

**Views and Experiences of Unemployed Youth
Graduates: A Case Study
of the Polokwane Area, Limpopo Province, South
Africa.**

Dolores Mokgohloa

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degree of MPhil in Youth Development and Policy at the University of
Stellenbosch**



**Supervisor: Prof. A. S. Kritzinger
Co-supervisor: Mr. W. F. van Aswegen**

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Date 7 March 2016.

SUMMARY

Since 1995 unemployment among graduates in South Africa has increased significantly. While unemployment rates have increased across all racial groups it is especially African youth who carries the burden of unemployment. The Limpopo Province which has a predominantly rural African population was selected for this study as this province faces great challenges concerning unemployment among young graduates. A qualitative study was undertaken in the area of Polokwane in the Limpopo Province to explore the views and experiences of a group of unemployed youth graduates regarding their unemployed status. Using a case study research design semi-structured interviews were conducted with six unemployed youths (three male and three female) between the ages of 24 and 31 years. These participants hold national diplomas and degrees from South African universities and technikons. The findings of the study were analysed using Atlas.ti, which is a qualitative data analysis computer programme.

The analysis of data showed that unemployed graduates come from poor family backgrounds, where they are expected to provide for their families and financially support their younger brothers and sisters to attend school. Some of the participants were found to be financially dependent on their parents and/or friends. Female participants who have children were found to be especially vulnerable given that the fathers of their children do not take financial responsibility for the children. Members of the communities in which the participants reside were reported to have negative reactions towards some of the participants when the latter are unable to find employment. Participants were found to have different views as to whether their qualifications are indeed marketable within the South African context and some were of the opinion that the institutions they attended had a negative influence on their marketability. According to participants the causes of unemployment amongst graduates were lack of work experience, high population and low economic growth, redeployment, lack of networks in the workplace, lack of interview skills, lack of career guidance and failure of workplaces to implement affirmative action. Regarding possible effects of unemployment it was found that participants experience low morale, frustration and low self-esteem.

It emerged from the study that participants are informed about programmes that aim to address the problem of unemployment among young graduates. These interventions were said to be only temporary solutions and participants do not regard them as being successful in addressing unemployment. It was revealed that the Government Youth Fund is not delivering services to poor rural youth who want to start their own businesses. It is suggested that future research focuses on the evaluation of programmes that aim to address youth unemployment and examines whether higher education is providing careers which are in demand in the labour market.

OPSOMMING

Sedert 1995 het werkloosheid onder gegradueerders in Suid-Afrika 'n sterk toename getoon. Terwyl werkloosheid onder alle rassegroepe toegeneem het, is dit veral Swart jeugdiges wat die probleem ondervind. Die Limpopo Provinsie met 'n hoofsaaklik swart landelike bevolking is vir hierdie studie geselekteer aangesien hierdie provinsie voor groot uitdagings met betrekking tot werkloosheid onder jong gegradueerdes te staan kom. 'n Kwalitatiewe studie is in die Polokwane area in die Limpopo Provinsie onderneem ten einde die persepsies en ervarings van 'n groep werklose gegradueerde jeugdiges rakende hul werkloosheid te eksploreer. Die studie maak gebruik van die gevallestudie as navorsingsontwerp. Semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude is gevoer met ses werklose jeugdiges (drie mans en drie vroue) tussen die ouderdomme van 24 en 31 jaar. Die jeugdiges beskik oor nasionale diplomas en grade van Suid-Afrikaanse universiteite en teknikons. Atlas.ti, 'n rekenaarprogram vir kwalitatiewe data analise, is gebruik om die bevindings te ontleed.

'n Analise van die data toon dat die werklose gegradueerdes vanuit 'n arm gesinsagtergrond afkomstig is waar daar van hulle verwag word om hul gesinne te ondersteun en finansieël by te dra tot die skoolopleiding van hul jonger broers en susters. Sommige van die jeugdiges is finansieël van hul ouers en/of vriende afhanklik. Sommige van die jong vroue wat kinders het is besonder kwesbaar aangesien die vaders van hul kinders nie finansiële ondersteuning bied nie. Jeugdiges rapporteer dat lede van die gemeenskappe waaruit hul afkomstig is negatief teenoor sommige van hulle reageer indien hulle werkloos is. Jeugdiges se sienings van die bemerkbaarheid van hulle kwalifikasies binne die Suid-Afrikaanse konteks verskil en sommige was van mening dat die opvoedkundige inrigtings wat hulle bygewoon het 'n negatiewe invloed op hul 'markwaarde' het. Volgens die jeugdiges is die oorsake van werkloosheid onder gegradueerdes gebrekkige werkervaring, hoë bevolking- en lae ekonomiese groei, gebrek aan netwerke in die werkplek, gebrek aan onderhoudsvaardighede en beroepsvoorligting en die feit dat werkplekke nie regstellende aksie implementeer nie. Wat betref die gevolge van werkloosheid is bevind dat jeugdiges 'n lae moreel, frustrasie en lae selfbeeld ervaar.

Uit die studie blyk dit dat jeugdige oor inligting beskik betreffende programme wat ten doel het om werkloosheid onder jong gegradueerdes aan te spreek. Hierdie intervensies word egter as tydelike maatreëls beskou en word nie gesien dat dit suksesvolle oplossings vir werkloosheid bied nie. Dit is duidelik dat die Government Youth Fund nie die nodige infrastruktuur aan landelike jeugdige bied om hul eie ondernemings te vestig nie. Daar word aanbeveel dat toekomstige navorsing sal fokus op die evaluasie van intervensie programme wat daarop gemik is om die werkloosheid onder jeugdige aan te spreek sowel as die mate waartoe instellings van hoër opvoeding voorbereiding bied vir loopbane wat in die arbeidsmark in aanvraag is.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS**CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

	Page (s)
1. Introduction	
1.1 Statement of the Problem	1 - 3
1.2 Purpose of the Study	3
1.3 Aims of the Study	3
1.4 Objectives of the Study	3 - 4
1.5 Motivation for the Study	4 - 5
2. Research Site	
2.1 Description of the Research Site	5 - 7
3. Outline of the Thesis	7

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE OVERVIEW

1. Introduction	
1.1 Definition of Concepts	8 - 9
2. Youth and Unemployment	
2.1 Youth Unemployment: A Global Perspective	9 - 11
2.2 Youth Unemployment: South African Context	11 - 13
2.3 Youth Unemployment: Limpopo Province	13 - 17
3. Unemployment and Young Graduates	
3.1 Unemployed Youth Graduates: A Global Perspective	17 - 18

	Page (s)
3.2 Unemployed Youth Graduates: A National Perspective	18 - 20
4. Factors Relating to Youth Unemployment	
4.1 Transition from School to Work	20
4.1.1 The Changing Youth Labour Market	21 - 23
4.1.2 Education in South Africa	23 - 27
4.1.3 Skills Needed in the SA Labour Market	28 - 30
4.1.4 Unemployed Graduates by Field of Study	30 - 31
4.1.5 The Brain Drain	31 - 32
4.2 The Reasons for Rising Unemployment Among Youth Graduates	33 - 34
4.3 Unemployment Among Youth Graduates: Racial and Gender Inequalities	34 - 38
5. Youth Livelihood Opportunities	
5.1 Youth Aspirations	38 - 39
5.2 Youth Unemployment and Livelihood Options	39 - 41
6. The Effects of Unemployment on an Individual	
6.1 Psychological Reactions to Unemployment	42
6.2 Social Effects of Unemployment	42
6.3 Gender and the Effects of Unemployment	43 - 44
7. Policy Interventions	44
7.1 The Employment Strategy Framework	44
7.2 Programmes to Enhance Youth Employability	44 - 53

	Page (s)
7.3 Challenges Faced by Youth Programmes	53 - 54
8. Summary	54

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

1. Introduction	55
1.1 Qualitative Methodological Paradigm	56
2. The Case Study Research Design	56 - 57
2.1 Advantages of the Case Study Design	57 - 58
2.2 Possible Sources of Error in Case Study Design	58 - 59
3. Population and Sampling	59- 60
4. Data Collection and Recording	60
4.1 Qualitative Interviews	60 - 62
4.2 Recording the Data	63
5. Data Analysis	64
5.1 Transcribing the Audio Taped Interviews	64
5.2 Coding Process	64 - 66
6. Ethical Considerations	
6.1 Confidentiality	66 - 67
6.2 Voluntary Participation	67
6.3 No Harm to the Participant	67

	Page (s)
7. Validity and Reliability in Qualitative Study	67
7.1 Credibility	68 - 69
7.2 Transferability	69 - 70
7.3 Dependability	70
7.4 Confirmability	70 - 71
8. Summary	71 - 72

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

1. Introduction	
1.1 Biographical Details of the Participants	73 - 74
1.2 Profile of the Participants	74
2. Socio-Economic Context of the Participants	
2.1 Socio-Economic Status of the Family	
2.1.1 Financial Constraints of the Unemployed Graduates' Families	75 - 78
2.1.2 Family Support Offered to the Unemployed Graduates	78 - 80
2.1.3 Family's Expectations of the Graduates	80 - 81
2.1.4 Treatment Received by the Unemployed Graduates from their Families	81 - 82

	Page (s)	
2.2	Socio-Economic Status of the Community	
2.2.1	The Unemployment Situation of the Participants' Communities	82 - 84
2.2.2	Community Livelihood of the Unemployed Graduates	84 - 85
2.2.3	Community Reactions Towards the Unemployed Graduates	86 - 88
2.3	Lifestyle of the Unemployed Graduates	88 - 91
2.4	Livelihood Opportunities of the Participants.	91 - 93
2.5	Future Aspirations of the Participants.	93 - 95
3.	Education of the Unemployed Graduates	
3.1	Academic Qualifications of the Unemployed Graduates	95 - 98
3.2	Academic Institutions Attended by the Unemployed Graduates	98 - 102
3.3	Careers Needed in the Labour Market as Stated by the Unemployed Graduates	102 - 103
4.	Causes of Unemployment Among Young Graduates	
4.1	Lack of Job Experience	103 - 104
4.2	Lack of Career Guidance	104 - 105
4.3	Lack of Networks in the Workplace	105 - 106
4.4	Redeployment	106 - 107
4.5	High Population and Low Economic Growth	107 - 108

	Page (s)
4.6 The Need for Post-graduate Qualification	108 - 109
4.7 Interview Challenges	109 - 110
5. Methods Used by the Unemployed Graduates in Searching for Employment	110 - 111
6. The Views of Unemployed Graduates on Affirmative Action	111 - 113
7. The State Intervention and Youth Unemployment	
7.1 The South African Government Interventions Promoting Youth Employment	113 - 114
7.2 The Skills Provided by the Youth Programmes Attended by the Participants	115 - 116
7.3 Views and Experiences regarding the Services Provided by Youth Programmes	116 - 119
7.4 Solutions as Suggested by the Unemployed Graduates	119 - 120
8. The Consequences of the Graduates' Unemployment	120 - 121
9. Summary	122 - 123

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Conclusion: Reflection on the Study	124 - 126
2. Anomalies and Surprising Results in the Study	126 - 127
3. The Gaps in the Study	127 - 128
4. Recommendations	

	Page (s)
4.1 Education	128 - 129
4.2 Policy Interventions Needed	129 - 130
5. Further Research Suggested	130 - 131
6. Concluding Comments	132
REFERENCES	133 - 145
APPENDIX	
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE	146 - 148

LIST OF TABLES

	Page (s)
Table 1: Provincial Distribution: Youth Economic Participation	12
Table 2: Limpopo Youth Economic Activity	15
Table 3: Educational Attainment of Youth in Limpopo Province	16
Table 4: Skills that are in Short Supply in the Labour Market	28 - 29
Table 5: Tertiary Educated Unemployment Rates by Race	36
Table 6: Tertiary Employment Growth by Race	37
Table 7: Biographical Details of the Participants	73

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

This chapter briefly presents the problem statement, the motivation for the study, and the purpose of the study, the aims and the specific objectives of the study. The description of the research site and the structure of the dissertation also form part of this chapter.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Young men and women in South Africa are facing the challenge of unemployment. Youth unemployment is a worldwide phenomenon (O'Higgins, 2001). It is particularly serious in third world countries. In South Africa, for example, all four-population groups (Whites, African, Coloured and Asian) collectively identified unemployment as a major problem (Everat and Sisulu, 1992). It is important to note that youth unemployment continues to be a striking feature of the South African labour market. The National Youth Commission reported that those in the 15-35 year age group make up the vast majority of the unemployed. In the South African society, youth make up 70% of all unemployed persons and 46% of the working population. This is a serious concern as it reflects the over-representation of youth amongst the unemployed (Youth Development Network, 2004a and National Youth Commission Policy, 2000).

The unemployment of youth in South Africa was found to be mainly linked to lack of education and lack of skills (CASE, 2000 and HSRC, 1999a). It appeared that lack of education greatly affects employability. IRIN news (2003) reported that many South Africans are now better educated. However, this has not necessarily translated into accessing better jobs, as they are facing the same problem as those who do not have higher education. Bhorat and McCord (2003a) reported that the unemployment rate of those with tertiary and secondary qualification is increasing. Although the unemployment rate declines for those with tertiary qualification and degrees as a proportion of all unemployed persons, there has been an increase in the number of unemployed persons with degrees. In 1995 there were 14 479 unemployed persons with degrees and this increased to 59 556 in 2002 (Bhorat and McCord, 2003a). While the chances of accessing

the labour market improve with higher levels of qualifications, a tertiary qualification in South Africa is not a guarantee of obtaining employment in the current labour market.

Currently young people who have post matric education are roaming around the streets in towns with their curriculum vitae (cv's), looking for jobs while some are getting discouraged (African National Congress Youth League, 2000, and Sunday Times, 2003). The number of unemployed graduates increases yearly because universities and technikons produce thousands of graduates who are unable to find or access jobs. This leads to an increase of unemployed graduates, which the South African economy is unable to absorb.

This is an alarming situation because education has been viewed as an advantage when competing in the labour market. People believe that without skills and better qualification, someone will have little chance of participating in the formal job sector. The public believes that the better educated an individual, the better off they are, and in South Africa, it is not only those without skills and education who struggle but also those who are educated (Moleke, 2003). This is a major challenge facing the youth of South Africa.

In the recent survey by the Human Science Research Council, it was found that, while university graduates have an advantage in the country's labour market, "some historical hurdles still remain" (HSRC, 2003). This survey showed that there are still inequalities in the job market. Borat (2004a) noted that there is the perceived suspicion of continued racial discrimination in the labour market. This challenge is mostly faced by black African youth. Mhone (2000) also confirmed this by saying that unemployment is high for all African youths irrespective of education level. It has been found that Africans, especially women that have studied at historically black universities, struggled to find jobs. It has been found that a higher proportion of graduates from historically black institutions (65, 4%) experience periods of unemployment compared to graduates from historically white universities (34, 6%) (Moleke, 2003). The large number of unemployed graduates among Blacks is linked to the major restructuring of the public sector, particularly in the community services sector (Bhorat and Lundall, 2003b).

Moleke (2003) also found that most Black graduates, who are unemployed, are crowded in the field of humanities and arts, which offer low employment prospects.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

While apartheid has gone, young people in poorly resourced communities such as Polokwane in Limpopo Province are facing a new set of challenges including “graduate unemployment”. Unemployment among graduates in this province is a serious concern because the economy of the province is unable to absorb them.

The number of young people who want to participate in the labour market after completion of their studies grows every year. The youth and their parents are under the impression that a tertiary education would guarantee employment, thereby bringing changes in their families to aid them to move out of poverty. However, the new political dispensation has not provided graduates with job opportunities but rather with continuous unemployment and poverty.

This study was aimed at getting insight from the unemployed graduates about their situation. The researcher was able to get clear and detailed information about the experiences and views of unemployed graduates. The findings will be presented in chapter four of the thesis.

1.3 Aims of the Study

- The primary aim of the study is to explore the views and experiences of unemployed youth graduates to develop a greater understanding of how unemployed youth deal with their situation.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

- To discover the experiences of graduates with regard to their unemployment status.
- To examine the livelihood activities and aspirations of youth graduates.

- To find out the reasons that promote unemployment among young graduates
- To identify the views of graduates concerning the strategies to solve unemployment among youth graduates.
- To examine the governmental policy framework in relation to its relevance for unemployment among youth graduates.

1.5 Motivation for the Study

Unemployment among youth graduates in South Africa is a matter of serious concern. Bhorat (2004a) mentioned that tertiary graduates were just a drop in the unemployment ocean in South Africa, and their numbers were the lowest among the country's educational sector, less than that of school leavers. Since 1995, there had been some alarming trends and unemployment among university educated youth had now proportionally increased more than in any other education sector. It is a serious matter because most young people are unemployed during what should be the most productive years of their lives.

The Community Agency for Social Enquiry conducted a study on unemployment among young people, and they found that education was rated as the first suggested solution to enter the labour market, (CASE, 2000). A large number of young people in this country value education, and they enroll at universities and technikons to get their qualifications, degrees and diplomas. But still unemployment is increasing. Graduates are under the impression that education will pave the way to increased job opportunities. This has caused them much frustration because graduates may interpret the fact of not being able to find a job as a sign of personal inadequacy, and such self-blame may affect the self-esteem of the graduate (Paledi, 2000).

The Government of National Unity came with measures to reduce youth unemployment in the country. Programmes were established in order to provide different skills and experiences, which are said to be needed by employers. However, there is still a gap because the employment rate of graduates is not increasing; instead the rate of unemployment seems to be increasing.

Both the state and parents have invested a lot of money in education, but now their expectations are not realised. Those with low education thought that it is easy to be employed if you have higher education qualifications. The unemployment of graduates raises a number of questions. Do graduates really know the reason why they are not employed? How do they feel about having qualifications without jobs? How does this situation affect them? How do their family and the community react to this situation? These are critical issues that are not being addressed but in current studies need to be researched in order for effective programmes to be developed that will assist unemployed graduates in securing employment.

Few studies have been done on unemployment among graduates. The previous studies on youth unemployment, mostly targeted youth in general and focused on the extent of youth unemployment and the causes of youth unemployment. They did not specifically focus on the experiences and views of unemployed graduates, (Du Toit, 2003, Mkandawire et al, 2001, ILO, 2004a). This study is relevant and important at this stage, because as has been shown, a large percentage of black graduates are unemployed, and the problem continues to grow.

2. Research Site

2.1 Description of the Research Site

Polokwane is the capital city of Limpopo Province. Limpopo is one of the provinces in South Africa with a high rate of unemployment among young people. It is predominantly rural and one of the most underdeveloped areas in South Africa. In 1980, the province could supply formal job opportunities to more than 80% of its labour force. In 1995 this figure dropped to a mere 45,8% leaving more than half of the labour force without formal employment. The reasons for the increase in unemployment in this province are numerous but the main one is that the formal sector of the economy has not been able to create enough job opportunities for its growing labour force. This is partly due to the restructuring of the public sector, which is the major employer of the province (Bhorat,

2004c). Nationally, the public sector employment fell by 8% or 150 000 jobs, due to the transformation process which carried out after 1996 (Bhorat and McCord, 2003a).

The needs for this sector have changed significantly in post-apartheid South Africa. The government has to deliver services to a much larger client base with limited resources. Transformation of the public sector has entailed not only the equity profile of the civil servants, but also the culture of service delivery within the public service. There is an acute need of highly skilled workers in order to plan and lead the development process, which will have a high priority in this province over the next two or three decades. This has resulted in a demand for a higher caliber of staff, and a more flexible approach to management and service delivery. Lack of relevant skills and experiences amongst young people is unacceptably high in Limpopo Province. The international demand for key professionals is placing greater pressure on the local labour market. Thus, the government is competing with both domestic and international employers for skilled labour. This translates into the need for much more flexible and sophisticated workforce that can adapt quickly to changes in the working environment.

Educationally this province fares worst when compared to other provinces. It has the lowest matric pass rate and has the fourth- largest number of under qualified educators. Limpopo Province experienced the poorest record of matric results. For example, in the year 1994, the matric results were 44%, 1995 were 38%, 1996 were 39%, 1997 were 28%, 1998 were 35% and in 1999 were 37%. The matric results average around 36.8 % between 1994 and 1999 (Mkandawire et al, 2001). These poor matric results had a large share of Bantu education that led most of the youth to be unemployed. This province has high rates of educational participation, but poor levels of educational achievement. Poor achievement reflects the poor quality of schools, which were imposed on Blacks as an aspect of Apartheid. Even among educational achievers there is significant unemployment, which points to the need for job creation. The consequence was that vast majority of youths left the educational system with poorer qualifications. As a result their ability to compete in the economic sphere was effectively hampered.

On the quality of provision, the province has the highest proportion of schools without telephones (69%) and the lowest percentage of schools with biology and science laboratories. Only 5% of schools in Limpopo province have libraries. The Province has three Higher Education Institutions (HEI), namely University of Limpopo, University of Venda for Science and Technology and Tshwane University of Technology.

3. Outline of the Thesis

This dissertation has five chapters. Chapter one includes the statement of the problem, motivation for the study, the purpose of the study, aims and objectives of the study and description of the research site. Chapter two provides a literature overview of youth unemployment, specifically unemployed graduates globally, nationally and provincially. The methodology used to conduct the study is discussed in chapter three and provides an overview of the research design, the methods used to obtain and analyze the data. Chapter four presents the findings, the integration of the findings with the literature and the discussion of the findings. The conclusion, policy suggestions and further research suggested are discussed in chapter five.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE OVERVIEW

1. Introduction

This chapter presents the literature, which is relevant to the study of unemployed youth graduates in South Africa. The literature on youth unemployed graduates and youth unemployment in general will be discussed, at the global, national and provincial levels. The definition of key concepts used in the study will also be provided.

1.1. Definition of Concepts

Youth

The National Youth Policy provides a very broad definition of youth by defining them as any person between the ages of 14 and 35 years (National Youth Commission, 1997). This study will be directed to the unemployed youth who completed higher education, particularly at colleges, technikons or universities and who falls under age group of young people according to the South African Youth Policy. The unemployed graduates participated in this study fall under the above-mentioned age group.

Graduates

The term graduate in this study refers to all young people who have successfully met the requirements to obtain the degree or diploma offered by the colleges, technikons, and Universities in South Africa.

Unemployment

In South Africa there are two definitions of unemployment: the official and expanded unemployment. According to Lehohla (2004) official unemployment covers unemployed persons aged 15 years and older within the economically active population, who are available to work within a week preceding the interview, who are not paid or self-employed and who have taken specific steps during the past four weeks preceding the interview to find paid employment or self employment. Expanded definition focus on the availability for work, irrespective of whether or not a person has taken active steps to find work, and this people might be termed 'discouraged job seekers'. The official

unemployment rate was 26,5% in March 2005 for both sexes countrywide. For males it was 22,4% while for females was 31,4%. The expanded unemployment rate was 40,5%. For males it was 33,0% while for females was 48.5% (Stats SA, 2005).

2. Youth and Unemployment

2.1 Youth Unemployment: A Global Perspective

The International Labour Organization (ILO, 2004a) stated that young women and men are the world's largest asset for the present and future, but they also represent a group with serious vulnerabilities. The International Labour Organisation found that in recent years increasing global unemployment has hit young people hard and today's youth are faced with high levels of economic and social uncertainty. Compared to adults, the youth of today are more than three times as likely to be unemployed (Du Toit, 2003). Research done by the International Labour Organisation confirmed this by showing how the global youth unemployment rate in 2003 was 3.5 times that of the global adult unemployment rate and has remained more than three times higher through the decade 1993 to 2003. It was estimated that in 2002, 185.4 million individuals were unemployed and this showed an increase in 2003 of 185.9 million individuals without work (ILO, 2004a). This increase was most pronounced among young people. The question of employment opportunities is frightening as more young people worldwide are about to enter the labour market.

Unemployment rates are considered to be the most visible and obvious indicator of youth employment challenges nowadays. Youth unemployment in the world has increased since 1993 when the unemployment for young people was 11.7 %. In 2003 it had reached its historical height of 14.4%, leaving 88 million young people without work. Youth unemployment rates in 2003 were highest in the regions of the Middle East and North Africa (25.6%), sub-Saharan Africa (21.1%), the lowest in East Asia (7%) and in the industrialized economies e.g. in Europe (13.4%) (ILO, 2004b).

