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CONSTRAINTS TO GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT IN THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

BY

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578698

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ABSTRACT

Graduate unemployment has become a significant factor in the global economy. The economic system now relies on institutional unemployment figures as the indices of the socio-economic well-being of any country. Research shows that graduate unemployment is potentially damaging to the economy. If such unemployment persists, it may lead to the erosion and outdating of graduates' skills–bases, which will affect the economy in the long term. Statistical reports show that there is high graduate unemployment in South Africa; hence graduates struggle to find work despite the skills shortage in the country. This seems to contradict previous studies suggesting that the higher a person's education level, the higher his or her probability of finding employment. As a result of the significant rise in unemployment rates among South Africa's stock of graduates, the extent of the emerging skills-mismatch possessed by new graduate labour market entrants are increasingly misaligned with the skills demanded by employers.

The main purpose of this study was to develop and evaluate a measure of graduate employability based on a theoretical model, which ascertains the significant association between the contextual factors of unemployment and graduate unemployment. This model also examines the significant association between employability factors and graduate unemployment.

A survey was conducted with 241 respondents, 65% of whom were unemployed. This study examines a number of factors that influence graduate unemployment such as employability factors, contextual factors and core - self-evaluation. Investigation carried out shows that there is a significant association between employability factors and graduate unemployment. Based on this, recommendations were made to suggest some possible ways in which the challenges of unemployment can be overcome.

CONTENT OVERVIEW

An overview of this dissertation is provided to give guidance and understanding to the reader.

Chapter 1, which is titled '*Introduction*', gives a background to the study, the research problem, research question, objectives and the motivation to the study. It also explains the theoretical model adopted as well as the hypotheses. The chapter concludes with the structure of the study.

Chapter 2 titled *"literature review"*, examines the relationship between the contextual factors of graduate unemployment and the employability models - those factors making a person employable, as well as the psychological factors of unemployment that are identified based on research findings in the literature that relate to this study.

Chapter 3, titled *"methodology",* examines the general outlook of the research design and the type of methodology used as well as the rationale behind the methods used. The qualitative and quantitative research designs are discussed. Issues relating to validity and reliability are addressed. Ethical issues and the limitations of the study are also discussed.

Chapter 4, titled "*Data analysis and discussions",* consists of the analysis of the research findings of the study together with a detailed discussion explaining the results and the outcome of the testing of the hypotheses.

Chapter 5, titled "*Conclusions and recommendation* consist of the discussion of the results, recommendations, and conclusions of the study. It provides an integration of the data and the literature, therefore making recommendations with practical implications.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Commerce in Management at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree of examination in any other university.

_____

JULIET ERONMWON EDAYI

Signed on this the day of 31/08/2015

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KEY TERMS

Employability, graduate unemployment, core self-evaluation, self-esteem, self-efficacy, locus of control, emotional stability, intellectual ability, skills mismatch, and contextual factors.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

BANKSETA	BANKING SECTOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING AUTHORITY
BBBEE	BROAD-BASED BLACK ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT ACT
CBI	CONFEDERATION OF BRITISH INDUSTRY
CSE	CORE SELF-EVALUATION
DBE	DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION
EEA	EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT
HBI	HISTORICALLY BLACK INSTITUTIONS
HEI's	HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS
HSRC	HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH COUNCIL'S
HWI	HISTORICALLY WHITE INSTITUTION
JIPSA	JOINT INITIATIVES FOR PRIORITY SKILLS ACQUISITION
NYDPF	NATIONAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT POLICY FRAMEWORK
NYC	NATIONAL YOUTH COMMISSION
NYS	NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 ..... **13**

RESEARCH PROBLEM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS **13**

1.0 INTRODUCTION **14**

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY 16

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT 17

1.2.1 MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY 17

1.3 KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS 18

1.4 OBJECTIVES AND NEED OF STUDY 19

1.5 HYPOTHESIS 19

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN 21

1.8 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS 21

THIS SECTION DEFINES SOME OF THE MOST IMPORTANT KEY TERMS USED IN THIS RESEARCH. 21

1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY 21

1.8 STUDY LIMITATIONS 22

1.9STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT 22

1.10 SUMMARY 23

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW **25**

2.1INTRODUCTION 25

2.2 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE ON EMPLOYABILITY 25

2.2.1 BASIC EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS 34

CHAPTER 3 ..... **60**

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 60

3.1INTRODUCTION 61

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN 61

3.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM AND PHILOSOPHY 63

3.4 RESEARCH STRATEGY 64

3.5 TARGET POPULATION 64

3.6 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE 65

3.7 DATA COLLECTION TOOL 65

3.8 RATIONALE FOR USE OF QUESTIONNAIRE 66

3.10PILOT STUDY 67

3.12VALIDITY OF INSTRUMENT 68

3.13 SCALE RELIABILITY OF ITEMS 68

3.14DATA ANALYSIS 69

3.15ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS 70
3.16 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY 71
3.17CONCLUSION 72
CHAPTER 4……..……74
RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION……..……..….74
4.1 INTRODUCTION…….……..……..……...75
4.2 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY 75
4.3 BACKGROUND VARIABLES 76
SECTION C: APPLICATIONS AND JOB SEARCH INFORMATION 88
SECTION D: APPLICATION PROCESS 91
SECTION E: SKILLS ISSUES 94
4.5 HYPOTHESES…… 102
4.6 CONCLUSION 112
CHAPTER 5……..…….114
5.1 INTRODUCTION 115
5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS 115
5.3 IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS 117
5.4 CONCLUSION 118
5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS 118
5.6 AREAS OF FURTHER RESEARCH 119
6. APPENDIX 121
6.1 THE STATISTICAL ANALYSES 121
6.2 CLEANED DATA 127
7. QUESTIONNAIRE 128
8. CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE 136
9. COVER LETTER 136
UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND 136
10. REFERENCE 138

