

**AN EXPLORATION OF THE CHALLENGES OF UNEMPLOYED RURAL YOUTH
GRADUATES IN A DISTRICT IN KWAZULU- NATAL**

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree

Master's in Education

(Adult Education)

In the

School of Education

College of Humanities

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Pietermaritzburg

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October 2021

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

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Date:

DECLARATION

I, Bongiwe Patricia Dlamini, declare that: **An exploration of the challenges of unemployed rural youth graduates in a district in KwaZulu-Natal** is my original work. The information from other scholars and sources that I used or cited have been indicated and acknowledged in the list of references and citations. All work that is presented in this study has not been submitted to any other institution.

Signature:  ...

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Date: 30 September 2021

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to all African citizens, particularly all Nkonjeni rural village residents who studied very hard with the aim of getting employment to upgrade their lives to an acceptable standard.

I further dedicate this work to my late grandmother, the pillar of my strength, Saliwesitheni Mbatha (Malencane) who raised me and encouraged me to continue to study although she herself was uneducated. May her soul Rest in peace.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to thank the Almighty God, for His love, grace, power and for the strength He gave me during this research journey. I thank Him for His presence and guidance from the commencement of my journey to the very end.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the following people who assisted me:

- To my supervisor, Dr. J. S. Mkhize for his guidance, care, patience and support he gave me throughout this research journey.
- To all the lecturers of the Adult Education Programme at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus, for their efforts and their inspiration especially in my first-year as a postgraduate student.
- To all the administrative staff for sacrificing their time to assist me to make this study a reality and a success in the School of Education, Pietermaritzburg Campus.
- To all the participants for the willingness to readily provide information, and who sacrificed their precious time to make this project come to fruition.
- To my dearest late husband, Phillip Dlamini, thank you for the best legacy and moral example you left behind. You motivated me to greater heights.
- To my dearest two sons, Lindokuhle Muziwensindiso and Ndabezinhle Zibusisoziyeza, and my only daughter, Nomlando Phiwokuhle, I just thank God for your presence in my life as pillars of strength who motivated me to work hard even on weekends and holidays when I had to leave you all alone at home.
- To all the members of my family, especially my mother Theodorah Bajabhisile, my sister Sophelele, my brother Simo, my stepdaughter Minenhle, and my uncles Khonangenkosi and Gabigabi - thank you for the support and motivation.
- Lastly, to my language editor, Brian Naidoo, for refining the final draft dissertation.

ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the challenges of youth graduates who are unemployed, especially those from the rural areas. Youth unemployment in South Africa and globally has significantly increased in the last few years. Particularly, the unemployment rate among youth graduates has increased across all racial groups and geographical areas, and this has affected the lives of rural communities. Nkonjeni village in KwaZulu-Natal (RSA), which has a predominantly rural African population, was selected as the geographical research area for this study. This rural village was chosen because, like many rural areas in South Africa, it is facing enormous challenges concerning youth graduates being unemployed. To achieve the objectives of the study, a qualitative research approach was applied to investigate the challenges and experiences of a sample population of six unemployed tertiary level youth graduates (three males and three females) from Nkonjeni rural village who qualified in the field of humanities and engineering studies. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect data. Furthermore questionnaire document were used to collect data, Tesch's (1990) eight-step approach for data analysis was employed. This qualitative study is guided by an interpretive paradigm which facilitated in-depth conversations with each unemployed graduate throughout the study. The Social Exclusion Theory, Capability Approach and Ecological Systems Theory underpinned the framework of this study. The findings revealed that the inappropriate subject content of modules and the lack of guidance for prospective youth graduates largely contributed to them being unemployed. The study also revealed that although the participants were actively job-seeking, there was a mismatch between their qualification and skills and the specific demands of the labour market, which further decreased their chances of employment. This situation was exacerbated by the lack of career guidance, work experience, social connections in the labour market, job recruitment practices which promoted nepotism and corruption. It is recommended that government policies and programmes promote self-employment through entrepreneurship with the provision of start-up capital.

KEY WORDS: Capabilities Approach, interpretivism, challenges, qualitative study, self-employment, Social Exclusion Theory

ACRONYMS

CSO	: Central Statistics Office
EU	: European Union
DBSA	: Development Bank of Southern Africa
DUT	: Durban University of Technology
GCIS	: Government Communication and Information System
ILO	: International Labour Organisation
MUT	: Mangosuthu University of Technology
NGOs	: Non-Governmental Organisations
NYC	: National Youth Commission
NYDA	: National Youth Development Agency
NYDC	: National Youth Development Council
NYP	: National Youth Policy
NYPSA	: National Youth Policy of South Africa
QLFS	: Quarterly Labour Force Survey
SARS	: South African Revenue Service
SAYP	: South African Youth Policy
SMEs	: Small and medium-sized enterprises
SRDG	: Social Relief of Distress Grant
Stats SA	: Statistics of South Africa
SSA	: Sub-Saharan Africa
SONA	: State of the Nation Address
TVET	: Technical and Vocational Education and Training

UN : United Nations

UNISA : University of South Africa

UNIZULU : University of Zululand

UNDP : United Nations Development Programme

WHO : World Health Organisation

WTO : World Trade Organization

DEFINITIONS

Corruption is a form of dishonest or unethical conduct by a person entrusted in a position of authority, often to acquire personal benefit.

Education is a process of facilitating learning or acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs and habits.

Employment is a state of having a paid job.

Nepotism is described as practices related to favouritism.

Participants refer to those people who participate in a study to give responses to questions.

Patriarchy is defined as a system where men are perceived to be the dominant gender and/or superior to women.

Poverty is the deprivation of food, shelter, money and clothing that occurs when people cannot satisfy their basic needs.

Qualitative study is a study that does not involve measurements or statistics but provides insight into the problem.

Self-esteem is what you feel about yourself.

Unemployment is defined as a state in which people, who can work, are without jobs.

Violence is the use of physical force that causes damage or injury.

TABLE OF TABLES

Table 1: PROFILLING OF PARTICIPANTS.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Table 2: THEMES AND SUB-THEMES.....	44

TABLE OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1: EC, MP, LP and KZN RECORDED EXPANDED UNEMPLOYMENT RATES ABOVE 50, 0 PERCENTAGES IN Q1:2022	13
FIGURE 2: SA’S UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES RANKED WORST IN THE WORLD (Trading Economics)	15

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUPERVISOR’S DECLARATION	i
DECLARATION.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
ABSTRACT.....	v
ACRONYMS.....	vi
DEFINITIONS.....	viii
TABLE OF TABLES.....	ix
TABLE OF FIGURES.....	x
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	xi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND.....	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 RESEARCH SETTING	4
1.3 SIGNIFICANCE AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY	5
1.4 RESEARCH PROBLEM.....	6
1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS	6
1.5.1 Main Research Question.....	6
1.5.2 Research Sub-questions	6
1.6 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	6
1.7 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS	7
1.7.1 Youth.....	7
1.7.2 Graduates	7
1.7.3 Unemployment.....	7
1.8 REFLEXIVITY.....	7

1.9 OUTLINE OF THE CHAPTER	8
1.10 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER.....	9
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	10
2.1 INTRODUCTION	10
2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	15
2.2.1 SOCIAL EXCLUSION THEORY	16
2.2.2 CAPABILITY APPROACH	18
2.2.3 BRONFENBRENNER THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	19
2.3 YOUTH AND UNEMPLOYMENT	19
2.3.1 Youth Unemployment: A Global Perspective	19
2.3.2 Unemployment in South Africa: Post-1994.....	20
2.4 EFFECTS OF UNEMPLOYMENT	22
2.4.1 Effects of Unemployment on Individuals.....	22
2.4.2 Unemployment and Socio-economic Hardships.....	22
2.5 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS	22
2.6 GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES AND INTERVENTIONS	23
2.6.1 Government Initiatives to Combat Youth Unemployment.....	23
2.7 REASONS FOR UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG YOUTH GRADUATES.....	24
2.8 CONSEQUENCES OF YOUTH EXCLUSION FROM EMPLOYMENT	24
2.9 WAYS TO PROMOTE THE YOUTH GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT.....	25
2.10 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER.....	25
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	27
3.1 INTRODUCTION	27
3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH	27
3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN	27
3.4 RESEARCH POPULATION.....	29
3.4.1 Sampling Method.....	29

3.4.2 Selection Process	30
3.4.3 Selection Criteria	30
3.5 DATA COLLECTION	31
3.5.1 Semi-structured Interviews	31
3.5.2 Questionnaire	34
3.6 DATA ANALYSIS.....	34
3.7 DATA VERIFICATION	35
3.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.....	36
3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	37
3.10 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER.....	37
CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS	39
4.1 INTRODUCTION	39
4.2 PROFILING OF PARTICIPANTS	39
4.2.1 Biographical Information of Participants Who Managed to Be Interviewed Due to Covid-19	42
4.3 THEMES AND SUB-THEMES THAT EMERGED FROM THE STUDY	43
4.3.1 Perceptions of Unemployed Youth Graduates on Their Status of Unemployment.....	45
4.3.2 Challenges Facing Unemployed Youth Graduates	48
4.3.3 Survival Strategies for Unemployed Youth Graduates.....	51
4.3.4 Unemployed Youth Graduates’ Attempts to Find Employment.....	52
4.3.5 Strategies to Combat Unemployment	55
4.4 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER.....	62
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS.....	63
5.1 INTRODUCTION	63
5.2 DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS	63
5.3 CONCLUSIONS EMANATING FROM FINDINGS	64

5.3.1 Objective 1: To Investigate Jobless Youth Graduates’ Job-seeking Behaviour and Encounters of Without Jobs.	64
5.3.2 Objective 2: To Understand the Reasons for the Unemployment of the Youth Graduates in Rural Settings.....	65
5.3.3 Objective 3: To Determine Whether Jobless Youth Graduates Realise the Outcomes of Their Rejection from Job Opportunities, and How They Plan to Combat Them.	65
5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	65
5.4.1 Self-employment.....	65
5.4.2 the Government.....	66
5.4.3 The NGOs and the Private Sector.....	66
5.4.4 Recommendations for Further Research.....	66
5.5 LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH.....	67
5.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION TO THE STUDY.....	68
REFERENCES.....	69
APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE.....	77
APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE.....	78
APPENDIX 3: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR UNEMPLOYED YOUTH GRADUATES.....	81
APPENDIX 4: INFORMED CONSENT LETTER.....	83
APPENDIX 5: DECLARATION BY THE PARTICIPANT.....	85
APPENDIX 6: APPROVAL NOTIFICATION.....	86
APPENDIX 7: LETTER OF PERMISSION TO TRADITIONAL COUNCIL.....	87
APPENDIX 8: LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE.....	88
APPENDIX 9: TURNITIN REPORT.....	89

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study was conducted in one of the provinces of Republic of South Africa known as KwaZulu-Natal, at a rural village of Nkonjeni which is twenty-five kilometres from the town of Ulundi, and falls under the Zululand District Municipality. The motive of this study was to explore the challenges of how unemployed youth graduates in the Zululand District, specifically at Nkonjeni, cope on daily basis with the needs to survive. Although KwaZulu-Natal is not considered as the poorest province, but level of joblessness particularly among youth graduates in rural villages, who struggled with deprivation, poverty and unemployment, is very high. Consequently, the opinion to pilot this study in the rural village of Nkonjeni was influenced by its lack of resources, poor infrastructure, abject poverty and the absence of basic services which was exacerbated by the high unemployment rate in the community, especially among youth graduates.

South Africans are getting frustrated as a result of unemployment. In places such as Nkonjeni, people continually complain about the lack of services, despite the fact that they believe that they voted for better life in the first democratic election held in 1994. Some of the unemployed people do, from time to time, protest and express their frustration about the lack of job creation in South Africa. Alexander (2010) claimed that the numerous protests concerned service delivery and against uncaring, self-serving, and corrupt leaders of municipalities. I am interested to investigate how these jobless youth graduates manage to deal with their unemployment status because of coming from poverty-stricken communities; whether there are any attempts being made by them to find jobs, or if government is assisting to alleviate the dire situation. The statistics (Stats SA, 2016) indicate that the alarming unemployment rate, especially among youth graduates, calls for immediate and urgent attention in South Africa. It is a clear indication that the government and other stakeholders may not be doing enough to create job opportunities. The youth graduate unemployment situation has been proclaimed as a worldwide crisis by the International Labour Organisation (ILO 2012).

Unemployment among youth graduates bestowed to any of the objections that we confront as a society as it is related with an increase in crime and a decrease in the standard of living especially in rural communities. This study is of critical national importance to the South African economy and education in general and her curriculum development in particular. It focuses on unemployment of graduates from tertiary institutions. The implications of unemployment in South Africa have also resulted in xenophobic attacks in all parts of the country. According to the Collins Corpus English Dictionary (2006, p.1689) ‘xenophobia’ is defined as a “strong and unreasonably dislike or fear of people from other countries”. In South Africa, many people blame foreigners, who work for less money, for the high unemployment rate. Tshitereke (1999) pointed out that people often create a frustration scapegoat. For example, foreigners are blamed for on-going deprivation and poverty in South Africa. The foreigners are seen as a threat to jobs, housing, education and health care (Morris, 1998; Tshitereke, 1999). Although Tshitereke discussed poverty as one of the effects of unemployment, he did not explore the phenomenon at Nkonjeni rural village.

The study explores challenges experienced by the unemployed youth graduates in a rural context and how unemployed youth graduates cope on daily basis with the needs to survive. It provides insight on the rural unemployed graduates in a rural context. Employability of graduates depends to a large extent on the match between the tertiary education they get and the skills demands of the employer sector .As reported by *Business Tech* (2018), jobless rate in South Africa escalated in 2018 to 27 percentage for the third quarter (Stats SA, 2018) and this has surpassed the increase seen at the beginning of the year. Unemployment among youth graduates is a growing international occurrence that has an adversely distressing societies’ current then subsequent communal-financial welfare (Moleke, 2005).This prompted the researcher’s need to explore the perceptions of young unemployed graduates at Nkonjeni rural village concerning the aspects underwriting to their jobless status with the intention of promoting strategies on how unemployment can be circumvented. Similar to other Black Africa states, South Africa was irresistible, youth of 48.8 percentages of its populace under the age of 35 years (CSO, 2019:IX).

South Africa’s wealth was propelled of different zones such as mining, industries, agriculture, building structures and government.

In 2018, South Africa's entire populace was evaluated at 14375.601: 49.3 percentages were males and 50.7 percentage females, and 60.9 percentages dwelt in countryside places where jobless rate is high, while 39.1percentage dwelt in inner-city places. According to Central Statistics Office (CSO, 2019), countries, 70 percentages of the country total populace were unemployed particularly in youth graduates, and those from in rural areas were 61.7 percentages while 39.3 percentages were from urban areas (CSO, 2019: IX).

In third quarter of 2020, the rate of unemployment escalated to a high of 29, 8 percentage (Stats SA, 2020). Furthermore, in February 2021, the high rate of joblessness in South Africa escalated to 30.4 % as stated in the State of the Nations Address (SONA, 2021) by President Cyril Ramaphosa. According to *Times Live* May,8 during 2018, the so-called 'era of nine wasted years' during the leadership of President Zuma, a huge number of unemployed youth graduates as well as other groups of people became jobless. This situation arose after allegations of state capture beginning with the inappropriate appointment and deployment of Ministers, especially in the Finance Ministry. The situation resulted in investors deciding not to invest in the economy of South Africa. During these nine years, the economy of South Africa dropped such that it led to the closing of factories, mines, companies and other industries. The crisis led to the high rate of unemployment among youth graduates, and the nose-diving of the value of the rand, which plunged the economy into disarray.