Youth unemployment is thus a global phenomenon, which is faced by youth both in developed and developing countries. While young people from different countries face unemployment, more challenges are found among those in the developing countries. Looking at the current evidence, Sub-Saharan Africa fares worst with an estimation of 30 million in terms of youth unemployment. South Asia has a forecasted growth of 21 million unemployed youth between 2003 and 2015, (ILO, 2004b). In many developing countries, the percentage of young people in the general population continues to grow significantly, putting further pressure on youth labour markets and exacerbating already high youth unemployment rates (United Nation, 2002). It is estimated that 85% (eighty-five percent) of the world's youth are living in the developing regions and the number is likely to increase even further (ILO, 2004b).

While developed countries are also faced with a problem of youth unemployment, there are some signs of improvement in many European countries. According to Roberts (1995), young people in Britain are exceptionally vulnerable to the ups and downs of economic restructuring. This was most notably after the economic recession of the early 1980s, which reflected global changes in the demand for labour. The changes in the demand for labour led to the collapse of the youth labour market and the restructuring of employment opportunities within a policy framework which placed priority on increased training, flexibility and securing a reduction in relative labour costs. The employers were provided with an incentive to seek ways of reducing labour costs and one of the ways in which this was achieved was through the use of part-time and temporary workers. During the 1980s, many firms reduced their core workforce and this made young people particularly vulnerable (Ashton et al, 1990 in Furlong and Cartmel, 1997). With a shortage of job opportunities for young people, some survive through marginal employment, where they have little control over their working environment and often have poor job security. In addition, Brinkley, (1997) describes young people as under-worked and under-paid and are relatively worse off in terms of employment than the workforce as a whole.

Youth unemployment is a crucial matter, because young people without a decent income, cannot support themselves, and will therefore be more likely to stay within the family household much longer than the family can afford. Global Employment Trends for Youth (ILO, 2004b) indicated that the extended financial burden on the household, ruins the chance of the family as a whole to get out of poverty, and sometimes hampers the chances of younger family members in gaining access to education. This automatically damages the future prospects of the younger siblings as well. Young people are excluded and not given the opportunity to participate in the labour market and therefore it is difficult for them to move away from poverty (ILO, 2004b).

2.2 Youth Unemployment: South African Context

South Africa has a large youth population. The 1995 October Household Survey (Stats SA, 1996) estimated that young men and women aged between 14 and 35 years comprised 16.2 million people, representing 39% of the population. Young people in South Africa are defined as the segment of the population that falls within the 14-35 age brackets (National Youth Commission, 1997). South Africa has a working population of about 27 million people between the ages of 16-64 (Bhorat, 2004c). Youth (within the definition of 15-35) account for close to 60% of the working age population. South Africa has a general growing unemployment problem, but youth are hardest hit. Young people constitute the majority of the unemployed in this country. This means that youth are over-represented amongst the unemployed. South Africa's youth unemployment challenge has been compounded by the legacies of racial discrimination that have permeated every social and economic sphere (Youth Development Network, 2004a).

According to CASE (2000) report young people rank unemployment as their number one concern. The report indicated that young people see "an ever narrowing window of opportunity and access into the job-market". What South Africa is experiencing at the moment is not essentially about a loss of jobs but rather a restructuring of the economy and consequently the restructuring of work. The African National Congress Youth League (1998) reported that the recent economic growth rate has done little to alleviate unemployment in the country.

Young people are said to be less productive than older workers, hence the marginal costs of employing youth are higher. Young people are said to be less experienced than their older counterparts. Lack of education and training is also blamed for youth unemployment. It has been reported that the levels of education enhance someone's chances of getting a job (African National Congress Youth League, 1998). It appears that lack of education greatly affects employability, yet recent economic trends have proven otherwise as there is increasing number of young people who are now better educated but the labour market is still not in a position to absorb them.

Youth unemployment is a problem facing largely historically disadvantaged sectors of youth such as young women, rural youth, African youth in particular and black youth in general. This group is hardest hit as they disproportionately share the burden of unemployment and poverty (Youth Development Network, 2001 and African National Congress Youth League, 1998) Youth unemployment varies from province to province. Predominantly rural areas such as the Limpopo, Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga provinces have the highest levels of youth unemployment and the lowest levels of full time employment among young men and women.

Table 1: Provincial Distribution -Employment and Unemployment (%)

Province	Youth in full-time Employment	Unemployed Youth %
Limpopo Province	13	61
Eastern Cape	17	56
Mpumalanga	23	51
KZN	24	48
North West	26	47
Northern Cape	33	41
Free State	32	37
Gauteng	41	31
Western Cape	44	25

Source: October 1995 Household Survey, CASE (1997), NYC (1997)

Unemployment is more serious in rural areas, than in urban areas. Although many rural young women and men are deriving a living from informal sector activities, it is becoming difficult for this sector to create enough job opportunities. The sector does not have enough elasticity for the growing numbers of the young job seekers (Mkandawire et al, 2001). Thousands of young people cannot find jobs, which suit their capabilities or ambitions. Tens of thousands do not appear as unemployed in the national statistics because they are in low-paid, part-time work which fails to meet their personal aspirations or their economic needs thereby depressing their standard of living as well as their quality of life. The high levels of unemployment lead to growing inequality, social exclusion, the waste of output and under-utilization of human resources, increasing insecurity and the human suffering inflicted on the unemployed (Viljoen, 1998).

Traditionally, South African youth who failed to proceed with their education beyond matric level and those who graduated, often migrate to metropolitan centers for employment. Migration into urban areas therefore has become almost another rite of passage for any young person growing in rural South Africa. Many young men and women still look at migration as a safety valve for employment. The urban environment is perceived as providing more opportunities (real and imaginary) for young people (Everatt, 1994).

2.3 Youth Unemployment: Limpopo Province

According to the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy, Limpopo Province is a predominantly rural environment and predominantly occupied by Black people. It is the most rural province in South Africa, with 88.1% of the total population residing in non-urban areas and only 11, 9% urbanized (Mkandawire et al, 2001). Limpopo province is the second poorest province in the country and is characterized by a high rate of poverty and unemployment. Limpopo Province is facing major socio-economic challenges especially in the rural areas. The rural areas have fewer opportunities with a significant population of women and youth (Limpopo Youth Economic Summit Report, 2003).

However there is an opportunity in the province for growth, especially in mining, tourism, manufacturing and agriculture. The mining sector increased from R2.8 billion in 1994 to R6.8 billion in 2000. The agricultural sector showed very moderate growth from R1.1 billion to R1.4 billion for the same period. The tertiary sector, which includes tourism, has increased from R18.5 in 1995 to R36.7 billion in 2001 (Limpopo Youth Commission Research Report, 2004).

2.3.1 Food insecurity

Mkandawire et al (2001) found that there is low food accessibility and affordability in the province and inadequate agricultural services. One of the most significant characteristics of food insecure households is the large number of children. Production systems in rural areas are characterized by dry land farming, with limited inputs like fertilizers. The erratic output, using traditional farming methods, continues to subject households to vulnerable food security. This province is facing a problem of inadequate basic services like unreliable and inadequate water, sanitation, health and educational services.

The report on *Poverty and Inequality in South Africa* prepared for the office of the Deputy President of South Africa, identifies on number of factors related to poverty in Limpopo Province:

- Food insecurity: The report described the inability to provide sufficient or good quality food for the family as an outcome of poverty. Households where children go hungry or malnourished are seen as living in poverty.
- Crowded homes: The poor were perceived to live in overcrowded homes in need of maintenance. Having too many children was also seen as cause of poverty.
- Usage of basic forms of energy: The poor lack access of safe and efficient sources of energy. In rural communities the poor, particularly women, walk great distances to gather firewood.
- Fragmentation of the family: Many poor households are characterized by absent fathers or children living apart from their parents.
- Lack of adequate paid, secure jobs: The poor perceive lack of employment opportunities, low wages and lack of job security as major contributing factors to their poverty (Mkandawire et al, 2001).

Even though a high proportion of households engage in informal agricultural production, it is clear this is on a limited scale and for household consumption only. Land is communally owned and the chiefs control its distribution. The low levels of income derived may be due to several factors including lack of access to land (63% of household with access to land for agriculture have less than one hectare and only 10% have over three hectares of land for farming), lack of access to production technologies, and lack of services (34% of households have access to electricity and 30% have access to water in their dwelling) (Mkandawire et al, 2001). Poverty in Limpopo Province is severe and that is reflected in most parts of the province, which is presently encompassing former homelands of Venda, Gazankulu and Lebowa.

2.3.2 Limpopo Youth Economic Activity

In the year 1995, the unemployment rate in Limpopo Province was 45,8% in the rural area and 25,7% in urban area and in the year 2002, it was 60,6% in the rural areas and 34,1% in urban areas (Bhorat and Oosthuizen, 2004b). Census Statistics reveal that the majority of youth in Limpopo are not economically active (51%) as they may still be in school. Of those that were ready and available for employment, 70 473 of youth were employed compared to 219 036 rural youth. The higher number of unemployed youth in the rural areas is indicative of Limpopo rurally based population. The table below explicates Limpopo's youth economic activity:

Table 2: Limpopo Youth Economic Activity

	Employed Youth		Unemployed Youth	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Urban	70 473	10%	48 701	7%
Rural	219 036	31%	366 108	52%
Total	289 509	41%	414 809	59%

Source: Statistics South Africa (Calculated from Census 2001 Data).

Unemployment among youth is high and those unemployed are unskilled. Because of lack of job opportunities, some young people end up migrating to urban areas while others remain within the province. In Limpopo, government is the largest employer, contributing 25 % of economic output (Mkandawire et al, 2001).

Youth unemployment in the Province is more structural than cyclical. Around 54% of the unemployed in the province indicated that they are unemployed due to the fact that they could not find a suitable job. Around 43% of the youth are unemployed due to lack of skills and qualifications. The Limpopo Youth Economic Summit Report (2003) emphasized that young people in Limpopo need to be developed and that there is a need to create an enabling environment for young people in the province to gain entry in economic participation and that it is necessary to provide information to young people on the following:

- the economy
- the labour market opportunities that are being created and
- guidance and advice to gain entry into the economic mainstream

2.3.3 Education in the province

Limpopo province has two universities, one technikon and a number of colleges. Data from Census 2001, showed that about 186.102 young people had no education and that only 1 276 had Masters and Doctoral degrees making this figure far below 1%. The following table shows the educational attainment of youth in Limpopo.

Table 3: Educational attainment of youth in Limpopo

Level of Education	Number	Percentage (%)
No Schooling	186.102	13%
Matric	168 913	12%
Bachelor's Degree	11 408	0,8%
Higher Degree (MA &PhD)	1 276	0,09%
Total	367 699	25,89%

Source: Statistics South Africa (Calculated from Census 2001 Data)

In addition, Mkandawire et al (2001) reported that there are young people in the province who are literate but the type of education, which they are exposed to, does not equip them with relevant skills and therefore they are not in a good position to participate in the labour market. Due to lack of equipment, basic facilities and qualified teachers, the education received by most young people in rural environments tends to be theoretically and textbook based; a type of education that does not adequately prepare the learners to face the practical realities of their environment (Mkandawire et al, 2001).

3. Unemployment and Young Graduates

3.1 Unemployed Youth Graduates: A Global Perspective

Miles (2000) described education as playing a crucial role in young people's lives. In developed economies and some developing regions, the incidence of unemployment tends to be higher among less educated youth. In South Africa for example, it was estimated that nearly two-thirds of the unemployed youth did not hold Grade 12 certificate (Du Toit, 2003). Traditionally, a higher level of education is known generally not only to reduce the risk of unemployment, but also to increase the chance of obtaining full-time employment with long-term contracts. In Latin American countries, the higher the education levels of youth, the lower the relative level of unemployment (Fawcett, 2001). In France, the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (1993 to 2003) Online database, shows a higher likelihood of a young person with low level of education (secondary level or below) facing unemployment in comparison to a youth holding a high-level qualification (tertiary level). However, according to the database, the employability advantage that the more educated youth in France once had over the less educated has declined. In 1992 the educated youth was 12 times more likely to be employed than the less educated while in 2002 the advantage had decreased to just over four times. In the Republic of Korea, the level of education seems to make little difference to the unemployment outcome (ILO, 2004b).

A study conducted by the University of Sussex in four African countries (Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe) about unemployed graduates reported that Africa's

educated youth often find themselves without a job after completing their studies (IRIN news report, 2004). It was found that young people are increasingly unable to find appropriate employment, which effectively utilized the knowledge, and skills they had acquired at tertiary institutions. It emerged from the study that a possible consequence of the presence of highly educated unemployed in a country is a “brain drain”, whereby young educated professionals migrate in order to try their luck in other areas of the world. A United Nations Development Programme report found that more than 450,000 Arab university graduates were settled in European countries and the United States in 2001, resulting in a loss of human and economic potential in the countries from which these young workers emigrated and an overall negative impact on development (UNDP, 2003).

Young people worldwide are experiencing an increasing pressure to gain qualifications. However in the absence of formal jobs they are faced with a pressure to find something else to earn money (Adamski and Grootings, 1989). In Britain, youth aged sixteen and seventeen, in 1996 entered training schemes when they left school. However well trained, there are no jobs at the end of the course attended and this increases the rate of unemployment (Morrow and Richards, 1996).

South Africa also started with the implementation of the innovative programmes aimed at preparing youths for the labour market, like the Learnership Programme, Employment Internship for Youth in the Public and Private sector and the National Youth Service Programme (Mhone, 2000). Most of the programmes are focusing more on experience, skills development in youth enterprise and small business training. None of these trends have impacted significantly on the national unemployment figures for young people, although in some communities they have been successful, and on a small scale they have often met with remarkable success (Foley, 2001).

3.2 Unemployed Youth Graduates: A National Perspective

According to the 1995 October Household Survey (Stats SA, 1996), Labour Force Survey (Stats SA, 2002), and (Abedian, 2004) unemployment among graduates have seen an increase from 6.44% in 1995 to 15.37% in 2002. These statistics correspond with the

ones given by Sunday times, (2004) that is, that the number of unemployed graduates has grown from 6% in 1994 to 16% in 2002. Every year twenty-one universities and fifteen technikons in this country produce thousands of graduates and it appears that doors are closed for them to compete in the labour market.

Graduate unemployment is now rife in our country. South Africa is experiencing structural unemployment and this is one of the greatest challenges facing the nation and the economy. According to Barker (2003) structural unemployment occurs when jobs are available and there are workers seeking employment, but the workers do not match the jobs. A form of structural unemployment was said to be the basis of apartheid economy. Specific race groups were excluded from specific skills categories and geographical areas consciously confining them to skilled labour. Today's structural unemployment is an outcome of a catastrophic skills mismatch. The population is growing, and the economy is now growing at about the same rate. Skilled job categories stand empty, and in low-skilled job categories workers cannot find jobs (Abedian, 2004).

There is a mismatch between the skills that the economy needs, and those available. This is in part a legacy of Bantu education in the case of the older generation, and of the education system inadequacies in the case of younger jobseekers. This affects those graduates from fields, which do not prepare them for a specific career. According to Moleke (2003), the unemployment of graduates in South Africa is influenced by factors such as study fields, race and gender. Humanities and arts have the highest proportion of those unemployed, while economic and management sciences and natural science have lower rates of those unemployed. Blacks are said to be making up a large proportion of those who hold less desirable qualifications. A high rate of graduate unemployment is also found in this group. According to Du Toit (2003) employers have the perception that African graduates from previously disadvantaged institutions lack essential competencies. There is a doubt whether those institutions produce skilled graduates.

However, in addition to the Bantu education and legacy of unskilled workers, the shape of unemployment affecting secondary, matriculated and tertiary jobseekers has changed.

This is not due to employers' racism, but to the failure on the part of the education and training systems, which renders an extraordinary proportion of matriculants, and even graduates unemployable. Lack of mathematical and numeracy skills, of analytical and professional abilities, and have training in targeted "hard" disciplines as opposed to "soft" ones, disadvantages young job seekers. There are vacancies in high-level management and in technical and artisan skilled areas, while people with certificates in "soft" subjects who consider themselves qualified, feel rage at being excluded. The structural unemployment is not defined by marginalized black people, excluded from the economy, but by the lack of appropriately skilled people (Abedian, 2004).

4. Factors relating to Youth Unemployment

4.1 Transition from School to Work

Transitional periods are commonly experienced by young people, for example, the transition from school to work and the transition from childhood to adulthood. According to Foley (2001) all these transitions mean that a person is now taking up responsibilities and activities, which change his/her status in a community. The transition from school to work is one of the processes whereby an individual has to gain academic credentials in order to negotiate labour market opportunities (White et al, 1997). It may be defined as the passage from the end of schooling to the first significant employment of a young person.

However youth transition is perceived as characterized by risk and uncertainty as young people with credentials or not and those with privileged or unprivileged social backgrounds worry about failure and uncertainty surrounding future events and experiences. Furlong and Cartmel (1997) reported that transition from school to work are not smooth as the entry to the world of work is characterized by a heightened sense of risk because young people are making their transition to work in a period of turmoil. The restructuring of economy in which there is high demand for a better-educated and more skilled labour force causes this turmoil.

4.1.1 *The Changing Youth Labour Market*

Furlong and Cartmel (1997) specified that there are important changes taking place in the youth labour market. This has been caused by changes in the global economy following the recession of the early 1980s. With these changing patterns of labour market, there is a continued decline in demand for low skilled labour and this has led to a demand for a highly skilled and educated labour force. This means that academic performance is a prerequisite in the modern labour market.

The restructuring of the labour market, which caused the decline of the youth labour market, has important implications for the way young people experience the transition to work. This has been observed by the rapid growth of young people nowadays who spent many years in educational institutions, building up a range of qualifications, which are regarded as helping them to make an effective transition to the world of work. Miles (2000) stated that the transition from school to work tends to be longer because there is increasing pressure on the youth to gain qualifications in order to find jobs. Borat (2003b) stated that the increasing level of qualification is associated with higher participation rates and those with tertiary education are more likely to be employed in comparison to those with less education. The leading economists have supported this in the 1960s, who claimed that education is a good investment in economic growth of a country (Cronje et al, 1999).

The South African labour market has been characterized by poor economic growth and high unemployment. In the decade 1980 to 1990, some 50 000 jobs were created every year. However, in the 1990s the situation became desperate because there was no net increase in jobs. Instead, more than 700 000 jobs were lost. On top of this net loss of jobs, there were more or less 400 000 to 450 000 new entrants to the labour market every year in search of jobs, (Barker, 2003).

Cunningham et al (1998) and Barker (2003) found that in South Africa a large number of jobs were lost in the manufacturing, mining, construction and transport and communication sectors. This was due to the technological changes taking place. This

economic situation was similar to that in Britain (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997). The only sectors where significant number of jobs was created were the government and service sector.

In terms of skills, the country is experiencing technological change mainly due to the growth of new advanced production methods. Barker (2003) indicated that the basic skills required working in the 21st century are likely to include teamwork, adaptability, initiative, creativity, and managing information, communication and technology while the International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2004c) reported that the restructuring of the economy needs individuals who specialize in certain fields, like managerial skills, research skills, advocacy skills, auditing and technical skills, which most of the youth from universities and technikons do not have. Consequently, the relative demand for skilled and highly skilled workers has been increasing. However, as already noted, the rising unemployment amongst those with a tertiary education shows that graduates do not possess the necessary expertise (Poswell, 2002).

A disturbing feature of the graduate labour market in South Africa is the obvious divide that exists between the public and the private sector. Black and Coloured graduates are largely employed in the public sector, while the Asians and White graduates tend to find work in the private sector (Moleke, 2003). The restructuring of the public sector results in fewer employment prospects for Black graduates, as they mostly dominated in the field of study that has lesser employment opportunities. Employment trends indicated an increasing demand for skilled workers – specifically those in the commerce and science and technical fields. In addition, Bhorat and McCord (2003a) said that the lower employment prospects for tertiary-educated Africans (Blacks) are due to the poorer education they receive.

A most pressing issue at the moment is the increasing unemployment rate among graduates, (people with higher education) and decreasing rates among those with minimal education (Boehm, 2000). There is a strong belief that a better education leads to a better job. However, it is a cause for concern that the proportion of unemployed people with

reasonable educational qualification is high. According to Barker (2003) people with higher educational qualifications become frustrated more easily if they do not find a job.

4.1.2 Education in South Africa

Personal development of young people, development of local communities and that of the country as a whole are inextricably linked to the provision of quality, relevant and well-managed education and training. It has been argued that the apartheid system contributed towards most of the problems confronting youth in South Africa. Analysis has been made of the inequalities in these systems and the lack of resources to provide quality education for all. The school curriculum was reported to be unresponsive to the changing labour market needs and it has failed to contribute to the development of students who are being prepared for the workplace (Slabbert et al, 1994). Therefore since 1994, the following initiatives have been taken to improve education in South Africa:

1. The South African Schools Act (1996) promotes access, quality and democratic governance in the schooling system. It ensures that the learners have the right of access to quality education without discrimination, and makes schooling compulsory for children.
2. The Further Education and Training Act (1998) and related policies provide the basis for developing a nationally coordinated further education and training system.
3. The Higher Education Act (1997) makes provision for a unified and nationally planned system of higher education and creates a statutory Council on Higher Education, which provides advice to the Minister and is responsible for quality assurance and promotion.
4. Curriculum 2005 envisages that general education move away from a racist, apartheid-learning model to a “liberating”, nation building and learner-centered outcomes-based model. The system emphasizes competencies rather than particular knowledge.

According to Barker (2003), the democratic government has made progress in Education.

There has been a significant increase in education expenditure under the post-apartheid democratic government, from R31, 8 billion in 1994 to R51, 1 billion in 2000. South Africa has one of the highest rates of government investment in education in the world. In spite of this, there are still many problems attendant to the South African education system.

Barker (2003) reported that there are some problems, which need special and urgent attention as this hampers the transition to work:

1. The shortage of skilled and capable personnel. Many teachers are still under qualified, especially in subjects such as mathematics and science. There is grave concern among some researchers about the supply of teachers in the years up to 2010.
2. The slowdown in the South African economy from the mid-1990s led to downward adjustments in expected growth, employment opportunities and the availability of education funding. The realization by many learners that they are educated to merely become unemployed contributes to the lack of a learning culture.
3. The number of Senior Certificate passes with endorsement for university entrance dropped from 78 821 in 1995 to 67 707 in 2001- a drop of 14% (Simkins, in Barker 2003). This is likely to cause a sharp fall in university enrolments and degrees granted, which is likely to have a negative impact on the supply of skills to the economy.
4. The educational system has in the past failed to supply the skills needed by the present or future economy. The need for a better balance between academically oriented and vocationally directed schooling has been emphasized by the private sector.
5. Many university degrees are awarded in social sciences and education. Tertiary training institutions are therefore not addressing the long-term need for engineers and scientists properly.
6. In this regard it is still worrying that a very small percentage of African learners receive an exemption in mathematics and science even less get a degree in these

disciplines. Therefore many of the students matriculating or obtaining degrees have unmarketable qualifications.

7. Racial, violence and other manifestation of antisocial values or behaviour are evident in some schools. Educational institutions are at times disrupted by learner or student boycotts and teacher strikes. More recently, racial clashes have also been evident at some schools and educational institutions, which are likely to further disrupt education.

According to Mhone (2000) "it has been recognized that the absence of adequate and smooth mechanisms of facilitating the transition of youths from school to the labour environment constitutes an important weakness that reinforces the marginalization of youth in the labour market". The majority of South African youth find themselves marginalized for their future by the poor quality of their education. What hampers their transition is unemployment, which is particularly high among the unskilled (Bhorat, 2003a and 2003b). The International Labour Organization (ILO, 2004c) reported that young people are often considered unattractive by the employer because of the poor transition from school to work. Poor transition results in lack of knowledge and skills required by the labour market. Even though the current generation of young people is the best-educated generation ever in the third world countries, large segments of the youth population face important deficits in basic education and literacy, which significantly reduces their chances of finding decent work.

What is perhaps most surprising and rather worrying is the economy's poor performance in the absorption of new labour market entrants with a tertiary qualification. It has been estimated that only 7% of those entering the labour force with a tertiary qualification between 1995 and 1999 were able to find employment (Bhorat and McCord, 2003a). In addition to this Klassen and Woolard (1997) found that the individuals that had the greatest difficulty in gaining formal sector employment are young people with no labour market experience and the poorly educated rural unemployed.

