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**A qualitative study exploring the experiences of unemployed youth in
Chatsworth, South Africa**

**Submitted in fulfilment for the degree of Master's of Social Science in
Psychology in the School of Applied Human Sciences, University of
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Acknowledgements and Foreword

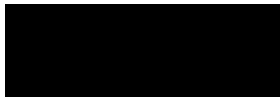
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Declaration of Authenticity

I, Mahomed Shuaib Husain, the researcher of this research report, hereby declare that all information and research used in this study was ethically and legally obtained. I have given credit to all individuals whose work I have used and referred to throughout this report. All content found in this report is original.



Mahomed Shuaib Husain

Abstract

Topic: The experiences of unemployed youth in Chatsworth, South Africa

Unemployment among the youth is a common occurrence in today's times. Most places of occupation seek employees with at least three years of experience. As a result, fresh graduates find themselves in a position of despair and hopelessness. In an attempt to help the youth to find suitable jobs, the government must provide the youth with viable job opportunities. This study aimed to investigate how unemployment affects the lives of the youth. This research report has been compiled based on six unemployed youth living in the Chatsworth area in South Africa. The research study was conducted using a qualitative approach through structured interviews. The results revealed that most unemployed youth had been miserable and felt as if they had no purpose in life due to being unemployed. The implications of the findings of this study are important and helpful to both job seekers and prospective employers.

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

There has been abundant research documenting unemployment (Bloom et al., 2018; Junankar, 2011). Unemployment is an economic and social problem that impacts on all countries and individuals. The leading causes of global unemployment are increasing pressure on the productive and service sectors (Hussainat et al., 2013). Unemployment can affect individuals significantly as they may not be able to meet their basic needs. Furthermore, unemployment blocks the individuals' future horizons and assassinates the dreams of the youth (Hussainat et al., 2013).

Falakahla (2018) found 71 million unemployed youth globally. Youth makes up 25 percent of the working population and 13.6 percent of the unemployed population globally (Singh, 2019). Generally, the youth struggles to enter the labour market compared to adults (Dagume & Gyekye, 2016) and is three times more likely to be unemployed than adults (International Labour Organisation [ILO], 2020). Dlamini (2020) found that the youth is marginalised in the labour market due to financial resources, job exploration abilities, work capability, and inadequate skills. In the next 15 years, youth searches for employment are expected to increase by 15 percent (Singh, 2019). The ILO (2020) found that every time the adult unemployment rate increased by 1 percent, youth unemployment increased by 2.1 percent.

Over two decades ago, South Africa crossed the threshold into a democratic era (Ferreira & Rossouw, 2016). Since 1994, the government has introduced a succession of economic policies to restore South Africa's macro-economic stability as a global and regional trade partner to attract foreign capital. These economic policies have impacted on South Africa's market shares, competitiveness, and economic growth. However, at the core of the government, strategic policy-making and planning have to continue to ensure job creation (Ferreira & Rossouw, 2016).

In the past decade, the unemployment rate in South Africa has been extremely high compared to other countries, for example Kenya (9.3 percent), Egypt (11.4 percent), Nigeria (6 percent), Zambia (7.2 percent), India (2 percent), China (4.4 percent), Russia (4.7 percent), and Brazil (12.5 percent) (Kwenda et al., 2020). A quarter of economically active people are experiencing unemployment (Kyei & Gyekye, 2011). A key social difficulty in South Africa is employment creation and reducing the unemployment rate (Mncayi, 2016). Meyer, N. (2017) found that many South Africans have been unemployed for more than three years, and some have never

been employed. In 2017, one in every ten working-age South African had never been employed (Donisi, 2017). There is no obvious solution to the high unemployment crisis and frustration among the unemployed in South Africa; hence the situation is referred to as a ticking time bomb (Mulaudzi & Ajoodha, 2020). The most significant risk to social stability in South Africa is the ticking time bomb. The unemployment rate continues to increase yearly (Pasara & Garidzirai, 2020). The employment population ratio declined by 3.1 percent, from 45,9 percent in 2008 to 42,8 percent in 2014, and the number of unemployed persons increased from 4.3 million to 5.1 million (Mathebula, 2017).

Between 2008 and 2014, the unemployment rate for persons aged 25 to 34 averaged 29 percent and over 50 percent for individuals aged 15 to 24 (Mncayi, 2016). The South African unemployment rate has averaged 20 percent since 1997 (Mncayi, 2016). From 1994 to 2019, the number of unemployed persons increased from 1,988,000 to 6,655,000, and the number of discouraged job-seekers increased from 1,684,000 to 2,749,000 (Roodt, 2019). The economy creates only 53,000 jobs per quarter, but 101,000 individuals enter the labour market per quarter (Penniston, 2021). According to Statistics South Africa (Stats SA, 2021), the unemployment rate in the third quarter of 2021 was 34.9 percent. The number of individuals employed decreased by 660,000.

In South Africa, unemployed youth are individuals who are available and searching for employment but cannot secure paid employment (Cloete, 2015). As a result, they experience discouragement and economic marginalisation (Dlamini, 2020). From 2008 to 2015, labour force participation among the youth was 16 percent to 21 percent lower than those of adults (Donisi, 2017). According to Cloete (2015), the youth is the most vulnerable group to unemployment because the youth is the largest cohort of new job seekers. Compared to South African adults, the youth is twice as likely to be unemployed (Dlamini, 2020). The high youth unemployment results in less money coming in from taxes, increasing the country's economic cost, because money is needed to be paid out on social grants, and reducing productivity, lowering the gross domestic product (GDP). If the youth cannot secure formal and full-time employment by the age of 24, they never will. The economy cannot be driven forward due to high youth unemployment preventing young persons from gaining skills and experience (Pharatlhatlhe & Byiers, 2019).

South Africa's youth unemployment rate was ranked fifth worst globally in 2013 and fourth worst in 2012 (Meyer, N., 2017). Furthermore, in a survey conducted in 2008, the Organisation

for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) found that South Africa has the highest youth unemployment rate among 36 countries. The World Economic Forum reported that only Spain and Greece had a higher youth unemployment rate than South Africa (Pharatlhatlhe & Byiers, 2019). In the first quarter of 2020, youth unemployment was 59 percent in South Africa (Du Toit, 2021), whereas the overall unemployment rate was 30 percent (Nyasha et al., 2021).

Rising Sun Chatsworth (2017) reports that “Our children are starving, and we need jobs to feed them and give back to our community” were the words of hundreds of unemployed youths. Youth unemployment has been a part of South Africa for many years, and KwaZulu-Natal is no exception (Dlamini, 2020). In some rural regions in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape, the unemployment rate is 50 percent, whereas the unemployment rate globally of 5.2 percent was the lowest over the past 40 years (Roodt, 2019). In the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality, which includes Durban, youth unemployment is higher than the adult unemployment rate (Dlamini, 2020). The youth unemployment rate in the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality is higher than the national youth unemployment rate in South Africa (Mashau & Houghton, 2015). The government has been trying to rectify youth unemployment through policies and job creation, but youth unemployment continues to escalate (Dlamini, 2020). The number of unemployed youth increased from 1.08 million in 1995 to 2.37 million in 2011 using the narrow definition, and the Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal provinces made up half of the total (Yu, 2012). Despite not being the poorest province, KwaZulu-Natal has the highest level of deprivation concerning services and perceived well-being (Mzizi, 2017).

Problem Statement

Individuals can fulfil their socially defined economic and psychosocial needs through employment. Employment is a norm and represents the primary source of income to purchase food and shelter (Salami, 2013). Employment is central to individual identity and participation (Voßemer et al., 2018). Individuals need employment to experience the benefits of life. Employment can play a role in decreasing depression and anxiety, enhancing autonomy, and increasing social status and personal growth opportunities. Employment is vital for physical and mental health (Akanle & Omotayo, 2020). It gives individuals a chance to utilise their strengths in the service of something bigger than the self, giving them meaning in life (De Witte et al., 2012). Employment is central to an individual’s identity and participation in a country

(Mousteri et al., 2018). Only the employed can describe the freedom that comes with being employed. Employment in one's desired occupational field can yield great progress in terms of financial, social and psychological standings. In a study conducted by Van Lill and Bakker (2020), employed persons were compared to unemployed persons over ten years. The results showed that employed persons experienced better self-esteem and life satisfaction. These rewards are taken away by unemployment, and individuals are impacted negatively (Mousteri et al., 2018). Numerous problems are associated with the absence of work, such as crime, gang violence, drug abuse (Idris, 2016), low self-confidence, depression (Zhang et al., 2020), and the erosion of human capital (Makaringe & Khobai, 2018).

Van Lill and Bakker (2020) found employment vital in transitioning from adolescence to adulthood and significant in maintaining or improving well-being. Employment allows the youth to acquire their livelihood and develop in society (Petros et al., 2015). The youth gains a sense of social status, competence, and independence through employment. In South Africa, the youth stated that the most important marker of the transition to adulthood is the ability to support and care for their families and run the household (Msigwa & Kipsha, 2013). Furthermore, economic and development experts recognise the youth as an invaluable resource that fosters economic growth and entrepreneurship and drives innovation in a country (Dlamini et al., 2019). A positive change can occur in a country's socio-economic development if there is proper utilisation of active, qualified, and valiant youth (Imtiaz et al., 2020). The global economic crisis made it clear that youth unemployment is more sensitive than adult unemployment (Berhe, 2021). Many sectors in South Africa that employ mainly youth experienced a decline in output, including government services (-0.4 percent), agriculture (-7.6 percent), manufacturing (-1.8), utilities (-0.4), construction (-5.9 percent), trade and accommodation (-3.8 percent), and transportation (-7.2 percent) (Maskaeva & Msafiri, 2021). Since youth unemployment impacts on current and future economies, it is important to focus on youth unemployment (Berhe, 2021). Increasing youth unemployment creates a hopeless generation and an army of unemployed, thus harming economies deeply, now and in the future. When the youth is unemployed for long durations, they become demotivated and lose interest in searching for employment (Meyer, N., 2017). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of the youth experiencing unemployment and to understand how unemployment negatively impacts on their lives.

The study began in early February 2021, when Covid-19 was at its peak. The time period in which the study was conducted made it difficult for the researcher to acquire all the necessary

information and permissions needed for this study to be a success. This was owing to the multiple lockdown rules and isolation rules that had to be followed at the time. The study was concluded in December 2022 when Covid-19 was easing off and the laws and restrictions made were gradually being lifted.

Research Context

Chatsworth is located within the eThekweni municipality in the KwaZulu-Natal province and comprises urban and rural areas. Chatsworth has a population of 196,580, with those aged 20 to 29 years making up about 20 percent of the total population (Census, 2011).

Objectives

The objectives of the study were as follows:

- To explore the youth's experiences of unemployment in the Chatsworth area.
- To understand the role of work and its impact in an individual's life.
- To understand how drastically people's lives change when they are faced with the negative effects of unemployment.

Research Questions

1. What are the experiences of unemployed youth in Chatsworth?
2. What role does work have in an individual's life?
3. What are some coping strategies the youth uses to cope with unemployment?

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Unemployment Globally

According to Matandare (2018), in 2016, global unemployment rates began to increase. Due to strong performance by developed countries between 2017 and 2018, the rate dropped, but 192 million people were unemployed. According to Onakoya and Seyingbo (2020), it is estimated that 210 million people are unemployed. Two-thirds of developed and half of developing countries are experiencing a slowdown in employment growth (Salami, 2013). To avoid further unemployment, 400 million jobs must be created (Adesina, 2013).

In most countries, the youth unemployment rate is higher than the adult unemployment rate (Dagume & Gyekye, 2016). One-fifth of the world's youth is not in training, education, or employment (Berhe, 2021). In 2013 globally, 15.7 percent of the youth were unemployed, 15 percent in Sub-Saharan countries, and 17.3 percent in OECD countries. Among OECD countries, Spain had the highest rate of 58.3 percent, and in Sub-Saharan countries, it was South Africa with 51.4 percent (Nonyana, 2015). For every unemployed adult, five youth are unemployed in South-East Asia and The Pacific (Fergusson, 2021).

In 2010, youth unemployment globally reached its highest level, with 620 million economically active youth and 81 million unemployed (Dagume & Gyekye, 2016). Only Spain, Bosnia Herzegovina, Lesotho, Mauritania, and South Africa have unemployment rates above 25 percent. In 2012, youth unemployment in South Africa was almost four times higher than in China, India, Russia, and Brazil (Mncayi, 2016). Youth unemployment is expected to increase to 9.5 percent in developed countries and 13.7 percent in developing countries (Mehmood et al., 2021). In 2018, the adult unemployment rate was 4.3 percent, whereas the youth unemployment rate was 12 percent (Marumo & Sebolaaneng, 2019).

According to Eseyin et al. (2021), youth is considered the engine of growth in every society; for society to thrive and develop, the youth's contribution is vital. Youth unemployment impacts on economies, community life patterns, and the social welfare of the youth. Globally 74.8 million youth were unemployed in 2011, and Africa made up nearly 20 percent of that number (Anyanwu, 2013). Youth unemployment poses a significant threat to a country's social, political, and economic stability (Panday et al., 2013). Youth unemployment affects a country economically through increased welfare loss, unused investments in education, and training

erosion of the tax base. Those socially involved are also affected by youth unemployment (Panday et al., 2013)

Youth unemployment is caused by several factors globally, such as environmental, political, social, and economic factors. The economic condition of a country's labour market and labour policies impact on youth unemployment (Panday et al., 2013). More employment opportunities are likely to be created in a country with high economic development due to an additional labour force required since output increases. To build an efficient and non-discriminatory labour system, well-designed labour market regulation in a country is essential. Such a system can employ both adults and youth. Employment registration, such as employment protection and minimum wage policy, affects youth unemployment (Panday et al., 2013).

Panday et al. (2013) investigated youth labour market performance and its influence on social and future economic development. They found a negative impact on the country's GDP when youth unemployment was high. Around 300 million youth are not earning a living wage or have productive work, and 621 million are not studying or employed. Yearly there is more than 120 million youth entering the labour market. The youth faces limited possibilities for livelihood (Mncayi, 2016).

Youth unemployment was three times higher than the adult unemployment rate in Australia before the COVID-19 pandemic (Waugh & Circelli, 2021). Youth unemployment was 2.4 times higher than the adult unemployment rate before the global financial crisis of 2008/2009. The youth experiences part-time work and lengthy unemployed periods in Australia. Youth neither working nor seeking employment amounted to 1,299,000 in May 2020 (Waugh & Circelli, 2021).

During the 1970s, youth unemployment emerged in the United States of America (USA) due to increased youth labour supply driven by the large cohorts of the baby boomer generations (Hermannsson et al., 2021). In the USA, over the past two decades, youth has been two or three times more likely to be unemployed than working-age adults (Inanc, 2020).

In 2019, the number of people unemployed was 3.2 million; these were the lowest unemployment rates in 20 years, but the youth made up 1 million of this number. One-seventh of the working population comprises the youth (Inanc, 2020).

Low levels of unemployment were detected in Europe from the end of the Second World War to the late 1960s. Unemployment increased in most capitalist economies during the 1970s and

continued to rise in the 1980s (Cristian & Ileana, 2018). The European countries initiated the Employment Protection Legislation to combat unemployment (Grzenda, 2019), which drastically affected youth unemployment. The labour market was divided into temporary and permanent employment. Unions only fought wage setting and negotiation processes for permanent employees in the dual labour market (Grzenda, 2019). The youth mainly occupied temporary jobs, which were not protected. As a result, temporary employees are the first to be shed during an economic crisis, increasing youth unemployment (Dietrich & Möller, 2016).

Hermannsson et al. (2021) found an increasing divergence of unemployment rates and youth unemployment across European countries from the early 2000s. Economic shakes and institutional features were the cause of the increase. Due to the youth participating in education and training programmes, youth unemployment is low in countries like France, the United Kingdom, and Sweden. Countries like Italy, Portugal, Spain, and Greece have the highest youth unemployment rate (Hermannsson et al., 2021).

Between 2000 and 2007, there was a positive economic performance in European countries, where the youth unemployment rate fell from 19 percent to 15 percent. Youth unemployment increased from 15.1 percent to 26 percent between 2008 and 2013 due to the 2008 financial crisis (Liotti, 2021). Youth unemployment rose from 4.2 million in 2007 to a peak of more than 5.6 million in 2014 in the 28 European Union countries (Dietrich & Möller, 2016). The youth experienced unemployment more frequently due to being poorly protected by work contracts, little work experience, and lower qualifications. The youth is the first to be dismissed and the last to be hired. For youth under 25, unemployment rates doubled or even tripled due to the financial crisis (Matysiak et al., 2021).

European countries adopted a non-standard form of work to overcome the financial crisis. The European labour market and welfare reforms have created jobs and reduced unemployment through worker protection, deregulation, and increased flexibility in labour relations (Jara Tamayo, & Tumino 2021).

Europe is divided into three groups: Eastern, South, and Northern Europe. In Eastern Europe, between 2000 and 2008, youth unemployment declined from 26.1 percent to 15.4 percent (Liotti, 2021). The rate increased to 27 percent in 2009 and 2010. In 2018, the youth unemployment rate declined to 12.7 percent. In South Europe, youth unemployment was 17 percent in 2008, and the rate increased to 36.3 percent in 2014 due to the economic crisis. In

2018, the rate declined to 24.2 percent. In Northern Europe, the youth unemployment rate peaked at 17.5 percent in 2014, and in 2018 the rate dropped to 14.5 percent (Liotti, 2021).

