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Social media entrepreneurship as an employment creation strategy:

A case study of students in Durban, South Africa.

By

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ABSTRACT

The study was motivated primarily by the realisation that the issue of youth unemployment, which has long perplexed both developed and developing countries, has reached new heights, particularly in South Africa. Nevertheless, it was acknowledged that there appears to be a much-needed shift in how young people use social media to combat this issue. The overall aim of the study is to shed insight into the youth's social media usage as an employment creation strategy in Durban, South Africa. The study aimed to explore social media usage as an employment creation strategy among students in Durban, while ascertaining student's perspectives and experiences of social media as an employment creation strategy. It also wanted to explore the opportunities and barriers of using social networking as an employment creation strategy. The study asked how social media is used as an employment strategy among students. This study collected data using telephonic interviews with 20 participants, who were students in various higher education institutions in Durban. The study found that the social media entrepreneurs interviewed, did not make money through being online like how bloggers, social media personalities do but they used social media for advertising their businesses. The study also found that the 'studentrepreneurs' utilised social media because it is cheaper than the traditional way of advertising.

Despite the numerous advantages found, such as helping entrepreneurs to collaborate with other small business owners, time efficiency and target market availability, social media was also found to possess its own disadvantages. A few of those disadvantages included finance, COVID-19, the fast paced and forever changing customer interest and many others mentioned. It was reported in the study that each time the participants conducted business online, they stood a chance of being victims to hackers, fraudsters, perverts and bullies. The study recommended that youth entrepreneurs should employ various social media sites to cater to various consumers. This was recommended to be done after noting the different participants' complaints of being victims of cyber-crimes. The study also suggested that whenever a corporation has implemented social media entrepreneurship, those who are in charge must devote enough time to it and should be willing to participate in social media to improve interaction between the company and its customers as this would help with relationship building. The study also recommended a collaboration between the government and the private sector or the private sector and NGOs, which would connect the youth to the preconceptions of the private sector.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ACRONYMS:

COGTA:	Cooperative Governance Traditional Affairs
COVID-19:	Corona Virus-19
ILO:	International Labour Organisation
NYDA:	National Youth Development Agency
OECD:	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
QLF:	Quarterly Labour Force Survey
RCM:	Regional Coordination Mechanism
SSA:	Sub-Saharan Africa
UNDESA:	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNFPA:	United Nations Population Fund

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<center>**INTRODUCTION**</center>

Background of the study

According to Vidhi (2020) youth entrepreneurship influences society's overall progress, as it contributes considerably to job development and economic prosperity of the nation. Furthermore, due to young people's innovation and creativity, entrepreneurship is among the key elements in the development of sustainable knowledge economies. Mbhele (2012) defined entrepreneurship as the discovery, evaluation, and exploitation of chances to introduce new products and services. It has also been described as methods of organising, markets, processes, and raw materials through initially unorganised efforts (Shane and Venkataraman, 2000). Student entrepreneurs are defined as students who enrol for and attend university classes while also running on and off campus businesses that generate income for them.

Entrepreneurship provides university students with the opportunity to create jobs for themselves and others (Naudé et al., 2015). It also provides an opportunity to network with customers in an individualised and meaningful way, while also allowing for quick responses to customer-related issues, sharing, and praising compliments about the business. Generally, when young entrepreneurs first begin their businesses, they cannot afford to spend much money on marketing and advertising. As a result, they regularly opt to use social media to market their businesses, which is among the best tools for marketing especially for the youth that spends a lot of time online (Lai and To, 2015). Social media is also one of the simplest and least expensive sources of marketing (Vidhi, 2020). It has emerged as a strategy of enhancing graduate careers and economic development in higher learning institutions around the world (Jones, 2014).

Entrepreneurship is primarily considered as a technique of achieving economic growth and also, creating jobs across a wide range of industries. Thus, entrepreneurs fundamentally transform their creative and unique ideas into company enterprises and job development through entrepreneurship initiatives (Singh, 2019). According to Sharma (2013) entrepreneurs play an important role in the economy because they use their knowledge and expertise to bring new ideas to the market and implement the necessary modifications to make the idea profitable. In the last decade, there has been an increase in entrepreneurial social media use, especially among young people. This emerging entrepreneurial social media usage trend provides new options for young entrepreneurs

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to grow their enterprises. Quite a number of young entrepreneurs are taking a significant lead in terms of audience reach, while using a wide variety of platforms to raise awareness of stronger outcomes and long-term projects, and a few of them are consistently doing better in business than others **(OECD, 2014)**. As it stands, social media networking is rapidly expanding in tandem with the growth of the internet.

The existence of goods and services on social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, and others, reflects the latest trend of using social media for professional networking. At the moment, most businesses give 5 to 20% of their advertising budget to social media (Vindhi, 2020). Social media-based businesses established by young people actively contribute to the achievement of their online businesses through free publicity (Azhar and Akhtar, 2020). Numerous studies have found that the youth are extremely motivated to contribute towards positive social change in the face of adversity, such as youth unemployment through the use of social media (Rizal et al., 2017).

According to the World Bank (2020) the unemployed are those individuals without work, seeking employment in the recent past period, and currently available for work, including people that have lost their jobs or have voluntarily left work. Littlewood and Holt (2018) identified that social media entrepreneurship has the potential to mobilize those unemployed young people in favour of major social goals such as job creation, poverty reduction, inclusion, and integration. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2020) the continuing decline in young people's labour-force participation reflects not only increased educational enrolment rate, particularly among young people.

Youth aged 15 to 24 continue to under-participate in the labour force, this is the result of delayed entry into the labour force which is said to have long-term consequences for their lives as well as the socioeconomic development of their countries. It is thus critical to understand their paths into the world of work and how they engage in employment (ILO, 2020). The ILO (2020) asserted that a significant majority of young people (776 million) are pursuing an education so that they could stand a better chance of participating in the labour market. A beneficial broad measure of youth labour underutilization is thus the number of young people that are not in employment, education, or training, which stands at 267 million, a high estimate mirroring how many young people worldwide are currently not contributing to self-development or national development by developing skills or participating in work (ILO, 2020).

According to a United Nations (2015) study it was shown that Africa has the world's fastest growing youth population after India and China. The continent's population of young people aged

15 to 34 years is expected to double to 400 million by 2045 (United Nations, 2015). Filmer et al. (2014) acknowledged that the claim that Africa is the youngest continent, while **Gates-Stewart** (2019) explained that while large numbers of young people are said to be entering the labour market, this is neither new nor unique to Sub-Saharan Africa. Recently, although 10 million to 12 million young people enter the labour force in Africa each year, hardly 3 million formal jobs are being created (Donkor, 2021). Fox and Gandhi, (2021) added that due to historically high birth rates, the Southern African region has the world's fastest growing labour force, and many young people struggle to find work and make a living year-after-year. Since most African countries have hardly any social protection, African youth have little or no option but to work when compared to their counterparts in the developed west (Beegle et al., 2018)**.** Africa's youth unemployment is proving to be a worldwide issue, with a sizable portion of youth poorly equipped to lead their continent and the world. This contributes to the number of reasons why the world cannot achieve and sustain sustainable growth.

Thousands of impoverished African youths will continue to flee to developed countries as stated by Fox and Gandhi (2021) in a Brookings Institution report. There were interventions suggested by the ILO (2012) however, such interventions have a poor track record in developing countries when considering that some of the countries are still experiencing war, some are affected by sanctions, as well as or oppressive dictatorships. As a result, only a small number of young entrepreneurs in Southern Africa have full access to these interventions. Fox and Gandhi, (2021) identified that African labour markets, too, are unable to accommodate young skilled workers that are available. Furthermore, surveys in rural Southern African countries revealed that young people in these regions frequently struggle to get the funding they need to start a business and they are excluded from government and donor initiatives, which is especially concerning given that two-thirds of new job seekers in Africa live in rural areas.

According to Fox and Webber (2014, p. 8) "Africa's big cities need more and more productive firms to quickly increase employment and offer decent jobs". International Labour Organization programs seek to train entrepreneurs through various business workshops, for them to access financial, business plan development, and mentoring, as well as changing attitudes about being entrepreneurs. According to the United Nations World Youth Report (2011) number of issues of concern were highlighted. A few of those issues identified included jobs and decent employment as a priority. UNDESA (2018) also noted that there is a direct connection between both decent employment and a dignified livelihood. The Global Digital Report (2020) discovered that more than 4.5 billion people around the world are using the internet, within that number, young people accounted for more than 60% of the total. Further, approximately 300 million people have gone

online for the first time. Nearly every day, users worldwide spend an average of 6 hours and 43 minutes on the internet (Global Digital Report 2020). According to a 2016 Facebook study, it was discovered that nearly 3 million companies regularly advertise on social media and nearly 50 million businesses use free profiles on their site (Mukolwe and Korir, 2016). As a result, social media has become an essential part of business operations, with most businesses prioritizing it in order to provide value and quality to their customers. Companies which use social media for marketing and promotion are more well-known in comparison to those who do not use any social media platforms for advertising. This has resulted in social media emerging as a major marketing and communication tool over the years. Marketing through social media networks is a multi-directional strategy that combines the communicative and functional roles of a buyer, supplier, or producer to create benefits for the entire network (Lagrosen and Grundén, 2014). This has caused social media to gain recognition as an effective tool for achieving corporate objectives and marketing strategies, especially in the areas of customer relationship management, consumer engagement, and communication (Filo et al., 2015).

Youth, according to Brown and Lent (2016) are more able to adapt and are faster learners than seniors, and they are more open to different approaches to problem solving and initiating change. This is largely due to technological advancements mirroring the rapidly expanding and changing virtual landscapes surrounding young people one important component of entrepreneurial preparedness is young people's life experience with new technology. Young people, in particular, are fascinated by social media which is a by-product of the internet and technology. According to Majid et al. (2020) social media use has undeniably had a positive influence in a number of different ways. In digital business, for example, the use of social media has proved to be successful in getting clients to purchase the items and services offered. As a result, the use of social media by young people is regarded as the best way of introducing them to the business world. In the 21st century, the way in which businesses market their products and services has transformed. According to Smith and Taylor (2004) businesses are currently experiencing a number of unforeseen circumstances, with the growth of the internet has presented various new features, it has made consumers more accessible and has given rise to a completely new set of engagement features that make the process of sharing information much easier and quicker, which has forced businesses to re-evaluate how they interact with customers.

Palmer and Koenig-Lewis (2009) mentioned that social media is used primarily for communication, allowing marketers and businesses to have a significant influence on their customers. It offers significant opportunities for entrepreneurs, particularly those who start-up with limited resources to engage in market communication and build their brand at a low cost

(Parveen, et al., 2016). For entrepreneurs, family businesses, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and large organizations, social media serves as an external enabler (Leonardi and Vaast, 2017). In this way, marketers and customers can work together more effectively. This makes it easier to form communities or groups of people who share common interests. Social media assembles the tools and services that aid in the facilitation of connections, points of view, and discussions. According to Dada (2017) social media facilitates consumers' access to a diverse variety of markets and supports entrepreneurs in developing legitimate relationships with their customers. A simple like[1], remark, text, image, or video sharing is a simple and effective approach to engage with a potential consumer. Customers could provide immediate feedback to entrepreneurs via social media. Positive feedback is believed to expand a company's customer base, while negative feedback shows entrepreneurs where they can improve. Social media offers tremendous opportunity for businesses, particularly start-ups, with limited resources to engage in market communication and increase brand awareness at relatively low cost (Parveen, et al., 2016).

Jones et al. (2015) asserted that utilizing social media for marketing purposes is important for small and medium-sized businesses because it allows them to form a group of potential customers and become more competitive while spending less money on advertising. Smith and Taylor (2004) stated that the internet introduced a slew of new elements that made consumers more accessible. This indicates that social media has made it possible to communicate directly with customers and followers, making it easier to build relationships over time rather than asking for a sale up front. As more digital consumers use social media to find new brands or products, South African youth can use social media to stay in touch with their customers in close range so that they can learn various things about their customers through what they share online. According to Shane and Venkataraman (2000) entrepreneurial opportunities can arise in a traditional economy from a variety of sources, including new products, new materials, additional information, and new resource uses, among others. New technologies provide yet another opportunity to advance by learning about business practices. Knowing this can serves as a source of a competitive advantage in a marketplace. Knowledge is needed to make decisions about distribution of resources and leverage the most value out of a combination of those resources which contributes to innovation (Darroch, 2005).

Auxier and Anderson (2021) conducted a global study which included the use of specific sites and applications as well as broad questions of overall social media use. They found that YouTube and Facebook went on to dominate the online landscape, with 81% users with 69% of those people,

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[1] Likes on social media are a form of communication allowing us to signal our validation and approval with a single click, without having to type anything. (Moffat, 2019)

respectively, reporting ever using these sites. YouTube and Reddit were the only two platforms measured to have seen statistically significant growth since their 2019 phone survey. According to Auxier and Anderson (2021) when it comes to the other platforms as per their study, 40% of adults regularly use Instagram, and roughly three-quarters use Pinterest or LinkedIn for job opportunities. A large percentage of 18- to 29-year-olds were using Instagram or Snapchat, and probably half utilise TikTok, with those on the low end of the scale of this group ages 18 and or over becoming particularly likely to be using Instagram[2] 76%, Snapchat[3] 75%, or TikTok[4] 55%. These percentages stand in opposition to those found in older populations. Furthermore, YouTube is used by most adults under the age of 65. Almost 95% of all those aged 18 to 29, 91% of those aged 30 to 49, and 83% of adults aged 50 to 64 use the platform. Nonetheless, among those aged between sixty-five and up, these figures fell dramatically (Auxier and Anderson, 2021). Newberry (2019) claimed that it is only logical to take advantage of the opportunity to be a social media entrepreneur. Many young people use social media for various purposes. Some people try to profit online by marketing and promoting items on various markets. However, findings from various sources motivate clients to come up with more innovative ways of using social media for more than just interacting with friends and family and to start making money online, reducing the number of young people looking for work in our country.

Newberry (2019) describes how social media entrepreneurs use it to build momentum and remain in contact with its customers. This is accomplished by regularly connecting with content or by placing advertisements. This helps to build trust and excellent relationships with those who are interested in the promoted content. According to Moisey and Van de Keere (2007) new technologies are enabling significant shifts in how work is done in businesses, rather than simply assisting employees to do things better and faster. Murray (2015) demonstrated that these advancements are accelerating toward a new industrial revolution with intelligent and considerate corporate leaders recognising that they must always determine how new technologies will fundamentally change their operations or risk being disrupted by those who do not. The World Economic Forum (2016) also stated that the world we currently live in is on the verge of a technological revolution which will innately change how we live, work, and interact with one another; the transition we are witnessing is unprecedented in history. According to Schwab (2017),

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[2] Instagram is a location-based social network mobile application for sharing photos and videos. This service allows users to apply digital filters and share their photos and videos on other social networks and social media platforms (Imaral, 2015)

[3] Snapchat is a multimedia app that can be used on smartphones running Android or iOS. It allows you to send pictures or videos, named "Snaps," to friends. These Snaps vanish after they've been viewed (Bates, 2021)

[4] TikTok is a popular social media app that allows users to create, watch, and share 15-second videos shot on mobile devices or webcams. With its personalized feeds of quirky short videos set to music and sound effects, the app is notable for its addictive quality and high levels of engagement (D'souza, 2022)

previous industrial revolutions liberated humanity from animal power, enabled mass production, and provided digital solutions to people all over the world. This fourth industrial revolution, on the other hand, is substantially different. It is distinguished by a plethora of new innovations that are fusing the physical, digital, and biological worlds, influencing all disciplines, markets, and businesses, and even challenging assumptions about what it means to be human.

1.2 Motivation for the study

According to Fox and Gandhi (2021) increasing opportunities for employment are incredibly significant in Southern Africa because it is the world's youngest region. First, 43% of the population under the age of 15 is dependent on their family's earnings for sustenance, growth, and self-growth. Simultaneously, 41% of the population lives in poverty, and children growing up in these households face irreversible physical and social harm, if not death, due to lack of food and childhood diseases, as well as a lack of access to education and other chance to create human capital (Beegle and Christiaensen, 2019). Igobhour (2017) found that youth make up 60% of Africa's unemployed. The primary motivation for this study stems from the country's high rate of youth unemployment. According to Statistics South Africa (2022) the official unemployment rate rose from 34.9% in the third quarter of 2021 to 35.3% in the fourth quarter of 2021. This was declared to be the highest percentage since 2008. According to the results of the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) for the fourth quarter of 2021, the number of unemployed people increased to 7.9 million in the fourth quarter of 2021 compared to the third quarter of 2021. South Africa officially defines youth as those aged 14 to 35. Whereas definitions of youth vary in research and development circles, they rarely contain such a broad age span. For example, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) defines early adolescents as those aged 10 to 14, late adolescents as those aged 15 to 19, young people as those aged 10 to 24, and youth as those aged 15 to 24. The standard definition of youth according to the Republic of South Africa is used in this work. According to Statistics South Africa (2022) youth unemployment rate remains at a staggering 65.5 % in the country. Their data also showed that the unemployment rate for graduates is 11.8% (Statistics South Africa, 2021).

Lam et al. (2008) asserted that the low absorption rate of youth, which is a measure of the proportion of working-age adults who are employed in the labour market, is one of the many reasons for South Africa's high youth unemployment. Age is also cited as an important factor in labour market segmentation in South Africa (Mlatsheni and Leibbrandt 2007). According to Statistics South Africa (2021) prior work experience and education are highlighted as essential

factors in the labour market. Employers frequently favour candidates with prior work experience and a higher degree of education. Unfortunately for the youth, a lack of job experience is a stumbling obstacle that makes it difficult for them to get work due to their lack of experience and expertise. The South African government has implemented several labour market initiatives aimed at both the supply and demand sides of the labour market. Natural economic forces and government initiatives have been unable to reverse the situation, raising serious concerns about the pervasiveness of unemployment and the flood of unemployed youth. Despite a slight economic recovery, South Africa has the possibility to become the most unequal society on the planet (Bhorat et al., 2020).

Growth does not lead to increased employment, and the South African economy remains plagued by high inequality and poverty, especially among the youth. High levels of inequality are exacerbated by high levels of unemployment. According to the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) for the first quarter of 2021, young people in South Africa are still struggling in the labour market (Statistics South Africa, 2021). Given the country's history of youth unemployment, its high prevalence cannot be understated. As is widely known the vast majority of unemployed persons are young people. The emphasis of this study is primarily on students in Durban, South Africa, because according to Magubane (2021) the state of the economy overview report by the economic development unit of the eThekwini Municipality indicates that the city is facing high levels of unemployment, it was further stated that unemployment in Durban now has 36.9% of individuals without employment. Unfortunately, as it has been mentioned, the majority of those affected in Durban are young people as they constitute the majority in the city. As Rondganger (2021) confirms that the youth are still the most susceptible age group in the South African labour market.

Durban's youth unemployment rate is 21.1 %, which is higher than the overall rate of unemployment (14%). This is an important motivation to probe why this is happening in the city of Durban as well as in the country and the continent, while also trying to find a solution to some of the problems that come with youth unemployment. In addition, to a lack of financial independence, unemployment is linked to reduced mental well-being (McGee and Thompson, 2015). Van Lill and Bakker (2022) noted that attending higher education may provide young adults with a competitive advantage in the labour market. Although developing countries have seen an upsurge in secondary and tertiary education completion, high unemployment rates force graduates to seek informal employment with fewer benefits (Ju'arez and Gayet, 2014). A degree does not guarantee employment in South Africa, as 8.2 % of youth graduates can affirm since they are unemployed (Statistics South Africa, 2019).

Despite the Southern African region having lower unemployment rates than other sub-regions, young people in Sub-Saharan Africa face underemployment (ILO 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has intensified the situation for the young people in this region. They now have higher unemployment and underemployment rates than ever before, owing to the fact that they were less to find a job due to pandemic related lockdown restrictions (Gould and Kassa 2020). High unemployment is becoming a greater concern than youth unemployment, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, where a sizable proportion of the youth population is unemployed (Flynn et al., 2017; African Development Bank 2019). Whereas 10 to 12 million young people enter the labour force each year, African countries generate only 3 million steady employment opportunities, leaving the majority of youth economically inactive or forced to work in low-wage, low-productivity jobs in the informal sector to make ends meet (Penar, 2021). Education is slowly proving to be a non-guarantee of employment, with graduates struggling to find work in South Africa, as well as in most parts of the world.

1.3 Problem statement

The main problem emanates from the effects of youth unemployment that is perplexing in both developed and developing countries, and has reached a tipping point (Sankobe, 2019). There are numerous reasons for the rising rate of youth unemployment and consequently, graduate unemployment. In South Africa, unemployment rate growth, a lack of required skills, poor education and a mismatch of acquired qualifications, in the labour market as well as the dire state of our economy, are among the major contributory factors to rising youth unemployment and graduate unemployment (Sankobe, 2019). As a result, it is not surprising that youth and graduate unemployment is the highest in the country and in the world. This has caused young people to take matters into their own hands by creating jobs for themselves, which has led to the conception of this study. This comes because of various factors; among those is the African labour force's failure to generate new and sustainable jobs for the youth, even those with college or university degrees (James, 2019). Despite a minor economic expansion, South Africa has remained a very unequal society (Bhorat et al. 2020). The South African economy shows high inequality and poverty particularly among youth, because growth does not result in high employment (Bhorat et al. 2020). High unemployment is a major contributor to the level of inequality experienced by young people in South Africa.

This is exacerbated by slowing economic growth and a lack of investment in youth programmes. South Africa's graduate unemployment rate has been continuing to rise ever since 2008 (De

Lannoy, 2018). The phenomenon of unemployed graduates, as exemplified by various political instabilities exacerbated by job demands in the country, sends a clear message. Student entrepreneurship is one of the options that are available to tertiary-based youth or students for overcoming the rife socioeconomic challenges. Student entrepreneurship provides tertiary level students not only with business knowledge and skills, but also a forum in which they can turn their innovative ideas into revenue generating initiatives (Tshishonga, 2021). Student entrepreneurship in a developing country like South Africa could help close labour shortages prompted by high levels of poverty, unemployment, and wage inequality. However, there is significant evidence from previous papers indicating that small businesses, particularly those run by young people, face a high risk of failure. This is demonstrated by a study by Odiambo (2013), which stated that enterprises employing 1 to 99 people currently represent approximately 48 percent of all businesses in Kenya, with a large percentage of these owned or managed by young people aged 25 to 34. According to Njonjo (2010), three out of every five of these businesses fail in Kenya within the first three years of operation, and eighty percent fail before the fifth year. A number of studies have focused extensively on the failure of youth owned enterprises and have given various reasons for those failures (Tendai, 2012; Kraus et al., 2018; Coibion, Gorodnichenko, and Kumar, 2018). Student economic exclusion has also become one of South Africa's greatest obstacles, as the country has a high youth unemployment rate, indicating some of the major economic participation challenges that the youth face.

Student entrepreneurship is serving as one of the options utilised for reducing the unemployment rate. Policymakers oversee the economic development and believe that fostering an entrepreneurial culture is the key to increasing new ventures and job creation. Furthermore, students are confronted with changing job markets. Students face evolving job markets, forcing them to start competing for fewer but more difficult openings or to pursue self-employment (Mwasalwiba, 2010). According to the UKZN-Student Entrepreneurship Policy (2018) there was a significance growth in the overall number of male and female entrepreneurs. Measures were taken by the university to help learners not only academically, as well as in personal growth and to ensure equity among all of the students it was noted that a significant amount of these student entrepreneurs utilize social media for their business advertisements. Both student entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial universities provide a setting for formal education and skill development (Grau et al., 2019).

Recently the government has been trying to encourage students to be involved in entrepreneurship through programmes and competition such as the Entrepreneurship Development in Higher Education (EDHE) Entrepreneurship Intervarsity 2022 (Universities South Africa, 2022).

According to Universities South Africa (USAF) (2022) the competition consists of 715 student entrepreneurs from 22 South African Universities. 124 of those students are enrolled in three Durban based Universities. The intention of the competition is for student entrepreneurs to compete against one another within their universities. USAF (2022) explains that EDHE's goal is to identify the top student entrepreneurs in South African public universities, to recognize and highlight their enterprises, and to encourage investment in this cohort of student businesses. In the brainstorming round, the competition allows potential entrepreneurs to submit their novel business concepts. Universities benefit from the process by showcasing their entrepreneurial ability and demonstrating how they assist and grow the next generation of business leaders. Students will propose their ideas and enterprises in order to win a R100, 000 cash prize as Studentpreneur[5] of the Year. Each of the four category winners will get a certain amount of cash (USAF, 2022). This is showing that government structures are recognizing the importance of entrepreneurship among the young entrepreneurs in the country.