There is also inequality in higher education and the labour market where employers discriminate between graduates according to their academic institutions (Moleke, 2003 and Bhorat, 2004a). The Human Science Research Council (2003) reported that only 28% of graduates from historically black universities found immediate employment, compared to 65% of white graduates, whose higher education is perceived by employers to be of better quality. Some of the institutions are viewed as providing a motivated, flexible and mobile workforce for the labour market, while the other institutions are perceived to fail to equip their graduates with these attributes, which would enable them to compete in the labour market (Du Toit, 2003 and Kruss, 2003). Unemployed graduates also emerge because of the mismatch between supply and demand as far as vocational fields and subjects are concerned (Boehm, 2000). This situation is similar with the one in Britain where there is a distinction between the old elite universities and the new universities, where the so-called "new universities" have a large number of students enrolled who face discrimination by employers. These new universities are characterized by having inferior resources (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997). Those who study at these universities come from lower working-class families. This group of young people lives in areas lacking in job opportunities.

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2004c) Education and Training Systems are loosely related to the economic growth of the country. The curriculum provided does not fully correspond with the skills and competencies required for a full productive working life or to those demanded in the labour market. For example Moleke (2003) reported that the higher education institutions should prepare graduates to have knowledge and skills required by the labour market.

Moleke (2003) said that one of the goals of higher education is to promote equity, access and fairness of opportunity. Education, and in particular higher education, is an important supplier of future managers and leaders of industry. Bailey (1990) and Mlatsheni (2002) insist that for this reason it is important that links between higher education and industry are developed, but little attention has been paid to the needs of the labour market. There is little or no guidance to students as they enter higher education. It is not clear how and

why students decide which fields to study. Moleke (2003) mentioned that in the absence of labour market information on the likely prospects of different fields, it could be assumed that these decisions of the students regarding the fields of study are arbitrary. If students failed to get a good guidance from the institutions, then they experience constraints in the labour market.

Sziraczki and Reerink (2004) conducted a survey study about school-to-work transition in Indonesia, and it has revealed some clues about the mismatch between young people's aspirations when joining the labour force and the demands of employers hiring young workers. The main aim of the study was to identify the factors influencing the movement of young people from education and training to the labour market. Inadequate education and training were cited as the main obstacle in finding work for 55% of youth. Only 44% of youth, most of who were already employed, received educational and vocational guidance; only 28% of job seekers reported having received guidance; 70% of those who responded said they had not received vocational guidance and would like to make use of it, if offered to them. 40% of employers reported using informal networks (friends and relatives of employees/managers) to fill vacancies. In the employment search process, 43% percent of job-seeking respondents used informal networks while 24% responded to advertisement and only 8% relied on employment services.

According to the Mhone (2000), "no coherent policy regime governs the transition from school to work". It has been reported that such a regime should consist of mutual reinforcing strategies encompassing employment, social and education policies, vocational training, placement and guidance, and a general active labour market supply of, and demand for labour continuously. Such policies should be particularly important for the 19-25 age group, for whom there are high unemployment rates, as well as for the 25-35 age group who become discouraged with the job search and may then withdraw from the labour force".

4.1.3 Skills needed in the South African Labour Market

Structural and technological changes in the South African economy have resulted in the demand for certain skills among employees. Skilled and highly skilled employees are demanded to compete in the labour market. At the moment the country is experiencing the mismatch problem where graduates holding certain qualifications face unemployment. There is a mismatch between the type of skills/qualifications held by many and the demand for certain skills/qualifications, which are in short supply. Abedian (2004) reported that the higher unemployment rate among qualified tertiary graduates is attributed to mismatch between the kind of skills and training they receive in the tertiary education sector as opposed to what is needed in the labour market. According to Kruss (2003) the structure of the economy and employment in South Africa has changed radically after apartheid while the education system has not changed enough to meet the needs of the economy.

Bhorat and Lundall (2003b) and Bhorat (2004c) indicated that employers suggested number of attributes, which are important for prospective employment. These include: communication skills, computer skills, problem solving skills, business skills, planning skills, learning ability and creativity. The table below provides a list of skills needed in the South African labour market.

Table 4: Indicative List of Skills that are in Short Supply in the Public and Private Sectors

Main Occupational Category	Minor Occupational Category
Scientists and researchers	Experienced and qualified scientists and researchers across all disciplines, but with emphasis on those working in scientific and technological changes.
Managers	Experienced and qualified senior managers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project manager • Financial Management • Production planning • Logistics management • Business leadership

<p>Professionals and qualified experienced technicians & associated professionals</p>	<p>Financial specialists, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chartered Accountants • Actuaries <p>Experienced ICT specialists, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer Programmer • Computer systems analyst • Computer systems designer • Professional Software engineers • Computer network management 	<p>Sectoral professionals and technicians, including Macro-economic researcher/analyst</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venture Capital specialist • Hydrocarbon specialist • Energy Planning specialist • Medical specialists, including medical officers: Theatre, ICU, Orthopaedics, Paediatrics and Advanced Midwives, Health Therapists: Physiotherapists, Dental therapist, radiographer • Bioprocess Business Area specialists • Hydro geologist • Agricultural Economist • Forensic investigators
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Main occupational category	Minor Occupational Category	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equitable Share Modelling • State Veterinarians • Food Safety & Quality Assurance Specialist • Medical specialists including nurses • Pharmacists • Forensic Pathologist • Geo hydrological Modeller • Environmental Geochemist • Biotechnology Manager • Agricultural product technicians • Quantity Surveyors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architects <p>Engineering, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrical • Mechanical • Chemical • Electronic Sensor systems • Coal mining • Mechanical and mining including Rock Engineers • Environmental Engineer • Radio Astronomy
<p>Artisan & related workers</p>	<p>Experienced and qualified artisans, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrician • Millwrights • Specialist steel welders 	

Sources: Seta (SSPs) 2000; Bureau of Market Research, University of South Africa, "Key skills shortages and the fast tracking of skills development", December 2001, and SDPU (2003) Survey of Public Sector Skills Needs.

In addition to the above skills, in the Primary Sector there is a large demand for skills associated with HIV/AIDS. Human Science Research Council (1999b) reported that there is a shortage of nurses in the country. There are 3,000 vacancies for nurses and this number is greater than the number of nurses graduating from the further and higher education sectors. Nurses are said to be associate professionals, employed in both private and public sectors of the economy. The need for nurses could be monitored on the basis of existing and vacant posts in relation to the bed occupancy rate in public and private hospitals. There is also a reasonable overlap between the occupational group, nurses, and the skills and competencies that need to be applied in a nursing situation. This contradicts what Borat and Lundall (2003b) and Borat (2004c) said about graduates with qualifications in nursing. These nurses also face problems of unemployment, especially black rural South Africans because in the service sector specific skills that are highest in demand are more analytical and interpretative skills. The above-presented skills indicate situations where demand for skills exceeds supply in relation to certain jobs and occupations. Only people with high qualification and who have work experience and skills find it easy to get jobs.

4.1.4 Unemployed Graduates by Field of Study

There is a serious concern that the qualifications obtained by most of the graduates do not secure employment for them. Lickindorf (1993) in Tlaletsi (2002) observed that numerous employers did not prefer to employ BA graduates. BA graduates find it more difficult to find employment compared to their counterparts with Engineering and Accounting degrees. This argument was supported by the study conducted by Moleke (2003), who discovered that graduates in Medical Science had the highest rate in finding employment (79%) followed by Engineering graduates (77%), while Law employment rate is 49,6%, Humanities and Arts with 46,8%.

Wilson et al (1999) reported on his study on Employment Trends in the Social and Human Sciences that the demand for undergraduate social and human science degrees has in the labour market decreased from 26% in 1976 to only 2% in 1996. The post-graduate Social and Human Sciences demand increased from 4% since 1988 to 17% in

1996. The White paper on Higher education (1997) states that one of the goals of an expanding higher education system is to expand enrolments in post-graduate programmes in order to address the high level skills necessary for social and economic development and to provide for the needs of the academic labour market.

Even though the graduates from the Humanities and Social Science are faced with a high unemployment rate, there are still large numbers of students at the universities who enroll within humanities subjects. The enrolment figures indicate that majority of graduates at the university are in the field of education or humanities – together these categories represent over 59% of total graduates. Whereas for the Technikons only 28% of their graduates come from the humanities and social science category. (Council on Higher Education, 2000). A profile of tertiary education in Youth Development Network (YDN, 2004a) reveals that increasingly Blacks are beginning to make significant inroads in terms of attaining qualifications. But only a small percentage of Blacks enroll in the natural sciences, which is one of the more demanding skills in the labour market. This is because of the historical weaknesses of Mathematics and Science teaching in Black schools.

A research on the linkages between education and the labour market indicated that African graduates have qualifications mainly in the fields of teaching and nursing while whites are in managerial, service and scientific professions (Council on Higher Education, 2002). In Boehm's paper (2000) the employers stressed the high relevance of mathematics and thinking skills for finding a job.

4.1.5 The Brain Drain

South Africa is experiencing a skills shortage and this is a major concern for the future development of the country. One of the more worrying features of the skilled labour force dynamic is that those who obtain high levels of qualifications appear to have a high propensity to leave the country. People with higher education are relatively mobile compared to those with less education (Moleke, 2003).

According to Moleke (2003) those moving abroad are largely in the fields of education, humanities and arts. Graduates from these fields have fewer labour market prospects in South Africa. This group of people therefore is expected to want to move to other labour markets in search of better prospects. Medical sciences and Agriculture also had higher proportions of those who had already moved abroad. That is why there is a shortage of nurses in this country.

Business Day (in Bhorat, 2001) estimated that between the years, 1994 and 1997, White employment fell by about 90 000 and large declines in labour force participation and employment were reported among whites between the 16-24 and 25-34 age groups. Low labour force absorption rate had resulted in large number of Whites emigrating. Business Day (in Bhorat, 2001) reported that a study by the South African Network of Skills Abroad (SANSA) base at the University of Cape Town, estimated that between 1994 and 1997 the number of workers going to five selected developed countries totaled about 33 000. Those who are leaving the country are mostly young White graduates who are at the beginning of their working life. The official statistics on emigration from South Africa do not provide a breakdown for the different ethnic groups in South Africa, but recent surveys indicate that Whites are far more likely to consider emigrating than are Blacks (HSRC Fact Sheet, 2004).

There is a contradiction between the fact that official unemployment among Black youth is high in all educational levels and quite low for all education levels among White youths. At the same time Bhorat (2001) argued that between the years 1994 and 1997, the whites experienced large declines in labour force participation and employment. Bhorat stated that while White unemployment is increasing, the rate of employment for Blacks, Coloured and Asians is becoming constant or increasing. This is against the statistics about the employment of whites being two times higher than Blacks and other races. Whites are mostly holding the qualifications that are in great demand in the labour market.

4.2 The Reasons for Rising Unemployment among Youth Graduates

Unemployment among graduates in South Africa is caused by several factors.

4.2.1 Population growth

Due to the significant increase in the economically active population, the economy has not been able to generate sufficient jobs to absorb a large proportion of labour market entrants (Du Toit, 2003). According to Tlaletsi (2002) there is an increased labour force participation rate among graduates. This is more visible in the number of young people opting for higher education and graduating each year. In 1998 universities and technikons produced 75 000 graduates and diplomats (CHE, 2000.) . A comparison of 1996 and 2001 higher education census data (which includes those younger than twenty years of age) shows that the population percentage with completed secondary and tertiary education has increased (Sunday times, 2003).

4.2.2 Lack of experience

After completion of the necessary education, youth wanting to enter the labour market for the first time still face shut doors. Most of the youth who finish their studies usually lack working experiences. Sometimes you find that a new graduate would apply for a job but, the employer may require five years experience, which a newly graduate does not have (CASE, 2000). The employers prefer the experienced worker to the graduate with theoretical knowledge. Getting such initial experience is a major difficulty most young people face. Education and training systems rarely offer students practical experience of what they are learning. Typically once young people have some working experience, their chances of finding new employment can increase dramatically, (ILO, 2004c).

4.2.3 Inappropriate way of searching for a job

Sometimes the graduates do not use proper methods of looking for a job and can easily influence youth unemployment. These include lack of labour market information, inexperience with the processes of applying for jobs and lack of access to the main information networks in the labour market. Usually the unemployed do not have relevant

information about where the jobs are available and how to obtain them. According to Moleke (2003) and CASE (2000) most of the youth who were looking for a job relied on informal mechanisms to find it. These include using contacts (86%), door-to-door search (85%), newspaper (72%) or their own efforts (67%). Significantly fewer unemployed used employment agencies (20%), the Department of Labour (10%) or state-sponsored employment schemes (6%) to find jobs.

4.2.4 Preference among employers for non-graduated individuals

Carnoy (1980) indicated that sometimes the employers employ only those with low education rather than graduated ones as they can pay them less. Mhone (2000) indicates that African youth are perceived to be cost-efficient in certain jobs such as Agriculture even with lower levels of education. Those with lower education are perceived to take any jobs knowing that they will be paid less unlike the graduates who expect higher pay.

4.2.5 Lack of career guidance in schools

HSRC media release (2003) highlighted the lack of relevant information on the country's labour market to the careers of matriculants. Most students enrolled at university with no idea about job prospects in different sectors. Little career guidance is available to potential university students to help inform their decision on a field of study.

4.3 Unemployment among Youth Graduates: Racial and Gender Inequalities

South Africa's youth unemployment is not equally spread among different population groups. There are disparities in the labour market regarding population group, place of residence and sex. Black, female and rural youth have less access to the labour market than their white female and male counterparts, (Limpopo Youth Economic Summit Report, 2003 and Mlatsheni, 2002).

4.3.1 Location

According to official sources/statistics, the unemployment rate in rural areas is higher than in urban areas. Young women and men in rural areas are often more disadvantaged than those who live in urban settings. They have less access to services and facilities and

opportunities for employment are far less than in urban areas. Not only are rural youths more likely to come from poor schools and institutions that provide them with a low quality of education, but also they have much fewer employment opportunities than their urban counterparts. The labour absorption rates for urban youths stood at 34%, compared to 22% for youths in non-urban areas in 1996 (Mhone, 2000). This is a significant figure when one considers that five out of the nine provinces in South Africa are primarily rural. Rural areas contain only about 25% of youths aged between 14-17 years and 14% of youth aged between 30-35 years (National Youth Commission, 1997). The latter signifies patterns of migration, where youth flock to the city at the start of their occupational cycle to find employment, where their low level of education puts them one step behind urban youths. The consequences of overcrowding in urban areas due to urbanization are caused by rural unemployment.

4.3.2 Age

Barker (2003) and Everatt (1994) reported that nearly three-quarters of all unemployed persons are younger than 35 years of age. Most (about 70%) of them never worked before, which means they would not qualify for unemployment insurance benefits. Such persons therefore have no sources of support other than their families, and may turn to crime or begging (National Youth Commission Policy, 2000).

4.3.3 Gender

In all age groups, women suffer higher unemployment rate than men. This difference is mostly pronounced for those over 35 years. Women in the 16-24 youth bracket suffer the unemployment rate of 38% as compared to the 28% suffered by their male counterparts. (Stats SA, 2002 and Barker, 2003).

Unemployment among women graduates is high because women tend to be clustered in the humanities, and in particular education and nursing where there is less demand (Bhorat and Lundall, 2003b). They do remain seriously under-represented in science, engineering and technology and in the business management fields of study, which are currently, and mostly in demand in the labour market. These programmes produce higher

economic benefits to successful graduates than education and the humanities (Council on Higher Education, 2000). Research done by various South African companies found that women do not have confidence in their own capabilities of qualification, and undervalue their efforts and contributions at work (Mail & Guardian, 2003: Feb 21-27) Women in Business.

4.3.4 Race

By far the highest unemployment rate according to the official definition is found among Blacks. Unemployment and other social ills are still disproportionately higher for Blacks. Statistics South Africa (Stats SA, 2002) showed that Black graduates are faced with an increase in unemployment. The rate of unemployed Black youth with tertiary qualification in 1995 was 10.01% and increased in 2002 with 25.95%. Other races also faced an increase in unemployment, but the situation of Blacks is deteriorating.

Table 5: Tertiary Educated Unemployment rates by race: 1995 and 2002

Race /Year	1995	2002
African/Blacks	10.01	25.95
Coloured	8.49	9.86
Asian	5.56	8.21
White	2.26	4.63
Total	6.44	15.37

Sources: October Household Survey (Stats SA, 1996) & Labour Force Survey (Stats SA, 2002).

Bhorat and McCord (2003a) also indicated that among those with tertiary education, African/Blacks employment decreased by 77 121 between the period 1995-1999, Coloured employment showed marginal growth, White employment rose by 66 741 and Indian employment showed significant growth. The table below reveals significant race differentials.

Table 6: Tertiary Employment Growth by Race

Race	1995	1999	Change	% Change
African	651245	574124	-77121	-11.84
Coloured	84032	86638	2606	3.10
Asian	60623	69816	9193	15.16
White	634204	700945	66741	10.52
Total	1430104	1436484	6380	0.45

Source: Council on Higher Education, (2003). Relations between Higher Education and the Labour Market.

This table shows that the demand for non-African/Black graduates increased, with White graduates being the primary beneficiaries.

A HSRC survey found that while university graduates have a distinct advantage in the country's competitive labour market some historical hurdles remain. There is still a difference along racial lines where 70% of the White graduates find employment immediately, compared with 43 % of Africans and 42, 2% of Coloured (IRIN, 2003). It continued that higher proportion of graduates from black universities (65, 4%) experienced periods of unemployment compared to graduates from White universities (34, 6%).

South African employers do not attach great value to qualifications from historically black institutions (Kruss, 2003). The employers feel that the qualifications held by African work seekers do not accurately reflect their skills levels even if they have proper qualifications in the fields that are considered to be high in demand. According to Borat (2004a) one of the reasons of Black graduates unemployment could be the mistrust in the quality of education of youths from traditionally Black institutions.

The HSRC (2003) argued that graduates still have the advantage over lesser-qualified jobseekers in the South African labour market. It has been found that more than half (60%) of graduates were able to secure employment immediately after obtaining a degree

and 93.8% of the remaining group succeeded in finding a job within the first year of searching. However, not all groups are equally successful in their search for a first job. Black graduates battle to find employment

5. Youth Livelihood Opportunities

5.1 Youth Aspirations

The difficult livelihood circumstances faced by many young people have resulted in deep-seated frustrations. Young people are beginning to feel a sense of alienation from the larger society and a sense of betrayal by the government, when they realize that their lives have not radically changed for the better since 1994. In a recent study conducted in Limpopo Province Mkandawire et al (2001) found that the majority of the youth are concerned that the government is not doing enough to create jobs for them. They argue that while they served as “foot soldiers” during apartheid struggle, now that freedom has been achieved they have been forgotten.

According to Mkandawire et al (2001), aspirations for young women and men are not radically different. Most aspirations of young people seem to revolve around the need for a sustainable livelihood. What seems to be different are the means of attaining such a livelihood. Among male youth there is the preoccupation of looking at migration into the cities as a major option for earning a livelihood. In spite of the well-known difficulties of acquiring a job in the urban areas, the city is perceived as a preferred option to living in rural areas. There is always a lingering hope that one might land a job, besides the other social opportunities such as going to soccer matches, and youth drinking and dancing bashes.

According to Slabbert et al (1994) young people have a wide range of job aspirations. Young people aspire to work as professionals, managers, service workers and factory workers. It was also found that those who are unable to find a job choose either to open a business or become involved in informal sector activity. Young people see the informal sector as the last resort to which they would turn if they become desperate, while in the

study conducted in South Africa, Malawi and Zambia over half of the unemployed youth intend to start their own business, (Chigunta et al, 2003).

Both male and female youth do not consider education as the key option for sustainable livelihood. In a province that has the poorest matric results and high rates of unemployment, proceeding with one's education, may not be the most rational option for a sustainable livelihood. Not surprisingly, therefore, some female youth even look at marriage as a livelihood option (Mkandawire et al, 2001). These sentiments among female youth are wide spread.

5.2 Youth Unemployment and Livelihood Options

The concept "sustainable livelihood" has in the recent past been adopted by a number of donor agencies, academic institutions as well as international NGOs as a useful framework for addressing poverty in the developing world. Among these include Institute of Development Studies and the World Bank. The key features of this approach include sustainability and people-centered, dynamic responsive and participatory engagement in addressing development needs of the disadvantaged communities including the youth. The approach acknowledges that young women and men are not only distinct from adults but also from each other. It recognizes the interconnected surroundings of family, living arrangements, finances, school, work, ecological environment and social life and development (Mkandawire et al, 2001).

In this study, Chamber and Conway's (1992) definition of sustainable livelihoods has been adopted. Chambers and Conway define livelihoods as encompassing capabilities, resources and opportunities that enable people to pursue individual and household economic goals. Economic goals can range along a continuum from survival to longer-term security for future generations. Different goals imply different strategies, often dependent upon different resource levels, vulnerability and life cycles. Capabilities include skills, good health, self-confidence, decision-making ability and self-esteem. Resources include financial assets (e.g. loans, savings, physical assets such as houses, land, infrastructure), and social assets such as youth networks, social ties and trusting

relationships. Opportunities include activities to generate income or to invest in assets. Activities may include self-employment, wage employment, home-based work, domestic production and the maintenance of reciprocal social and community relations that build social capital.

The youth of South Africa are faced with difficult choices for survival. Post Apartheid South Africa has not been able to provide the livelihood opportunities they had hoped for. Youth remain marginalized in society, which results in limited access to resources including kinship networks, education, land and technology. These challenges are not unique to youth. Young women are particularly affected in a patriarchal, cultural and social context, which marginalizes them in relation to skills-development, knowledge and institutional support. This leaves them vulnerable to unwanted pregnancies, prostitution and HIV/AIDS as well as other forms of abuse which further limit their choices of life (African National Congress Youth League, 2000, UN, 2003 and ILO, 2004b).

Youth from all locations, urban, peri-urban as well as rural areas have rather limited options to earn a livelihood. Most remain dependent on their parents well beyond the age of thirty years. In South Africa, the youth whether literate or illiterate, have never looked at land as a source of livelihood. In a survey conducted by the HSRC, it was reported that at least 60% of the youth expressed readiness to join the informal sector if they were unable to enter the formal job market (Slabbert et al, 1994). According to Mkandawire et al (2001) there are 58% of young people (Blacks) who operated in the informal sector, like running their own enterprises, such as small shops called spaza, shebeens, car wash and others selling fruits and vegetables.

There are those who do commercial sex and other underground economy livelihood activities including selling of illegal drugs. In South Africa, among female youth, prostitution was identified as a major means of livelihood. In some instances men have resorted to commercial sex as a livelihood option. In spite of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, anecdotal evidence seems to suggest that commercial sex is on the increase. In some cities people of the nether world organize the trade. In other cities, including townships,

the trade seems not to be organized; rather young females are engaged in what might be termed “free lancing”. That means they live normally in their homes and in some cases with their parents but operate at night in streets, shebeens or streets near hotels. The risks of these young sex workers is not only to health, especially STDs and HIV/AIDS infection, but also exposure to related health hazards such as drug abuse as well as the risk of being raped (Mkandawire et al, 2001).

5.2.1 Crime as an emerging Youth Livelihood Option

Chigunta et al (2003) in his study revealed that young people regard illicit or illegitimate activities as a form of self-employment or business enterprise. It has been discovered that the illegitimate activities involve some young men dealing in illegal and highly dangerous substances. These include selling illicit drugs like marijuana while others were engaged in extortionist activities, vandalism, burglary and theft.

Chigunta et al (2003) reported there is a difference in the major sources of income between the female and male youth. This study revealed that 46.5% of female youth were relying on a spouse or partner as major sources of income. In contrast the major sources of income for 51.3% male youth were casual work compared to only 8.5% of female youth. However, many young men and women still face serious difficulties in attempting to start their own enterprises in the informal sector. Therefore the unemployment and underemployment status of the youth is reflected in the almost visible phenomenon of idleness – a sign of laziness.