The youth is more likely to experience cyclical unemployment in European countries. Firstly, in comparison with adults, the youth has lower job protection. Secondly, adults have more job-specific experience than youth. Thirdly, organisations are not prepared to spend on additional training and education (Ravšelj et al., 2019).

Unemployment in Africa

In the world, Africa has the fastest-growing youth population (Shankar et al., 2016). Of the nearly 420 million youth in Africa, only one in six is in wage employment; one-third is in vulnerable employment, and one-third is unemployed and discouraged (Pharatlhathe & Byiers, 2019). In Africa, youth is more likely to be unemployed (African Development Bank. (2016). Tens of millions of youths join the labour market every year, but only about 3 million formal jobs are created per annum, making youth unemployment in Africa very severe, pervasive and multifaceted (Metu et al., 2020). Mehmood et al. (2021) found that youth unemployment is affected by GDP, domestic investment, criminal activities, militancy, neo-liberalism, and social inequalities. Between 2000 and 2008, 73 million jobs were created in Africa, but only 16 million were for the youth (Grace Goitsemodimo Tabengwa et al., 2017). Youth unemployment would increase by 0.5 percent if the youth population in Africa increased by 1 percent (Mncayi, 2016). Garcia and Fares (2008) conducted a study in Africa in 15 countries. In countries like Cameroon, São Tomé and Príncipe, the Gambia, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Malawi, they found that, on average, the youth waits five years before finding employment. According to Azu et al. (2021), youth unemployment can be reduced with exogenous policies like trade openness.

The unemployment rate is not a good measure of Africa's labour market or employment function (ILO, 2020). Most youths are forced into the informal sector, where employment is less stable with lower rewards (Metu et al., 2020). Informal employment can be defined as part-time wage employment, non-wage employment, and agriculture work (Golub & Hayat, 2015). Anwar and Graham (2021) found that 85.8 percent of the individuals are employed in the informal sector. At an early age, the youth often enters the labour market without education or skills. As a result, informal employment is experienced, such as working in poverty, self-employment, underemployment, and working for no wage (Mncayi, 2016). It is estimated that

72 percent of the youth live on less than 2 dollars daily (Grace Goitsemodimo Tabengwa et al., 2017).

The structural mismatch between employers' demands and youth skills creates high unemployment in Africa (Metu et al. 2020). African youth lacks Information and Communications Technology (ICT) skills and they are behind their counterparts in advanced countries. Youth who has access to ICT does not have the necessary ICT skills to succeed in the labour market. The youth equipped with the necessary skills often use it for other purposes like scams, idle chats, and advanced fee fraud instead of employment (Metu et al., 2020).

According to Grace Goitsemodimo Tabengwa et al. (2017), the education system in Africa focuses on academic performance rather than the practical skills required to improve economic performance. The structure of the syllabus is built around theory and not practice. Therefore, it does not benefit students to succeed in economic activities. Mncayi (2016) found that the education structure in Africa does not correspond with the current economic conditions. Secondary schools and colleges prepare the youth for white-collar jobs rather than self-employment, increasing youth unemployment. A survey was conducted where most youths stated a lack of employment in Africa. A second group stated that they are frustrated since employment is given to people with "connections" (Grace Goitsemodimo Tabengwa et al., 2017). Due to the informal nature of employment in Africa, youth with high levels of education tends to make up the largest portion of youth unemployment (Golub & Hayat, 2015).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, the youth make up 20 percent of the entire population (Coulibaly & Page, 2021). The youth unemployment rate in Sub-Saharan Africa is higher than all other regions except North Africa and the Middle East. There is a struggle with social and human development, which contributes to low levels of employment and productivity (Mncayi, 2016). To meet the job demand, 20 million new jobs must be created annually. However, the economies in Africa are only half of what they should be. The continent's structural transition has been slowed down due to a lack of adequate employment opportunities (Coulibaly & Page, 2021). Only one in four youth will be able to find employment in the period leading up to 2024, and only a few will secure formal employment (Yaya et al., 2019). In South Africa, Nigeria, and Tanzania, the governments employ only 40 percent of the youth, and with private companies downsizing, the youth faces harsh economic conditions (Oluwatayo & Ojo, 2018). As a result, intensified vulnerable employment is experienced, such as working in poverty, self-employment, underemployment, and working for no wage. Mncayi (2016) found that three in

five young workers in Sub-Saharan Africa cannot be productive at work because of a lack of education.

Sixty percent of the youth in North Africa and 48 percent in the rest of Africa are experiencing a long duration of unemployment (Anwar & Graham, 2021). Abé Ndjié et al. (2019) found that the highest unemployment rates among all regions globally were identified in countries in North Africa, and those most affected were the youth. According to Oluwatayo and Ojo (2018), the private sector employs 600,000 youth in Egypt, but there is 1.5 million youth. Due to the political violence in North Africa, the youth unemployment rate was 30 percent in 2019, double the global average (Adelaja & George, 2020).

West Africa's employment structure is non-productive in underemployment, low-quality, and vulnerable employment. This is compounded by the increased youth unemployment (Adekoya et al., 2018). In 2014 the rate was 7.32 percent, and in 2017 8.17 percent. The increasing youth unemployment rate indicates the existence of wasted economic resources. Youth unemployment affects Ghana and Nigeria's economic growth; unemployed and underemployed youth make up 43 percent and 48 percent, respectively (Adekoya et al., 2018).

The COVID-19 Pandemic

Su et al. (2021) found that the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the world of work negatively. In total, 9 percent of global working hours were lost, equating to 255 million full-time jobs. From February 2020 to the end of April 2021, the unemployment rate in the USA increased from 3.5 percent to 14.7 percent (Bianchi et al., 2021). Since the start of the pandemic, 54 million Americans have lost their jobs (Raifman et al., 2021). The rate increased from 6.5 percent to 6.6 percent in the European Union. In the second quarter of 2020, the USA employment rate dropped from 71.2 percent to 62.5 percent (Fischer & Schmid, 2021). In October 2020, the US unemployment rate stood at 6.9 percent. The European Union and the US youth unemployment rate exceeds the overall unemployment rate. The pandemic added new reasons why people experience unemployment, such as school shutdowns, infections or fear of infection risk, and family or transport issues (Fischer & Schmid, 2021). In the United Kingdom, organisations were no longer advertising employment opportunities. The unemployment rate did not increase drastically in the European Union due to the countries

using short-term work rather than dismissing employees. Boneva et al. (2020) conducted a study, and found that even self-employed people experienced unemployment.

History of Employment in South Africa

During the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, the unemployment rate increased sharply in South Africa. The current population survey estimated that in the 1970s and 1980s, the unemployment rate was 12 percent and 20 percent, respectively (Mlatsheni & Ranchhod, 2017). The population census data estimated that in 1991, the unemployment rate was 19 percent. The South African labour and development research unit survey of 1993 found the unemployment rate to be 30 percent (Mlatsheni & Ranchhod, 2017). Between 1980 and 1993, South Africa's average economic growth was 1.4 percent due to most South Africans being unable to enter the labour market (Pasara & Garidzirai, 2020). The labour absorptive capacity, which indicates new labour market entrants employed in any given year, was found in 1960 at 90 percent. In the 1970s and 1980s it fell to 15 percent. Between 1991 and 1993 it was negative figures. It increased to 7 percent in 1995 (Mlatsheni & Ranchhod, 2017).

Post-1994, South Africa adopted a neoliberal economic system, but the system did not generate employment (Cloete, 2015). The system contributed to unemployment through the impact of cheap products and well-intended labour legislation of the African National Congress (ANC) (Cloete, 2015). As a result, unemployment has become a defining characteristic of the South African economy (Dadam & Viegi, 2015). Many previously disadvantaged individuals have been entering the labour market in search of employment; however, the South African labour market has not been able to absorb these individuals at the required pace, therefore creating unemployment (Wakefield et al., 2020). According to Webb (2021), the ruling ANC refutes the notion of welfare dependency and has historically associated wage labour with dignity and full citizenship. Rivombo and Motseke (2021) state that the government should protect citizens against unemployment by reforming the unemployment insurance system, implementing trade policies that promote quality employment, and ensuring job security.

In 1995, the unemployment rate drastically diminished to 17 percent due to the end of apartheid and heavy sanctions against South Africa (Moyo et al., 2017). The unemployment rate began to increase again between 1996 and 2003 due to the Asian financial crisis of 1997 and 1998 and the draught experience in South Africa around 1995 (Moyo et al., 2017). Between 1998

and 2002, 5 million job seekers entered the labour market, but only 1.6 million jobs were created (Viljoen & Dungan, 2013). The unemployment rate averaged 21 percent from 2004 to 2007. This saw South African economic growth at an average rate of 5 percent per annum (Moyo et al., 2017). The 2008-2009 recession slowed down the economy, where close to 1 million South Africans lost their jobs (Mlatsheni & Ranchhod, 2017). Any employment gains made during peak economic growth were reversed due to the recession. The employment-to-population ratio declined by 3.1 percent, from 45.9 percent in 2008 to 42.8 percent in 2014, and the number of unemployed persons increased from 4.3 million in 2008 to 5.1 million in 2014 (Mlatsheni & Ranchhod, 2017).

Meyer, D. F. (2017) discovered that “jobless” growth is experienced in South Africa. Aspects like corruption, crime, the structure of labour legislation, and globalisation with trade liberalisation propel this phenomenon. Jobless growth is when a recession occurs, and the economy experiences economic growth. In contrast, it is only able to maintain and, in some situations, decrease employment levels or when positive economic growth is experienced, unemployment rates increase (Meyer, D. F., 2017). To create employment in South Africa, focus needs to be on implementing public work projects, skills development, and improving links between the formal and informal sectors and labour-intensive sectors such as construction and tourism (Meyer, D. F., 2017).

Fourie (2011) conducted a comprehensive study on employment in South Africa, and found that key problems in employment were employment creation, and the labour market is affected by poverty, social welfare grants and the supply of labour, and structural problems limiting the smooth functioning of the labour market, such as employment being affected by real wage elasticity of labour demand, which was approximately 0.7, and an output elasticity of employment of only 0.5, and lastly employees finding it difficult to transition from the informal to the formal employment sector. In 2016, South Africa’s unemployment rate was ranked eighth in the world. Wakefield et al. (2020) analysed the quarterly labour force study 2013-2014 data and reported more than 3.3 million people were unemployed for more than a year, and 1.7 million were unemployed for less than a year. South Africa’s high unemployment has been attributed to the poor relationship between trade unions and businesses, disappointing economic performance, minimum wage, and poor education (Du Toit, 2018).

From January 2008 to January 2009, 4,899 companies retrenched employees. The private sector failed to recover from the 2013 labour market instabilities, and more jobs were lost than

were created in 2014 (Mncayi, 2016). Since the global recession, the private sector could only recover 36 percent of jobs lost. In February 2014, 118,397 jobs were lost, of which 26,832 were temporary, and 105,593 were permanent (Mncayi, 2016). In March 2019, one of South Africa's biggest banks, Standard Bank, shut down 91 branches, rendering 2,423 employees unemployed (Penniston, 2021).

Economic growth plays a crucial role in providing employment opportunities (Mncayi, 2016). South Africa requires an estimated 6 percent to 7 percent increase in investment and growth to reduce unemployment, while the country's growth has been below 3 percent. Policies like the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA), and Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) were introduced and implemented by the government to create employment. By 2000, the GEAR policy promised to create 400,000 new jobs; between 1994 and 2012, only 50,000 jobs were produced annually. In 1994, 2.4 million people were unemployed, which doubled to 4.8 million people in 2013, mainly due to strikes, crime, low productivity, and rigid labour laws that deter investments (Mncayi, 2016). There are not enough jobs to alleviate the legacy of racialized poverty of the pro-growth economic policies of the 1990s and 2000s (Webb, 2021). Furthermore, the unemployment rate continues to increase because of the underperformance of the formal sector and the inability of individuals to enter the informal sector (Mncayi, 2016).

Types of Unemployment

Unemployment occurs when the price of labour is too high for organisations to afford and when the supply exceeds demand. A significant number of vacancies can exist in tandem with high levels of unemployment in developing economies like South Africa due to skill mismatch (Meyer, D. F., 2017). There are different types of unemployment, namely cyclical, frictional, structural, and seasonal (Banda et al., 2016).

Structural Unemployment

In South Africa, structural employment is the main type of unemployment experienced. Structural unemployment occurs when there is a change in economic activities, a change in the structure of an industry, and when there is a mismatch between the skills of the worker and the skills required (Banda et al., 2016). Most organisations no longer require unskilled labourers

and moved towards a skilled labour force, resulting in structural unemployment (Banda et al., 2016).

Seasonal Unemployment

During certain times when employees are employed, seasonal employment occurs; these workers are employed in industries where they are not required throughout the year, because of the inherent nature of such industries (Banda et al., 2016).

Frictional Unemployment

When there is an unsatisfied demand for labour, frictional unemployment occurs (Banda et al., 2016). Unemployed employees cannot fill the unsatisfied demand since the workers are not aware of the jobs in question or do not possess the required attributes. In South Africa, frictional unemployment is common among unskilled labourers due to a lack of communication facilities (Banda et al., 2016).

Cyclical/Keynesian Unemployment

When aggregate effective demand is deficient, cyclical unemployment, also known as Keynesian unemployment, occurs (Banda et al., 2016). The economy experiences higher levels of unemployment when there is a recession. Compared with adults, the youth have fewer employment protections and less job-specific experience, and organisations tend to spend less on additional training and education (Meyer, 2017).

To identify the health status of the labour market, economists look at the distinction between structural, frictional, and cyclical unemployment (Ravšelj et al., 2019). When the overall labour market is well-balanced, high structural and frictional unemployment levels can still occur because employees exclude themselves from the labour market when they are unwilling to work for a minimum wage. There are always people who are changing their jobs (Ravšelj et al., 2019).

Youth Unemployment in South Africa

South Africa's primary policy challenge in the past and present remains youth unemployment. In 2014, the South African government introduced the employment tax incentive bill to promote youth employment, but for most youth, the transition from unemployment to

employment did not happen (Wakefield et al., 2020). The youth unemployment rate in South Africa is almost four times that of the average in Sub-Saharan Africa (Meyer, N., 2017). The youth remains the most vulnerable to unemployment since they have little work experience. In South Africa, three-quarters of unemployed individuals are aged 35 and younger, and 65 percent have never been employed (Cloete, 2015). One in three working-age young people has a job (Shankar et al., 2016). As a result, South Africa faces the prospect of having a generation faced with the erosion of skills and human capital (Shankar et al., 2016).

Acquiring critical skills and lack of education

Between 2008 and 2014, the youth unemployment rate increased from 2.6 million to 3.4 million, and this was due to structural unemployment (Cloete, 2015). Employers find that the youth are unprepared and underqualified for the available jobs. In post-apartheid South Africa, skills development is vital to the youth (Dlamini, 2020). Griesel and Parker (2009) conducted a survey and found that employers look for interactive skills, applied knowledge, workplace skills, and intellectual ability when recruiting. Other skills include technological knowledge, business acumen, and problem-solving skills. Most youth who lack the required skills come from historically black institutions where they did not acquire or develop these skills (Oluwajodu et al., 2015). The youth potential is not fully known, and provision is made by section 8 of the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995 (Labour Relations Act, 1995), making it difficult for employers to shed non-performing employees. Therefore, employers are more risk-averse to hiring inexperienced youth (Yu, 2013). Between 1995 and 2011, the employment elasticity of economic growth for adults was 0.68, and for the youth, 0.43. These results indicate that the youth is more likely to be laid off during the economic recession, affecting their ability to gain experience and skills. Furthermore, in a developing country like South Africa, there is a lack of available jobs suitable for entry-level skills (Yu, 2013). The youth in South Africa is unskilled due to a cyclical increase in unemployment in various sectors, poor infrastructure and weakness in the training systems, a deteriorating education system, and a shortage of investment in skills (Shava & Clementine, 2016).

The youth is prepared for the world of employment at TVET (technical and vocational education and training) colleges in fields such as bricklaying, plumbing, electronic and electrical engineering. However, employers had to retrain TVET College youth graduates they

employed due to the curriculum at the colleges being so irrelevant (Rivombo & Motseke, 2021). The curricula have not fostered critical skills like vocational and entrepreneurial skills, computer literacy, interpersonal skills, creativity, critical thinking, leadership, communication, problem-solving, technological knowledge, and business acumen (Shankar et al., 2016). As a result, many youth graduates started experiencing unemployment because employers searched outside of South Africa for the required skills. The poor education system does not equip the youth with the needed skills (Webb, 2021). Shava and Clementine (2016) found that the South African education system needs to be upgraded. South Africa requires 40,000 engineers per annum, but the country can only produce 13,000 engineers. Rivombo and Motseke (2021) found that the existing educational structure is not meeting the youth's South African education and training needs. Hence, the only way to address the skill shortage in South Africa is to invest in training and education (Shava & Clementine, 2016). Mncayi (2016) found that the private sector struggled to fill an estimated 800,000 vacancies while there were 600,000 university graduates unemployed.

The skills required in the South African labour market are health science, technology, science, and education (Marumo & Sebolaaneng, 2019). Most youths do not pursue these fields because they find it challenging to pass mathematics and physical science in Grade 12. Naong (2011) analysed why unemployment among the youth is high and found a weakness in the South African education system, and individuals choose the wrong field of study. Humanities and arts graduates are not needed in the South African labour market, and they are the second largest majority of unemployed people in South Africa (Marumo & Sebolaaneng, 2019). Some youth complete qualifications at tertiary institutions that employers do not recognise.