Entrepreneurship is also widely recognized around the world as the mind-set and process required to create and develop economic activity by combining risk-taking, creativity, and innovation with sound management (Gallant, 2013). Entrepreneurship is critical to all sectors of the economy because it is a powerful force that drives innovation, productivity, job creation, and economic growth (Davey et al., 2011). Job creation is extremely crucial to a country's long-term economic prosperity. As a result, entrepreneurs who start new businesses or expand existing ones are critical contributors to a healthy economy (Zerihun, 2014). Considering the obvious problem brought by unemployment as well as the possible solution social media could bring if utilized correctly, the study aims to explore student's perspectives and experiences of social media as an employment creation strategy while also discovering the way in which they utilise social media as an employment strategy in the city of Durban.

1.4 Aim of the study

The overall objective of the study is to shed insight into social media usage as an employment creation strategy. The specific objectives of the study are:

- Explore social media usage as an employment strategy among students in Durban.

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[5] A studentpreneur is a student who owns a company while still in school, that not only helps the student's business but it also helps students build relationships with people from other professions (Torenberg, 2012)

- Ascertain student's perspectives and experiences of social media as an employment creation strategy.

- Explore the opportunities and barriers of using social networking as an employment creation strategy

The study is guided by the following key research questions:

- How is social media used as an employment strategy among students and why?

- What are student's perspectives and experiences of social media use for employment creation and how has that changed their previous opinion?

- What are opportunities and barriers experienced by students regarding the use of social media as an employment creation strategy?

1.5 Theoretical framework

Social capital/networks theory

Bourdieu (1977) defined social capital as the sum of actual or potential resources associated with an everlasting network of mostly institutionalized relationships of common understanding and acknowledgement. The social capital theory best suites this particular study because social media entrepreneurs (which the study focuses on) frequently construct and exploit social networks to access key information and resources. They also uncover and develop significant prospects and grow core competencies to create a competitive edge and continuously maintain the new venture's sustainability, which the researcher believes is what the theory is about. Sociologists used the term to describe the use of general interactional embedded relationships, including the community, friends, colleagues, and family relationships, to help the individual create social capital and wealth (Burt, 1997).

According to Lin (1999) the concept has two important elements: (i) it represents resources embedded in social relations rather than individuals, and (ii) access and use of such resources reside with actors. The first element implies that social capital can be envisioned as an investment by individuals in interpersonal relationships useful in the market. It is an investment in social connectedness through which resources of other actors can be accessed and borrowed. Lin's concept of social capital has a more individualistic approach. Actors engage in interactions and

networking in order to produce benefits. As according to Lin's point of view, clients are part of the business and as such, good interaction with clients could lead to more clients. Lin treats social capital as a social asset by virtue of actors' connections and access to resources in the network or group of which they are members. The social capital theory puts emphasis on how long-term interpersonal relationships can become a useful resource for members of the network. The social capital theory emphasises how long-term interpersonal relationships could be a valuable resource for network members (Jacobs, 2016). This is similar to how social media business owners gauge the relationships they have with their clients to ensure that it is nurtured and has enough growth and development for future projects. Scholars studied the relation among both social capital and entrepreneurship and found that social capital of entrepreneurs helps facilitate the acceptance of entrepreneurial behaviours by entrepreneurs (Wang et al., 2019).

Hernández-Carrión et al. (2017) asserted that entrepreneurs who may have access to social capital are often more likely to be creative and expand their businesses, resulting in improved performance regardless of various definitions of social capital, multiple studies have been conducted. It is crucial to note that social capital theory has more than two perspectives, each of which relies on the academic field upon which the argument is founded on (Hernández-Carrión et al., 2017). In this study, the micro perspective also known as the networks approach was the main perspective. This broadly emphasises the individualistic or micro-social perspective analysis of social capital, which Bhandari and Yasunobu (2009) described as an individual resource where the actor utilises their network of relationships to achieve both instrumental (income, status, and power) and expressive objectives (welfare, health, recognition, mutual aid). It is commonly established that social capital contains numerous core elements, such as trust and understanding, associational activities or membership and civic norms. Social capital, as originating from psychological research, has a significant value in the establishment of network relationships in businesses. It affects the outcome and tendency of network connections in start-up businesses, and it has progressively become such an important element in academics' studies of entrepreneurship. According to Watson (2007) businesses are incorporated in specific interpersonal relationships, and their advancement is closely intertwined to these relationships. When small business owners or new businesses vigorously establish network relationships and develop them for marketing, they demonstrate a strong network orientation, which provides the foundation for establishing and sustaining a competitive advantage (Strobl and Kronenberg, 2016). According to Sorenson and Stuart (2008) the capacity of business entrants to face improvements in the industry structure and acquire economic opportunities while in operation is a test of whether they can enhance the quality and quantity of information they receive in an inclusive environment while also having good

thinking, innovative thinking, and responsiveness. Company's competitiveness will be improved and prolonged if they can quickly identify market changes and react as well as act swiftly in their operation management (Chen and Lin 2019). Totterman and Widen-Wulff (2007) pointed out that social capital has been studied by sociologists and political scientists at three levels: macro, mezzo and micro levels. Macro level studies involves citizenship in geographic regions, mezzo level involves studies of sociological perspectives of business organizations and how units within them exchange capital resources, while micro level studies focus on individuals and their relationship with others which produces capitals. Widen-Wulff and Ginman (2004) put forward three dimensions of social capital: structural, content and relational; and pointed out how information science research developed and used them to explain various aspects of knowledge sharing.

According to the social capital theory of entrepreneurship, an entrepreneur's ability to collect and use social capital is essential for the success. The networks, relationships, and public image that an entrepreneur has created over the course of their career are referred to as social capital. Social capital enables entrepreneurs to recognise potential markets that others may have overlooked and to secure the necessary financing to launch their business. Entrepreneur's capabilities to achieve business objectives are restricted in the absence of social capital. However, the significance of social connections and networks to entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial performance has become more commonly acknowledged. According to the evolving viewpoint, because economic activity is rooted in society, the innovative entrepreneur builds social capital by establishing relationships (networks and connections) that can provide outer sources of information, assistance, finance, and expert knowledge, enabling for collaborative learning and boundary crossing (Lechner and Dowling, 2006).

Lin (2001) established the social capital theory based on the definition that social capital is the social resources that exist in social network relationships and can thus generate returns. The theory best fits this study because it talks directly to what the study is about, which is exploiting interactions with different individuals (networks) to gain financially. The study also utilizes social capital theory to look at whether the theory can help facilitate change in student's perspectives and experiences of social media as an employment creation strategy in Durban, as well as in the rest of the country. The theory argues that trust is an important factor when going about the process of forming social capital relationships. Trust is important for social media entrepreneurs when exploring the opportunities and barriers of using social networking for self-employment creation among young people in our societies. Another instance is the use of social connections by entrepreneurs to develop new business support, which promotes positive business performance and contributes to financial advantage for social media. Entrepreneurs, as seen in the early phases

of business formation, require the greatest social network links to overcome their obstacles in gaining suppliers and consumers.

According to Premaratne (2002) a network connection is a method for entrepreneurs and their networks to build and maintain long-term ties. Lin (2017) similarly, added knowledge by stating that social capital consists of a network of communication and interaction established by the network of communication and interaction among both entrepreneurs and their relatable friends and relatives, as well as within the entrepreneurial team, via social networks. Bridging social capital refers to social capital formed by entrepreneurs through the use of social media and various relationship networks of suppliers, customers, the public, government departments, service organizations, media, and intermediaries within external environment, such as the depth and breadth of connections, the extent of trust in relationships, as well as the degree of mutual trust between relationships. Scholars have investigated the relationship between social capital and entrepreneurship and discovered that entrepreneurs' social capital helps facilitate the acceptance of entrepreneurial behaviours by entrepreneurs (Wang et al., 2019). Evidence based research has discovered that social capital togetherness can also provide input on wealth creation capabilities (Herrero, 2018). People one with social networks as shown in Figure 1.1, share similarities, and those similarities foster trust, which leads to them supporting each other's business, which is the primary objective as an entrepreneur.

Figure: 1.1. Social networks relationships for business.
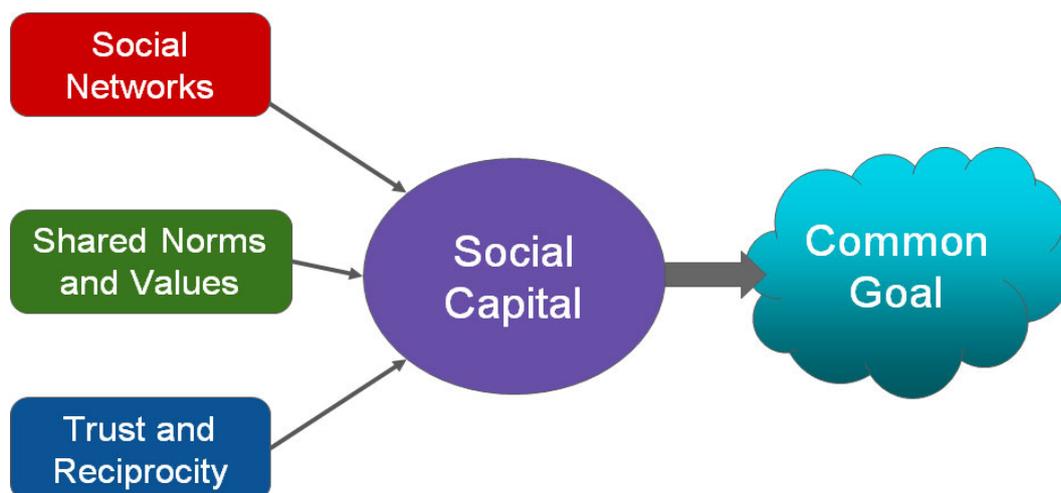
Source: Rempel and Markland (2018)

1.6 Organization of dissertation

This dissertation is divided into five chapters. The first chapter, which is the introductory chapter, provides context for the study as well as motivation for the study. This chapter outlines the research objectives and questions that has guided this study. Chapter two presents the literature surrounding social media use as an employment creation strategy. The chapter looks at national, continental as well as international economic trends used by entrepreneurs when using social media in the business. Chapter three presents the methodological approach used to collect data for this study. Chapter four presents the findings of the study. The chapter provides the profile of participants of the study, themes and subtopics as a method of data analysis and discussion of findings. The final chapter, chapter 5 presents the discussion of the findings in relation to the literature and then conclude with an overall summary of the finding's analysis, discussion, recommendations and conclusion.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines literature on the use of social media as a tool to achieve entrepreneurial success among the youth of Durban, South Africa. It draws on various literature and past studies on the topic of unemployment and social media use. The aim of the study is to shed insight into social media usage as an employment creation strategy. The study wants to find out how students conduct business online, why do they do it online and which social media sites are the most used. A review of the literature suggests that graduates are no longer guaranteed employment as many are unable to find employment after graduation (Mncayi, 2021; Van Nieuwenhuizen, 2019; Omarjee, 2021; Solomons, 2021). According to Mihindou (2014) students are establishing social media businesses as the new path or channel of participation when it comes to selecting a career and making a living for themselves. This chapter explores the factors that drive the youth to consider social media entrepreneurship over other ways of doing business. The chapter then discusses the advantages of utilising social media for entrepreneurship and, finally, looks at the challenges the youth face while using social media in their respective businesses.

2.2 The concept of student entrepreneurship

Primarily, the path of entrepreneurship is chosen as means of achieving economic growth by creating jobs in a variety of areas. Hence, entrepreneurs transform their creative and innovative ideas into businesses and create jobs through entrepreneurship (Singh, 2019). According to Sharma (2013) entrepreneurs play an important role in any economy because they use their skills to bring good new ideas to the market and take corrective action to make the idea lucrative. Student entrepreneurship can be defined as a variable in the contribution of financial development tools based on the knowledge acquired by university students and then converting that information into revenue-generating businesses (Bailettai, 2011). Naudé et al. (2015, p. 269) states that "Student entrepreneurship mainly focuses on young individuals and student entrepreneurs in academic institutions of higher learning". According to Abartani (2019) the very first investigation on entrepreneurship and any other forms of media was reported in 1971 through looking at the field of music, although there were not many publications. Nevertheless, the third millennium is a

beginning of interest in research on entrepreneurship and media (Hang and Van Weezel, 2007). However, it is now clear that entrepreneurship and media have a mutual impact (Khajeheian, 2013).

Adeniyi and Ganiyu (2021) asserted that student entrepreneurship in a developing country like South Africa could be helpful in closing the employment gap. Entrepreneurship is regarded as a viable career path for young people and students (Beeka et al., 2011). Given the problem of youth unemployment and unemployed graduates, student entrepreneurship has emerged as a platform for students to turn their knowledge gained into revenue-generating businesses (Bailetti, 2011). It is one of the methods in which the unemployment rate and the social issues of young people, such as poverty, unwanted pregnancy, and drug use, can be lowered.

The global average for youth unemployment is 14.4%, Africa has a rate of 21% (Amolo, 2015). According to Bailetti (2011) the most effective way to address unfavourable economic conditions is through the development of potential entrepreneurs through an enriched environment and learning found in institutions. In this case, the students take on the role of potential entrepreneurs. It demonstrates that entrepreneurship is a viable option for coping with the situation as a solution to the high unemployment. Entrepreneurship is especially important because it creates jobs in national economies. Policymakers who oversee economic development believe that fostering an entrepreneurial culture is the key to job creation. Furthermore, students are confronted with evolving job markets, forcing more students to compete for the few available jobs, or to pursue self-employment (Mwasalwiba, 2010).

According to the World Economic Forum (WEF) (2016) previous waves of technological progress and population change have resulted in new ways of job creation. New business models are causing disruption and will have a significant impact on the job landscape in the years ahead. Several of the main transformational drivers that are currently changing global sectors are likely to have a big influence on jobs, ranging from substantial job creation to loss of jobs, and from increased labour productivity to increasing skill gaps. In-demand jobs or specializations that did not exist 10 or even 5 years ago in many sectors and nations, and the rate of change is expected to accelerate (World Economic Forum, 2016).

Mtshali (2019) added that countries such as South Africa should prioritize the development of young innovative entrepreneurs at the university level. These efforts began in 2017 with the launch of a national student entrepreneurship program by the Department of Higher Education and Training. As much as this is a good initiative, various degrees must be aligned with this initiative in order to theoretically endorse the venture in developing and improving entrepreneurial thinking,

entrepreneurial self-efficacy, entrepreneurial intention, and entrepreneurial action between students and graduates. Due to the obvious prevalence of financial hardship, universities also developed policies to encourage entrepreneurship among their students and faculty (Thoni and Schenller, 2011). According to Marchard and Hermens (2015) universities need to provide education as well as start-up facilities. Poverty, inequality, and exclusion are held responsible for South Africa's economic problems (Basell and Freidman, 2016). Universities are tactically positioned to meet such challenges in the knowledge-based economy. As a result, a channel was made available for university students to learn real-world business skills while also contributing to the creation of better communities. According to Mtshali (2019) if new small businesses can establish business relationships with long-standing, innovative businesses, they may receive support to sustainably enhance entrepreneurial ideas. Nicolaides (2011) stated that with a high rate of graduate unemployment in South Africa, the Department of Higher Education and Training is encouraging students at higher education institutions to become entrepreneurs.

According to the Kelly (2012) the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) from 2011 indicated that South Africa had low level of entrepreneurial activities partly due to the small percentage of South Africans who finished tertiary education. However, although an entrepreneurship career might have been desirable in South Africa, the fear of failure made South Africa one of the most fearful countries, ranking them second only to the volatile Ethiopia. Furthermore, a survey conducted by Brijlal (2011) on the knowledge and perceptions of final year students at the University of Western Cape in South Africa indicated that less than half the students expressed interest in becoming entrepreneurs (Amolo, 2015). Furthermore, young graduate unemployment remains a worry that South African institutions, led by the government, are attempting to solve through entrepreneurial education, among other efforts (Ndedi, 2015).

This issue underlines the South African economy's inability to produce enough work prospects for recent graduates. Entrepreneurship, particularly youth entrepreneurship, might help to alleviate the dearth of job possibilities by allowing recent graduates to forge their own pathways. According to Zingoni (2012, p. 12) "operating a business helps young people gain economic independence, reducing their reliance on state support". Thus, youth entrepreneurship does not only help young graduates to forge their chosen career, but also enables them to become independent from their families and the government. The effect of lowering youth unemployment through entrepreneurship is far-reaching, as it not only reduces joblessness, it also creates a greater tax base and jobs inside small and medium-sized business enterprises (Mbuya and Schachtebeck, 2016).

2.3 Studies on youth entrepreneurs in other parts of the world

It has been noted that anytime an economy shows signals of development, there are ambitious entrepreneurs in the background. Due to high unemployment among youth, involvement in youth entrepreneurship has increasingly been encouraged as a strategy to develop self-employment opportunities. This leads to self-employment. As Selenko and Pils (2019) asserted it contributes to the accomplishment of significant life goals. Participation in youth entrepreneurship can foster human capital traits such as self-reliance and awareness of a need for skill development. There are also possible societal benefits such as employment creation, innovation, and adaptability to changing economic environments; however, the magnitude of these may be low, especially in the case of student entrepreneurs (OECD/EU, 2020).

Llisteri et al. (2006) also affirm that entrepreneurial activity is a significant source of revenue and employment. It is the target of policies aimed at providing alternative employment options to address the labour market's inability to accommodate young people. However, entrepreneurship is a diverse phenomenon. According to Llisteri et al. (2006) there are two types of young entrepreneurs; those who become entrepreneurs out of circumstance since they are unable to find other types of formal employment or complete their schooling, and those who embrace the market opportunity. Globally, young entrepreneurs account for a small number of working individuals (Llisteri et al., 2006). Many of them are self-employed, with only a few of them employing others in their businesses. Llisteri et al. (2006) saw entrepreneurship as something dangerous to youth entrepreneurs between the age of 16 to 24, since evidence suggests that due to their lack of knowledge, entrepreneurial skills, social capital, and other resources youth entrepreneurs mainly face an even greater risk of business failure.

According to the OECD (2021) in the European context, estimations imply that 40 to 45 % young people were willing to pursue entrepreneurship, although few young people are self-employed or engaged in a business start-up. This indicates that there is still an underexploited potential among young people. If most young people in the 18-30 years old bracket were as engaged as males in the 30-49 years old bracket, the European Union would have additional one million youth entrepreneurs (OECD, 2021). To do away with the existing problems, the ILO (2012) suggested that increased access to finance is required to promote youth entrepreneurship and self-employment via enhancing financial infrastructure, bank competition, and non-bank funding. As in most regions, youth unemployment increased significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic, and entrepreneurial initiatives were developed as part of the European policy response. Through

increased investments in the Young Employment Initiative, EU members can access increasing levels of financial support for youth entrepreneurial initiatives. According to the 2013 Global Entrepreneurship Monitor/Youth Business International (GEM/YBI) youth entrepreneurship assessment, Sub-Saharan Africa had the largest proportion of prospective youth entrepreneurs of any area in the world, with 60%. Nonetheless, 32% of young people were shown to be necessity-driven entrepreneurs, implying that they viewed entrepreneurship as a survival strategy rather than an available opportunity to exploit. A study by the ILO (2014) showed that young people in the Sub-Saharan Region account for approximately 20% of total country populations. One of these populations chosen in that study is the Zambian populace, which the study described as being quite young, with about 75% of the people under the age of 35 in 2010. About 30% of young Zambians are self-employed, mostly as own-account workers, and less frequently as employers (ILO, 2014).

According to the GEM, those who believe they have the essential abilities to start up a business are four to six times as likely to do business in Sub-Saharan Africa. According to the same survey, young people in Sub-Saharan Africa have reasonably good sentiments toward entrepreneurship, and doing business is a much more prevalent source of employment than in other parts of the world. Entrepreneurship is viewed as a legitimate career option, and young people are more willing to establish their own businesses (Kew et al., 2013). According to Ogamba (2018) addressing issues of youth inclusion and participation in every society, especially in developing countries, requires a holistic intervention that targets economic and political empowerment. For instance, in Nigeria, one major area of deprivation and exclusion challenge for the youth is in economic and livelihood pathways. The reason for that is because Nigeria is a country of contrasts; although it is endowed with enormous human and natural resources, it remains in the category of countries with high rates of poverty and unemployment, especially among the youth and other vulnerable groups of the population (Toyin et al., 2016).

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic also caused widespread disruption in labour markets, with disproportionate effects on youth employment. Demand has fallen because of lockdowns and travel restrictions, and many businesses have been forced to cease or reduce their operations, with major consequences for workers. The utilisation of youth entrepreneurship in Asian countries, like in most parts of the world, is prevalent, especially among developing, financially struggling countries. The Overseas Development Institute (2012) conducted research on youth entrepreneurship in India, a country with the world's largest youth population. India's youthful population is seen as the country's most valuable human asset, and therefore, they feel that the potential of youth should be properly utilised for the country's growth. India, like the majority of Asian countries, has around 300 million youth but only 100 million jobs, resulting in

a 200 million employment gap (ILO, 2013). This disparity can only be filled through self-employment and youth entrepreneurship employing novel business methods such as social media or the internet. Another study on youth in certain parts of India by Jagannathan et al. (2017) found that they were more highly probable than youth from other continents to report that entrepreneurship is better than working for others, that it is more satisfying, that it is certainly worthy of societal respect, and that it is necessary for the country's prosperity (Goel et al., 2007). A few qualitative research studies have been carried out in India. These studies discover that family income, family history of business ownership, ease of access to entrepreneurial opportunities, education, business type, and multiple other qualities are strongly correlated with entrepreneurial interest and propensity in this region as well (Jayalakshmi and Saranya, 2015).

In some Asian countries, such as China, entrepreneurship is a way of life for the general community as well as their youth, reaching 269 million in 2021 (UNFPA, 2021). According to the State Council of the People's Republic of China (2017) the development of entrepreneurship in China has reached a golden period. Since 2015, mass entrepreneurship and innovation have emerged as new national economic development plans, and Chinese central and local governments have committed massive resources to start-ups, particularly innovative ones among young entrepreneurs. Although there is substantial support for private firms, preferential policies have historically favoured state-owned and foreign-owned enterprises. However, the country issued a new State Council resolution in July 2017 requiring various ministries to lead or support entrepreneurship and innovation projects (State Council of the People's Republic of China 2017). In several areas of developing countries, youth entrepreneurship is encouraged as a consequence of multiple governments' efforts to utilise the available and desperate youth to help countries reach better financial situations. In contrast, developed countries, such as North America, encourage entrepreneurship because it is lacking among youth, not because of a dire need.

2.4 Entrepreneurial social media use during the pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly accelerated social media use among adults as a result of an increased need to communicate (El-Khatib and Samet, 2020). Through establishing connections with consumers, social media platforms have changed the dynamics of social media entrepreneurship. However, according to Narayanan and Kartheeswaran (2019) the emergence of COVID-19 has led to a change in people's lives. Lockdowns, self-isolation, and social distancing are among the measures to be implemented, all of which have a significant influence on entrepreneurial social media use in order to keep people engaged, socially connected, and in contact with enterprises. Nonetheless, due to the introduction of these measures to reduce the

spread of COVID in several countries, it has been shown that isolating people has psychological consequences such as depression, anxiety, and stress (Walker et al., 2020). Quarantine also has economic effects as the shutdown of retail stores resulted in the interruption of product delivery chains (Karabag, 2020). During the pandemic, various governments have begun to identify small businesses as a source of economic growth and employment creation (Engidaw, 2022). Small enterprises are seen as the foundation of every economy, their protection has now become more crucial than ever due to the rippling impact of COVID-19 on economies around the world. Entrepreneurial social media has witnessed higher growth since the beginning of the pandemic, and the UNCTAD (2020) found that social media has become an important sales channel for many companies.

The COVID-19 crisis has become associated with a change in sales composition (UNCTAD, 2020). Galhotra and Dewan (2020) explained that several industries and sectors were affected, including education, where pupils had a range of learning experiences, some using online teaching and learning tools for the first time (Galhotra and Dewan, 2020). Due to COVID-19 regulations, health, and economic-driven market shifts, various figures revealed that the number of active business owners fell from 15.0 million in February 2020 to 11.7 million in April 2020, according to Fairlie (2020). The highest reduction on record was 3.3 million active company owners (about 22 %). The total number of hours worked by all business owners had decreased by 29%. Although incorporated enterprises are more growth-oriented and steady, they fell by 20% from February to April (Fairlie 2020).