6. The Effects of Unemployment on an Individual

Unemployment is a particularly serious problem for the youth. Willis (in Haralambos and Holborn, 1991) found that unemployment disrupts the normal transition to adulthood. The young unemployed are denied opportunity to become independent from parents and often experience long periods of poverty. Willis believes that financial hardships prevent them from enjoying a normal social life. Without work, leisure activities have less meaning and a lot of time is spent at home. Young people are left in “limbo” in a state of suspended animation, unable to look forward or make the transition to adulthood status.

They become bored, frustrated and demoralized. This often leads to stress discovered and conflict within the family (Paledi, 2000).

6.1 Psychological Reactions to Unemployment

The psychological reactions are often quite different amongst the newly unemployed compared to those who have been in the situation for a longer period. Fagin and Little (in Haralambos and Holborn, 1991) claim to have identified four main stages that the unemployed undergo:

1. The first stage is called the "Phase of shock". This stage consist of disbelief and disorientation
2. The second stage is that of denial and optimism. In this stage the unemployed are positive and optimistic. They tend to seek work enthusiastically during this stage.
3. Fagin and Little found that nearly all those who remain unemployed went through the third stage, anxiety and distress. The unemployed become more concerned about finding work and anxious about their future.
4. The final stage was found to be resignation and adjustments. The long-term unemployed eventually come to terms with their situation. They accepted that their prospects of finding work were slim, lowered their expectations for the future and became apathetic. O'Donnell (1994) adds that at the psychological level there is the shock, shame, loss of confidence among the unemployed.

6.2 Social Effects of Unemployment

Fagin and Little (in Haralambos and Holborn, 1991), again claim that work gives people a sense of identity of who they are and what their role in society is. It is a source of relationships outside the family. Unemployment tends to reduce social contacts. They also point out that work provides an opportunity to develop skills and creativity and a sense of purpose. According to them work divides the day and week into time periods. They found that the unemployed had difficulty organizing their time without this framework. A sense of purpose tended to be lost with unemployment. O'Donnell (1994) is of the same opinion that unemployment tends to be socially isolating resulting in withdrawal from contact with others.

6.3. Gender and the Effects of Unemployment

Sinfield (in Haralambos and Holborn, 1991) believes that unemployment is a particular problem for men. Sinfield stated that women are expected to be primarily committed to being housewives and mothers rather than workers. Work is often seen as a central source of identity for men, but as less important for women. Women might be expected to suffer less from unemployment because domestic life offers them a sense of identity and purpose. However, Henwood and Miles (in Haralambos and Holborn 1991) carried out a study comparing the situation of unemployed men and women. They found that for a short time, it helped for women to turn their attention to domestic work. After a while they began to feel isolated. They miss the social contacts and sense of purpose provided by employment outside the home.

Young people who are unemployed are more likely to feel alienated and estranged from a society, which fails to find a useful role for them at work. Unemployed youth are more likely to engage in anti-social behavior and commit criminal acts. Lowering of self-esteem, a feeling of uselessness and a sense that life may be meaningless can easily affect the unemployed youth. They perceive themselves as a burden to their families as they are not contributing to the family income (Everatt, 1994). Slabbert et al (1994) reported that being unemployed carries a stigma and a sense of inferiority thereby increasing feelings of worthlessness and frustration.

The Northern Province Development Organization reported that unemployment among youth is causing more problems that the government has to face. The youths who consume and abuse alcohol get money from their parents and they lie about what they intend to do with the borrowed money. If they do not get financial help they steal or rob people. There are those who resort to sex as entertainment and are likely to get STDs, AIDS or unplanned pregnancies, which often lead to street abortions. Therefore unemployment causes young people to become robbers, rapists, and killers or to risk their health in unsafe abortions, or commit suicide (Youth Development Network, 2000) and O'Donnell 1994). Chigunta et al (2003) also suggested that unemployed youth often

engage in anti-social behavior as a way of confronting the frustrations and shame of failing to obtain independent livelihoods.

7. Policy Interventions

Youth Development Network, (2004b) reported that for a number of young people in South Africa, the transition from school to work poses considerable challenges. The education and training sector, labour market and youth policy have in recent years placed significant focus on the plight of unemployed youth. Youth unemployment has emerged as a major developmental challenge for a post-apartheid South Africa. Mhone (2000) indicated that youth unemployment has to be addressed as part of an overall transformation process. As a result of this focus, a number of programmes and policies, designed to give young people a sense of direction about their futures and increase their access to opportunities, have been established.

7.1 The Employment Strategy Framework

In the context of high and persistent unemployment, the Employment Strategy Framework was formed by government to give direction to the initiatives addressing the problem of unemployment. The aim of the strategy was to increase the demand of labour and to strengthen the employability of labour. This government strategy was focusing on the disadvantaged people and vulnerable groups. For young people, it was indicated that they will receive attention by promoting youth employment and skills development with the consideration of a youth Learnership wage, a youth training subsidy, improved career service in school, Internships and improved vocational training.

7.2 Programmes to enhance Youth Employability

7.2.1 National Youth Service

National Youth Service (NYS) is broadly defined as the “involvement of young people in activities which provide benefits to the community whilst developing the abilities of young people through service and learning”. This young people are disengaged because of a sense of powerlessness and irrelevance; accordingly they require access to

opportunities for participation as individuals as well as a generation. Thus National Youth Service, as a special government initiative, seeks to contribute to the enhancement of youth as present and future social capital. An enhanced citizen status of young people means that they can participate meaningfully in the political, social and economic life of the country, (National Youth Commission, 1998).

The mission and the goal of the programme:

The mission of the programme is to engage young people in a systematic programme that provides them with vocational skills and educational training while contributing to reconstruction and development and enhancing their employability. It imparts life skills to the participants and encourages the spirit of community service.

Specific objectives:

- The specific objectives of the National Youth Service programme are to seek to contribute to the transformation of the South African society through reconstruction and development programmes, which involve young people in service delivery and learning.
- The programme provides jobs for those people (especially youth) who cannot find work elsewhere. Particularly those who have not worked before are considered “unemployable” in the formal jobs.
- It aims to support individuals transformation through the growth of civic awareness in the young people involved, through their experience of service and through the development of their skills” (National Youth Commission, 1998).
- A further aim is to increase the employability of young people. Young people are trained in technical skills (e.g. HIV/AIDS counseling), and then have an opportunity to apply and reinforce their learning by providing community services. The NYS model reflects an integrated approach to community service, skills development and access to employment opportunities. The programme equips young people with sufficient skills and experience that, on moving on from such programmes, they can find regular employment in the formal sector.

- The National Youth Service programme delivers basic needs by contributing to the provision of housing infrastructure, etc.

National Youth Service has been motivated by the South African youth sector as a programmatic vehicle which can respond to the multiple needs of young people and enable them to access new opportunities for employment and income generation, skills development and personal development, while contributing to national objectives for reconstruction and development of South Africa.

7.2.2 Internship programme

An internship is a planned, structured, and managed work experience that is occupationally based and incorporates a skills programme designed to produce meaningful competencies which may earn an intern an education and training credit. The expected units of outcomes and performance are framed for mutual and optimal benefit to both the intern and the host department. The work experience should increase and extend theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom through carefully selected practical work assignments. Internships allow the intern to come to a better understanding of his/her prospective career and provide the opportunities to demonstrating his/her abilities and talents to the host organization (Internship Framework for the Public Service (2000) and National Youth Commission Policy, 2000)

The goal and mission of the Employment internship programmes are to address the lack of work experience among young people. According to the Internship Framework for the Public Service and African National Congress Youth League, (1998), the Internship Programme aims at addressing the following main problems:

- Shortage of skilled, qualified and committed professional candidates for positions in the public service
- Low level of practical work experience, discipline and understanding of the needs and realities of the public service workplace among graduates
- Low awareness among students of the job and career opportunities in the public service

- Poor access to work experience for students and the unemployed youth

Outcomes:

Thus, the internship programme includes the following deliverables:

- Relevant and meaningful work experience provided to build skills that are accredited by the appropriate sectoral education and training authorities
- Interns provided with opportunities to demonstrate their capacities for work and expose them to the demands of work in the Public Service in order to inform their career choices
- Strengthening the potential of the labour market to supply the skills needed
- Basic competencies established in occupations that are strategic to service delivery but that are experienced as difficult to fill appropriately

Government can use internships to recruit young people to needy areas so as to develop a public service cadre committed to transformation and a high standard of service delivery (Internship Framework for the Public Service, 2000).

7.2.3 Youth Entrepreneurship (Government Youth Fund-Umsobomvu)

The drive to develop young entrepreneurs is largely being spearheaded by the Umsobomvu Youth Fund (UYF). The (UYF) is a government created development finance agency for skills development and employment creation for youth. In fulfilling its mandate, the UYF has spearheaded the following initiatives to stimulate and promote youth entrepreneurship. Creating jobs and developing skills among young South Africans are the main aims of the Umsobomvu Youth Fund. The fund was established in January 2001 with a mandate to create a platform for job creation, skills development and transfer for South Africa's young people (Umsobomvu Youth Fund, 2002)

Umsobomvu youth funds' activities are spread across three programmes:

- Skills development and transfer
- The youth entrepreneurship programme
- Contact information and counselling

Skills development and transfer

The youth fund has two major programmes that form part of its skills development and transfer programme:

- ***School to work*** is designed to transfer high-level technical skills and to facilitate work experience for unemployed matric and tertiary graduates. It also aims to introduce black youth into previously inaccessible careers, such as IT and accounting.
- ***Youth service*** focuses on unemployed youth who have no tertiary education, enabling them to acquire the skills, competencies and experience they require to achieve economic independence.

Youth entrepreneurship

The youth entrepreneurship programme has three major projects:

- ***Enterprise funding***
- ***Micro-finance*** is focused on entry-level investments, and its pilot projects with the Nations Trust and Nicro enterprise finance are funding micro-enterprise and co-operatives.
- ***Business development services*** voucher programme helps young entrepreneurs to access quality business support from approved service providers through vouchers, ranging in value from R1 500 to R23 000.

Recently, the *Take it to the People* project was launched to create locally based economic opportunities for young people. The project focuses on income-generation and self-employment for young people living in 21 urban and rural areas identified as significant “poverty pockets”. The project aims to develop local solutions to unemployment by investigating options for youth development in the form of micro and small business and co-operatives. The project will work in conjunction with local municipalities and donors.

Contact, information and counselling

The contact information and counselling programme offers information and counselling support regarding career development, employment and entrepreneurship through a youth line, advisory centre and an Internet portal. The first 12 of 33 planned advisor centres

have already opened in the province of Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Northern Cape, North West, and Western Cape.

Youth Advisory Centre

Youth Advisory Centers (YAC's) are largely funded by the UYF and implemented by NGO's. The YAC's are located in communities with large youth populations. YAC's were developed to promote contact, information and counseling services to young people. Each YAC has computers and online connectivity as well as vital information relating to careers and job opportunities. YAC's also provide training workshops on life skills and job related skills e.g. CV writing, interview techniques etc (Umsobomvu Youth Fund, 2002).

7.2.4 Learnerships

The need to establish learnership division was decided at a SETA Authority meeting in October 2000. Learnerships are tools to address problematic features of the South African labour market. They build relationships between structures learning and structured work experiences, as a learner has to be work-ready before a certificate is issued. Learnerships are under the supervision of the Department of Labour. Learnerships refer to the work place based learning pathways. The goal and mission of the programme is to facilitate skills development and entry into the labour market (Education, Training and Development Practices- Sector Education and Training Authority, 2001)

Target population

The learnership programme is targeting youth and other sectors marginalized by the labour market, such as women, the disabled and rural people in general.

Specific objectives:

- The objective of the programme is to enable learners to acquire professional or occupational competence in areas where there is clear demand and opportunity in the economy.

- To facilitate skills acquisitions and provide the destitute people who are in the learnership programmes with learnerships allowances as some form of income relief.

The Skills Development Act, aimed at developing the overall skills base in the country, guides the implementation of the Learnership programme, and targets young people as a key beneficiary. Young people receive theoretical training in an identified area through an accredited training service provider. In addition, they are placed in a structured workplace in order to experience what it really means, and what is required to work in a company/organization (Education, Training and Development Practices- Sector Education and Training Authority, 2001).

7.2.5 Expanded Public Works Programme

The expanded public works programme by the Department of Public Works is seen as a key short-term mechanism to increase employability, provide work experience and create value chains through entrepreneurship. Young people have been identified as beneficiaries in major public works programmes designed to be labour intensive.

Expanded public works programme is a nation wide programme that aims to draw significant numbers of the unemployed into productive employment. The programme hopes that workers and the unemployed will gain skills while they work, which should increase their capacity to continue working elsewhere once they leave the programme at the same time earning an income (Department of Labour, 2003).

The EPWP intends utilizing public sector budgets to reduce and alleviate unemployment. This will enhance the ability of workers to earn an income, either through the labour market or through entrepreneurial activity. The primary goal of the National Expanded Public Works Programme is to alleviate unemployment for a minimum of one million people (at least 40% of women, 30% youth and 2% disabled) in South Africa between 2004 and 2009.

7.2.6 South African Graduate Development Association

In 1997 the South African Graduate Development Association was established to lend a helping hand to graduates who could not find employment. SAGDA helps prepare graduates for the world of work and for community service. Most importantly, SAGDA helps graduates find work by facilitating graduates placements in business, government and NGO's (Machaba, 2001).

Youth Development Network

The *Youth Development Network* is a national network of seven youth development organizations operating in South Africa. The YDN formed in July 1998 to explore ways of increasing the impact of youth development programmes, sharing information and best practices amongst the member organizations, securing resources to support youth development programmes.

A survey on *youth employment programmes* conducted by Youth Development Network indicated that a great deal of emphasis and value are placed on entrepreneurial skills development as a possible vehicle for addressing youth unemployment. A survey shows that most young people are motivated to start their own businesses, and create their own employment, because their chances of finding jobs in the current labour market are so limited.

The following are some of the youth employment programmes:

7.2.7 The Youth Development Trust (YDT)

Background

The Youth Development Trust is an affiliate of the International Youth Foundation (IYF). It was founded in 1987 as the Human Resources Trust to facilitate the distribution of international donor funds to local development organizations. The focus of these initiatives was to strengthen the service delivery of youth development organizations.

The *Make A Connection Programme* is an international partnership between the International Youth Foundation (IYF) and Nokia. It uses life skills to promote positive youth development and focuses on giving young people and opportunity to make connections with their communities, families, peers and themselves. The programme was launched in South Africa in April 2000, and is presently operating in seven countries (Make a Connection, 2004)

Target group

Participant in the programme are graduates who have been unemployed for at least one year after graduating from a Department of Education registered technikon or university. They must be in possession of a degree or diploma in the faculties of science, engineering, commerce, management, technology, social science, humanities or related fields. The participants must also be residents of South Africa and not older than 28. Applicants undergo a strict selection process.

Description of the programme

The *Make A Connection programme* offers a completely subsidized three-month course providing integrated and holistic training for participants in the areas of life skills, entrepreneurship and information and communication technologies. Graduates are assisted in finding employment by reputable placement agencies.

Youth Development

Through its life skills component the programme looks at formal and informal ways in which young adults develop self-confidence and self-worth. Many of the participants in the programme have low self-esteem, a common problem related to not being able to find employment. Most of them do not have the necessary skills and training to look for employment and often do not make it past sending their CVs to a few prospective employers. The programme helps participants see that work itself is a powerful developmental tool, a means of learning, building responsibility and personal growth.

Evidence of Success

Since the programme started in 2000 approximately 102 participants have completed the course. Of this number, more than 50% of the graduates have been successfully placed in formal employment or internships (Youth Development Network, 2004b). However, the above policy and programme interventions have not been able to reach most young people living in rural environments

7.3 Challenges Faced by Youth Programmes.

7.3.1 Lack of support from the private sector

Many of the initiatives that are promoted by the government need private sector support and engagement to be successful. For example, the learnerships initiatives are dependent on young people accessing work experience through companies and organizations. Companies in South Africa have not really come to the table in terms of supporting these initiatives (Youth Development Network, 2004a).

7.3.2 Finding Appropriate Service Providers

There is a large pool of organizations in South Africa providing services to youth. These service providers have particular experience in a selected field e.g. construction, but they lack the vital experience and understanding of what it means to work with young people within a developmental context (Foley, 2001).

7.3.3 Lack of integration across Departments

Many of the initiatives depend upon significant collaboration at the national, provincial and local level. The government does not lend itself easily to integration and high-level collaboration. Since the implementation of these programmes, graduate unemployment and youth unemployment in general has been rising from 1994 and 2000. The success can only be seen if the unemployment rate of graduates is decreasing. This raises some questions whether these programmes are really achieving the intended goals of creating job opportunities for young people (Youth Development Network, 2004a).

In addition, YDN discovered that many organizations lack formal standards, against which to measure the effectiveness or success of the work they are doing. The youth programmes highlight the need for coherence between what is taught at school and the skills required in the labour market. There is a need for enormous amount resources to be ploughed into youth employment. While entrepreneurial skills development may be part of the strategy to tackle unemployment, caution needs to be exercised. The youth unemployment challenges in South Africa are complicated, and need to be addressed through comprehensive, integrated and sustainable strategies. Young people in the country are faced with an array of social challenges, unemployment and poverty. Starting a small business without the capacity to sustain it, or cope with other related challenges, can actually perpetuate the problem (Youth Development Network, 2004b).

7.4 Summary

In this chapter I reviewed the literature from previous studies that has been conducted on youth unemployment. It looked at aspects such as background information on unemployment among graduates globally, nationally and provincially, transition from school to work, the current status of South African labour market, the skills demanded by the South African Labour Market, the brain drain, the reason for rising unemployment among graduates, the impact of education on employability, racial and inequalities in the job market, unemployed graduates by field of study and policy interventions. The literature reviewed emphasizes again the lack of research that has been conducted on young unemployed graduate students.

The following chapter gives a description of the methodology in which this research study is informed.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

1. Introduction

The study focused on the following aims and objectives:

The Aim of the study

- The primary aim of the study was to explore the views and experiences of unemployed youth graduates to develop a greater understanding of how unemployed youth deal with their situation.

The Objectives of the study

- To discover the experiences of graduates with regard to their unemployment status.
- To examine the livelihood activities and aspirations of youth graduates.
- To find out the reasons that promote unemployment among young graduates
- To identify the views of graduates concerning the strategies to solve unemployment among youth graduates.
- To examine the governmental policy framework in relation to its relevance for unemployment among youth graduates.

Some of the most important decisions that form part of planning a research project are of a methodological nature. On the most general level this relates to the selection of an appropriate methodological paradigm as well as a research design. More specifically decisions regarding research methods and techniques must be taken. It was decided that a qualitative methodological paradigm, a case study research design and associated research methods and techniques will be most appropriate for this study. In this chapter the above will be discussed and motivated. Attention will also be given to ethical consideration and issues to validity and reliability.

1.1 The Qualitative Methodological Paradigm

Babbie and Mouton (2001) refer to three important methodological paradigms in the social sciences, which are the quantitative, qualitative and participatory action paradigms respectively. As indicated above it was decided that a qualitative paradigm would be most appropriate for the present study. Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding rather than explaining human behaviour. The primary goal of qualitative study is to describe and understand human behaviour. In a similar vein, Merriam (2002) indicated that the purpose of qualitative researchers is to conduct a basic interpretive study in order to understand how people make sense of their lives and their experiences. Therefore this indicates that a qualitative study is conducted in a natural (rather than experimental) setting and the main concern is to understand the social problem or phenomenon under study.

Strauss and Corbin (1990) argue that qualitative methods can be used to gain a new perspective on things that are already known, gain in-depth information that may be difficult to convey quantitatively, and to understand phenomena about which little is known. Due to the lack of research on unemployed graduates in South Africa a qualitative approach seems to be the most appropriate to explore young peoples' experiences of unemployment. This will enable the researcher to capture the participants' views regarding their status.

2. The Case Study Research Design

Lincoln and Guba (1995) said that before starting with a study a researcher must prepare a research design. The design for a research project is literally the plan for how the study will be conducted. Research design is a matter of thinking about, imagining, and visualizing how the research will be undertaken (Berg, 1998). Durrheim and Terre'Blanche (2002) compared designing a research study with a building design. They argued that without a plan to work from the builders can forget to include something important in the study. Research designs ensure that the study fulfils a particular purpose and that the research is completed with the available resources. This implies that the research project is structured beforehand to give a clear plan regarding how to gather,

organize and analyze data for investigation in such a way that validity is maximized. The design of an investigation touches almost all aspects of the research, from the selection of cases, details of data collection to the selection of techniques of data analysis (Flick, 2004).

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001) there are three types of research designs that form part of qualitative research that is ethnographic studies, case studies, and life histories. It was decided to follow a case study design for this study. Leedy (1997) and Yin (1994) defined the case study design as a type of qualitative research in which the researcher explores a single “case” faced with the problem. It is an intensive description and analysis of a phenomenon or social unit such as individuals, groups, institutions, or communities (Stake, 1995 and Merriam, 1998). In this study the researcher focuses on unemployed youth graduates. The case study approach tends to prefer small numbers, which are investigated in-depth. A case study design examines a single case in-depth in order to understand the person or phenomenon and aim to provide an in-depth description of a small number of cases. In this study, only six unemployed youth graduates participated.

In conclusion, it can be noted that in certain research situations qualitative research designs are more appropriate than quantitative study designs. Qualitative designs such as case studies are more suitable for exploratory research on the experiences and views of unemployed youth graduates. This is a new phenomenon and it is appropriated that this topic be explored. Case study design and all the methodologies used in this study, allowed the researcher for the discovery of the unexpected and to investigate the aspects under study more in depth.

2.1 Advantages of the Case Study Design:

2.1.1 Establishing rapport with research subjects

A case study provides the researcher with an understanding of a complex phenomenon (Yin, 1994). The researcher has employed a case study design because the researcher was

in a favourable position to establish rapport with the research subjects (Mouton, 2001). During the fieldwork process, the researcher was able to create a relationship with the interviewees to make them feel comfortable and to share their experiences and views about their situation.

2.1.2 High construct validity

Yin (1994) suggested that by using multiple sources of evidence ensures construct validity. In this study the researcher employed multiple sources of evidence: namely interviews and documents. The documents used to support interviews were documents related to youth unemployment, higher education and the labour market.

2.1.3 In-depth insights

Mouton (2001) indicates that case study design provides in-depth description of the data. The researcher interacts very closely with the participants and the probing or follow-up questions lead the researcher to come up with detailed information.

2.2 Possible Sources of Error in Case Study Design:

2.2.1 Potential bias of the researcher

The potential bias of the researcher can be caused by the preset ideas and the expectations that the researcher will have concerning the study (Mouton, 2001). The cues and the signs, which will be given by the researcher, can show the interviewee the expectations of the researcher in the study and the participant can give answers, which impress the researcher. In this case the researcher was already aware of the sources of error and tried to be neutral and took care of the non-verbal cues towards the participants, avoiding giving any sign of acceptance or rejection of the answers given by the participants.

2.2.2 Interviewer effect

Interviewer effect refers to the idea that the characteristics of the interviewer may influence the answers of the participants (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1982). Some interviewer's characteristics such as race, sex, or age are easily controllable. Both the

participants and the interviewer fall under the same age group of youth, which is between the ages of 14 and 35 years. So there was no age gap, which could have made the participants to feel uncomfortable. Even in the issue of race, all the participants share the same race with the researcher. It was easy for them to ask questions if they did not understand and even to clarify some of the questions in their own language, which was Northern Sotho.

3. Population and Sampling

Unemployed youth graduates in the area of Polokwane formed the population for this study. Qualitative research uses non-probability procedure for selecting cases from the population (Lewis and Ritchie, 2003). When using non-probability procedure units are deliberately selected. In this study the researcher utilized a purposive sampling procedure to select the cases and only six participants/cases were included. Patton (1990) indicated that purposive sampling is the dominant strategy in qualitative research. Furthermore, purposive sampling seeks information-rich cases, which can be studied in-depth. Bless and Higson-Smith (2000) indicated that the chance that a particular unit will be selected for the group depends upon the subjective judgment of the researcher. Padgett (1998) said that qualitative researchers pursue some form of purposive sampling when selecting the participants and this is based on the ability of the participants to provide needed information.

The participants were selected on the basis of known characteristics, which might relate to factors such as experience relevant to the research topic (Lewis and Ritchie, 2003). The sampling frame used was the Unemployed Graduates database of the Limpopo Youth Commission. The unemployed graduates' database was compiled from statistics from different youth organizations. The graduates selected have attended a youth program called "Make a Connection". "Make a Connection" is program aimed to offer experience and skills to unemployed young graduates from universities and technikons.