Furthermore, low quality of education is provided in some tertiary institutions since they cannot hire high-quality lecturers and research staff (Dlamini, 2020). Tertiary education is low among the youth, with 61,358 honours graduates and 113 Master's or Doctorate graduates (Thwala, 2011). Panday et al. (2013) found the youth is aware of the fundamental and critical role education plays in obtaining employment. In total, 51,3 percent of the youth stated that a lack of qualification for the job was the main reason for unemployment. Other reasons were financial difficulty associated with job search 11,2 percent, work experience 13,6 percent, and areas where they lived 21,4 percent. Economically active youth increased from 6 million to 8.4 million between 1997 and 2002, but the number of youths employed increased from 4.3 million to 4.9 million (Panday et al., 2013).

Patel et al. (2020) found that the unemployment rate of youth with no matriculant certificate was at 55 percent, while those with a matriculant certificate was at 36 percent, and those with tertiary qualifications was at 8 percent. Education is vital in developing human resources, attitudes, knowledge, and skills. Education serves as a means to the global knowledge economy, providing the foundation for transformation and industrialisation (Dlamini, 2020). Mpendulo and Mang'anyi (2018) conducted a study in the Eastern Cape and found a relationship between educational level and youth unemployment. Most of the youth in South Africa cannot cope with their studies. Therefore, they are poorly educated and drop out early (Yu, 2013). Before reaching Grade 12, 40 percent of learners drop out (Rivombo & Motseke, 2021). In 2018, 3.3 million youth living in South Africa were not in employment, training, or education. The youth makes up 71 percent of individuals discouraged from continuing their job search (Mago, 2018). Altman et al. (2014) found that 56 percent of youth lived in a household where no adult was in formal employment, and one-third (36 percent) of them lived in a household with no working adult. As a result, the primary explanation for dropping out of school and university was financial reasons (Altman et al., 2014). Those who receive government funding may also have to support their families. Therefore, they must enter the labour market (Lam et al., 2009). Thus, due to the high demand in the South African labour market, not having proper education results in youth unemployment (Yu, 2013). In recent years, learnerships and internships have targeted youth with degrees or diplomas (Kheswa, 2017).

Marumo and Sebolaaneng (2019) found that the South African basic education system still follows apartheid-type dimensions perpetuating inequality. In a democracy, race is not the issue but the family's financial capabilities. The skills required in the labour market are more likely to be acquired by youth who attend well-functioning schools and have proper resources (Marumo & Sebolaaneng, 2019). Schools in rural areas do not have basic facilities like computers and libraries. The infrastructure includes insufficient classrooms, no learning material, and no proper toilets. The youth is still educated about being low-class labourers (Marumo & Sebolaaneng, 2019). Most of the youth in these areas are illiterate and are faced with the prospect of unemployment since the economy demands skilled labour. Youth unemployment among Africans was 70 percent, while for whites it was 12 percent (Mlatsheni & Rospabé, 2002). Kasongo (2013) found that between 2001 and 2007, under the narrow definition of employed and unemployed persons, the highest unemployment rate was associated with the youth, individuals who were previously in unskilled occupations, blacks,

and women. Hunter (2019) found that in South Africa, youth can access valuable forms of symbolic capital required to pursue professional employment when they attend schools in historically white areas. Rivombo and Motseke (2021) found that many poor youths in South Africa cannot afford tertiary education, affecting their employment and skill development. Chibba and Luiz (2011) found that Africans with Bachelor's degrees or higher made up 1.8 percent and 9.1 percent have had some form of tertiary qualification, while whites had 19.4 percent and 40 percent, respectively. Increased social and economic costs will be experienced in South Africa if youth unemployment is not dealt with through long-term and short-term policies, such as developing higher critical manpower needs for the economy through education systems and public work programmes (Jeke & Wanjuu, 2021).e

Lack of availability of opportunities and high expectations of job seekers

The youth finds it difficult to find job opportunities due to poor market mechanisms and inadequate market information. The human resource structures and processes further prevent the youth from attaining opportunities, such as low-risk hiring. Employers and experienced workers are favoured over first-time job seekers (Shankar et al., 2016), since employers are reluctant to invest resources in training the youth due to less profit and less productivity. Furthermore, Schedule 8 of the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995 states that employers cannot just dismiss employees for poor performance (1995 labour relations act). Therefore, employers feel more risk-averse (Yu, 2013). Between 1995 and 2011, the employment elasticity of economic growth for adults was 0.68. For the youth it was 0.42. These results indicate that during the economic recession, the youth is more likely to be laid off (Yu, 2013).

South Africa has many minerals and human resources (Banda et al., 2016). However, these resources have not been optimally utilised due to adverse policies by the government, mismanagement, and corruption (Banda et al., 2016). According to Banda et al. (2016), almost R250 million was spent upgrading former president Jacob Zuma's house; this money came from taxpayers. Not using these resources appropriately results in youth unemployment (Banda et al., 2016).

A study conducted in South Africa found that the youth felt that the government was not creating enough job opportunities (Cloete, 2015). Since democracy, the youth realise their lives have not changed for the better. Since democracy has been obtained, the youth has been

forgotten, although during apartheid, they served as “footsoldiers” (Cloete, 2015). Many youth have lost their lives since they participated in the demonstration at the grassroots level in protest against the apartheid policies (Cloete, 2015).

More than 2,000 youth marched through Johannesburg to demand employment in October 2012, led by Julius Malema. The youth was met by former president Jacob Zuma who promised to establish 5 million jobs (Mago, 2018). Rivombo and Motseke (2021) state that the government should protect citizens against unemployment by reforming the unemployment insurance systems, implementing trade policies that promote quality employment, and ensuring job security.

Rankin and Roberts (2011) state four reasons why the youth is not provided with job opportunities. Firstly, the youth enters and exits the labour market during periods they would otherwise engage in education. Therefore, they are likely to display seasonal unemployment patterns. Secondly, the youth is less emotionally mature; consequently, they are likely to quit or be dismissed from employment. Thirdly, to compete with older employees, the youth is less equipped. Fourthly, the youth is less likely to have families to support and may receive financial assistance from their families, and they are less risk-averse and less dependent on their wage income. As a result, when a general excess supply of labour or aggregate demand in an economy leads to a firm downsizing, the youth faces unemployment (Rankin & Roberts, 2011). A study by Yu (2012) examined data obtained from 1995 to 2011 and found that persons aged at least 30 or younger (25 to 29-year olds, 49 percent, and 15 to 24 year olds, 27 percent) have been seeking employment longer than three years.

Penniston (2021) found that the policies established by the South African government, like considerable legal protection and a high minimum wage, contribute to high youth unemployment. The stipulated minimum wage started by the South African policymakers prevents job creation for many unskilled youths. Many organisations have a poor relationship between pay and productivity, little cooperation between employees and employers, and inefficient hiring and firing procedures. These factors discourage employers from hiring new employees. Employers look to reduce their labour force of less skilled and less experienced employees, directly impacting on the youth’s employment prospects (Penniston, 2021).

In South Africa, youth is the majority; therefore, youth unemployment is high, coupled with the fact that more and more youth are graduating from university (Mbandlwa & Shezi, 2020). With the hope of finding better employment, university and college graduates spend years

obtaining their education. In South Africa, graduate youth unemployment increases yearly. In 2018 it was 19.5 percent, and in 2019 it increased to 31 percent (Mbandlwa & Shezi, 2020). Youth without tertiary education makes up a large proportion of unemployed youth. There is a shortage of entry-level positions in a developing country like South Africa (Dlamini, 2020). Since those with tertiary education are unemployed, the youth is demotivated to pursue or further their education. According to Mbandlwa and Shezi (2020), a burden is placed on universities that are seen as institutions of knowledge production because youth is not allowed to apply their knowledge since the government cannot control the unemployment rate.

In South Africa, employees are allowed to work beyond retirement age. According to the Labour Relations Act section 187(1) (Labour Relations Act, 1995), it is unfair and illegal to dismiss an employee based on age (Mbandlwa & Shezi, 2020). South African history is used as a scapegoat to justify why many old employees, due to retire, are still working in the private and public sectors, reducing employment opportunities for the youth. When experienced workers are available for employment, employers are reluctant to invest resources in youth training. For South Africa to prosper, the youth must be provided employment opportunities to express their new ideas. Senior employees above 65 must transfer their skills and knowledge to the youth. Youth unemployment can be reduced if the South African government encourages private and public sector employees to retire (Mbandlwa & Shezi, 2020).

Mncayi (2016) found that aptitudes and attitudes of job seekers are just as important to employers as academic qualifications. Unrealistic high expectations of graduate youth impacted on youth unemployment (Marumo & Sebolaaneng, 2019). Mncayi (2016) found that immediately after completing their studies, the youth feels entitled to high positions, such as managerial positions, and high salaries. Senior positions require years of work experience; therefore, their high hopes are irrational. Graduate youth is not given permanent positions in the labour market because universities do not provide adequate training and work experience (Marumo & Sebolaaneng, 2019). Graduate youth is required to participate in internship programmes to acquire work experience. Work experience is gained over time in the labour market. The behaviour displayed by the graduate youth shows that they do not consider or understand this. Graduate youth refuses low positions and lower salaries, so some prefer to remain unemployed. They have wage demands beyond the market-clearing wage for new entrants (Marumo & Sebolaaneng, 2019).

Educated youth becomes redundant/useless resources. They miss out on training and development on new methods, hence, they become “rusty”. Work experience cannot be overlooked. Educated persons lose out on gaining proficiency through work experience if they are not working (Pharatlhathe & Byiers, 2019).

Cost of Job Search

The process of job recruitment has been revolutionised due to technological advancements. Employment application has become an online activity. Inequality has been created between those who have access to search and apply for jobs and those who do not (Oyedemi & Choung, 2020). In South Africa, internet users make up 56.2 percent of the population. Oyedemi and Choung (2020) found that the price of prepaid mobile broadband in South Africa ranked 35th out of 50 African countries, where the average cost per gig is \$6.9 (R115) compared to Egypt \$1.98 (R20), and Liberia \$0.03 (R0.15). A study conducted in South Africa by Baldry (2013) found that socio-economic status affects job searching and unemployment. This raises concerns about how many South African unemployed youth from disadvantaged backgrounds would be able to apply for employment (Oyedemi & Choung, 2020).

A study conducted in Cape Town (Webb, 2021) found that employment is located mainly in the city, Southern and Northern suburbs, and in these areas, only 37 percent of the population live there. Furthermore, it costs the youth R200 a day to search for employment, including the cost of printing CVs and taxi or bus fare. A survey found that the main reasons for unemployment were no money for transport to look for work, and a lack of jobs in the area where the individual lives, therefore, the youth has lost hope (Tshabalala, 2014). In that way poor youth may be excluded from employment opportunities. In South Africa, age is an important labour market segmentation; more uncertainty is faced by the youth concerning abilities, a lack of social capital, or strong network and financial resources, which affect their employability (Maskaeva & Msafiri, 2021).

The Effects of Unemployment

Experience is one of the core factors that employers look at when hiring new employees. Candidates who have more experience have a greater chance of increasing a business's

productivity as they already have the skills and expertise to excel in the workplace. Experience forms the foundation of hiring at most companies and it is sought for by most employers.

The social effects of unemployment

A critical and formative period for the youth is transitioning to their first sustainable job. During this period, youth experiencing a long period of unemployment can experience a loss of social networks and the ability to develop essential skills (Rainsford et al., 2019). Unemployment causes the youth to experience a loss of confidence and lower cognitive skills, such as learning and processing information, impacting on their adaptability and productivity (McQuaid, 2017).

A study by Kroft et al. (2016) found that youth experiences erosion of their skills when unemployed for an extended period and experiences poorer prospects of finding employment. A study by Kroft et al. (2013) in the US found that youth with different levels of education who experience long periods of unemployment was less likely to receive a call-back from employers. Those who experience long durations of unemployment suffer social exclusion from the labour market and become discouraged (Moerane, 2016). Furthermore, prolonged unemployment causes stigmatisation (Ayllón et al., 2022).

A loss of self-confidence, withdrawal and the inability to retain one's social and material status are experienced when unemployed (Grzenda, 2019). Griep et al. (2012) collected samples of unemployed persons in South Africa and found a low connection with society and low self-worth. Often the unemployed experience stigmatisation in society (Du Toit, 2018). They resent society because they feel society has rejected them (Petros et al., 2015). Since they do not have a positive sense of identity and status, the unemployed person may hide away from others in the community. Saleem and Hussain (2018) found that unemployed youth experiences inadequate contact with people and less social interaction; generally, social exclusion. In the US, unemployed youth experiences alienation, anger, and pervasive feelings of hopelessness.

The Psychological effects of unemployment

Employment is a vital determinant of self-esteem. Unemployed youth experiences lower levels of psychological well-being, ranging from depression, anxiety, and self-harm because of a lack of structured time, social context, and status (Bhat & Joshi, 2020). Depression is associated with a loss of position and the loss of self-esteem. Unemployment affects the psychology of

the youth, and therefore they experience a lower quality of life, dysfunctional relationships, a loss of social life, and decreased self-esteem (Bhat & Joshi, 2020).

According to Van der Meer and Wielers (2016), unemployed individuals experience a loss of commitment and self-esteem because having a job is important, and individuals use their jobs as a basic comparison with others. Unemployment reduces the outcome of social comparison and lowers the individual's reflected appraisal, hence, losing their self-esteem. Happiness is part of subjective well-being, and it is reduced due to lower self-esteem. Van der Meer and Wielers (2016) found that the principles of self-esteem include self-attribution, social comparison and reflected appraisal.

Cognition and behaviour are influenced by self-esteem. In securing and holding employment, self-esteem is an important psychological quality (Huysse-Gaytandjieva et al., 2015). When unemployed youth compares themselves to working individuals, they experience hostility (Kheswa, 2017).

The history between unemployment and mental well-being dates back to 1930. A large number of research found a negative experience between unemployment and psychological well-being (Russell et al., 2020). Studies by Lloyd and Leibbrandt (2014) found that a consequence of unemployment is the experience of poor health. Health care during unemployment is neglected, and money is spent on other items (Madureira-Lima et al., 2018). Studies by Pharr et al. (2012) found that unemployed individuals had poorer access to health-care services than employed persons; therefore, they experienced mental health issues. Compared to employed youth, unemployed youth experienced increased levels of depression and psychological distress with low levels of self-regard. The youth experienced psychological distress due to unemployment, even after considering confounding factors and initial mental health status. Job searching and re-employment are impeded when the youth's well-being is deficient (Du Toit, 2018).

Employment is considered the primary determinant of health (Bhat & Joshi, 2020). Thus, there is an association between youth unemployment and heart attacks in later life, poor physical health, and high stress with the youth contemplating suicide. The youth is expected to be employed and contribute to the family and society's growth due to investment in the youth. Unemployment results in the youth experiencing a loss of self-confidence, resulting in depression, mental illness, and malnutrition (Panday et al., 2013). Dlamini et al. (2019) found the youth engaged in poor health behaviour such as smoking, substance abuse, and sexual risk-taking due to unemployment after graduating.

Unemployed people become convinced that they are incapable of finding employment and discourage themselves from further attempts because of unsuccessful job searches (Moerane, 2016).

When being introduced to someone for the first time, the person's employment status is usually included in the first topic (Mzizi, 2017). However, unemployment robs the person of their sense of identity. When a person experiences unemployment, their identity changes, and they feel worthless, powerless and disorientated. A person's identity is influenced by employment. In front of society, individuals see themselves as naked. They believe they are stigmatised and embarrassed by other people knowing they are unemployed (Mzizi, 2017).

Society places high importance on employment, especially if they have a strong social work norm (Willemse, 2015). When unemployed people fail to adhere to this norm, they experience embarrassment and shame. Certain individuals in these societies have a hostile attitude towards unemployed persons. They believe unemployed people lack discipline, good working practice, motivation, flexibility, and competence. Furthermore, negative public attitude causes unemployed people to experience shame (Willemse, 2015).

The Economic effects of unemployment

Individuals experience a downfall in their financial well-being due to unemployment. As a result, human hardship is experienced, affecting their ability to support their families since money allows people to have life experiences and control their lives (Mzizi, 2017). These experiences are vital to developing and maintaining a healthy self-esteem and identity. In individual autonomy is limited due to a loss of finances.

When people become unemployed, financial deprivation is the most common difficulty experienced. Financial pressure influences the individual's decision to pursue temporary work, further education, or training. Financial distress is significantly tied to perceptions of job loss and self-assessment of overall career adaptability (Siemens, 2000). A study by Creed and Macintyre (2001) found that a person's financial situation is the most important predictor of well-being. A study by Amundson and Borgen (1987) found that individuals experienced negative emotions when affected by financial pressure, negative attitudes, and unproductive job search activities; they felt they were not contributing to society or their families and engaged excessively in unproductive activities (such as watching television).

Unemployment forces the youth to adjust their standard of living and their ability to plan. The youth has to delay important decisions such as getting married and having a family due to a lack of economic resources (Voßemer et al., 2018). The experience of social problems might emerge, such as leaving behind friends and family in need of finding a job. Hussainat et al. (2013) conducted a study on unemployed youth in Jordan and found that the major psychological impacts of unemployment were inferiority complex, anxiety, and carelessness, and a delay in marriages.