The elections that took place on the 8 May 2019 also impacted the lives of the youth graduates who now saw little hope in being employed in South Africa. Empty promises about job creation during election campaigns resulted instead in people being retrenched or led to employers introducing contract-based appointments instead of permanent ones. In addition, vacant posts were not filled when there was resignation, retirement and death, hence those who were in the sector were overburdened (*Times live*, July 5, 2019). The containment of the Eskom saga led to load-shedding two years ago and is on-going-it resulted in many qualified (including graduates) and unqualified people becoming jobless (Ibid).

Moreover, water shortage was still a critical issue, and poor infrastructures such as roads, schools and community halls are still visible. Buildings were burned and destroyed by violent protesters who hoped that such evasive action will catch the eye of politicians to produce sound service-deliver. The government turned a blind eye to protests.

Jobless youth graduate rate in our country South Africa escalated to 40.1 percentages by 12 February 2020, while the general unemployment rate remained at 29 percentages (IOL, 2020). The outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic that affects Nkonjeni, other provinces of South Africa and the whole world, further damaged the economy of the country such that it bordered on junk status (Moody, 2019). This pandemic caused thousands of jobs being lost in all sectors including entertainment, sports, tourism and hospitality, among others. The first Covid-19 lockdown which began on 27 March 2020 gave rise to a series of problems that led to thousands of people being retrenched. That lockdown, implemented as from Level 5, disrupted our economy with disastrous implications for day-to-day survival. All sectors including industries, schools, sales firms, and commercial activities were closed. Tourism, entertainment and hospitality industry were the most affected during lockdown. Hence, workers in this industry were laid off with no opportunity to provide for their families.

Unemployment contributes to some of the challenges that we face as a society. It is associated with crime, inadequate living conditions, psychological and physiological ill-health and the performance of the economy as a whole. By reducing poverty these negative effects can not only positively improve the quality of life for the individual but also his/her family and society as a whole. Therefore, we cannot overlook unemployment as one of the causes of poverty (Korankye, 2014). Entities involved in retrenching included the SABC, Greyhound, Citi-liner, and other corporates. In some sectors, employers allowed their employees to perform their job duties from home, mainly via online platforms. The continuation of restrictions even to the present day was exacerbated by the New Wave 4 Omicron mutation which crippled employment initiatives. The advent of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), which introduced Zoom and robotics (among others), will impact the employment sector (IOL, 2020).

1.2 RESEARCH SETTING

Ulundi as one of the smallest Bantustan rural towns in South Africa accomplished remarkable prominent stages of rural-urban immigration due to employment searching. Hence, people migrated from Nkonjeni to large cities such as Durban, Johannesburg, Kimberley, and Cape Town to find jobs. The prominent jobs on those days were mining industries for gold, coal and platinum.

Delius (2017:11) postulated that migration was purposefully implemented by colonial administrators in the 19th century as a part of the grand plan by the apartheid government to

suppress people of colour. Thus; this legacy suppressed the majority from accessing employment by depriving them of quality education by enforcing the law of job-reservation. No doubt, this history of suppression and oppression and its resultant and cascading effects will take years to dissipate as unemployment rates among blacks rise daily, given their disadvantaged circumstances of the past. In this community of Nkonjeni, most of the populace are illiterate, poor infrastructure such as poor network connection, poor internet sources and escalated rate of joblessness and dire dearth; and desperation often results in violence and criminal acts such as thefts.

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

In most people, employments served as the income generator for living. They are also vital for the intellectual wellbeing of individuals and for communal coherence in society, and to boost the economy (World Bank, 2012). Youth graduates who are still unemployed are detrimental to wealth. Pauw, Oosthuizen & Van der Westhuizen, 2006:10, postulated that “frustration and disillusionment among young people, while extended periods of unemployment may result in the erosion and outdating of young people’s skills base”.

Proprietors of factories and shops by foreigners like the Chinese and Pakistanis lead to disinvestment because investors fear investing in our unstable economy which leads to retrenchment and closure of factories, industries and mines. Foreigners plough up their profits into the countries of their origin which disadvantages the South African economy. Furthermore, foreigners who are illegally in the country, deprive SA citizens of finding jobs as they (foreigners) work for ‘slave wages’.

Most of them imported goods cheaply from home countries and they also run tuck-shops in townships which are convenient for locals due to close proximity, flexible credit facilities, and low prices. While this is beneficial in the short-term, they do not promote employment among youths who do not have start-up capital. Foreigners also played a huge part in contributing to the unemployment of youth graduates because some of the employers hired them on a contract basis for low salaries (IOL 2020).

Sen (1999) claims that youth unemployment rejects youth of the opportunities to fulfil their targets to live a meaningful life, adding that jobs from occasions can lead to further youth

exclusion from education chances which can actually keep them stuck in dearth while searching for jobs. I sought to investigate this phenomenon with the intention of creating or suggesting spaces which can be exploited to remedy the dire situation of youth graduates' unemployment given the vast speculations.

1.4 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Youth graduate redundancy was a worldwide dilemma destructively disturbing current and subsequent socio-wealthy, welfare and environments (Moleke, 2005).

Nevertheless, there appears to be no known a study research piloted in exploring the aspects underwriting to joblessness among graduate youths in rural areas such as Nkonjeni in Ulundi (KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa). This study intended to associate interruptions by potentially providing new knowledge that focuses specifically on the Nkonjeni rural area.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.5.1 Main Research Question

- What are the factors that contribute to unemployment among graduate youths at Nkonjeni?

1.5.2 Research Sub-questions

- What challenges do unemployed youth graduates encounter?
- Which daily survival strategies do jobless youth graduates employ?
- How do unemployed graduates attempt to find formal employment?
- How can unemployed youth graduates circumvent their challenges by creating self-employment opportunities in rural environments?

1.6 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The **aim** of this study was to explore the unemployed youth graduates' perceptions of strategies to promote youth employment.

The aim could be realised by pursuing the following **objectives**:

- To investigate jobless youth graduates' job-seeking behavior and encounters of without jobs.

- To understand the reasons for the unemployment of the youth graduates in rural settings.
- To determine whether jobless youth graduates realize the outcomes of their rejection from job opportunities, and how they plan to combat them.

1.7 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

1.7.1 Youth

The period of your life when you are young, or the state of being young from ages of 15-24 years (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). This study will be focused to the jobless youth who fulfilled the required qualifications from advanced educational institutions especially at a technical vocational college, University of Technology and in universities. Participants in this study fall under the above-named age group but from 18-35 years old.

1.7.2 Graduates

A person who is recognised by a university, college or university of technology as having completed the requirements of a degree or diploma studied at the institution (Wiktionary Dictionary, n.d.).

1.7.3 Unemployment

Unemployment refers to a situation when a person who is actively searching for employment is unable to find work (Investopedia, n.d.). In this study, it is a situation where people who can work but are without work, and are actively looking for a job (ILO, 2010).

Unemployed: People who aged between 18 - 64 who are without jobs but looking for work (World Bank, 2013:33).

Rural area: refers to an open swath of land that has few homes or other buildings and not very many people. Its population density is very low: 6-12+ (National Geographic Society, n.d.).

Village: In this study, it is a geographic area, smaller than a town or city (World Bank, 2020).

1.8 REFLEXIVITY

The research involved youth graduates from a rural village; the possibility of research bias was avoided by the researcher who remained unemotional to produce authentic findings corroborated via the review of literature on the subject which fostered objectivity. In addition, maximum interaction (e.g. they authenticated their responses via the cross-checking of transcriptions and audio-recordings) with the participants during the research process ensured reflexivity.

Furthermore, the process of probing for elaboration and clarity during the interviews conducted face-to-face with the participants was done to obtain authentically rich and in-depth data which enabled the researcher to access incisive information of lived-experiences that proved to be realistic and genuine.

1.9 OUTLINE OF THE CHAPTER

Chapter 1: Introduction and background

This first chapter provided an outline of the whole study such as rationale and significance. It stated the problem, questions, aim, and objectives of the research. Furthermore by a concise clarification of the main perceptions used of the study such as, the principle of reflexivity, and the structure of the dissertation.

Chapter 2: Literature review

The episode presented literature review connecting to the state of being jobless of youth graduates. Concerns relating to the topic such as joblessness in South Africa, and the social exclusion of jobless youth graduates, were dissected (Burger & Von Fintel, 2009:1). The chapter also elaborated on the three objectives of the study. This chapter also discussed frameworks used in study. The research project was underpinned by the Social Exclusion Theory; Capability Approach and Bronfenbrenner Theoretical Framework known as, (Ecological Systems Theory) served as the supporter because it enables the daily burdens of the jobless and their life experiences (Fouché & Delport, 2005).

Chapter 3: Research design and methodology

This chapter discussed how the data was being collected and evaluated by the researcher.

It further described the strategy that was used during research, identified target and sample of the population, explained the collection techniques of the data and described restrictions for

study before ending the chapter. The collected data was explored by the researcher, using the eight steps as suggested by Tesch (1990).

Chapter 4: Data presentation and analysis

This chapter summarised conclusions, outlined the biographical details of participants, revealed the topics and sub-topics that arose from study, and described allegations of joblessness. The findings of this study identified strategies that would counter graduate unemployment.

Chapter 5: Discussion of findings, recommendations and conclusions

This chapter bestowed the endings and suggestions emanating from main outcomes of this study. Endings were represented in alignment with aims, while recommendations emerged from endings and outcomes of the study.

1.10 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

The introduction and background of the study were provided. This explored the situation of graduate youth unemployment and the challenges thereof. The problem statement, rationale for the study, aim and objectives, concepts, research questions, the value of the study, chapter outline the summary were also presented.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The greatest noticeable indications of joblessness in South Africa is observing youth graduates congregate at employment agencies with CVs in hand waiting to accept any job on offer, while others begged passing motorists to hire them for any available piece-job (Harmse, Blaauw & Schenck, 2009). It is against this backdrop that the discussion on the relevant literature on the topic was aligned to the aim, the purposes, and the research questions of the study. The literature on unemployed youth graduates in general will be discussed at the international, national and provincial levels.

According to research done by Stellenbosch University (2019), the joblessness rate was 32.9 percentages in March 2019 for both sexes countrywide. For males it was 22.4 percentage, while for females it was 31, 4 percentage. Twelve years later, the rate of joblessness increased markedly especially among youth who have tertiary qualifications in different fields. In 2009, it was 26.5 percentages but currently (2021) it has accelerated to 34.4 percentage (Stats SA, 2021). The youth constituted 23 percentage of this 34.4 percentage. According to Stats SA (2021), this is the highest official rate recorded since the *Quarterly Labour Force Survey* started in 2008 when 7.8 million people were jobless. Recently, South Africa's unemployment figures ranked the worst in the world, amid the worsening Covid-19 pandemic and the rioting in July 2021 in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng provinces. These riots claimed the lives of 354 people and many businesses and shops were looted and vandalised, hence leading to further mass unemployment. The civil unrest occurred in South Africa's' KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng provinces from 9 July to 18 July 2021 sparked by the imprisonment of the former President Jacob Zuma for contempt of court, where total deaths was 342 and the arrested was 3407. The cost the country from these civil unrest was about 50 billion rand (\$3.3 billion) in loss and about 150 000 jobs were at risk because many shops and industries were burned and looted. South Africa lost damage was worth \$1.7 billion says state insurance company (Africa news Live TV, 2021)

According to the *Quarterly Labour Force Survey* of the 1st quarter of 2021, young people are still struggling to enter the South African labour market.

The official unemployment rate was 46.3 percentage among young people aged 24-34 years, implying that almost one in every two young individuals did not have a job in the first quarter of 2021 (QLFS,2021).

Unemployment is a serious problem in South Africa and affects the lives of a large proportion of potential employees in the country, even though we live in a new democratic country. Mike (1995) found that unemployment induces people, who would not otherwise become involved in criminal activities, to commit crimes because they spend much of their time idling or are under financial pressure or are frustrated and indignant. Indeed, the poor are frequently led to crime because of their relative deprivation and acute sense of want (Bangane, 1999). I have sense that as long as people remain in poverty and unemployed they will be vulnerable to criminal activities as stated by the above authors. This is supported by Tshabalala (2003) who stated that prisons are full of people who try to make money by committing crimes as the result of unemployment. Furthermore, “since the political transition in 1994, South Africa has witnessed the acceleration of its already high unemployment rate” (Burger & von Fintel, 2009:1).

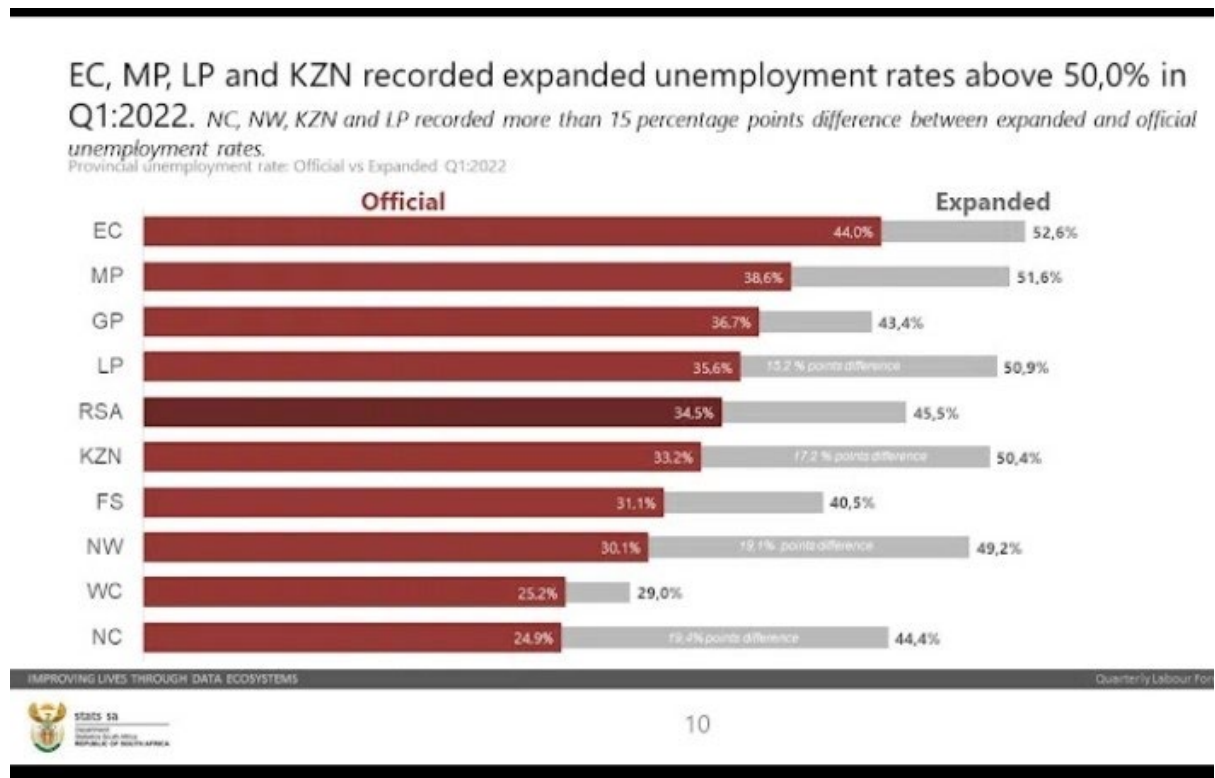
These six countries that have the highest unemployment rates in Africa. Those are South Africa, Nigeria, Lesotho, Gabon, Somalia and Tunisia. South Africa: According to Statistics South Africa, SA’s unemployment rate was 35, 30 percentages as of December 2021, served as the highest among all these countries. Followed by Nigeria: Latest report by Nigeria’s National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2021) said this West African country’s unemployment rate is at 33.3 percentages. The third country is, Lesotho: Figures from the International Labour Organisation has Lesotho’s unemployment rate a 24, 60 percentages. The fourth country is, Gabon: The unemployment in Gabon increased to 22, 30 percentages in December 2021. The fifth country is Somalia: According to The World Bank. Somalia’s unemployment rate is currently at 19, 8 percentage. The last country among the six is, Tunisia: According to Tunisia’s National Institute of Statistics, unemployment rate stood at 16, 10 percentages as of March 2022.