Lofland and Lofland (1984) believe that researchers are more likely to gain successful access to situations if they make use of contacts that can help remove barriers to entrance.

In this study the researcher was working closely with the key informants, which were youth commissioners. The participants were contacted telephonically. When recruiting the participants, I the researcher identified myself, telling them who I am, where I come from, where I got their names and phone numbers and explained to them the purpose of the research. Several youths were contacted and six participants agreed to participate in the study. I, the researcher agreed with them on the dates and the time and the venue of the interviews.

The group of participants consisted of three males and three females. All the participants hold tertiary qualifications from South African universities and technikons. The participants were between the ages of 23-31 years. According to the South African National Youth Commission (1997) this group falls under the age group of youth, where a youth is defined as a person between the ages of 15-35 years.

4. Data Collection and Recording

Padgett (1998) mentioned the three methods of data collection in qualitative research: observation (of the respondent, the setting, and oneself), interviewing and review of documents or archival materials. People's words and actions represent the data of qualitative inquiry. Stake (1995) and Yin (1994) identified six sources of evidence in case studies, which are documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participation observation and physical artifacts. The researcher used interviews to collect data from the participants.

4.1 *Qualitative Interviews*

Patton (1990) refers to three types of qualitative interviewing: 1) informal, conversational interviews, 2) semi-structured interviews; and 3) standardized, open-ended interviews. In this study the researcher employed semi-structured interviews to gather information. Semi-structured interviews are qualitative data gathering techniques designed to obtain information about people's views, opinions, ideas and experiences. By using this method the researcher was free to follow up ideas, to probe responses, and to ask for clarification or further elaboration.

The interviewer formulated the interview guide after consulting with the previous literature. The interview schedule or guide is a list of questions or general topics that the interviewer wants to explore during the interview. An interview guide ensures good use of limited time, and helps to keep interactions focused. In keeping with the flexible nature of the qualitative research designs, interview guides were modified to focus attention on areas of particular importance and to exclude questions the researcher found to be unproductive for the goals of the research (Lofland and Lofland, 1994).

Conducting an interview is a more natural form of interacting with people than making them fill out a questionnaire. Mischler (1986) indicated that an interview is a *joint product* when interviewees and interviewers talk together and how they talk with each other. Through the use of semi-structured interviews, I, the researcher had an opportunity to get to know the participants quite intimately and this led me to better understand how they think and feel. The researcher was able to talk to the participants in some depth about their feelings and experiences.

Patton (1990) in Arksey and Knight (1999) believe that one of the key techniques in good interviewing is the use of probes. Three types of probes were identified that a qualitative interviewer can use in order to have a good interview: detail-oriented probes, elaboration probes and clarification probes. The researcher used these probes to make sure that information given by the participant is valid and reliable. With detail-oriented probes, I, the researcher raised follow-up question to fill out the picture of whatever I was trying to understand, for example, how the participant is going to resolve the situation.

With elaboration probes, I asked the interviewees to tell me more about their situation following the answers they have provided. Clarification probes were also used as the researcher wanted to have a clear understanding of what the participants have said or mentioned. Probing helped the researcher to understand the situation of the participants. Arksey and Knight (1999) argued that researchers using semi-structured interviews are advised to probe and prompt participants' responses. This led the researcher to obtain information about the participants.

Before conducting actual interviews with the participants selected for the study, the interviewer conducted a pilot study. The pilot study helped the researcher to test whether the questions and themes were relevant to the study. It may emerge from the pilot study that a number of questions are not clear or specific to the participants, in which it becomes difficult for them to give relevant answers. The researcher realized that there were some questions, which the participants were struggling to answer. In this case the researcher tried to rephrase some or change the questions and put them in such a way that the participants could easily understand. By conducting a pilot study the researcher was able to get more meaningful results.

In order to receive the interviewees' consent, I informed them about the aims of the study and that I would like to share this information with policy makers to assist in addressing the problem of high unemployment in our country especially among graduates. Terre'Blanche and Kelly (2002) said that the researcher must ensure that the environment chosen for the interview is not disturbing. In other words, if recording is going to take place, the sound/noisy environment should be avoided. The interviewer, being the researcher, was aware of the noise that can cause distraction during the interviews. All the interviews took place in an office at the Youth Commission. The set-up of the office was not distracting and only contained a table and a few comfortable chairs. The room was also warm enough. The office environment was suitably quiet and private; and there was no distraction of movements. Before commencing with an interview, the interviewer made sure that the telephone was off in order to avoid interruption.

At the beginning of each interview the interviewer gave the interviewees the opportunity to warm up by asking them general questions in order to make them feel comfortable. The establishment of rapport was very important in the interview sessions and it was developed before commencing with the interview. Before commencing with the interviews, the interviewees were given the biographical details profile to complete and they were free to ask if they do not understand what appears on the profile.

4.2 Recording the Data

A basic decision going into the interview process is how to record interview data. It is the researchers' preference to choose the method of data recording. In this study the researcher employed audiotaping to capture the data. Audiotaping is probably the most popular method of recording qualitative interviews. Patton (1990) says that a tape recorder is "indispensable", while Lincoln and Guba (1985) do not recommend recording except for unusual reasons. Recordings have the advantage of capturing data more faithfully than hurriedly written notes might, and it was easier for the researcher to focus on the interview.

The tape recorder provides an accurate, verbatim record of the interview, capturing the language used by the participants including their hesitations and tone in far more detail than would ever be possible with note taking. It helped the researcher to capture the whole conversation during interviews with the participants. By using a tape recorder the interviewer was allowed to devote her full attention to the interviewee and to probe in-depth. Arksey and Knight (1999) indicated that a tape recorder demonstrates to participants that their responses are being treated seriously. Terre'Blanche and Kelly (2002) confirm that tape recording shows interviewees that the researcher takes their views seriously.

Arksey and Knight (1999) believe that the idea of taping might increase nervousness. This was not the case in this study because all the participants agreed to the interviews being tape-recorded and they were comfortable with these arrangements. Lincoln and Guba (1985) base their recommendation on the intrusiveness of recording devices and the possibility of technical failure. Arksey and Knight (1999) also supported view. According to the latter a poor quality recording causes problems later on when it comes to transcribing the material. In this study, the researcher faced a problem in some interviews, where the tape recorder failed to record some information. This happened because the researcher used the wrong cassettes for the tape recorder. This led the researcher to go back and conduct the interviews again. The relevant participants fortunately agreed to this.

5. Data Analysis

Marshall and Rossman (1990) defined data analysis as a process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. They see it as a messy, ambiguous, time-consuming, creative and fascinating process. Data analysis is an ongoing and interactive process in qualitative research. Data analysis consists of sorting the data into categories, formatting the data into a coherent story, and writing the qualitative text (Mouton, 1996). To analyze, literally means to take apart words, sentences and paragraphs to make sense of the raw data. Schwand (1997) maintains that an analysis ought to be rigorous, systematic, disciplined and carefully, methodologically documented. Alasuutari (1995) agrees and suggests that qualitative research refers to the act of eliciting meaning from the data in a systematic, comprehensive and rigorous manner.

In this study, the researcher used the software programme called Atlas.ti to manage and analyze raw data. According to Friese (2004) one should take caution and remember that unlike statistical packages, qualitative data analysis software does not analyze the data per se, but rather serves as a tool that supports the process of qualitative data analysis.

5.1 Transcribing the Audio Taped Interviews

Padgett (1998) mentioned that it is very important to begin the transcription of the audiotapes early as this enable the person who is transcribing to become intimate with the interview data. In this study the researcher started with the transcription during the fieldwork. Transcription takes long because the transcriber has to listen very carefully to the words of the participants and sometimes has to play the cassette again to get clarity. The researcher transcribed by typing the text from interviews into word processing documents. These transcripts were later analyzed using the Atlas.ti computer programme.

5.2 Coding Process

Coding qualitative data is a process of identifying bits and pieces of information. Coding is defined as marking the segments of data with symbols, descriptive words or category names. Kelle (1995) believed that coding is done to establish links in different segments in the data and create categories of data that are defined as having some common

elements. According to Kelle and Siedel (1995) the researcher, when coding, will notice the relevant aspects of a phenomenon and this helps in analyzing that phenomenon in order to find commonalities, differences, patterns and structures.

Coding is the major stage of qualitative data analysis. During this process the researcher begins at the most basic level, reading and rereading every line of text in the search for meaning in the data and to segment the data in meaningful analytical units (Padgett, 1998). In the present study the researcher also wrote memos that are reflective notes on the data.

The researcher utilized three types of coding: open coding, quick coding and the in-vivo coding.

5.2.1 Open coding

Open coding is inductive in nature, and consists of the selection of a text passage a researcher would like to code, selecting the coding and entering a code word name (Friese, 2004). Strauss and Corbin (1990) indicated that analysis begins with identification of the themes emerging from the raw data and that this process is referred to as open coding. The goal is to create descriptive, multi-dimensional categories, which form a preliminary framework for analysis. Words, phrases or events that appear to be similar can be grouped together into the same category.

Straus (1987) believes that open coding:

- Identifies themes, careful observation and recording of what is in the data
- Develops the analytical abstraction grounded in close inspection of the data
- Categories and sub-categories are noted and labelled in this coding
- Comparisons are made to broaden the scope of the analysis
- Focuses not only on the naming of the categories and their supporting data, but on how in the coding process, these categories are related

5.2.2 Quick coding

Quick coding (also called code with drag & drop) is deductive in nature. In this case the researcher has to click code or drag to existing code (Friese, 2004). Quick coding assigns the current code (the one currently selected in the code list window) to the marked text.

5.2.3 The In-vivo coding

In-vivo coding is inductive in nature. It means that the text passage selected will be used as the code (Friese, 2004). In-vivo coding means to assign the text that is to be coded to a code whose label is the text itself.

During the coding process, the researcher realized that specific issues surfaced continually throughout the six interviews, so the related codes were merged in the Atlas programme. Dey (1993) identifies the process of breaking up data and bringing it together in a different new way, as classifying data. He further suggests that classifying data entails a process of organizing and assigning data into categories or classes and identifying formal connections between them. This process helped to identify the key themes that arose from the data in the present study and grouped into a few families. A family in Atlas.ti refers to the option given to the user to group codes together. After creating families, the researcher used graphical presentations of categories and theoretical concepts in the form of a network to help in the discussion. The themes identified during the data analysis are presented in chapter four.

6. Ethical Considerations

6.1 Confidentiality

The interviewer assured the interviewees of the confidentiality of the information that would be provided and that the information or data would only be used for the stated purpose of the research. Arksey and Knight (1999) stated that there are procedures that should be used for implementing confidentiality in qualitative interviews. The real names of the participant and other personal details must be disguised. In this study the names

given to the participants are not real names. Padgett (1998) indicated that using code numbers or pseudonyms rather than names on all notes and tapes could assure confidentiality. The location of the study, a local community or whatever, needs to be hidden by giving them fictitious names. In this study, the researcher did not mention the name of the places where the participants come from and even the universities where they have studied.

6.2 Voluntary Participation

Babbie and Mouton (2001) stated that participation in a social research disrupts subjects' regular activities. In this study the subjects were asked if they are interested in taking part in the research study. The participants in this study volunteered to participate. They agreed that the information provided, excluding their personal details, might be used for the purpose of the study.

6.3 No harm to the Participant

In social research, the study conducted should never injure or harm the people involved, whether they volunteered or not (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). In this study the researcher was very careful and tried to avoid a situation where the participants would feel belittled by their poor family background and the fact that they are not working and earning money. The issue of their family's financial background was very sensitive, but the researcher tried to make it simple for the participants so that they can provide relevant answers.

7. Validity and Reliability in Qualitative Study

Qualitative research also involves strategies to establishing validity and reliability. But in qualitative research validity and reliability are substituted with the parallel concept of trustworthiness. Trustworthiness of data in qualitative research is of great importance and much emphasis is placed on it. Guba and Lincoln's (1985) model of trustworthiness have been used for this study to assess the validity of the research process and findings. Trustworthiness contains four concepts: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability (Krefting, 1991).

The researcher used the following methodological strategies for demonstrating qualitative “rigor” or for attaining trustworthiness:

7.1 Credibility

It refers to what extent the findings are a true reflection of the life-worlds of the participants, as experienced and described by them. The particular action taken by the researcher to achieve credibility was the usage of multiple sources or triangulation (the type of information and ways of obtaining the same information), member checking, peer review and referential adequacy and interviewing technique (Babbie and Mouton, 2001).

7.1.1 Member checking

This is a common strategy used for ensuring validity in qualitative research (Merriam, 2002 and Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Member checks is the process where the researcher asks the participants to comment on the interpretation of data. In this process the researcher took the findings back to the participants and asked them whether the interpretations are true or not. By using member checks, the researcher was confirming the results with participants. Padgett (1998) indicated that member checking is not easy because some participants will be too busy to grant an interview. But in this study, the interviewer did not have any problem of meeting with the participants again. The researcher avoided the wrong interpretations by using this strategy.

7.1.2 Peer debriefing and support

Padgett (1998) believed that peer review is another strategy used for ensuring rigor in qualitative studies. Peer debriefing is a process of allowing a peer who is a professional outside the context and also has some general understanding of the study, to analyze materials, and listen to the researchers’ ideas and concerns (Erlandson et al, 1993). The researcher involved several people to read the raw data and comments or give ideas on the findings of the study. Peer debriefing in the study involves the following: previous lecturer, the Chief Executive Officer of the Limpopo Youth Commission and a fellow MPhil student whose focus is on Gender and Adolescent/ Youth Sexuality.

7.1.3 Referential material adequacy

The researcher used audiotape recorder, which provided a good and reliable record of the results. Audiotaping is the most popular method of recording qualitative interviews. As noted earlier, a tape recorder provides an accurate verbatim record of interviews, capturing the language used by the participants, including their hesitations and tone, in far more detail than would ever be possible with note taking.

7.1.4 Interviewing technique

The semi-structured interview and probing allowed the researcher to collect relevant information.

7.2 Transferability

It refers to the degree to which findings can be applied to other contexts or settings. Lincoln and Guba (1985) pointed that transferability refers to the possibility that what was found in one context by a piece of qualitative research is applicable to another context. Kelly and Terre'Blanche (2002) also indicated that transferability relates to the extent to which the interpretative account can be applied to other contexts than the one being researched. In order to create a foundation for transferability and allow other researchers to use the findings in making comparisons with their own work, a research report must contain an accurate description of the research process and a detailed description of the research situation and context (Smaling, 1992 and Babbie and Mouton, 2001). Furthermore, by providing detailed information, findings can be generalized to other settings.

7.2.1 Detailed description of data

Babbie and Mouton (2001) and Merriam (2002) believed that the *detailed* description of data in the qualitative study ensures validity. This involves providing an adequate database, that is enough description and information that readers will be able to determine how closely their situation matches. In this study, the researcher attempted to provide a rich description by including quotes.

7.2.2 Purposive sampling

By employing this sampling procedure, the researcher purposely collected data from the people who have known characteristics, which are related to the research topic (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). The participants provided relevant information as they were affected or facing the problem investigated.

7.3 Dependability

Dependability corresponds to what in natural science is called replicability, which is the extent to which an application of equivalent instruments to the same units yields similar results. Since qualitative studies by their very nature cannot be replicated because of changing realities, their attention is turned to the stability and consistency of the inquiry process. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that by demonstrating dependability, the researcher has to provide evidence to show stability of the research results. The steps that were taken to ensure dependability in this study included: code-recode strategy, peer debriefing and keeping research notes and all collected data (Krefting, 1991).

7.4 Confirmability

It refers to the degree to which the study's findings are free from bias. In this study, triangulation of data sources, memos, recorded audiotapes and reflexivity was employed to achieve confirmability (Lincoln and Guba in Krefting 1991).

7.4.1 Memo writing

Miles and Huberman (1994) indicated that memos are essential techniques for qualitative analysis. Memos report data and tie together different pieces of data into recognizable form. The researcher wrote the memos throughout the research project. The researcher's memos entail: the summaries of the literature, the summary of the codes, the field notes and transcriptions. Memo writing served as an excellent apparatus to the researcher, to reflect on the thesis and to integrate thoughts. Strauss and Corbin (1987) mentioned that memos as written records of analysis are related to the formulation of theory.

7.4.2 Reflexivity

This involves the critical self-reflection by the researcher regarding assumptions, biases, theoretical orientation, and relationship to the study that may affect the investigation. This process refers to the researcher's practice of being self-aware and the rigor of being immersed in the data. This incorporates a much disciplined thought process and numerous critical interpretations of the data. The researcher reflected on the study especially during the data collection process and analysis in order to ensure in-depth understanding of the phenomenon (Merriam, 2002). Reflexivity entails exploring the researcher's own background and the effect this might have on the analyses of the data received. In the following paragraph, I will give an overview of my personal background.

I, come from one of the rural areas in Limpopo Province. I am a Christian and member of the Catholic Church. I received my Bachelor degree in one of the Historically Disadvantaged Institution and studied my second degree at a Historically White Institution. I am aware of the education received in the black institution and white institutions. I do have experience and passion in working with young people, the unemployed, those at school and out-of-school youth (especially those living on the streets and the abused). From my experience, I have learnt that young people need to be developed. It can be educationally, socially, spiritually, economically, mentally etc. During the analysis and discussion phase, I was very careful and remained neutral to avoid any form of bias in my results.

8. Summary

In this chapter various methodological issues were addressed. A first issue discussed was the choice of the qualitative methodological paradigm and the case study research design associated with this paradigm. This was followed by an overview of the characteristics of the research population and the selection of informants by means of non-probability sampling - specifically the technique of purposive sampling. Attention was also given to the process of recruitment of participants. The data collection instrument used, that is, a semi-structured interview and the procedures followed while collecting data e.g. the reasons for choosing semi-structured interviews, the pilot study conducted, how the

researcher carries out the interviews, the setting of the interview and the recording of the data were also discussed. Ethical issues and the strategies used to ensure validity and reliability of the data collected e.g. credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability were discussed in detail. During analysis of the data the computer programme called Atlas.ti was employed. The procedure/steps followed while analyzing data were discussed e.g. transcribing the audio taped interviews, coding process (open coding, quick coding, in-vivo coding), and how the themes were developed.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

1. Introduction

This chapter presents the views and experiences of the unemployed youth graduates in the area of Polokwane in Limpopo Province. The findings will be presented in the form of tables and quotations. The findings of the study will be presented and discussed in relation to the study objectives stated in chapter one.

The researcher analyzed the interviews conducted with six youths who were unemployed at the time of the study. Interviews were conducted with three males and three females. The biographical details of the participants are presented in table 7 below.

1.1 Biographical details of the Participants

Table 7: Biographical details of the Participants

Gender	Age group	Area	Qualification	Institution	Duration of Unemployment
Ruth	28 years	Rural	BA. Psychology	University	5 years
Angela	26 years	Rural	ND. Public Management	Technikon	1 year
Petra	31 years	Township	BA. Admin	University	4 years
Dumi	23 years	Rural	ND. Public Management	Technikon	2 years
Michael	27 years	Rural	LLB	University	1 year
Gabriel	24 years	Rural	ND. Accounting	Technikon	1 year

The following themes will be presented and discussed in this chapter: the socio-economic context of the participants, livelihood opportunities and future aspirations of the participants, their academic qualifications, the kind of institutions attended by the unemployed graduates, the careers demanded by the labour market, causes of graduates being unemployed, government interventions addressing youth unemployment and consequences of youth unemployment. The study concerns the way six participants engage with the issue of unemployment, focusing on their views and how they experience the situation.

1.2 Profile of the Participants

The age of the youth interviewed ranges between 23 and 31 years. This age group falls under the age group of “youth” as defined by the South African Youth Policy (National Youth Commission, 1997). The study comprised of a group of six participants; three males and three females. The names of the participants to be used in the study are as follows: Ruth, Angela, Petra, Dumi, Michael and Gabriel. The study was conducted in Polokwane area, which is predominantly rural.

The figure above indicates that five participants were from rural areas while one participant was from a township. Rural areas are mostly poor and provide no job opportunities for its people. Of the six participants’ three have been to technikons, while the other three attended universities. Two unemployed graduates were holding national diplomas in public management and one was a graduate in accounting. Three unemployed graduates attended universities and hold degrees in Psychology, Administration and Law. The duration of unemployment among graduates ranges between 1 and 5 years as indicated in the table above.

The following presentations focus on the views and experiences of unemployed graduates as stated in the objectives at the beginning of the study.

2. The Socio-Economic Context of the Participants

2.1 Socio-Economic Status of the Family

The unemployed graduates were requested to describe their family's socio-economic status. The participants in this study were from different rural areas in Limpopo Province. This province is identified as being one of the most underdeveloped regions in the country and as noted earlier unemployment is one of the most critical concerns young people have in the province. The socio-economic status of participants' family is described in terms of: financial constraints experienced by the respective families, the support that participants enjoy from their families, the expectations that families have from the participants and how the participants are treated by their families.

2.1.1 *Financial Constraints of the Unemployed Graduates' Families*

The data from the study shows that five participants experience financial constraints in their families. The sources of income that they have do not cover all the household expenses. Below are evidences that describe the financial situations in the families of the unemployed graduates:

Ruth aged 28, comes from Mphahlele area, one of the poorly resourced areas in Limpopo. She is from a family of seven, including her three siblings, father and mother and her child. Her father is a breadwinner with the little money he gets and her mother is working at a project where sometimes they get paid after two or three months. Her father gets something like R2000.00 monthly which is not enough for the family of seven, while the other child is still at school. Her brother, who is still at technical school, works during the holidays to get some money for the fees. Ruth reported that her father was struggling a lot while she was still at the university and that is why she worked part-time at the university library to get some money to buy food and some clothes. She thought she would help her parents after her studies, but that did not happen. Ruth feels pity for her parents because now she has a child and the father of the

child is not responsible and so her parents have to support the child. This is more strenuous to her parents.

***Petra aged 31**, comes from Seshego one of the townships in Limpopo province. She is living with her granny, her two younger sisters and is the mother of two children. Her parents have passed away some years back. Her younger sisters are getting foster grant and her granny pension grant. Petra has been working in one of the clothing shops in town and at the time of the study she was no longer working because she was getting very little money. The money she got was only for transport to go to work and to buy some food while at work.*

***Dumi aged 23**, comes from a poorly resourced environment at Matlala. He is from a family of nine, both parents and six siblings. Both Parents are working; a father who is a jeweller and a mother who is a domestic worker. His younger brothers are attending school; although through hardships. He is the only one from the family who has a tertiary qualification. His father sold all the cows for him to go to school and now they do not have cows. Dumi is expected to find a job soon to pay the fees for his younger brothers. He is relying on his parents and it is a very difficult situation. His parents do not earn enough to support the whole family.*

***Michael aged 27**, comes from a rural area Botlokwa known as Matoks in Limpopo. He is from a family of six, both parents and three younger sisters. At the time of the study Michael was living with his granny because of the problems he encountered in the house. Michael's parents were educators and not earning enough because they could not manage to pay tuition fees for the children. Michael stayed at home for one year after matric, as he did not have money to go to school. Thereafter he worked for three years to obtain some money to go to university.*

Gabriel aged 24, comes from a poor area called Maraba. He is from a family of seven, both parents and four siblings. His father is the only one working; he is a builder and a carpenter. Sometimes he does not bring anything to the family as it depends on the customers. The whole family is looking at his father for support. His sister also has a child and this is really a burden to his parents. Gabriel is the only one from the family who has a tertiary qualification and his siblings never went to tertiary institutions. Gabriel got a loan, which paid his tuition fees only, and it was difficult for him to get money to buy food while he was still at school. At the moment he has to find a job to pay back the loan.

The available evidence indicates that the main source of income in the family of the unemployed graduates is their parents. In some families only one parent earns an income. The money they receive is spent on basic things like food and electricity. The data revealed that families of the participants are not in a position to pay fees for the children. The kind of jobs they have and the money they get monthly is not sufficient enough to support the families. The research shows that the families of the unemployed are large in number, they are all above five and therefore it becomes very difficult and strenuous for someone getting R2000.00 a month to financially maintain such a big group. Mkandawire et al (2001) supported that most black families are large in number and this situation increases poverty. The study shows that the participants struggled a lot while they were at tertiary institutions; some have worked before they went to universities, while others were doing part-time jobs.