Coping with Unemployment

Coping is a cognitive and behavioural effort to manage internal or external demands experienced as exceeding or taxing an individual's resources. Factors such as resilience determine the coping styles individuals adopt in a stressful situation, resulting in the deterioration or maintenance of health (Willemse, 2015).

Problem-focused Coping vs Emotion-focused Coping

When coping is directed towards managing or altering the problem causing distress, it is referred to as problem-focused coping (Willemse, 2015). Unemployed people can use a problem-focused approach by applying for a new job or re-skilling. Employees utilised problem-focused coping when a situation is controllable (Willemse, 2015).

Emotion-focused coping is when coping is directed towards regulating the emotional response to the problem (Willemse, 2015). When people deal with personal feelings and reactions to the problem by avoiding to solve it, they employ emotion-focused coping. Emotion-based coping is more likely to occur in an unstable employment environment, and the individual is more likely to experience health problems. Employees use emotion-focused coping when a situation is not controllable (Willemse, 2015).

McKee-Ryan et al. (2005) found that emotion-focused coping and problem-focused coping were associated with good mental health among unemployed people. These results were found among people who managed their stress levels indirectly through emotion-focused coping, such as getting involved in community activities, seeking financial assistance or social support, devaluing one's former job, or distancing oneself from the job loss, and indirectly through problem-focused coping, such as engaging in non-work activities, reframing negative thought

positively, seeking to relocate to an area of increased employment opportunities or enrolling in retraining or re-skill programmes (McKee-Ryan et al., 2005).

The Role of Internal and External Factors

Stress occurs when an individual evaluates a situation as exceeding or taxing their available resources and jeopardizing their well-being (Hoare, 2007). The available resources that help individuals to cope with unemployment are internal (self-efficacy and self-esteem) and external (financial and social). As a result, to manage stressful situations, individuals require personal characteristics or environmental resources (Hoare, 2007). McKee-Ryan et al. (2005) state that personal resources are vital for unemployed people's mental health and well-being. Components of the core self-evaluation include self-esteem, locus of control, self-efficacy, and affectivity, which are important to a person's ability to cope with a stressful situation and evaluate themselves. Thus, these personal resources are crucial, which people can draw upon to cope with unemployment (Hoare, 2007).

Optimism

The psychological effect of unemployment can be moderated through optimism (Mutambara et al., 2018). Optimism is defined as the ability to see the future with generalised positive expectations. Optimistic individuals have great success in attaining goals. These individuals are more likely to experience positive feelings, even when faced with unemployment. Optimism is an effective coping strategy and is very important in predicting psychological well-being (Mutambara et al., 2018).

Social Support

Kieselbach (2003) found that social support is vital among unemployed people. Social support is defined as (a) the support network an individual has, (b) whether the relationship is able to provide adequate emotional and instrumental support to the individual, and (c) interpersonal transaction that includes the individual receiving support, informal or appraisal assistance,

instrumental and emotional aid (Hoare, 2007). Social support helps unemployed individuals to develop adaptive coping skills. Therefore, social support strengthens the ability to cope with adversity in stressful situations. Social support acts as a buffer against stress. A study by Bjarnason and Sigurdardottir (2003) in Northern Europe found that social support played a buffering role in combatting psychological stress among unemployed persons. Unemployed people are aware of the vital role of family support. Mckee-Ryan et al. (2005) found that social support reduced the negative consequences of stressful events and promoted healthy psychological well-being among unemployed people. Between 1987 and 1989, Moller (1991) conducted a study and found that unemployed persons took hand-outs from relatives to continue their job search and relied on their family's income to survive. Despite being unemployed, 91 percent of the respondents stated they felt loved by their families.

Chapter 3 : Theoretical Framework

Jahoda (1981) conducted interviews with the unemployed individuals and found that they experienced disintegrated time structures, family conflict, inactivity, apathy, and depression (Mzizi, 2017). Jahoda (1982) found that employment enlarges the scope of social relations, imposes a time structure on a working day, provides individuals with status, and demonstrates that the purpose and achievement of a collective transcend that for which an individual can aim. According to Jahoda (1982), the ultimate question was what caused these individuals to experience these effects of unemployment; it was either being without a job, or economic hardship. According to Jahoda (1981, 1982, 1997), when an individual experiences unemployment, both factors play a crucial role. Unemployment deprives an individual of various benefits typically gained through employment, and the psychological effects of unemployment cannot be considered in isolation.

Manifest vs. Latent Benefits

Jahoda (1981) calls the differentiation between the manifest and latent function of social institutions the “latent function” of employment. According to the latent deprivation theory, people primarily engage in work for financial rewards (manifest benefits), but many latent by-products (latent functions) are experienced. Individuals have a deep-seated psychological need

to satisfy their latent function, and paid employment helps to fulfil it (Creed & Evans, 2002). According to Jahoda (1981), manifest benefits and latent consequences promote health and well-being. Employment provides people with an income to meet their basic needs, such as clothing, shelter, and food, which are manifest benefits (Allan et al., 2020). When people struggle to meet their basic needs, they experience a loss of manifest benefits, referred to as financial deprivation. Employment provides latent consequences like time structure, social contacts, collective purpose, personal status, and regular activity. As a result, psychological needs like psychological stimulation, social connection, and self-determination are met (Allan et al., 2020).

There is a strong social component in all of the psychological needs specified by Jahoda (1981, 1982, 1997). This is evident for the status-identity dimension and clear for the social contacts dimension to maintain mental health (Batinic et al., 2010). When people cannot meet their psychological needs, they experience a loss of latent benefits, referred to as experiential deprivation. As a result, they experience poor well-being due to a loss of finances and experiential deprivation during unemployment. People in full-time employment have the highest levels of latent benefits, followed by part-time workers, and unemployed persons receive no benefits (Allan et al., 2020). Unemployed people experience more distress than employed people because they are deprived of the latent benefits (Batinic et al., 2010). Paul and Batinic (2010) conducted a study in Germany and found individuals' job status influences the number of latent benefits individuals receive; hence, more health problems are associated with lower status jobs compared to high-status jobs.

Creed et al. (2001) conducted a study and found a significant relationship between psychological distress and financial strain. Furthermore, the study supported Jahoda's (1982) theory that heightened levels of psychological distress were experienced by their participants because of a loss of latent benefits. The heightened psychological distress causes depressive symptoms, resulting in lower self-esteem and affecting the employee's ability to re-enter the labour force (Siemens, 2007).

Time Structure

According to Jahoda (1982), time structure is the most important latent benefit and individuals experience a heavy psychological burden when they lost this benefit. The time-related

restriction and requirements that are placed on individuals are either individually or socially created by the organisation, which are referred to as time structure (Batinic et al., 2010). In society, individuals require a clear time structure to fill their day with planned activities (Paul & Batinic, 2010). Time structure enforces and internalises a daily routine, for example employees are required to start and finish work at a certain time and work a certain number of hours per week (Scheuring, 2020). Creed and Macintyre (2001) found that the best predictor of mental health was whether individuals felt their time was occupied. Furthermore, individuals experienced lower levels of self-esteem, more depression, and higher levels of psychological distress when structured and purposeful time was low (Creed & Macintyre, 2001). When there is nothing to be done, days stretch long, time wastage is experienced and boredom becomes the rule of the day (Paul & Batinic, 2010). Employed persons have more structured and purposeful time than unemployed people (Creed & Macintyre, 2001). Among unemployed people, time structure is a major predictor of depressive symptoms. A special characteristic faced by unemployed people is uncertainty about their future, therefore, the individual experiences impaired time structure (Paul & Batinic, 2010). A university student who had time structure had good psychological well-being. According to Jahoda (1982), unemployed people and retirees experienced the same time structure. Winefield et al. (1992) conducted a study and found that in mediating the negative effects of unemployment, time structure played a buffering role.

Social Contact

Individuals experience positive psychological well-being when they engage in social contact (Creed & Macintyre, 2001). When social capital is high, individual well-being is optimal. Individuals feel good about themselves when they engage in social contact (Glancy, 2012). Creed and Macintyre (2001) found that unemployed people who had few social contacts had low levels of well-being, and unemployed persons who engaged in high levels of social contact had superior well-being. Unemployed people have less social support from close relations and authority figures. They are also involved in fewer social activities than employed people (Creed & Macintyre, 2001). The negative effects of unemployment can be negated by close social support from friends and family (Creed & Macintyre, 2001). Unemployed people experience social isolation, which is linked to decreased participation in social activities and low self-esteem (Glancy, 2012). Social contact provides more opportunity for judgment, more

information, and rational appraisal of other human beings with their various ways of life and opinion. Social contact cannot be replaced by merely intensifying family life (Paul & Batinic, 2010). According to Jahoda (1982), women often speak of the deprivation of losing social contact outside the nuclear family after they give up employment to look after their children.

Collective Purpose

Jahoda (1981, 1982, 1997, as cited in Batinic et al., 2010) used collective purpose to describe an individual's need to be useful to others. According to Jahoda (1982), the way other members of society ascribe to an individual is the way the individuals see themselves. Employment provides individuals with a sense of identity, status, and position in their society (Glancy, 2012). Jahoda (1982) found that employment provides people with the opportunity to feel part of society outside of their nuclear family and a deficiency is experienced due to a loss of this benefit. People need to share their experiences and make contact with people outside of their nuclear family. Jahoda (1982) states that individuals need to know they have a recognised place in society, participate in collective enterprises where they can feel useful, and have a deep-seated need to structure their time use and perspective. A sense of purposelessness occurs, resulting in distress when individuals are deprived of collective purpose (Paul & Batinic, 2010). Howaorth and Paterson (1995, as cited in Glancy, 2012) tested Jahoda's theory in their research and found that individuals' well-being benefitted from the collective purpose. According to Jahoda (1981), unemployment impacts negatively on one's well-being because employment provides a platform for people to feel connected. Individuals experience a surge in their well-being when the collective purpose is gained through leisure or work activities (Creed & Macintyre, 2001). When people are unemployed, they have feelings of having a collective purpose or common goal (Creed & Macintyre, 2001).

Jahoda (1982, cited in Wood et al., 2018) states that identity and status are different elements. Status is anchored in the value system of society and an individual's identity is a personal notion of and image of themselves. However, Jahoda (1982, cited in Wood et al., 2018) claims that they are closely related because people develop their identity through the status ascribed to them by society (Wood et al., 2018).

Activity

Activity describes how people use their time (Scheuring, 2020). Individuals and socially created institutions influence the amount of activity a person experiences (Batinic et al., 2010). Creed and Bartrum (2006) found that unemployed youth with structured or socially gregarious activity had good psychological well-being. Furthermore, an activity played a vital role in helping individuals to access other latent benefits. Individuals can maintain high levels of self-identity when they engage in activities that require high skill levels (Higginbottom et al., 1993). When unemployed people engaged in competence-serving activities such as household chores, socialising and active leisure, they experienced better psychological well-being (Creed & Macintyre, 2001). Being active has a positive effect on a person's well-being, even due to external forces such as the need to earn a living (Paul & Batinic, 2010). Evans and Haworth (1991) conducted a study between two groups on the level of activity; the group with lower levels of activity had less access to latent benefits compared to the group with high-level activity. Waters and Moore (2002), in their sample of employed and unemployed individuals, discovered that social and solitary leisure activity promotes positive self-esteem. Unemployed individuals experience lowered psychological well-being because of a loss of structured activity (Glancy, 2012). Hoare and Machin, (2010) found that unemployed people who were less active experienced psychological distress compared to their counterparts who were active.

Personal Status

Jahoda (1982) found that the job someone does defines their status. The society a person lives in determines their social status and it is essential in the construction of one's identity (Paul & Batinic, 2010). The unemployed experience a loss of identity and an absence of status in society (Glancy, 2012). Creed and Machin (2002) found in their samples of 161 unemployed individuals that status was the lone latent benefit that was a significant predictor of an individual's well-being. Even a low-status employee (manual labourer) has a status compared to unemployed people who have no status at all (Paul & Batinic, 2010). Selenko and Batinic (2011) found that feelings of worthlessness are experienced during unemployment because of financial strain which can be buffered by the societal status and recognition.

Access to Latent Benefits

In modern societies, Jahoda (1988, as cited in Paul et al., 2007) found that employment is the only source able to provide the five latent benefits. Participation in voluntary association and organised religion also provides one or more benefits. However, they are not linked to the economic necessity of making a living. Therefore, employed persons can access all the latent benefits compared to unemployed persons, students, retirees, homemakers, and housewives (Paul et al., 2007).

The negative effects of perceived financial strain on well-being experienced during unemployment might be softened by accessing latent benefits gained through employment or other structures (Selenko & Batinic, 2011). The most important predictor of psychological distress is financial strain, followed by latent benefits status, time structure, and collective purpose (Creed & Bartrum, 2006). Employed women experience higher levels of activity and social contact compared to housewives. Higher levels of social contact, collective purpose, and time structure were detected for employed persons compared to retirees (Paul & Batinic, 2010). Paul and Batinic (2010) found that young unemployed individuals had higher status, more social contact, and lower time structure than older persons. Hoare (2007) found that unemployed individuals who had time structure and social contact had better mental health.

According to Glancy (2012), there is a significant association between well-being and collective purpose, status, and time structure. During unemployment, a person's personal agency is restructured because of poverty. Hence, filling time during the day becomes difficult; through time structure, activity, and collective purpose the stigma and social exclusion can be mitigated (Selenko & Batinic, (2011).

A British study by Miles (1983) found that there was no difference in collective purpose between employed and unemployed persons, but employed people had higher levels of activity, status, time structure and social contact than unemployed persons. A Swedish study by Isaksson (1989) found that among employed single employed men, time structure, activity, and collective purpose were high compared to single unemployed men, but there was no difference between social contact and status. Hence, latent benefits are more freely available to employed people than to unemployed persons, especially regarding activity and time structure. However, some doubt remains about collective purpose, identity/status, and social contact. Unemployed people experience reduced status and collective purpose because of stigmatisation (Paul &

Batinic, 2010). Unemployed people who had time structure and social support experienced better mental health (Hoare & Machin, 2010). According to Creed and Evans (2002), the youth is regarded somewhere between employed and unemployed individuals on the access to the latent functions and level of well-being.

Greater distress is experienced by unemployed with high levels of employee commitment compared to individuals who are ambivalent about employment (Hoare & Machin, 2006). Hoare and Machin (2006) found that individuals who were happily unemployed exhibited high self-esteem and they had good social contacts, and engaged in purposeful activities, whereas individuals who had high employment commitment experienced unhappiness during unemployment, had few social contacts and experienced financial strain and low self-esteem (Hoare & Machin, 2006).

Criticism of the Theory

Several problems have been identified in the latent deprivation theory. Firstly, empirical evidence found that unemployed individuals do not suffer psychologically (Creed & Evans, 2002). In this context, to satisfy their basic psychological needs, people have found alternative ways to access latent functions. Latent benefits can be obtained through maintaining regular contact with people outside the family and continuing the pursuit of purposeful activity. Secondly, empirical evidence found that certain latent functions concerning well-being are more important. According to research activity level, time structure and collective purpose have a stronger effect on well-being than the remaining latent function (Creed & Evans, 2002). Thirdly, the latent functions are given more importance compared to the manifest function. Empirical evidence found that a loss of the manifest function and poverty caused a decline in well-being among unemployed persons (Creed & Evans, 2002), whereas the theory proposes that a loss of latent functions primarily accounts for a decline in well-being when an individual experiences unemployment. Fourthly, other populations apart from those in the labour market also experience the association between latent function and well-being. Fifthly, the basis of the latent deprivation theory is that employment is universally beneficial to psychological well-being. However, the empirical evidence found that individuals do not experience employment as universally beneficial or satisfying; indeed, improvements in well-being can be experienced after leaving dissatisfying and stressful work (Creed & Evans, 2002). Lastly, it is generalised

that employment which is paid is beneficial. There is a failure to acknowledge that people perceive situational information based on individuals' differences in personality and disposition. The theory ignores the fact that people have different functions in a situation, unique experiences, values, previous experiences, and temperament to evaluate conditions. Therefore, the model must consider individual differences that people bring to a life situation and give more. Creed and Evans (2002) found that the theory can benefit from recognising the interplay of people's personalities.

According to Jahoda (1982), being in the poorest form of employment is better than experiencing unemployment. In some forms of employment, employees are forced to engage in excessively demanding activities and there are unpleasant social contacts or overly rigid time structures. Even under such poor working conditions, Jahoda (1982) believes that employment was better. According to Hoare (2007), employees in unsatisfactory employment conditions experience psychological distress the same as unemployed people. Over-employment (heavier workload) and under-employment have increased in the past decade and have significantly impacted on employee well-being. Hoare (2007) found that individuals experience mental distress burnout and depression because of overworking, and the increased prevalence of heart rate has been linked to under-employment. Employment activity determines people's psychological well-being, with the highest risk of poor mental health being experienced by dissatisfied workers, satisfied employees experiencing healthy well-being, and unemployed persons being in between. Hoare (2007) found that the workplace influences an individual's well-being and whether individuals can keep a job or successfully find employment (Hoare, 2007).

Galić (2007) found that the relative deprivation theory is criticised because it encourages unemployed people to ascribe to passivity. Furthermore, individuals are actively trying to achieve self-determination, continuously attempting to make sense of events, in line with goals, personal values, and expectations of the future in a context of cultural norms, traditions, and past experiences. Finally, unemployment restricts and discourages individuals' agency, which damages them psychologically (Galić, 2007).