Alexander et al. (2020) conducted a study in the United States of America, which looked at the financial fragility of many small businesses and how the COVID-19 crisis has affected them. They discovered that 43% of enterprises were temporarily closed and that employment had plummeted by 40%. Their findings depicted a significant blow to small businesses since the great depression of the 1930s. According to their findings, many of these businesses had little cash on hand at the start of the pandemic, which means they had to drastically slash costs, take on further debt, or declare bankruptcy (Alexander et al., 2020). While official data for most nations is not available, estimations in various countries such as Europe, North America, and Asia-Pacific showed that online orders increased in various regions during the first half of 2020 (OECD, 2020). Various trends have appeared as a result of social media use by entrepreneurs and various enterprises. Blanco and Padilla (2020) emphasised that during the COVID-19 pandemic, social media was one of the most effective communication networks for sharing and obtaining information. By reaching through popular social media platforms, social media marketing is on the rise. To enhance sales, marketers used social networking platforms to promote their company's products and services.

During the pandemic, the need for the production of video content rose, and the content on various social media platforms aimed at improving the purchasing and selling of products. Thus, proving that customers' shifting needs and new technology are always being adapted. Szymkowiak (2016) stated that internet-based new technology platforms have created a new approach for acquiring knowledge and exchanging user experiences about online businesses via various electronic media channels. Companies use social media to sell their products and locate their target audience, while consumers ask their questions in the discussion forums in order to discover an answer that will assist them in making a buying decision.

For social media entrepreneurs to promote the brand, Kathirvel and Srinivasan (2018) highlighted social media as key for all types of marketing, especially where client preferences are trending and changing on a regular basis. Certain challenges have developed as a result of entrepreneurial social media use among entrepreneurs during COVID-19. Perrin (2019) asserted that access to the Internet was described as one of those challenges, especially in the context of rural areas, where access to the internet was non-existent or severely limited, which has been problematic for years but arguably never as acutely painful as during the COVID-19 pandemic. Rural areas without sufficient internet connectivity and services faced more challenges such as skills, training/development, and jobs/telework, limitations of distance learning (Thompson 2020). For many rural residents, the internet speed was found to be a common challenge, and, for an alarming number of people, access remained problematic and costly. As many people are working from home, multiple devices and users within a household often cannot be supported at the internet speeds required to effectively participate in school or work activities (George 2019). Most small businesses have not made substantial investments in information technology infrastructures, and the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic exposed their unpreparedness to make the transition to digital tools (Ratnasingam et al., 2020).

According to a case study by Ratnasingam et al. (2021) on digital marketing adoption by furniture manufacturers in Malaysia, the COVID-19 pandemic increased the competitive pressure among furniture retailers significantly, while challenging all aspects of the business environment. Nonetheless these furniture manufacturers and retailers were determined to regain some control over the customer-controlled social media space, which has prompted many businesses to invest in social media presence, especially during the global pandemic the accelerated application of digital marketing as the sole channel for marketing-activities among furniture manufacturers became very apparent since the onset of the global coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic in early 2020 (Ratnasingam et al., 2020). The epidemic acts as a wake-up call for businesses that have been slow to embrace digital revolution and are now poorly prepared. Given

the stress of possibly health-compromised staff, a sudden and severe drop-off in demand, and extreme economic instability, many digital enterprises are now attempting to transfer their operations and people to a virtual environment.

2.5 The emergence of entrepreneurial use of social media among youth

According to Lockett and Brown (2000) there is a growing trend of new enterprises being formed on the internet however, it was not until the late 1990s that the phrases E-entrepreneurship and digital entrepreneurship were being used (Hull et al., 2007). Social media marketing first gained popularity back in 1990, the digital age took off with the coming of the internet and the development of the Web 1.0 platform. In 1993, the first clickable banner went live, this marked the beginning of the transition to the digital era of marketing. As a result of this transition, new technologies entered the digital marketplace in 1994. After Google was founded in 1998, the internet sensation began, and all the relatively small browsers were either left behind or wiped out, making room for the industry's powerhouses. According to Monnappa (2022) the digital marketing world saw its first steep surge in 2006 when search engine traffic was reported to have grown to about 6.4 billion in a single month. Over the years as social media has evolved and innovated, new ways of using it has changed as well, particularly for entrepreneurs who are using it to run their enterprises.

According to Bennet et al. (2019, p.13) "the utilization of technology aids in the expansion of an individual's social network by promoting entrepreneurship". Interpersonal interaction is an essential means for people to obtain social and economic resources, as well as to maintain and expand social networks (Cho et al., 2007). Face to face contact is the traditional mode of interpersonal communication, but communication via socially interactive technology, such as phone calls and text messages, has been gaining popularity in the last couple of years (Pierce, 2009). Bennet et al. (2019) added that increasingly social networks have been shown to have a positive impact on entrepreneurship. The main reason for this is that social networks assist potential entrepreneurs in obtaining clients as well as financing. In an imperfect credit market, up and coming entrepreneurs are frequently wealth-constrained, and obtaining external financing is critical for entrepreneurship (Djankov et al., 2006).

With the advancement of technology-based entrepreneurship, technological communication has become more convenient and has significantly reduced face-to-face interaction (Erwin et al., 2004). Therefore, the utilization of technology for business can enlarge individual's social network by more communication with others. Balachandran and Sakthivelan (2013, p.5) believed that "the

internet is possibly the greatest scientific and technological movement that our generation can imagine. It has managed to bring many benefits to the society, including cultural, economic, and political benefits". One of the most significant aspects of the internet is its ability to connect people regardless of their physical location through a communication network. The advantage of this is that it allows one to bring people together for a shared objective without having to physically bring them together in an office. As a result, virtual offices are becoming more common. Employment is changing as a result of technological advancements. Technological changes are nothing new in the economy; however, it is worth noting that some businesses are disoriented by technology and struggle to use it to their advantage. Employees in these businesses lack knowledge of social media marketing, and management views social media as time-consuming. As a result of underutilization, small businesses are unable to fully realize the potential benefits. As a result, there is a need to educate employees and improve their skills, knowledge, and attitudes toward social media marketing (Rambe and Nel, 2015). As identified by Rambe and Nel (2015) SMEs in South Africa lack technological knowledge on how to conduct business through social media, they also observed that most businesses are sceptical of social media's utility, and small businesses are hesitant to adopt social media technology.

According to Vidhi (2020) social media can help young entrepreneurs to extend their business on a global scale, expressing ideas and brands precisely and effectively helps in building not only physical connections but also virtual connections with potential investors, key partners, employees, and consumers. Social media gives an opportunity to know the wants of customers, through analysing social media profiles and also makes things easier for entrepreneurs to keep their potential consumers by understanding the need of their customers. Connecting with customers through social media platforms, entrepreneurs get an opportunity for maintaining customer relations and as a result enhancing customer loyalty. It is necessary to frequently interact with customers and start building a strong relationship with them (Howard et al., 2007). A customer is always looking for a service channel where they can easily connect with business. With the help of social media platforms, creating a voice for the start-up is important in boosting the overall brand image of the business. According to Ali and Ahmed (2018) a business or brand that values and respects its customer takes time to compose a customized message that leaves a positive impression on the customer's mind. There is no doubt that social media platforms play an important role in helping young people start their own businesses. This can be accomplished through the various users of various social networks who express their experiences and thoughts. As a result, an open and creative conversation between users is developed, which fosters knowledge exchange among users (Jagongo and Kinyua, 2013).

In reality, the information offered can help an entrepreneur improve their business management skills. Indeed, the internet has enormous potential for creating and realising social empowerment and equity, with the goal of improving the daily lives of entrepreneurs as well as the general public (Mehra et al., 2004). The different online avenues, such as YouTube and Facebook, have become part and parcel of our lives, more so for the youth all over the globe (Chan and Holosko, 2016).

An international survey by the PEW Research Centre (2012) reported that the use of social media was more rampant with individuals below the age of 30 than with those who were 50 years and older. Many of the youth who use social media for business access the internet either through a computer or their mobile phones (PEW Research Centre, 2012). The phone is a very powerful tool for empowerment considering that a high percentage of youths own one. Additionally, PEW Research Centre (2012) also noted that approximately 60% of smartphone owners regularly visited various social media platforms whenever they used their phones. Cell phone use can translate into social capital (Kim, 2015). Social capitals are the valuable social networks, contacts, and connections among people through which individual productivity is increased (Putnam, 2000). As a result, if social media is well managed or used, it has the potential to transform the lives of its users, particularly young people. Almost all businesses can now access resources, whether human or otherwise, that were previously impossible or unavailable to them. Social media has also assisted businesses in improving their worthiness, expanding their market, improving their strategies, and gaining access to many more suppliers. As a result, it has become critical for both business owners and advertisers to understand how social media works and, more importantly, how to use it to their advantage (Jagongo and Kinyua, 2013). This is because the importance of social media as a communication and marketing tool in any business cannot be overemphasised.

Employees, as individuals or as members of a team, play a critical role in organisational performance in the current competitive business world. In fact, an organization's ideal effectiveness and efficiency are determined not only by its financial resources or by employing the best strategy, but also by the extent to which and how it uses its human resources (Hosain, 2017). Human resources are currently one of the most valuable competitive advantages that organisations can develop and maintain (Kareem et al., 2019). Kollmann and Hasel (2006) asserted that since the mid-1990s, the constant advancement of social media has permitted the creation and expansion of so-called social media businesses, whose business models are centred on generating value through electronic information over data networks (Kollmann and Hasel, 2006). Social media is assisting in the establishment of a prospective connection between candidates and recruiters (Hosain, and Liu 2020). Individuals are learning to take advantage of this new channel of communication and information as social networks shift away from their

original concept of leisure. Popular applications include spreading news, building audiences, raising awareness, and forming peer communities. Companies now have their own social media pages where they can recruit job candidates (Melanthiou et al., 2015). Companies, for example, are now creating and opening their own Facebook pages and using those pages as advertisement tools to help them find talent (Andrews, 2012). Furthermore, human resources professionals are increasingly using social media to find elaborate job applicant information and screen and select the best-suited applicants (Brown and Vaughn, 2011).

Online recruitment has recently been recognised as a technological and organisational tool that can provide significant assistance in the management of recruitment and selection processes. According to Gravili (2003, p.132) this was formed in the nineties in the United States, with the introduction of the internet. It is unknown when the Internet was being used for recruitment and selection reasons. What is certain is that the two web-recruiting giants, Monster.com and CareerMosaic.com, both began operations on the Internet in 1994. Many years have passed since then, and these sites like the entire online sector, have grown to become an inexhaustible business resource (Hosain and Liu 2020). In the United States, the internet has gradually gained a leading role in personnel recruitment, a trend that is being mirrored in Europe, where it appears to be the preferred way of finding work. To get an idea of the scale and speed with which this phenomenon is growing, considering that in 1999, the electronic hiring index recorded an increase in online recruitment in the space of a year; 28 million jobs were posted online (Gravili, 2003). Social media can serve not only as an entertainment platform but also for other business purposes. Organizations are using social media for various purposes, such as as an online selling and advertising platform, for reviewing customer feedback, and in many other ways (Hosain, and Liu 2020).

2.6 Advantages of social media entrepreneurship

According to Lee (2018) the social media industry has seen a lot of changes and a substantial rise in usage. It is said that social media platforms allow users to stay connected with friends they know in real life or meet new friends in the virtual world. There are also sites created to make professional connections, such as LinkedIn and Bumble Bizz. Lee (2018) mentioned that these social media platforms help businesses market their products and services while helping entrepreneurs communicate to the world. Social media makes the world aware of their products, services and, more importantly, their visions. Morrell et al. (2017) revealed that most users visit social media platforms at least once a day and 51% of users visit more than one social media platform multiple times a day. These visits give more exposure to an entrepreneur's products and

services, thereby creating more business opportunities for them (Al-Nafisi, 2015). According to Kelley et al. (2017) social media users explore multiple social media platforms on a regular basis. For example, 91% of Instagram users have used Facebook, and 87% of Facebook users utilize YouTube. Over 90% of those who frequently engage in social media use YouTube. By using only two or three social media platforms, an entrepreneur can broadly distribute business advertisements and create a diverse customer base.

2.6.1 Poverty reduction through entrepreneurship

Numerous developing countries suffer from poverty and high unemployment rates, and as a result, entrepreneurship has been promoted as one solution to these challenges. Entrepreneurship is critical since it helps build new enterprises, hence lowering unemployment and encouraging economic development. Based on this perspective, Raza et al. (2018) demonstrate that the positive impact of entrepreneurship and a well-established entrepreneurial culture cannot be overstated. Entrepreneurship is a widely recognised instrument for poverty alleviation (Mbeteh and Pellegrini, 2018). It is also a significant source of employment and economic growth. Poverty in South Africa remains the country's leading problem. The South African government recognised the importance of small enterprises in the country's development shortly after 1994. Following that, the government recognised that strengthening entrepreneurship was one of the techniques that could be used to address issues such as inequalities, poverty, and unemployment (Nieman and Nieuwenhuizen, 2018).

According to Welkessa (2015) entrepreneurship accelerates the creation of work opportunities, boosts economic activity in a variety of sectors, and identifies new growth avenues. It is also beneficial for fostering balanced regional development, reducing social difficulties, boosting economic independence, and stimulating capital formation. Radebe and Vezi-Magigaba (2021) have written extensively about the critical role that entrepreneurship plays in both advanced and emerging countries' economic growth. Undoubtedly, small enterprises are key in the quest to raise economic growth and reduce South Africa's unemployment rate, which stood at 34.4% overall, and 64.40% for the youth, in the second quarter of 2021 (Statistics South Africa, 2021). Unemployment has become an epidemic in South Africa, and youth unemployment exacerbates the country's already dire position, thus leading to absolute poverty. This condition is caused by a variety of circumstances. Some of these circumstances are because some people are unemployed since they only have a basic education, whereas others lack access to higher education and training.

Interestingly, there are others who have attended higher education and training institutions and graduated but are unable to find work (these are the ones the study is focusing on).

One of the solutions for unemployment is entrepreneurship, as it has been viewed as critical to eliminating unemployment and boosting innovation, particularly among the youth. Following decades of massive governmental planning failures, it appears that small-scale human ingenuity and entrepreneurship are now critical components of the fight against poverty (Ahlstrom and Ding, 2014). According to Ahlstrom (2010) rapid economic expansion in recent years has enabled large numbers of people to escape poverty; nevertheless, it is clear that, although certain countries and regions have seen significant declines in poverty, there are still areas with high populations of poor people that could actually benefit from poverty alleviation efforts such as the introduction of social media entrepreneurship. As researchers are increasingly realising that entrepreneurship could play a significant role in alleviating global poverty (Alvarez, Barney, and Newman 2015). The goal is to better understand the affiliation between entrepreneurship and poverty reduction, as well as how to encourage productive entrepreneurship (Baumol et al., 2009). A similar focus is still needed to better understand how poverty might be eliminated through digital economies (social media entrepreneurship). As South Africa's economy is routinely recognized as being one of the most efficient in the world, however, Blaine (2013) claims that its society is one of the most unfair in the world due to the rising poverty and unemployment.

It should also be outlined that in response to the known challenges, the government implemented a range of different methods over the years, including providing employment financial supports to businesses that employ young people, youth development programs such as NYDA[6] that can provide public sector opportunities for employment and entrepreneurial efforts and employment services for the youth (Filmer,and Fox, 2014). It is just as important to also note the contribution of COVID-19 towards the growing number of youths that are unemployed in South Africa. Masenya (2021) argues that millions of people are struggling to find jobs more and this has been made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, Martin and Marlow (2018) stated that another way of creating jobs is to comprehend digital entrepreneurship. Digital entrepreneurship can also assist us in understanding the future and current global labour market dynamics and trends. Digitalisation can be regarded as one of the tools among various dimensions of the socio-economic system technological, economic, social, ecological and technological (Satalkina and Steiner 2020).

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[6] The National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) is a South African-based agency established primarily to tackle challenges that the nation's youth are faced with. The NYDA was established by an Act of parliament, Act no 54 of 2008.

Therefore, there is a need for South Africa to pay more attention to a solution-orientation approach as it is going to assist the country in minimising youth unemployment.

2.6.2 Low Cost

As Reedy et al. (2000) described social media entrepreneurship as the lucrative use of digital communications, Taher (2021) asserted that over the years, it has evolved into a critical economic dynamic. It has shown that it is able to assist many businesses reach a broader consumer base, while also allowing customers to shop at their leisure and has helped contribute to its development. There is the suggestion that social media can help businesses save money on labour as well as other expenses and it can also aid in the management of operating costs in a variety of areas thus lowering the cost of transactions made. The use of digital advertising through email, and many other tools made available to entrepreneurs by social media represents significant cost savings over traditional methods. According to Weinberg (2009), the primary benefit of social media marketing is cost-effectiveness. When compared to other forms of marketing, social media marketing has relatively low financial barriers. The majority of internet sites enable people to create profiles and post information freely, unlike traditional marketing methods, which can cost millions (Taher, 2021). Several social media tools, including those for businesses, are free to use. Businesses with a limited budget can operate highly successful social media marketing campaigns. The benefit of having reached the target market for little or no money is significant, and the audience that wants information joins or follows the business voluntarily (Shaheen, 2019). Pay-per-click advertisements on sites like Facebook are geo-targeted based on specific criteria in order to reach the correct audience. Due to the popularity nature of social media, each person who reads the posts has the ability to spread the news further within his own network, allowing information to reach a large number of people in a short period of time (Weinberg, 2009).

Social media makes it simple for consumers to gain access to a wide range of markets and assists entrepreneurs in developing genuine relationships with their customers. A simple like, comment, message, or sharing of photos and videos is a quick and efficient way to connect with a potential client. Entrepreneurs can also use social media to get immediate feedback from their customers. Positive feedback can expand a company's customer base, while negative feedback can show entrepreneurs where they can improve. Gilmander (2019) provided reasons why he believes entrepreneurs should be utilizing the social media space. An entrepreneur is always looking for a competitive advantage, a new gadget that can help make them more productive, a means to save more money, or a market trend to take advantage of (Gilmander, 2019).

According to Shaheen, (2019) the importance of running an online business is to reduce costs paid to the manufacturers or vendors in speed in the processing of electronic stores and low-cost inception compared to the e-processing of traditional stores, which leads to a reduction in the cost of business performance, and increase the scope of supply markets, including beyond the limits of space and time, and thereby to increase competition which results from the high-quality products and low prices (Anati, 2000, p. 36). According to Samarrai (1999) lower business process costs for products or services provided by entrepreneurs are said to be very important components of product pricing. In this regard, social media entrepreneurship (e-commerce) plays an important role in lowering these costs by improving sharing of information and increasing business collaboration, as well as lower costs of searching for merchandise process-related information and going all the way to potential buyers and sellers in the market (Samarrai, 1999).

2.6.3 Seizing emerging business trends

According to Cambalikova (2021) in order to survive in a turbulent economic climate, every business needs to understand how to deal with new challenges, especially youth-owned social media-based businesses. The rate of change in the way of doing business has changed dramatically in recent years, and it has become a part of the daily reality of businesses and organizations. To remain profitable and competitive in the current global business environment, organisations must meet the changing environmental conditions (Rigby, 2017). Severe competition is a fact of life for any entrepreneur, as the market has changed, new players have entered, and competition has increased (Cambalikova, 2021). To compete effectively, it is critical for enterprises to respond quickly to environmental uncertainty, innovation, and both external and internal changes. According to Sganzerla (2016) organisations that are resistant to change are frequently at risk of losing their competitiveness, as a result, companies must monitor changes, evaluate them, and respond appropriately.

The persistence and power of ongoing digital transformation is evident in the results of our most recent management tools and trends survey, as managers embrace digital tools like advanced analytics and the internet. According to Bhor et al. (2018) since everyone else is going online, the services that one has to offer must also go online. One's basic services include healthcare, shopping, and ticket bookings, among others. Prior to the internet, mass communication was used to publicise and market any product or service. According to Bhor et al. (2018) systems such as Google Analytics monitor the activities of a website, whereas Facebook or Twitter data analysis tools combine social science and computer science to display useful insights gathered from stakeholders (Bhor et al., 2018). The only flaw in the online systems being used for

entrepreneurship is that if there is any technical problem, it affects every sector of society rather than just one (Abroms and Maibach, 2008). A range of applications exists which provides evaluation of social media usage. Social media entrepreneurs can use this to their advantage and make business development decisions. Google and other digital platforms provide a detailed and simplistic analysis of information from available social media platforms.

It shows how commonly a specific search term is entered in relation to total search volume in various regions and languages around the world. Business trends, according to Lee et al. (2010) may indicate that technologies or related topics will be of great interest in the future or that they will be obsolete for future directions. Identification of such trends necessitates analytical skills, which can be aided by trend mining and visual analytics (Nazemi and Burkhardt, 2019) According to Rekettye and Rekettye (2019) (2020), the economic situation of the 21st century has been quite volatile thus far due to the dramatically changing environment, which has a significant effect on business performance. As a result, there is a growing interest in locating lucrative prospects that may point the way for the future of many young people in business. Another important aspect to consider is that the influence of social media is not limited to the online space, but is continually altering media culture such as television, film, and the arts that surpass its traditional borders. However, by utilizing social media, entrepreneurs may take advantage of the available opportunities as well as its capacity to circumvent areas where traditional advertising and marketing cannot (Appel et al., 2020).

2.6.4 Customer feedback

Businesses must acknowledge the importance of building relationships with their customers if they are to thrive in the long run (Tatikonda, 2013). It is critical for small, medium enterprises to strive to increase customer service in order to grow these relationships. Multiple studies in different sectors show that customer satisfaction increases profits as a result of consumer loyalty and repurchase intentions (Okharedia, 2013). It is essential to remember that what may satisfy customers today may not satisfy them in a year's time. If neglected, customer dissatisfaction can signal the end for a business, specifically if the effect of customer dissatisfaction on the organisation and its profitability is misinterpreted time and again (Tatikonda, 2013). Tatikonda, (2013, p. 38) also claimed that "customer satisfaction feedback should be gathered on a frequent basis, and if used properly, this reflection about how satisfied clients are with the business and the product and service offerings can be crucial in establishing relationships and customer loyalty".

Any communication from a customer about a product or service is considered important feedback, which can assist the business in more ways than the entrepreneur can imagine (Erickson and Eckrich, 2001). The company encourages unsolicited feedback by using methods such as surveys and focus groups that ask customers to provide feedback (Sampson, 1996). Customer satisfaction is influenced by services and products offered as well as quality assessments. Customer happiness is influenced by their emotional responses, actions, and perceptions. Zeithal and Bitner (2003) added that greater consumer loyalty, extending a customer's life cycle, extending the life of things bought by the consumer, and boosting positive word-of-mouth communication can all benefit the organization. When a consumer is satisfied with a company's product or service, he or she is most likely to return and suggest the company's products or services to others. It is challenging for a business to grow if it ignores or disregards the needs of its clients (Tao 2014). Businesses that do not collect customer satisfaction data have no idea if they are on the right road or if they need to make changes to better satisfy the demands of their customers.

This is critical for entrepreneurs and their enterprises because attracting new customers is challenging. Small businesses must go above and beyond to retain customers and spread positive word of mouth about their brand. Despite extensive research on customer satisfaction, little is known about how customer satisfaction is measured. One of the most substantial benefits of using social media for entrepreneurship, according to Johnston et al. (2013) is that client input is free. It is critical to identify a product market, and one of the best ways to find out what people want is to ask them directly. Prior to the emergence of social media, obtaining feedback from existing and potential clients was even more difficult (Johnston et al., 2013). Social media offers entrepreneurs continuous free input and is now the go-to site for client assistance. Customer satisfaction measures how well a company's products or services meet the expectations of its customers. Customer feedback is a broad and detailed psychological assessment of a customer's interaction with a product or service.

Consumer satisfaction is widely acknowledged to be critical to long-term corporate success (McColl-Kennedy and Schneider, 2000). The service-profit chain concept explicitly links consumer feedback to corporate success and profits. Customer interaction has increased over the years as social media entrepreneurship has grown; many customers now expect a response within 45 minutes on social media. Keiningham and Vavra (2001) estimated that for every percentage improvement in customer satisfaction, the return-on-investment increases by 2.37%. Additionally, when a consumer is satisfied with a product or service, they indirectly become brand ambassadors for the company because social media has enabled the entire world to connect, a customer post an entrepreneur can literally connect with billions of people all over the world if they have access to

the internet. Online customer engagement is useful since it supplies the company with reliable information about client feelings. This is defined as a technique for improving and strengthening social relationships through the use of a social media platform (Steinfield et al., 2012). Considering the fact that "the number of friends or followers a person has on a social media platform describes their level of intensity, whereas the amount of time spent on a social media platform determines the quantity of usage" (Petersen and Johnston 2015, p. 4).