While some of the participants' families were getting little money, some were not having any source of income. They are only looking at the government for support, like getting foster grant and pension grant. Though the unemployed graduates experienced financial problems, the female participants were experiencing more problems because they have children who need money to go to school and be maintained like any other children. The female participants experience pressure to work for their children. The study shows clearly that the unemployed graduates are not living an easy life. Their families cannot

even afford to buy them and their children clothes. This is a vicious circle because parents cannot afford to support their children and unemployed graduates also have children and there appears to be no way that the family can escape this predicament. The result will be that the younger ones will not be able to go to school because there are no jobs for their elder brothers and sisters who are supposed to help them.

Even though five participants faced financial problems in their families, it emerged from the study that one unemployed graduate does not experience any financial constraints. The participant indicated that her parents could afford to pay university fees and technikon fees and still pay the rates and buy food in the house. Angela has confirmed this:

Angela comes from a rural area called Chebeng. She is from a family of eight. Her father is a businessman who owns taxis and is also the breadwinner. She has two brothers who studied at the university and the other one at technikon. The remaining two siblings are still at school. Her father can afford to pay the fees for all the children and is even able to meet the needs of the family. Angela has a child and her father is paying the fees for the child who is still at crèche.

2.1.2 Family Support Offered to the Unemployed Graduates

Despite the fact that the youth are unemployed, their families still give them support. The data shows that the unemployed get financial and moral support from their parents. However, the participants view themselves as being a burden to their parents because of the financial situation their families are faced with. This corresponds with what Everatt (1994) found. The study shows that the participants are more reliant on their parents, because whenever they want to go to search for a job in the nearest town or go for an interview, the parents provide them with money for transport, photocopying their certificates and the use of a fax. The overall study shows that all the participants relied on the goodwill of their parents and relatives. The evidence below shows how the participants experienced family support:

Ruth: *"It is a strain for my family because if I see some post in the newspaper which is related to my course, they give me some money to make copies of certificate so that I can apply for that post. Even if I have to travel for an interview they don't mind giving me money".*

Angela: *"It is difficult anyway, because everywhere I go I have to request money from my parents and they also have to take care of my child who is in a crèche".*

Petra: *"We don't have parents; we are living with my granny. My younger sisters and my two children are getting foster grant from the government. With this money they pay school fees and buy school uniforms. Again my uncle is helping in the family, buying food".*

Dumi: *"My parents are so accommodative but sometimes I feel like I should move out and do my own things. I am so dependent on them. My mother is giving me money and I am very much dependent on her".*

Michael: *"My granny helps me with money to go and look for a job because I am not staying with my parents. Before she gives me money I have to explain to her where and what I am going to do in town".*

Gabriel: *"I can see that I am a burden because whenever I go to town to search for a job, they have to give me money for transport and to buy newspapers, and to fax my curriculum vitae".*

Dependency on family members is confirmed by Moller (1991) in Slabbert et al (1994). According to them family support is the major source of social security of the unemployed in South Africa. This happens mostly in black communities, which carry the burden of unemployment.

2.1.3 Family's Expectations of the Graduates

Families expect their children to work and help them after completing their studies. This happens in communities where poverty is very high. This study found that all the participants experience pressure to go out and work to support their families. The following illustrate some of the participants' experiences:

Dumi: "My parents are almost in their sixties; my mother is 65 years and my father 60 years. I am most definitely expected to take care of my younger brothers and sisters for them to go to school. My parents didn't tell me that they need help, but judging by the financial situation, their pensions would not be able to afford to take my younger brother and sister to school. They are so supportive but I can see that they expect me to get a job. Basically I am not included in their budget, but they are supporting me. While I was studying it was even more strenuous than now."

Gabriel: "I am the only one educated in the family and my parents are hoping that I will help them".

According to the findings, the unemployed graduates are expected to be responsible for their younger brothers and sisters who are still attending school because their family's financial status is very low and their parents are getting old. The participants found that, even though their parents did not mention that they need help, they can see that they are expected to provide for the family. Slabbert et al (1994) and ILO (2004b) support these results, that is, the majority of black youth live in families where income is very low and the younger generation are better educated than their parents. Therefore they are expected to provide for the family.

Family expectations become a serious matter where an unemployed has a child. This study found that all the female participants have children, who need their support. In such cases the participants experience more pressure to find jobs because their parents cannot

afford to support them and their children. The quotations below show how the female participants experience their situation as mothers who are unemployed:

Ruth: *"I do have an eight year old child and his father does not support him. My family has to care for my child and me. It is very difficult for my father.*

Angela: *"I don't know how I feel, it is just that I `m just waiting for something to happen, so that I may be able to do everything for myself and my child and my parent also, as it has been a year after my graduation".*

Petra: *"I am a mother of two children. I have to go out and work. My kids expect me to work for them".*

In a situation where the unemployed has a child, household poverty increases. Therefore this condition delays the family's efforts to escape from the cycle of poverty.

2.1.4 Treatment received by the Unemployed Graduates from their Families

The study also explores the views and experiences of unemployed graduates about the treatment they receive from their families. It emerged from this study that five participants receive a positive treatment from their families while one participant receive a negative treatment. The negative treatment received by Gabriel emerged because he could not buy or provide the family with anything. Gabriel was staying with one of his relatives in one of the urban area in Johannesburg while looking for a job. The following quotation explains the kind of treatment he received:

Gabriel: *"You know, after I completed my studies, I was staying with my relatives in Gauteng, looking for a job. At the beginning our relationship was nice but after some months things started to change. My aunt was not happy, as I was not earning any income. The relationship then started to become sour. She was complaining about food and of course I was not buying anything and she wanted me to go back home because I could not find the job. I moved out of the house and found a place for me, which was*

expensive. I was paying R350 a month. So my parents were forced to send me money that was not enough at all. I was able to pay the rent but it was not easy as it was very little. Sometimes I was borrowing money from friends to buy some food. Sometimes I was going to bed without eating. Life was difficult until my parents told me to come home and leave everything”.

Everatt (1994) confirms that young people like Gabriel flock to the city at the start of their occupational cycle to find employment. They move to urban areas with the belief that companies will easily absorb them. Unfortunately urban areas are unable to absorb them and offer them jobs. Therefore it becomes difficult for the unemployed as they are expected to support the families. The situation becomes worse for the family or the people with whom the unemployed is staying with; if they do not understand the situation of an unemployed person.

2.2 Socio-Economic Status of the Community

The socio-economic status of unemployed graduates' communities will be discussed with a focus on the following sub-themes: community unemployment, community livelihood and community reactions towards the unemployed graduates.

2.2.1 The Unemployment Situation of the Participants' Communities

The areas in which the participants live were characterised by a high unemployment rate among youth and adults who were retrenched. The evidence below shows how the participants in this study described their communities' unemployment situation:

Ruth: *“Large numbers of young people in my area who have been to colleges have diplomas in teaching. That is the reason why it is hard for them to find jobs”.*

Angela: *“In my village we have a lot of people who did not go to school, and they are not working. The only thing that they do everyday is to play*

certain games called "Mochaina" (Gambling). They play the game every morning and afternoon so that they can get little money to survive".

Petra: *"Not much has been developed in my area. I am living in a township, which is not doing well economically. Many people are not working".*

Dumi: *"I am from a very poor area where I cannot expect to get employment. Again it depends on what you have studied as other careers are unmarketable like mine. But all in all, my area is not a place where someone can find any job of any kind. It is not civilised".*

Michael: *"All in all I can say my community is underdeveloped. Most of the youth are unemployed, and most of them are no longer going to school because their families cannot afford to pay the fees at the tertiary institution".*

Gabriel: *"Most young people in my area didn't go to tertiary institutions while others didn't even pass grade 12. Some of the parents have been retrenched from the firms at an early age and now they can't find jobs. The number of the unemployed youth has been increased by those adults who have been retrenched".*

It is evident from this study that the areas where the participants come from face the problem of unemployment. This has been confirmed by Borat and Oosthuizen (2004b) and Limpopo Youth Economic Summit Report (2003). Their areas, being rural and peri-urban, experience poverty where some families cannot even afford to send their children to school. It has been revealed by this study that there are children who did not even have grade 12. Thus they have no prospect of finding jobs without any qualification. The evidence from this study also indicates that young people whose parents were able to send them to tertiary institutions are also facing unemployment because of the kind of

qualifications they have, like teaching. Their areas of study do not provide the resources that can be utilised to create jobs. The study shows that the participants lost hope in finding jobs in their areas and they do not expect anything to happen that can relieve their situation. In some areas the people who have been retrenched from companies, who are now experiencing the same problem, have increased the rate of unemployment.

In general, the data suggests that the communities where the unemployed graduates come from are faced with problems of unemployment both among young people and adults. The communities are disadvantaged as they face problems of access to resources that can be used to create jobs. Lack of capital in the communities results in young people discontinuing their studies, failing to reach grade twelve, and not being able to go to universities or technikons or even colleges. This has been confirmed by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA, 2001).

2.2.2 Community Livelihood of the Unemployed Graduates

It has been shown that the communities where the participants come from, experience high levels of poverty. Most of the households rely on government grants for survival, while other members of the communities work at some projects where they get very little money depending on the commission. This has been reported to be little or not enough for the families. Other communities were reported as relying on agricultural products, while other families cannot afford to buy the seeds and hire the tractors for ploughing. According to Mkandawire et al (2001) communities lack resources to sustain themselves. The quotations below show how some of the participants describe their communities' sources of livelihood:

Ruth reported that they have projects like bakery and gardening in the community. Some people in this community work in those projects and get some income even though it is not enough to support the whole family. She reported that her mother is working in those projects and the income they get depends on the commission they make. They do not get money every

month sometimes only after two or three months. She said that it is better than nothing.

Angela reported that in her community other families struggle a lot while others are much better off even though she could not give the percentage. She mentioned that those who are poor are large in number and they depend much on pension grants of old people. You will find that there are eight people in the house and they are only looking for that R 780. 00.

Michael reported that there are lots of families that rely on old age pension and child support grant, which is not enough to operate the house.

Gabriel reported that most of the families in his community rely on old age pension, which is not enough for the families as they are many. He mentioned that those who are not working do have fields where they plant mealies to make mielie meal, beans, sweet potatoes, pumpkin and sugar cane while others are just lazy; but others don't have money to hire tractors for ploughing.

The poverty described by the participants, shows that the communities are in need of support and guidance especially the young people. Support is needed for young people to be able to uplift the condition in their communities. According to the experts, the government has to pay attention to the needs of the youth, like those who want to create their own businesses or anything that can develop their own communities. If projects can be established in these areas and information provided, then people will be able to sustain or maintain themselves and employment opportunities can be created. Many people are relying on government grants only, which is very little to maintain families. Seven hundred rand for example is not enough to maintain five people. This study thus shows that participants come from poor and underdeveloped communities, where there are little or hardly any opportunities to generate an income.

2.2.3 Community Reactions towards the Unemployed Graduates

The community always assumes that someone with a tertiary education will immediately be employed when they finish studies. Unfortunately that was not the case with the participants in this study. Participants experienced pressure from the community and their families because much was expected from them. The evidence below shows how the community and families reacted towards the unemployed graduates:

Ruth: *“They respect me a lot. I don’t know may be it is because I am a graduate. I am a counsellor at the church and the people respect me. Sometimes I don’t feel the pressure that I am not working because of the way they treat me. Most of the youth come to me for assistance. Right now they heard that I was in the program and they want me to help them to write CV`s and how to get into the program”.*

Dumi: *“Judging by the way I grew up in that community, people still believe in going to school. If someone has been to school, even though is not working, the community still respects that person because of the education he or she has”.*

Michael: *“At home they just see me as a child facing a great deal, unlucky child trying very much to find a job, going out to make things happen, and a hard worker. They view me as an achiever waiting for that chance to come”.*

Gabriel: *“I am so fortunate because the friends I have suffer like me as they are not working. They also went to school; some have diplomas while others have degrees. So we are living together helping each other and consoling one another. Most of the people in my community see education as having value but because of financial problems others are unable to go to school”.*

According to the study, some communities still have respect for the graduates and support them even though these graduates are unemployed. It has been noted in this study that the community respects the graduates for what they have achieved and even go to them for assistance. The unemployed graduates do not feel pressure because their friends are also not working and they do console each other as they are in the same situation. They do receive support from their communities. Members of the community regard the unemployed graduates as achievers and hard workers. The people in these communities value education and they still want to send their children to tertiary institutions. This study shows that, even though the graduates are not finding jobs, the communities are not giving up on sending their children to school.

It has emerged from this study, however that some communities look at the unemployed graduates as failures- they see highly educated people who fail to get jobs. The quotations below depict the negative reactions from the participants' communities and relatives:

Angela: "People in my community are saying that to go to school is a waste of money. Look now, you are not working, you should have done something. They said go to that institution where you studied, tell them that you need a job, may be they will supply you with one. I told them, it does not work like that; you must get a job for yourself. In addition to that my aunt used to tell me: "Just go to that Technikon of yours and tell them you need a job". Young people in my community start to look for a job immediately after matric and others stay at home because they are saying when you go to tertiary institution, you pay a lot of money and at the end you will stay without a job".

Petra: "Those who are working used to say to me, are you still at home not working; you must go and see the (Sangoma) traditional doctor to help you find a job. This demotivates me because always when I go out for partying, I ask for money and I become a charity case. I don't want that.

The unemployed graduates feel pressured and negative by what the society is saying about them. These community members do not see the importance of being educated, and for them it is a waste of time to attain higher education. These correspond with what Mkandawire et al (2001) reported. Education is no longer perceived as a solution in addressing the problem of unemployment. Some of those who completed matric are reluctant to proceed to tertiary institutions because “we see no jobs beyond matric”. Young people will end up not considering education as the key option for sustainable livelihood. Therefore the study suggests that unemployment among graduates can send a wrong message to the communities of not considering education as the key to success. Though others still value education and offer respect to the graduates, others are losing hope in proceeding with their studies.

2.3 The Lifestyle of the Unemployed Graduates

This theme explores the lifestyle of the unemployed graduates, for example, what do they do everyday, as they are not working. The following quotations describe how they spend their days and the kind of life they are living:

Angela: “After training it was a disaster, life was boring, staying at home doing nothing. I have to wake up, clean the house; prepare breakfast for my mom and my dad. During the day I don’t have anything to do. I only watch TV and wait for my younger brothers who are driving taxis to bring me newspapers so that I can check job advertisement. Sometimes I listen to the radio.”

Petra: “Normally I wake up at 5h00 in the morning, bath the kids and prepare them to go to school. Three times a week I do go to meet with my friends and discuss about the business we want to establish. This business entails, catering, travelling and tourism and marketing. I come home after three in the afternoon. On other days that I don’t meet my partners I just stay at home the whole day doing nothing. Sometimes I do read story books and magazines.”

Dumi: *“Basically I used to stay at home, watch television the whole day. Since I attended the youth program, everything has changed because I was used to wake up at 3h00 in the morning to come to town. Six o’clock (18h00) in the evening I go back home, play a guitar, do some exercises and go to sleep. Even now because I am done with the training, I go to town every day, go to Youth Office and do job hunting. I try to make connections with different people in different departments since I don’t have brothers and sisters working in town that I can make connections with. So I make my own networks. I make friends all over town with people that I can rely on for information about employment opportunities. My friends are not at home; most of them are at school. I spend most of the time inside the house if I do not go to town to do job hunting.”*

Michael: *“Everyday I do wake up in the morning, prepare breakfast for my granny. After that I do the cleaning, read magazines and newspapers and I usually put two hours aside to visit my friends. Late in the afternoon I go to football practice, in the evening watch television till twelve midnight. I hate loitering around and I am time conscious. I do have reasons in what I do everyday.”*

This study shows that unemployed graduates spend most of their time doing domestic work and helping their parents. This has been supported by O’Donnell (1994) and Willis (in Haralambos and Holborn 1991). In addition to that, Angela in this study shows how disastrous it is to stay at home doing nothing.

The data indicated that the participants are busy with job hunting everyday, making connections with those who are working, asking for help. Even though these graduates are not getting employed, it shows that they are working very hard to find jobs. It has been noted in this study that though they are not working, they have a strong link with the media as they spend some time reading newspapers, magazines, watching television and

listening to the radio to gain information. By reading newspapers they are searching for jobs, which are advertised, and local radio, which is also off help.

Others do create time to be with their friends, for socializing as Michael and Petra reported. This does not correlate with what Willis in Haralambos and Holborn (1991) believes, that is, that the unemployed do not enjoy normal social life as they do have financial hardship. This shows that even though someone does not have money, this cannot prevent him or her to socialize with friends. They are also involved in some kind of entertainment like what Dumi and Michael do everyday, playing soccer and guitar. Petra who is busy planning to start a business has time to meet with her partners. According to the study, the participants do spend their time wisely, as they structure their day. This information partly disagrees with what Fagin and Little in Haralambos and Holborn (1991) said that the unemployed find it not easy to plan their work accordingly.

The study revealed that though unemployed graduates are not doing any formal job, they do have a desire to help their communities. They share the knowledge they acquired from universities and technikons with their communities - especially young people. Michael and Ruth reported to be acting as advisors to young people in their communities as indicated below:

Michael: "I am advisor to the youth. I advise grade 12 learners by guiding them about careers that they can follow when they go to tertiary institutions. I do advise them when they have personal fights like fights in their relationships and parents. I try to guide them which channels they have to follow and at the same time trying to be neutral and creating a friendly environment. I like to communicate with illiterate people because I don't want to be put into categories like to be counted with educated people. So it is better to put myself in their stand or level".

Ruth: "Most of the youth come to me for assistance. Right now they heard that I was at the youth program and so they want me to help them to

write CV`s, and they ask me about computer programmes because they don't know anything about a computer. So I advise them to attend the program because it is useful. I am also a counsellor at the church, they respect me. Sometimes I don't feel the pressure that I am not working."

The study shows that the unemployed have skills to advise young people who are still at school in choosing careers and how to solve their personal problems. They also serve as counsellors in their churches. The one participant acquired counselling skills while she was at the university, studying Psychology. The study shows that the graduates have the ability and the potential to put their skills into practice even though they are not employed. Therefore, although the qualification that graduates attained are not acknowledged by employers, their communities regard them as important assets in the society.

2.4 Livelihood Opportunities of the Participants

The researcher explored the ways that the unemployed graduates were trying to earn an income. This study shows that five participants were doing nothing at the time of study, sitting at home and not earning an income. These participants indicated that they depend on their parents financially. While most depend on their parents, it emerged from this study that one participant received money from her boyfriend. Only one participant, Gabriel reported that he is involved in some casual work, although this is not a daily job.

Angela stated that she has a boyfriend who is the father of her child and who gives her some money. She does not ask him for money every month. Sometimes he just volunteers to send money and sometimes she asks. She stated that the boyfriend deposits money in her bank account.

Gabriel indicated that he used to work with his father, who taught him how to repair things. He repaired the doors and fixed curtain rails in the community. He said that from that job he got little money and tried to spend it wisely because he did not know when he would get the next

money. This depended only when people called him to come and repair or fix things in their houses.

The study revealed that only one of the unemployed graduates depends on her boyfriend financially. This is consistent with what Chigunta et al (2003) and Mkandawire et al (2001) found. Casual work also serves as an important income generating opportunity to those who have no permanent employment. Gabriel was found to be involved in some casual job and earning money, even though it was not on a regular basis. This study also noted that large number of unemployed graduates is relying on parents financially. This has been supported by the Chigunta et al (2003) and Mkandawire et al (2001). Therefore the results in this study are against what Chigunta et al (2003) said, that young people tend to resort to illegitimated activities to earn an income.

It has been revealed in the study that two participants, Ruth and Petra were previously involved in casual work (at the clothing shops) as a source of income. They have indicated that they were working abnormal hours and getting paid less money and therefore they decided to quit from work. At the time of study, the participants were not working. The quotations provide an indication of their feelings:

Ruth, " I was working at clothing shop as a casual worker but when you think of what you have studied at school and you are not using that, is painful, because you are concentrating on the other side of life and there is no challenge, to be a cashier there is no challenge. The main problem was that we were getting little money; I could not even save anything".

Petra, "I only got a job in a clothing shop, where I was working abnormal hours and getting little money, and I decided to quit".

Brinkley (1997) and International Labour Organisation (2004b) have confirmed that young people from lower income families, instead of being unemployed, are often forced to take up any available income-generating activity for example, unsafe and informal

jobs. Being involved in this kind of employment they are often underpaid and work long hours. This study shows that young people from disadvantaged communities face a series of labour market obstacles particularly high unemployment and low quality employment. Therefore this study indicates that the unemployed graduates lack sustainable sources of income. In addition to that, young people from rural areas have rather limited options to earn a livelihood.

2.5 Future Aspirations of the Participants

This study also explored the plans of participants to access employment. The study shows that all the unemployed youth graduates have plans to earn a living and even to help their communities, for example Ruth, Petra, Michael and Dumi are intending to start their own businesses while Angela is just waiting for something to happen e.g. finding a job and also Gabriel is searching for a job, at the same time doing some casual job, helping his father. The following participants articulate their aspirations as follows:

Ruth reported that there are children in her community who formed groups and everyday they go to a certain house to read and watch Television. She realized that there is a need in the community to have a library where the learners can study. She reported that she has library experience as she once worked at the university library while she was studying. She is still searching for information on how to start this project. She indicated that she would be helping her community and even herself.

Petra, and her three friends are starting a business and it is still at its beginning stage. She mentioned the business entails catering, traveling and tourism. Their business does not have enough funds and so they do raise funds by popping out some money every month. Petra indicated that it is not easy because she is not working but she tries by all means to get some funds. She stated that they do not get any funds from outside and they are busy applying and looking for sponsors to help them. She also mentioned she is involved in a Community Policing Forum where they are

trying to raise funds for the Aids Orphans and to take the street kids away from the streets and build a shelter for them. She said that they do not succeed because they do not get funders, to fund for their projects. She reported that it is very difficult if you do not have money and they cannot do anything if they do not have funds.

Michael reported that he is someone who is ready to empower youth and so he is intending to start a business with his partners where they want to employ young people. He stated that they want to start a poultry farm and gardening project to create employment. But up to now they did not get any one to help them financially to start their own business. He said that that they are still in the process of looking for funders. At the same time Michael indicated that he got a sponsor to fund his studies to do some practice in law. He was so happy because he was longing to further his studies.

Dumi reported that he is busy requesting finance and at the same time looking for (CC) forms (close corporation). He reported that he is planning on registering Close Corporation with his friend. They have already submitted their name and they are in the process of selection and if they are selected they have to pay an amount of R 700.00 to be registered. After registering they have to write a finance business plan because that they most definitely need finance and make necessary networking to find a building constructor.

The results revealed what the unemployed graduates want to do in future. Their aspirations show how much they want to develop their communities and sustain themselves. They want to establish projects in their community in order to create job opportunities build shelters for the street children and take care of the AIDS orphans. This aspiration of wanting to become entrepreneurs and community developers emerged after realising the lack of formal employment opportunities. This is supported by

Chigunta et al (2003), Mkandawire et al (2001), Slabbert et al (1994 and ILO (2004c). Prior to graduating these participants had other aspirations. The options of entrepreneurship and self-employed relate to the shortage of jobs they experience.

The study found that these graduates want to start businesses in order to create employment opportunities for themselves and even for other people in their areas where it is difficult to access jobs. However, young graduates tend to be faced with the problem of accessing funds to start their business. Lack of funds is one of the constraints that youth faces when they want to start their enterprise and they tend to be discouraged, as they do not have any one to sponsor them. Chigunta et al (2003) and YDN (2004b) confirm that young people are confronted with obstacles in entrepreneurship in that they experience difficulties in accessing funds. In general the data suggests that young people are disadvantaged and face problems of access to resources, such as capital. As a result young people usually fail in establishing their own enterprises.

3. Education of the Unemployed Graduates

3.1 Academic Qualifications of the Unemployed Graduates

This study explores the views of unemployed graduates with regard to their qualifications. In this study three participants consider their qualifications less marketable, while the other three viewed their qualifications marketable. Graduates with diplomas in Public management and Accounting, and a degree in Psychology indicated that their qualifications do not match the skills demanded in the labour market.