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

Research methodology refers to the way individuals collect and analyse data (Mbhele, 2021). Research methodology provides the science of how the research will be conducted. During the methodology, knowledge is gained (Goundar, 2012). Research methodology uses a design procedure to investigate a research problem and state how data collection can be conducted successfully (Adegbenjo, 2019). In the execution of the study, the methodology drives the methods that the researcher inquirer will follow (Kheswa, 2021). How the research question will be approached and answered is determined by the methodology (Taylor et al., , 2015). According to Henning et al. (2004), research methodology includes a coherent group of methods that suit the purpose of the study. The methods complement each other and are fit to deliver data and findings that reflect the research question.

Research Design

Research design contains the blueprint for collecting, measuring, and analysing data and explaining observations to solve the research problem (Mbonambi, 2018). Research design serves as a bridge between the research questions and conducting the research (Mbhele, 2021). The goal of the research design is to answer the research questions using multiple data generation methods and to assist the researcher in exploring and explaining the phenomenon under study (Mokoena, 2021). According to Kumar (2011), to answer the research questions successfully, the research design assists in creating and identifying relevant tools and techniques. Therefore, credible results are produced when the researcher has a good research design (Mbhele, 2021).

Exploratory Research

According to Neuman (2006), research is conducted for various reasons, such as describing, explaining, or exploring a finding, an assumption, or a phenomenon. Exploratory research is most suited when researching a new area of inquiry (Mbhele, 2021). According to Burns and Grove (2001), when researchers want to gain new insight, discover new ideas and increase their

knowledge about a phenomenon, they employ exploratory research. There is a limited amount of research on how the youth of Chatsworth experience unemployment, therefore, qualitative research was considered most suitable since the research explored a phenomenon about which little is known.

Exploratory research explores the research topic with varying levels of depth, but does not seek to provide the final and conclusive answer to the research question (Mbhele, 2021). Exploratory research provides the groundwork for further vigorous studies to occur in the area of interest. A new hypothesis is developed with the new information generated. The use of exploratory research was determined by the objective of the study (Phajane, 2020). Lastly, exploratory research has two purposes, firstly, the researcher is allowed to observe the phenomena, and secondly, the research provides insight into and meaning to the given situation (Greener, 2019).e

Qualitative Research

A qualitative research design was chosen for this study because the researcher would be able to explore how unemployed youth experience unemployment. Qualitative research is context-sensitive, therefore it provided the perfect platform to research the experiences of unemployed youth living in Chatsworth (Ngubane, 2018). Qualitative research allows deep experiences and perceptions to emerge and to explore the research question in-depth (Mahabeer, 2019). Hence, the researcher would be able to obtain an understanding of the youth's thoughts, feelings, and interpretations of how the youth experiences and copes with unemployment (Van Rooyen, 2018). These vital aspects enable the researcher to better understand how the participant experiences the phenomenon in qualitative research. An important characteristic of qualitative research is that it allows the researcher to collect data in a close, intimate, and humanly way (Mahabeer, 2019).

Qualitative research is used when human factors like conviction, motivation, outlook, and discerning are widely examined and cannot be broken down quantitatively (Gcaza, 2021). The researcher created or determined the total precision and depiction of a research theme of interest. Therefore, the participant's contribution or reaction is not limited (Gcaza, 2021).

Qualitative research design takes an individual's subjective experiences as real. Through interaction and listening carefully to what these individuals have to say, these subjective

experiences are constructed (Mahabeer, 2019). A qualitative study entails studying this subjective matter using an interpretive and naturalistic approach, therefore, it is considered a multi-method approach. The interpretation of experiences and the meaning attached to those experiences form the basis of qualitative research (Gcaza, 2021). In qualitative research, the researcher can understand the social world because the researcher connects and gives power to language and expression to the people involved (Mahabeer, 2019).

According to Creswell (2007), qualitative research focuses on identifying and understanding what meanings individuals attach to a phenomenon; furthermore, the phenomenon is not manipulated but rather understood from the participants' perspective. Since this study was interested in answering research questions that drew on the participants' experiences, beliefs and meaning, qualitative research was considered most suitable as it is informed by the social situation and context (Phajane, 2020).

Qualitative research is conducted through an interactive relationship between people, spaces, and objects (Willig, 2008). The research focuses on interpreting people's feelings and experiences rather than quantification and measurement; therefore, it was considered the most suitable approach for this study. Merriam (2009) states that qualitative research is an inductive process, the research is richly descriptive, the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and the research focuses on process, understanding, and meaning.

Qualitative research comprises material and interpretive practices that make the world more noticeable and allows the researcher to be located (Luthuli, 2021). The practice transforms the world into a series of representations such as interviews, memos, photographs, field notes, recordings, and conversations. Data is organised into categories and patterns are identified among the data and this process is primarily inductive. From the research context, data and meanings originate "organically" (Mbhele, 2021).

Qualitative researchers work with a relatively small number of participants because data collection and analysis are often more time-consuming and labour intensive than quantitative research (Nkosi, 2019). Qualitative research aims to understand the topic under investigation. It is concerned with the process or meaning that individuals attach to their given social situation; therefore, a small number of participants are used (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). In qualitative research, the relevant categories of respondents are identified within the target population because the population is too large to include in its entirety in the study (Neuman,

2014). Sarantakos (2005) states that data gathered verbally is not presented in numbers or formulae, but rather in a detailed and complete form.

The research process is flexible because the researcher plays a pivotal role in creating knowledge; the researcher influences and shapes the research process. Reflexivity means that the researcher takes a constant stance in their role and actions in the research process that are subjected to scrutiny just like the data (Willig, 2008). Babbie and Mouton (2005) found that more valuable information emerges spontaneously in qualitative research because of its flexibility. Pillow (2003) states that reflexivity legitimises, validates, and questions the research process; therefore, it is vital. According to Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011), two types of reflexivity exist: interpersonal and personal reflexivity. Interpersonal reflexivity recognises the personal dynamics between the researcher and participant and the interview. On the other hand, personal reflexivity alludes to how researchers reflect on their backgrounds, which may influence the research process. Therefore, to comprehend how data was created through the data gathering process, the researcher employed both personal and interpersonal reflexivity (Nkosi, 2019).

Qualitative research avoids generalising and predicting a phenomenon but rather seeks to understand the phenomenon in question (Cassim, 2020). Qualitative research employs meaning rather than forms of data analysis and relies on linguistics and not numerical data. The research questions are not closed-ended hypotheses, but rather open-ended and exploratory. Ormston et al. (2014) found that however many types of questions are avoided, qualitative research adopts what and how to type questions to a particular phenomenon.

Qualitative research uses strict control of variables, unlike quantitative research, which focuses on estimating and using figures to prove or disapprove a hypothesis (Cele, 2021). The quantitative approach is fixed and a linear approach to research and thus requires a pre-planned guide that the researcher is obliged to use to conduct the research according to a pre-planned design, which limits reclusiveness, but this research requires flexibility and recursiveness, therefore qualitative research was the most appropriate since this study deals with experiences of unemployed youth (Kheswa, 2021).

Interpretive Paradigm

A research paradigm is a lens through which view and understand the world. The paradigm the researcher chooses guides their actions (Ngubane, 2012). Bertram and Christiansen (2014) state that the paradigm guides the research question, the method used in data collection, and it analyses the finding, which is the most important. According to Scotland (2012), various types of paradigms exist, such as critical, interpretive, and positivist paradigms.

The interpretive paradigm was considered the most suitable for this study. The interpretive paradigm emerged from the philosophy of Edmund Husserl, Wilhelm Dilthey and other German philosophers (Mbhele, 2021). In this paradigm, the researcher is not detached from the subject they are studying, but is inextricably part of the social reality being researched (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). Interpretive research aims not to uncover universal context, value-free knowledge, and truth, but to understand the participants' experiences. According to Cohen et al. (2007), the social phenomenon in interpretive research is to understand the participant's perspective and not the researcher's perspective (Rehman, & Alharthi, 2016).

The researcher has an insider's perspective since the process is dynamic, which allows the researcher to have an active role. The researcher adopts a facilitative approach for open-ended inquiry to gather qualitative data from the respondents using interviews. The researcher works with detailed verbatim transcripts containing personal information that is in-depth and rich in data (Luthuli, 2021).

The interpretive paradigm draws widely and selectively from a range of ideas in philosophy and avoids trying to operationalise a specific philosophical idea. Smith et al. (2009) state that in the interpretive paradigm, the researcher must have a close interpretive engagement to make sense of what is being said or written. The paradigm emphasizes a dual relationship where the researcher is trying to make sense of the participant and the participant is making sense of their lived experiences (Phajane, 2020).

Hence, there is no single route to true reality. In this approach a small sample size is used, therefore, the interpretive paradigm is appropriate for qualitative research (Phajane, 2020). This paradigm's strength originates from its naturalistic approach, depending solely on communication from human interaction. The production of knowledge is in-depth and reflective of the participant's experiences as they have lived them and the world is considered dynamic and complex (Phajane, 2020).

Sampling

Guest et al. (2013) state that a sample is the research's unit of analysis. The researcher chooses samples based on their ability to provide rich information to represent the entire study population at which you look for variability; hence, the sample includes relevant groups, communities, and individuals. The research objective and the aim of the study determine who the samples are going to be (Maphumulo, 2019). The researcher can experience advantages such as saving money, time, and effort while still delivering credible results; however, sampling must be done correctly. Therefore, the researcher only includes a subset of the population in the study (Gumbi, 2021). Ghaljaie et al. (2017) state that the ideal situation is to collect data from all individuals to obtain effective, true, and precise outcomes. However, sampling techniques are used because testing all individuals is difficult.

The National Youth Commission Act of 1996 define the youth as anybody between the ages of 14 and 35 (National Youth Commission, 1997). Although this is a broad definition of youth, the age range embraces various categories of the youth who have been exposed to different socio-political and historical experiences. Samples for this study were from Indian youth aged between 20 and 30 years who have experienced unemployment for six months or longer. The sample comprised a minimum of six participants or until data saturation was reached.

The study used non-probability sampling. Non-probability sampling avoids the general usability of results but seeks to understand human issues in their deepest (Biyela, 2019). The researcher specifically looked for participants who would serve the purpose of the study in non-probability sampling (Ngcobo, 2019).

Sampling Technique

The study was be guided by purposive and snowball sampling. Snowball sampling is when one participant gives the identity of the next potential participant (Neuman, 2014). Purposive sampling is also called convenience sampling (Neuman, 2014). In purposive sampling, not all individuals in the population have an equal probability of being included in the research because the researcher determines the inclusion and exclusion criteria (Ngcobo, 2021). The

participants are chosen carefully according to their knowledge and their qualities. According to Achayra et al. (2013), purposive sampling is the most commonly used sampling technique in qualitative research. The technique allowed the researcher to select youth between the ages of 20 to 30 years old living in Chatsworth who are experiencing unemployment.

Table 4.1:

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals living in Chatsworth for longer than two years • Must be unemployed for six months or longer • Between the age of 20 to 30 years • Must be able to understand English • Must have access to social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals living in Chatsworth for less than two years • Being unemployed for less than six months • Younger than 20 years old and older than 30 years old • Not fluent in English • No access to social media

Data Collection

According to Creswell (2007), gathering information through various interrelated methods to yield a hypothesis on research data is referred to as data collection. According to Struwig and Stead (2017), there are two types of research data when a researcher collects new data for the study; this is called primary data, and when data is available from previous studies other than the current study, this is referred to as secondary data. Since this was a qualitative study and new information was collected from unemployed youth living in Chatsworth, primary data was used (Sathyanand, 2021).

In an interview, the interviewer posed questions to evoke a reaction from the interviewee, and in general, this is a discussion between two individuals. To collect qualitative data, the researcher used interviews to obtain data about the experiences of unemployed youth living in Chatsworth (Ndwalane, 2021). Qualitative interviews allowed the researcher to probe further whenever a response was particularly important, and the researcher (interviewer) was able

clarify any unclear points (Kallio et al., 2016). Interviews were structured according to a time limit; therefore, the interviewer adhered to the agreed-upon time (Ndwalane, 2021).

Various types of interviews exist, such as focus groups, semi-structured or unstructured, and structured interviews (Ndwalane, 2021). However, the researcher used semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions to collect data. A semi-structured interview combines a pre-determined set of open and close-ended questions and is a qualitative technique. Open-ended questions allowed each respondent to reply without being judged (Ndwalane, 2021). Unlike structured interviews, semi-structured interviews did not restrict respondents to a set of pre-determined answers. The researcher was able to probe the unemployed youth to better understand their experiences. Semi-structured interviews allow for more flexibility than structured interviews. The interviewee is allowed to express their ideas and feelings in a semi-structured interview (Ndwalane, 2021). Participants were allowed to voice their experiences of unemployment; therefore, this data generation method was suitable for this study. In qualitative research, semi-structured interviews can provide reliability and dependability of the data. Semi-structured interviews can obtain in-depth data from the participants. Furthermore, participants were allowed to ask questions about the researched phenomenon (Ndwalane, 2021).

Semi-structured interviews are a critical part of qualitative research and a vital tool to uncover knowledge through conversation, interaction, and the different life experiences of the subjects (Kakilla, 2021). The researcher can arrive at a multi-layered conclusion by critically scrutinising the conversation during the semi-structured interview. To uncover hidden information that may turn out to be helpful in the final data analysis, the researcher followed up on all the verbal and non-verbal responses such as silence, laughter, and hunches. The interviewer discussed multiple topics that promoted flexibility (Kakilla, 2021).

Each interview took approximately 45 minutes. Due to COVID-19, interviews were conducted on Zoom or WhatsApp calls. The participants were required to show their faces only at the start of the interview. The participants were reimbursed for the data they used to participate in the study. The interviews were audio-recorded. According to Neuman (2014), with a recording instrument, the researcher can explore topics in more detail, be more attentive during the interview, and identify and note non-verbal cues. During an interview it is impossible to remember all the many detail, therefore, a recording instrument is there to assist (Walker, 2007).

Data Analysis

According to Terre Blanche et al. (2012), the process of data analysis involves building up data in a meaningful way after it has been broken down in the research process. Thematic analysis was used to analyse data derived from the interviews. The thematic analysis focuses on identifying-analysing and reporting patterns/themes within the data, and this process is flexible (Jamieson, 2019). Thematic data analysis is quick and easy to use for novice researchers, therefore, it was deemed suitable (Yildiran & Holt, 2015).

There is a strong relationship between thematic analysis and the interpretive paradigm. Both methods seek to interpret data and reality is obtained through participants' sights, backgrounds, and experiences (Zuma, 2019).

According to Terre Blanche et al. (2006), the following stages in the thematic analysis were followed.

1. Familiarisation and Immersion

In the first stage of the analysis, the researcher sought to understand the meaning of the data (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). The researcher familiarised himself with the data by reading the transcripts several times and making notes. To get a thorough understanding of the transcripts, the researcher re-read the transcripts multiple times over a period of time. The researcher began to prepare for the next stage in the data analysis phase, deducing themes (Terre Blanche et al.2006).

2. Deducing themes

Themes are meanings, activities, and feelings often recurring (Mncono, 2018). After reading the transcripts several times, the researcher began to identify themes that appeared frequently (Terre Blanche et al., 2006).

3. Coding

The researcher recognised certain areas of the data as significant to a recurring theme and they were highlighted. During this stage, the researcher recognised predominant themes and sub-themes. Hence, the data was coded into themes (Terre Blanche et al., 2006).

4. Elaboration

In this stage, themes were explored more closely (Terre Blanche et al., 2006). The researcher examined the themes to derive meaning and align the meaning with the objectives of the study.

5. Interpretation and Checking

In this stage, the researcher checked and interpreted themes and sub-themes of the data to study the experiences of unemployed youth living in Chatsworth (Terre Blanche et al., 2006).

Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, trustworthiness is ensured by addressing four criteria: dependability, credibility, confirmability, and transferability (Ngcobo, 2020). Mkhize (2020) found that trustworthiness encourages norms and values such as professional ethics, scholarly rigour, and transparency within the research society.

Credibility

Credibility refers to when information is obtained, and the researcher makes sure it is not altered or amended, nor will any information be created (Greener, 2019). The findings must represent the participants' reality and experience, and the observed social phenomenon must reflect accurately in the data collected (Ngcobo, 2020). Credible results can be ensured by allowing participants to take their own decisions to participate in the research without coercion and the whole research complying with the ethical process (Ngcobo, 2020). The researcher ensured credibility by fully disclosing the study to each participant, including limits to confidentiality and anonymity. Furthermore, with the use of a recording instrument as proof of the information collected, the researcher will ensure that the information collected is not altered or amended.

Dependability

Dependability refers to convincing other researchers and readers that the findings did occur as portrayed by the study, hence the study is valid (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). When the researcher asks whether the research process is logical, well-documented, and audited, dependability is reached. The researcher used an independent reader to read and audit the transcripts and analyse them to ensure that dependability is reached. Lincoln and Guba (1985) state that credibility can be used to affirm dependability, therefore, there is a close relationship between credibility and dependability. In the study, dependability was obtained through a detailed account of processes specified in the collection of data and data analysis to obtain the results (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). To ensure accuracy, the interview reports were shown to the interviewees to ensure that everything written down has been justified. The researcher employed member check criteria and peer review reading. Furthermore, the research was not biased and did not display stereotyping. All participants were given the same interview questions. All participants were treated with the same dignity and respect.

Transferability

The research process and context transferability were achieved by providing a detailed report about the study participants. Transferability allows other researchers to check if the study can be compared and used in their study (Masambuka, 2020). The study's transferability is supported by the researcher being transparent about analysis and trustworthiness, a richly detailed description of the people being studied, location, and context (Mkhize, 2020).

