furthermore, another major discovery in this research is positive impact that financial technology had because of its services which made easy access to financial services and that people no longer needed to visit the bank branch but used Internet. This has brought about availability of banking apps, mobile money, which people had access to. Financial technology has made ease of access transactions now in real time which led to people doing their business conveniently and faster as they no longer needed to, for example, the time of using checks wait for these transactions to clear.

These findings imply the existence of advantages of such innovations for consumers which are substantial: responsible digital finance enables greater access to financial services and may favourably impact the financial inclusion of excluded and underserved individuals, it offers consumers a wider choice of financial products and services, at lower costs, expanded speed, convenience, and security, and it can ultimately contribute to increasing the efficiency of operations of financial services providers by spurring competition. We make the case that one of the main benefactors of the financial sector' digitalization will likely be young people. The Fintech Adoption Index (Ofcom, 2020), for instance, emphasises that young people are driving overall Fintech adoption. The financial system is evolving due to technology. Therefore, it is the responsibility of policymakers to guarantee that this transition is both safe and inclusive, leaving no one behind.

However, given that those who are financially excluded are frequently also more vulnerable and less likely to have access to digital tools (such as people with disabilities), traditional financial services providers have a crucial role to play. This research falls under the umbrella of the role that conventional financial services and their providers, along with other financial and non-financial youth support programmes, such as coaching or mentoring, education, employment, and training, play in ensuring inclusive youth development. A greater range of financial services, including mobile banking, online applications, payment applications, mobile wallets, and in-app purchases, are available to users who have access to the Internet and a mobile phone. Simple digital financial services, such as mobile money and accounts, mobile payments, mobile savings, or digital credit, are accessible through basic mobile phones. Access to increasingly advance financial services and products may be available via smartphones.

Between the year 2017 and 2022, Zambia has made significant strides on its path to digital transformation over the past few years. Progress is particularly evident in digital infrastructure, digital financial services, and digital platforms, while more significant gaps remain in digital skills and digital entrepreneurship (World Bank, 2020). The Bank of Zambia has no specific technological innovation that has promoted access and inclusion of young people and youths of digital financial services. Findings to determine the extent to which the Bank of Zambia has promoted financial Access and protection for the Youth suggests that digital financial services are strongly linked and associated with financial literacy. In this case, for the Bank of Zambia to enhance digital financial services, they need to invest more in financial literacy. In addition, the moderate positive correlation findings saving, and Digital financial services imply that an increase in offering digital financial services by the Bank of Zambia would results in promoting more saving among young people and Children. Furthermore, moderately negative correlation between saving and financial literacy implies that an increase in financial literacy would mean an increase in saving among young people.

Our study reveals that financial literacy activities by the Central Bank as tenets of Child and Youth financial inclusion for children were fairly done with the scale of four (4). Many media have been used to enhance financial literacy such as road shows, social media, radio, public addresses, and school visits. In terms of interim performance of the Bank of Zambia, our study discovered that the Bank has not done much in facilitating the availability of capital for youths, in addition, the BoZ has not done much in areas such as developing guidelines for activation and use of dormant accounts and determining the age of a child youth customer for the child friendly financial products and has not done much in ensuring availability of child friendly financial products for Youth. On the other hand, the bank has done fairly well in developing guidelines for safer banking (savings and payment) of Child friendly financial products, the bank developed templates for commercial banks and other financial institutions of Child friendly financial products and facilitated an increase in savings by children. Out of seven (7) key performance areas, the findings show that the bank has only done well in three (3) while it has not done well in four (4) areas. The findings on barriers to financial inclusion for youths and Children cited in this research include the most barriers to child and youth financial inclusion as lack of financial literacy, followed by a lack of collateral and lack of appropriate financial products. children face many barriers in accessing financial services that arise from limitations in the regulatory environment (policies and regulations), supply side (financial sector) and demand side (children do not have sufficient awareness, access to, and usage of financial products). The Overall findings of our study support the idea that the Bank of Zambia's quest to develop a financial inclusion strategy under strategic direction number 5, with a particular emphasis on digital financial services, rural finance, and children has not been achieved in the period of 2017 to 2022. The next section will be recommendations based of the findings of this research.

Limitations and Suggested Area for Further Research

The present research used a small sample size made up primarily of Bank of Zambia employees. Therefore, particularly in a methodical situation, the findings cannot be generalised to other sectors in Zambia. Further, a study of this kind that involved a larger sample size, numerous institutions, or the private sector could provide a wider view on evaluating the extent of the promotion of financial access and protection for children in Zambia. Secondly, the data was collected using self-reported questionnaire and may, therefore, have been subject to misreporting either deliberately or unintentionally. The researcher addressed this by conducting a pilot study using employees of the Bank of Zambia selected from different departments at the Ndola office and making follow ups after the questionnaires were retained.

5 Recommendations

From the lessons learnt the BoZ should stick to its vision and mission which includes to be a credible Central Bank that contributes to the economic development of Zambia and play a key role in the economic development of Zambia by pursuing appropriate monetary and financial stability policies that will enable the country to become a prosperous middle-income country by 2030. In future when developing strategic plans, it would be better that the process be widely inclusive. Based on the study findings and their interpretations as well as the conclusions, our study recommends the following:

a) **Digital financial services and needs for children:** To increase financial capability in the provision and demand for young financial services and products, engage in increased sensitization and education of both supply and demand side players.
b) **Public Policies and Non-Regulatory Interventions:** Examine non-financial legal and regulatory frameworks relating to the provision of financial services to children to identify access barriers. These are the legal and regulatory provisions outside of the BFSA and other instruments administered by the BoZ but that have an impact on child and youth finance. For example, provisions relating to minors and guardians and legal ages for participating in contracts.
c) **Interim performance of the Bank of Zambia strategic plan for children**: the Bank uses Finscope as a measurement tool to financial inclusion. This does not show a true reflection of the Bank of Zambia's strategic goals as it does not address the aspect of Children below the age of 16 years. Therefore, we need to formulate a separate tool which will include children.

An evaluation of the central bank's role in promoting financial access and protection for youth was done using an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design. This mixed-methods design provides interesting insights into establishing the state of implementation of Strategic direction 5. The conclusion drawn is that promotion of financial literacy and financial empowerment, particularly for children has not happened and as such the strategic direction has not complimented the National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFIS) objective to improve the quality and availability of financial products and services for minors.

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