2.6.5 Social trust in business

According to Valenzuela et al. (2009) social trust is an interactional process that is accomplished by having a consistent character with clients. Trust is malleable and subject to change. The goal of online social trust, according to Uslaner (2002) is to minimize the amount of uncertainty about what the entrepreneur is offering. This is an integral part of social media entrepreneurship because social trust demonstrates that one is likely to receive an influx of consumers as a result of recommendations from satisfied customers. Social media users must master the act of social trust by seeking information about others (Ellison et al., 2007). As a result, if an active Facebook user discovers that their followers in their personal list acts or posts information in a negative manner, such an individual is likely to be distrusted. As a result, "using social media can be associated with having a trustworthy network of friends" (Valenzuela et al., 2009, p. 877). An example of this is, if a person displays social trust and it happens that they belong to a group with a large group of connections, such a person may be able to receive social support in times of a corporate crisis taking place, and this type of assistance encourages social trust toward accomplishing life satisfaction (Valenzuela et al., 2009; Johnston, 2015). This means that when using Facebook for social interaction and for business, the aspect of social trust must be considered, as it is a deciding factor that encourages good social relations with friends, family or customers.

Being surrounded by a great social circle is important in business especially when one is a young entrepreneur looking forward to grow your enterprise and attain more customers. Social capital is defined as the benefits of using social networks, which aid in companionship with people of diverse opinions and bridging gaps among people in a society, allowing the society to function effectively (Uslaner, 2001). The concept of social capital focuses on the social structure of studying encouragement as an important factor of social relationships as well as making an honest living. There are numerous forms of social capital, according to Petersen and Johnston (2015) especially among university students. The three types of social capital for social interaction that students use on social media platforms to best demonstrate their social interest are linking social

ties, building social ties, and maintaining social ties. Petersen and Johnston (2015, p.7) explored the benefits of social capital through interaction further, discovering that "the use of social media helps users broaden their social integration through the development of social ties". Similarly, Donath and Boyd (2004) concurred that student use of Facebook can enhance the development and maintenance of social interaction since the ability to access social media is cheap, making it accessible to students.

According to Ellison et al. (2007) people use social media platforms to bond with individuals from diverse cultures, promote diversity, and, most importantly, provide emotional comfort for such individuals both online and offline. Consequently, Johnston et al. (2013) observed that the more a person uses messaging apps such as WhatsApp and Facebook, the stronger the bond for consistent social interaction with others becomes. For example, a person can use Twitter to form alliances with a group of social bloggers and power holders, and by proving their loyalty, they will build a reliable relationship among people who might assist them in building their social reputation, which can lead to a new customer. According to LaRose (2008, p.312) "individuals receive support networks from other users, which helps them raise their profile and improve their quality of life, particularly among students, by improving their self-esteem and giving a sense of accomplishment". According to Boyd and Ellison (2007) social relationships shift as people move around and meet new people, particularly among university students who frequently change academic levels and come from diverse environments and upbringings. As an outcome, using social media sites helps maintain previous or old relationships with others, especially those who are geographically distant. According to Rost (2011) the use of social media and instant messaging has assisted students in keeping social ties, particularly in long-distance relationships.

2.7 Challenges of social media entrepreneurship

There are numerous causes of youth unemployment, many of which have a high level of agreement. The most significant is the country's poor macroeconomic performance. Everyone in the economy suffers from a lack of growth, but some groups are particularly hard hit. In fact, youth are disproportionately affected because youth unemployment is prone to changes. It varies more than adult unemployment (Ryan, 2001). There are several constraints that young entrepreneurs must conquer in order to become entrepreneurs (Bizri, 2017). Sandhu et al. (2010) asserted that these obstacles are global in nature because they illustrate problems in both developed and developing countries. According to Munaiwa (2013) the challenges that young entrepreneurs face around the world are similar. Watiri, (2012) believes that many students' entrepreneurial spirit is

stifled by a lack of experience and technical knowledge, as they fear competition from already established entrepreneurs. Several factors contribute to this increased recurring uncertainty, such as the fact that young people typically have less experience; companies have invested less in training them and thus lose less when laying them off when compared to an adult experienced worker. Due to lack of experience, youth face higher barriers to entry into the labour market. Furthermore, in a downturn, firms first stop hiring before beginning to lay off workers. Given that young workers make up a disproportionate share of the pool of available candidates, a hiring slowdown will disproportionately affect them (O'Higgins 2001).

2.7.1 Lack of required skills

Skills shortages remain one of the main obstacles to development in South Africa (ASGISA, 2006). A worrying trend seems to be emerging, such that, while the rate of youth unemployment is low in comparison to the overall unemployment rate, it has been rising at the fastest rate of all education cohorts since 1995. Boateng (2016, p. 391) stated that " in Ghana, the poor quality of the working population or lack of a basic education has made it difficult to find work in the formal sector. According to Burns (2008), the social issues that youth in post-Apartheid South Africa face are unemployment and a lack of skills. Strong employment growth festered in South Africa from 2000 to 2005, roughly mirroring the rate of economic growth (Oosthuizen 2005). This expansion demonstrates the importance of output growth in stimulating youth employment requirements, particularly in recent years. However, it is true that more than half of the growth in youth employment has been in low-wage informal or self-employment jobs (Burns et al., 2010).

There are numerous explanations why graduates remain unemployed, but the most common explanation given by most companies and industry players is a lack of key employability skills (Walters, 2016). Unemployed graduates are reported to be short in a variety of occupational skills and expertise, including communication, personal qualities, problem-solving abilities, and technical abilities (Omar and Rajoo, 2016). Companies have often expressed concern that graduates lack English language fluency, communication skills, analytical capabilities, and critical thinking abilities (Cheong, Fernandez-Chung and Leong, 2016). Many young people are compelled to accept working conditions that include low wages and demeaning terms and conditions of employment. In some developing economies, two-thirds of the young population is underutilized, which means they are unemployed, working irregularly, most likely in the informal sector, or not in the labour force, education, or training (International Labour Organisation, 2013).

Gumede (2012) asserted that irrespective of the approach any study takes to investigate young people's skill development, the situation young people find themselves in points to a historical incapability by the South African government and partners to help solve the youth unemployment challenge in a sustainable manner. According to Waldie (2004) young people without skills are viewed as heavily reliant, or as a danger to themselves and a societal problem (Britton et al., 2011). Both these perspectives negatively impact South Africa's ability to see young people as an integral part of its development agenda. South Africa's escalating mass of unskilled and unemployed youth signals that the formal economy is failing to absorb them. Furthermore, higher levels of employment provide several other benefits, as most of the skills required to improve young people's chances of getting a job are acquired (OECD, 2013). Moreover, Edwards (2006) stated that the source of youth unemployment is South Africa's workforce's failure to impart necessary skills to youth. In the absence of skill development initiatives, well over 90% of the world's youth population in developing countries lacks appropriate and demanded skills (Keep, 2012). According to Mlatsheni (2005) four out of every five school leavers are functionally illiterate (they lack the language skills needed to succeed in tertiary institutions) and 60% have unsatisfactory mathematics and science skills as they finish high school. The presumed low quality of South African education, especially in the former African school system, serves as a major deterrent on the demand side for employing large numbers of first-time labour market entrants (Kraak, 2005). Education is, of course, not the only way to acquire skills. Experience in the form of part-time employment eases the transition from high school to work, helps youth choose career paths, and instils work ethics that employers value (Burns, 2008).

2.7.2 Lack of capital

Booyens, (2011) asserted that South African SMMEs face various challenges, including a lack of funding and access to finance. These include a lack of entrepreneurial culture, poor skills to manage businesses, as well as a high market entrance barriers all of which contribute to high rates of business failure (NCR, 2011). Even so, according to the 2010 Small Business Survey, lack of access to finance (8.7%) was ranked third after competition (12.6%) and lack of operating space (16.2%) as major barriers to the growth of SMMEs (FinScope, 2010). As previously stated, the lack of access to capital and funding is a significant obstacle to youth entrepreneurship in South Africa. Youth do not have capital or assets to use as collateral for a loan from the official financial system that is associated with high interest rates and complex application procedures (Rogerson, 2008). In financial institutions, young entrepreneurs compete with consumers for funds available.

Nonetheless, both the private and public sectors offer a variety of assistance and financial support programmes to South African SMMEs. Government agencies such as SEDA, Khula Enterprise Finance, and Ntsika Enterprises Promotions Agency primarily assist existing, medium-sized businesses (Booyens, 2011). Even through the government's commitment to assisting small and medium enterprises, awareness and utilisation of available resources has been extremely low (Mago and Toro, 2013). Based on the 2010 Small Business Survey, 75% of entrepreneurs were unaware of support organisations (FinScope, 2010). According to Altman and Marock (2011) allowing youth access to credit facilities allows them to take advantage of opportunities and thus engage in small business operations. Every business requires resources to function and succeed. Financial resources, physical assets, human resources, and technological resources were described as some of the resources required for any business start-up and growth (Abor et al., 2006). For the day-to-day operations of the business, financial resources are required. These resources are required to fund all other types of resources, such as physical, human, and technological resources. According to Sutton et al. (2007) many businesses fail due to insufficient financial resources and an inability to manage these resources. An entrepreneur's resources include his or her own resources and abilities (Wu, 2007).

Previous research has shown the significance of resources in terms of entrepreneurial readiness. According to Mansor and Zahari (2007) there is an association between students' motivation to become entrepreneurs and resources. A study by Seun and Kalsom (2015) show that entrepreneurial education influences the effect of resources on entrepreneurial behaviour. Human resources refer to the types of people who work in the business to help it run smoothly. Their knowledge, expertise, and experience are extremely valuable and can be established through education and training. Intellectual property (copyrights, trademarks, and patents) are examples of technological resources that can provide a competitive advantage (Chimucheka, 2012). Goodwill can be a valuable resource as well. Goodwill as a resource is more closely related to the company's overall reputation. It can also improve brand loyalty and a company's reputation. When examining the barriers to youth entrepreneurship, it is critical to consider the support structures in place to promote youth entrepreneurship in our country. Entrepreneurial resources are the tangible and intangible assets that businesses deploy to exploit market competitive flaws (Alvarez and Barney, 2014).

2.7.3 Lack of entrepreneurship education

According to North (2002) active intervention will be required for young people to break free from the negative spiral. As a result, there is a pressing need for young people to be trained and educated in entrepreneurship. The youth should learn to be informed consumers, acquire the appropriate attitude toward work, and the abilities necessary to recognise profitable business opportunities and assist them to start their own business enterprises from an early age in order for them to become successful entrepreneurs rather than job seekers (North, 2002). According to Radebe and Vezi-Magigaba (2021) quality entrepreneurship education is significant in enhancing the culture of entrepreneurship in students or learners because they grow up with the attitude of starting their own businesses because the entrepreneurial foundation is instilled in them from an early age. Mahola et al. (2019) asserted that this is critical in developing the knowledge and skills that allow entrepreneurs to exploit opportunities. Furthermore, entrepreneurship education helps entrepreneurs improve customer awareness, innovation and creativity, resource gathering ability, and business and technical skills. Furthermore, because of its role in fostering entrepreneurs, it has been encouraged in many educational institutions, and as a result it is also presented as a solution to South Africa's problems (Mahola et al., 2019).

Entrepreneurship education teaches students about economic opportunities, the business environment, identifying opportunities and developing business plans, enterprise management techniques, self-development techniques, and particular leadership abilities (Akhmetshin et al., 2019). Suleiman (2010) argues that this education provides people, especially youth, with knowledge and expertise that improve them into capable people through real-life learning experiences in which they can take risks, manage results, and gain knowledge from the outcomes. Increased entrepreneurial education has the potential to significantly contribute to job creation, eradicating poverty, and economic progress (Isaacs et al., 2007; Chimucheka, 2013). A significant amount of education and training is associated with entrepreneurial behaviour (Niema and Nieuwenhuizen, 2009).

Fatoki and Odeyemi (2010) observed that in order for businesses to obtain the necessary funding from stakeholders, they must frequently demonstrate that they have the proper training and experience in that field, which improves their managerial competency. As a result, Fatoki and Odeyemi (2010) believe that entrepreneurship education has a positive impact on funding opportunities. Fogel et al. (2006) emphasised the importance of effective youth entrepreneurship education in training young people to take responsibility, enterprising individuals who go on to become entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers, thereby promoting economic development and

the development of sustainable societies. Bawuah et al. (2006) argued in a study on entrepreneurship education in tertiary institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) that the bottleneck in entrepreneurial activity in developing nations is caused by a lack of entrepreneurial skills and that formal education is famously focused on preparing students for employment in the government sector and existing companies, instead of entrepreneurial activity and the formation of new businesses. In general, the South African educational framework does not put a significant enough emphasis on the type of entrepreneurship education that prepares youth, such as providing a basic knowledge of how to start and run a business, as well as access to finance literacy, marketing, and business skills.

According to Sikalieh and Otieno (2011) university-based entrepreneurship studies are designed to determine and encourage entrepreneurship, creativity, and abilities, and to enable the development of independent behaviour that will build a comprehension of business start-ups and student management skills. Sikalieh and Otieno (2011) go on to illustrate that students are not adequately prepared to become entrepreneurs, but rather to enter the labour force as labourers. The transition of education from a teacher-cantered to a learner-cantered approach allows students to improve their critical thinking in entrepreneurship (Shaver and Commarmond, 2017). After having taken entrepreneurship courses, students can understand the basic essential teaching approach, which includes providing a business practice, visiting a company, and interviewing a successful entrepreneur. This teaching method, which uses contextual learning and provides real-world experience rather than theory, is regarded as the most important in developing their entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial skills (Farny et al., 2016; Potishuk and Kratzer, 2017). Entrepreneurship education at the tertiary level should consider an effective instructional approach that allows students to gain first-hand experience in business as well as practice. This entrepreneurial approach can help students develop an entrepreneurial mind-set (Ndou et al., 2018). Students will develop a better entrepreneurial mindset if they pay attention to the curriculum and techniques for teaching practical entrepreneurship courses.

The primary goal of entrepreneurship education is to enable all necessary entrepreneurial skills to achieve entrepreneurial success (Audretsch et al., 2016). The traditional learning methods are no longer adequate to meet the versatile environment's demand for entrepreneurial ability (Brian and Norma, 2010).

2.7.4 Credibility, trademark and copyright issues

According to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) (2004, p. 54) trademark is defined as "any sign that individualises the products of a given enterprise and separates them from the goods of its competitors". Castaldi (2018) claimed that it serves two important functions. The first of the two functions is that trademarks reveal where a product came from. The owner of a trademark has both the exclusive right and the obligation to use it in the market. Given that there is an increased competitiveness in the entrepreneurship environment, Flikkema et al. (2014), asserted that the increased competitive environment in services offered by entrepreneurs has encouraged further the use of trademark as well as intellectual property rights to put a mark on their property. This, however, is proving to be a difficult task in the social media space. According to a study conducted by Krishanmurty and Kuck (1999), certain websites were developed to cause major confusion to customers due to a lack of copyright and trademark among many entrepreneurs. Steinman and Hawkins (2010) asserted that while social media entrepreneurs use social media platforms to promote products and brands to their customers, it is critical for social media businesses to safeguard their own trademarks and copyrights. This is due to the high level of competition in online run businesses; many companies are concerned about their credibility. This is not to say that all online-only businesses are unreliable however, with regard to the lack of confidence in social media entrepreneurship as whole, Martin and Murphy (2017) discovered that consumers are concerned about data privacy and their confidence in brands and platforms. Marketing and related disciplines have studied privacy and trust concerns from various perspectives, and they use multiple definitions of private information (Aguirre et al., 2015).

Consumers are adjusting and responding to a digital world in which privacy is not promised. With weakening trust in social media platforms and brands that advertise on them, many customers prefer not to share private information in exchange for more personalised experiences. With the lack of trust in social media businesses, Edelman (2018) claimed that customers are nervous about their purchases being monitored and added that they frequently believe that brands should not be able to buy their data. In line with growing privacy concerns, consumers perceptions of brands and social media are becoming more negative and as a result, customers are removing their social media profiles.

With nearly 40% of digitally connected individuals admitting to removing at least one social media account due to concerns about the misuse of their sensitive information (Edelman, 2018). This is a negative trend not only for social media entrepreneurs but also for brands and who have become reliant on these channels to reach consumers (Edelman, 2018). As such, accomplishing and

building trust and convincing customers that those relationships in the digital world are just as genuine and honest as those in the real offline world remains a problem. Ratnasingham (1998) found that one of the main reasons customers do not do more extensive online shopping is because of their fear of online credit card fraud. Furthermore, privacy concerns have resulted in a public relations disaster for some major social media marketing companies, resulting in significant brand image being tarnished (Advertising Age, 2000).

2.8 The downside of social media

Due to its dependability and consistency, social media opens up a wide range of opportunities for businesses including social media entrepreneurs. Marketing on social media refers to marketing that takes place on social media platforms (Nadaraja and Yazdanifard, 2013). Companies nowadays (big or small) can reach out to prospective customers easily, and immediately, as a result to social media. However, social media marketing faces a number of challenges. Some of these challenges were highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic. That is when social media become a major risk to its users, as illustrated by reports showing that the level of scamming soared (Fletcher et al. 2020). This could be attributable to the fact that individuals had to work online, which meant that scammers had more people to con.

According to Fletcher et al. (2020) in the American context, social media scams have been on the rise for several years. The overall confirmed losses from these thefts totalled $134 million in 2019, estimated costs in the first half of 2020 reached new highs, totalling around $117 million. During that time, reported social media scams included online shopping, romance scams, and promises of financial relief or economic opportunities (Federal Trade Commission, 2021). Fletcher et al. (2020) also stated that scammers can create a false profile and pose as someone people know, or they can even hack a valid account. They do this by concealing their identity, they can gain access to a virtual community that people trust, increasing their likelihood of being believed. Social media, on the other hand, is not merely a place where criminals may steal information. It is also used to trade information that's been hacked. These platforms provide scammers with a plethora of ways to contact with consumers, and the potential for harm is enormous.

Human and child traffickers also target their victims on various social media sites before they abduct them. Ryklief (2020) asserted that traffickers scour platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok for vulnerable young people, and then they begin grooming them after they have identified a possible target by creating a relationship through a friend request, like, or remark on a post. According to Ryklief (2020) of the 30 000 children who are prostituted in the country,

half are under the age of 14 and as young as four and the province of KwaZulu-Natal is the primary source of human trafficking victims. Other forms of luring individuals for sinister motives using social media are also on the rise.

Nair (2021) made an example of a Facebook page that advertised government job openings and was continuously enticing naive South African job seekers. 189,000 members of the page were left gobsmacked when they learned that the page, which featured a variety of employment ads for government ministries including Home Affairs, Correctional Services, and the Police Service, was detected as a scam (Nair, 2021). In South Africa, criminals frequently use bogus adverts to defraud unwary and desperate job seekers by demanding payment for administrative fees, upfront payments to ensure employment, or police clearance checks. Some of the dangers of using social media for work, according to an article by Subramoney (2022) stem from the unknown perils lurking on the opposite side of the "employment offer". The recent article is on the three victims, a man aged 27 and two women aged 21 and 33, who allegedly answered a Facebook advertisement for work in Tzaneen. According to Subramoney (2022) the unaware victims boarded cabs and travelled to a specific location in Tzaneen in search of work opportunities offered by the suspect through the use of WhatsApp, where they were met by "employers" who turned out to be people with sinister motives. They were robbed of their cell phones, money, and clothes. They were then made to strip and photographed, and the photos were forwarded to the family of one of the victims, who demanded money in exchange for their release (Subramoney, 2022).

2.9 Summary

The study overviewed global youth and economic trends in order to try and understand the stand of youth unemployment from a global viewpoint. The study also looked at the challenges the youth are facing, such as lack of capital, inadequate entrepreneurship education and many other challenges. In the research it is also noted that there are many advantages of using social media such as easy marketing, connecting with clients on a personal level, staying up to date with the newest trends is said to be a great way of interacting with the customer base and many other instances.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This study seeks to shed insights into social media usage as an employment creation strategy. This chapter also presents and thoroughly explain the area in which the study takes place, as well as the methods utilised in the study. The chapter also outlines participant selection process, data collection, and data analysis. The chapter also focuses on the data collection procedure that was used, as well as sampling of the collected data and its analysis. The chapter also discusses aspects such as the ethical considerations when doing this research along with the importance of credibility, confirmability, transferability in the study and the trustworthiness of research. The researcher describes how he ensured that all four areas were addressed. Finally, the chapter discusses the study's limitations as well as potential solutions.

3.2 Study area

The study was conducted in Durban, South Africa. According to eThekwini Municipality (2020) Durban is the largest city in the province of KwaZulu-Natal and the third-largest city in the country. According to COGTA (2020) the area is topographically hilly, with many gorges and ravines, and almost no true coastal plain. It spans an area of approximately 2 559km^2 and borders three provincial districts, namely Ugu in the south, iLembe to the North as well as uMgungundlovu to the west. Durban has 3.9 million people, accounting for 34.7% of the total population. Between 2008 and 2018, the population grew by 1.45% (which is lower than the national average of 1.57%). The metro has an average household size of 3.3, which is lower than the provincial average of 3.8. Close to 30% of the population is under the age of 15 years and 63% of the population is under the age of 35 (COGTA, 2020) which makes more than half of the population of Durban fall under the youth bracket and is the reason why the study best suits this area. Furthermore, 8 802 households are headed by children and young people between the ages of 15 and 19, and 42.14% of households are headed by women (COGTA, 2020). The median age of the metro of 27 years is higher than that of the province (22 years) and 10% higher than the figure for South Africa (25 years). Approximately 55% of the population is between the ages of 20 and 59 years, whilst 8% of the population is older than 60 years (COGTA, 2020).

Around 2.1 million of Durban's residents live below the upper bound poverty line of R 1 227 per person per month, and 17.1% of the population reported having no income (Stats SA Community Survey, 2016). Approximately 16.8% of the population has no education while 5.8% have a higher education qualification. According to Global Insight, over a million people are living below the food poverty line in Durban in 2018, with most of the people from the African group, following by Asian, Coloured and white. COGTA (2020) also mentioned that the labour force absorption rate showed an increase of 0.2% (from 48.1% to 48.3%) and the participation rate decreased by 0.3% (from 61.3% to 61.0%) over the same period, indicating that there are more people looking for employment and the likelihood of them finding employment has decreased. Figure 3.1 is a map of the city of Durban (CBD) and its neighbouring townships and suburbs. The townships were established for diverse race groups to live in during Apartheid. Each of the several neighbourhoods and townships has its own set of problems. Poverty is widespread, youth unemployment is a problem, and inequality and class differences are visible in each of these communities. Nonetheless, Durban is a seaside city, which is why it is an attractive site for visitors and investors.

Figure 3.1: Map of Durban
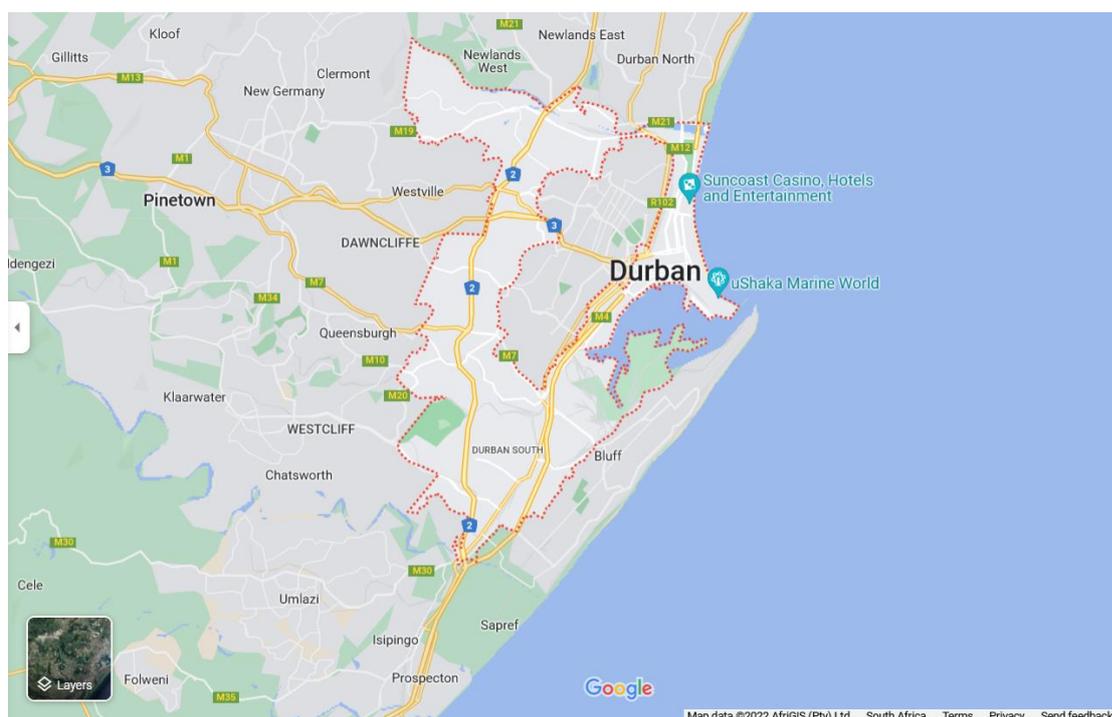
Source: Google Maps (2022)

3.3 Research methodology

Creswell (2013, p. 97) defined the case study method as "exploring a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through elaborate, in-depth collection of data that included various information sources and reporting a case description and case themes". The case of youth unemployment has been well explored, and as a result, there are many sources of data related to this subject. This study then aims to concentrate on the strategies used by individuals to get themselves out of unemployment. It examines the lived experiences of twenty young undergraduates to learn about their developed behaviours related to their innate desire to succeed. When conducting research, researchers can use a variety of techniques provided by research methodology. There are two types of research methods, qualitative and quantitative methodology. This study employed a qualitative approach because this method seeks to explore and understand the meaning that some individuals or groups of people think come from social or human problems (Creswell, 2013). In this study, the goal was to investigate the reason why students use social media as strategy to employ themselves in Durban over traditional ways of doing business (entrepreneurship). The study also wanted to determine the student's perspectives on social media usage as an employment creation strategy and thus discover the challenges that are faced by social media entrepreneurs. This approach best suits this study, as Braun and Clarke (2006) stated that qualitative research methodology is concerned with the phenomenon of quality, it aims to obtain a description, feeling, and meaning of a situation, and it employs reasoning and word use. Similarly, Silverman (2002) claims that qualitative research is used to gather opinions, motivations, and an understanding or reasoning for a specific phenomenon. "Qualitative research seeks evidence, it seeks responses, employs a previously defined set of measures to answer questions, and attempts to understand the topic or problem from the perspective of the population on which it is based" (Denzin and Lincoln 2003, p.1). Since this study aims to obtain insights into people's lives, the multifaceted nature of qualitative research enables researchers to develop a holistic picture of the phenomenon in question (Denzin and Lincoln (2005). Using a qualitative research approach allows the researcher to gain specific information on students' behaviours, opinions, and challenges related to the entrepreneurial use of social media in Durban, South Africa.