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure1. The Theoretical Model tested in this research (Source: Self) 20
Fig 4.1 Gender of Respondent 76
Fig 4.2 Age of Respondent 76
Fig 4.3 Marital Status of the Respondent 77
Fig 4.4 Level of Education 78
Fig 4.5 Employment Status 78
Fig 4.6 If you are unemployed what would you want to do? 79
Fig 4.7 Race of Respondents 79
Fig 4.8 Length of Unemployment 80
Fig 4.9 Highest Education Attained 81
Fig 4.10 Degree or discipline undertaken 82
Fig 4.11How was the degree undertaken? 83
Fig 4.12 When degree was completed 83
Fig 4.13 At university I did part-time or casual work 84
Fig 4.14 At university I did vacation program or internship 84
Fig 4.15 At university I did voluntary or charity work 85
Fig 4.16At University I was a member of student society 86
Fig 4.17 At university I was office holder of a student society 86
Fig 4.18 When did you start looking for future employment? 88
Fig 4.29What source of information did you use in your job search? 89
Fig 4.20 Job expectations before joining an organisation 89
Fig 4.21 What is your monthly salary expectation? 90
Fig 4.22What number of applications did you make? 90
Fig 4.23 What recruitment stage were you successful in after application? 91
Fig 4.24 What extent where you aware of career opportunities? 92
Fig 4.25 Amount of help received from the University in your career plan and job search 92
Fig 4.26 Kind of help did you receive from the University 93

Fig 4.27 What do you feel you have to offer potential employers in terms of skills gained during your period of study 94

Fig 4.28 How did you acquire these skills? 95

Fig 4.29 I am confident and I get the success i deserve……..……...96

Figure 4.30: Sometimes I feel depressed……..…….96
Figure 4.31: When I try, I generally succeed…….....96
Figure 4.32: Sometimes when I fail, I feel worthless ……..……....97
Figure 4.33: I complete tasks successfully…….....98
Figure 4.34: Sometimes I do not feel in control of my work…….....98
Figure 4.35: Overall I am satisfied with myself…….....99
Figure 4.36: I am filled with doubts about my competence …….....99
Figure 4.37: I determine what will happen in my life…….....100

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: A brief comparisonof other employability models with the graduate Employability Model 30

Table 2: Summary of skills identified as work readiness skills. 34

Table 3: A comparison of the quantitative and qualitative approaches in research methods. 61

Table 3.2: Research paradigm and Philosophy 63

Table 5.1 Cronbach Alpha Coefficients for the Graduate Unemployment Questionnaire. 75

Table 4.2: Frequency table for gender 101

Table 4.3: Frequency table for marital status 101

Table 4.4: frequency table for Age 101

Table 4.5: Logistic Regression Predicting likelihood of Unemployed Graduate from Contextual factors 103

Table 4.6 Logistic Regression Predicting likelihood of Unemployed Graduate from Employment factors 106

Table 4.7 Logistic Regression Predicting likelihood of satisfied graduate from Contextual factors 107

Table 6.1: Descriptive Statistics 121

Table 6.2 When did you start looking for future employment? 125

Table 6.3 At university I was office holder of a student society 126

Table 6.4 How was the degree undertaken? 126

Table 6.5 When did you start looking for future employment? 127

Table 6.6 At University I was office holder of a student society? 127

Table 6.7 How was the degree undertaken? 127

CHAPTER 1

RESEARCH PROBLEM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In recent years (Holden & Jameson, 2002), there have been historic turbulent socio-economic upheavals and imbalances in countries across the world, and unemployment continues to be a fundamental attributing factor, which severely impacts on socio-economic transformation (McConnell, 1995), particularly in developing countries. According to Olejniczak (2012), graduate unemployment reflects a gap in the labour market as it is able to reduce capability by limiting resources, restrict conversion factors, and reduce instrumental freedoms. The rationale for this view is that there is clearly a direct relationship between the well-being of a country and the level of graduate unemployment, especially in a declining and stagnant economy (Gazier, 2001; York & Knight 2007).

The availability of a strong skill base is an essential element of any strategy to reduce unemployment (Barker, 1999). Efficient education and training do not only play a major role in supporting higher economic growth, but also contribute to finding a better match between the availability of skills and the demand of labour market, which reduces structural unemployment issues in an economy(Snower Dehesa, 1997). Employment opportunities could also be created without reducing existing ones by putting extra effort on the promotion of more equal employment opportunities for those out of work (Barker, 1999).

Rapid forces such as technological advances and globalization in the postmodern society have left their mark on the labour market, thus creating a metamorphosis in the nature of work and the way in which individuals approach their careers (Snower et al., 1997). In addition, organizations are responding to technological developments, increased customer demand and globalization by implementing work structures that support adaptability and flexibility (Van Dam, 2004:29) and employability of graduates.

Employability relates to the value of individuals with regards to future employment opportunities (Schreuder, 2001). According to Fugate, Kinicki and Ashforth (2004), an individual's employability includes a multitude of person-centered constructs that interactively fuse to assist individuals in successfully adapting to numerous work related changes in the economy. Thus, from this perspective, employability is viewed as a psycho-social construct that embodies individual characteristics which foster adaptive cognition and behavioral effect (Darity& Goldsmith, 1993). This also enhances the individual work

interface (Fugate et al, 2004:15). Thus, an individual's employability does not only extend beyond knowledge and skills but also includes strong attributes such as core self-evaluation.

Harvey (1999) defines employability as the propensity of the graduate to exhibit attributes that employers anticipate will be necessary for future effective functioning of their organization. Employers seek individuals who would become involved in delivering value to the company by keeping up with the changing environment (Barthorpe& Hell, 2000).

In recent times, there has been a move towards the knowledge driven economy, which expects individuals to have the appropriate skills, knowledge and creativity needed to handle the complexities of a constant changing world wide economy (Brown, 2009). This has caused employers and government policies to focus on the supply of job-ready individuals to the labor market.

For individuals to be successful in career pursuits, they must leverage their psychological resources (Coetzee, 2008). A host of social psychologists which include Jahoda (1988); Warr and Jackson, (1988); Liem and Liem (1988);Kessler, Tumer and House, (1988)inferred that unemployment is likely to have subsequent effects on the productivity of an individual which therefore pose significant high level of anxiety, depressions (Darity et al 1993).

These resources include skills and abilities such as behavioral adaptability, identity awareness, a sense of purpose and core self-evaluation, which include self-efficacy, self-esteem, locus of control and emotional stability. Core self-evaluation (CSE) is deep seated evaluation that individuals have regarding their self-worth. Individuals with high CSE are positive and self-confident (Judge &Hurst, 2007). CSE relates to the measures that include better work motivation, job satisfaction and better life. There are situations that can influence individual performance (Callaghan, 2013); these include self-perception and individual behavior. However, high self-efficacy enables better task strategies which are related to work performance.

This research seeks to investigate fundamental factors that determine high rates of graduate unemployment in South Africa, with specific focus on intrinsic and extrinsic characteristics of graduates and employers. In addition, the study will contribute to knowledge on graduate unemployment and also provide new insight on the association between employability factors and graduate unemployment.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

In developing countries such as South Africa, high unemployment among graduates is a socio-economic challenge with an economic cost and many other facets, which include reducing economic welfare, reducing output, and eroding human capital **(**Naong, 2011).