According to the latest Labour Force report of National Bureau of Statistics, unemployment among young Nigerians (15-34 years) is the highest in the country with 21, 72 million or 42, 5 percentage (QLFS, 2022). Ferreiro and Gomez (2018) noted that youth unemployment is caused by reduction in GPD growth rate.

In Lesotho, high rates of unemployment is caused by labour market deficiencies, undiversified markets and small private sector. Furthermore, the main challenges the country faces are poverty and health issues (World Bank, 2019). Gabon unemployment rate for 2020 was 20,74 percentages a 0,83 percentages increase from 2019. The high rate of unemployment among youth graduate is demand deficit during a recession (QLFS, 2021). Somalia unemployment, youth total was reported 34,91 percentages in 2020, while of the youth graduates was 19,8 percentages according to the World Bank (World Bank, 2020). Tunisia, as the sixth country has the lowest percentage among all of them of 16,10% of unemployment rate (National Institute of Statistics, 2022)

In South Africa, Eastern Cape served as the province with the highest unemployment rate in the first quarter (at 44,0 percentages), followed by Mpumalanga (at 38,6 percentages), followed by Gauteng (at 36,7 percentages), followed by Limpopo (at 35,6 percentages), then KwaZulu-Natal (at 33,2 percentages), then Free State (at 31,1 percentages), then North-West at (30,1 percentages). Western Cape and Northern Cape had both the lowest rate at 25,2 and 24,9 percentages respectively (QLFS, 2022). The unemployment rate increased in eight of the nine provinces in the third quarter compared with the second quarter (Stats SA, 2021). The Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated South Africa's labour market woes last year. Before the pandemic, the economy was already suffering from high levels of joblessness as problems such as Persistent cuts choked growth, contributing to poverty and inequality (QLFS, 2022). Four provinces had expanded recorded unemployment rates of above 50,0 percentages. Those provinces are Eastern Cape (52,6 percentages), Mpumalanga (51,6 percentages), Limpopo (50,9 percentages) and KwaZulu-Natal (50,4 percentages).

Figure 1: EC, MP, LP and KZN recorded expanded unemployment rates above 50, 0 percentages in Q1:2022



The ten highest unemployment rates in the world are (World Bank, 2021):

- Brazil:13,2%
- Spain:13,1%
- Greece:12,5%
- Turkey:11,2%
- Culombia:11,0%
- Argentina:8,5%
- Italy:8,1%
- Sweden;7,8%
- Urugay:7,7%
- France:7,2%

In some of the countries mentioned above such as Greece, Spain, Columbia and France, some of the causes of high rate of unemployment are: Greek youth unemployment was exacerbated by the 2008 Financial Crisis as well as the European Debt Crisis which hit Greece harder than many other countries in Europe.

The increase in segmentation of the labour market, the lack of effective employment policies and deficiencies in the education system have been cited as some of the principal reasons behind the significant level of youth unemployment in Spain (Wikipedia, n.d.).

While the 2008 economic crisis caused financial troubles in all European Union member states, impacting companies and banks, studies have showed that the young people without diplomas are some of the main causes of youth unemployment in France (Wikipedia, n.d.).

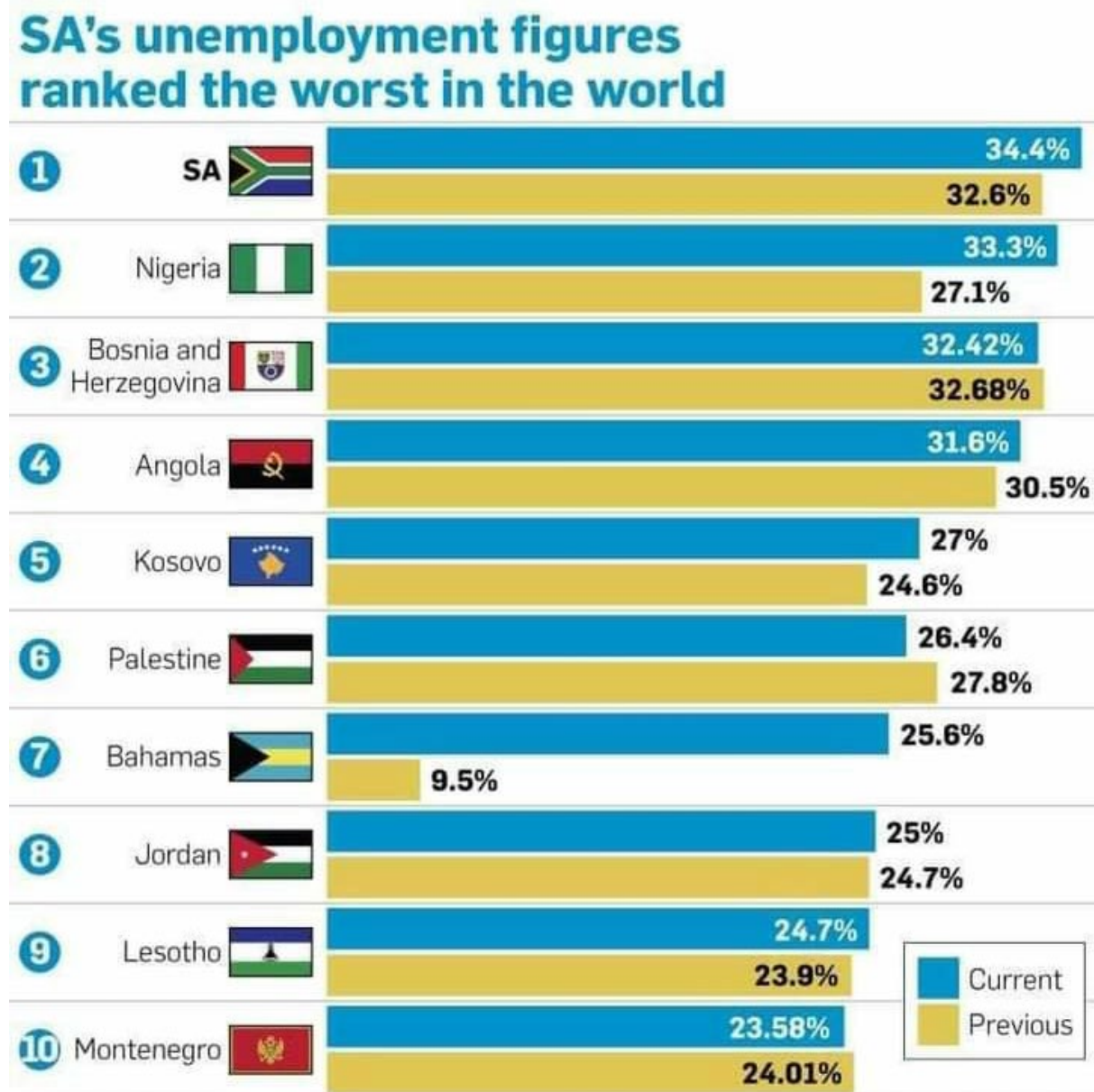
According to Lam, Leibrandt and Mlatsheni (2008) point out that South Africa is an important case study for youth unemployment, although research on youth unemployment in South Africa is new. According to Cochrane and West, youth and those with lower skill levels are most affected by the unemployment situation in South Africa. Harmse, Blaauw and Schenck (2009) believe that one of the most visible forms of unemployment in South Africa is seeing labourers standing day-to-day on road sides waiting for any job that might come their way.

The introduction of the Covid-19 Social Relief of Distress Grant (SRD) applications by this age group as at 11 August 2021 highlighted that the high rate of unemployment among youth caused them to apply for this R350 grant. There were more than 5 million such applicants in the age group 25-29 (Stats SA, 2021). Moreover, the total percentage of jobless youth rate was 40.3 percentages for those aged 15-24, and 15.5 percentage among those aged 25-34 years (Stats SA, 2020). Furthermore Stats SA (2020) revealed that of those expected to work during lockdown, 91 percentages continued to receive part salaries and 12.8% received their full salaries during the second quarter of 2020. Regarding graduates in this age group, the unemployment rate was 33.1 percentages during this period compared to 24, 6 percentages in the 4th quarter of 2019 (QFLS, 2019).

Graduate youth unemployment is a growing global phenomenon that is negatively affecting their present and future social-economic wellbeing (Moleke, 2005). Annamária (2013:183) argues that “If an increasing part of the new generation begins its adult life with the feeling of being unnecessary and having no chance to integrate into the mainstream society, the future will be burdened with more and more inexperienced and disappointed people with all the consequences of this.” This emphasises the need for exploration of challenges of young unemployed graduates at Nkonjeni, in Zululand Municipality, of the factors contributing to their unemployment so that ways to promote their employment can be found.

South Africa ranked number 1 worldwide; with the highest rate of unemployed people including youth graduates. See the enclosed figure that contains the rate of unemployment worldwide in Figure 2.

Figure 2: SA’s unemployment figures ranked worst in the world (Trading Economics)



Source: Trading Economics

THEUNS KRUGER, Graphics24

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study aimed to examine the challenges of unemployed rural youth graduates who reside in the Nkonjeni village in the Zululand District.

With this intention in mind, I decided to employ three suitable theories which will complement and synchronise with each other in order to dissect participants' responses incisively. This section discusses the three theories that support the aim, objectives, and answers the research questions – they are the Social Exclusion Theory; Bronfenbrenner and the Capability Approach; however, the Social Exclusion Theory is the main theory that underpins this study.

2.2.1 SOCIAL EXCLUSION THEORY

The term itself was first coined in France in the mid-1970s by Red Lenoir, Secretary of State of Social Action, but it was not until the 1980s that social exclusion began to receive widespread use in that country (Silver, 1994). It is the process by which the poor lack benefits, facilities and equal opportunities that the others enjoy. Overall, social exclusion describes a state in which individuals are unable to participate fully in economic, social, political, and cultural life, as well as the process leading to and sustaining such a state.

Social Exclusion Theory is a multidimensional process of progressive social rupture, detaching groups and individuals from social relations and institutions and preventing them from full participation in the normal, normatively prescribed activities of the society in which they live. It occurs where particular groups are excluded by mainstream society from fully participating in economic, social and political life. It involves the lack of denial of resources, rights, goods and services, and the inability to participate in the normal relationships and activities available to the majority of people in a society, whether in economic, social, cultural or political areas (Wikipedia, n.d.).

According to Guildford (2000), social exclusion can be caused and can also be caused by social problems in society, like a lack of education, a lack of health services, and unemployment because of the multidimensional nature of social exclusion, Haralambos and Holborn (2008) argue that addressing social problems in society should take a multidimensional route. For example, lack of education among female youth may result not only from lack of schools, but also from poor health, society cultural norms, and other factors that should be recognised and addressed to solve the problem. Sen (2000) further argues that exclusion can happen unintentionally (passive exclusion), for example, due to slow economic growth, while at times it can be intentional (active exclusion), for example, due to a certain policy being enforced.

Sen (2000) also argues that, both passive and active exclusion in society are routes to capability failure and poverty that certain people experience. According to Sen (2000), Social Exclusion

Theory is helpful in building an inclusive society because it gives a better understanding of the diverse phenomena of deprivation and poverty, with a particular focus on relational obstacles to social inclusion, and offers the policy implications of that understanding.

Peace (2001:16) views “Social Exclusion as a contested term. Not only is it used to refer to a wide range of phenomena and processes related to poverty, deprivation and hardship, but it is also used in relation to a wide range of categories of excluded people and places of exclusion”. Furthermore, according to Room (1995), Social Exclusion can be viewed as a dynamic multidimensional process where various deficits reinforce each other. In this study’s framework, joblessness is considered one of the vital risk factors for social exclusion. As such, the Social Exclusion Theory pertains to individuals who are blocked from (or denied full access) to various rights, opportunities, and resources that are normally available to members of a different group. As such, the Social Exclusion Theory pertains to individuals who are hindered from privileges of getting a job. These opportunities are fundamental to social integration and adherence to human rights within societies.

Additionally, the Social Exclusion Theory assists in dissecting both the arrangements and the vigorous procedures of not being equal among groups in society, including the unemployment of youth graduates. Over time, Social Exclusion creates a feeling of hopelessness and negativity concerning the individual experiencing it, which cascades into the community (Toye & Infanti, 2004). Since Social Exclusion Theory involved “being shut out from any of the social, economic, political and cultural systems which determine the social integration of a person in society” affected individuals, especially the youth, develop a sense of helplessness which may lead to social exclusion and its related negative consequences (Walker & Walker, 1997:8).

Social Exclusion Theory describes a situation where not everyone has equal access to the opportunities and services that allow them to lead a decent happy life. In this theory, every person has certain rights that should prevent these blackouts (Day, 2021).

In sum, the Social Exclusion Theory promotes the understanding of rejections whereby youth who are qualified to obtain jobs are being hindered from getting employment opportunities, outlines the outcomes of this rejection, and creates awareness of how the policy allegations can be implemented.

2.2.2 CAPABILITY APPROACH

The Capability Approach was first pioneered by philosopher and Nobel Prize winner in economics, Amartya Sen (1999:36). He described development “as a process of expanding the real freedom that people enjoy” adding that freedom is both the "primary end and... the principal means of development" where it is the space in which the achievement of development should be evaluated and judged. Capability Approach served as a moral framework. It proposed that social arrangement should be evaluated primarily according to the extent of freedom people have to promote as well as achieving functions they value. It claims that freedom to achieve wellbeing is a matter of what people can do and be.

Robeyns (2006:353) states that:

The core claim of the Capability Approach is that assessments of the wellbeing or quality of the life of a person, and judgements about equality or justice, or the level of development of a community or country, should not primarily focus on resources, or on people’s mental states, but on the effective opportunities that people have to lead the lives they have reason to value. The core concepts in the Capability Approach are a person’s functioning’s, which are [one’s] beings and doings (for example, being well-fed or literate), and [one’s] capabilities, which are the genuine opportunities or freedoms to realise these functioning’s.

In other words, Capability Approach is seen as a hypothetical framework whereby two normative claims entail: first, the freedoms to be achieved, and then the second, primary moral importance; should be understood in terms of people’s capabilities and how they function. In this study, the Capability Approach served as a supporting framework because when youths are denied opportunity to access employment, but also from accessing educational opportunities which results in being plunged deeper into the quagmire cycle of poverty.

The Capability Approach principles as espoused by Sen (1999) support the concept of human development and wellbeing, where youth tried by their all means to apply for any advertised posts they came across in the development of their own future.

Furthermore, I espoused this approach as an additional framework to my study because the human rights of the unemployed graduates are violated especially after working so hard in spite of adversities to obtain their degrees or diplomas (Sen, 1999). The Capability Approach focuses

on talents that were given to people, as contradicted to what they have, or how their emotions are. Sen (2009:253) maintains that, in analysing wellbeing, we should shift our focus from “the means of living”, such as for rewards, to the “actual opportunities a person has”, namely their functioning’s and capabilities. Performances refer to the various objectives that a person achieves in “doing or being”.

Sen (1999) contends that youth joblessness forbids these qualified young people to represent what they did in their higher education. Hence, the Capability Approach which was adopted in this study in conjunction with the Social Exclusion Theory to promote a deeper and rich perceptive of the causes of youth graduate joblessness.