Conformability

Conformability refers to how the researcher addresses influences or biases in the research and whether the findings are repeatable and consistent (Mkhize, 2020). The researcher should keep a detailed note of all their analyses and decisions during the research. The study can be discussed in a peer-debriefing session with other qualitative researchers and reviewed by a colleague (Polit & Beck, 2014).

Reliability

Reliability refers to consistency in measurement over repeated measures. Furthermore, reliability is seen as a degree to which a test is free from errors. It measures consistency, precision, repeatability, and trustworthiness of a research (Chakrabartty, 2013). The first step in ensuring the reliability of the study was to ensure that the research method (qualitative design) chosen was kept consistent throughout the study. Thereafter, a sample group of participants were chosen and this sample group was kept consistent as well. The questions administered and data collection techniques were all in line with the research method that was chosen (qualitative design). In qualitative research reliability is referred to as when a researcher's approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects (Twycross & Shields, 2004). Reliability was also ensured by keeping in line with how relevant and accurate the information sought from participants were. Participants were all asked the same questions within the same amount of time.

Validity

Validity forms the core of any study that aims to be trustworthy and accurate. According to Messick (1999), validity refers to the degree to which empirical evidences and theoretical rationales support the appropriateness of actions. It is the degree to which results are truthful. The validity of this study was ensured by asking all participants to fill in a consent form in which they were asked to be truthful in all their responses. In qualitative research it is when a researcher uses certain procedures to check for the accuracy of the research findings (Creswell, 2014). It is not a property of the instrument, but of the instrument's scores and their interpretations.

Research Ethics

Ethical considerations are among the most important parts of any research project (Zuma, 2019). According to Rani and Sharma (2012), the researcher should conduct the research with care, be truthful in reporting findings, be open to criticism, have new ideas, and act morally and responsibly. The study would fail to protect data provided by the participants if the ethical

principles were missing (Zuma, 2019). According to Cohen et al. (2011), minimising problems that may arise during fieldwork and securing the participants' rights are crucial. Ethics means that in collecting, analysing, and publishing information about the experiences of unemployed youth in Chatsworth, the researcher applied moral rules and professional codes of conduct (Kitchener, 2000). According to Christiansen et al. (2010), for research involving human and animal participants, ethics is required. Hence, the researcher must follow ethical principles to protect participants' rights in the field (Msweli, 2020).

The researcher must adhere to research ethics to ensure that the research design is trustworthy (Sathyanand, 2021). According to Vanclay et al. (2013), the researcher must adhere to the research institute's guidelines to maintain a good professional practice that complies with ethics. The researcher applied for ethical clearance to the ethics committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, complying with the ethical requirements (see Appendix 4) (Ngcobo, 2020). Throughout the research, the researcher ensured that ethics remained a top priority. This study adheres to research ethics' informed consent, beneficence, non-maleficence, anonymity, and confidentiality.

Informed consent

According to Creswell (2007), obtaining informed consent from the participants is the most important ethical principle. The essential information about the study was explained in the informed consent form (see Appendix 2). The form explained the participants' role, and the positive and negative aspects of the study, and assisted in explaining the purpose of the study (Mtetwa, 2021). According to De Vos et al. (2011), all necessary information regarding participation in the research should be included in the informed consent form.

Before the interview began, the researcher read the informed consent form to each participant, explaining to the participants what they could expect from the data collection process. This ensured that each participant clearly understood the information contained in the informed consent form. Informed consent is essential in research as it is a sign of respect. All participants were able to read and write in English; however, the researcher did provide further clarification when participants required clarity. Participants must be given sufficient time to go through the informed consent form before they accept or decline to participate in the study (Nzuza, 2019).

Anonymity and Confidentiality

Anonymity means that participants are protected and remain anonymous and nameless during the research setting (Neuman, 2014). According to Maxfield and Babbie (2017), persons reading the study should not be able to identify any participants, and then confidentiality is reached. To make participants feel safe and allow them to freely express their feelings, anonymity serves as a vital ethical principle. Anonymity provides the foundation for confidentiality because participants become aware that the data they provide will not be misused. Confidentiality, on the other hand, limits other's access to private information derived during the data collection process. Confidentiality ensures anonymity and privacy by protecting participants' information (Nzuza, 2019). The researcher is allowed to use the participant's real name if only the participant has given their approval. In the current study, the researcher gave each participant a form indicating the procedures and protocols to be followed. Participants indicated that their names and identity must be protected because unemployment is a sensitive and personal issue (Zuma, 2019).

Pseudonyms helped to protect sensitive and personal information. Pseudonyms generate anonymous norms that would protect each participant's identity (Bettini, 2009). If participants provided their cell numbers, the researcher made a note and only used it within the study context. The researcher stored all verbatim transcripts on a laptop which was protected by a password.

Non-maleficence

Non-maleficence is the principle that states that the researcher must not cause harm to the participants (Hutchinson, 2021). All participants were respected and were allowed to withdraw from the data collection if they experienced discomfort. The researcher did not force, lure or manipulate participants into participating. All who participated did so voluntarily. The researcher informed participants about their rights and was sympathetic, honest, and respectful to every participant (Msweli, 2020). To protect participants against viruses and diseases, the researcher chose to conduct the interviews on WhatsApp video calls or Zoom calls. Furthermore, the researcher choose to pay for any psychological harm experienced by the

participants (Hutchinson, 2021). At the end of the interview, participants were allowed to ask questions (Zuma, 2019).

Deception occurs when the researcher misleads or wrongly informs the research aims to the participants (Hutchinson, 2021). The participants should not be deceived about the nature of the research in terms of what the outcomes will be used for or the researcher's intention. In this study, the researcher was always honest and trustworthy to each participant (Hutchinson, 2021).

Beneficence

Beneficence is when the research benefits the participants (Hutchinson, 2021). This study has no monetary benefits, but participants were allowed to express how they experience unemployment openly and freely (Hutchinson, 2021).

Gatekeepers

Cohen et al. (2007) state that ethical obligations are compulsory from the relevant gatekeeper to obtain informed consent. The researcher completed an application form to the University of KwaZulu-Natal research ethics committee, informing the committee of the entire detail of the study. The ethics committee then provided the researcher with a written report allowing the research to be conducted (see Appendix 4). The researcher wrote a letter to the councillor of Chatsworth to obtain their informed consent to use members of the community as participants. The councillor permitted the researcher to conduct the study in Chatsworth (see Appendix 3). The researcher wrote a letter to each participant (see Appendix 2, and they provided their approval (Msweli, 2020).

Chapter 5: Findings

This qualitative study explored the experiences of highly efficient and qualified, but unemployed youth living in Chatsworth. The study investigated the youth's experiences and allowed opinions and viewpoints to be voiced. This chapter discusses and explains the results of the semi-structured interviews.

Participants

The table below shows the key demographics of the participants in the study.

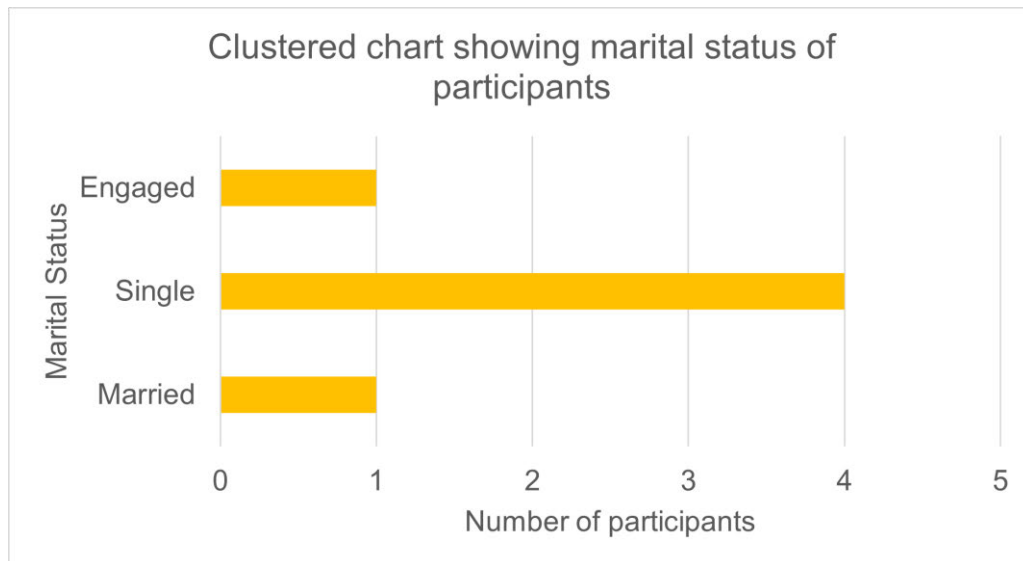
Table 5.1:

Participant Demographics

	Age	Education	Dependants	Marital status	Race	Gender	Length of Unemployment
Participant A	29	Grade 12 Diploma	4	Married	Indian	Male	2 years
Participant B	24	Honours: Inclusive Education	0	Single	Indian	Female	1.5 years
Participant C	25	Honours: Psychology	0	Single	Indian	Female	2.5 years
Participant D	25	Bachelor in Psychology	0	Single	Indian	Male	2.5 years
Participant E	25	Master's: Health Promotion	0	Single	Indian	Female	2 years
Participant F	26	Bachelor in BCom Law	0	Engaged	Indian	Female	1 year

Figure 5.1:

Marital Status of Participants



Activities during Unemployment

Participants were asked about their daily activities during their unemployment, and if they conduct their activities in a structured or unstructured manner.

Theme 1: Daily Routine

Participants were asked to describe their daily routine while they are unemployed.

... in the day there is not much to do. On certain days I go out searching for employment to earn a small income to buy groceries and make supper for my family. I have reduced myself to being a driver and a general labourer just to earn a little income so my family can eat and survive. (Participant A, 29)

From this response, it is clear that the participant will settle for any job in order to make ends meet.

This was Participant B's response when asked about daily routine. The participant said that daily activities have become mundane and as a result, the participant does not find the need to look forward to the next day.

I wake up in the morning have breakfast, assist with household duties, do whatever needs to be done and apply for employment online. In the afternoon I exercise. I help my mum with household chores (cooking, cleaning, ironing, and putting clothes on the line). I help the neighbour's child with homework. Sometimes I am only having a shower at 8 pm. This routine is not something I look forward to. Hence, I do not have anything planned for the next day. (Participant B, 24)

Participant C complained of certain health issues associated with the participant's daily routine.

I have issues sleeping; therefore, I sleep pretty late. I wake up around 10 am. I ask my granny if she requires help with cooking or anything, I read my book throughout the day, watch tv shows and visit my friends. Every day is like the same day. I get mentally sick such as I suffer from fatigue and a lack of concentration. I sometimes skip breakfast. I question myself as to what's my purpose in life. I wish I had more meaningful activities. Something which would give me a sense of purpose and progress in life and help make a difference out there. (Participant C, 25)

It is evident from this response that this participant feels suffocated by the lifestyle being led and the lack of motivation and zest has negatively impacted on both the participant's physical and psychological well-being.

Participant D seemed to have a rather relaxed lifestyle, regardless of being unemployed.

I wake up between 8 am – 10 am depending on the time I sleep. I engage in some light exercise for 30-40 minutes, then I relax a bit and have my breakfast. I look for employment online afterward I watch television and play video games. We have a family maid, however, when she is unavailable then I assist with the daily chores. (Participant D, 25)

Participant D admitted to having no set/fixed daily routine. Apart from the completion of household responsibilities, the participant does not have much to keep the participant occupied during these days of unemployment.

Some days I wake up at 9 am and other days I wake up at 2 pm. It is very hard to have a routine when you are unemployed because there is not much to do. I don't have many chores to do. I do basic house chores like tidying the bed, cooking, and cleaning."

(Participant E, 25)

Participant F compared life now to prior times of employment, reminiscing the good times.

When I was employed, my normal routine would include waking up early, getting ready for work, taking out the trash, and having breakfast with my fiancé. I would go to work and attend meetings. After work, I would come home take a bath, watch a series and get ready for bed. However, being unemployed is difficult daily. (Participant F, 26)

Theme 2: Time Structure

Participants were asked if they have a structured time to do their tasks.

Participant B stressed the fact that no set time or structure is followed.

I don't have a set routine or time, whatever comes my way I do. This routine is not something I look forward to. Hence, I do not have anything planned for the next day.

(Participant B, 24)

Both Participants A and C claimed that since being unemployed, they have no structured time to complete their daily tasks.

I have all the time since I am unemployed and the chores are done randomly whenever I feel like doing them. (Participant A, 29)

My days are unstructured. It is hard to stick to a schedule because I think what is the point of a schedule when I can do things when I feel like it. (Participant C, 25)

Like Participant B, Participant D also stated that by doing daily tasks in an unstructured timeframe one can become frustrated by the repetitive nature of one's lifestyle.

During my initial days of unemployment, I enjoyed this routine, but over a prolonged period, this routine has become repetitive and tiring. (Participant D, 25)

Participant E enunciated that having no schedule can really contribute to a hostile lifestyle.

I have no time structure. Having a good routine and a schedule is healthy, but sadly I do not have this because of unemployment. I am unable to sleep at night then I try and sleep during the day which affects my ability to be productive and create a schedule.
(Participant E, 25)

Participant F said that by being unemployed, it makes it more difficult to live a structured life. “*Being unemployed has given me no set time whatsoever.*” The participant described his day as “*as the day comes it goes*” **(Participant F, 26)**.

The Experience of Unemployment

Participants were asked about their experiences with unemployment.

Theme 3: Financial Experience

Participants were asked about their financial experience with unemployment.

Participant A described their experience of unemployment as “*devastating to the finances*”.

The participant further stated,

I have not been able to pay my rent and children’s school fees, and I have had my car repossessed. Financially, I am constrained. Food is limited for breakfast I eat porridge and then I eat what I can. I eat one meal per day.” **(Participant A, 29)**

Participant B says that the participant’s household is experiencing financial burdens because they are a family of four and there is only one breadwinner in the family.

Because of unemployment, I have been experiencing financial issues. In my household, there are four members and recently my dad was retrenched. Now my mum is the sole breadwinner. I had hoped I would be able to find employment and assist in the household. However, this has not worked out. Hence, the financial issues at home have been draining for me and my family. **(Participant B, 24)**

Participant B stated: “*I no longer have a medical aid; therefore, I struggle to go see a doctor when I get ill*”.

According to Participant C, being financially dependent on one's parents is not ideal when one is an adult and meant to be fending for oneself.

Being unemployed has been tough financially. I do not have a job I cannot contribute to the household finances; therefore, it has been very difficult with regards to many things such as medical treatment and going out. Being financially independent as an adult youth is important. You don't want to continuously ask your parents for money.

(Participant C, 25)

Participant C went on to further explain the financial burdens of medical conditions:

In 2020 I required physio, my medical aid only provided two physio sessions for the entire year, but I needed physio more often. I could not get the physio because I could not afford it. I am anemic. I require lots of supplements like ... **(Participant C, 25)**

Participant D stated “Without employment, there is no money”.

Participant E explained the plight of being financially dependent on others by sharing some of the taunts that the participant has to endure as a result of being unemployed.

My uncle assumed that I would be able to find employment after qualifying. He told me I am taking up space in the household because I am not contributing financially.

(Participant E, 25)

Similar to Participant E, Participant F explained,

I have to depend on my fiancé for finances which makes me feel inferior in the relationship. It's a difficult month end when it's time to pay bills and I don't know where the money is coming from. When I was employed, I was able to buy good nutritious food from Woolworths but now I have to settle for less. I am unable to go to the gym because of financial issues. **(Participant F, 26)**

Theme 4: Psychological Issues

Participants were asked about the psychological effects of the unemployment that they experience.

Participant A complained of having insomnia due to financial burdens.

All my psychological issues including insomnia, anxiety, depression and feelings of worthlessness are caused because of unemployment; not having an income and having all this burden being placed on my shoulders and my inability to fulfill these responsibilities messes with my mind. (Participant A, 29)

Participant B went on to speak about physical aspects contributing to psychological effects of unemployment.

Being unemployed has caused me to experience stress. I have started to develop stress pimples which have become noticeable. The amount of stress I have experienced because of unemployment is indescribable. When I meet people, they question me about my acne and I have no answer for them. The experience of being unemployed is draining and it's not something I want to discuss with everyone. Being unemployed is affecting me psychologically. (Participant B, 24)

Participant C spoke about how unemployment is a contributing factor to already existing psychological issues.

Before I was unemployed, I was diagnosed with depression and anxiety. However, in the last I was unemployed 2.5 years, my anxiety and depression have gotten worse. Unemployment is not the main cause but it is a contributing factor to my anxiety and depression. (Participant C, 25)

Participant D explained how unemployment has contributed to stress and mayhem in the participant's life.

This routine that I have been following over the years is affecting my psychological and emotional health. I am suffering from anxiety and depression. I am extremely stressed because I am reaching an age where I should have some kind of formal work experience. Some job opportunities in South Africa state the maximum age to apply is 35 years old. If I don't find employment soon things are going to be extremely difficult. (Participant D, 25)

Participant E reiterated the harmful effects of stress by explaining how a lack of sleep has affected the participant's life.

Being unemployed has caused me to experience depression. I cannot eat I skip breakfast and lunch and only eat supper. I have developed sleepless nights known as insomnia.
(Participant E, 25)

Participant E stated: “During this period of unemployment, I started to develop suicidal thoughts”.