Graduates represent skilled labour as they have studied specific fields and have acquired relevant qualifications that confer a certain skill on them. When eventually, they join the labour market, many of them discover that the easily available jobs often have little or nothing to do with their qualifications, or their acquired skills. They, therefore, find themselves unemployed – not because they are not qualified enough – but because the available jobs in the labour market cannot accommodate their acquired skills. This state of affairs is what is known as structural unemployment. Arnold (2012)in his book, Economics, further describes it as "...structural changes in the economy that eliminates some jobs and creates others for which the unemployed are unqualified".

Factors such as rapid increase in population (as well as increase in number of graduates), growth in rural-to-urban migration, increase in mechanisation by companies and businesses, slower rate of economic growth, and rise in unemployment of graduates have gradually developed into real social issues, thus necessitating this current study.

There has been an increase in unemployment in the South African economy over the last decade. In 2008 the unemployment rate was 21.8%. In 2009 the unemployment rate increased to 24.2%, while in 2013 and 2014 the unemployment rate increased to 24.5% and 25.5%, respectively (Stats SA, 2014).

In the past decade, there has been a structural change in the labour-demand trend towards increased demand for highly skilled workers, as a result of the gradual shift from primary sector to the secondary and tertiary sectors (Bhorat& Jacobs, 2010) and the need for becoming globally competitive to boost economic growth through the adoption of improved production techniques. Thus, structural unemployment is caused by changes in the composition of supply and demand (McConnell, 1995). The apparently significant rise in unemployment rates among South Africa's stock of graduates, and the extent of emerging skills-mismatch, has led to a situation whereby skills possessed by new graduate labour market entrants, are increasingly misaligned with skills demanded by employers (Koen, 2006; Branson et al., 2009b: 2).

Sha (2006) carried out a study which shows that graduates who are unemployed blame employers for their unemployment, whilst the employers blame the graduates for their negative attitude towards work. Negative attitude to work is thus one of the reasons why employers are reluctant to hire graduates. Other researchers have also conducted various studies on graduate unemployment. For example, Naong (2011) analysed the reason for graduates' struggle to find employment, and found that most graduates have this difficulty not only because they have chosen the wrong field of study but also because the South African education system is weak. In order to solve the problem, he proposed the promotion of an entrepreneurial culture which would bring about a paradigm shift among South African graduates, from being 'job-seekers' to 'job-creators' (Naong, 2011).

Additionally, Mostert (1996: 294) emphasised further on the theme of structural employment, by stressing that, "Structural unemployment...results from problems in the economy. Examples of structural problems are workers without the required training or experience....Structural unemployment may also be the result of sexual discrimination in the labour market". The aforementioned points represent some of factors that could possibly cause graduate unemployment, which will be highlighted in this research as possible constraints.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Unemployment is one of the most pressing challenges for South Africa today. However, the graduate labour force is on the rise as more and more people are graduating from higher institutions of learning. Despite the increasing growth in the graduate labour force, graduate unemployment seems to be rising with overall unemployment rate in South Africa. Graduate unemployment is therefore an important area of study as unemployment among graduates is potentially damaging to the economy. This is because graduate unemployment amounts to a waste of scarce human capital. If such unemployment persists, it may lead to the erosion and outdating of graduates' skills–bases, which will affect the economy in the long term (Pauw, 2006). It is therefore important to investigate the possible causes of graduate unemployment and its possible solutions, in order to develop the economy.

1.2.1 Motivation of the study

As a tutor, during her interaction with students, this researcher observed that young people studying for a qualification experience anxiety, uncertainty and frustration as they harbour genuine fear of the unknown that awaits them upon graduation. This uncertainty is simply

born out of their awareness of the growing difficulty in obtaining jobs, which awaits them in the labour market after completing their studies. The students realise that jobs are getting harder and harder to find – more so for graduates over and above any other category of jobseekers. Therefore, the motivation for this study stems mainly from the experiences of these students.

Research has shown that graduate unemployment only accounts for 5.9% of the changes in overall unemployment from 1996 to 2012 (Broekhuizen& Berg, 2013), even though the actual unemployment rate for this educational group increased from 5.4% in 1995 to 7% in 2012 (Broekhuizen& Berg, 2013). Although the absolute size is small, this percentage increase shows that graduate unemployment has increased over time. Statistical reports show that there is high graduate unemployment in South Africa; hence graduates struggle to find work despite the skills shortage in the country. This seems to contradict previous studies suggesting that the higher a person's education level, the higher his or her probability of finding employment (Oosthuizen, 2005).

It is therefore important to identify the necessary requirements demanded of graduates for employment. Graduate unemployment is centred on education, and education is not the only cause of graduate unemployment in South Africa (Lie, 2007). This study on graduate unemployment seeks to explore other possible constraints to graduate unemployment and possible solutions.

1.3 KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study examines the labour market of graduates in South Africa. Specifically, the study is undertaken with the aim of investigating the following key questions:

What are the perceived constraints to graduate employment in the various sectors within South Africa?

To what extent are contextual factors related to graduate unemployment?

To what extent are employability factors related to graduate unemployment?

To what extent are employability factors related to core self-evaluation?

To what extent are employability factors related to core self-evaluation?

1.4 OBJECTIVES AND NEED OF STUDY

In order to contribute to the body of literature on graduate unemployment, this study will examine the labour market for graduates in South Africa. The objective of the study is to determine the perceived constraints to graduate employment in the various sectors within South Africa. The study also aims to investigate the relationship between the contextual factors and graduate unemployment as well as the relationship between employability factors and graduate unemployment. The research will also examine the link between contextual factors and core self-evaluation. In addition, the study explores the possible existence of an association between employability factors and core self-evaluation.

1.5 HYPOTHESIS

The need for individuals to possess a combination of attributes that would enable them to gain employment is very crucial based on the fact that there are certain employability attributes employers look for in graduates (Tomlinson, 2007; Williams,2005; Fugate2004), an individual's employability are number of person centered constructs that interactively fuse to assist individuals to gain employment (Fugate et al., (2004: 15), To achieve the objectives outlined for the study, the following hypothesized relationships based on the research questions will be tested as follows:

1. *What is the association between the contextual factors of unemployment and graduate unemployment? A quantitative analysis would be adopted.*

    H1 will be tested using logistic regression analysis where the dependent variables would be one for employed graduate and zero for unemployed graduates together with its covariate.