Below is the evidence that shows how the unemployed graduates viewed their qualifications:

Ruth who holds a degree in Psychology indicated that she failed to find a job because if someone has a degree in Psychology, it is very difficult to get employed. She said that at least those who have a degree in Industrial Psychology find jobs in companies and mines. She continued that it is better for someone to have a Masters Degree in Psychology in order to

find job because most of the posts advertised, require someone with masters who has registered with the council of Psychologists. Ruth reported that she wants to further her studies and do honours in Psychology provided she gets financial help.

***Dumi** who holds a diploma in Public Management said that it is a very big challenge for someone having a diploma in Public Management searching only for a government job. He continued by saying that if a person holds this kind of qualification, he/she usually follows an equivalent qualification. He indicated that when the employers look for someone with a qualification in human resource, he would say that he has done personnel management. Dumi reported that it is very rare to find a post as public administrator.*

***Gabriel** holds a diploma in Accounting. He reported that there are jobs out there where they need people with accounting, but it is difficult to get there. He mentioned that the employers are looking for people who hold a degree in accounting or masters in accounting. He said it is very rare to find a post for someone who has diploma in accounting like himself. This is a challenge.*

Thus, while the demand for undergraduate social and human sciences degrees in the labour market have decreased, post-graduates in the social and human sciences have increased (Wilson et al, 1999). Those who hold undergraduate degrees find it difficult to acquire employment in South Africa and also participants holding a diploma appear to find it even more difficult to get employed, as employers require people with a degree. Moleke (2003) also confirmed that those holding degrees in accounting, business management and economics have better prospects in the labour market. The White Paper on Higher Education (1997) also confirms that graduates are encouraged to enrol in post-graduates degrees in order to address the high levels of skills needed in the market.

On the basis of these results, we can conclude that unemployed graduates in this study are faced with insufficient qualifications, which need to be supplemented to meet the requirements of the labour market. The South African labour market is going through a transformation process and so highly skilled personnel, especially people with managerial skills, are really needed (Poswell, 2002). In addition, to be more responsive to challenges necessitated by the rapidly changing local and global economy, lifelong learning is important. Education should not only be about transmission of knowledge, but needs to further encourage collaborative learning, build on learners' interests and experiences, encourage creativity and flexibility. Lifelong learning encourages the development of an education system, which prepares one for the working life and labour market (National Youth Commission Policy, 2000).

Some of the unemployed graduates in the study, however, viewed their qualification as being in high demand in the labour market. The participants with a BA in Administration, a diploma in Public Management and a Law degree, indicated that there are lots of jobs in their field of studies. These findings contradict what Moleke (2003) found, that is, graduates in Law and Human Science are less likely to access employment. The participant with a degree in Administration believes that there are jobs in this field because every office has an admin, and this also applies to the participant with Public Management qualification. The findings suggest that there is a high demand for students with a Law degree. These findings once again contradict the view of Moleke (2003). According to her the field of Law had the highest percentage of males who experienced periods of unemployment.

This is how the unemployed graduates explicitly view their qualifications:

Angela, who holds a diploma in Public Management, reported that it is not a problem for someone with this qualification to find a job. She said that with this career someone could either be a receptionist, administrative officer, secretary or manager. She continued by saying the

only thing is to choose which career to follow. In addition to that she mentioned that Public Management is well advertised on newspapers.

Petra, who holds a degree in Administration, reported that there are a lot of jobs in her career. She stated that every office has an admin, so there are jobs in every department, company, mine or in any work place.

Michael, who holds LLB degree, reported that a degree in Law has a great value compared to other careers. He continued by saying that someone holding this degree can work in many firms and even in government department and companies

According to Moleke (2003) African graduates who have qualifications in Management Sciences, which the participants in this study have, do not get employed quickly as their counterparts. Moleke believes that racial discrimination still take place in the labour market.

These findings appear to suggest that participants in this study regard their qualifications marketable even though they experience problems in accessing employment. They value their qualifications as allowing them to work in all spheres, either in government or in the private sector. Even so, the doors are not opened for them to compete in the labour market. Therefore this study suggests that the apparent mismatch between academic programmes offered at higher education sector, and the demand for particular skills is a critical aspect, which requires urgent attention.

3.2 Academic Institutions Attended by the Unemployed Graduates

This study also suggests that the academic institutions attended by the participants are having an influence on their employability. Petra described the institution she attended as having a low standard and providing poor education, while five participants described their institutions as having a high standard and providing appropriate education. Petra stated that her academic institution was providing a theoretical education, which does not offer practical teaching. According to the participant this has a great influence on her

employability. The following quotations demonstrate/illustrate the views of the participant:

Petra: "If I was giving marks out of ten; I will give my institution five out of ten. We just go to the lecture room and listen and go out without any practical lessons. Learning about the human mind, where are you going to put that into practice; they do not send you to hospitals or anywhere. Some students in other institutions visit hospitals and do practicals and have a clear understanding of what they have learned in school. Sometimes if the institution is multi-cultural it is good to interact with people of other cultures and learn from them. So at my institution we were only blacks, but all in all the most important thing is to have practical training, which we didn't have. My Institution has an influence on my unemployment status because there is a big difference for someone from black university and the other one from multi-racial and white university. Really it is obvious that they will choose the one from multiracial university, which are previously white institutions. At multiracial universities students are exposed to so many things and the fact that you are from a white university, the employers will prefer you without considering who you are. My institution has a major impact on my unemployment status. If you are from a white university and want to study at a black institution, they will credit you the subjects you have done. But from black to white university they won't credit you; you will have to start from zero. They rate the standard of black university very low compared to theirs. Even in the job market they are aware of this thing. If I was an employer I will employ someone from a white university. Students from a black university and white university are totally different. Students from white universities are over-confident and they can do anything anywhere. They are so motivated, I wish I could have studied there, and may be today I wouldn't be here".

These views correspond with those of Bhorat (2003b and 2004a) who indicated that the graduates from historically advantaged institutions are the first preference of employers. According to the participant unemployment among African/Black graduates relates to the quality of tertiary institutions that students attended. From the participants' views, there is a difference between the kind of education offered at the Historically White Institution and the Historically Black Institutions. Kruss (2003) as well as Furlong and Cartmel (1997) supported this idea that Historically White Institutions expose students to the diversity of communities and as a result they are better able to manage in the working world. This, they suggest, puts the graduates from Historically Disadvantage Institutions in a situation where they are faced with unemployment. This makes them see their qualification as having no value. Business Day in Du Toit (2003), Bhorat (2003), Mkandawire et al (2001) and International Labour Organisation (2004c) confirm that those graduates from previously disadvantaged institutions are marginalised by the poor quality of education they receive and this makes them unattractive as employees.

The higher education institutions, especially Black institutions, have been criticized for failing to supply the labour market with skilled graduates. These institutions do not have relevant resources to produce skilled and better-educated graduates. These institutions need to offer proper training to the students so that they may be employable. This could be achieved by expanding the curriculum to new scarce skills demanded by the labour market. In the report of Council on Higher Education on the relations between higher education and the labour market, Kruss (2003), mentioned that historically disadvantaged institutions needs to prepare individuals to become employable in new occupational fields leading to economic development.

The education system, especially the black institutions, needs to be transformed in order to avoid the negative perceptions on the part of employers. The process of transition from higher education to work is of paramount importance to the South African market as a whole. Strategies need to be developed by educational institutions to help graduates to get ready or be prepared for the labour market. Historically Black institutions need to be transformed in order to make it easier for students from these institutions to enter the

market with ease. Boehm (2000) reported that employers prefer education and training to be more practical and more skill oriented, which is mostly needed in the labour market. These institutions are faced with lack of resources which results in them being miles behind of what is happening in the labour market especially as far as technological development is concerned.

However, this study showed that even those who are from White institutions, who view their institutions to be of higher standard, with high quality of education, are without jobs. Some participants are of the opinion that, even though their institution is of high standard, their qualifications do not match the skills needed in the labour market. This correlates with the idea of Abedian (2004) that there is a mismatch between the skills the economy needs and those available.

Some of the participants, who have studied at previously Black institutions, view their institutions as one of the best institutions. This is how some participants describe their academic institutions:

Dumi: "I have chosen this institution knowing that it has high status and I believe that the qualifications are competitive but then the kind of qualification that I have is a challenge, my qualification is very vague".

Michael: "My University is one of the best institutions in the country. Even though the media has discredited it, it has produced the most famous lecturers, pharmacists and politicians. The fact that it is a black institution, other people takes it as having a low standard when they compare someone from Turf and Wits but according to me even though it is regarded as a historically disadvantaged institution, it is trying to be the best".

Gabriel: "Of course, the standard of my institution is high because people who have studied there whom I know are working. It is one of the top and

old technicians in this country. I don't even doubt it and I am proud that I studied there".

3.3 Careers needed in the Labour Market as stated by the Unemployed Graduates

This study shows that some of the participants are aware of the careers that are in high demand. Unfortunately they did not hold those qualifications. Dumi for example, comments as follows:

Dumi: "Most of the jobs that are advertised are IT related, financial related, medical related, very few have been advertised on Public Management or community project. The mines and private sector are busy building industries; one cannot compete with those who have commercial credentials. Someone who is studying medicine knows very well that after completion he/she will get a job. Someone who has done engineering will get a job and someone who has done internal auditing is competitive on the private and the public sector. The employers want someone whom has knowledge in the field of engineering, to improve the infrastructure in the rural communities, so they said one needs a civil engineering background and that is a challenge to me. When you do restructuring, the only people that you need are those people who did organizational work-study, human resource managers, and auditors to check the financial status of the country or the department. You don't need administrators, custodians or people who are cleaning. How often are you going to advertise those kinds of posts".

The kinds of skills that are demanded are related to science and technology as mentioned by the participant during the study. The HSRC (1999b), Barker (2003) and Poswell (2002) confirm the result.

Dumi suggested: "The province or government should look at the needs and prescribe certain courses for the students that are relevant to the economy. Some of the courses offered by our institutions are irrelevant".

Therefore, the overall view of the study shows that students are not provided with proper guidance when selecting careers. This led the students to choose careers that are not relevant to the current South African labour market (Slabbert et al, 1994, Mhone, 2000, CASE, 2000 and Furlong and Cartmel, 1997). There is a need for the academic institutions to link with the labour market, so that relevant skills should be provided to the students. This is consistent with what Bailey (1990) reported. Therefore it will be vital to create strong linkage between department of education and the South African labour market in order to offer relevant skills to the graduates.

4. Causes of Unemployment among Young Graduates

The youth unemployment in South Africa is caused by many and sometimes interrelated factors. This study explores the contributing factors that the unemployed graduates think could have led them to be unemployed.

4.1 Lack of job experience

In terms of the causes of unemployment, the participants reported that the cause of unemployment among graduates was lack of job experience. Three participants reported that the employers require certain duration of work experience, which graduates do not have. Below I presented two quotations on how lack of work experience blocked graduates to get employed:

Dumi: "I do not meet the requirements the employers want because the employers will say they need three years experience in administration. These are stumbling blocks for me".

Michael: "I think it is because I don't have work experience. If I should have gone to law school, which will help me with practice, how legal

things works, I should have been at work now. Law firms do not train or teach someone a job, the training and the teaching must be done by the law schools”.

The International Labour Organization (2004c), CASE (2000) and Paledi (2000) confirmed that one of the reasons for youth unemployment is lack of job experience. This is an obstacle for graduates as they do not have experience due to the fact that they were not given the chance to do practical work in their academic institutions, yet they are expected to come up with experience for a duration of three or five years. Automatically this excludes young people who come straight from tertiary institutions, who never worked before. Exclusion makes young people to become vulnerable, have low self-esteem and think that the qualifications they have are not important as they are not given the opportunity to serve in their communities and practice what they have learnt at schools.

4.2 Lack of career guidance

It emerged from the study that lack of career guidance at schools and higher institutions contributed to them being unemployed. The study revealed that Ruth and Petra did not get advice or guidance on which field of study to choose. They also did not get information about the tertiary institutions and so they did not know where to go to after completing their matric. The evidence below shows how lack of career guidance has contributed to graduates not finding jobs:

Ruth, “I did not know which stream to follow when I arrived at the university, but I wanted something related to Social Work and the people who were helping us to choose courses were all students and they also had wrong choices of streams meaning that they were not having knowledge on career choices. No professionals or lecturers were involved in that process”.

Petra, "I think the problem is that I am from a black school where we did not get good advice on where to go and which field of study to take and at which institution".

Their experiences correspond with the views of Moleke and HSRC (2003) and International Labour Organisation (2004c) that there is lack of career guidance at schools. The participants blamed the institutions for not providing career guidance and assisting them in selecting suitable careers, which leads graduates to choose careers that are less demanding and considered unattractive by employers. Young people are given inadequate guidance about what job opportunities are available in the market, resulting in them being marginalised and discriminated on the basis of their qualifications and institutions. This also suggests that many young people are discriminated against on the bases of their poor socio-economic background, which force them to attend schools or institutions, which not provide guidance on career choice. These findings correspond with the idea of (Furlong and Cartmel, 1997).

4.3 Lack of networks in the workplace

The study revealed that if an individual does not have connections with anyone in the workplace; it is not easy to get a job. Gabriel reported that for someone to get a job, that person must have friends or relatives in the work place:

Gabriel: "The fact that I do not have connections with people who are working, no one will employ me. Those who have friends and relatives in the workplace find jobs. I do not know anyone working either in the government departments or companies."

Sziraczki (2004) confirmed these findings, that is, that employers often use informal networks to fill vacancies. These results raise an important question e.g. what is going to happen to those graduates who do not have relatives and friends in the workplaces and whether those people who occupy posts have relevant qualifications. Gabriel raised an

issue that employers are giving jobs only to those who belong to their own cultural/ethnic group. Gabriel comments on this in the following quote:

Gabriel: "You will find that the employer needs people belonging to his or her cultural/ethnic group. It works mostly among blacks, for example, if a person comes, looking for a job, not sharing the same culture with the employer, then the employers do not even look at them e.g., the Pedi employer prefers mostly the Bapedi's and the Venda prefers the BaVhendas. Sometimes you can see that you are unemployed because you belong to a certain cultural/ethnic group. In this case it is not a matter of not having relevant qualification, it is discrimination".

According to Gabriel, discrimination among cultural/ethnic groups is one of the factors that led him not to access employment. This corresponds with Paledi's finding (2000) that discrimination is one of the causes of unemployment among graduates. During the apartheid era, South Africans faced the problem of racial discrimination. With the present government, however, blacks are experiencing discrimination on the basis of ethnicity.

4.4 Redeployment

It was learnt from the study that redeployment has an influence in youth unemployment. Petra, reported that adults already in the workplace move from one position to the other. Vacant positions are thus filled with people already participating in the labour market. This indicates that the chances for young people, fresh from the institutions are very limited to enter the labour market. Petra said:

Petra: "I think even before they advertise the posts they know the people who will take the position, and those people are already in the working place and if you do apply, you waste time because already there is somebody for the post. The other problem is that old people are occupying positions which could be given to young people".

According to Petra, those who are in the work place find it easy to move from one job to the other. This happens because employers need someone who has experience, which the graduates do not have. This usually happens in the government where they indicate on the vacancy circular that preference will be given to government employees or public servants, not outsiders. Doors are not opened for new entrants, no matter how educated they are. Therefore this study suggests that redeployment leads to youth unemployment, which is skyrocketing in Limpopo Province. The study suggests that youth be given opportunities in different departments. In my opinion, young people are needed to come up with new ideas to help in the development of the province.

4.5 High population growth and Low economic growth

High population growth has been identified as one of the causes of unemployment. Angela and Gabriel indicated that there are job opportunities but those jobs are not enough because there are a large number of unemployed people in the province. It means that the total number of jobs advertised cannot absorb the people looking for jobs. The government also has been blamed for not creating enough job opportunities as Mkandawire et al (2001) has noted. The following illustrates Petra, Angela and Gabriel's views on high population growth in the province:

Angela: "There are lots of posts advertised but you will find that they need only one for each post, from hundred people. Work opportunities are there, but not enough for the unemployed people in this province. You will find ten thousand people applying for only ten posts. This is very bad".

Gabriel: "You know we are many in this country. Everyday the town is full of people who are looking for jobs. Even our government does not create enough jobs to tell the truth. The government is not able to supply us with enough jobs".

Petra: "At the moment I have lost faith in the government promising to give us enough jobs".

Tlaletsi (2002) and Du Toit (2003) support the views that high population growth rates and low demand of labour lead to the problem of youth unemployment.

4.6 The need for post-graduate qualifications

The data from this study suggest that less qualification led the graduates to be unemployed. Some participants, those with diplomas and degrees argue that post-graduate degrees could facilitate access to jobs. The following statements make it clear how they view their qualifications:

Ruth with a degree in Psychology:

"I stayed at home with a junior degree in Psychology that is why I want to do Honours in Psychology and may be continue with Masters Degree if I get financial help".

Michael with a degree in Law:

"Partially I blame myself for not being able to negotiate for a loan to go to a law school to improve my qualifications and have more knowledge about law".

Gabriel with diploma in Accounting:

"The other thing is that my qualifications are not enough, what can I say. May be I should have studied further".

Wilson et al (1999) and White paper on Higher education (1997) confirmed what the participants said, that is, that there is a need for students to have completed postgraduate studies, as the labour market is more open to people of that calibre. This indicates that the qualifications that the graduates have do not allow them to get employed, to compete in the labour market. They have to apply for loans and scholarships as one of the participants have stated for them to go to universities. The fact that they do not have enough money to continue with their studies means that they will be faced with the harsh realities of unemployment and underemployment.

This puts participants in a very difficult position. They have to further their studies, but do not have the financial means to make this possible and at some time family needs them to generate income to help siblings.

4.7 Interview challenges

This study also revealed that unemployment among young graduates might be related to a failure to present themselves during interviews. Four participants in this study indicated that they have been invited for interviews and they realise that their inability to make presentations and failing to answer questions during interviews, have played a role in not being appointed.

Ruth was invited for an interview in the Department of Health in Limpopo Province. She said:

"I did not know how to do presentations like in some of the interviews you have to do presentations. I did know how to answer some questions e.g. like tell us about yourself. Again I didn't know how to approach them".

Angela was invited for interviews three times at the Department of Health, Public Works and one of the food shops in Limpopo Province.

This is her experience:

"I got shaken because I was faced with a panel of five people. Everyone was asking questions. Some of the questions were difficult because they were asking things that I have mentioned in my CV, what I did in my first year at tertiary institution e.g. "what have you done in Statutory framework", Oh I was scratching my head, and everything was difficult".

Petra was invited for an interview in several companies around Polokwane: She said:

"Honestly, may-be I am not good enough or may-be I don't show potential in the job I have applied for. I went for interviews and they said they would call me back. Till today I did not get anything from them".

Michael was invited for an interview in one of the law firms in Johannesburg: This is how he shared his experience:

"The interview was challenging, but I was able to answer the questions though I don't know if I gave the correct answers that they wanted. To tell the truth, the questions were intellectual and I realized that they really needed someone who knew law. But even then I have tried my best even though they didn't employ me. And this indicates to me that I didn't answer the questions the way they wanted"

This study shows that the graduates were invited for interviews several times, but they were unable to answer the questions and to present themselves to the interviewers. They failed to convince employers that they are capable of doing the job being advertised. The evidence from this study also indicates that the graduates were unable to recall what they have learnt at school and this led the participant not to respond to some of the questions asked. In general the results suggest that the participants did not have skills on how to approach interviews, were unsure what would be expected from them and how they should answer the questions.

5. Methods used by the Unemployed Graduates in Searching for Employment

It was discovered in this research that those who experienced periods of unemployment use multiple methods in their search for employment. The study was able to establish the methods that the unemployed used to search for jobs. The research found that all the participants were using the different methods like, newspapers, Internet, and personal contacts.

This is consistent with what CASE (2000) and Moleke (2003) said about the strategies used by the unemployed when looking for a job. The participants were only having access to Internet the time they were still attending the youth program. It emerged from the data that one participant also use door-to-door searches, visiting different departments. The unemployed also used government circulars advertising vacancies. The following are some quotations that confirm the strategies used in searching for employment:

Dumi: "I look at the newspaper and see what kind of post has been advertised. Now I have started to go to certain departments and do information interviews, ask them what they do, what are they working on and ask them if they have any kind of employment available and if they need a person. I am very passionate about the rural community, disadvantaged people. I try to find out how the various departments get involved in the community projects.

Michael: "I read newspapers as source of information. I even search through Internet and even my friends use to tell me which firm to apply".

Petra: "I do use newspapers, government circulars and sometimes my friends help to search jobs on the Internet".

The research also found that five unemployed graduates have been looking for jobs only in their hometown. They have been searching for jobs in their province because they do not have relatives in other provinces that can accommodate them. Some have been thinking of moving while others do not have that mind of going somewhere to search for employment. This corresponds with what Mkandawire et al (2001) found. In this study none of the participants thought of moving abroad to look for a job.

6. The Views of Unemployed Graduates on Affirmative Action

One of the main challenges facing the post-apartheid era is to ensure equity and redress imbalances in the employment system. It emerged in the study, that affirmative action, which is the policy to redress imbalances in the labour market, was not well implemented.

The data shows that people are still facing discrimination, and women continue to experience greater unemployment compared to men. The policy of gender equity is not yet in practice as the study reported. The research found that in the work place Blacks are

hired on the lower level (sub-ordinates) while Whites occupy executive positions. The evidence below shows the participants' opinions on affirmative action:

Angela: "Large number of women out there is not working while the majority of men are working. Even if the government said they follow affirmative action, I doubt because women are not working, so why are we not getting jobs."

Ruth: "Affirmative action is not working, blacks are not working and I never heard of a white graduate in this province being unemployed, since I was born".

Petra: "You see, there is still racial discrimination when coming to employing blacks. I am from a black university with Admin qualification, no one is interested in me but the white person with B Admin can easily find a job. Blacks are still undermined".

Michael: "Some of their policies were passed but not implemented and not well regulated. They will tell you about Affirmative Action but when you go there you will find black people as the sub-ordinates, being at the lower level while the whites occupy the high positions being executives".

Mlatsheni, (2002), Labour Force Survey (Stats SA, 2002) and Mail & Guardian (2003) support the results of this study that there is no gender equity in the labour market because a large number of women is unemployed compared to men. The report disagrees with what Bhorat & Lundall (2003b) stated that women face unemployment because their careers are more in humanities than in management sciences and engineering as this study has two female participants with careers in management science and they are unemployed.

Bhorat (2003b), IRIN (2003) and HSRC (2003) agree with the results that there is racial discrimination in the labour market emphasis being on black people. According to the views of Angela, Ruth, Petra and Michael affirmative action is not well implemented.

7. The State Interventions and Youth unemployment

7.1 South African Government Interventions Promoting Youth Employment

Since 1994, the government has undertaken initiatives to address the specific needs of young men and women. The government of South Africa has put in place a wide range of interventions to address the growing level of unemployment. This theme explores the experiences and views of graduates about the government interventions that tackle the problem of youth unemployment. The results showed that all the participants were aware of those interventions. The following statements show how the participants were familiar with the interventions:

***Ruth:** "Truly speaking, this learnership and internships are good. But you will find that you spend a year working, hoping that at the end you will get a permanent job in that company or department not knowing that at the end you will be unemployed even though you got experience. The interns go back to face the problem of unemployment".*

***Angela:** "There are solutions for unemployment because I attended entrepreneurship programme where one can start a business and be self-employed".*

***Petra:** "The government is trying to provide youth learnerships and internships. They are trying to empower the youth through entrepreneurship".*

***Dumi argued that:** "The government is just offering temporary solutions, dishing out learnerships and internships whereby the government departments at the end of the day are filled with learnerships and you will*

ask yourself when the government is going to create permanent employment. Look, someone who is doing an internship is doing a job of someone who is permanent, yet they are not rewarded accordingly and for a certain period of time. After getting used to the working environment, you are back at home. This is temporary whereby at the end of the day when the internship and learnership are completed, people get frustrated. So for now I can say that the government is offering temporary solutions to young people”

Michael: *“The government offers experience through the youth programs because in some posts they require certain experience for a particular duration”.*

Gabriel: *“There are solutions for unemployment like the internships but they are not permanent. You can work for one year and thereafter you are like us. I think that is not a good solution. The government is promising what they cannot fulfil”.*

Participants are aware of government’s efforts to solve the problem through learnerships, internships and youth programmes. The aims of these programmes are to offer experience and skills needed in the labour market. Though the government provide the interventions to solve unemployment, the study revealed that these programmes are not permanent solutions. Interventions are only there to provide skills and experience for a certain period and after that the graduates have to look for a job. Therefore this study indicates that unemployed youth have knowledge about the interventions, but they are against how the programmes operate because when the training is completed the graduates remain without a job, as there is no guarantee of getting employed after internship.