2.2.3 BRONFENBRENNER THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Ecological System Theory was developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1995).It focused on the quality and context of the child’s environment. He stated that as a child develops, the interaction within these environments becomes more complex. This complexity can arise as the child’s physical and cognitive structures grow and mature.

The systems and types of social interactions in our environments that we as human beings find ourselves in shape our ways of life, our opportunities and our abilities (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). Bronfenbrenner’s (1989) argument is that answers to solving social problems in our societies lie in the systems and structures that shape our daily interactions, our capabilities, and the freedoms that we enjoy. Government policy and management practices of the government of a country could be referred to here as the systems and the social interactions that shape our ways of life, and access to opportunities like employment.

The Bronfenbrenner Theoretical Framework is also known as Ecological System Theory. It focuses on the quality and context of the child’s’ environment. He believed that a person’s development was affected by everything in their surrounding environment.

He divided the person’s environment into five different levels: the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, the macrosystem and the chronosystem. In this study, the youth graduates from rural areas are affected from their immediate environment of being unemployed

2.3 YOUTH AND UNEMPLOYMENT

2.3.1 Youth Unemployment: A Global Perspective

Youth unemployment is a well-known global phenomenon that harms communities and individuals in both industrialised and emerging countries. While youth from different countries face the dire challenge of unemployment, more serious problems are found in developing countries, especially in rural villages. In an analysis of current evidence concerning sub-Saharan Africa, we note that 30 million youths face unemployment. Further, the youth graduate unemployment rate increased in 2019. Youths aged between 24 and 34 are the most susceptible in the South African labour market as revealed in the unemployment rate of this age group which was 55.2 percentages in the 1st quarter of 2019 (Stats SA, 2019).

Among graduates in this age group, the unemployment rate was 31.0 percentages during this period compared to 19.5percentage in the quarter of 2018 an increase of 11.4 percentage points quarter-on-quarter (Stats SA, 2019). In the 1st quarter of 2019, the youth unemployment rate rose to 39.6 percentages. This is an increase of 9.6 percentages indicating that the youth still find it difficult to secure jobs in South Africa. The unemployment rate for graduates according to the 2019 QLFS is about 2.1 percentages which reflects unemployment levels across all ages and not just those of recent graduates. South Africa's population is estimated to be 58.78 million, of which approximately 17.8 million are between the age of 18 and 34, most of whom are unemployed (Stats SA, 2019).

2.3.2 Unemployment in South Africa: Post-1994

Unemployment is defined as a “state in which people who can work are without jobs and are seeking for pay or profit” (Adebayo, 1999:185). “Since the political transition in 1994, South Africa has witnessed the acceleration of its already high unemployment rate” which has its roots in the legacy of being disadvantaged by apartheid policies (Burger & Von Fintel, 2009:1).

This situation has cascaded into mass unemployment of the black population who were robbed of equal education opportunities in the previous dispensation. When looking at the state of South Africa's employment rate post-apartheid, Carmody (2002:256) asserts that “despite the elimination of international sanctions since 1996 when neo-liberal economic reforms were introduced, more than a half a million jobs have been lost, in contrast to the 6 million jobs that were meant to be created”.

The present democratic dispensation struggled to emerge from the quagmire of past injustices that affect the present, but mismanagement and corruption exacerbated the already precarious job situation. Moreover, several companies and industries were liquidated due to the years of

stagnation followed in many people becoming jobless. South Africa's unemployment figures, especially among youth graduates, ranked the worst in the world. The Covid-19 pandemic that affected the world from March 2020 resulted in lockdown levels that affected the employed as well as the employment-seeking citizens (Carmody, 2002).

Many jobs were lost when certain companies that closed immediately after the 1994 democratic, reopened under altered names with new requirements for new employees; some were offered jobs on a contract basis, and permanent posts were rare. The advancement of technology and the arrival of the 4IR (Fourth Industrial Revolution), introduced Zoom and robotics which replaced humans with automated systems which led to the decline in employing unskilled youth graduates in South Africa. The requirements of more than 5 years' experience in scientific skills thus denying 'unqualified' graduates (Kingdon & Knight, 2005; Koller, 2005).

Most jobless youth are reluctant to be self-employed as they prefer to depend on a steady income without the intricacies and risk of running a business. Some do not seek employment as they will jeopardise the receipt of government child grants which will be concluded or should they derive a pay from any other source. (Koller, 2005). Furthermore, SA educational curriculum is not geared to prepare students with relevant skills for the demands of the 'new' labour market (Nattrass, 2003). In addition, labour unrest involved demands for increased wages which could not keep many companies in a profit-oriented sustainable position thus resulting in a decline in recruiting new employees. In KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) poverty-stricken conditions prevail unabated with authorities turning a blind eye.

The lack of household incomes endangers sustainable livelihoods. Poverty has enormously affected KwaZulu-Natal, particular at Nkonjeni and other rural villages' citizens who now resort to prostitution, corruption, child-trafficking, femicide and murder (Bacus, 2013; Draper et al., 2006).

In a study by Nel and Neale-Shutte (2013) they agreed that the field of study maybe a reason for unemployment. On career choice, Alesina, Danninger and Rostagno (1999) also argued that educational and attitudinal choices are tilted toward the public sector in countries where public jobs are much more attractive and available than private sector jobs. This suggests that attractiveness and availability of job opportunities for a specific career also influences choice of a career. Other literature, Bernstein (2010); Rankin, Simkins, Rule, Trope and Bernstein

(2007); and Wittenberg (2002), also identify networking as the most effective job searching strategy.

In addition, dearth resulted in school drop-outs as they cannot afford uniform, stationery, transport, school-fees, and other school expenses And those who do attend school regularly are demotivated (Bacus, 2013). Additionally, child-labour abuse is escalating at an alarming rate. Many school children leave school to find piece-jobs (especially on farms or worked as domestic workers. Furthermore, teenage pregnancies not only contribute to overpopulation and increased levels of poverty, but also to increased reliance on government grants.

An increasing number of young girls at their adolescent stage are falling pregnant, thus putting more pressure on the struggling parents (Fedderke, & Luiz, 2008). Maduna et al. (2013) add self-destructing habits, supposedly meant for coping with stress and depression, but depletes income resources and creates a world of fantasy.

2.4 EFFECTS OF UNEMPLOYMENT

Joblessness regarded as “the great tsunami of the economy that goes lurching on and people are caught up in tidal wave” (Kew, 2001:73). It affects individuals, families, as well as the community at many levels.

2.4.1 Effects of Unemployment on Individuals

Individuals who are unemployed generally display a variety of emotions: anger, sadness, trauma, anxiety, confusion and stress (Cullen, 1999; Warr, 1997).

This may lead to further adverse conditions such as boredom, decreased zest for life and all psychological problems (Cullen, 1999; De Witte et al., 2012).

2.4.2 Unemployment and Socio-economic Hardships

Joblessness, can led to disastrous consequences on one’s commercial and social wellbeing, ultimately leading to economic hardships, and failure to provide for the immediate needs of the family. This disrupts family life and often leads to breakups (Fryer 1997).

The loss of earnings affects individuals as they become the targets of labelling (loafers, shirkers, and useless individuals etc.)

2.5 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS

Republic of South Africa identified youth joblessness as one of the most serious difficulties young people encountered due to the lack of economic growth and the resultant inadequate job opportunities. The demographic information from the Zululand District Municipality (KZN 226) for 2016 revealed that the unemployed youth graduates aged between 21 and 34 years was 51.2 percentages. Within this District, the Ulundi Local Municipality where the study was conducted (Nkonjeni) reported a joblessness rate of 56% in the last quarter of 2020 (Stats SA, 2020). This also showed that even in rural areas the rate of unemployment among youth graduates is unacceptably high.

The SA government reports challenges pertaining to intervention to promote youth unemployment is stumbling block which is compounded by government officials embezzling funds which are supposed to be used to support projects that create jobs.

2.6 GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES AND INTERVENTIONS

The SA initiated programme plans such as in-service training, learnership and internships to help the unemployed youth with skills and service experience needed for job market. Under the auspices of this programme, youths are required to apply for internships and learnership which will entail securing contracts from twelve months to thirty-six months. The government aims to provide relevant work experience to youths to improve their chances of employability. Government policy provides a system in which citizens are able to access and make use of opportunities that enable citizens to develop as individuals or as a society (Bronfenbrenner, 1989).

In this case, the Government of Republic of South Africa through several legal instruments takes the responsibility of providing educational skills and employment opportunities to citizens which included all the participants in this study. Sen (2000) further argues that exclusion in society can happen unintentionally (passive exclusion), for example, due to slow economic growth, while at times it can be intentional (active exclusion), for example, due to a certain policy being enforced. This means policy monitoring and programme evaluation would help provide more and better-quality jobs for young people.

2.6.1 Government Initiatives to Combat Youth Unemployment

In the first quarter of 2022, Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), revealed that the unemployment rate increased to 63, 9 percentages for people aged 15-24 years old. On the other hand,

unemployment stood at 42, 1 percentage for the 25-34 age group, prompting government to find ways to combat youth unemployment. The youth has been urged by Minister in the Presidency Mondli Gungubele to take advantage of the government to develop and launch their own business. The government has made provisions through presidential youth employment intervention programmes like Youth Employment Stimulus and the Social Employment Fund to ensure that youth-owned businesses thrive. In a statement, Gungubele said: “Since its launch in October 2020, the first two phases of the Presidential Employment Stimulus programme supported over 850 000 work opportunities, with 84 percentages of the participants being young people.”

The youth have been encouraged to explore other opportunities that are available through the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), and the Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator. More than 1100 youth-owned businesses in the township and rural economies are estimated to have received grant support from the NYDA. According to the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS); this very same group of participants will also be recruited for the revitalised National Youth Service. “The youth- owned enterprises, supported through the Youth Micro Enterprise Relief Fund and the NYDA Grant Funding programme, have collectively created and sustained 8600 jobs in the economy,”the GCIS statement read. It has been reported that 50 000 participants have been recruited in community safety, food and nutrition, digital inclusion, sports, arts, and recreation for a programme currently in the pipeline. More job opportunities for the unemployed will continue to be created through these programmes.

2.7 REASONS FOR UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG YOUTH GRADUATES

Another prevailing obstacle to obtaining employment is that youth graduates lack work experience. As such, tertiary institutions should create more Work Integrated Learning (WIL) opportunities to produce students who are employable because they have been exposed to practical work environments where they acquired basic skills in their specific fields. “The shape and pace of entrepreneurship in the emerging economies is significantly determined, adding that “for newly forming organizations, the institutional environment defines, creates, and limits entrepreneurial opportunities” (Manolova, Eunni and Gyoshev 2008:205).

2.8 CONSEQUENCES OF YOUTH EXCLUSION FROM EMPLOYMENT

“If an increasing part of the new generation begins its adult life with the feeling of being unnecessary and having no chance to integrate into the mainstream society, the future will be burdened with more and more inexperienced and disappointed people with all the consequences of this”. Annamária (2013:183)

Evidently, there are sombre results regarding youth joblessness. The unemployment and sluggishness of youth lead to unfavourable mental, societal, job-related and economic problems. Lastly, the advent of the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR) has resulted in the loss of millions of jobs globally; for example, technologies in the form of robotics replace human beings.

2.9 WAYS TO PROMOTE THE YOUTH GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT

Bronfenbrenner’s theoretical framework, namely the Ecological Systems Theory of human development and association, was appropriate to this study because it looks at individuals in their environment.

Accordingly, during contact sessions with my participants (co-researchers) I had to consider each one as an individual - someone who is unique who has a variety of skills and possesses a bank of previous knowledge. While designing instruments (e.g. questionnaires) for data collection, the theory guided me since it indicated how to look at individuals in their particular environment. So in this study, it was possible to use available instruments in our rural environment.

During data analysis, the researcher had to fully understand the individual participant, as according to Bronfenbrenner (1989), people are both producers and products of their lived-experiences in their environment. People do not live in isolation but rather within multifaceted social structures that contain the social networks and traditions.

I employed the Ecological Systems Theory to enhance this study’s authenticity and effectiveness while being focused on the rural environment where the participants belong to a multifaceted structure. Although the participants are unemployed, they are educated and are looking for jobs, despite living in a rural area which is poverty-stricken, underdeveloped, and lacks basic resources.

2.10 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

Emanating from the discussions in this chapter, especially on strategy, philosophies agreement has been reached that a serious dilemma of youth graduate joblessness exists in South Africa, particularly at Nkonjeni where the study was conducted with local people. Republic of South Africa has one the highest rates (27.60 percentages) of people without jobs in the world (ILO, 2019). Although literature provides possible intercessions on this issue of joblessness, current statistics (Stats, 2021) prove that the situation is worsening largely as a result of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) failing to provide programmes that promote youth employability; and this is exacerbated by government mismanagement.

This chapter also focused expressly on the theories, approach, and literature on youth graduate unemployment which highlights the phenomenon that exists at Nkonjeni rural village. The Social Exclusion Theory supported by the Capability Approach and Ecological Systems, underpinned this study. These frameworks dissect the phenomenon which involved a number of aspects at both the individual and his or her personal life in the society, particularly in rural villages. These theoretical philosophies promote the implementation of strategies to accelerate interventions that may minimise the problem under investigation.

The next chapter (3) discusses the methodology applied to elicit data from the selected participants.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

To attain the major objective of this study, which was to explore the challenges of jobless youth graduates at Nkonjeni in the Zululand District, it also involved the issues that arise from the state of being joblessness. This chapter discussed how the data was collected, analysed and interpreted by the researcher. Further, it explained the espoused research design. It also explained how the participants were selected. It further shows the path through which researchers formulate their problem and objective and present their result from data obtained during the study period. It elaborated how procedures were followed and maintained when the data was collected. Also what type of tools was used to collect the data? Lastly how the data was being analysed. The restrictions of the study, was also explained and discussed before concluding the chapter.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

This study espoused qualitative approach, which was exploratory from an epistemological position based on an interpretivist principle to deem the aim, objectives and research questions. Research approaches plans and the procedures for research that span the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection. A qualitative research approach was explained as:

“The study of people as they go about their daily lives. It tries to understand how people live, how they talk and behave. It strives to understand the meaning people’s words and behaviours have for them (Tutty, Rothery & Grinnel, 1996:4).”

This approach assisted the researcher to gain a deep insight into how jobless youth graduates view themselves when they possessed qualifications of such as humanities and engineering but still on burden of being jobless at Nkonjeni in the Zululand District (Engel & Schutt, 2010).

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is a plan to answer the research questions intended to provide an appropriate framework for a study. It is intended to provide an appropriate framework for a study. It focused on what type of study is planned and what kinds of results are expected from the research. The researcher interpreted the difficult incidents that jobless youth graduates encounter on their daily routines, how do participants manage and cope in their status of being jobless. In this situation, the researcher should be in an unprejudiced mind in order to classify dangerous topics as they appeared during the processes of interview involving the participants (De Vos & Fouché, 2005). I, the researcher adopted a case study because my title: An exploration of the perceptions of unemployed rural youth graduates: A case of the Nkonjeni village in the Zululand District. In this study, for example, a group of individuals had been watched over an extended period of time to observe the progression of a particular event or scenario. Youth graduates had been waited for more than four years to get employment.

A case study is an in-depth study of one person, group or event. In this study, a group of unemployed qualified youth graduates from Nkonjeni rural village were randomly selected to fulfil the research questions. In a case study, nearly every aspect of the subject's life and history is analysed to seek patterns and causes of behaviour. The researcher chose Nkonjeni because, this is a rural village outside the outskirts of Ulundi with the highest rate of youth graduates being unemployed, to analyse the behaviour of the jobless graduates. I employed the case study in this study to emphasise the topic title of the study: "An exploration of the perceptions of unemployed rural youth graduates: A case of the Nkonjeni village in Zululand District." Now the new title topic has been adopted to suit the use of pseudonyms to: "An exploration of the challenges of unemployed rural graduate in a district in KwaZulu-Natal."