2. *What is thesignificant association between employability factors and graduate unemployment?*

    H2 will be tested using logistic regression analysis

3. *What is the association between the contextual factors of unemployment and core self-evaluation.?*

    H3 will be tested using logistic regression analysis

4. *What is the association between employability factors and core self-evaluation?*

H4 will be tested using logistic regression analysis.

5 *What is the association between core self-evaluation traits and graduate unemployment?*

H5 will be tested using logistic regression analysis

6. *Does Gender moderate the relationship between core self-evaluation traits and graduate unemployment?*

H6 will test the moderation analysis using multiple logistic regression analysis.

7. *Does Core self- evaluation mediate the relationship between contextual factors and graduate unemployment?*

H7 will test for mediation using mediated logistic regression analysis.

8. Does Core self- evaluation mediate the relationship between employability factors and graduate unemployment?

H8 will be tested using mediated logistic regression analysis.

HI: *Contextual factors of unemployment are significantly association with graduate unemployment.*

H2: *Employability factors are significantly associated with graduate unemployment?*

H3: *Contextual factors of unemployment are significantly associated with core self-evaluation.*

H4: *Employability factors are significantly associated with core self-evaluation.*

H5: *Core self-evaluation is significantly associated with graduate unemployment.*

H6: *Core self-evaluation traits significantly moderate and graduate unemployment.*

.**H7:** *Core self- evaluation significantly mediates the relationship between contextual factors and graduate unemployment.*

H8: *Core self- evaluation significantly mediates the relationship between employability factors and graduate unemployment.*

The hypothesised relationships expressed in this section have been formulated on the basis of the theoretical model (see Figure 1), the research model, utilised for the study. The theoretical model presents an image of the key constructs of the study that are related by theory together with the possible relationships which the study intends to investigate. This model is developed from the literature, and a quantitative model is developed in this study for

empirical testing. The tested model (in the study) is compared with this model, which reflects the broader global literature.

1.6 MODEL

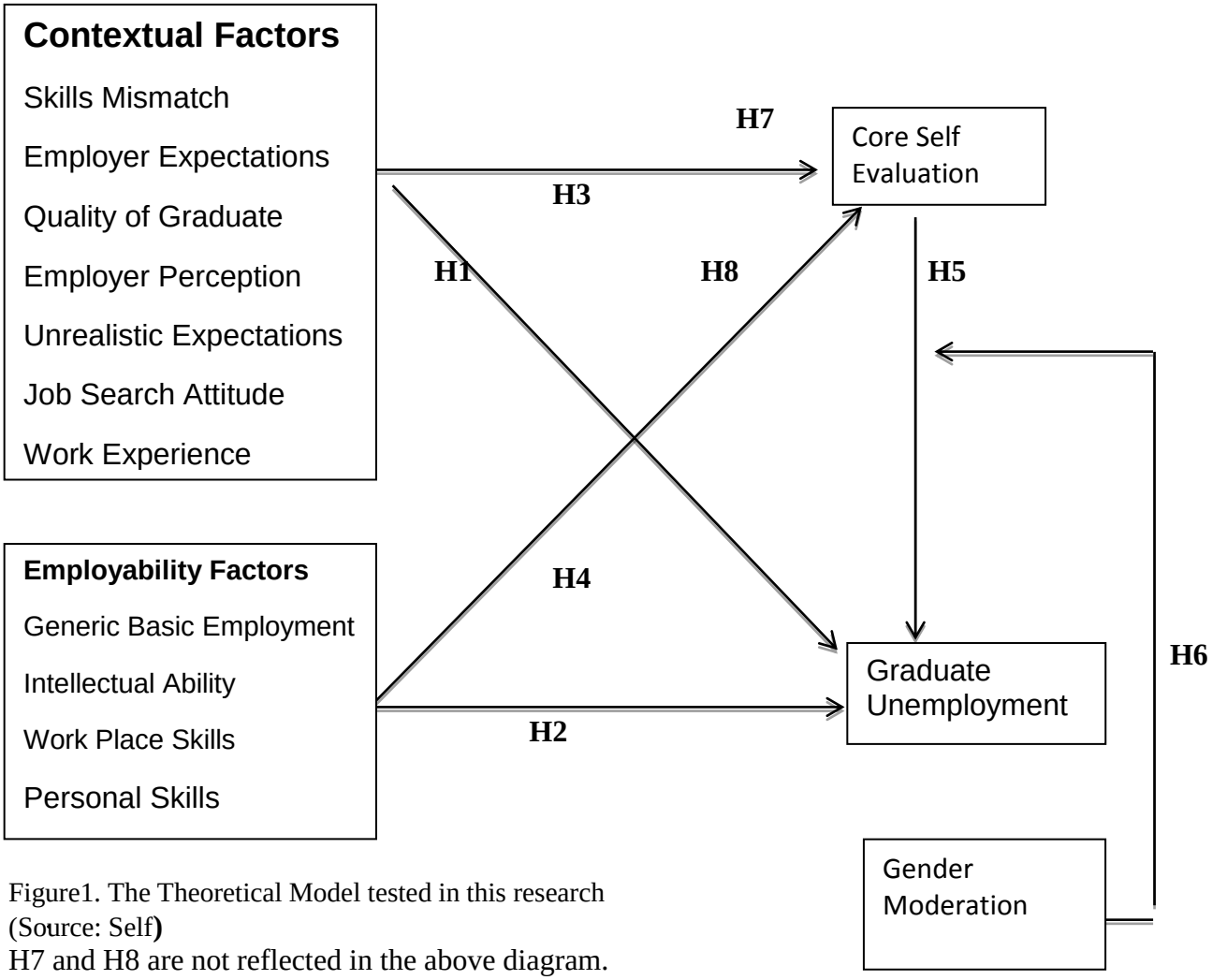


Figure1. The Theoretical Model tested in this research
(Source: Self**)**
H7 and H8 are not reflected in the above diagram.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

Research methodology is a systematic way of solving a problem (Babbie& Mouton, 2001). It is a science of studying how research is to be carried out. Research design refers to the blue print of how the researcher intends to conduct or carry out the research (Babbie& Mouton, 2001). A quantitative approach is used to quantify the problem by way of generating numerical data which are transformed into useable statistics. It employs strategies of inquiry such as experiments and surveys, and collect data on predetermined instruments that yield statistics data (Richard, 2009). The data was analysed using SPSS software package to determine the relationships between contextual factors, employability factors, core self-evaluation and graduate unemployment.