The goal of qualitative research is to provide information about the human experiences, opinions, emotions, and beliefs of selected individuals or populations in society. This allows the researcher to gain first-hand knowledge of individual behaviour, resulting in unique and accurate data, as opposed to quantitative research, which is more focused on statistics and numerical data. Qualitative research aids in the comprehension and interpretation of complex reality by identifying

intangible factors such as religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and gender roles (Phillips and Burbules, 2000). In qualitative research, the participant-researcher relationship is often less formal because participants are given the freedom to elaborate on their responses in detail through the use of open-ended questions, which allow the researcher to respond immediately to the answers produced by the participant by asking probing questions. This research method collects data through in-depth interviews, focus groups, participant observation, documents, records, and observation. Lincoln et al. (2011) claim that qualitative research is effective in obtaining information about the behaviours, values, opinions, and social contexts of particular populations it provides information about the human side of the issue. Therefore, this method was effective in ensuring that the aims and objectives of this research were achieved. According to Marshall (2003) qualitative data gives the researcher the flexibility to probe participant responses, which enables the participants to generate further explanation from their answers.

Open-ended questions are capable of evoking responses that are unanticipated by the researcher, explanatory in nature, and culturally salient and meaningful to the participants (Marshall, 2003, p. 20). Berg and Lune (2012, p. 4) added that "qualitative research is a long, hard road, with ambiguous data on one side and stringent requirements for analysis on the other, along with the issue of data interpretation and analysis". There are some disadvantages to qualitative research methods. According to Silverman (2010) qualitative research methods occasionally ignore contextual sensitivity in favour of focusing on meanings and experiences. The phenomenological approach, for example, seeks to unearth, interpret, and comprehend the participants' experiences (Wilson, 2014; Tuohy et al., 2013). Sallee and Flood (2012) asserted that policymakers may be sceptical of qualitative approach findings when conducting research. In relation to Sallee and Flood (2012) work on educational practise in the United States, they found that central and state governments tried to quantify teacher and student performance, and quantitative approaches are usually given credence in several social sciences (Berg, 2009). Furthermore, purely qualitative research may overlook the cultural and social interpretations of the variables under consideration (Richards and Richards, 1994).

3.3.1 Research paradigm

A research paradigm, according to Guba and Lincoln (1994), is a specific worldview that describes, for the academics who convey this view, what is appropriate to research and how. According to interpretivists, the researcher and the participants are mutually dependent, which means that they affect each other in the creation of knowledge (Guba, 1990). This indicates that interpretivists attempt to perceive a phenomenon from the viewpoint of the participants. In terms

of methodology, interpretivists employ qualitative methods and data collection techniques such as interviews, observations, and document reviews (Henning et al., 2004; Denscombe, 2005). The interpretivist paradigm was used in this study because the research objective was to ascertain the perspectives of students and their experiences of using social media as an employment creation strategy for themselves. This paradigm was used because it allows the researcher to look at how human beings attach meaning to their universe, and the way they view the universe influences the way they interpret the universe (Bertram and Christiansen, 2014). Interpretivists aim to understand the meaning that informs human behaviour. In the setting of this study, the researcher needed to comprehend the attitudes, and knowledge of the youth in terms of generating money through social media.

3.4 Sampling

According to Nieuwenhuis (2010), sampling is the process used to choose a portion of the population for study. There are two broad classifications of sampling techniques, probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling methods, according to Acharya (2013, p. 330) are "the best model in sampling methodology and for guaranteeing generalisation of research findings to the target group". Probability sampling means that each person in the population has an equal chance of being chosen for the study. Qualitative research generally uses non-probability and purposive sampling methods and not random or probability sampling (Ntuli, 2020). Non-probability samples are those where the likelihood of a subject being chosen is unknown, resulting in preference bias in the study (Acharya, 2013). This study used purposive sampling. According to Patton (2002), one of the key distinguishing features of qualitative research is purposeful sampling. The logic and power of purposeful sampling are found in the selection of information-rich cases (such as unemployment) for in-depth investigation. Cases that are information-rich can provide information about issues that are central to the purpose of the investigation, hence the term purposeful sampling. According to Emmel (2013), cases are carefully selected because they make a significant contribution to creatively solving the puzzle under investigation and present the most convincing case possible with the resources available. This means the researcher ensures that the right people are part of the study, instead of randomization, individuals are chosen based on their accessibility. The researcher did this by choosing specific people who matched the researcher's eligibility requirements. For this study, there were, 20 students (10 males and 10 females) from Durban, South Africa. These students had to be South African undergraduate students at tertiary level from any higher education institution within the city of Durban. By this, the researcher did not necessarily mean that they had to be studying in the Central Business District (CBD). Students in neighbouring township colleges and

universities were also eligible to participate in this study. They also had to be 18 to 35 years of age, and entrepreneurs who use social media to either run or advertise and promote their businesses. According to the NYDP (2009) youth are defined as anyone between the ages of 14 and 35. The chosen age group (18 to 35) best suited this study because, according to Statistics South Africa (2022), the youth continue to be the most disadvantaged in the labour market with an unemployment rate higher than the national average. More than 60% of the youth aged between 15-24 and 42,1% for those aged 25-34 years were unemployed, thus showing the severity of youth unemployment (Statistics South Africa, 2022). The researcher managed to recruit students through writing a series of advertisements, mainly through Facebook, inviting those who are into entrepreneurship and social media to participate. Individuals that met the criterion and those who were interested responded to the invitation, and as a result, data was collected.

3.5 Data collection

Techniques for gathering data include observation, interviews, focus groups, questionnaires, and surveys (Berg, 2006). Telephonic, semi-structured interviews were used for this study. According to Drabble et al. (2016) even though the utilisation of telephones for quantitative survey data collection is common and well-represented in research literature, using telephones for qualitative interviews is generally regarded as a poor substitute for face-to-face interviews. As a result, the literature's concerns regarding the use of telephones for qualitative interviews primarily focus on the potential negative effect on the richness and quality of empirical data collected by telephone versus face-to-face interviews (Novick, 2008; Irvine et al., 2013). Among the most frequently expressed concerns about telephone interviews are the difficulties in establishing connections, the inability to react to visual cues, and the possible loss of contextual information (i.e., the ability to observe the individual in a work or home environment) (Novick, 2008; Holt, 2010; Smith, 2005). A few studies have specifically compared the outcomes and dynamics of telephone and in-person qualitative interviews. It was discovered that telephone interviews were slightly shorter in duration than in-person interviews (Irvine et al., 2013).

On the other hand, another study discovered no differences in the length, depth, or type of responses between phone and in-person interviews (Vogl, 2013). In one of the few studies to examine dynamics between interviewer and interviewee, Irvine et al. (2013) found that interviewees were more likely to make requests for clarification and to check on the adequacy (specifically the sufficiency and relevance) of their responses during telephone interviews (Irvine et al., 2013). The reason why semi-structured telephonic interviews were used in this study is

because it necessitated different ethical concerns, such as in the case of COVID-19. Self (2021) adds that during the COVID-19 pandemic, most researchers had to change the method they used when collecting data in order to keep themselves and subjects safe, as well as to comply with government limitations and legislation. People from all around the world can be interviewed if they have telephone and computer access, which is a major advantage of telephonic interviewing (Mann and Stewart, 2000). In the same manner, the researcher then chose to use telephonic interviews. Social media entrepreneurs were identified by the researcher through a variety of posts from different social media platforms, but mostly through Facebook. These posts required students to promote their businesses on social media, which aimed to help them gain customers from other students and the public.

The researcher then identified the eligible individuals as they responded to the post with the type of businesses they run and in that manner the participants were found. Participants were then contacted and asked if they would be willing to take part in the semi-structured telephonic interviews, which they agreed to. These interviews consisted of open-ended questions. To collect data, two phones were used: one to call the participants and the other to record the interview with the participants. The interviews required the researcher to ask 20 questions and wait for the participant's answer after each question. Although some of the questions sounded similar to the participants, the researcher had to rephrase some of them because the participants gave similar answers to different questions. Following the participant's agreement to take part, participants were sent questionnaires and informed consent forms via WhatsApp. The researcher requested participants read the informed consent to learn more about the objectives of the study, as the researcher will ask them to verbally agree or disagree to participate in the study during the call. Calls to participants ranged in length from 20 to 55 minutes, depending on the individual because some participants are more expressive than others. The call timeframes were different for each participant. The data provided by the participants during the interview included direct quotations, experiences, and the participants' opinions (Babbie and Mouton, 2001).

In addition, the researcher asked follow-up questions to entice the participants to participate in a conversation. This was created to put the participants at ease and to obtain perceptions in order to better understand what the participants felt and meant in their responses. If participants could not explain terms in English, the researcher encouraged them to explain further in their mother tongue (isiZulu). The researcher transcribed the information by participants verbatim and translated into English where necessary. Terre Blanche et al. (2006, p. 296) agree that "the interview allows the researcher to delve deeper into the feelings of the participants". The researcher checked all questionnaires for completeness, accuracy, and consistency with all the information gathered. And

lastly, the researcher made sure that a respectful tone was used and that no personal opinions were expressed during the interview.

3.6 Data Analysis

In qualitative research, data analysis is defined as a process of analytically searching and arranging observation notes and interview scripts that the researcher has gathered in order to better understand the phenomenon (Berg, 2006). Furthermore, the researcher used thematic analysis to identify different themes from which the data for the interviews was gathered. Thematic analysis, according to Alhojailan (2012) is used to analyse categories and present themes that correspond to the data. This illustrates the data in great depth and works with a wide range of topics through interpretations. Thematic analysis enables the researcher to link an analysis of themes to one of the entire contents (Alhojailan, 2012). In transcription and familiarisation, the researcher transfers audio-recorded data onto paper so that the data can be more easily analysed without missing any important data from the interviews. The researcher becomes deeply involved in the data by repeatedly listening to recordings and reading transcripts. Identifying themes in a qualitative study also provided the researcher with a broader picture to conceptualize the findings. The following steps were taken, data was analysed by listening to the recorded audios that had stored data for each interview the researcher did with the participants. Notes were taken word by word (verbatim) of what the participants had said in the interviews. The researcher carefully read the transcripts, word for word using predetermined theoretical concepts. Appropriate words, phrases, and sentences were identified, and segments in the transcripts were coded or labelled. Codes were created based on what was common to most participants during the interviews.

Thematic analysis is a flexible qualitative method that Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) argue should be learned because it provides core skills that are important for conducting various types of analysis and is not tied to any specific reasoning.

According to Braun and Clarke (2006) as shown in Figure 3.2, there are six steps of thematic analysis: during familiarisation, the researcher must have gained an understanding of the content by engaging with the data at hand. The researcher must be very familiar with the various data collection methods, such as interviews and any other data they may be using. This stage is useful to make notes and jot down early impressions. the second step is based on the researcher identifying preliminary codes, which are features of the data and clearly show the context of the conversation. In the second phase the researcher starts organising data in a meaningful and

systematic way. Coding reduces the data into themes. There are different ways to code and the method will be determined by research questions.

The third step looks at specific themes that are derived from underlying themes. A theme, according to Braun and Clarke (2006), is a sequence that reflects something significant or fascinating about the data and/or research question. During this phase, the researcher analyses the codes, and it is these codes that when combined form a theme. The fourth step ensures that themes are consistent and distinguishable from others. During this phase, the researcher should review, modify, and develop the emerging themes; it is helpful to collect all relevant data for each theme. According to Braun and Clark, this is where the researcher should ask if these themes make logical sense and if the data supports those themes. The researcher must also be cautious not to invest too much in a single theme and should monitor to see if themes overlap or are truly distinct. The final step is where the researcher interprets the themes.

Figure 3.2 Thematic analysis steps.
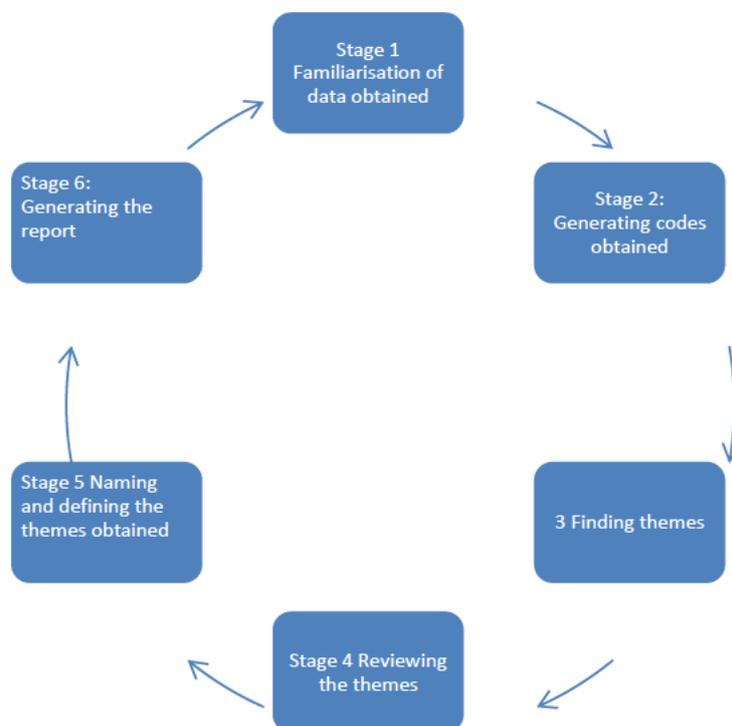
Source: Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 87)

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are crucial in research as they form part of the norms and standards for conduct, which highlight the difference between what is right and what is wrong, ethics also helps in determining behaviours that are acceptable and unacceptable (Kvale, 2007). Researchers must maintain ethical standards to ensure that their study has taken the correct steps, especially when dealing with sensitive topics such as minors, people with special needs, human rights, animal welfare, and legal compliance (Weinbaum et al., 2018). Since this is a completely new study, ethical clearance was requested and granted by the Human Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (protocol number HSSREC/00003078/2021). After participants were identified through a series of posts on social media, the relevant participants were contacted, and they were informed about what the study entails. They were informed that the study is online and that it consists of a semi-structured interview, which will take a certain amount of time.

Participants were informed that they have the right to agree or disagree with participating in a research project. An informed consent form was electronically sent to the participants to read and decide whether or not to partake in the study. Participants then had to verbally agree to take part in the study as they could not physically sign the consent form. All participants were informed that the researcher is a Master's degree candidate at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and that this was a research project. All the necessary information that the researcher felt the participants had to know before taking part in the interview was read out to them. All identifying information was removed from the transcripts, and participants were referred to or identified using pseudonyms. The privacy of participants was ensured during the interview process, the researcher had to be alone in the room and make sure no one was there to listen to the interview with participants over the phone. Data that was collected was extracted from the phone and transferred to a password-protected USB storage device.

3.8 Credibility, Confirmability, Transferability, and Dependability

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), credibility is based on the true value of the data if the research findings accurately represent the original data communicated to the researcher by the participants. Credibility is very important as it assesses if the data is true and complete, which is one of the most important aspects of qualitative research. Transferability refers to the applicability of findings to participants. Sim and Sharp (1998) contend that the difference between dependability and confirmability is that dependability is based more on consistency, ensuring that the way in which observations have been done is consistent with the way that the data has been observed. Whereas confirmability is based on the neutrality of the researcher, since qualitative research falls more on interpretative worldview the researcher's experience should not overshadow the experience of participants. In addition to this, validity in qualitative research is of crucial importance because it ensures an aspect of truthfulness within the focus of the study. Thus, validity in qualitative research is more interested in the authenticity of the data obtained than in a single truth (Neuman, 2013). Essentially, this implied that the researcher was interested in observing students' social media usage as an employment strategy in Durban, South Africa. Furthermore, qualitative studies look into people's experiences and perceptions, the researcher used the findings of the participants for confirmation, validation, and approval because the researcher still has access to the participants' information. Furthermore, the researcher gave the participants the freedom to choose when they wanted to be interviewed. This was done to try to ensure that the participants were relaxed and free in their own places. The interviews were time-consuming, as they required a significant amount of time to conduct, transcribe, and analyse in order to produce reliable results (Guest et al., 2006). Furthermore, the interviewer must be knowledgeable and skilled in conducting the interviews, as this will help the interviewer collect thorough and detailed data from the interviewee. Furthermore, the researcher must be able to make the participant feel at ease and interested in the topic.

The researcher avoided yes-or-no questions, as well as leading questions, which was one of the techniques. The researcher made sure that respectful language was used and that no personal opinions were expressed during the interview. Semi-structured telephonic interviews are useful when seeking detailed information about a person's thoughts and behaviours. It also allows for an in-depth exploration of new issues (Attride-Stirling, 2001). The interviews were conducted over the phone since the researcher was following COVID-19 regulations, which required

people to meet only in emergency situations. Moreover, in-depth interviews are used instead of focus groups when participants are not included or do not feel comfortable speaking openly in a group, or when the researcher wants to distinguish between individual and group opinions about the programme (Guest et al., 2006). Moreover, in-depth interviews provide rather more comprehensive information than other methods of data collection, such as surveys. They may also provide a more relaxed environment in which to gather information, as individuals may feel more comfortable having a conversation with the researcher about their programme as opposed to filling out a survey (Guest et al., 2006). Essentially, using themes to identify an object or area is an important aspect of data interpretation and creates a connection to the research questions (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Before the interview began, the researcher informed each participant about what the research entailed and the kind of information that was required from them. With this in mind, a consent form was sent to the participants via social media so that the participants could verbally decide whether they wanted to take part or not. In addition to this, to ensure trustworthiness, the researcher has provided a detailed description of the data obtained during the interviews.

3.9 Study Limitations

Bowen, (2008) stated that when researchers are choosing their methods and procedures for their study, they have to be aware of some challenges that may arise among certain research groups, specific research settings, and unique research circumstances. Hence it is imperative to consider the limitations of any general or specific study. One of the most major issues was that the researcher was unable to interview participants face-to-face, due to the risk of COVID-19, as that would have allowed the researcher sufficient time with each one of the participants. This was limiting, as face-to-face interviews allow the researcher to observe the emotion behind the respondent's comments. As O'Connor et al. (2008) affirms that semi-structured interviews, particularly those conducted online, can be difficult for researchers to conduct because any visual and nonverbal signals (facial expressions, gestures, and body language) that can help contextualize the interview in a face-to-face setting are lost. The researcher's inability to conduct face-to-face interviews during data collection was in accordance with the country's COVID-19 restrictions. When researchers need to gain a thorough understanding of the participants' lived experiences, qualitative research is recommended (Marshall and Rossman, 1999). In most cases, qualitative research necessitates the researcher immersing themselves in

the topic under investigation. To address the lack of a face-to-face interaction, the researcher endeavoured to be friendly toward participants in order to establish rapport and make them as comfortable as possible so that they would not withhold any additional information they might want to share. Another problem that the researcher encountered was the use of two cell phones; one to call participants and the another to record. The use of a cell phone resulted in poor sound quality in some of the recordings, however, to try and address the matter the researcher ensured that there were no other sound disturbances during the interview recording, and also tried making sure that the participants spoke clearly and followed up with participants after the interview if anything was unclear.

Some participants persisted on speaking in IsiZulu, despite the researcher's best efforts to persuade them to include some English in their comments. This was most likely related to their need to freely interact and express themselves. Furthermore, when a Zulu native makes contact with another Zulu person, they will most likely converse in IsiZulu instead of English, therefore the researcher emphasised that this was a scholarly interview, at which point they chose to mix in some English. As a result of this, the researcher proceeded to use IsiZulu with some participants in order to put them at ease. The researcher, on the other hand, transcribed everything in English. The researcher's final challenge was the lack of airtime. To add follow-up questions and encourage participants to open up more, enough airtime is required. This study was not financed, thus the researcher had to spend a lot of money on airtime to acquire mobile data in order to hold the lengthy phone calls with participants while they answered the numerous research questions. To compensate for a lack of funding, the researcher had to use WhatsApp calls in order to reduce airtime expenses, as well as in cases where participants had access to WhatsApp.

3.10 Summary

This chapter introduced and provided all of the pertinent details of the study area. The chapter also provided an overview of the research methodology of the study. Qualitative research methods were used as this was the most appropriate to investigate the reasons why students use social media as an employment strategy in Durban. Telephonic semi-structured interviews were used to collect data for this study. Data was gathered from twenty participants who attended Durban's various higher education institutions. This study followed the UKZN set of rules and ethics; it has its own set of limitations, which the researcher listed.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

The study sought to delve deeper into the topic of youth unemployment, which has affected a sizable number of young people in the country. This study focuses primarily on students in Durban, South Africa. The study was conducted after it was found that, while many young people use social media on a daily basis, they do not capitalise on it as much as young people in other countries. It also aimed to assess how effectively youth can use social media entrepreneurship to gain financial benefits. South African youth frequently use social media to interact because the rate of use for business is lower than in more developed countries, where youth unemployment is on the rise. This is analogous to having the means to escape from poverty but not knowing how to put them to use. This motivated the researcher to investigate areas of weakness as well as what can be done to improve those areas in order to fully utilise the opportunities provided by social media.

This chapter presents and explains the study's findings. The themes that were related to the study's main objective, as well as sub-themes, were used to categorise the results accordingly. Although the participants' perspectives varied, themes were identified using data that was relevant to all participants regarding entrepreneurial social media use in Durban. The main results from the semi-structured telephonic interviews with social media entrepreneurs are also presented in this chapter. The chapter begins with demographic information about social media entrepreneurs. Thereafter, the results of the interviews are discussed. The results begin with the first theme, which attempts to analyse the distinctions in how young entrepreneurs perceive and define social media. This is followed by the various advantages and disadvantages of social media. Finally, issues of unemployment and what can be done to address them are discussed.

4.2 Sample characteristics

This section analyses the various demographic characteristics of the respondents, including race, gender, ages, the type of businesses they run on social media as well as their level of study. Twenty young social media entrepreneurs from Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, were interviewed using semi-structured interviews. The participants' ages ranged from 20 to 31

years. Ten of the participants were men, while ten were women. Three of the participants were students at Mangosuthu University of Technology, three were students at the University of South Africa, and five at the University of KwaZulu Natal. Three more students have enrolled at Durban University of Technology. The remaining students attended various TVET colleges, such as Berea Technical College and eThekwini College. All of the participants were undergraduates pursuing various degrees in a variety of disciplines. Participants had to be using social media for conducting and advertising their businesses**.** They had to be under the age of 35, which is the legal youth age in the Republic of South Africa. These participants took advantage of social media's various advantages and thus succeeded in running small businesses while still studying at higher institutions. The question about the participant's business background revealed information about the types of businesses they run.