Case study is a popular approach that allows researchers to develop and present an in-depth view of a particular situation, event or entity (Rule & John, 2011)

The researcher adopted a case study because it has both strengths and weaknesses. The strengths of a case study are:

- Allow researchers to collect a great deal of information.
- Give researchers the chance to collect information on rare or unusual cases.
- Allow researchers to develop hypotheses that can be explored in experimental research.

The weaknesses of a case study are:

- Cannot necessarily be generalized to the larger population.

- Cannot demonstrate cause and effect.
- May not be scientifically rigorous.
- Can lead to bias.

The researcher adopted the case study to explore a unique or recent discovered phenomenon. The insights gained from such research can then help researchers to develop additional ideas and study questions that might then be explored in future studies. In this study, the researcher adopted explanatory case studies. These are often used to do causal investigations. In other words, researchers are interested in looking at factors that may have actually caused certain things to occur. The researcher adopted qualitative case study because it is research methodology that help in exploration of a phenomenon within some particular context through various data sources, and it undertakes the exploration through variety of lenses in order to reveal multiple facets of the phenomenon (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

3.4 RESEARCH POPULATION

Nkonjeni, rural village where the study was conducted is also where all of the participants reside. Nkonjeni is a rural village and it must be regarded as poor area with poor infrastructure such as gravel roads, water and electricity. It served as the researcher's place of birth and residence. The place falls under Zululand District. All the participants were born resided at Nkonjeni for more than ten years. This rural area was selected because in this community, youth are jobless (News Report, 2018).

All the participants were born at Nkonjeni and fulfilled the aim and objectives of this study. All these Nkonjeni graduates had qualifications from tertiary institutions in the faculties of the humanities, engineering, and arts studies from HEIs such as TVET colleges, universities of technology, and traditional universities in South Africa. There was no official data base available to evaluate the statistics concerning this population in the community of Nkonjeni.

3.4.1 Sampling Method

The study adopted a qualitative research approach; where the sample was drawn from the populace using a non-probability sampling method (Strydom2005). Sampling is one of the most important aspects of research design. In a research context, sampling refers to the process of

selecting a subset of items from a defined population for inclusion to the study. Emanating from the non-probability sampling method, both the purposive sampling and snowball sampling which were considered to be appropriate. Purposive sampling is the most appropriate and familiar because it is where the researcher chooses the most suitable qualified participants to respond to the questions given by providing the correct answers (Marshall, 1996). All of the above will enable the researcher to get in order to collect valuable and eloquent data.

3.4.2 Selection Process

Since the researcher is from the rural area, she approached the Traditional Authority to explain the purpose, requirements and details of this study. In addition, consent to conduct the study was granted under the leadership of INkosi and iziNduna. Hence, the researcher was assisted by some of the traditional leaders in organising the gatherings so that the researcher must address the members of the society explaining about the purpose of the study.

The researcher together with traditional leaders helped in identifying jobless youth graduates in community. The sample for twenty (20) residents from Nkonjeni less than 35 years of age with suitable qualifications was selected. Due to the fact that my study was conducted during a Covid-19 crisis (as from March, 2020), I was obliged to follow the protocols of Covid 19. When I tried to conduct interviews some were not around Nkonjeni rural place because of the lockdown, which was then by Level 5. When the country went back to Level 3 lockdown, I only managed to get only six participants out of twenty who qualified to participate. Communication was through cell phone, the researcher was able to introduce the purpose and details of the study. The researcher further re-assured to participants that to participate is free no compensation, meaning it is voluntarily. After approval of the selection of the twenty participants, questionnaires were disseminated to them. Convenient scheduled dates for the interviews were unanimously agreed upon.

Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 lockdown protocols, interviews were rescheduled to other convenient dates. During these face-to-face interviews, precautions regarding Covid-19 were maintained: sanitising of hands, scanning of temperature, wearing of masks, social distancing, no sharing of equipment such as pens, no hugging and shaking of hands, and the interview time was curtailed due to restrictions on social gatherings.

3.4.3 Selection Criteria

During the meeting that was held on a day after approval from the Traditional Authority, I met hundreds of unemployed youths of different ages and education levels. This occurred while I was addressing the potential participants on details of my study emphasising that only youths possessing degrees or diplomas or certificates were suitable for this research project. After this announcement only twenty youth graduates remained behind. I used a questionnaire for selection purposes. Eventually, only six participants were chosen.

The selection criteria for jobless youth graduates were:

- They must be Nkonjeni residents for at least 5 years, and possess South African citizenship.
- They must be youth graduates aged between 20 and 35 years with a tertiary qualification in the humanities, engineering or arts.
- A gender-balance sample was preferred, thus three males and three females were randomly selected.
- They must participate free without any payment.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION

Data collection was being defined as “a series of interrelated activities aimed at gathering good information to answer emerging research questions” Creswell (1998:111). In this study two data collection instruments were used such as: Semi-structured interviews and questionnaires

3.5.1 Semi-structured Interviews

A semi-structured interview is a data collection method that involves asking participants a set of open-ended questions and following them up with probe questions to explore further their response and topic of interest. According to Creswell, W. & Creswell J. (2019), the total number of questions should be between five to ten.

It allows the participants the freedom to express their views in their own terms. The researcher adopted this type of interview because it was fairly reliable and easy to analyse, large of amount of detail generated and also fairly flexible and sensitive. The steps needed to prepare for and conduct a semi-structure interview:

1. Determine objective and scope of study.

2. Design the interview questions, ensure that questions are open-ended, simple, and concise, and be mindful of word choice, especially if the topic is sensitive in this study, which involves unemployment. However, if the target group is small, you can interview all the respondents.

3. Identify the target group(s) for the semi-structured interview.

4. Determine how, when, and where you intend to conduct the interview. In this study, researcher was having a challenge to observe all Covid protocols and seek for a favourable place and dates with low levels such as Level 2. In this study, dates were rescheduled to comply with Covid rules. Once done, get the participants consent and notify them ahead of the interview date.

5. Conduct your interviews.

When conducting a face-to-face interview, researcher should listen attentively to the respondents and pay attention to non-verbal cues like gestures, changes in voice, body language, and more. In addition, researcher should try her best to be non-judgemental, emphatic, and friendly throughout the interview.

6. Transcribe the audio or videos from semi-structured interviews.

After conducting interviews, you may need transcripts of your audio files in order to analyse and find insights.

How to get research interviews transcribed:

- Use automatic transcription service.
- Use YouTube transcripts.
- Listen on 2x speed and take notes.
- Transcribe it yourself.
- Try Delve, Transcript Analysis Software.

7. Code the data

8. Analyse the data

9. Present the results as a research paper or report.

During face-to-face interviews, only the researcher and the participant were allowed to a favourable place to maintain confidentiality of information. This ensured that discussions were focused without any interruptions from anyone. The advantages of these interviews helped the researcher to acquire the relevant information that enables her to collect data and to discover the circumstances they go through on daily experiences and their perceptions (De Vos & Fouché, 2005; Babbie & Mouton, 2001). However, face-to-face method was costly in transport and time consuming.

Schedule for interviews was drafted and drawn to address the four research objectives. This acted as a guide to elicit in-depth discussions around various themes that the researcher wished to address with the participants. A semi-structured interview schedule is a model for collecting comprehensive and comparable data (Appendix 2) Greeff (2005).

The language used during the interview schedule is just simple and understandable. The language used was simple English. The commanding questions were avoided so as not to distort the data. The interview schedule questions were flexible to provide a room for expansion by participants. The interview schedule began whereby the researcher introduced herself to participants and outlined the aim and objectives of the study. It included aspects such as ethics regarding voluntary participation, issues of confidentiality, permission to use a digital recorder, informed consent, access to the research findings, and the length of the interview. This information helped the participants prepare for the interview, to feel secure after knowing that their information would be kept confidential, and to generally know their role during the interview.

Questions from the similar objective were gathered together so as to capture and understand the themes, categories, and sub-categories that were emerging from the data for each research objective. Probing for more information during the interviews was also encouraged.

Lastly, the interview schedule outlined the gratefulness of the researcher for participants' contribution in the study, guarantee of confidentiality of the information they shared, and it gave participants a chance to provide feedback on their views and experiences of the research interview. The questions posed in the conclusion part, the researcher was able to gather additional important information about the study that could have been omitted during the conducting of the interviews.

The benefits of using semi-structured interviews are:

- Researchers can prepare ahead questions.
- Allow the interviewer to be prepared and appear competent during the interview.
- Allow informants the freedom to express their views in their own terms.
- Can provide reliable, comparable qualitative data.

The participants signed consent, and then a digital recorder (cell phone) was used to record the interviews process. During interviews, all the participants seemed comfortable with being recorded; hence, no interruptions were allowed which ensured elicitation of expansive, rich, and authentic data (Opdenakker, 2006).

3.5.2 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a very convenient way of collecting information from a large number of people within a period of time. Hence the design of the questionnaire is of utmost importance to ensure accurate data is collected so that the results are interpretable and generalise able (Wikipedia, n.d.). It is a list of questions or items used to gather data from respondents about their attitudes, experiences, or opinions (Appendix 3). It is a research instrument that consists of a set of questions or other types of prompts that aims to collect information from participants. It is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions for the purpose of gathering information from respondents (blog.hubspot.com). It served as research tool used to conduct surveys. These instruments include either written or oral questions or compromise an interview-style format. The researcher adopted questionnaire to enhance “study authenticity and effectiveness of the challenges and perceptions youth from ruralareas perceive.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis summarises collected data. It involves the interpretation of data gathered through the use of analytical and logical reasoning to determine patterns, relationships or trends. In this study, researcher used qualitative data analysis techniques. It helps the researchers’ straightforwardly interpret the data so that researchers do not leave anything out that could help them derive insights from it.

The collected data was by using the eight steps suggested by Tesch (1990):

Step 1: The researcher ought to read the entire transcript carefully to obtain a sense of the whole and jot down some ideas.

Step 2: The researcher selects one case, asks “what is this about?” and thinks about the underlying meaning in the information. The researcher’s thoughts can be written in the margin.

Step 3: A list is made of all themes or topics. Similar themes or topics are clustered together.

Step 4: The researcher applies the list of themes or topics to the data. The themes or topics are abbreviated as codes, which are written next to the appropriate segments of the transcripts. The researcher tries out this preliminary organising scheme to see whether new categories and codes emerge.

Step 5: The researcher finds the most descriptive wording for the themes or topics and categorises them. Lines are drawn between categories to show the relationships.

Step 6: The researcher finds the most makes a final decision on the abbreviation for each category and alphabetises the codes.

Step 7: The data material belonging to each category is assembled and a preliminary analysis is performed.

Step 8: The researcher recodes existing material if necessary.

In this study, researcher used qualitative methodological, where data are analysed by themes from descriptions by informants and also data are reported in the language of the informants. In this study, data was analysed inductively. Inductively data analysis allowed flexibility, attends closely to context and supports the generation of new theory. This study is an exploratory research that is considered to be inductive and qualitative (Stebbins, 2001).

An inductive approach authenticated the research to collect data that is relevant to the topic of interest. Once a substantial amount of data has been collected the researcher will then take a breather from collection, stepping back to get a bird’s eye view of the data.

3.7 DATA VERIFICATION

The trustworthiness of qualitative research is established on a set of criteria: transferability, credibility, confirmability, dependability (Lincoln & Guba 1985).

Transferability: Means to simplify the outcomes of the study to the overall populace, this study sample is six (6) participants, their personal experiences are based as an individual; the judgements should not be simplified (Engel & Schutt, 2010).

Credibility: This refers to ensuring the research questions should line up so that the information gained during the interview from the participants will be a precise one. (Babbie & Mouton, 2010). This can be done by avoiding leading questions.

Confirmability: Means whether or not the conclusions can be validated by other researchers (De Vos & Fouché, 2005:347). To confirm confirmability, participants interviews were recorded, and the transcripts were made available to the individual participants and the supervisor for verification

Dependability: Means providing proof that if the same study were to be repeated with a different group of participants in a similar setting, similar results could be obtained (Babbie & Mouton, 2010).

3.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study had employed qualitative research approach, so in this case where there is such a small sample, a possible prejudice may affect the credibility of research findings (Grinnell & Unrau, 2008). As such, the findings on the same topic are not generalizable to other areas.

Hence, it was chosen as the methodology because this approach authenticates, reinforces, simplifies understanding, makes-sense of the interpretation of the results, and explains intentions underlying human interaction.

In qualitative research the objective is exploratory and descriptive, rather than explanatory (Ferreira, Mouton, Puth, Schurink & Schurink, 1998). It focuses on understanding a given social-setting, but not necessarily on making predictions about a particular setting. A broader research study, provincially, needs to be undertaken to determine the effects of unemployment on youth graduates.

Additionally, all the face-face interviews for this study were conducted in the English language, but in some instances, participants were allowed to respond in isiZulu. Translation services were utilised to assist in transcription. Participants were informed prior to the commencement of the research study that the interviews would be conducted in English, and they all agreed. However, it was possible that some participants felt uncomfortable in using English for communication at the interviews (possibly a reason for their unemployment status) and this may have somewhat skewed the findings.

Lastly, the interview venue was comfortable and conducive for a smooth interview process; and participants did not show any sign of awkwardness (Opdenakker, 2006).

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Consent was applied for and given by the Mbatha Traditional Council at Mahlabathini, under Zululand District, where the study was taking place (Appendix 7). The administrators of the venue and facilities to be used were requested for permission which they duly and graciously assented to be given. All Covid-19 protocols were observed.

The researcher should observe all the ethical procedures relating to confidentiality in order to comply with the ethical standards when conducting research and interviewing participants, and voluntary participation of the subjects. Concerning confidentiality, the interviewees were guaranteed by the interviewer that the information they provide would be treated with utmost privacy and used only for the study. In this study agreement was reached that all participants will use pseudonyms. The real names of the participants, information, personal details, and site interview details were protected for anonymity purposes.

All documents, information and audio-recordings were stored in a password-protected electronic file which could only be accessed by the researcher and her supervisor.

At the first contact meeting with all the research participants, they were informed verbally (and in written form in the consent letter) of all the finer details of the research project and that participation was purely voluntary.

They were also given informed consent letters to read and sign to confirm their voluntary consent to be interviewed and to be audio-recorded (appendix 5). Also, they were free to exit at any stage of the research process (if they felt uncomfortable) without being disadvantaged in any way. Also, to protect identities, the researcher allotted pseudonyms/codes to each participant and research site (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

3.10 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

In this chapter, an explanatory qualitative approach was discussed regarding this research project title which entailed: *An exploration of the challenges of unemployed rural youth graduates in a district in KwaZulu-Natal*. This research design type required that the researcher

enter the field of the sample population. It included details of how the sample was selected for this study (Strydom, 2005).

Collected data was analysed by the researcher by using the eight steps suggested by Tesch (1990). Moreover, the limitations of the qualitative research approach which is subjective in nature, was outlined (Grinnell & Unrau, 2008). Lastly, ethical considerations for the study were explained in accordance with the procedures suggested by the ethical standards of social science research [UKZN] (Babbie & Mouton (2010).

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discussed the subsequent topics such as the findings from the participants, their demographical details, topics and sub-topics that arose from the study, as well as implications of joblessness. The outcomes originated from data gleaned during interviews conducted with six unemployed youth graduates face-to-face, on topic regarding the perceptions of them at Nkonjeni rural village, and the factors contributing to their joblessness.