An electronically administered structured questionnaire was used as the primary data collection instrument for this research study. The reasons why electronic administered structured it's more cost effective to manage, relatively easy to analyse and also reduces the bias of associated with interviews. Additionally, the electronically-administered questionnaire is also perceived to be less intrusive than face to face surveys (Dane, 2000).

1.8 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

This section defines some of the most important key terms used in this research.

Employability: Employability is the capability of obtaining and keeping some fulfilling work, It includes having the set of skills, knowledge, understanding, and personal attributes which make people more likely to choose and secure jobs in which they may be satisfied and successful (Pool & Sewell, 2007; Weligamage, 2003).

Graduate unemployment: The skills, understanding and personal attributes that will make a graduate more apt to obtain employment and be successful in their occupation not only to their advantage but also to the advantage of the labour force, the country and the economy (Yorke, 2006)

Unemployed person: As the one, who is without work, is currently available for work and is seeking to work (Barker, 1999).

1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings and recommendations from this research will assist policy-makers, especially the Department of Labour, to implement policies that will alleviate problems of graduate

unemployment. The government will be able to create a labour market that works better for graduate employment. It is recommended that the government invest heavily in education to enable graduates, through skills' development and training, to become self-reliant, instead of remaining job-seekers.

1.8 STUDY LIMITATIONS

According to Cooper and Schindler (2001), all research studies have limitations. The disclosure of these limitations enables better appreciation of the results or findings of the study. This also allows the reader to have a better understanding of the circumstances and context in which the research was undertaken.

This study relies upon self-reported data obtained through questionnaires, which is highly susceptible to respondent bias as it is skewed towards creating a favourable image of oneself (Cooper &Schindler (2001),

Given the nature of the central issue and the reliance on the information supplied, it is imperative to note the possibility of respondent bias even though the questionnaires would be completed anonymously. In keeping with prevalent practice in research, this study leans on the assumption that respondents would answer the questions in the data collection instrument honestly, especially as the study design makes no provisions for interviews to verify data supplied.

The other issue in this study is that it is a cross-sectional one, which implies that the researcher relies on a snapshot of the situation for purposes of analysis. For a construct like graduate unemployment with temporal implications, perhaps the study would have benefitted from longitudinal approach, especially to determine graduate employability.

1.9STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The research report for the study is presented in five chapters structured as follows:

Chapter 1 – Introduction: This section of the study provides the necessary platform to launch the research. It starts by illuminating the background to the study, in order to enable an understanding of the specific social context under which the research is undertaken. The chapter also presents a discussion of the problem that provides sufficient motivation for the study to be conducted. Furthermore, it discusses the main research objectives and poses questions that would pave the route towards the achievement of the stated objectives. The

chapter also presents the research model and the hypothesis derived therefrom. The significance of the study and possible limitations are also discussed.

Chapter 2 - Literature review: This portion of the report is dedicated to the review of literature relevant to the study. The literature covering the major constructs of the research model is discussed. This includes perceived causes of South African graduate unemployment.

Chapter 3 - Research methodology: This chapter discusses the scientific approach that was utilized in the research. Particular attention is paid to the issues relating to research design. The chapter is utilised to define the population of the study and the sampling technique utilised for selecting the respondent group. A section of the discussions in the chapter also covers matters related to the data collection instrument and the statistical tools to be utilised for the purpose of data analysis.

Chapter 4 - Presentation of results and discussion of findings: The focus of chapter four presents the data collected through the instrument utilised in the study. This section of the work also discusses the findings of the research.

Chapter 5 - Recommendations and Conclusion: The last chapter of the report is dedicated to making recommendations with practical implications as part of the chapter; the research questions are also revisited and answered in the light of the information presented in the penultimate chapter of the study. The chapter also provides a conclusion which points to areas where future studies related to the current one, can be conducted.

1.10 SUMMARY

This chapter has been introductory in nature. As part of its content, the chapter opened with an introduction before presenting the background against which the study was conceived and conducted. This background served essentially to establish the context for the study.

Attention was also paid to the issue of the problem statement of the study and the objectives of the study and some research questions were posed. The chapter also served to provide a research model and accompanying hypothesis that the study investigated. The significance of the study and its limitations were also covered in the chapter.

Chapter two will be reviewing the literature which comprises of the theoretical, conceptual, and legislative frameworks regarding graduate employment and unemployment

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1Introduction

This chapter reviews literature which comprises of theoretical, conceptual, and legislative frameworks regarding graduate employment and unemployment. The views of various researchers on skills deficiency in the public sector and graduate unemployment/employability is documented in the course of this chapter. The literature review covers a range of documents including policies that govern young graduate unemployment in South Africa. Articles (published and unpublished) in the South African and international contexts are also reviewed. This chapter presents a theoretical framework on employability, unemployment and the types of unemployment and covers the conceptual factors of graduate unemployment. The chapter also discusses core self-evaluation as a mediating factor to the conceptual factors of unemployment and then it focuses on the legislations governing graduate employment in South Africa. The chapter concludes with a review of graduate unemployment in South Africa.

2.2 Theoretical perspective on employability

The notion that graduates should be expected to possess certain general qualities and attributes as a result of their higher education experience is long established (Andrews &Higson, 2008; Cranmer, 2006; Williams, 2005; Wilton, 2008; Stubbs and Keeping, 2002). The Dearing Report (UK) defines the aim of higher education as being "to inspire and enable individuals to develop their capabilities to the highest potential levels throughout life, so that they grow intellectually, are well equipped for work, can contribute effectively to society and achieve personal fulfilment". The 1980s (in the UK) is when the complacency about the employability of graduates began to be systematically challenged. Since 1990, there have been many reports and papers urging the higher education sector to take key, core, transferable and "employability" skills into the hearts of students' learning experiences (Mason et al., 2001; Williams, 2005).

The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) defines the term "Employability" as "*a set of attributes, skills and knowledge that all labour market participants should possess to ensure they have the capability of being effective in workplace – to the benefit of themselves, their employer and the wider economy"* (Bimrose, 2009). The term 'employability' has also been used to covey the idea of graduates' susceptibility to find work (Mason et al., 2001).