Table 4.1: Sample characteristics of participants

No	Name (Pseudonym)	Race	Gender	Age	Business type	Year of study
1	Nosi	African	Female	31	Sells graduation gowns	Third
2	Sthe	African	Female	25	Selling beauty products	Second
3	Zipho	African	Female	20	Decorates kiddies' parties	Second
4	Khosi	African	Female	26	Sells clothes online	Second
5	Tee	African	Female	20	Selling weaves and products	Second
6	Xolo	African	Female	22	Selling accessories	Third
7	Nolbee	African	Female	23	Selling artificial hair	Third
8	Samke	African	Female	23	Sells bags and shoes	Third
9	Mabi	African	Female	24	Owns a clothing brand	Second
10	Busi	African	Female	28	Sells handbags	Second
11	Skhumba	African	Male	25	Selling pot plants and seeds	Third
12	D A	African	Male	26	Buys and sell's second-hand phones	Third
13	Mathambo	African	Male	26	Paid academic assistance	Second
14	KC	African	Male	21	Prints t-shirts and sell them	Second
15	Mazwi	African	Male	23	Cell phone and laptop repair	Second
16	Spinal	African	Male	28	Decorator for ceremonies	Second
17	Mjita	African	Male	21	Sells herbal life	Fourth
18	Xavi	African	Male	23	promotional company	Third
19	Nkuthalo	African	Male	25	Sell colognes	Third
20	Charlie	African	Male	25	Selling women clothes	Second

4.3 Understanding of social media

Twenty social media entrepreneurs were telephonically interviewed with the intention of gathering their experiences about their entrepreneurial social media use and a means of trying to understand what they thought social media was in terms of their personal definition. Before they responded, the researcher noticed an interesting pattern that showed that the majority of the participants used social media to sell various items and products. None the less, depending on their experiences, all the participants gave different responses to this question, with quite a lot of similarities in them. Below are some of the responses given by the participants, as well as the types of social media platforms they used for business. Their answers spoke directly to the use of social media in their daily lives as well as for business, and they showed that they do not actually make money by just using social media. However, they used social media to advertise and market their business.

It was interesting to learn that all of them did not have physical stores that one could visit in order to browse the items for sale. There also appeared to be a pattern of students starting entrepreneurial ventures on campus in order to be less reliant on their parents. As a result of their awareness of what is going on in the country and in higher education institutions, such socioeconomic forces like youth unemployment have pushed students to become entrepreneurs. As Banda (2022) mentions, the South African government has repeatedly promised millions of employment opportunities but has failed to meet its targets over the last two decades. So, as an outcome, South Africa's unemployment and youth unemployment have long been identified as a national crisis, with statistics putting the country as one of the most affected in the world. Even after shocking unemployment levels, nothing much has been done in South Africa to reduce youth unemployment.

These factors contributed to the participants' determination to start something for themselves should they fall victim to the system. The participant's explanation of social media clearly shows that they know what social media is and what it is generally used for. However, they showed that they utilised social media for its convenience and its availability in order to capitalise on that and make an income. Most young people's lives revolve around social media, and as a result, accessing information, providing information, and communicating via social media is frequently easier and more convenient. Student entrepreneurs use this presented opportunity to communicate with one another as well as with their customers, and benefit from it by getting customers.

"According to my own understanding, social media is a place whereby people communicate. They might either be in close proximity or far away. It is a place that you can use for many reasons because of its lack of boundaries, which makes it easy to market to marketers like myself. I see social media as an opportunity to establish many ideas that I have concerning my business" (Charlie, Male).

The participant perceived social media as something that is associated with effective communication, whether in close contact or in a faraway place, and also mentioned its various benefits when communicating with his clients, as well as demonstrating how social media helps with establishing relationships and promoting his business to his target market.

"I believe that social media is a channel that we use as people to communicate with other people, to interact, to share ideas, to connect with family members and strangers, and so me of us use it for business purposes, to share our businesses, to seek new clients"

(Nolbee, Female).

The participant viewed social media as a channel, comparable to that which another participa nt referred to as "a place". The participants also thought it was a very effective instrument to use for engagement with friends and family, as well as   an effective business communication tool.

"Social media comes as a solution for communication. It is more effective with the use of the advancement of technology and all the electronics combined. It has got to do with improving communication nowadays between the receiver and the sender of the message, and it is also a channel to convey messages of all content to massive numbers of people in a society without going straight to engage with them physically. So, we are able to communicate using most different types of platforms. That's what comes to my mind when you say social media" (Xavi, Male).

One participant saw social media as an answer to various business problems because it enhanced communication, saved time, and reduced travel costs between him and the clients. Participants showed that they understand what social media is in terms of using it for personal reasons as well as for business. All participants showed that they understood the shift from merely using social media for everyday communication to something completely new, such as entrepreneurship. The participants were also asked what they thought about using social media on a regular basis, whether for themselves or for their businesses. While the reactions and

responses varied, the majority agreed that social media was an effective tool for communicating with friends and family as well as conducting business. This question attempted to ascertain whether they believed it was crucial to maintain a social media presence with both their customers and their direct competitors. Three participants were split in their opinions, claiming that using social media continuously can have both positive and negative effects. One participant explained that he depended heavily on social media for everyday activities like checking traffic, media releases, and so forth. However, he complained that social media gets in the way of studying effectively because of its constant demand.

> *"Yes, it is good, but at the same time, someone else may say it is not, but for me, I believe it is the right thing"* (Mathambo, Male).

> *"Okay, for the business side of things, it is definitely a good thing to use social media because it is an easy way to promote your business or whatever it is that you are promoting on social media, because it makes it easier to reach a lot of people, so it is actually great to use in terms of using it for personal use as well. However, I would not recommend using it for day-to-day use, but I would highly recommend using it for business. To answer your question, yes, I believe that using social media for my day to-day operations is a good idea. However, it should not be used on a daily basis for personal purposes"* (Busi, Female).

One of the two indecisive participants proceeded to explain that a break from social media is necessary because prolonged use of social media affects one's mental health over time. However, when one reflects that these social media entrepreneurs make their profits by being online much of the time, it comes across as a contradiction. This is contradictory because it raises the question of who attends to their customers if they are not interacting with them, given that they are in charge of advertisements, social media sites, and so on**.** A single participant did not believe in using social media on a daily basis because it can lead to addictive behaviour when used frequently. The participant claims he discovered this while volunteering at a rehabilitation centre, which prompted him to reconsider his daily social media usage.

> *"I would say it is not important, the reason why I am saying that based on the fact that I do understand that social media made life easier for human beings to do their daily activities and for some to do business but we are human beings after all, we need that person-to-person interaction. I have been volunteering in a rehab centre I learned that social media can be addictive so when you're going to be using it every day then it is not*

going to be good for your health as well. Using it every day interferes with your health system in simple terms because you find that someone has become anti-social, they just get glued to their cell phones and not interact direct to people which makes people careless with each other but rather depend on their phone" (Zipho, Female).

A few participants also mentioned that social media has multiple benefits as it may be used for personal and business-related reasons. The participants stated various reasons why they thought social media is beneficial to their businesses.

"*Yes, I think it' is very good because it allows you to do two things at once. You can communicate with people but at the same time you can do it to build your business portfolio and get clients. You can literally just WhatsApp those people instead of calling them without having to buy airtime, so it is quite good and saves money*" (Mathambo, Male).

A few participants explained that their lives lately revolve around social media since it is popularly used depending on how many people they want to reach. To deliver their products and services to their target audience, various industries, organisations, and businesses often use social media as a reliable platform and online marketing tool. Several individuals consider social network entrepreneurship as a feasible and effective business model due to the large number of social media users available. As a result, social media entrepreneurs are said to be looking for opportunities on various social media sites in search of customers because it does not require going out in person to look for those customers, and it can be done despite geographic differences.

"*Well, I can say he is 50% right and 50%* not*, because there are good and bad things about social media and it has made communication easier with business partners who are far away and clients who are far away, but the downside of social media promotion is that you might be communicating with untrustworthy individuals unlike one-on-one encounters where you meet people face-to-face, so was my answer, it is not 100%"* (Mazwi, Male).

The respondent mentioned that she found social media to be extremely useful when looking for suppliers, that she found it very good because she could compare the prices before purchasing the weaves, and that it has also helped her reach her customers with ease.

"*It is useful because that's where you meet your suppliers, because there are different types of weaves, there are Peruvian weaves, there are Brazilian weaves, and their prices are different because they are from different areas, so you get to network with people and*

find the best offers and find the best customers. You get exposure even from people from faraway places who are potential clients for your services" (Nolbee, Female).

4.4 Person responsible for social media marketing in business

All of the participants operate small businesses, and none of the twenty interviews mentioned any employees. This could be because these businesses are new and small, and as such, many participants were unable to hire due to the size of the business. These participants felt that they could handle everything on their own. Because their businesses had not yet expanded to the point where they could provide opportunities for others, they used social media to find work for themselves. As a result, the researcher recognised that these young entrepreneurs are responsible for everything that contributes to the smooth operation of their businesses. The researcher discovered that participants buy their merchandise already made by others, add what their customers instructed, and afterwards establish a mark-up price when selling their merchandise or services.

This, however, was not applicable to the participant whose business involved providing academic assistance. However, to the researcher, this also meant that the participants can sometimes fail to update their social media sites regularly since they are full-time students. Their tight schedules in terms of running the day-to-day activities of their businesses may prevent them from being able to devote more time to social media marketing and other business-related commitments. Morphitou and Demetriou (2014) however, state that organisations should fully commit their time and thoughts to being involved in social media marketing. The participant stated that he is responsible for just about everything related to posting and handling of business information as well as his personal social media account. He also went on to explain how social media has made it easy for his business to reach out to different customers from different areas, which enabled him to easily access customers through recommendations and free publicity.

> *"For communicating with my family, I use Facebook as well as WhatsApp. In terms of marketing for my business, I mostly use Twitter and Facebook because that's where I think I have the most clients and because that's where people spend most of their time. So yes, I take the opportunity wherever there's a trend, I try and capitalise on it. I find most of my clients on Facebook as I have mentioned previously. I have relatives with whom I share my posts with, and they also share whatever I post, which makes it even easier for me to get more customers from references"* (Charlie, Male).

4.5 Knowledge of social media for job creation

According to Arca (2012) because social media is a relatively new domain, measuring the effectiveness of digital systems is extremely difficult. Some of the participants expressed a lack of social media marketing knowledge, as books and educational material available on the topic primarily consist of handbooks and guides on social media implementation, rather than its effectiveness. As a result, social media entrepreneurs did what they thought was right and what they knew, thus, highlighting the fact that the topic of social media entrepreneurship is not properly researched. Nonetheless, each social media entrepreneur advocated for effective social media use in order to broaden the scope of social media use for entrepreneurship.

4.5.1 The types of social media sites used the most

The interviews revealed that almost all participants used the three major social networks to promote their businesses, with Facebook being the most frequently mentioned because of its prominence among the other social media platforms. According to Patricios and Goldstuck (2018) Facebook is the biggest social network platform among South Africans, with 16 million users. One could argue that Facebook is on its way to competing with radio and television in terms of reaching a significant majority of the population in this country. This may justify why all study participants use Facebook as a social media marketing tool.

> *"Facebook is mainly for advertising my business, then WhatsApp. I used it most of the time for when people place orders so that they can communicate with me with regard to payment options and other specifications of their order"* (DA, Male).

> *"With regards to Facebook I use it for advertising graduation gowns because I am able to post on the university pages. Obviously when I log on the page I will post them, explain that I am selling graduation gowns and graduates from UKZN will then contact me on the side and ask me questions related to my graduation* gowns *so that's basically what I do and then after that they take my numbers that is when WhatsApp comes in when they inquire about prices and how to get a hold of me"* (Nosi, Female).

The participants revealed that WhatsApp was primarily used to communicate with friends and family. The best thing about WhatsApp is that almost everyone uses it and it does not require any training as it is straight-forward and simple. In terms of business, the participants

demonstrated that they mostly use it with customers to close business deals and communicate about payments. WhatsApp messaging is end-to-end crypto encrypted and, as a result, most participants chose it to discuss sensitive financial information. Its sense of safety gave the application leverage over its sister application, Facebook. Then, several participants demonstrated how they added a touch of formality to their business practises by using emails. Last but not least, they revealed that they use LinkedIn to see if they can find motivation by looking at other young people's success stories, employment journeys, academic journeys, and so on. They were also on LinkedIn to establish entrepreneurial relationships with their business peers as well as bigger businesses and investors that might be scouting for something different with the potential to grow. This is also done to improve their prospects of landing a job after graduation.

"I also use WhatsApp to communicate with my customers because it is easier than the other networks, such as email. Some customers do not even have emails, so it is easy for them to tell their children to text me so that I can get my order. This is because I deal with orders mostly on WhatsApp" (Skhumba, Male).

"I have a business account on Facebook, I mean, on WhatsApp, if someone wants to speak to me from Facebook, they can easily speak to me on WhatsApp. They can do that because I also provided my number on my Facebook, so my accounts are somehow linked" (Mabi, Female).

The benefits of social media entrepreneurship, according to the participants, include expanding the client base, allowing engagement and immediate interaction with customers, minimising advertising costs, improving financial performance, and fostering positive recommendations. The benefits mentioned by participants are closely related to the benefits identified in the literature review, which have been well documented by authors such as Neti (2011). According to Sashi (2012) social media benefits businesses by improving relationships with current and potential customers. Due to the high level of competition among businesses, social media benefits businesses by improving relationships with current and potential customers.

4.6 Key benefits of using social media

Social media can be a useful tool for businesses, bringing advantages such as engaging with the target audience. However, there can also be disadvantages, including the resources required and negative feedback. The participants answered the question by asking them about the various benefits of using social media for business purposes. They were first asked about their personal experiences with using social media, aimed at assessing their understanding of social media and also, their business.

4.6.1 Collaboration with other business owners

One participant provided an interesting response when asked if social media is a good tool for collaborative efforts with business peers. She believed that social media would be extremely beneficial to her in terms of collaborating with other business owners in the same market as she is involved in cosmetic products. This occurs because it is advantageous to interact with like-minded people, specifically if they run similar businesses, because they can help each other develop new and creative concepts and techniques to overcome challenges that they have previously encountered. Business peers may also know better-priced stock for the social media entrepreneur's similar businesses.

> *"I genuinely think that there is always something new to learn from every businessperson. Because I sell hair, I believe that there is something I can gain knowledge from someone who sells clothes, because we are all selling at the end of the day, so I think it is a great idea to use social media on a daily basis to interact with other entrepreneurs. I'd like to interact with make-up artists because we're all in the same business of making people look beautiful. After they've finished with make-up, they can be referred to my weave business for additional beauty enhancement"* (Tee, Female).

4.6.2 Time efficient

The participants explained that using social media for their businesses gave them time to manage what they do and when they do it. Their business getting in the way of their studies was also shown to not be an issue as most participants showed that they have total control when it comes to when they can operate, which does not interfere with their schedule. One participant mentioned that he views social media as a God-given gift because of its endless possibilities as

well as the number of people his post could reach through just simple advertising his business on social media.

"Technology has really been a God-given gift to us because there was no such thing in the 90s. In a space of an hour or close to a day, you will get about 1000 likes on your Facebook page. This clearly shows the type of support we can get from social media, which is good for our business. So, it is a good communication tool for many businesses, and while I cannot say what it does for other businesses, I am very satisfied with it" (Mathambo, Male)**.**

4.6.3 Easy to use

Social media is more than a broadcast channel or a sales and marketing tool. Billions of individuals all over the world use social media to share information and develop relationships, demonstrating that social media is not a complicated tool for communication, but rather a tool that is made to accommodate everyone. One of the main advantages of using social media for business purposes that participants praised was the ease with which they use social media. They appreciated how social media made it simple for essentially everyone to use it. The participant stated that she enjoyed social media entrepreneurship because it allowed her to meet people from all walks of life, which the researcher interpreted to indicate that she values distinct types of individuals with various backgrounds.

"Social media helps us communicate and meet with new and diverse people, especially those of us in business. We need clients who will support us for the business to be successful. We need suppliers who will provide us with what we are selling, so social media is where you find all the things I have just listed" (Mabi, Female).

4.6.4 Target market availability

Another finding among many participants was that they chose to use social networking sites because of the abundance of clients on social networking sites, as opposed to people that do not need customers to make money on social media but do need followers, such as bloggers and YouTubers. It was discovered that these young social media entrepreneurs in Durban use social media for ease of access to their desired target people. One participant made it clear that

social media has made her work easier because unlike before, she does not need to physically go out and advertise her business to customers.

"I help them do all of the digital work services such as promoting, online selling, creating their customer database online in order to reach their target market online, and all of those things in the digital space" (Xavi, Male).

"With this, I am not saying they should not have fun, but they must also use it to their advantage because it has many advantages, such as the fact that it is easy to communicate, it is easy to find your target market, it is easy to even see which business is trending or which business can be successful, it is even easy to conduct surveys if you want to know if the business that you are starting can be feasible" (Skhumba, Male).

The participant explained that he felt that social media should also be used for fun. However, he encouraged young people in particular should ensure that they take full advantage of the opportunity of the availability of customers in a single digital space.

4.6.5 Cost effective

Many businesses nowadays rely on digital marketing to raise brand awareness and increase sales. Nonetheless, internet competition has skyrocketed because every company wants to establish a strong online presence. As a result, businesses must spend a great deal of money on advertising in order to outperform their competitors and win the target audience. However, many businesses have used social media as a marketing tool. Indeed, the low cost of social media marketing allows even small businesses and start-ups to expand their audience and find new customers. The participants were all tertiary students and they felt that social media has assisted them as they do not have much financial resources. Several people stated that one of the reasons they chose to use social media for entrepreneurship was because of its low cost. Almost all social media platforms allow entrepreneurs to sign up and create a profile for free, charging only data and not a sign-up fee. Another example of this is that numerous customers will repost the advertised content, providing the entrepreneur with free exposure. If an entrepreneur decides to invest in social media advertising, their advertisements will be shown to highly targeted users who are most likely to become customers.

"Yes, it is. To me, social media is cost effective, because I've just started my business, so social media is the only platform that I can use to advertise my brand and also

communicate with my family, so it is very cheap compared to using airtime. It is both cheap and fast to get a hold of many people at the same time" (Mabi, Female).

"Yes, it is, and it saves a lot of time and a lot of money" (Xolo, Female).

The cost efficiency of social media emerged as important among several entrepreneurs. This means that the majority of entrepreneurs saw social media entrepreneurship as a less expensive way to communicate and advertise to their target market.

"Yes, they are telling the truth. Using social media for business is quite cheaper than putting up a post or something like that, so it is more convenient" (Samke, Female).


4.6.6 Adaptability

Since adaptability is a skill that enables an entrepreneur to be versatile and quickly accept change, it became clear throughout the study that social media is commonly integrated into the lives of entrepreneurs because it allows for flexible time management that is aligned with their academic work and entrepreneurial responsibilities. Facebook, WhatsApp, emails, and Instagram were found to allow social media entrepreneurs to operate at any time and postpone taking orders if they are preoccupied with schoolwork or have other priorities, demonstrating that social media has increased entrepreneurs' adaptability as they can acclimate to numerous situations and circumstances to offer the best services to their customers. One participant stated that she found it simpler to search for a business online rather than going to the business in person. According to the participant, social media entrepreneurship has made her life significantly simpler in this regard. This change in access and availability brought about by the combination of social media and entrepreneurship has been shown to be well received by social media entrepreneurs.

"Yes, I do actually because most business people meet on social media, for an example, let's say you need someone to create a logo for your business, you can easily just post on Facebook and explain what type of services do you need and people will simply just recommend businesses and then you can check the suggested profiles and then it just makes life easy" (Samke, Female).

4.6.7 Customers speak directly to the entrepreneur.

Another advantage that was highlighted by the participants during the study is the fact that their customers did not have to report anything to anyone else other than themselves. This served as an advantage in the sense that they were always aware of what their customers wanted, and they gained the skill of identifying the needs of customers and delivering them according to the expectations of their customer. Figure 4.1 depicts an engagement between participant 1 and her client, demonstrating how social media allows clients to communicate directly to the entrepreneur rather than someone else. Direct conversations between entrepreneurs and clients are ideal because the customers are able to express concerns and properly explain what they want, as opposed to hearing what someone else says the customer said. The participant revealed that some of the advantages of speaking directly to the customers instead of having someone else speak on her behalf is that she becomes aware of the standard expected from her business in order to ensure client satisfaction.

Figure 4.1.

,
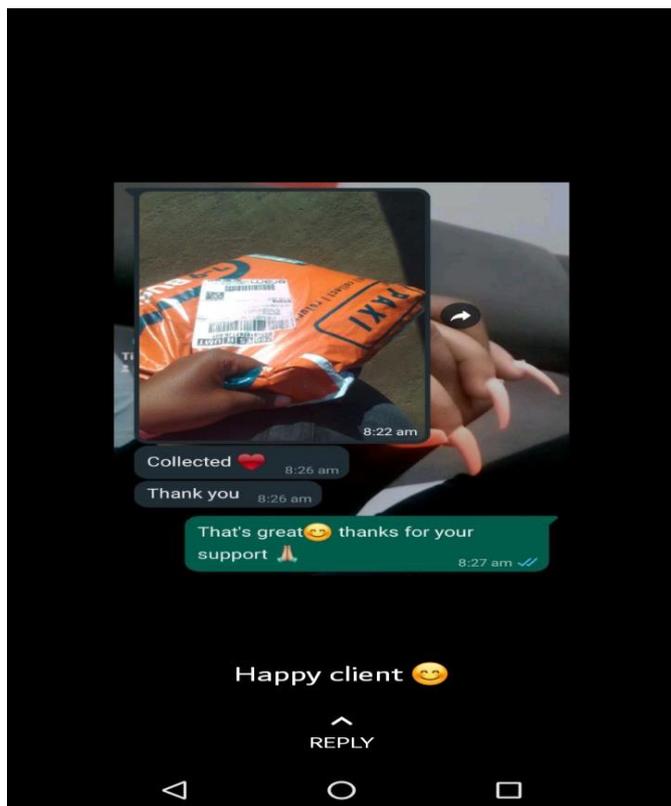
(A conversation between the participant "Nosihle" and a client that was happy with the package).

4.6.8 Creating product interest

Figure 4.2 depicts the concept of increasing product interest and serves as an example of how the online community and interested organisations will interact when discussing a product or service. This is primarily accomplished through a series of posts by the entrepreneur in an attempt to attract customers. Although the illustrated image does not depict interaction, the main point is that participants post such messages in particular groups to promote their businesses. Figure 4.2 is a cell phone photograph (screen shot) of an advertisement in one of the groups, which the researcher trimmed out to protect the participant's privacy and confidentiality. The participant's advertisement qualifies as a method of increasing customer interaction. This is advantageous in the sense that people become acquainted with the business and its services, particularly considering that all of these are small and new businesses that need to reach as many people as possible in order to gain a large number of customers.

Figure 4.2
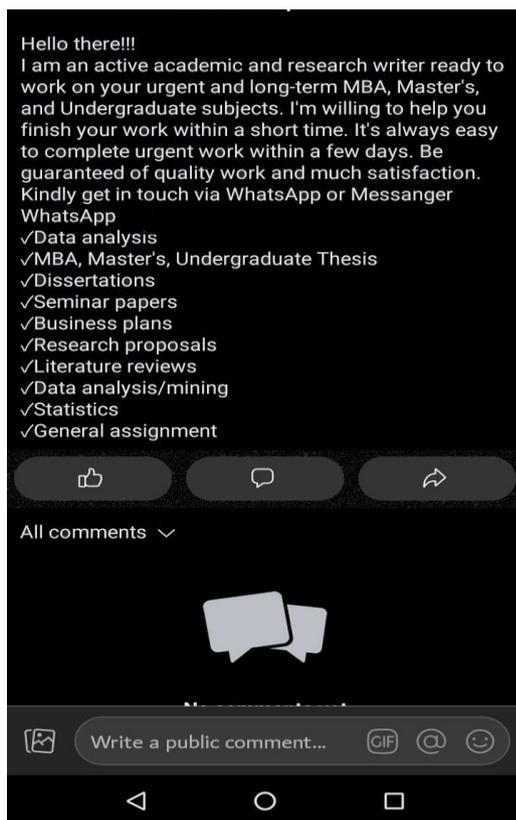
(The participant "Mathambo" who had just posted his advertisement on a page with thousands of followers, waiting for people to engage with his post)

4.7 Disadvantages of social media entrepreneurship

The participants' personal use of social media part of the challenges was mainly from things such as hacking and fabricating stories with the intention of tarnishing the business's reputation. Bullying came as another big issue for most participants, as they explained that some people on these social media platforms are not very nice human beings. They project their negativity onto other users online. Due to the current lack of business rights and protection from social media, some participants complained that as social media entrepreneurs they have met countless troubles, particularly with regard to the issue of the lack of authenticity by the entrepreneurs to protect their businesses from fraudsters and fake profiles. The researcher found attacks on their reputation to be one of the more problematic challenges faced by social media entrepreneurs when incorporating social media sites into their businesses.