Theme 5: Relationships

Participants were asked how being unemployed has affected relationships in their life.

Participant A stated that due to being unemployed, the relationship between the participant’s parents and himself has become strained.

At one stage in my life, my parents looked at me as a successful son who looked after his family. My parents in their old age who collect pensions have to share whatever they have with me which makes me feel terrible. For me, this is very demeaning. Because of such circumstances. Furthermore, I avoid them because I do not want to see them in such a pathetic state. **(Participant A, 29)**

Being unemployed has affected my marriage, my wife and I only have to speak to each other when necessary to avoid screaming and shouting at each other. **(Participant A, 29)**

Participant B complained of being constantly compared with other family members who were successful and lucky in finding employment.

My cousin and I studied together. Throughout our academic careers, there have always been comparisons between her and me regarding our grades. Immediately after graduation, my cousin was able to find employment after two months and I am still searching for employment. My family continuously questions me and my aunt mocks me all the time. My aunt compares her daughter to me all the time. Because of unemployment relationship with my family has been affected. **(Participant B, 24)**

My extended family is harsh towards me. They question me as to why I don’t go out and get a job. They force me to take any kind of job such as a cashier. They ask me to get any kind of job so I can help out financially. **(Participant C, 25)**

This is what Participant C said when asked about strain on relationships during unemployment. The participant said that it was miserable having to continuously hear taunts as if it was the participant's fault that employment could not be found.

Participant E described the feeling of helplessness "*as a wave of sadness*". The participant further stated,

I am very unhappy. I feel like I am stuck in a box and I have tried everything to find employment and come out of the box. I often sit down and just cry because I feel as if I am not good enough. (Participant E, 25)

Theme 6: Emotional EFFECTS of unemployment

Participants were asked about the emotional effects of unemployment.

Participant A expressed mixed feelings by saying,

I feel like life has drained everything from me. I am always frustrated and shouting. I feel angry all the time. (Participant A, 29)

Participant B felt unmotivated and discouraged and stated,

Unemployment has affected me emotionally. There is pressure from society. Everyone continuously questions me as to why I am not working. Everyone expects me to have already found a job by now. I feel like a total failure. Being unemployed for such an extended period has affected my self-esteem. (Participant B, 24)

Participants C and D both expressed feelings of despair.

I sometimes feel down and frustrated. I want to do things differently, but I don't know how to go out about making that change. It is not a good situation to be in. (Participant C, 25)

I am experiencing extreme anxiety with zero sense of happiness. Being confined in my household is affecting me emotionally. (Participant D, 25)

Participant E complained of feeling inferior to others because of hurtful comments that are hurled at the participant.

I am damaged emotionally I am suffering from emotional abuse because my husband constantly points out that I am unemployed. I feel frustrated because I studied for so many years but some individuals did a 2-year course and they were able to find employment. (Participant E, 25)

Participant E described the feeling of helplessness:

... as a wave of sadness ... I am very unhappy. I feel like I am stuck in a box and I have tried everything to find employment and come out of the box. I often sit down and just cry because I feel as if I am not good enough. (Participant E, 25)

Participant E noticed

... people who are employed are happy. These individuals make me feel as if I cannot be around them. They place me on a lower standard than they are on. (Participant E, 25)

Participant F stated,

Emotionally I have not been stable. I have to wake up every day and then the thought hits me that I am unemployed. (Participant F, 26)

Theme 7: Social Life

Whilst experiencing unemployment, participants were asked if they have a social life.

Participants A, B, and C all responded similarly when asked about their social life during times of unemployment. It seems that due to financial constraints, it is quite difficult for participants to socialise and meet family and friends regularly. These were the responses captured:

Before I used to go out with friends to the beach. Now I do not do any of that. My social life is non-existent. In my free time, I continuously think about how I can make a plan for the next day. I have no time for anything else. (Participant A, 29)

I no longer have a social life. Whenever my friend goes out, I cannot join them because I do not have the financial means to do so. (Participant B, 24)

Many of my friends are unemployed as well, therefore, they do not care. I do not go out often with them. I have to make excuses such as I can't make it, but in fact, I cannot afford it. (Participant C, 25)

Theme 8: Physical Effects

Participants were asked how unemployment has affected them physically.

Participants A and B both explained the detriments of being unemployed and the physical aspects involved. They stated:

Being unemployed has caused me to lose a large percentage of my hair. I have lost around 4 pant sizes. I have dark circles around my eyes because I lack sleep. (Participant A, 29)

I cannot treat the stress pimples on my face; unemployment is not only affecting me psychologically, and emotionally, but also my physical and mental health well-being because I cannot see a dermatologist. (Participant B, 24)

Participant E said that due to a lack of finances, the participant has lost a lot in terms of physical fitness.

I am not getting enough vitamins and I noticed my hair is constantly falling. I have lost a lot of weight. I feel sluggish and lethargic. I am unable to treat myself which is causing me to develop acne. The stuff I was able to do before, now I cannot do such tasks because I feel lazy. (Participant E, 25)

Theme 9: Lack of Opportunities

Participants were asked what the government can do to improve the employment of the youth in Chatsworth.

Participants' responses to what the government can do to improve employment were all very similar. Most of the participants concluded that the government needed to improve by equipping the youth with practical skills in order to make them more employable.

In support of the above statement, this is what participants had to add:

Employment opportunities are not fair for everyone. The government needs to provide equal opportunities to all individuals regardless of race. There should be up-lifting centres that help the youth acquire critical skills such as welding, carpentry, and mechanics. These development programmes are offered to other races and not Indians.
(Participant A, 29)

The government should offer internships to the youth. So, the youth can improve their skills in whichever field they are in. For example, in my case when a teacher qualifies for a government school should a recent graduate pay them a small fee and shadow a qualified more experienced teacher with an inexperienced youth to allow the youth to build their experience. **(Participant, B, 24)**

The youth should be allowed to do more practical things so they can learn, which would enable them to go out there and find employment. The field of psychology must be improved to open up more job opportunities. The government should also create more jobs by expanding trade and improving infrastructure. The government should allocate more funds to help small businesses and entrepreneurs start their businesses.
(Participant C, 25)

The government is not doing its part to assist minorities in South Africa (Indians, Whites, and coloureds). A lot of job opportunities created by the government require years of experience. Entry-level jobs have extremely low salaries which are demoralizing for a lot of people. There are not a lot of job opportunities created by the government for people who have matric let alone people who have degrees including myself. **(Participant D, 25)**

Unemployment is a common issue in the Westcliff unit 3 area. Most individuals experience unemployment because of the field they are in. But if they have work experience, they would be able to find employment. In my community of Westcliff unit 3, no employment interventions are being conducted. The government's main aim should be to help graduates. I feel there has to be graduate programmes because employers are demanding experience as soon as young individuals complete university.
(Participant E, 25)

Theme 10: Youth Unemployment in Chatsworth

Participants were asked if youth unemployment is a common issue in their community.

Most of the participants said that unemployment was due to the government's lack of intervention when youth graduates and seeks jobs. These were some of the responses from participants with regard to unemployment:

Unemployment is a common issue in the community where I live. There are several youths fresh out of college who hang around doing nothing because they are unemployed and can't seem to find a way out. Some of these graduates have high-ranking degrees such as accounting and engineering. The government should up its game when it comes to offering internships to the youth so the youth can up their skills in whichever field, they are in. (Participant B, 24)

I have noticed there are individuals in their 40s who are at home and are trying to do things from home because of COVID-19 things have gotten tough in the labour market. I have noticed many individuals have been retrenched because of COVID-19. Many individuals have tried to establish small businesses because of COVID-19 they were not able to. In my community of Westcliff unit 3, no employment interventions are being conducted. (Participant E, 25)

Coping with Unemployment

The participants were about their coping mechanisms adopted during unemployment.

Theme 11: Financial Assistance

Participants were asked if they receive any financial support from family or friends to cope with unemployment.

It was evident that not much financial support was provided to participants in their times of need. Participant A stated,

I go to organisations that assist the poor and needy. The organisation pays my rent and provides groceries. (Participant A, 29)

Participant B commented by saying,

I receive financial support from my mom. She provides a small allowance monthly so I can buy my necessities. (Participant B, 24)

Participant D described being destitute by saying,

I receive financial support from my family. My dad provides me with spending money. My brother and mother provide airtime, data, snacks, and food, but this is not something I am proud of. My friends occasionally assist me financially, but very rarely. When I go out with them, they contribute or makeup where I am short. (Participant D, 25)

Participant F explained their plight by saying,

My dad provides me with financial support. When I was employed, I would receive gifts from my family, but now that I am unemployed, I receive monetary value rather than gifts, because my family knows I need the money rather than the gifts. (Participant F, 26)

Theme 12: Emotional Support

Participants were asked if they receive emotional support from friends and family to cope with unemployment.

Having emotional support from loved ones during trying times is very important and can really help to keep one in good spirits. Participants opened up about the type of emotional support they receive from their near and dear ones during their plight of unemployment.

I receive emotional support from my mom and sister. They are always available to talk whenever I am not feeling my best because of the situation I am in. My younger sister is extremely helpful. She is always available especially when I need to vent. (Participant B, 24)

Participant C stated,

I receive emotional support from friends and family. I speak freely with my family telling them exactly how feel. I tell them if I am sad, depressed, upset, or angry. (Participant C, 25)

I receive emotional support from my brother and father. My friends provide emotional support. They understand my situation. My friends are always available to provide a helping hand, give me a shoulder to cry on, and hear me out. (Participant D, 25)

My family provides me with support stating I should be patient everything in life take time and I will eventually find a job and earn money. They assure me that everyone's job search is different and some individuals can find a job fast while it takes others some time. (Participant E, 25)

I don't get much emotional support. When I tell someone, I am unemployed, they become ignorant towards me. If someone hasn't been unemployed or in that situation, it's hard to reach out and give to other motivations who are unemployed motivation. Therefore, I am self-motivated. (Participant F, 26)

Theme 13: Psychological Support

Participants were asked if they receive psychological support.

Many of the participants admitted to receiving some sort of psychological support. Please note that all medical treatments spoken of by the participants were offered to them for free, either by medical psychology students (practising at UKZN), or by family members informal counselling). These were their responses as to how this support mechanism has helped calm them and their anxiety:

I often come across motivational photos and videos on social media and I am trying yoga at the moment to help me cope with stress and anxiety. (Participant B, 24)

I am seeing a psychologist at the University of KwaZulu-Natal support services. I consulted with a psychiatrist who prescribed tablets, I tried the tablets and they helped me to sleep better. (Participant C, 25).

Recently I started to see a therapist. The therapist referred me to a psychiatrist who provided me with medication to cope with my anxiety and depression. (Participant E, 25)

Psychologically I am affected, but I have my partner by my side who has been my strength. He tells me that I have been through matric, I passed well and I have my degree. Things will eventually get better. (Participant F, 26)

Theme 14: Individual coping mechanisms

Participants were asked how they cope with unemployment on a personal level.

Participant B seemed to be coping moderately well due to self-motivation,

To cope with unemployment, I am taking it one day at a time. However, it is not easy; I try to be positive as hard as it is. I give myself hope every day that at some stage I will find employment. (Participant B, 24)

Participant C was very positive and encouraged,

I exercise which helps my physical and mental health. I go to therapy, write journals, participate in online therapeutic courses and do meditation. I pray a lot. I believe God has a plan. I believe there are benefits to an individual's current situation. I use this opportunity of having time off to work on writing my books which I hope to get published one day. (Participant C, 25)

Participant D expressed the need to constantly be kept occupied as a way of coping with unemployment.

Personally, to cope with unemployment I engage in exercise, I play video games and I use social media. This keeps me occupied throughout the day. I pray for employment. I chat with friends and try to discuss opportunities. We discuss what our future is going to be like. I assist my younger cousins with their homework; these coping mechanisms assist me to cope with anxiety and depression. (Participant D, 25)

Participant E despondently shared,

My coping mechanism differs. On some days I feel as if no one truly understands me. I have to convince myself that unemployment is temporary. On other days I would be cooking and I would burst into tears thinking about what I could have done in my career. On other days I go and spend time at my parent's house. Certain days are harder than other days. (Participant E, 25)

Participant F said that by helping others, the feeling of “uselessness” is somewhat lessened.

I am self-motivated. I have been helping out in the community. This is the way I motivate myself and try to build up my confidence. (Participant F, 26)

Theme 15: Optimism with regard to Finding a Job

Participants were asked if they are optimistic about finding employment in the future.

Participant A said that being optimistic is not something everyone can be especially, after failing hopelessly every time you try.

I am constantly looking for employment daily. I apply for jobs daily and I do get a few responses and afterward, nothing materialises, hence I am still searching for employment. (Participant A, 29)

Participant B seemed to have a more hands-on approach and was optimistic in finding a job one day.

I look for vacancies in the newspaper, and online and I know many teachers I ask them for assistance. However, sometime when I have the means I go to school and ask for opportunities. (Participant B, 24)

Participant C seemed to have lost all positivity in finding employment. The participant stated,

I am not searching for employment by going onto any websites. However, my aunt sends me job adverts such as research and counseling jobs. (Participant C, 25)

Participant D gave the impression of being optimistic,

I am currently seeking employment. I have a profile on indeed and pnet. My friends and family send me learnerships and job opportunities that they come across. (Participant D, 25)

Participant E disheartenedly said,

I have asked for help in trying to find employment. I have gotten so depressed in the search of finding employment that I went to the Chatsworth mall and I was handing out my CV at all the shops. I have applied for teaching posts to go teach abroad, but nothing has worked in my favour. (Participant E, 25)

Participant F complained of the financial costs incurred by being an optimistic job seeker.

I am searching for employment. But it is very costly. Sending out my CV daily cost a lot of data, revamping my CV is costly, and going out and physically handing out my CV costs petrol. (Participant F, 26)

From the participants' responses of the various factors affecting their lives due to unemployment, it can be deduced that the disadvantages of being unemployed greatly outweigh what some may deem as a “break from the working world”. Almost all participants declared having lost social interactions and losing their zest for life due to being jobless. The stigma that society places on the unemployed has greatly affected the psychological well-being of participants. It is evident that most participants feel helpless and despondent with their situations but cannot do anything to improve their state as it is out of their control to find suitable jobs that match their qualifications.

Chapter 6: Discussion of Results

What Role does Work have in an Individual's Life?

According to Jahoda (1982), work is a contractual agreement that provides material benefits. Employment is essential in the development and maintenance of an individual's identity. In the 21st century there is more emphasis on the importance of work as a source of a person's identity because of the erosion of many traditional forms of identity. In the past, people living in small rural communities were identified by their skills, interest and families. However, communities have become complex as families grow. Relationships among people have become fleeting and broken. Therefore, a person's sense of identity is lost, hence, great significance is placed on work in identifying the kind of person the individual is (Conroy, 2010).

Human life is only able to make sense when individuals can reach their goals and values (Górny, 2018). It is through work that an individual's goals and structure originate (Navarro-Abal et al., 2018). Work influences humans culturally, socially, and psychologically and it forms an integral part of an individual's daily life. Jahoda (1982, as cited in Letsie, 2009) states that employment provides a sense of identity, both individually and through contact with other people, structured time and monetary value. Therefore, people's personal development is mediated by the work they do (Górny, 2018). When unemployed people found employment they experienced improved mental health and physical health (Thill et al., 2020).

The main source of meaning to human life is provided by employment (Thill et al., 2020). Employment plays a vital role in maintaining an individual's mental well-being (Thill et al., 2020). Unemployment changes an individual's social structure from a comfortable position to an uncomfortable one, and all people require a sense of structure and goals in their lives (Navarro-Abal et al., 2018). Employment is the greatest and most dominant structure that helps individuals to meet their fundamental needs (Navarro-Abal et al., 2018).

The difficulty that people experience with having too much "free" time can be linked to the modern, industrialised way of living. Structure (attending kindergarten, school, and work) becomes the norm from a young age. A person finds it difficult to occupy themselves with self-determined activities when they are suddenly confronted with a loss of structured time. When individuals become unoccupied, future goals, plans, and quality time all become meaningless (Willemse, 2015). There is a positive association between structured purposely use of time and

level of self-esteem. Unemployed people, when compared to employed people, experienced less routine in their use of time, less direction and less engagement (Letsie, 2009).

Time structure has five dimensions. The first dimension is known as the *Sense of Purpose* and refers to humans needing to feel part of personal and collective goals. When individuals experience more sense of purpose, they are less bored because their days are usually spent in a meaningful manner (Van Hoya & Lootens, 2013). The second dimension is known as *Structured Routine* and refers to the routine individuals follow. If individuals have a well-structured routine, their days are structured accordingly with the sole intention of accomplishing their tasks. The third dimension is known as *Present Orientation*, and it refers to people focusing on living in the present and the here and now. Individuals with low present orientation worry about the future and they are more likely to dwell on missed opportunities or daydream (Van Hoya & Lootens, 2013). The fourth dimension is known as *Effective Organisation* and refers to the extent to which people believe their time has been organised well. Persons with highly effective organisations do not require a lot of time to get going and they do not switch aimlessly between activities. The last dimension, known as *Persistence*, refers to the dedication individuals have to finish their activities without giving up easily (Van Hoya & Lootens, 2013).

What are the experiences of the unemployed youth

The latent deprivation theory developed by Jahoda (1982, as cited in Letsie, 2009) is effective in understanding the experiences of unemployed individuals. The theory states that unemployment deprives people of structured activity, being part of a collective purpose, informed personal status and identity provision for regular shared experiences and contact with persons out of the individual family and the establishment of daily structured time, whereas employment provides these benefits (Letsie, 2009).