CBI defines the competencies that make up employability as self-management; team work; problem-solving; application of information technology (IT); communication and literacy; application of numeracy, business and customer awareness; with positive attitude emphasized as the most central and pivotal (Bimrose, 2009). Alternatively, Pool and Sewell (2007) define employability as "*having a set of skills, knowledge, understanding and personal attributes that make a person more likely to choose and secure occupations in which they can be satisfied and successful."*

The concept of employability refers to the competencies a graduate must have in order to find a job (Tomlinson, 2007). One argument usually raised as an explanation for graduate unemployment is the lack of employability. According to Weligamage (2003: 3), employability is defined as "a set of achievements which could be in the form of skills, understanding and personal attributes that make graduates more likely to gain employment and become successful in their occupation". These skills will directly benefit the workforce and the economy (Tomlinson, 2007; Williams, 200; York & Knight, 2007).Sha (2006: 3) defines employability as a "mix of skills that employers expect to find in new recruits". Sha further argues that employability does not only depend on the skills required to gain employment, it also depends on the skills needed to progress within a particular industry, to achieve one's full potential, and to contribute successfully to that organisation (Bridgstock, 2009). The perspective taken by this study suggests that employability is determined by the kind of knowledge, attitudes, and skills possessed by a graduate, and the way in which these attributes, such as skills, and knowledge, are presented to employers (Barnett, 2006; Williams, 2005).

Employability is the capability of obtaining and keeping some fulfilling work. It includes having the set of skills, knowledge, understanding, and personal attributes which make people more likely to choose and secure jobs in which they may be satisfied and successful (Pool & Sewell, 2007).

According to Fugate et al. (2004, p15), employability is a psycho-social construct embodying individual characteristics, fostering adaptive cognitive behaviour and affect, and enhancing the individual work interface.

It is important for graduates seeking employment to understand the concept of employability in order to achieve the perceived employability demand. Employers seek individuals who are

adaptable, creative, innovative, and flexible, as well as being able to solve problems. The ability to adapt to the changing environment and needs in the labour market and the ability to adapt to the behaviour demanded to handle any specific situation appears attractive to prospective employers (Fugate et al., 2004).

According to Peck and Theodore (1998:27), the only way of addressing this problem of unemployment is to make all unemployed people more attractive to employers—through help with motivation and job-finding, and through skill-formation. It is therefore important for institutions to teach employability skills as well as basic skills before learners graduate from higher institutions. This would prepare them for what to expect in the workplace, and would include skills such as mentioned by Luft and Schoen (1986), those of problem-solving, stress-management, professional characteristics, communications skills, and human relations principles (Poole & Zahn 1993). Pool and Sewell (2007) believes that there are some components of employability.

The University of Sydney (1997) believes that graduates should be more employable, more capable to cope with change and more developed as people. In specific terms, graduates of any faculty, board of studies or college of the university should have knowledge skills by having a body of knowledge in the field(s) studied; being able to apply theory to practice in familiar and unfamiliar situations; being able to identify, access, organize and communicate knowledge in both written and oral English; having an appreciation of the requirements and characteristics of scholarship and research; and having the ability to use appropriate technologies in furthering all of the above. Graduates also need to possess thinking skills such as being able to exercise critical judgment; being capable of rigorous and independent thinking; being able to account for their decisions; being realistic self-evaluators; adopting a problem solving approach; and being creative and imaginative thinkers (Pool et al., 2007).

With regard to personal skills, graduates must have the capacity for and a commitment to life-long learning; the ability to plan and achieve goals in both personal and the professional spheres; the ability to work with others (Grant & Ashford, 2008). In addition, graduates must have personal attributes that strive for tolerance and integrity; and acknowledge their personal responsibility for their own value judgments; and their ethical behaviour towards others (Bridgstock, 2009).

Employability model is seen as the stages of an individual employment life cycle. Below is a table that shows a brief comparison of other employability models with the definition of the graduate employability model (Poole et al, 2007)

Table 1: A brief comparison of other employability models with the graduate Employability Model

Employability Model	Definition of employability	Dimension of employability	Focus on model
Fugate, Kinicki and Ashford's (2004) Model of employability	Employability is a psycho-social construct embodying individual characteristics, fostering adaptive cognitive behaviour and affect, and enhancing the individual work interface (Fugate et al., 2004).	Personal adaptability Career identity	Individual characteristics
Van Dam's (2004) process model to employability	Employability orientation refers to the attitudes if employees towards intervention aimed at increasing the organisation flexibility through developing and maintaining workers employability for the organisation	Work related characteristics Employability activities Knowledge and work experience.	Contextual factors
Graduate employability model	Employability refers to a psycho-social construct representing a contribution of attributes, disposition, values, attitude and skills that promote proactive adaptability in a changing environment and enhances an individual's suitability	Personal dispositions for employment Self-evaluation Proactivity	Individual attributes

	for employment in order to be successful in their employability pursuits.	Openness to change Entrepreneurial orientation.	
Pool and Sewell's (2007) employability model	Employability is the capability of obtaining and keeping some fulfilling work. It includes having the set of skills, knowledge, understanding, and personal attributes which make people more likely to choose and secure jobs in which they may be satisfied and successful (Pool & Sewell 2007).	Knowledge and employability skills Work experience Career development Self-efficacy Self-esteem	Personal characteristic
Bridgstock (2009) conceptual model of graduate attributes for employability	They are the soft skills that employers expect graduates to have; such skills ensure graduate employability	Generic skills Traits and disposition Self-management Self-esteem Self-efficacy Locus of control Emotional stability	Graduate attributes and personal disposition for employability.

Source : Fugate and Kinicki (2008).

The following is a discussion of factors that determine graduate employability from a theoretical perspective:

2.2.1 Basic employability skills

These are referred to as transferable skills or core competences. They are the soft skills that employers expect graduates to have; such skills ensure graduate employability (Bridgstock, 2009). Soft skills include integrity, intellectual capacity, teamwork skills, analytical and problem-solving skills, basic communication skills, and an understanding of the workplace, so that the employee can function efficiently (Griesel & Parker, 2009). Certain basic skills, such as computer literacy, oral presentation skills, technical ability, proficiency in English, knowing the organisation, numeracy or quantitative literacy, ability to use information, and the ability to find and access information, were seen as important aspects of a graduate's basic skills and understanding (Griesel & Parker, 2009).

Table 2: Summary of skills identified as work readiness skills.