4.2 PROFILING OF PARTICIPANTS

The following table provides the participants' profiles:

Participant	Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Qualification	Institution	Year of completion	Years unemployed
1	Lambos	32	Female	Degree in Psychology	UNISA	2014	6
2	Sphereshah	28	Female	Degree in Community Development	UNIZULU	2015	5
3	Ntobzah	28	Female	Degree in Education	UNIZULU	2015	5

4	Motoh	30	Male	Diploma in Marketing	DUT	2016	4
5	Oshie	24	Male	NCV-N4 in Electrical Engineering	Mthashana TVET	2016	4
6	Genqeh	26	Male	Diploma in Mechanical Engineering	MUT	2016	4
7	Lulu	26	Female	Degree in Music	UNIZULU	2015	5
8	BonJour	32	Male	NCV-N6 in Management Assistant	Mthashana TVET	2014	6
9	Cebzin	30	Male	Degree in Education	UNIZULU	2014	6
10	Katty	32	Female	Degree in Tourism	UNISA	2016	4
11	Sontoh	34	Female	Diploma in Nursing	Indumiso School of Nursing	2010	9

12	T-man	34	Male	Degree in Criminology	UNISA	2012	7
13	Maphorisah	30	Male	Diploma in Public Management	DUT	2014	6
14	Magugwana	33	Female	Diploma in Nature Conservation	MUT	2015	5
15	Tonqoh	31	Female	Degree in Media Studies	UKZN	2016	4
16	Kwenzoh	29	Male	Diploma in Traffic Management	Tshwane	2016	4
17	Tshitshi	27	Female	NCV-N6 in Hospitality	Mthashana TVET	2016	4
18	Senzoh	33	Female	Degree in Agriculture	UNIZULU	2014	6
19	Mabhizah	31	Male	Diploma in Policing	LYCEUM	2012	7

20	Qaloh	28	Female	Diploma in Nursing	Indumiso School of Nursing	2009	10
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4.3.1 Biographical Information of Participants Who Managed to Be Interviewed Due to Covid-19

Lambos

Lambos is a female of thirty-two-years, who has been living in the Nkonjeni rural village for more than ten years. She is unemployed for about six years beginning from 2014 after completing her degree in psychology at the University of South Africa. She is a single mother of two children.

Sphereshah

Sphereshah is a female of twenty-eight years, who has been living in the Nkonjeni rural village since she was born. She has been unemployed for about five years since 2015 after completing her degree in community development at the University of Zululand. She is a single mother of one.

Genqeh

Genqeh is a twenty-six year-old male who has been living at Nkonjeni rural village since he was born. He has been unemployed for about four years since 2016 after completing his National Diploma in Mechanical Engineering at Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT). He is single without children.

Motoh

Motoh is a male of thirty-years old who has been living at Nkonjeni rural village since he was born.

He has been unemployed for about four years as from 2016 after completing his National Diploma in Marketing at Durban University of Technology (DUT). He is single with one child.

Ntobzah

Ntobzah is a twenty-eighty-old female who has been living at Nkonjeni rural village since she was born. She has been unemployed for about five years since 2015 after completing her Bachelor of Education (Commerce) degree at the University of Zululand. She is single with one child.

Oshie

Oshie is a male of twenty-four years who has been living at Nkonjeni rural village since he was born. He has been unemployed for about four years since 2016 after completing his National Certificate N4 in Electrical Engineering at Mthashana Technical Vocational Education and Training. He is single without children.

4.4 THEMES AND SUB-THEMES THAT EMERGED FROM THE STUDY

Table 1: Themes and sub-themes

Main Themes	Sub-themes
4.4.1 Perceptions of Unemployed Youth Graduates on their Status of Unemployment.	4.4.1.1 Lack of career guidance. 4.4.1.2 Qualification-employment mismatch.
4.4.2 Challenges Facing Unemployed Youth Graduates.	4.4.2.1 Social effects of unemployment. 4.4.2.2 Psychological effects of unemployment.
4.4.3 Survival Strategies for Unemployed Youth Graduates.	4.4.3.1 Illegal means of survival. 4.4.3.2 Insufficient of social connections related to job opportunities.
4.4.4 Unemployed Youth Graduates' Attempts to Find Employment or to Earn a Salary.	4.4.4.1 Job-pursuing behaviour. 4.4.4.2 Vigorous ways of seeking a job. 4.4.4.3 Shortage of work experience.
4.4.5 Strategies to Combat Unemployment.	4.4.5.1. Venturing into self-employment. 4.4.5.2 Failure of provision of government policies and programmes. 4.4.5.3 Establishment of employment opportunities. 4.4.5.4 Establishment of internships.

4.4.1 Perceptions of Unemployed Youth Graduates on Their Status of Unemployment

4.4.1.1 Lack of career guidance

Participants indicated that the state of being unemployed has affected not only Nkonjeni as their residential area, but South Africa and the international community. They suggested that at high school level the subject of career guidance needed to be implemented as this will guide students in the Senior and FET Phases to choose subjects wisely where scarce skills are practised in preparation for tertiary education and future employment. Below are some of the responses:

Genqeh:

My perceptions are as follows: the choice of subjects we did at high school makes it difficult to register for courses with scarce-skill subjects that will offer more youth employment opportunities. Government and tertiary institutions must review the present curriculum and bring in the ones that promote job opportunities. We were told that Science and Maths are the best subjects ever; if you have them, job opportunities are plenty, but now I am at home unemployed after 4 years. Government seems to offer one- or two-year internships or learnership; after that nothing takes place.

Ntobzah:

The commerce stream/faculty must be closed or reduced to a certain level.

Government must decrease the intake of students enrolling for teaching, nursing and other popular courses until all those who are qualified are absorbed and employed first. Otherwise it is very difficult to find job nowadays.

Lambos:

The government points-system or levels from 1-7 had a negative influence on students; those who had low scores seem to enrol for any course even if they are not suitable - just for the sake of studying.

But at the end, after they have completed the qualification, they suffer trying to find jobs. Government must focus more on TVET colleges because they offer programmes that are based on scarce skills.

Sphereshah:

We as youth must not run away from the Science stream since it opens up many job opportunities. Government needs to review all courses that are offered at tertiary level. Students must be encouraged to follow the Science stream which will acquire employment which will help to reduce the high rate of unemployment.

Oshie:

The tendering system and agencies are the main causes of the high unemployment rate. Corruption and bribery are leading South Africa to disaster. The combination of subjects I chose at high school gave me a problem as it was a mismatch of what I was trying to pursue, but when I went to a tertiary college, it gave me a headache. I was supposed to be following a Science curriculum but found myself doing accounting as well. That is why I had a problem of choosing a suitable career because at school I did a combination of the Science and Commerce streams.

Motoh:

Overcrowding in South Africa is caused mainly by foreigners who took jobs which were meant for local citizens. Most of these foreigners are here in South Africa illegally.

The economy of this country is falling down in such a way that many industries, mines and companies are retrenching their employees or introducing the contract system for 12 months up to 36 months, which leads to uncertainty in the job market.

All of the participants indicated that they were unemployed because of their choice of subjects at high school which affected their curriculum selection at their respective tertiary institutions.

Most of this inconvenience was caused by the lack of guidance at school level. They further advocated that government must play a proactive role in implementing and creating of job opportunities by revisiting the school and tertiary institution curricula to structure them according to the demand for scarce skills in the labour market.

4.4.1.2 Qualification-employment mismatch

According to their profiles, some of the participants obtained qualification in the humanities field; and engineering. Hence, all these jobless youth graduates despite having relevant qualifications but they are not working. This was due to the lack of WIL (Work Integrated Learning, n.d.) and career guidance which can be attributed to the mismatch between their qualifications and the requisite skills demanded by the labour market. This was rebounded in the following retorts:

Ntobzah:

The qualification that I possessed has met the needs of to the institution's curriculum but not for me to get a job or has not much of a link to industry. This university degree that I have possessed restricted me only to be Commerce teacher nothing else, really necessary to fit into industry.. But most of the high schools have discontinued the Commerce stream, yet universities are still offering it. Where are all these students going get the jobs since it is so hard for me since I graduated four years ago, and each year there are so many graduates coming out of tertiary institutions?

Motoh:

Well, I think I could say that there are very few advantages, mostly there are disadvantages. First, it's like I was aiming to be enrolled in Cost and Management Accounting, but due to low points I found myself being enrolled in marketing instead; now I am unemployed for several years. Most of the time some of the posts that are being advertised require a Code 10 driver's licence and five years' experience, which I do not have.

Sphereshah:

I was told that my course, Community Development, is the same as Social Work so I had to register; but now all those who did Social Work have jobs and I am still jobless after four years. Some jobs that are being advertised require a two-to-three years' experience and a Code 10 driver's licence which I do not possess.

Lambos:

To be a Psychologist, was my childhood dream. Now, after obtaining my junior degree, I realised that I need to upgrade to the Master's and later the PhD before I am able to

find a job. I am old now and government jobs prefer the 18 to 35-year-old, but I am already above thirty.

Genqeh:

For Engineering, you need in-service-training before you graduate. Most of the companies do not want to offer that service, even if you want to be a volunteer. Life seems to be difficult and frustrating.

Oshie:

Most of the modules in the Engineering programme require both practical and theoretical skills so that a candidate or graduate becomes effective in the job sector. If a graduate did not acquire practical skills he/she will be excluded.

The above responses provided indication that the choice of subjects or specialisation in higher education has a major role in the issue of high rate of unemployment particularly in youth graduates. Moleke (2005) and Baldry (2013) asserted that graduates in the above specialisation are too many that is why newly graduated failed to get jobs. The study employed the Social Exclusion Theory which promoted the factors that if they are still without jobs they are going to be excluded everywhere including even from their next of kin from a qualification perspective which led the youth graduates not finding suitable jobs due to the choice of subjects in high school and HEIs.

This exclusion made their lives to become miserable and financially drained which may lead to negative behaviour. Also, the Capability Approach as a supporter to main theory enriched the lives of the people. Also their social wellbeing should be elaborated according to their abilities so that they can attain their performances (Sen, 2002). Ecological Systems Theory also played an important role in supporting the study.

It was noted that participants was educated and professional but jobless and they tried to equip themselves with the tools of education but a lack of job opportunities disappointed them.

4.4.2 Challenges Facing Unemployed Youth Graduates

4.4.2.1 Social effects of unemployment

Participants revealed that as a result of being unemployed they experienced very little social support and social interaction from their families, friends and community. They were sarcastically referred to as being educated and professional, but without jobless and same as those who never went to school. This is the validations of some of the responses:

Sphereshah:

Being unsuccessful to secure after every job interview I attended. They call me or notify me later about the outcome of the interview, and this makes me feel sick. It costs me a lot of money to photocopy, print, scan, email or post. I always have to bear the brunt of people gossiping that I am qualified and a professional but I have no job. I am unhappy because I am struggling, and nothing gives me pleasure as before.

Oshie:

I had to isolate and distance myself from others because I am always penniless and I cannot hang out with my friends. Some of the family members are losing respect for and hope, since I am unemployed.

Ntobzah:

I cannot go out and hang out with my friends, even if I like because it feels that as I am unemployed, I am useless to society. Everyone avoids me since I am a burden to them. Even at home, my parents are devastated because they used their pension to pay for my tertiary fees, but now I am still with them at home, and jobless.

Genqeh:

Being jobless affected not only me, but also my social life. I am always on Google trying to get jobs, but to no avail.

The above responses suggest that unemployed people find it difficult to hang out with their friends. Also, maintaining harmonious relationships with their families as well as the community, is awkward because of their status of being unemployed. Hence, they become excluded from their communities and exceptional others. Additionally, community members stigmatise jobless people, as in the case of Sphereshah, Oshie, Genqeh and Ntobzah.

Jobless youth managed to revoke and isolate themselves from any occasions everywhere Moller (1992) and Mabasa (2008). Together with Social Exclusion Theory, studies reveal that unemployed youth graduates have many burdens such as being deprived of a decent living and being isolated (Ibid). Social Exclusion Theory involves understandings of “being shut out from any of the social, economic, political and cultural systems which determine the social integration of a person in society” (Walker & Walker, 1997:8). It was evident from participants’ responses that they had attended interviews several times, but in vain. In addition to being hindered from obtaining jobs, what was more painful was being shunned by society, friends, and family members.

Moreover, the Capability Approach which refers to the “alternative combinations of ‘functioning’s’ that are feasible for a person to achieve success” provides hope that one day opportunities will crop up (Sen, 1999:75).

4.4.2.2 Psychological effects of unemployment

Some of the participants emphasised their state of being jobless had a destructive impact in their psychosomatic wellbeing. They pointed that being unemployed brought stressful and emotional conditions, since they cannot be able to provide them.

These undesirable emotions uttered by the participants are manifest in Sphereshah’s, Lambos’s and Motosh’s remarks:

Sphereshah:

I had been called in for some interviews but no employment was offered and I had lost hope which causes stress and depression. Sometimes I had to borrow money from family members, but at the end got no job. The money I got from my small part-time duties such as doing washing, ironing, baby-sitting, and selling fruits and vegetables was very less to fulfil my obligations.

Lambos:

I suffered anxiety, emotional trauma and depression by failing to provide for my family after a difficult struggle to pass my degree. My family contributed a lot to me, even their last cent. To see them struggling to send me to a university made me sick. My parents’ tavern was not functioning very well since Covid-19 has arrived in South Africa and

the selling of liquor was restricted during Covid-19 levels 3, 4 and 5, hence finance was not available.

Motoh:

I had the issue of sleepless nights that led me to suffer stress. I always think of spending last cents on emailing/photocopying and posting letters trying to find a job, but no avail. I was disappointed and hurt that I spend my little money I have from my part-time duties of tutoring Grade 12s who are doing Commerce subjects, and by typing CVs.

Motoh, Sphereshah and Lambos' responses provided evidence that unemployed people have burdens they carry on their daily lives as they are waiting for a promising future. All of the above lead them to suffer stress, depression, helplessness, hopelessness, and negativity.

4.4.3 Survival Strategies for Unemployed Youth Graduates

4.4.3.1 Illegal means of survival

Being jobless and without an income, brought financial adversities to the participants.

When interviewing them, one of the participants disclosed that she got involved in the illicit trade of running a tavern without a licence for selling liquor to cope with her personal need to survive. Her verbatim response was:

Lambos:

I am running a small tuck-shop with a tavern hidden inside to have food and data for applying for vacant posts. Unfortunately, I sell liquor without a valid licence. I keep on evading the police for this bad behaviour.

The effect of not having money to survive on a day-to-day basis is that it leads you into unacceptable behaviour because others are doing it and are thriving from it. People will start engaging in criminal activity as sometimes it is the only way to avoid starvation. Prostitution is a common example of criminality to avoid destitution. Other crimes perpetrated to survive include hijacking, common theft, housebreaking, shoplifting, and drug-peddling, amongst others.

4.4.3.2 Insufficient social connections related to job opportunities

Lack of proper communication was repeated as one of the motives for being excluded from society because for their unemployment status. Ironically, social connections are needed to have ‘contacts’ in the job marketplace to obtain jobs. The following comment bears testimony to this:

Sphereshah:

I felt hopeless that acquiring jobs needed the assistance of ‘connections’ and the practice of bribery. Corruption is a major issue in our country. The levels of nepotism are rising because ‘connections’ may get you a job. The reason could be that I have no one to back me up; I am trying to get a job with my own effort. I am trying to apply the moral way, and not rely on connections.

You find that people do not necessarily find employment because they have got the right paper qualifications. Foreigners got jobs here in South Africa; the employers are paying them peanuts. Sometimes you can only find employment because of certain connections that you have.