Unemployed people, when compared to employed people, experience fewer social activities, feel less involved in a collective purpose, report lower social statuses, experience more financial strain, are involved in fewer social contacts, show lower levels of activity, have less structure and purposeful use of time (Letsie, 2009).

Paul and Batinic (2010) found that due to unemployment, many youths experienced restricted social activity and social isolation because of financial loss. The unemployed person

experiences a reduction of social contact, and because of a reduced standard of living, the individual avoids family and friends (Górny 2018). Letsie (2009) found that unemployed individual experience uncertainty about the future, because of low self-esteem they feel lonely and empty, furthermore, they experience boredom because they have to reduce their personal expenditure because of financial issues (Letsie, 2009). Jahoda(1981, cited in Bähr et al., 2022) states that unemployed persons experience a loss of self-respect and their sense of time, they feel like a scrap heap, they do not enjoy their leisure time and they are disheartened.

Jahoda (1982, as cited in Wood et al 2018) states that in a capitalist society, a major collective purpose that is instilled in individuals is to earn cash money. Therefore, unemployed individuals cannot gain status or identity in gaining collective purpose within society. Society forces individuals to observe habits, opinions, life experiences different to their own, hence, without employment people experience social isolation (Wood et al., 2018). Unemployed persons experience negative effects with regard to social life. Kunze and Suppa (2017) used a panel data from Germany and found that unemployment affects individuals' social participation, and they highlighted the importance of social contact.

Unemployment results in a loss of self-esteem and a variety of psychological and physical effects, whereas employment provides a positive social identity. Unemployed people do not only have the status of a working person's person, but they do not have the integrity that helps to maintain self-image (Conroy, 2010). Unemployed people experience a loss of image in the eyes of their peers and the individual loses their status and common sense of values in their own eyes. Employment influences and establishes hierarchies and groups from which a sense of security, recognition, belonging and understanding is derived that defines people in terms of status. Unemployed people experience a lack of belonging and often feel inadequate; furthermore, having no purpose in life causes the individual to experience self-estrangement, isolation and feelings of powerlessness (Conroy, 2010).

During unemployment, spouses blame each other for over-spending during these tough times, for not saving enough, and for not foreseeing job losses, and this ultimately causes their relationships to suffer (Finnegan 2015). Each day without work, the unemployed individual encounters a sense of guilt and shame in front of their family and the community, which affects their self-esteem (Górny 2018).

Youth who was unemployed after seven months of leaving school was lonely, unhappy, and less satisfied with themselves (Willemse, 2015). The experience of being unemployed has a

direct impact on financial instability. Individuals are forced to make extreme economic adjustments, such as reducing the quality of their nutrition, housing, and healthcare because of the sharp and persistent reduction in income (Farré et al., 2018).

Unemployment affects individuals more when their identity is tied to providing economic stability for their families and themselves (Finnegan, 2015). McCelland and Macdonald (1998) found that unemployment caused individuals to experience a decline in healthcare, clothing, diet, and standard of housing. Edwards (2017) found that unemployment impacts on psychological health, and he also claimed that as a result of unemployment, individuals experienced nervousness, restlessness, a lack of confidence, irritability, insomnia, depression, and increased anxiety.

According to Jahoda(1988, cited in Ezzy, 1993), the negative experiences of unemployment are not only caused by economic deprivation of unemployment. Because the financially secured is also affected by unemployment, Jahoda(1988, cited in Ezzy, 1993) further states that the abrupt exclusion from employment that previously dominated the individual's life is a common experience shared by all unemployed persons. Furthermore, Pultz and Teasdale (2017) found that people who are poor, unemployed and homeless are blamed for being in that situation.

Unemployed individuals experience unemployment in four dimensions, namely family consequences, psychological, social and economic (Letsie, 2009). The family experiences difficulty, there is low morale, they are afraid of the future and bored. In society, unemployed persons become a burden to society, their social status is low and people look down on them. Unemployed people have little money and they cannot afford to do certain things they want to (Letsie, 2009).

Unemployment affects the individuals and their family (Letsie, 2009). The individual effects are psychological and physical. The psychological effects are a decrease in personal identity, concentration, level of aspiration, life satisfaction, self-esteem and increased hostility depression, anxiety, stress, anger, fear, despair, loneliness and social isolation (Letsie, 2009). Physical effects involve increased kidney disease, heart disease, and hypertension, a lack of energy, sleeping problems, stomach aches, and headache. The family dimension includes decreased family cohesion, reduced well-being of children, there are increases of child abuse, family conflict, depression in the spouses and marital friction (Letsie, 2009).

Jahoda(1986, cited in Ezzy, 1993) states that human beings require a structure every day of their lives; beyond their primary day humans have an enlarged horizon, being part of a collective effort is a human requirement, knowing their place in society, and being active. Therefore, the negative experiences associated with unemployment are a result of the individual's exclusion from employment that helps the individuals to meet their basic needs (Ezzy, 1993).

How do the youth cope with unemployment

Uchino (2009) found that there are two types of support, *perceived* and *received* social support. Received social support is defined as behaviour that assists the unemployed. Perceived social support is believing support will be provided by family and friends. Waters and Moore (2002) found that counseling interventions improved the self-esteem of unemployed persons.

McKee-Ryan (2003) states that individuals utilise four types of coping resources, namely time structure, financial assistance, personal initiatives and social help from family and friends (Conroy, 2010). However, the person stage of adaption to the experience of unemployment is determined by the role of social support (Letsie, 2009).

Individuals are able to cope with the stress associated with unemployment if they provide themselves with positive self-messages, reframing concepts of self-worth, and rethinking their career paths (Letsie, 2009).

Ermann (2011) found that the two coping strategies unemployed people use are problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping. In problem-focused coping, the individual objectively and analytically takes action by deliberately mitigating or eliminating the stressor, for example the individual could move to another country where employment prospects are better, study a new qualification or learn a new skill, actively search in newspapers or on the internet for job opportunities (Ermann, 2011). In emotion-focused coping, the individual minimises the problem, distances from the issues and avoids the problem, for example seeking financial assistance from friend or family or community-based programmes and seeking social support from close friends or family. During the initial stages of unemployment, the individual maybe be angry or shocked and will utilise emotional-focused coping. After some time the individual may then start to search for jobs or learn a new skill, hence, the individual is displaying problem-focused coping (Ermann, 2011).

Chapter 7: Limitations, Recommendations and Conclusions

Limitations

The methodology used prevented the researcher from using a large sample size. During the selection of participants, the researcher could easily have been biased. All the data was transcribed manually by the researcher, which was time-consuming. Interviews were long and tiring. The researcher's presence during the data collection could have influenced participants' responses. Data was obtained from only a few participants, therefore it is hard to generalise to a larger population. Face-to-face interviews were limited. The researcher could not conduct face-to-face interviews because of COVID-19, and social distancing measures were observed. The researcher could not observe participants' physical reactions since participants only showed their faces on Zoom calls.

Recommendations

The community councillor of Chatsworth needs to get more involved with the youth. There needs to be more career drives or career days. The youth needs to be educated about which skills or degrees are required in the labour market. Non-government organisations should recruit unemployed youth living in Chatsworth to work during their holidays and thus providing them with valuable work experience.

I did thorough research and found no studies documenting the experiences of unemployed youth living in Chatsworth. Hence, to my knowledge this is the first study. Therefore, a qualitative study was used. A qualitative study entails using a small number of participants to conduct a study. For future studies I recommend the use of a quantitative study, which will allow more unemployed youth living in Chatsworth to participate. The quantitative study can be used to test multiple hypotheses.

Individuals who are working in Chatsworth need to give back to the communities and follow the Batho Pele principles. Programmes which can be implemented in Chatsworth are the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). Through this programme unemployed youth can obtain temporarily jobs and poverty can be reduced. The National Public Work Programme

can be used to increase self-employment and improve individual chances of entering formal employment.

Conclusion

This research study was developed with the purpose of understanding how unemployment affects people and the impact that it has on their lives. It was the aim of this study to understand the experiences of unemployed youth living in Chatsworth, to understand what role work has in an individual's life and to understand the coping mechanisms of being unemployed. The data collected through structured interviews has allowed for the following deductions to be made: the unemployed youth of Chatsworth has been affected on a social, emotional, physical and psychological level due to them being unemployed; this has had a ripple effect as their unemployment has also impacted on the lives of their friends and family. Therefore, this study has achieved the intended purpose of understanding how unemployment affects people and the impact that it has on their lives.

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Appendix 1: Interview Schedule

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

TITLE: A qualitative study exploring the experience of unemployment youth living in 'Chatsworth'

KwaZulu-Natal

Researcher: Mahomed Shuaib Husain

Section A: Biographical information (this information will be asked off the record)

- 1) How old are you?
- 2) Number of dependents?
- 3) What is your marital status?
- 4) In which location in Chatsworth do you live?
- 5) What year did you finish school?
- 6) What is your education level?
- a. What qualification did you study? (if they have tertiary education)

Section B: Introductory Questions

- 1) Can you please describe what a normal routine day looks like for you?
- 2) What activities do you usually do throughout the day?
- 3) How do you feel about this routine and those activities?
- 4) Do you have a set time to do certain tasks in the day?

Section C: The experience of employment

- 1) Do you have employment experience?
 - a. What kind of employment experience do you have?
 - b. *If participant says they have employment experience, then probe for issues around their experience and how they lost their job*
 - i. *Since you were unemployed, do you follow routine*
 - c. *If participant says they do not have any employment experience, then probe for issues around their experiences of seeking employment*
- 2) How long have you been experiencing unemployment?
- 3) What are your experiences of being unemployed?
- 4) How has being unemployed affected relationships in your life?
- 5) What impact has unemployment had on your well-being? **(make examples of what is meant by well-being for participant's understanding)**
- 6) Can you describe to me your experience of searching for employment?
- 7) Are you actively seeking employment?
 - a. Why or why not?

Section D: Coping Mechanisms

- 1) Do you receive any support from family and friends?

- a. Probe for financial support?
 - b. Probe for emotional support
 - c. Probe for psychological support
- 2) How do you cope with being unemployed?

Section E: Community interventions

- 1) Do you think that unemployment is a common issue in the community where you live? In what ways?
- 2) Are there any employment intervention being conducted in your community?
- a. Please describe those interventions
- 3) What strategies do you believe the government should adopt to reduce unemployment

Appendix 2: Informed Consent Form

INFORMED CONSENT

Note to researchers: Notwithstanding the need for scientific and legal accuracy, every effort should be made to produce a consent document that is as linguistically clear and simple as possible, without omitting important details as outlined below. Certified translated versions will be required once the original version is approved.

There are specific circumstances where witnessed verbal consent might be acceptable, and circumstances where individual informed consent may be waived by HSSREC.

Information Sheet and Consent to Participate in Research

Date: 30 August 2021

Greetings, thank you for participating in my research

My name is: Mahomed Shuaib Husain from South Africa, Durban, Chatsworth I am currently studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal towards a Masters of Social Science degree in the college of Humanities. I am currently conducting a study on the experiences of unemployed youth living in Chatsworth

You are being invited to consider participating in a study that involves exploring the experiences of unemployed youth living in Chatsworth. The aim and purpose of this research is to understand the experiences of unemployment youth living in Chatsworth, to understand what role work has in an individual's life and to understand how unemployed youth cope with being unemployed. The study is expected to enroll participants until saturation is reached and the study will be conducted within the community of Chatsworth. It will involve the following procedures an in-depth semistructured interview conducted on Zoom or Whatsapp call, the participants will be required to show their face and they will be reimbursed with data. The duration of your participation if you choose to enroll and remain in the study is expected to be 40 minutes per interview. The study is funded by (provide details if relevant).

The study may involve asking sensitive questions concerning unemployment. The study will provide no direct benefits to participants. The scientific benefit will allow participants to be more aware of how they spend their time during unemployment. The research will provide full description to the participants there not be any hidden detail.

The research involves no potential risk to participants.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval number).

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact the research department on cellphone: 0613947464 or shuaibhusain411@gmail.com or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus
Govan Mbeki Building
Private Bag X 54001 Durban 4000
KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA
Tel: 27 32604557
Fax: 27 32604609
Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Participation in this study is voluntary and participants can withdraw from participation at any point in the study. In the event of refusal or withdrawal of participation participants will not incur a penalty or a loss of treatment or other benefits to which they are normally entitled. During the research participant can communicate to the research that they wish to be removed from the study and the researcher will not ask or question the participants decision. The researcher will be respectful and always seek to dignify the participants.

There will be data involves. The researcher will imburse all participants on their data, if any psychological harm is experienced the researcher will provide psychological help at his own cost.

Participants will be informed about the purpose and motives of the study both orally and in writing. Confidentiality regarding private information from the participants will be kept between the researchers, his supervisor and the participant. In addition, participants will be assured that their identities would not be exposed in research reports or any other form of publications. Information will be kept for a period of five and then destroyed. Participation in the study is totally voluntary and participants can withdraw from the study anytime without being penalized. Participants will be given an informed consent form which they would have to sign and returned.

CONSENT (Edit as required)

I (Name)_____ have been informed about the study entitled
(provide details)_____ by (provide name of
researcher/fieldworker)_____.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study (add these again if appropriate).

I have been given an opportunity to answer questions about the study and have given answers to my satisfaction.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

I have been informed about any available compensation or medical treatment if injury occurs to me as a result of study-related procedures.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study, I understand that I may contact the researcher at (provide details).

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus
Govan Mbeki Building
Private Bag X 54001 Durban 4000
KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA
Tel: 27 32604557
Fax: 27 32604609
Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Additional consent, where applicable, I hereby provide consent to:

Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion	YES / NO
Video-record my interview / focus group discussion	YES / NO
Use of my photographs for research purposes	YES / NO

Signature of Participant

Date

**Signature of Witness
(Where applicable)**

Date

**Signature of Translator
(Where applicable)**

Date

Appendix 3: Gatekeeper Permission Letter

GATEKEEPERS PERMISSION REQUEST LETTER

DEAR: WARD COUNCILOR OF CHATSWORTH

Introduction

My name is Mahomed Shuaib Husain. I am currently completing my Master's degree at the University of KwaZulu Natal. I require your permission to conduct a study, which explores the experiences of unemployed youth living in Chatsworth.

Aim and Purpose

The aim and purpose of this research is to understand the experiences of unemployment youth living in Chatsworth, to understand what role work has in an individual's life and to understand how unemployed youth cope with being unemployed. The study is expected to enrol participants over the age of 20 until saturation is reached and the study will be conducted within the community of Chatsworth.

Data Collection Method

Semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions will be used to collect data. Open-ended questions provide respondents with the opportunity to give an emotional and creative response, express their views, and explain their opinions in their own words. Each interview will take approximately 45 minutes. Due to Covid-19 interviews will be conducted on Zoom or WhatsApp call. Participant will be required to show their face only at the start of the interview. The participants will be reimbursed for the data they used to participate in the study. The interviews will be audio-recorded.

Eligibility criteria for Participants

The individual must be living in Chatsworth for longer than two years, must be unemployed for a period of six months or longer and between the age of 20-30. In addition, they must be able to understand English and must have access to social media.

Ethical Protocols

Participation in this study is voluntary and participants can withdraw from participation at any point in the study. In the event of refusal or withdrawal of participation, participants will not incur a penalty. During the research, participants can communicate to the myself as the research that they wish to be removed from the study and the researcher will not ask or question the participants decision. The researcher will be respectful and always seek to dignify the participants.

The researcher will imburse all participants for the data they have used. If any psychological harm is experienced, the researcher will refer the participants to the psychology clinic based at the University for psychological help.

Participants will be informed about the purpose and motives of the study both verbally and in writing. The interviews will be audio recorded. Confidentiality regarding private information from the participants will be kept in a safe place where only the researcher and the supervisor will have access. In addition, participants will be assured that their identities would not be

exposed in research reports or any other form of publications. Information will be kept for a period of five and then destroyed.

DO YOU GIVE PERMISSION FOR THIS STUDY TO BE CONDUCTED? IF YES PLEASE SIGN BELOW

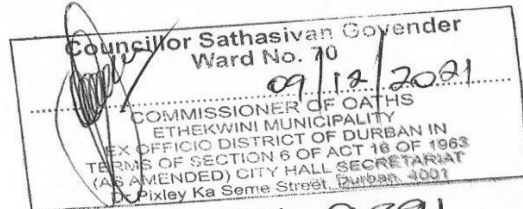
COUNCILORS SIGNATURE

COUNCILOR FULL NAME

SATHASIVAN GOVENDER

RESEARCHER SIGNATURE

M. S. ALLEN



082 806 9891

Appendix 4: Ethical Clearance Letter

Ethical Approval Letter



15 April 2022

Mahomed Shuaib Husain (216067862)
School Of Applied Human Sc
Howard College

Dear MS Husain,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00003535/2021

Project title: A qualitative study exploring the experiences of unemployed youth in Chatsworth, South Africa

Degree: Masters

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 18 October 2021 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL** with the following condition:

- The use of video recording and photographs is not permitted

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

This approval is valid until 15 April 2023.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

All research conducted during the COVID-19 period must adhere to the national and UKZN guidelines.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,

Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 8350/4557/3587 Email: hssrec@ukzn.ac.za Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics>

Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS

Shuaib Thesis

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15%

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STUDENT PAPERS

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