Category of skill	Academic and technical skills	Basic skills	Experience
Description of the skills	Skills learned during schooling and formal qualification(s).	Skills that are required in the workplace, irrespective of the type of position that is applied for Some of the skills include integrity, intellectual capacity, teamwork skills, analytical and problem-solving skills, basic communication skills, and an understanding of the workplace,	Skills learned by practical, work experience, which can be part time of full time employment, and related or unrelated to the further studies that the learner embarked on

Examples of skills or knowledge in this category of skills/knowledge required	Cognitive skills	Communication • Oral communication • Written communication • Negotiation skills • Listening skills • Conflict resolution skills •Interpersonal skills and teamwork •Occupational skills (job search strategies) Information technology skills Time management	• Understanding how Organization's operate • Understanding different departments and levels within Organisations
	Personal skills	• Openness • Flexibility, • Conscientiousness • Emotional stability • Agreeableness • Ability to negotiate • Locus of control • Self-motivation • Ability to show initiative • Ability to create and innovate	

Source: Self

It is clear from the above that the challenge exists to equip graduates with the necessary skills required in the workplace and that work readiness programmes play a valuable role by enhancing job related skills. A recent study by Weligamage (2009) states that there is a gap between the expectations of employers, and their evaluation of the basic skills and understanding demonstrated by recent graduates in the workplace, in other words, many graduates do not possess these skills, which then results in an increase in graduate unemployment.

2.2.2 Intellectual ability

Of all the skills graduates are expected to possess, a sound intellectual ability and knowledge are the ones required to meet workplace demands and opportunities. In order to possess these skills, a graduate must have a basic understanding of economic realities, the ability to formulate assumptions, construct a logical argument, basic enquiry, research skills, an interest in ideas and the desire to continue learning (Griesel et al., 2009). There is a significant gap between the expectation of employers and the quality of graduate skills or attributes. It was found that employers express an interest in graduates who are interested in ideas and desire to continue learning. Unfortunately, it is evident that many graduates do not possess these skills (Griesel et al., 2009). This raises a question regarding the imbalance between the product-delivery of universities and the expectations of employers. According to Pool and Sewell (2007), career-development learning should be included in all training programmes for undergraduates, thus ensuring their susceptibility to being employable.

2.2.3 Workplace skills

The point of this attribute is that graduates must move from the theoretical aspect and into the practical part of employment. Some of the attributes allowing the shift from theory to the practicality of employment are: the ability to develop an extensive approach to problem-solving, the ability to plan, begin, and finish tasks independently, the ability to choose relevant information in order to address practical workplace problems, and the understanding of the ever-changing dynamics of the workplace. In their survey, Griesel and Parker (2009) came to the conclusion that the expectations of employers towards graduates are not being met by these graduates, which is one of the reasons for graduates being unable to secure employment.

2.2.4 Personal skills

These kinds of skills include openness, flexibility, conscientiousness, emotional stability, agreeableness, ability to negotiate, locus of control, self-motivation, and the ability to show initiative, the ability to create and innovate, being able to possess a sense of identity and self-confidence, and a willingness to learn in order to adapt to the changing nature of the workplace. Such are some of the personal skills employers expect graduates to possess in order to be able to able adapt to the dynamics of their workplaces (Weligamage, 2009).

The survey conducted by Griesel et al., (2009) shows that, to a certain extent, universities have been able to assist graduates with the listed skills. Universities have been able to help graduates to develop their team-building skills, time-management skills, and the ability to accept different cultures. For example, the weekly tests and exams students write during their period of study, enable them to build time-management skills. If a student can submit his or her assignment on time, efficiently, it means that he or she has acquired a certain level of time-management skills (Daniel, 2007). Another example is that school group assignments assist in building team-work skills, because students can work with their team members to complete an assignment, irrespective of the differences in their culture and background. Therefore, one can argue, with reference to the listed examples, that the activities carried out in schools have in fact been structured to help graduates acquire a certain level of the required skills (Oluwajodu, 2013).

Graduates must be actively involved in improving their skills and be willing to learn new ways of doing things. As highlighted by Cheng and Arnold (2010), employers are in need of these skills and if they find graduates who possess such skills, they will employ them. Graduates constantly need to prepare themselves for the continuously altering nature of the workplace, and for meeting their employer's needs. According to Cheng and Arnold (2010: 15), "linkages between universities and industries offering work-based projects and internships" can help universities to acquire information which will update their curricula.

2.3 Conceptual factors of graduate unemployment

2.3.1. Race

Owing to the history of the discriminatory policies amongst races in South Africa, this aspect is specifically important to look at, especially when looking at Bantu education, which was used to marginalize black South Africans in particular (Rakometsi, 2008:3). South Africa

received a lot of international attention during the apartheid regime due to its segregation policies. However, after the first democratic election in 1994; South Africa became a democratic society, which encouraged accessibility of all services to every citizen (National Youth Development Policy Framework, 2007). Over the past 25 years therefore, with a democratic system in place, more black graduates have enrolled into Higher Education Institutions which has changed the higher education landscape (Van der Berg & Van Broekhuizen, 2012:16). On average, a higher proportion of white graduates found a job immediately after graduating, even though other racial groups had also stepped in the pool of graduates, which changed the higher education landscape, as highlighted in a Development Policy Research Unit (DPRU) working paper of 2006 (DPRU, 2006:16). Van Berg and Van Broekhuizen (2012:3) indicate that there are misconceptions regarding segments of graduates struggle to find jobs, especially those from historically disadvantaged (and often rural) backgrounds, as well as students who majored in the arts and the humanities.

Koen (2006:6) mentions that the political and policy implications of graduate studies in 2006 show the equity effects of university and technikon education in the labour market, by tracing the success of black graduates compared to white graduates in finding jobs. Also in a research carried out by the DPRU (2006: pp14), African graduates accounted for 84.9% of the total tertiary unemployed population in 2005. The increase in African graduate unemployment is a result of a massive enrolment of Africans in tertiary institutions and also the fact that most of these students study at HBUs (Historically Black Universities) with a disproportionate numbers of students graduating in fields with lower employment prospects (Koen, 2013 cited in DPRU, 2006:14). However, Van der Berg and Van Broekhuizen (2012:16) state that there has been a decline (at a rate of 1.87% per year) from the year 2000 in the number of black unemployed graduates.

2.3.2. Age

Graduates can be classified into two categories; the "younger" (between the ages of 15 to 24) and the "older" graduates (24 to 35 years). In a study by the DPRU on the graduate unemployment in Post-Apartheid South Africa, the results established was that the younger category of graduates aged between 15 to 24, were least likely to find a job compared to their older counterparts (DPRU, 2006: pp11). On the other hand, the 35 to 44 year age group was 21% more likely to be employed (DPRU, 2006:11). Most often, young graduates are hardly demanded by employers due to the risk of employing inexperienced young graduates whose

productivity is not fully known (Yu, 2013: pp3). Yu (2013:5) illustrates this in a study conducted by the National Treasury (2011), using the Quarterly Labour Force Survey (2011Q3 data). Findings from the study proved that narrow unemployment rate is the highest in the 18-24 years cohort (51.0%), followed by the 25-29 years cohort (33.8%). Although the age profile of the labour force has not changed dramatically over the period, it does appear as if the labour force is becoming younger with labour market participants between the ages of 15 and 34 accounting for more than 60 per cent of the growth in the labour force (DRPU, 2006:6). Van der Berg and Van Broekhuizen (2012: 15-16) point out that though unemployment amongst young graduates has been rising above its level as of a decade ago, the figures are not all that large when compared to unemployment amongst non-graduates. Another very important factor that influences graduate employability is the field of study. This is discussed in the next section of this chapter.