The Social Exclusion Theory applied in this study unpacked that some of the available jobs are being ‘sold’ as one needs to be ‘connected’, regardless of qualifications, to secure employment. Some posts can only be obtained if you have political ‘connections’.

4.4.4 Unemployed Youth Graduates’ Attempts to Find Employment

4.4.4.1 Job-pursuing behaviour

All the participants walked regularly to and fro visiting internet outlets to look for vacancies that may appear on online platforms. They faxed, emailed and goggled in the hope of securing jobs. Some of them even tried knocking door-to-door where companies were situated in the hope of securing a legal job in the District and in other provinces. The responses below are indicative of the frustrations of job-seeking people:

Motoh:

I tried door-to-door enquiries in some of the industries and municipal offices to find job or to volunteer. The Covid-19 protocols and lockdown periods decreased our chances because companies and sectors were closed, and their employees worked at

home. Some of the companies are closing and thousands of employees are being retrenched.

Ntobzah:

I tried even to move out from KwaZulu-Natal to other provinces such as Gauteng, Mpumalanga and North-West trying to find a teaching job by going door-to-door to District Offices, but to no avail. The situation of being unemployed has affected me a lot.

Lambos:

I tried and tried by applying and responding to the posts, but had no success so far. I visited places where psychologists are needed, but I failed to secure a job.

Sphereshah:

I tried so hard to seek a job at the Department of Social Development, but had no success.

Genqeh:

My modules were based on the fact that I must work in a mining environment; sadly, I tried my best to seek employment here but I failed.

Many mines are closing down and retrenching is rife. Those few mines which are still operating are implementing the contract basis approach.

Oshie:

This situation is so bad because that even Eskom is retrenching many employees due to Covid-19, and the load-shedding situation.

It is evident that all participants tried their best to seek for jobs. Some were prepared to volunteer but Covid-19 restrictions exacerbated the situation because people now worked from home, and recruitment came to a standstill.

4.4.4.2 Vigorous ways of seeking a job

Participants stipulated that they were up and down searching for work. They tried all their best by applying and emailing CV. Below are some of the responses:

Sphereshah:

There is a certain stage when I just feel uncomfortable. You know, being under one roof with someone who's taking care of you. Being as old as I am, and being qualified and have to be dependent on someone else - it just pains me.

Motoh:

Yes, I am actively searching. At least once a week I drop 3 or 4 applications. The first thing I do when I wake up in the morning, I check the [website] for vacancies. I have access to the internet, so when I wake up I listen to the news and surf the net for vacancies.

Lambos:

There are quite a number of reasons why am looking for employment. The first one being that I am financially not stable. Also, in order for one to survive in this world, one must have something to do like a job to be able to provide for the basic needs like shelter, food, water and other essentials.

The above evidence confirms the notion that among the jobless youths, searching actively for a job is a daily function which needs motivation and determination (Vansteenkiste, 2005). Despite challenges at Nkonjeni village, many job-seekers travel to internet facilities for about 25 kilometres, spending R30 for a return trip, to check and apply for possible vacancies which appear online. The Social Exclusion Theory engaged in this study makes us conscious of challenges such as poor infrastructure of the area, load-shedding, and crime that hinder the process of job-seeking.

4.4.4.3 Shortage of work experience

Accomplices expressed that when posts are being advertised, they came with requirements of experience of more than three years. Sometimes up to five years. According to their profiles,

they were graduated and left unemployed by then their lack of relevant work experience was voiced (below) for being one of the major reasons for this situation:

Lambos:

Jobs that are advertised require people with experience; some up to five years, and being a graduate just coming straight out from college without any experience, is hindering graduates like me to become employed.

Sphereshah:

Most required qualifications that are advertised by companies want a Master's so I feel like am disadvantaged there; and if not they want experience, and I only graduated four years ago, and where am I going to get the five years' experience when everybody who is employing wants to employ somebody with experience?

Motoh:

Number one factor I think, some of us are not told... I think when you are in university in the 2nd or 3rd year, you are supposed to start your internship or in- service training. It really helps to have work experience, and without work experience many people do not qualify for a specific job. I wasn't told about this, but only knew about it after I had graduated.

Those who never worked before were disadvantaged as most jobs need relevant experience. The question is where are they going to get 3-5 years' experience? Youth graduates, particularly in rural areas, are being deprived of their right of volunteering so that they can get experience. This places them in an invidious position.

4.4.5 Strategies to Combat Unemployment

4.4.5.1 Venturing into self-employment

High rate of joblessness among youths must drive themselves to establish their own job opportunities. They should create self-employment to elevate their independence and employment status. These following responses describe this strategy:

Ntobzah:

Yah, the role of business and the private sector must encourage us to create a conducive environment for these young graduates to be able to join them. They have to assimilate them by allowing them to enter the industry. They should recruit and train them, and give them something to do or impart skills so that they can know how to run businesses. I think small business developments or cooperatives are the main solution to decrease unemployment in our rural village at Nkonjeni and in the province itself.

Motoh:

If you have the relevant skills and you have the capital, you can create job opportunities to employ others. That should be our goal, not just to sit around but to be proactive. Use your skills and creativity to explore avenues to secure capital to open some business.

Oshie:

There is need to sensitise my fellow youths on other means of survival apart from using government as a major employer. I think as a youth, it's high time we started looking at self-employment opportunities and not relying just on government.

Sphereshah:

I feel that we as youth must come together to initiate agricultural cooperation where are going to plough fields, do needlework, baking and growing crops such as potatoes, mielies, cabbages, tomatoes, chillies, yams, cotton and beans (among others) and sell to the community, and supermarkets such as Super spar, Rhino, Cambridge and Shoprite.

I think INkosi and iziNduna will play a significance role by providing us with all necessary equipment such as fields, tractors and old houses since we will also start poultry and dairy farming. We can also assist the Department of Agriculture to expand their operations.

Ntobzah:

We as the youth must work together to bake cakes, sew uniforms, open up food- stalls, and plough fields to prepare for the agricultural industry while we are waiting for jobs.

Genqeh:

I think it is the time now to start a co-op or my own company and register it since I acquired some skills of motor mechanics while studying at a technical school.

Since youth graduates are excluded from venturing into self-employment as they are from rural areas where they were not taught skills of buying and selling, they need to be equipped with entrepreneurial skills. In my village there are no such teaching centres, hence they are deprived of acquiring such skills World Bank (2013).

Below are responses from the participants:

Lambos:

Curriculum implementers should review the current curriculum because it do not suit the needs of graduates to get jobs.

Ntobzah:

I think sector should come to our rescue us, especially those who want to initiated self-employed. They must provide us with capital.

Motoh:

Government should provide employment by setting up projects that can involve the youth and by also providing small loans to people who want to do business and to start-up SMEs.

Cooperation should be a priority where Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are used to boost self-employment opportunities. Research participants suggested that the initiative of job creation must be not a provincial, national but be of the worldwide. However, via the Social Exclusion Theory, it was exposed that the rate of unemployment has escalated to 34.4 percentages (Stats SA, 2021). This is compounded by the level of escalating corruption in the country among the government officials – billions meant to create job opportunities are

siphoned off by corrupt government officials who are the very ones who were given the responsibility of reducing unemployment. For example, a few Ministers benefitted in tenders related to Covid-19 PPEs, and some of them decided to resign while others were expelled. Also the July riots where there was mass looting by the hungry and the criminals had an impact on the high rate of unemployment (TimeLine's News, 2021).

4.4.5.2 Failure of provision of government policies and programmes

Government drafted and implemented policies but never made a follow up that they are existing and functioning. The following responses emphasised this failure:

Genqeh:

I think even the education we acquire is mainly theoretical; it's not really practical, so no wonder we are unemployed when we finish school, but we always hope and think of being employed.

Ntobzah:

Yes, the other thing is that you can blame it on the poor education system. We are not okay in whatever field. They are supposed to include industrial skills, so that if you are unable to get a job, you can use those industrial skills to sustain yourself. Like in my programme, there were no industrial skills taught to us, so the only thing that we are waiting for is to be employed.

Lambos:

Yes, even if I am to start business, what business can I do, where can I find the money from? But again the problem also lies with the education system that we have. Usually there is more theoretical knowledge than practical. They do not really train us in skills on how we can survive. Without that, the only thing we are waiting is for government to employ us; if not government, then the private sector. This is really not self-employment.

These responses confirm the findings which confirmed education curriculum offered had contributed in the shortfall of job opportunities (World Bank, 2013).The following responses confirmed this:

Sphereshah:

I thought of venturing a project and create jobs to other graduates.

Motoh:

I have not tried this self-employment strategy. But once in a while, I think that's the next strategy I am working on. If I go beyond November, December going into 2016 I think I would love to venture into the informal sector.

Oshie:

I think if I do not find a job, I can do something else. Maybe I can even get a loan to open some business. If am able to or if someone is to give some money, I can do something else than just job-hunting. Yes, but I can still job-hunt and do something else like business.

Lambos:

I will still do something though I have not told anybody, but I have been thinking of venturing into designing - yes, fashion and designing. I can do it. I was thinking I should start with as little as mum can afford to give me, then I could start my own thing.

Yeah, I think that way will make me to survive because I have to think on those lines. However, the thing is that I do not have starting capital; at least I should have a back-up.

It was evident from the above responses that the majority of them were reluctant of the possibility of being self-employed and found it not achievable at that time because of the lack of finances, as noted in the responses below:

Sphereshah:

Now...ok the challenge which is there is if you have little capital and you depend on that same money, sometimes you will end up by using the capital for non-business purposes. So right now, self-employment is not feasible because I do not have money.

Motoh:

I have never thought about self-employment, but because of the experience I have had for the past 12 months, it has given me that drive of becoming self-employed. At the moment, ah, it's not really feasible because I have not done anything of that kind.

Oshie:

Am really saying entrepreneurship is not feasible for me? The funds are there if you know how to access financial institutions, you know. It's feasible only if someone has income that is sufficient as start-up capital.

It was obvious that the majority of youth graduates had not ventured into self-employment as an alternative to joblessness (Nel & Neale-Shutte, 2013).

This was confirmed by the responses below:

Ntobzah:

At the moment, there is none I know who became successful, and I do not know any of those because if there was any I could have heard about it. I do not think there are any, unless if it was recently introduced because I do not know any.

Ok, I might not really be too well versed in this. If they were any, they would have told us when we were graduating because we had government officials there.

Genqeh:

Right now am not aware of any government programme which is aimed at assisting me who is a graduate searching for employment... But for us graduates, I am not seeing anything the government is trying to do to help us, because everything is against us.

The above excerpts reveal that more and more jobs need to be created at Ulundi, South Africa and worldwide. These programmes should encourage young graduates to venture into the self-employment arena. Social Exclusion Theory exposes the fact that youth graduates have been excluded from life's opportunities Sen (1999).

4.4.5.3 Establishment of employment opportunities

All citizens including youth graduates should be provided with job opportunities in South Africa (including government and the private sector).

The responses below confirm this:

Genqeh:

I think firstly government should come in and become the employer. It's not easy but if they plan ahead, efficiently and effectively, I think that can happen. I think the government should be the first to start with providing employment for the youth graduates.

Oshie:

The role of the government is to ensure that the youths have jobs. Not necessarily formal jobs, but to ensure that they have an enabling environment for them even to be self-employed.

Sphereshah:

Government has a role to employ, to provide employment for the youths, especially the jobless graduates. Employment is supposed to be readily available for the youths because if they do not employ the youths, they encourage activities that are not good.

4.4.5.4 Establishment of internship opportunities

Government should provide youth graduates with placement opportunities so that they should qualify to foster the promotion of youth graduate employment. The following verbatim responses confirm this:

Motoh:

No country has developed without investing in the younger generation. I am of the view that government needs to implement a deliberate and workable policy for internships. Every graduate is supposed to be subjected to internship so that they could gain experience for at least a year.

Ntobzah:

I think what counts most is that while you are still at school or at a tertiary institution at least somebody should be proactive and introduce internship programmes in conjunction with other organisations just to equip yourself with basic practical skills.

Ryan (2001:82) postulated that “mass apprenticeship in Germany and school-employer recruitment networks in Japan, both promoted the direct hiring of school-leavers into a wide range of regular and career employment”. Those graduates from rural village, where the infrastructure is poor, travelled long distances to the internet café. As such, they are being excluded and deprived of job opportunities (e.g. work experience training) because they sometimes receive SMSs or emails after the closing dates of the posts or training sessions.

4.5 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter offered analysis and outcomes of the research which stipulate barriers that forbid graduates to get jobs. These include: lack of career guidance from as early as high schools, an out-dated curriculum that marginalises practical work, the mismatch in subject-combination from high school up to tertiary levels, lack of work experience because the curriculum is too theoretical, lack of internships/apprenticeships (e.g. WIL) when at tertiary institutions, and depression and anxiety caused by job-hunting.

In previous years, qualifications such as Engineering, Science and Nursing were popular, but today it is different; for example, this study had two participants who were graduates with engineering qualifications. It also includes the biographical information of the participants. Moreover, challenges and the resultant survival strategies concerning unemployed youth graduates sometimes led to illegal means to subsist. The provision of opportunities to promote internship programmes was emphasised to decrease unemployment and crime. The following chapter (5) centred on the conclusions and recommendations of this study.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the findings and gives the summary of the findings of the study, recommendations and conclusions. It also presented extract from the main outcomes of this study. This chapter also reiterated the individual experiences of the people of Nkonjeni rural village, and how their burdens of being jobless and dearth influenced their behaviour to survive. Moreover, the limitations and ideas for future research are outlined. Lastly, the summary and conclusion regarding the overall study is presented.

5.2 DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

Participants indicated that the effects of unemployment are very overwhelming to anyone who experiences them. They blamed themselves for not being able to support their families financially as a result of unemployment, experienced feelings of guilt and had to rely on the financial support of others. They also had withdrawn themselves from social interactions and isolated themselves from community activities as they were uncomfortable that they are unemployed.

Youth graduates also indicated that to be unemployed is to feel different, looked-down upon, ineffective and excluded from the normal patterns of life of normal people. Unemployed individuals lose much of their senses of belonging to the society. They further confirmed that unemployment creates frustration and anger that leads to violence such domestic and community violence, substance abuse, prostitution, drug trafficking and sometimes even suicide. In addition, the participants indicated that unemployed people lose not only their job, but also much of their social identity (Jahoda, 1997). To ensure that there is no desirable social identity outside of employment, the unemployed are stigmatised. They are portrayed, frauds, hopeless cases or lazy blunders who are living up at taxpayers. They even lose respect from the family members and this makes them feeling very embarrassed.

The jobless participants who took part in the study revealed that their status of being jobless bring stress and depression to those who experienced being unemployed. They feel ashamed for not being breadwinners in their respective homes. They also pointed out that to be without job they suffer being neglected and disrespected as being common people with common life (Jahoda, 1997). The state of being jobless has a variety of deleterious effects on individuals especially on unemployed youth graduates (participants). The findings in this study are aligned to the principles of the Social Exclusion Theory that underpinned this study.

Also in this study, I also adopted the Capability Approach to work in cohesion and combination with the Social Exclusion Theory. I further adopted Ecological Systems Theory to elaborate and strengthened this study in exploring the challenges of unemployed rural youth graduates in a district in KwaZulu-Natal. They suggested that they suffered from low self-esteem and they suffer from being in a state of poverty due to unemployment. Findings of this study indicated that after being qualified and graduated of these participants stress is one of the major elements that can lead them to engage in illegal activities such as committing crimes without luck of finding jobs.