4.7.1 Hacking

Almost all participants stated that they were almost victims of hacking or were not trusted by their targeted customers because they did not know whether the businesses were legitimate or not, and they explained how this affected their businesses. When asked, the participants explained that these hackers target their businesses and send fake links, and that the hacker on the other end has complete access to their social media sites a minute after clicking on the link. One participant explained that this is mostly done on Facebook, while another participant complained about hackers forging slips and pretending to pay in order to get the products before they can pay.

> "*Yes, of course, not forgetting Facebook, but it is just that I do not actually like Facebook that much because it can be easily hacked by hackers, and then I mainly just use WhatsApp and emails, so Facebook has been great, but now recently it has been easily hackable by hackers, so that's my only problem with it*" (Xolo, Male).

> "*Yes, they are, you find that when people have to pay, some tend to use fake slips. They make a fake slip and pretend as if they have paid you whereas your phone has not yet reported money being deposited. If you end up sending people clothes without verifying and so on, you end up losing quite a lot of money because people like to say they're using another bank so obviously I am unable to send anything before it reflect on my side. Those*

are some of the problems I come across often running a business via social media" (Charlie, Male).

The participant informed the researcher that she has met people who fabricate payment slips and act as if they have paid in order to obtain the free goods and services offered by her business because when doing business online, the entrepreneur usually waits for the client to demonstrate that they have paid to the account number provided to them. After ensuring the payment one can send their requested merchandise and criminals have mastered and used this to benefit from the entrepreneur's negligence.

4.7.2 An attack on reputation

Participants reported being vulnerable to a variety of attacks. Specifically aimed at their personal and business reputations in order to discourage them from continuing to operate their businesses. A few participants reported that when using social media, their business accounts' reputations were sometimes attacked and defaced. Participants stated that they occasionally interact with clients who leave negative remarks and, on occasion, attempt to have their accounts hacked. This ultimately harms their companies' reputations and undermines their customers' trust in them.

"Yes, there are challenges that I have encountered, but recently I've realised how easy it is for someone to destroy your business or the reputation that you have worked so hard to achieve on social media. So, it is very easy for people to just spread a certain narrative regarding the business in general, so like for me, because I sell cologne, another person can just post negative reviews regarding the cologne that I sent to them, and so social networks have made it easy for people to tarnish the business image. So that's been the main challenge that I've faced with regards to the business, then also while promoting a business on social media" (Xavi, Male).

4.7.4 Scamming

Social media is a common first point of contact for most scammers. They may have a fake profile they use to send a friend request. The initial message may compliment a product the entrepreneur sells or suggest they have a product or service-related question, based on their snooping of their profile. A participant explained that she was a victim of a scammer that posed

as a supplier and coerced her to pay a deposit fee, which led to the scammer blocking the participant, which is when she then realised that she had just been a victim of a scam.

"I've been through a lot. Yes, I do get challenges. Sometimes you meet people who assure you that they can supply you with the stock, like this one time, I had to pay a deposit for us to meet with the supplier, and then when it was time to meet, he blocked me. You meet scammers sometimes. When I post my pictures, other people steal them and post them as if they are theirs. Then people get confused as to whether the business is mine or the new persons after they see us posting similar photos" (Samke, Female).

When asked what she did to reduce the chances of these scammers scamming her again in the near future, the participant stated that she has learned to become more careful when dealing with almost everyone on social media because it is hard to tell who is scamming or attempting to scam you. Another participant suggested that people must secure access to their personal or business social media sites to reduce their chances of becoming scammed because scammers continue to flourish when people do not understand technology and its abilities. The participant had the following to say

"What I did was to create a very unique page and encouraged people to notice certain things that make my page original most of the time. Now I leave my number on my page so that people can contact me so that we can speak. I am also thinking about other ways of making sure that my accounts are secure. Yes, I am not an IT specialist. However, I am friends with people who are very knowledgeable when it comes to computers, so I have contacted one of my friends who I think will help me to protect my account from scammers" (Charlie, Male).

Many participants stated that they frequently face difficulties when dealing with people who create fake social media accounts, falsifying their personal as well as their business identities. One for each of them as individuals and business owners. This was allegedly done by criminals who knew the entrepreneurs well enough to forge or fabricate information in order to deceive others. The participant discussed that he was quite experienced with getting his personal data altered by people with malicious intentions; he remembered how his identification was nearly stolen by someone who pretended to be him and started asking all of his family and close friends for money.

"Yes, I have faced situations such as finding your own information being misused by people who create fake pages under your name pretending to be you, so yes, I have been through

something similar to that whereby people requested money from people using my name" (Charlie, Male).

4.7.5 Cancellation of Orders

Some participants complained about customers who cancel their orders at the last minute or fail to notify them when they no longer need or want their product. This happens because social media, in general, is not an order management tool but just an online platform that has been adapted for business use. When confronting customers about cancellations, the social media entrepreneurs find that customers avoid them, do not answer their calls, or block them on WhatsApp. The implications of such actions by customers result in losses for social media entrepreneurs because they prepare their services and wait for their customers in order to deliver, and then when their customers do not carry on with the order, this means that the business has lost precious time spent while preparing the cancelled request as well as material.

"One of the disadvantages I've had while using social media for entrepreneurship is the fact that it is easy for customers to just cancel orders, I once had this customer that wanted me to print T-shirts for his shisanyama business. He gave me his, business name, as well as other specifications to include in these T-shirts, and when it was time for him to pay me before I courier his merchandise, he started having stories. First, he said it was the network, secondly, he said it was the banking app that was giving him problems, and then finally he said he was mugged while he was going to the bank to deposit money. He ended up cancelling the order after I had already printed his shirts, which came in as a very big loss for me as it is a small business" (KC, Male).

4.7.6 Bullying

Participants reported that even though using social media is great for business, more than five participants explained that they come across people who are online bullies. This issue was mentioned the most by the majority of female participants, which was an interesting pattern to see. However, three male participants also touched on bullying as an issue not directly affecting them but as something that affects more people on social media than people realise.

"Some of them, especially cyber-bullying, I find on my personal account on my page that it is mostly negative feedback from customers, and then I make sure that I follow up with the

customer to find out what is causing them to feel that they are not satisfied with my products until we reach a common ground and then fix things. I think it starts with accepting that the customer is always right and then working towards meeting the needs and expectations of the customer, because the customer is always right" (Busi, Female).

The participant revealed that she sometimes feels like she is being scapegoated by cyber bullies who leave negative comments, but she uses this as an opportunity to examine at her service and improve it in order to meet the needs of the customers.

"Also, one of the things that people do not talk about enough is bullying on social media and social media in general, so it really does take a toll on my mental health, so I have to use it but to a certain extent because I cannot just go AWOL just like that because I am a business person, so you have to use it to a certain extent, you have to draw the line somewhere" (Nkuthalo, Male).

The participant also mentioned that he uses social media to a certain extent, but when he begins to feel that it has caused him harm, he simply disappears without a trace, and he uses this time to recuperate. This prompted the researcher to assume that the business is also impacted because the entrepreneur spends time away from social media, where his business is located. Leaving his client's needs unattended for a period of time.

> *"Yes, I have faced challenges while using social media as an individual. On social media you come across bullies, so it becomes toxic for sensitive people who take everything to heart. Some people even make comments such as 'people should put their feelings aside before they log in,' emphasising how toxic the social media environment gets sometimes"* (Samke, Female).

This participant experienced bullying as a direct consequence of her daily use of social media, both for herself and for her business. She complained that other social media users are not always nice; they can bring out the worst in others, which can mess with emotions especially if not emotionally prepared for it.

4.7.7 Trust

Customer and retailer trust are critical for successful e-commerce operations (Dhiyauddin et al., 2016). As a result, it is critical for social media entrepreneurship to be founded on customer trust. The participants added trust as a key issue because they rely heavily on their customers'

trust; they explained that trust is very difficult to earn for social media entrepreneurs with all of the available challenges that exacerbate doubt in online businesses. Things such as cybercrimes, hacking, scamming and fake business profiles make it even harder for businesses to be trusted

> *"There is a lack of trust, mainly because they do not know you. Now they are supposed to trust you with their money. We usually say you pay first, and then I have to order using some of your money, and that becomes a problem for people, and it becomes hard for them to trust you"* (Samke, Female).

Another participant described the significance of trust in social media entrepreneurship, stating that when one provides great service, trust is developed, and this works for the enterprise because customers end up giving positive reviews and thereby referring other customers to the business.

> *"Yes, but basically what I am trying to say is that when people have used your services, they can even go out there and recommend them to other people to use". The referral they make to other people means they trust your business"* (Xavi, Male).

4.7.8 The Need for Uniqueness

One of the challenges participants are faced with is the challenge of having to stand out and differentiate themselves from other similar businesses on social media. Since running a business via social media network/s has become easy and accessible, there has been an increase in the number of accounts being opened for that purpose. As a result of this steep influx, social media entrepreneurs have to ensure that their businesses are advertised in a unique way in comparison to others who offer the same product or service online through Instagram. This requires that they constantly update and improve their products and services for added value.

> *"To tell you the truth my brother, competition is very tough in these types of businesses because of two factors. The first one being the fact that nothing lasts in the social media space. It is very fast paced. What I mean by that is, when your customers are into something you are selling today, it does not mean they will always be like that. What I have noticed is that people's preferences are influenced by various trends on social media, so it really becomes a major problem for me to always be in touch with everything that's going on in order to be the preferred person for my product"* (KC, Male).

The participant explained that as a social media entrepreneur cannot do anything completely unique in the social media business space. Someone will always have the same set of skills and sell the same product. This meant that there is no running away from competition as an entrepreneur, but rather requires embracing it and learning from it.

4.7.9 Finance

One of the participants pointed out that one of the things affecting them as youth entrepreneurs is the issue of funding, or the lack of it. According to the researchers' observations, since students are perceived to be financially unstable and to rely on NSFAS to meet basic needs, it becomes difficult for them to obtain any financial support from their friends, families, or even stakeholders. This might be due to the fact that their enterprises are comparatively small, and therefore, investors do not invest in such small businesses due to the increased risks from doing as such. Another potential reason for the lack of finance for most youth-owned start-ups, especially the ones the researcher concentrated on in this study, is that such businesses have a high probability of failure, and therefore, these types of businesses frequently lack support from well-established businesses, friends, and family. As Mazanai and Fatoki (2012) tell us, small enterprises face a number of difficulties in obtaining capital, primarily because of their particularly high-risk nature.

> *"It is useful to us, like I said, not everyone has that kind of finance because some people do not have the kind of business to start because they do not have the capital to start the business, so it is useful to a certain extent, I think, and it can definitely decrease the unemployment rate, to a certain extent"* (Nkuthalo, Male).

4.7.10 Competition

Participants also revealed that they have a challenge with competition between big and small businesses for similar customers. As it is widely known, increased competitiveness leads to increased productivity and higher product and service quality. Businesses can satisfy consumer preferences and, as a result, improve their market position. As that particular market is steadily expanding, consumers benefit from lower prices and a broader range of goods and services. Competition, on the other hand, reduces the entrepreneur's pricing power and shrinks their customer base, particularly if demand for products or services is limited from the start. A

competitive market may also force the business to lower its prices in order to compete, lowering the return on each item produced and sold by that particular business. The market becomes flooded when too many businesses produce the same products. Inventory builds up as goods are produced in excess. When inventory reaches unsustainable levels, the company may have too much capital invested in items that are only sitting on the shelf and not enough cash on hand for pressing expenses like buying stock for social media businesses that do so as part of the business. Only two participants responded and had something to say with regards to the challenge identified.

> "*Another challenge, I've also realised, is competition. For instance, I charge R100 an hour, but then you find that's the common competition. Please hear me out. I do not want to sound like I am being xenophobic or discriminatory in any way, but the number of foreign students who do the same business I am doing and charge R70, which means all my customers will now go to them, which is bad for my business. So yeah, that's another major problem. There's so much competition in my line of work, so if you are not ready to compete with other people who will charge you way, way less than you charge, I do not think you can make it in this type of business*" (Mathambo, Male).

However, one other participant thought that competition was something social media entrepreneurs can use to draw inspiration from and improve their businesses instead of looking at it as a threat.

> "*For businesses, you can get customers easily on social media. You* see *people who are selling the same products as your competition, and they encourage you to put in more effort and to do better in your business*" (Busi, Female).

Another participant believed that her social media accounts were being hacked by rivals in order to steal information and harm her business. This might have been done so they could get all of her clients and profit from her demise.

> "*I think it can be competitors* and *sometimes people who are trying to prove a point and they see me pushing my* business" (Mathambo, Male).

4.8 Unemployment

The awareness of the ever-rising level of unemployment became the main driver for many participants to start their own businesses. This meant that the youth was aware of the problem,

and they tried to come up with a solution by advertising their various services and what they sold on social media. All participants agreed that social media can play an important role in addressing the employment crisis by creating jobs for millions of unemployed youths in Durban and across the country.

> *"Yes, I do. Let me start by saying that instead of the youth waiting for the government to offer them jobs, they can now start their own small businesses and then use social media to advertise those businesses, so in saying that I mean yes, young people can benefit from it"* (Khosi, Female).

One female participant believed that using social media can reduce the number of people migrating to urban areas because they go there to look for work, and as such, the participant indicated that social media can be an alternative because people can have businesses online instead of going to urban areas to look for work as things are happening, thus decreasing the percentage of people in urban areas.

> *"Yes, I do believe that it can benefit them in fighting unemployment because other people are in rural areas and going into urban areas is becoming a problem because of overpopulation in urban areas. So, using information presented by social media and all social networks can benefit us instead of all of us going into the urban areas and into those industries. We have to go into part into new fields that are presented by social media so that people can benefit and find themselves employed by themselves"* (Xolo, Female).

4.8.1 Economic factors as drivers of entrepreneurship

When it comes to poverty and starvation, social and economic factors are always important to consider. Economic factors include unemployment, financial gap, and self-reliance, which now have prompted students to undertake social media entrepreneurship. According to Krants (2001) the sustainable livelihoods approach indicates that economic growth may lead to alleviating poverty, which is dependent on the poor's capabilities and ability to capitalise on those capabilities. The sense of powerlessness has also motivated these students to try and avoid relying on their parents for financial support while attending university or college. Students have recognised an economic gap in our economic system, and in order to alleviate unemployment and reliance on parents and partners, they have turned to entrepreneurship. These were the responses to the question of why they chose to be entrepreneurs on social media

"I made the decision to pursue social media entrepreneurship at the beginning of COVID-19 because there was no one printing t-shirts in our neighbourhood at the time. I saw a gap to help people create memories and guarantee that they are of the highest quality, so social media made it easy to connect with them when it was not allowed" (KC, Male).

"I realised I was going to be here for 3 years starting and ending my degree, so since I was selling and doing some entrepreneurial work for my parents back home, I decided I should not stop but continue because I was just changing places and the product I was selling" (Tee, Female).

The participant stated that after realising she would be spending a few years at university, she decided to continue what she had been taught at home when her parents used to force her to sell to customers. This was intriguing and raised the question of whether other social media entrepreneurs were also influenced by their background to become entrepreneurs.

4.8.2 Strategies for avoiding social media marketing pitfalls

Issues, such as focusing on your product or service more than your audience, can pose as a pitfall in the social media space. Internet users are bombarded with advertisements. They use their social media accounts to engage in conversation, make connections, and build relationships. They want to be entertained and possibly inspired. What they do not want is for businesses to sell them goods all the time. With regards to possible strategies for avoiding social media entrepreneurship pitfalls, some participants believed that learning of new and improved ways of expertise could help them implement social media marketing effectively.

"I think it can, in a way. Entrepreneurship seems like it is going to be a solution to this very high number of unemployed youth because the more we create job opportunities for ourselves, the more our numbers will go down. So, the social media route is easier because you do not even need a lot, just the internet and a device to connect and then you are done" (Samke, Female).

Businesses may sometimes choose social media sites that their potential customers do not use, based on the business owner's interests. However, businesses should instead choose platforms where they can best interact, share posts, answer questions, and share articles with existing and potential customers. In summary, the sub theme proposed strategies for avoiding the social

media marketing pitfalls, as perceived by participants, include avoiding managing a social media site without proper knowledge; avoiding using a business social media platform as a platform for meeting friends; and, finally, avoiding using just one social media site for marketing one's business, but rather trying to use various sites in conjunction.

4.8.3 Addressing customers' concerns through social media

In general, a company can improve sales, provide better customer service, and create superior advertising for a social media entrepreneur by being equipped with a social media strategy and always interacting with clients in both praise and criticism. A participant in the study stated that she recommends social media entrepreneurship because of its capacity to link entrepreneurs with their client base in order to address their concerns and complaints about the business or the services it provides. She noted that social media provides her with a platform to investigate a variety of customer care-related queries in order to ensure that the services customers may be complaining about are promptly addressed, as well as to look into improving the well-reviewed merchandise or services.

> *"Another advantage of using social media for entrepreneurship is that it has encouraged me as an entrepreneur to understand what my clients need from me. If they have any questions, they can simply contact me through the easy access that the social media space has made available for the client-entrepreneur relationship. I once had a client who purchased a Peruvian weave, and I may have mixed her order with someone else's order, so she contacted me personally, and the issue was resolved well before the customer resorted to writing about the business on apps like Facebook, where we see unhappy clients reporting about how unhappy they are with the customer service of some of the online businesses"* (Tee, Female).

4.9 Youth social media education

Social media education remains the most important but missing aspect in the South African region. This is disastrous when one compares this with developed countries such as the USA, UK, Canada, and so on. Martin, Carree, and Thurik (2010) investigated the influence of entrepreneurship on growth in the economy. Their main results were that there is a scarcity of observable evidence linking measures of entrepreneurial activity for regions to economic

growth. In this particular study, more than seven participants proposed that social media education be initiated as early as in high school as a partial solution to the socio-economic problems concerning our youth, which social media entrepreneurs are never a part of due to their ingenuity. They claim that this will serve as a solution to teach South Africans, particularly our youth, how to confront the global unemployment crisis head-on. Several participants spoke on this issue.

"I think this must be instilled in schools first. Maybe demonstrating short courses for matric, introducing additional programmes which will give them certificates for them to have the passion and drive to do anything on social media. We need to install all this culture in high school if the government can make it compulsory for everyone who's in matric to have a certificate in either social media or entrepreneurship so that they have some sort of a certificate and a better understanding to try to give them an extra advantage, to have a better understanding of using social media in an effective and efficient manner" (Mathambo, Male).

The next participant suggested that social media entrepreneurship education be introduced in schools to help fight youth unemployment. The participant claimed that this must be done by visiting various high schools and teaching learners about the importance of social media entrepreneurship because some people learn by seeing and hearing people, they know say they have done this and that, and only then do they begin to believe in that specific thing, so the participant stated that this might work for the issue of youth unemployment at hand.

"I think people are still stuck in the idea that social media is just for amusement, so if you find someone and ask them what they do when they get data, they will tell you that they log in on Facebook, on YouTube, and watch videos and movies, so no one is actually advertising themselves or their businesses, so educating people about the importance of TV and radio and then maybe paying more for social media influencers and YouTube so that it can encourage people to use these platforms and services themselves and for their businesses as well as going to schools to start teaching them from a very young age about the importance of social media" (Zipho, Female).

Another participant agreed that social media entrepreneurship is essential in schools, and this participant also believed that paying social media influencers, youtubers and others more than

they were being paid could influence the youth to use social media for something other than just for entertainment.

4.10 Possible solutions to the challenges

The participants provided a variety of responses to the question about what they did to deal with the challenges they encountered in their respective businesses. This was primarily due to the fact that these entrepreneurs ran different businesses online and, as a result, did not encounter the same types of issues. Most of the challenges they encountered were similar, but not all of them, so they had different perspectives on possible solutions to be applied. With regards to the issue of non-payment by customers, participants said that they had to come up with a creative way of ensuring that people do not run away without paying for the services.

> *"As a result, I have established other means of paying, which is a limit that people using my account number can use, so I've decided to use cash send, which is directly deposited so that I can be sure that I have cash before I send the product. Before, I used to trust people a lot, so that cost me quite a lot, and now I am extra careful when it comes to matters concerning money and giving people their products"* (Charlie, Male).

When asked what the participants thought should be done with regards to introducing social media entrepreneurship as an alternative to employment. Several participants gave different answers with a similar meaning. Since it was made clear that social media is quite popular among the youth in Durban as well as in the whole country.

> *"I think it can, but to a certain extent. Not everyone has something to promote on social media, so not everyone has some kind of business they can promote"* (Nkuthalo, Male).

One participant suggested that for people to consider social media entrepreneurship as an self employment strategy, websites should come up with creative ways to ensure that people are interested in this type of entrepreneurship, thereby impacting youth unemployment.

> *"People like social media developers can come up with a new way to increase the benefits of social media usage. For instance, let's say when I use social media and stream certain content, I also have benefits through obtaining or getting data from Google for promoting social media businesses online. That can be another way of encouraging people to promote businesses by giving them something for saying something about the business online. So,*

when people view my post, they use data to do so, and then the number of people who have viewed my post can in a way give data back to me" (Xolo, Female).

Some participants believed that addressing unemployment could be accomplished by staging programmes as stated above and posting them on social media, as well as removing the government dependency mentality. Another participant, however, suggested that it would be preferable if the developers of these social media sites could also assist by creating pop-up advertisements to promote entrepreneurship by revealing ways in which social media can help people. To summarise the findings related to proposed solutions to social media challenges, the participants indicated that social media businesses should be flexible and willing to learn how to use new social media sites; integrate social media with other communication tools; hire special expertise to manage their social media accounts; and, lastly, be pro-active to keep abreast of the changes in social media.

4.11 Summary

The chapter examined the sample characteristics in order to determine what type of business the participants had, what level of education they had, and so on. The chapter then moved on to the results of the interview, which sought to discover what the participants knew about social media, who was in charge of advertising in their businesses, and which social media sites they utilized the most the benefits and drawbacks of using those sites. The study also looked at economic factors as drivers of entrepreneurship, and it aimed to find possible solutions to the challenges. The study also discovered that there are benefits and disadvantages to using social media for business. The main findings were that most participants sold various items online and then advertised what they sold. This was a different experience compared to what other social media entrepreneurs from other regions experienced while conducting business on social media.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

The primary goal of this research was to determine the role of social media in assisting student entrepreneurs in Durban, South Africa, to achieve entrepreneurial success. For the study, students were interviewed to investigate the use of social media as a job search strategy. The study also sought to ascertain the perspectives and experiences of students who had used social media as an employment strategy, as well as to investigate the benefits and drawbacks of using social media sites as a job-creation strategy. The interviews were conducted with 20 people from various institutions in Durban, South Africa, whose genders varied (10 males and 10 females). This was designed to acquire different perspectives from different people's lived experiences.

5.2 Summary of findings

The theoretical foundation of the paper is social capital theory. According to Xie, Wang, and Lee (2021) the theory of social capital puts emphasis on how long-term interpersonal relationships can be a valuable resource for network members. This is exactly what the participants indicated by building relationships with friends and family and, as a result, gaining customers. Lin, Cooks and Burt (2001) definition of social capital is used in this study, which defines social capital as resources embedded in one's social networks and resources that can be accessed or mobilised through network ties. As Lin, Cooks and Burt (2001) proposed that social resources are embedded in a network of personal connections, it was also discovered that this emanates from an individual's interpersonal relationships, since social resources can only be created when an individual interacts with other members of society. Based on this, the findings reveal that the most valuable resources available to social media entrepreneurs are their social network relationships, which can bring returns to their businesses. According to Lin, Cooks and Burt (2001) social media entrepreneurs capitalise on the relationships they have built and maintained over time. According to the definition and the theory's foundation, the study discovered that marketing and selling to friends, as well as referrals from friends,

benefited social media entrepreneurs, confirming the proposed theory that relationships benefit social media entrepreneurs.

The interviews revealed that the participants viewed social media as a tool for marketing their businesses. According to the social capital theory, social media entrepreneurs cultivate various types of relationships and then utilise them to generate income. According to the various definitions of social media given by the participants, they showed that, while they were aware that social media is a collection of digital platforms, the connections and friendships they formed on various social media sites were critical components to their business success. Many of the participants were first-time business owners and hence lacked business competence. They also admitted that they knew little about running an online business.

According to Ndlovu (2014) young people's ability to participate in the economy is limited by both their inability to launch and manage successful businesses and a lack of expertise necessary for employment. They did not have enough time to devote to social media business activities because of other commitments like education. As an outcome, they were not able to schedule their day in an effective manner in order to make the most of it. These time management behaviours or skills are believed to enhance positive academic output by allowing students to effectively manage their lesson plans and meet learning objectives (Razali et al., 2018). Alyami et al. (2021) asserted the importance of planning in advance as an entrepreneur is key. This is due to the fact that these entrepreneurs were still students, enrolled in various colleges and universities and required time to study. The primary and most significant finding in my research results was that all of the participants were using social media entrepreneurially to advertise and market their enterprises rather than earning a living for using social media (YouTubers, online gamers, and influencers) as is common in other parts of the developed world.