7.2 The Skills Provided by the Youth Programmes Attended by the Unemployed Graduates

Five of the six unemployed graduates have attended youth programmes, while one participant did not attend the programme because she was familiar with what was taught. Those who attended the programme indicated that they benefited and felt empowered afterwards. The evidence below shows how the unemployed graduates benefited from the programmes:

Ruth: *“The programme has equipped us so that we can cope at the work place. The training offered us with entrepreneurship skills, knowledge on how and where we can start our businesses, and taught how to do balance sheet, cash flow and business plan and all those things that are related to a business. I can now use Micro soft word, Excel and Power Point. They even help us to have e-mail addresses and we have done Life-Skills programs. Since I have completed the program I am too much on books I am now reading motivational books and the developing skills notes. They do give a direction of what do I want, what can I succeed in”.*

Angela: *“I have learnt how to write a business plan and in life-skills programme I have learnt how to speak in public, not to be scared and to be confident enough in what I am doing”.*

Dumi: *“Joining the youth program for the unemployed took me through the process of the skill audit, I discovered what I can do, the kind of skills that I have. I know exactly what I want to do. Now I know I can train and I can teach which are my natural skills. I have learnt behavioural skills, knowing my downfalls, my strengths and weaknesses, make presentations, how to dress for different occasions and how to approach interviews. You gain skills, knowledge about entrepreneurship e.g. how to balance books, how write a competitive business plan and how business cycle works.*

Michael: *“As I was attending a programme for unemployed graduates. I was getting money from the programme for transport and food. I felt empowered; it made a difference in my life. I have learnt to take initiative, to be able to communicate, to be confident enough and to view life in a different manner and not to wait for the government to give us jobs, to be self independent and to be positive”.*

Gabriel: *“What I benefited from the programme was computer skills, how to prepare for the interviews, and communication skills. I felt motivated after the programme and even now I am proud of being in that program”.*

The emerging evidence shows that the unemployed youth have acquired communication skills, computer skills, and entrepreneurial skills including how to write business plans, how they can make their business plans competitive, how to do presentations and how to approach interviews. The programme motivated the youth and at the same time changed their lifestyle. The study found that after the programme Ruth started to read motivational books, which really changed her life. Michael also reported that he felt so confident, empowered, and positive and he learnt to be an initiator. Dumi and Gabriel mentioned that they have acquired interview skills, knowledge about how to prepare for interviews which is very important at their stage.

7.3 Views and Experiences regarding the services provided by Youth Programmes

The research explored the views and experiences of the participants regarding the services delivered by the youth programmes. According to the results, the programmes addressing youth unemployment have failed to accomplish their goals. This is what the participants experienced about the services delivered by the programs.

Ruth: *“I do have plans but they do not work because when you go to a government Youth Fund, they want 10%, like if I need R70 000.00 to start*

a business they need R7 000.00 from me before they can fund my business”.

Dumi: *“This Youth Fund does not cater for the disadvantaged youth. Those who are rich can have that money. Now, where is the vision of the government? Government is doing nothing; they don’t help us, the youth entrepreneurs. All the investors need you to pop out something from your pocket before they can help. At the moment what I know is very complicated following the procedure of DTI, starting by submitting business plan and the procedure of Youth Fund, which is very vague and misleading because if you go there, they will tell you they need 10% of collateral, which is the security that can be used or the insurance”.*

Michael: *“Internships and volunteering in government departments is not a solution. Why is the government not creating or giving permanent jobs. Why do they waste money on one-year contract? On top of that what they are doing in the programme is not what we did at school. The government is doing nothing for the youth. Their mandate talks about helping disadvantaged youth but in reality that is not the case;, that is why it has been questioned in the media, on their service delivery and it has been found that it is not delivering at all. All that they are showing us is very positive and encouraging. If you want to start a business, which is one of the skills, which we got from the programme, is difficult because we don’t have money to start. But at the end of the day if you follow the road of getting funds from Umsobomvu, it is very tough”.*

Gabriel: *“So it raises questions whereby I am a youth, I have never owned a house before, not worked before, how am I going to get 10%. I have seen that nothing will happen even if you can apply because we don’t have money. The youth fund helps someone who has money not us. Even if you go there nothing will happen”.*

Petra: "I don't think the government is helping because those attending the programs go back to square one and become unemployed".

What is emerging from this study is that after the unemployed graduates have attended the programme, they developed ideas of creating their own businesses, being self-employed, as they have realised that there is scarcity of jobs in the formal sector. This is supported by Chigunta et al (2003) and Mkandawire et al (2001). According to the latter decreasing formal employment opportunities have led many young people to look into the informal sector as a source of livelihood. It emerged from the study that the unemployed graduates were aware of the programmes assigned to fund young entrepreneurs. Even though the participants wanted to start their own businesses, the study revealed that they experienced financial problems to establish their businesses.

In the exploration of the views of participants, it has been found that they were faced with a huge problem when requesting the funds from the government. The study revealed that for a young person to get funds, 10% of the money requested should be given to the government youth fund before funding the business. This was a crucial matter whereby the participants were discouraged and losing hope in government because the youth fund was assigned for disadvantaged unemployed youth who want to create their own enterprises.

If the government is helping the jobless who are underprivileged who never worked before, the questions remains as to where are they going to get money, poor as they are? Only those who are working or are rich can afford that 10%. According to this study, the participants did not succeed in their initiatives because it is difficult and very tough for them to find any help. Lack of capital became an obstacle to young people.

One can ask the following questions: how can the government expect an unemployed person to have money? Where are they going to get the money considering the poor financial background of their families? Does the government really know the needs of the disadvantaged youth before establishing the programmes or are these programmes for

advantaged youth who do not have a problem of getting funds to start businesses? Why are they offering entrepreneurial skills if they are not in a position to give funds to the youth who wants to start businesses? The government through its policies tries to address the imbalances, but still fail to acknowledge the difficulties experienced by the poor.

Young graduates argue that the government is not doing enough to help the disadvantaged youth. Young people feel betrayed by government, when they realise that their lives have not changed for the better since 1994. It has been reported that those who attended programmes, have remained unemployed (Morrow and Richards, 1996). Foley (2001) is also of the opinion that none of the youth programmes succeeded in solving the problem of youth unemployment in South Africa.

Therefore this study suggests that continuous monitoring and evaluation be done on the existing programmes to see if they reach the stated goals of promoting youth employment in the country. If their goals are not met, existing programmes need to be reconsidered and new programmes should be devised.

7.4 Solutions as suggested by the Unemployed Graduates

Though the participants showed feelings of discouragement, some of them were able to come up with strategies that can be used to resolve the problem of youth unemployment. The unemployed graduates raised or suggested the following strategies:

Dumi: "The department of education should know the kind of courses the economy requires in the country and prescribe that to the institutions and make sure that this is followed. This will be of great help and avoid people who have done courses and end up saying "I wish I had not taken this kind of course because it is tough to get a job".

Michael: "The money budgeted for internships should be used to employ people permanently because with the internships they employ people for

six months and there after you go back to the street. It is a waste of money”.

The above quotes show that the Department of Education should liaise and form a network with the labour market, to look at the careers, which are in demand in the market. This is consistent with what Kruss (2003), Mhone (2000) and Moleke (2003) have pointed out. The academic institutions should advise the students to choose the careers that the economy demands. The study suggests that the money budgeted for internships should be used to employ the youth permanently. According to the study the internships are only temporary because after the training people go back to the streets and stay unemployed. A long-term solution has to be found, to do away with six months employment and create permanent employment.

8. The Consequences of Graduates' Unemployment

The study explores how graduates feel about their unemployed status. The findings revealed that the unemployed graduates showed feelings of disappointment and discouragement. This is how they express their feelings:

Ruth, “When you think of what you have studied at school and you are not using your career, is painful”.

Petra, “I think it was a waste of time for me to go to a university, after getting a degree, staying at home for four years doing nothing”.

Michael, “I feel frustrated because my peers are making money out there and their parents are proud of them and this puts me under pressure. Sometimes I ask myself if I have chosen the right career”.

Dumi, “That was a downfall, because my expectation was not met. I expected things to be easy for me, but they were not as I thought, so I

think, is a challenge right now. It is a matter of being unlucky. That is what I see”.

Gabriel, “I was thinking I am going to work in the corporate offices, driving a big car, having my own house. Now look at me, without one of those things, is a kind of depression”.

The data reveal that unemployed youth feels discouraged and frustrated, as they are unable to realise their expectations and achieve their desired goals. Unemployment has lowered their expectations for the future. Barker (2003), Hall (in Slabbert et al, 1994) Haralambos and Holborn (1991) and Paledi (2000) confirm these findings. Michael experiences pressure from friends and family to find a job. Fagin and Little (in Haralambos and Holborn, 1991) and Moller (in Slabbert et al, 1994) also found that unemployed Black people are usually faced with financial and psychological pressure because they are expected to help their families. The study shows that one of the participants believes that he is unemployed because he has chosen the wrong career. This is in line with what O'Donnell (1994) and Paledi (2000) found in the research. They discovered that the unemployed tend to lose confidence in what they have and who they are. In addition to that, they start regretting the fact that they have studied for so long. People who are jobless or unable to find a job tend to view themselves as failing in life.

The emerging picture of this study, therefore, is that unemployed graduates developed feelings of sadness, being discouraged and hopelessness. These feelings are not unexpected, because work is a means through which an individual strives to meet his or her needs. The study suggests that there is a great need for the unemployed graduates to find help on how to handle and cope with their situation. Therapy is needed for the unemployed youth in order to guide them to build up their self-esteem, to do away with feelings of despondency and to make them live a less stressed life. If this kind of feeling continues without any support it may lead to depression, which can create severe problems in their lives.

9. Summary

Some of the most important findings of this study are the following: the unemployed graduates who took part in the study comes from poor families. The participants rely on their parents financially as they are not earning any income. Though not working, they all have aspirations of creating small businesses for their livelihood. However, they are not in a position to establish those enterprises because of lack of capital.

Three graduates viewed their qualifications as less marketable, while the other three viewed their qualifications as marketable. Those who viewed their qualifications unmarketable showed signs of regretting their choice of career, while others still feel motivated and want to further their studies and get higher qualifications. Graduates, who viewed their qualifications as being in high demand by the economy, were confident. Furthermore, the results showed that some of the graduates viewed their institutions as having low standard while others felt that their institutions have high status. The institution of low standard was reported to have an influence on the unemployment of graduates.

According to the graduates the following factors relate to their unemployment: lack of experience, high population growth and low economic growth, lack of career guidance, redeployment, the need for post-graduate qualification, discrimination among blacks, interview challenges, lack of social networks in the workplace and failure on the part of employers to implement affirmative action in the workplace. With regard to the consequences of unemployment, the graduates showed signs of depression, hopelessness, low self-esteem and some were experiencing pressure because they have to help their families and support their own children.

The findings showed that the graduates were familiar with the government initiatives addressing the problem of unemployment and participants have attended some of the programmes. It has been reported that they have gained skills and experiences during the training. The findings showed, however, that the participants were not satisfied with the services provided by the programmes, which address youth unemployment. The

unemployed graduates have also suggested solutions that can be implemented to tackle the problem of graduates' unemployment.

In the light of the above findings, the researcher makes certain recommendations regarding the problem of unemployed graduates. These are presented in chapter five as well as suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Conclusions: Reflection on the Research study

The present study explored the views and experiences of unemployed youth graduates in a particular area in Limpopo Province. Previous researchers focused more on the extent of youth unemployment, causes of youth unemployment among school leavers and those with Grade 12 and unemployment in general. Therefore this study strives to fill the gap in the existing literature on youth unemployment in South Africa.

The study showed that unemployed youth graduates are from disadvantaged families. Families experience financial constraints and they even struggle to buy basic necessities like food. It has been found that graduates are expected to help their families, so that the families may move out of poverty. However, the study found that the graduates rely on their parents' goodwill and financial support, as they are unable to find employment.

The study demonstrates that the problem of unemployed graduates has a negative influence on communities. This is due to the fact that, contrary to the communities; young people who are still at school tend to view education as useless and not important. For the most part older members of the community view education as a solution to unemployment. The study shows that some participants viewed their qualifications as marketable while others see their credentials as unmarketable. The research showed that, while some graduates were aware of the skills needed in the labour market, others were not aware because they viewed their credentials as marketable.

The study also revealed the views of participants about the institutions at which they studied. One unemployed graduate reported that her institution has a low standard, while five graduates said they come from institutions of high standard. The former said that the education offered at her institution is of poor quality and too theoretical and does not offer any practical experience of any course.

The study suggests that unemployment may relate to: lack of job experience, lack of networking with those in the workplace, high population growth and low economic growth, lack of career guidance at schools, redeployment, the need for post-graduate qualification, interview challenges and failure to implement affirmative action in the workplace.

The views of the unemployed graduates on the government strategies that address the problem of youth unemployment were also explored in the study. The study shows that the graduates were familiar with interventions addressing youth unemployment. Those interventions are Internships, Learnerships and Youth programmes. The unemployed graduates expressed dissatisfaction with the services provided by the programmes promoting youth employment. The participants are facing challenges of sustaining themselves, creating their own enterprises. The research showed how the participants lost faith in government because they do not get any support and the fact that the government is helping those who have money. According to some participants the poor would become poorer, the rich will become richer. Interventions were seen to be offering temporary solutions to unemployment. However, findings did indicate that they have acquired certain skills from programme they attended.

The study shows that the unemployed experience feelings of depression, disappointment and alienation. Some lost hope in government and feel that their aspirations of starting businesses will not be achieved or succeed.

In the light of the above findings and discussions, there is an urgent need to address the problem of lack of adequate education, lack of skills and experiences, the relationship between education and training institutions and the labour market to facilitate the school-to-work transitions. If this problem can be successfully tackled, further deterioration of youth unemployment will be prevented. Higher education should be more responsive to the needs of the labour market, so that the graduates would be employable. The public and the private sector expect institutions of higher education to prepare graduates to be ready to compete in the labour market. This will be the key to improve the social and

labour market position of young people and to diminish the negative effects of youth employment on society at large. It will also allow young people to realise their potential and to make a contribution to society.

The South African youth unemployment crisis needs to be seriously and urgently discussed. The unemployed in this country are the poor and marginalised. Young people in this country are excluded and they are more vulnerable than any other groups. Young as they are, they need relevant guidance and support which will lead to a brighter future. Ignoring young people can easily put our country in a terrible situation in the near future.

More than anything the youth want jobs; they have a desire to be independent and to gain feelings of self-worth and purpose in life. Indeed, youth should be considered a valuable asset to society and they should be given chance to make a contribution to society and to realise their potential.

2. Anomalies and Surprising results in the study

The following anomalies will be briefly discussed

2.1 Redeployment which influence Youth Unemployment

Redeployment is the movement from one position to the other in the workplace. This was raised as one of the causes of youth unemployment. Those in the workplace, who have job experience, are the ones who get first preference when jobs are advertised. This result in young people being excluded in the workplaces because those with five or ten years experience take jobs that could be given to young graduates.

2.2 The Requirements of the Government Youth Fund

The study revealed that government youth fund requires ten percent from young people requesting funds to start their businesses. This was a surprise, because the government policy is addressing the problem of unemployment among youth, who never worked, who don't have any sources of income. How can they be expected to have ten percent as most

of them come from poor rural areas where it is difficult to get food and water? The booklet or information about the youth fund does not show that if you need funds, you will be expected to pay ten percent of the money you are requesting.

2.3 Discrimination among cultural/ethnic groups

This topic emerges from the study, and the researcher did not expect it. The participant reported that employers are giving jobs to those who belong to their cultural/ethnic groups. According to the participant, discrimination among cultural/ethnic groups is one of the factors that let him not to access employment. The researcher was familiar with racial discrimination not discrimination among people of the same race.

2.4 Challenges faced by Unemployed Graduates during job interviews

This was raised as one of the causes of graduates' unemployment. This suggests that graduates were not trained or prepared enough on how to approach interviews. The graduates were supposed to be taught this while they were at school or tertiary institutions. This indicates to us that the graduates did not receive any kind of training related to career guidance, which was going to help them to make proper career decisions and how to approach job interviews.

3. The Gaps in the study

Even though the study has attempted to fill some gaps in the existing literature, there are still some shortcomings, for example:

- One of the limitations of the study is that the findings of the research cannot be generalised to the whole population. The study was conducted in Polokwane and the findings cannot be generalised to include other areas.
- The participants selected were only six and further research should include a larger number of participants.
- All the participants belong to one racial group, which can create a bias in the study.

- The stakeholders e.g. the personnel in different youth programmes, the youth commissioners, should have been contacted, in order to get their views on the activities, implementation, and achievements of the programmes.

4. Recommendations

In this section, certain recommendations based on the research findings are presented.

4.1 Education

This study showed that the unemployed youth graduates have qualifications, which are not demanded by the labour market. Employers seem to perceive some of the tertiary institutions as providing poor education. The following recommendations will be directed mainly to the Department of Education (schools and higher education institutions) and the labour market (the private and the public sector).

(i) Pre-study Vocational Guidance

The Department of Education should form a link with the labour market and discuss which skills are in demand in the economy at that period. Career guidance should be offered to the learners in primary and secondary school, and this must be included in the curriculum and be compulsory for everyone. This will enhance the learners' interest in the different employment fields and prepare them for the necessary educational skills that they need to acquire.

(ii) Employers and Universities Recruitment

The Department of Education should mediate with the employers of different companies and government departments, to come and motivate the learners. The employers have to explain to students about careers and skills that are needed in different companies. The universities should recruit learners and tell them about the courses offered at their universities and how those courses are related to the labour market.

(iii) Post-study Vocational Guidance

Post-study vocational guidance should be provided to the students in higher education institutions. This will prepare the student to cope in the work place. The post-study vocational guidance should entail methods of searching for a job, how to write a curriculum vitae and how to approach interviews in the workplace.

(iv) Transforming Higher Education Institutions

- There is a need to improve the quality of education provided by institution especially the historically disadvantaged. Under-skilled personnel in the institutions must undergo training skills, (Mkandawire et al, 2001).
- There is a need for tertiary institutes to facilitate education towards imparting practical skills. Presently there is a focus on theoretical skills that are not desired in the labour market.
- In-service training should be provided to the students in their final year of study at universities and technikons. This training will provide experience and skills that are related to the careers of the students. The in-service training should be part of the course at the institution.
- There must be a policy that governs the transition from higher education to work in South Africa. The interaction and networking of higher education and labour market will help institutions to produce graduates who are equipped to compete in the labour market.

4.2 Policy Interventions needed

- Skilled personnel working with young people are needed in the public and private sectors.
- Establishment of programmes, which will offer, graduates skills and experience demanded by the labour market will be useful.
- Programmes should be more multifaceted which will allow graduates to receive experience in different fields of study
- Continuous evaluation and monitoring of youth programmes will be useful in order to see whether the goals of the programmes are achieved.

- Follow-ups with the unemployed graduates are required to see if they accessed jobs after the programmes and if not, to find a solution for the problem.

5. Further Research Suggested

Based on the research findings, I, the researcher, suggest that the following research be conducted in the near future:

- Career guidance and the courses offered at schools if they are related to the careers needed in the labour market.
- Coping strategies that unemployed youth use/offered to cope with the condition of unemployment.
- Job seeking skills that young people have.
- The relationship between the higher education institutions and the labour market should be looked at - especially the historically disadvantaged institutions.
- The impact of education on employability. The research suggests that programmes or courses offered at higher education institutions be evaluated to assess whether they correlate with what is needed in the labour market.
- Programme evaluation research on Government youth programmes addressing the problem of unemployment be done, focusing on the following phases:
 1. Clarificatory evaluation
 2. Process evaluation
 3. Outcome evaluation

1. Clarification evaluation

Clarificatory evaluation is the introductory phase where the evaluator or the researcher has to know what the program is all about. Important things that must be clarified are the following: the goals of the programme, the objectives and activities of the programme, programme components, the management system and the target groups, which are beneficiaries. This is an ongoing process, even during the implementation phase the clarification of the programme is needed.

2. Process evaluation

Process evaluation is aimed at enhancing current programme by understanding it more carefully. Process evaluation will focus on the implementation of the programme. Process evaluation will be conducted in order to examine the operations of a programme, including: which activities are taking place, who is conducting those activities, who is reached. It will assess whether the resources have been allocated or mobilised and whether the activities are being implemented as planned. The following can serve as a guide to the researcher or the evaluator of the programme: Is the programme being implemented as designed? Does the programme serve the target population? Is the necessary programme management administration and infrastructure in place to support programme implementation.

3. Outcome evaluation

Outcome evaluation is research that is designed to sum up the effects of the programme - has it accomplished the goal or intent of the programme? It is also the impact of summative analysis, which seeks to estimate the effects of the programme. The important question in an outcome evaluation is whether the participants have changed in the direction that the programme was planned.

The above-mentioned phase should employ qualitative data collection techniques and focus on the following:

- The problem addressed by the programme
- The target group/the beneficiaries
- The activities of the programmes
- The implementation of the programmes
- The outcome of the programme

The study should find out whether the activities/objectives correlate with the outcome of the programme and whether the outcomes address or solve the problem of unemployment faced by the participants or young people.

6. Concluding Comments

The aim of the study was to explore and understand the views and experiences of unemployed graduates about their situation. The objectives stated at the beginning were exploring: (1) the experiences of a group of graduates with regard to their unemployment status, livelihood activities and aspirations, (2) the views of graduates concerning the strategies to solve unemployment among youth graduates, (3) the governmental policy framework in relation to its relevance for unemployment among youth graduates and (4) the factors that promote unemployment among graduates. These objectives served as a guide to the researcher from the beginning of the study up to the end.

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APPENDIX

• INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Views and Experiences of Unemployed Youth Graduates: A Case study of the Polokwane Area, Limpopo Province, South Africa.

1. Economic Issues

Family

What is your current family financial background?

- Is there anyone earning a salary?
- Does the income cover all the costs in the house?
- How has the unemployment situation affected your family financially?
- Has your family experienced financial constraints after your studies?

How do you make your daily living?

Do you get any income?

Does your family expect any financial help from you?

Do you have any plans to earn a living in the future?

Community

Tell me about your community's economic condition?

What are your plans to uplift the conditions of your community?

Have you already done something to uplift the conditions of your community?

2. Social Issues: Graduate Unemployment Status

What were your expectations before you graduated and how does unemployment influence your expectations?

What kind of treatment do you receive from your family?

How do you spend your day, as you are not working?

How do you feel being unemployed, as you have qualifications?

What do you think could have led you to be unemployed? And where do you put the blame?

Do you have any solution that you have already thought of, that can get take you out of unemployment situation?

How does your community react to your unemployment status, taking into account that you are a graduate?

3. Education: Standard of Institutions and Views on their Qualifications

Where did you study?

What courses did you study?

How do you rate the academic standard of your tertiary institution?

Are your qualifications marketable or demanded by the economy of the country?

Is your study field well advertised for employment in your region?

Do you feel the institution where you obtained your qualifications has any influence on your unemployment?

How were your qualifications received when you have applied for a job?

Since you have applied for a job, have you ever received any invitation for an interview?

Which methods have you used to look for a job?

Where have you looked for a job?

4. Political Issues: Governments Role

What solutions to unemployment is your government currently offering to unemployed graduates?

Government claims to provide programmes to help uplift the unemployed youth. Do you feel that such interventions provide employment opportunities for graduates?

Have you ever attended one of those programmes?

How did you benefit from those programmes?

Based upon the accumulation of your experiences, do you think the government supports individuals to create jobs or to be self-employed?

What are your personal views towards South African labour market?

Do you feel your gender places an influence on your unemployment?

Does your race have an influence on your unemployment status?

Based on your knowledge do you think that affirmative action has been practiced in the workplace?