Furthermore, the participants indicated also that unemployment has a financial impact on individual's standard of living and their psychological wellbeing. The findings illustrate that the financial limitation imposed by unemployment effect an individual's quality of life and standard of life. The study confirmed that unemployed people like employed people have the same basic human needs (e.g. food, clothing and adequate housing) like the employed people. They also need the same services like n for themselves and their families: health, education and recreation. But they have to reduce these very necessities because of their situation of unemployment.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS EMANATING FROM FINDINGS

The conclusions pertaining terms of each of the study's objectives were presented:

5.3.1 Objective 1: To Investigate Jobless Youth Graduates' Job-seeking Behaviour and Encounters of without Jobs.

The high rate of jobless youth graduates is an indication that participants were unable to reinforce themselves financially and their subordinates. This elaborated the need to motivation and to persevere with confident that one day they would find employment.

Also the choice of subjects played an important role nowadays because South Africa has adopted technology.

5.3.2 Objective 2: To Understand the Reasons for the Unemployment of the Youth Graduates in Rural Settings.

The absence of work experience (WIL), mismatch between the qualification and the demand for scarce skills between their hiring practices and few job vacancies. In addition, corruption and nepotism diminished youth graduates' chances of employment as they lacked money to bribe officials. Rural areas, where the study was have the poor infrastructure whereby advertised posts came after the closing dates. Youth graduates tend to be excluded from societal gatherings implied that the lack of income affected participants' ability and confidence to fully interact with friends, family, and community members.

Some of the participants resulted in resorting to illegal and unethical means of acquiring money and necessities; for example, graduates resorted to writing assignments for students enrolled at various universities and colleges to receive some sort of income to survive some even contemplated committing suicide

5.3.3 Objective 3: To Determine Whether Jobless Youth Graduates Realise the Outcomes of Their Rejection from Job Opportunities, and How They Plan to Combat Them.

The findings aligned to this objective led the researcher to conclude that the creation of job opportunities be provided by stakeholders (e.g. the government) as this would decrease poverty and boost the economy. Furthermore, youth indicated that the NGOs and the private sector's role must be more 'aggressive' regarding policy changes and service delivery provision which would promote youth graduate employment. Lastly, the youth graduates were critical of government's efforts to promote employment opportunities stating that programmes by the state fell dismally short of expectations due to unchecked incompetence and corrupt practices.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations based on the conclusions drawn from the findings are outlined below:

5.4.1 Self-employment

Since the unemployed youth graduates' situation was exacerbated by the increasing number of new graduates and the slow economic growth in the Zululand District, particularly at Nkonjeni where the study was conducted, venturing into job creation should be promoted. Some of the participants initiated a plan of forming cooperatives involving, among others, farming, sewing and baking.

5.4.2 The Government

In this study, most of the unemployed youth graduates indicated that they were not aware of any government programme that promoted their employment; the government should therefore sensitise the graduate youth on, and promote access to such programmes. The government policies and programmes should also promote self-employment, and should through the education curriculum, inculcate an entrepreneurship spirit and skills in the youth. Through policy instrument, the government should furthermore enhance equal access to employment opportunities in all the sectors of the economy by ensuring that job recruitment and hiring in the country, is merit-based rather than being based on nepotism and corruption.

On the other hand, the government should improve the macro-economic policies to attract foreign investment by creating an enabling political and economic policy environment; promote economic growth in order to create more jobs; and to be able to conduct monitoring and evaluation of internship programmes to assess if these are being utilised effectively. Government should advertise and promote easy access to such programmes since many are living in rural areas where there is a lack of resources such as libraries and internet cafés. There must be the inculcation of an entrepreneurial spirit, and the development and training in scarce skills at school and tertiary levels.

In other words, practical training in scarce-skill-areas will enhance the chances of unemployed individuals gaining work experience to become self-employed. Corruption must be rooted out to give employment initiatives a chance of being successful.

5.4.3 The NGOs and the Private Sector

This should also empower youth graduates by providing skills and development opportunities through internships, while consolidating their partnership with government and other role-players in order to provide suitable employment opportunities to citizens.

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the private sector are stakeholders in enhancing youth development (NYP, 2006). The NYP 2006 also acknowledges that partnership between the government and the private sector would enhance service delivery for youth development. The different roles that NGOs play in communities have the potential to influence change at the level of the individual youth, government and the whole society.

In conclusion, it can be said that the youth, government, the NGOs and the private sector were identified to be the key role-players in promoting youth graduate employment. On the part of the youth, it can be concluded that youth graduate participants viewed self-employment and the ability of the youth to demand for employment opportunities from stakeholders as ways that could promote youth graduate employment. On the part of the government, conclusions can be drawn that provision of employment and internship opportunities, promotion of self-employment, and a promotion of merit-based employment recruitment and hiring practice by all stakeholders would promote youth graduate employment.

Another conclusion can be drawn that the NGOs and the private sector's roles of advisory, advocacy, empowerment and provision of employment opportunities to graduates were viewed by participants to be ways to promote youth graduate employment societal norms, improve understanding, influence agendas, influence policies, implement policies, and to solve problems. The sub-section that follows explores the roles that the NGOs and the private sector could play in promoting youth graduate employment as indicated by the unemployed youth graduates.

5.4.4 Recommendations for Further Research

It is recommended that a research be done on exploration of perceptions of college and or university students on self-employment as an employment opportunity for them after their studies.

5.5 LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

It is recommended that further research be conducted on exploring the perceptions of youth graduates in rural villages to implement job opportunities during and after completion of their studies as this may open doors for employment and thus improve the economy and the lives of many people who are struggling to survive.

Research should also explore the HEIs role in introducing more WIL programmes to complement theoretical areas of the curriculum. The extent of stakeholders' involvement in youth employment - especially the government - should be investigated to expose corruption and reasons for the failure of state programmes. This will expose inept officials who are reluctant to implement and monitor programmes that relate to employment opportunities.

Although this research study attempted to explore graduate youths' position concerning being unemployed, it is limited in that the sample was minimal such that the study's results could not be generalised to the whole of RSA. Further, the Covid-19 protocols exacerbated the situation as restrictions were placed on gatherings, meetings, interviewing processes, finance, and travel; if not, this research project could have been more expansive and informative to elicit other reasons for youth graduate unemployment from (among others) HEI personnel, government officials, and the Tribal Authority.

5.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION TO THE STUDY

This chapter (5) concluded the research study, where the details of conclusions and recommendations were found. Conclusions for this study were presented in relation to the aim, objectives, and research questions; and emanating from these conclusions, recommendations were suggested.

Also, suggestions for future research arose out of the limitations that hindered a possibly more elaborate presentation of the study's findings. However, it is envisaged that this study will awaken all role-players from their comfort zones to become activists to enhance this already dire situation of unemployment among qualified youth graduates. Stringent control mechanisms must be instituted to improve the devastating situation of mass unemployment, as this will provide hope for the future of South Africa.

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APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE

What type of higher institution did you attend, and what is the name of the institution?
What is the highest level of your education?
What is the field of your study?
Have you received career guidance before?
When did you complete your qualification, and for how long have you been unemployed?
What challenges do you face when searching for a job?
How has being unemployed affected you?
What informal strategies do you use to seek employment?
What formal strategies do you use to seek employment?
Do you think your qualification is useful in relation to other qualifications? Explain.
Did you have practical work experience or gain skills while pursuing your qualification?
Please voice the effects of unemployment on you, the family, and with other significant people?
Do you think your experience would be different if you were in another province? Explain.
Do you think your experience would be different if you had other higher qualifications?
What do think are the causes of unemployment among youth graduates?
What are your needs and aspirations as a young person in South Africa?
What do you think needs to be done to support graduates to access jobs in South Africa?
Clarifying question and probe:
Can you tell me something more about your unemployment status in relation to your qualification, societal expectation, and possibility of getting employed?

Thank you for your participation!

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Project Title: An exploration of the challenges of unemployed rural youth graduates in a district in KwaZulu-Natal.

Researcher: B. P. Dlamini (Mrs)

Date:

Section A

Biographical information of the participants
--

1. The name of the participants (pseudonyms only)

.....

2. Age

3. Gender

4. What is the highest level of your education?

.....

5. What is the field of your study?

.....

6. What type of higher education institution did you attend?

7. What is the name of the institution?

.....

Section B

Understanding the historical background of unemployment

1. When did you complete your degree/diploma/certificate/training.....
2. How long have you been unemployed?
.....
3. What challenges do you face as an unemployed youth graduate?
.....
4. Have you worked for an income before?

Section C

An exploration of the challenges of unemployed rural youth graduates

1. What are the challenges of the unemployed youth graduates in general, and yourself in particular?
.....
2. How is unemployment affecting your relationship with your friends and family?.....
.....
.....
3. What survival strategies have you adopted as an unemployed youth graduate?
.....
.....
4. What attempts were made by you to find employment or to earn a salary?

.....
.....

<p>Section D</p> <p>Understanding possible interventions to address unemployment in the rural community</p>

1. How can the unemployed youth graduates in rural villages circumvent the unemployment situation?

.....
.....

2. What is the role of the community to deal with unemployment?

.....
.....
.....

3. What do you think needs to be done to support graduates without jobs in South Africa?

.....

4. Can you tell me something more about your unemployment status in relation to your qualification, societal expectations, and possibility of getting employed?

.....

Thank you for your participation!

APPENDIX 3: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR UNEMPLOYED YOUTH GRADUATES

1. What is your gender? Tick one:

(a) Male [] (b) Female []

2. Citizenship:

(a) RSA [] (b) Non-RSA []

3. Age Range:

(a) 20- 23 years [] (b) 24- 27years [] (c) 28- 31years [] (d) 32- 35years []

4. Higher Institution Attended:

(a) TVET [] (b) College e.g. Nursing [] (c) University of Technology [] (d) University []

5. Field of Study: (a) Science [] (b) Humanities [] (c) Engineering [] (d) Nursing [] (e) Other (specify) -----

6. Highest academic qualification: (a) NCV/NATED [] (b) Diploma [] (c) Degree [] (d) Other (specify) -----

7. In which year did you complete your diploma/degree/certificate? -----

8. For how long have you been unemployed? (a) Less than 6 months [] (b) Less than 1 year [] (c) 1-2 years [] (d) 3-5 years [] (e) More than 5 years [] (f) Other (specify) -----

9. Mention details of your attempts at finding employment -----

10. Mention the main causes of not finding employment? -----

11. Mention survival strategies during the period of your unemployment -----

12. Did you receive assistance from any of the stakeholders below? Tick where applicable:

- (a) Municipality []
- (b) Church []
- (c) Government []
- (d) Traditional Council []

Thank you for your participation.

APPENDIX 4: INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

Dear Participant

My name is **Bongiwe Patricia Dlamini**, Student Number 218074760. I am a Master of Education candidate in Adult Education studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus. The title of my research is: ***THE EXPLORATION OF CHALLENGES OF UNEMPLOYED RURAL YOUTH GRADUATES IN A DISTRICT IN KWAZULU-NATAL***. The aim of the study is to explore and describe the graduate youths' experiences of unemployment. In order to fulfil the requirements for my degree, I am required to conduct an independent research study. I have chosen graduate unemployment as a topic for this study. You have been selected as a participant. I am interested in interviewing you so as to share your experiences and observations on the topic under investigation.

NOTE:

The information that you provide will be used for scholarly research only. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You have a choice to participate, not to participate, or exit at any stage of participation. You will not be penalised for exiting. Your views expressed in this interview will be confidential and anonymous. Neither your name nor your identity will be disclosed in any form during the study. The interview will take about 30-45 minutes, but if you still have something to say beyond the estimated time, you are at liberty to elaborate. The recordings as well all information collected associated with the interview will be stored in a password-protected electronic file accessible only to the researcher and the supervisor.

After a period of five (5) years, in line with the rules of the university, it will be disposed of by shredding and burning. If you agree to participate, please sign the declaration form attached to this consent letter (a separate sheet will be provided for signatures).

I can be contacted at the School of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, and Pietermaritzburg Campus. Email: bongiwepatriciadlamini@gmail.com and Cell 076 405 1679/0733055956

My supervisor is Dr J. S. Mkhize who is located at the School of Education, Pietermaritzburg Campus, of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Contact details: email:MkhizeJ3@ukzn.ac.za. Phone: 033 260 5071.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Kind regards

Bongiwe Patricia Dlamini

APPENDIX 5: DECLARATION BY THE PARTICIPANT

I (Full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire. I

I CONSENT/DO NOT CONSENT to have this interview recorded (Delete what is not applicable)

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

APPENDIX 6: APPROVAL NOTIFICATION



02 April 2020

Mrs Bongive Patricia Dlamini (218074760)
School Of Education
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Mrs Dlamini,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00000467/2019

Project title: An exploration of the perceptions of the unemployed rural youth graduates. A case of Nkonjeni village in Zululand District

Degree: Masters

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 10 September 2019 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**

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

This approval is valid until 02 April 2021.

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

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

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

Yours sincerely,



Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
UKZN Research Ethics Office Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000
Tel: +27 31 260 8350 / 4557 / 3587
Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics/>

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

INSPIRING GREATNESS

APPENDIX 7: LETTER OF PERMISSION TO TRADITIONAL COUNCIL

Mbatha Traditional Council

P.O. Box 271

Mahlabathini

3865

14 May 2019

Mrs B.P. Dlamini

P.O. Box 32

Uhundi

3838

Dear Madam

RE: A LETTER OF GRANTING A PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT NKONJENI VILLAGE UNDER MBATHA TRADITIONAL COUNCIL AT ZULULAND DISTRICT.

We hereby granting a permission to **BONGIWE PATRICIA DLAMINI**, with ID number: 7406030336087, a full resident of this village, to conduct research on the topic of the thesis titled: **AN EXPLORATION OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF THE UNEMPLOYED YOUTH GRADUATES: A CASE OF NKONJENI VILLAGE IN ZULULAND DISTRICT.**

We as Mbatha Traditional Council, we are grateful about this research to be conducted in our village because it will put our village in a world map.

Yours sincerely,

Mr B.M Cebekholi (Acting Inkosi: Mbatha Traditional Council)

Signature: _____

083 581 8156 / 065 808 2704

Mrs T.N Mpungose (Administrative Clerk: Mbatha Traditional Council)

Signature: _____

076 888 3293

**MBATHA
TRADITIONAL COUNCIL**

2019-05-14

PO BOX 271
MAHLABATHINI
3865

APPENDIX 8: LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE

590 Miami Road
Hibberdene
KZN
4220
Cell: 0842648401
brian.naidoo25@gmail.com

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Evaluator of Schools for Umhlati.

SPECIALISING IN THE LANGUAGE EDITING OF THESES, DISSERTATIONS, JOURNAL ARTICLES, PROPOSALS, POLICIES AND PUBLICATIONS

CERTIFICATE FOR LANGUAGE EDITING A DRAFT MASTER'S DISSERTATION

BONGIWE PATRICIA DLAMINI

Master's in Education
**AN EXPLORATION OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF UNEMPLOYED RURAL YOUTH GRADUATES: A CASE OF NKONJENI VILLAGE
IN THE ZULULAND DISTRICT**
UKZN (Student number:218074760)

WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This certificate confirms that the above-mentioned student submitted her draft master's dissertation to me for language-editing, which included correcting in-text citations and the list of references. This was duly edited by me and sent back to the student for revisions as per suggestions from me. I make no claim as to the accuracy of the research content. The text, as edited by me, is grammatically correct. After completion of my language editing, the student has the option to accept or reject suggestions/changes prior to re-submission to the supervisor who will check the content and instances of plagiarism, if any.

Professional EDITORS Guild

ID: 5606255134081 **DATE: 06/02/2022**

Brian Naidoo
Associate Member
Membership number: NA1001
Membership year: March 2021 to February 2022
084 264 8401
brian.naidoo25@gmail.com
www.editors.org.za

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

APPENDIX 9: TURNITIN REPORT

Bongiwe Dlamini Dissert... ?

Match Overview

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