In this study, social media entrepreneurs interviewed revealed that they did everything in their businesses because they did not yet have or afford any employees, because many ran relatively small online businesses and lacked the funds to hire others. According to an article by Beaver (2020) the United States had 30.2 million small businesses operating in 2018. This, according to the article, showed that in 2018, the United States had 30.2 million small businesses operating. Nearly half of small-business owners who close their doors blame a lack of funds. Simply put, there was not enough money coming in to pay for workers or cover other expenses. This clearly demonstrates that social media entrepreneurs face an even more difficult situation

because they have many other tasks on the side, like school and life in general. Therefore, a lack of funds in their businesses emerged as one of the most significant aspects of their business success or failure. The participants stated that they were engaging in social media entrepreneurship by utilising various social media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp (one of their favourites) Twitter, and a few others. They also stated that they use Instagram and Skype to a lesser extent. This served as an indicator showing that there is high social media usage amongst youth-owned small businesses in Durban. This finding is in line with previous research in other areas, such as that of Benson and Filippaios (2015). Their study sought to ascertain the level of understanding and application of professional social media usage among students, and it was based on a survey of over 600 business school graduates from an accredited UK university.

According to the study findings, business students' work experience and age play an important role in their use of social networks for business, knowledge, and career management. According to the data obtained in this study, young student entrepreneurs outperformed older entrepreneurs in terms of using social media to find business prospects. Due to their personal experiences with online bullying and other risky situations such as scams, some participants expressed scepticism about social media. Since these participants utilised social media entrepreneurially, they saw no reason why more traditional advertising mediums such as flyers, posters, newspapers, and radio should be preferred over social media entrepreneurship. Given how simple it has become to communicate with multitudes of individuals in a matter of minutes, they reported having fully embraced social media and will continue to do so indefinitely.

Similarly, Jagongo and Kinyua (2013) conducted a study to determine the impact of social media on the growth of SMEs in Nairobi. This was accomplished by assessing the impact of social media on access to the market, customer relations management, ingenuity, and pricing of SMEs in Nairobi, and the study discovered that social media tools used by entrepreneurs provide greater market connectivity and customer relationship management, which have a significant impact on the expansion of SMEs. This further supports the notion that students were aware that whenever they used social media, they were bound to improve their businesses through advertising and acquiring a decent number of new customers. Participants agreed that social media tends to benefit their businesses. The main study findings substantiate the literature, as participants reported similar benefits and contributions of social media entrepreneurship in their businesses to those identified in the literature. They identified various

potential benefits of social media entrepreneurship. They stated that social media entrepreneurship assists businesses in expanding their client base.

The participants mentioned that they saw an increase in the number of customers visiting their Facebook business pages, and they hoped that such page hits and interactions would help attract clients to explore their enterprises. Some reported that their Facebook pages are now buzzing with new customers, and that the numbers have steadily increased. Participants also stated that businesses' financial turnover improves due to entrepreneurial social media use. Since the participants acknowledged that their sales grew everyday due to their marketing activities on various social media sites, this actually improved the finances of the business.

Musungwini et al. (2014) study elaborates on the significance of social media entrepreneurship by establishing the impacts of effectively utilising social media platforms and giving suggestions for the businesses in the business the study was about as well as other companies planning to take their businesses to social platforms. Social media fosters a genuine connection between businesses and their customers, and that this connection fosters a trend in purchase intensity. Social media provides a platform for communication between entrepreneurs and their customers. Participants indicated that applications such as Facebook and WhatsApp provide a communication platform where they could get quick responses from and from their customers. As a result, the participants reported that social media has helped to improve their communication.

The participants also stated that social media sites have allowed their businesses to engage their customers on a regular basis, and people also get to communicate directly to their favourite businesses through social media. As a result, existing customers recommended others to their businesses. However, the participants indicated that they were also able to communicate with their friends and family while waiting for customer engagement Heimlich (2011) discovered that building trust and commitment in committed relationships (between entrepreneurs and their customers) necessitates the formation of a strong bond through communication. Customers who are willing to engage with entrepreneurs become partners in the value-adding process, working together to best meet their own and other customers' needs (Sashi, 2012).

Social media marketing is less expensive than more traditional advertising methods such as radio and newspaper marketing. Businesses can post information on social media sites for very little money. Businesses recognised that using social media had saved them a significant amount of money that would otherwise have gone toward newspaper or radio advertising.

Because of social media, advertising costs have been kept to a minimum. Huang and Brown (1999) asserted that small businesses have problems with marketing due to their inability to employ a marketer to carry out marketing activities for the business. The social media entrepreneur is often responsible for the performance of functions within an organization, such as finance, purchases, advertising, and recruitment. They will often decide which marketing strategies to use because the use of specialists is rare and they do not often have a marketing manager as an employee (Berthon, Ewing, and Napoli, 2008).

The participants made it clear that their businesses benefited from being advertised on social media because they believed that social media fosters stronger relationships between the business and its customers. The results showed that the advantages of having an online enterprise are both physical and intangible in nature. An example of an intangible benefit is when target clients start talking about the businesses and referring other clients to the businesses as an outcome, which may improve the businesses' sales and finances, which is a tangible benefit. The review of literature (Chapter Two) also demonstrated the enormous contribution and benefits of social media entrepreneurship. Neti (2011) emphasised the benefits of using social media for entrepreneurship (mainly for marketing) which range from a simple increase in the number of customers to a significant increase in returns or profits made by entrepreneurs. Social media entrepreneurship is revealed by literature as a platform for businesses to interact with their customers and showcase their products to a wide range of people. The findings in this study reinforce those reported in the literature.

Several obvious challenges were reported to be faced by social media entrepreneurs when using social media for business purposes. They revealed significant challenges, such as time constraints that prevented them from regularly updating their social media sites. Participants highlighted that they were often both owners and managers of their small businesses; hence, they did not have sufficient time to devote to social media activities, because of their many other responsibilities in the business. Technology-related knowledge and skills were also a major challenge for participants. They acknowledged that social media sites such as Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube were good, but that they did not possess the necessary skills to utilise them effectively, as many did not mention utilising these sites. Their lack of skills, however, did not imply that they were clueless when it came to technological knowledge and how to conduct business through social media. Participants emphasised that the use of social media, especially Facebook, appeals to the public, exposing their competing companies' strengths and weaknesses because it is vulnerable to hackers and scammers. Social media is a new strategy

that is less popular among small businesses than it is among large corporations. Van Scheers (2016) for example, highlighted the difficulties associated with implementing social media entrepreneurship, such as a lack of resources, poor management and entrepreneurship skills, inadequate training and development, and difficulty measuring the effectiveness of social media entrepreneurship.

Although technology has been identified as an effective tool of change and innovation that can improve small business owners' competitive advantage, numerous participants claimed that social media did come in as a solution to a new business model. However, the level of competition in social media marketing is becoming incredibly large every day. As a result, they must think outside the box and strive to distinguish themselves from other businesses in the same industry. Adiguzel et al. (2020) explains that the internet connects businesses and customers in an exchange market environment that transcends physical, cultural, and legal boundaries, and on an unimaginable scale that was previously thought to be technically impossible. Because of competition, consumers can compare products and/or services as they see fit. However, Shukla and Dubey (2021) on the other hand, asserted that due to high competition, customer acquisition costs have risen due to fierce competition among wholesalers, long-term retail companies, and products that were not previously purchased online. Many retail stores were forced to close as countries went into lockdown, and e-commerce (social media entrepreneurship included) accounted for 16.4% of total global sales during this period. There was consensus among the youth entrepreneurs that one of the major challenges facing them was that their businesses were in low-income communities, and this impacted revenues.

Another obvious impediment to business growth identified by participants was a lack of the necessary infrastructure to allow the youth to run their businesses efficiently. As these entrepreneurs chose to conduct their businesses online, most of them avoided the fact that they did not have sufficient resources to run physical businesses, so they made do with what they had. The enterprise owners and key informants stated that the businesses run by the youth in the study were in very competitive trades. Due to many businesses operating and offering the same services and products, the participants were left with a very small share of the market. The high levels of competition hinder the businesses from growing. The study found that a large number of young entrepreneurs were unaware of government, business, and non-governmental organisation (NGO) programmes designed to help them grow their businesses. However, Cloete (2022) asserted that through the NYDA grant program, more than 1100

youth-owned businesses in the rural and township economies received grant funding to start their businesses. Youth-owned businesses have created and sustained 8,600 jobs in the economy, thanks to the NYDA grant programme and the Youth Micro Enterprise Relief Fund. This shows that the entrepreneurs were not aware of the possibilities, because none of them mentioned such programmes assisting them in their time of need. As such, the researcher supposes that the participants must have known but did not have faith in any government organization, even though youth entrepreneurs agreed that young people are overflowing with ideas but lack the necessary guidance and confidence to realise their potential. This is quite worrisome if one considers how effective young entrepreneurs can be when given a chance and supported by their governments to combat youth unemployment.

According to Onwu (2022) African young entrepreneurs are developing solutions that have the potential to impact not only their home countries and continent, but the entire world. If the conditions are favourable, they can also generate numerous jobs along the way. It is therefore critical that they be allowed to do so in a region with high unemployment (particularly among the youth). It is clear, then, that authorities, large corporations, as well as other players in the entrepreneurial ecosystem must work together to cultivate and assist as many young entrepreneurs as possible. However, the participants noted that, through mentoring, workshops, and community development programmes, the young people could learn more about entrepreneurship. The participants also reported that the banks had to make their application process easy and understandable to all. However, most of the participants did not know how the business sector and NGOs could be of assistance to young enterprise owners.

5.3 Recommendations

There are a number of recommendations that emerged from this study. Entrepreneurs must develop a strategy in the beginning stages of their social media entrepreneurship journey that is aligned with their business objectives. Businesses may incorporate social media entrepreneurship to increase their sales, to increase their customer base, or to improve their financial position. These objectives should be considered before a social media business plan is made. Whenever small businesses experience temporary growth, they should consider looking for help from social media experts to assist them in achieving their goals. While businesses can save money by monitoring and managing their own social media accounts, having access to the services of a well-established social media expert would increase the

success of their social media businesses. Social media provides a platform for connecting youth-focused enterprise programmes and policies to the realities and aspirations of youths. Youth enterprise owners must be given a platform to present the challenges they face with regard to running and growing their businesses so that policies are formulated that directly address the issues as they stand on the ground. These platforms could be embedded in review clauses for current youth programmes.

Since the participants agreed that the government plays a critical role in creating a favourable environment for more young people to start social media businesses, they believed that making community-based agencies available could increase awareness of youth entrepreneurship and support systems available to them if they decide to become entrepreneurs. As a result, intensive awareness-raising campaigns should be conducted to raise awareness of relevant agencies such as NYDA, SETAs[7], and Khula Enterprise Finance[8]. This should aim to assist places that were never before reached. Youth entrepreneurs in various locations such as townships, informal settlements, and rural areas in order to encourage youth to markets, among other things. The participants claimed that they were unable to obtain financial assistance from banks and other financial institutions because their financial situation was precarious. This is problematic as Kew et al. (2013) and Schoof (2006) maintained that lack of access to finance and business support services are some of the factors that influenced youth entrepreneurship development in most societies. Similarly, access to finance was also identified as a major barrier for young entrepreneurs in a South African study (Chiloane-Tsoka, 2013).

Lack of financials was stated as a key constraint to entrepreneurship development in South Africa is a lack of financial support. Kew et al. (2013, p. 21) also asserted that "youth are highly susceptible to these constraints because they frequently lack a credit history or resources to serve as collateral for loans from financial institutions, and they are less likely to have collected sufficient capital to finance a business venture with their own savings". However, the researcher believes that offering resources to individuals who wish to pursue entrepreneurship will change the youth's attitudes toward social media entrepreneurship. This can be accomplished by simplifying the application procedure and making support access points easily available to all young people.

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[7] SETA, is an acronym for Sector Education and Training Authority. The members of a SETA include employers, trade unions, government departments and bargaining councils where relevant, from each industrial sector.
[8] Khula Enterprise provides funding directly to viable small, medium and micro enterprises that could not otherwise attract funding.

The current government policies could be more effective if they had in-built mechanisms for constant and periodic review to ensure that they remained relevant to the youth as well as that they remained in sync with the youth's realities and aspirations.

Building constant and participatory review processes ensures that the programmes are youth focused. With many of these youth-only programmes failing to produce tangible results, the government can try to incorporate young policy developers who understand what young people want from the organization. This is because, a lot of negativities are mentioned with regards to organisations responsible for running the organisations that are responsible for small and medium enterprises. According to Dube et al. (2022) the overall number of small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs) operating in our economy has not improved from the estimated 800,000 in 1995. According to the Masterplan for National Integrated Small Enterprise Development (NISED). the South African market maintained the same number of SMMEs from 1995 to 2022, with only 330 000 of those able to provide employment. This means that the government can begin by examining what is causing the failure, as well as the actual challenges on the streets, rather than relying on statistical data gathered by someone else.

Another possible recommendation for addressing the identified challenges is to organise for young people who have achieved success in business to play a role in inspiring potential entrepreneurs and those attempting to run viable businesses by demonstrating the possibilities for success in business. At the community level, this can be accomplished through entrepreneur fairs and classroom visits, which can be timed to coincide with Youth Day or other special days. Another thing that can be done is for the government to include a mentorship clause as part of their support conditions, allowing those who succeed to give back to other young people. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) can also assist the government and individuals in encouraging youth entrepreneurship. Some participants did not mention non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as being one of the frameworks that could assist them, even though these organisations could play a role in addressing the outlined issues and challenges affecting youth. Their role could include strong information brokerage and connecting youths to existing support (from government, the private sector, and NGOs).

A joint effort between both the government and private sector (NGOs), to allow several people from the private sector to be special guests or educators on a few of the lessons will be extremely helpful in connecting the youth to the private sector's expected standards. As well as supporting youth businesses, particularly in mainly disadvantaged communities, must also be

viewed as the private sector's primary BBEE and corporate social obligation initiatives, and they should be rewarded with BBEE credit points for doing so. Examples of assistance may include subcontracting assistance and sourcing some of their inputs from young entrepreneurs. A hotel operator, for example, who sources vegetables and carrots from a youth cooperative or entrepreneur should be eligible for BBEE credit. Some of this can be done if the private sector broadens their corporate social responsibility to include targeted support for youth businesses that are in their line of work.

The participants stated that the use of social media for commercial or personal purposes has helped them solve many of their financial problems, but they also stated that they frequently encounter difficulties when attempting to conduct business online. Many of those problems were classified as "cyber-crimes," which Al-Khater et al. (2020) defined as cases of indictable offences and misdemeanours that use computers or communication technologies as targets or commission instruments or are connected to the widespread use of computer technology.

According to research, cybercrimes typically result in a breach of personal privacy, a security breach, a loss of company, financial fraud, or harm to public and government facilities. Due to this, nearly every participant had something to say about one or more types of cyber-criminal actions they had encountered, highlighting the seriousness of the issue social media businesses were dealing with. The study found that identity theft among businesspeople, cyberbullying, and false information were among the most frequently reported incidents. However, scamming and personification are the most significant in terms of business.

According to Hayes (2021) 43% of cyber intrusions focus on small companies, with financial, retail, insurance, and legal sectors being among their top choices. As a result, cybercrime impacts all businesses, not just established ones. This is supported by shocking statistics claiming that South African businesses face 577 cyberattacks every hour, likely to cost billions of rands per year. This called for an investigation because the situation was getting worse by the day in South Africa. It was stated that South Africa had the third-most attacks than in any country (Hayes, 2021). It is important to recommend that youth social media entrepreneurs should be proactive in searching for information on available support and other opportunities to grow their businesses' knowledge.

Since almost all the participants were new business owners and did not have prior knowledge on how businesses are run, they probably committed some business mistakes due to this. So, business education is important in order to equip entrepreneurs with knowledge. According to

Zwane et al. (2022), the most essential part is that entrepreneurship promotes economic growth for both developed and developing countries (Noor and Isa, 2020). Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SME) have been and continue to be the cornerstone of South Africa's growth and economic expansion. SMEs contribute significantly to economic stability by increasing market efficiency, attracting foreign direct investment, and creating jobs (Ahmed and Ganapathy 2021; Saah 2021). However, for young entrepreneurs to succeed in businesses, they are required to possess a set of skills, as explained by Mwangi (2011) who believes that entrepreneurship education is important in primarily assisting graduates, active entrepreneurs, and aspiring entrepreneurs in starting and running their own businesses as opposed to looking for paid employment from other people or organisations (either public or private). As a result, Mensah (2013) also emphasised that entrepreneurship education may enable a person to realise their full entrepreneurial potential.

Youth entrepreneurs should employ various social media sites to cater to various consumers. After noting the different participants' complaints of being victims of cyber-crimes, entrepreneurs should avoid using only one social media platform, such as Facebook. Marketers should learn to use as many social media platforms as possible, including Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, and LinkedIn, because these platforms are where potential customers can be discovered. In addition, no good businessperson knows the exact location of their success, so entrepreneurs should ensure that they exhaust all the available resources at their disposal.

Individuals in charge of small businesses must adopt social media marketing in order to learn about new social media sites that can be used in business and understand how they work in order to fully participate in this new social media phenomenon and increase advertisement reach. Whenever a corporation has implemented social media entrepreneurship, those who are in charge must devote enough time to it and be willing to participate in social media to improve interaction between the company and its customers. This would help with relationship building. Use a bigger sample size because findings from smaller samples (20) may not be generalised to represent the perspectives of all the youth social media entrepreneurs owning small businesses on social media in the city of Durban. A comparison study could be conducted to see which small businesses use social media for entrepreneurship and which do not. A comparison can be used to determine which businesses are significantly more successful and to investigate the relationship between social media entrepreneurship and business success. More research is needed to determine how to effectively manage and gain competitive advantages from business opportunities offered by various social media platforms. Through

various social media platforms, social media entrepreneurs require more data and information about entrepreneurship, their businesses, and products. Research could focus on addressing the social media entrepreneurship challenges experienced by small businesses in more detail and how those challenges can be mitigated soon.

5.4 The way forward

As stated, numerous times throughout the study, this research was planned to be conducted face-to-face, but due to the COVID-19, this was not possible, which had a significant impact on the quality of the data gathered. Because it was not permitted, it was difficult to schedule interviews with various participants at convenient times. Instead, telephone interviews were conducted, which had their own drawbacks, according to Block and Erskine (2012). For example, the absence of visual aids, which are commonly used in face-to-face interviews, may have an impact on the content of informant responses obtained in structured telephone interviews.

The second reason is that people's reactions on the phone may differ from their reactions in person. There are two possible explanations for this. Firstly, the anonymity that comes with separation may increase or decrease the subject's desire to express themselves in a socially acceptable manner. The study's findings revealed that social media was used more frequently than traditional media outlets (television, magazines, billboards, and radio). As a result, it may be interesting to look into the psychological effects of excessive social media use. The research's contribution shed light on how small firms in Durban, South Africa, use social media for entrepreneurship. According to previous research, small businesses in South Africa use social media for entrepreneurship at a very low rate (Lekhanya, 2013). As a result, the research helped to improve understanding of the use and potential impact of social media entrepreneurship for small businesses. The study is also important for organisations that are just getting started with social media entrepreneurship. The study serves as a foundation for future research on social media entrepreneurship in the context of small businesses in South Africa.

5.5 Conclusion

The study looked at the role played by social media in trying to reduce youth unemployment in Durban, South Africa, through entrepreneurship. Social media is seen as a valuable tool to increase interaction with customers. According to the literature, social media entrepreneurship is a powerful communication tool when used effectively by businesses. The study concludes by linking research findings with the study questions.

The participants reported that social media entrepreneurship improves relationships (through handling customer questions and complaints) while also providing customers with relevant information about the business's products and services. The participants reported that social media entrepreneurship has increased the customer base of the business.

Throughout the paper, it was noted that social media is still considered a relatively new communication strategy, and small businesses are gradually adopting it. According to the findings, small businesses lack the resources (financial and human) and time required to fully encompass social media entrepreneurship. The participants also stated that they face challenges regarding the use of social media for entrepreneurship purposes, they complained of being victims to hackers, bullying, fear of missing out which causes pressure/depression. However, they were very happy with the benefits of and the ease of access of customers

Throughout the paper, it was noted that social media is still considered a relatively new communication strategy, and small businesses are gradually adopting it. According to the findings, small businesses lack the resources (financial and human) and time required to fully encompass social media entrepreneurship. Small businesses should be adaptable enough to learn new technologies in order to adopt social media entrepreneurship. Businesses need to outsource to experts so that they learn new technologies in order to keep abreast of changes in social media usage. Small businesses do face challenges when implementing social media. However, the challenges are outweighed by the benefits and opportunities that social media presents to businesses. Social media entrepreneurship has great potential to reach out to a large customer base thus benefiting the business.

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UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)

APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL
For research with human participants

INFORMED CONSENT RESOURCE TEMPLATE

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:

Dear Sir/Madam.

My name is Thobelani Ntokozo Mdluli from the School Of Built Environment and Development Studies Department, University of Kwa-Zulu Natal Howard College; email address Ngonyamamdluli@gmail.com OR 220104963@stu.ukzn.ac.za
You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything unclear or if you need additional information. Take time to decide whether or not you would like to take part.

Thank you for reading this.

The Project purpose **is to study the case of students regarding the use of social media as an self employment creation strategy in Durban, South Africa.**You will kindly be required to participate in a semi structured questionnaire for an hour/depending on how long it will take the participant to finish the questionnaire. The transcript of the questionnaire will be stored on my personal computer and it will be destroyed within five years upon completion of my study. Your participation in this study would be strictly confidential. Your name will not be mentioned.

Participation in this study is voluntary. This means you may choose to withdraw from the study at any point without attracting any penalty. Participation will not attract any cost. No incentives for participating in the study will be provided. The interview will be kept strictly confidential. Your identity will be protected and anonymity will be maintained throughout the interview. Audio recordings and transcribed materials will be kept safe by the researcher for use in my dissertation without reference to your name or identity. After completion of the dissertation, audio recordings and transcripts will be kept with my supervisor and will be disposed of after five years upon completion of the study. **Please note that copies of a summary of the main findings of the dissertation will be made available upon request. Should you agree to participate and wish to receive a copy.** In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact me on 0786437826 or ngonyamamdluli@gmail.com OR 220104963@stu.ukzn.ac.za . You may also contact my supervisor, Prof Pranitha Maharaj maharajp7@ukzn.ac.za or on 0312602243, or UKZN's Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee. 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 researcher at (provide contact details) 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
PrivateBagX54001
Durban
4000
KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA
Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609
Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

CONSENT

I _____ have been informed about the study entitled *Social media use as an self employment creation strategy: A case study of students in Durban, South Africa*
I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.

I have been given an opportunity to answer questions about the study and have had 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:

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   **Date**
(Where applicable)

_____   _____

Signature of Translator   **Date**
(Where applicable)

Interview guide

Appendix1.

Semi-structured interview

Dear respondent, this questionnaire aims at obtaining primary data regarding your perceptions about social media entrepreneurship activities. Kindly be informed that both the researcher and the supervisor (i.e. lecturer) will use all information obtained for academic research purposes only. You can be rest assured that both the researcher and supervisor will guarantee ethical and careful use of the information. Please note that participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any stage of the study if you wish to do so.

Personal information

Full Names:

Surname:

Level of study:

Age group:

Gender:

1.   What is your definition of social media?

2.   Do you believe using social media for your day to day operation is ideal? Please motivate your answer.

3.   Which of the following social media platforms do you communicate with your networks or clients and why? Facebook, Emails, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Skype or others.(please specify)

4. Do you think social media is a good communication tool for socializing and for business? (Please motivate your response)

5.   Are there any challenges that you have encountered while using social media, if yes please motivate?

6.   How do you mitigate the negative impact of the above mentioned challenges if you were to face them in future?

7.   Is there anything else you would like to add regarding the use of social media in business?

8.   Are there any challenges that you have encountered while using social media for business activities? Please motivate

9.   Would you say it is a useful communication tool for entrepreneurial networking and why?

10. How do you separate business networking and personal networking?

11. Please mention at least three benefits of using social media for business purposes according to your perception.

12. Do you believe social media entrepreneurship can benefit the youth in fighting unemployment? Yes/no (please provide a reason for your answer).

13. According to your opinion, is social media entrepreneurship a way for the future of entrepreneurship? Substantiate your answer.

14.What do you think can be done to encourage the youth to take social media entrepreneurship as an alternative for unemployment?

15.Do you believe that enough is being said about other ways to make money via social media and why?