2.3.3. Field of Study

According to Bhorat, Mayet and Visser (2012:114), the field of study is one of the critical aspects to consider in the discussion of employability. The DPRU highlights that there is usually a mismatch between the types of skills required by the employers and what is presented by the graduate (DPRU, 2006:13). Some areas of study such as engineering impart certain job-specific skills that are clearly understood in the labour market, therefore providing an indication of what capabilities young graduates possess to be productive at work (Moleke, 2005:1). Thus, a graduate's level of experience is based on the employee's idea of the value of the degree. Conversely, in more general fields such as the social sciences, graduates qualifications indicate to employers that they are people who possess character traits that are necessary for the success on the job (Moleke, 2005:1). Young graduates with commerce based qualifications are considered to be better suited to business than graduates with humanities or arts based qualifications. Employers are often concerned about the qualification of young graduates in relation to their ability to perform the job than in their capabilities. This sometimes explains why students with arts and humanities based qualifications find it more challenging to be absorbed into the labour market, with the overarching lower probability of gaining employment (Moleke, 2005:1).

Yu (2013:3) highlights that graduates from fields such as the medical sciences stand better chances of gaining employment immediately after graduation because of the incorporation of internship programmes as a part of their studies. He further indicates that students from study

fields such as humanities and arts as well as education are less likely to find employment, compared to those from fields like engineering and medical sciences (Yu, 2013:3). Van der Berg and Van Broekhuizen (2012:17) concur with this argument by stating that an in appropriate course selection may lead to lower employability among South African graduates. In two separate surveys, the October Household Survey (OHS) and the Labour Force Survey (LFS) research conducted in 1995 and 2002 respectively, it was established that individuals trained as teachers or other public sector workers, and those with business, commerce and management qualifications were being subjected to significantly higher rates of unemployment than individuals from other fields of study (Van der Berg & Van Broekhuizen, 2012:5). This indicates that the qualification obtained by the graduate influences the chances of securing a job in that same field of study. However, studies have shown that the higher education institution (HEI) where an individual studies, also influences their chances of securing a job which will be looked at subsequently.

Pauw et al. (2006) the nature of graduate unemployment in South Africa, for which data was extracted from various Statistics South Africa datasets, the researchers argued that the rise in graduate unemployment is partly explained by an increase in the enrolment of students for diplomas or certificates, and that historically Black universities have disproportionate numbers of students graduating in fields with lower employment prospects. According to Statistics South Africa (2005), individuals with a qualification in the field of commerce, business, and management, accounted for 31% of total tertiary unemployment. However, based on the fact that commerce students make up a large proportion of tertiary institutions, it is difficult to identify which kind of tertiary qualification has the highest unemployment rate of the group. Pauw et al. (2006) explains that two-thirds of the Economic and Management Science (EMS) students gained employment after completing their studies, however, it was found that EMS university graduates represent only 10% of unemployed graduates. This suggests that the majority of the unemployed graduates among commerce students comprise non-degree students, or students with diplomas and certificates.

Statistics South Africa (2005) also demonstrates that technical-college students with a qualification in Physics, Mathematics, Computer Science, and Engineering account for a sizeable share of tertiary unemployment. Although these students make up about 70% of technical-college enrolment, the tertiary unemployment level is still surprising given the increased demand for information technologists and engineers. This issue then raises

argument and debate apropos of the perceptions of the employer and the quality of these qualifications.

Moleke (2005) and Naong (2011) observe that, whilst labour demand is usually low for students with qualifications in the humanities and social sciences, enrolment in these fields of study remains high. According to Moleke (2010), there is a significant demand for humanity and social science graduates in the public sector; in other words, demand for these graduates is driven by the public sector. However, the public sector is constrained by the mismatch between the demand for and supply of skilled people. Most of the jobs advertised by the public sector are for professionals in health and education (Bhorat &Visser, 2010)

Bhorat and Visser (2010) also discovered that university graduates with a professional focus on engineering and medicine secured employment faster than graduates with history or a more general field of study, nevertheless enrolment within the professional field of study remains low. This, then, raises questions regarding student selection of their courses, whether they actually receive guidance from anyone (parents, lecturers) when making their decisions, and subjects learners take at school which limit their supply options (Oluwajodu 2013). The reason for a choice of study in the general field is because it is easier to gain admission to these fields; it is within a family's ability to support the student; and it is less stressful for the student to pass all the courses Sha (2006). Another important reason is that many students are interested in the course, or rather, they have a passion for it, and while other students believe that the course will secure employment. Another point emerges - that there is probably a deficiency in career guidance both in schools and in tertiary institutions. Pauw et al. (2006) pointed out that the lack of adequate preparation for the labour market may be a contributing factor to the high unemployment rate amongst graduates.

2.3.4. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

HEIs are one of key stakeholders in enhancing employability and their responsibility is to identify how they can enhance the skills of their future employees (Weligamage, 2009: 116). Over the years, developing employability skills of the graduate has been a topic of discourse among policy makers who are making plans to increase graduates skills to meet the need of the current workforce (Weligamage, 2009:116). Holmes (2013:538) emphasizes that the way in which HEI's helps prepare students for their post-graduation lives is of utmost importance. While some universities produce employable graduates, others do not. This can be better explained when one takes into account the historical patterns of access to HEIs in South

Africa, whereby there were high standard universities on the one hand and disadvantaged universities on the other (DPRU, 2006:14). Historically black universities (HBU) produce disproportionate numbers of students graduating in fields with lower employment prospects (DPRU, 2006:14).

In the United Kingdom, HEIs have been charged with the responsibility of promoting graduate employability which means attention should be placed on more than just the academic skills usually represented by the subject matter or class of degree (Knight &Yorke, 2003:3). Kruss (2004:673) concurs with this by stating that several calls have been made to ensure that the higher education system in South Africa is more responsive to the social and economic needs of the society to create a more direct and closer relationship between higher education and economic development. The establishment of a highly educated workforce serves as a priority for the new goal of building a knowledge-based economy in South Africa, to provide education and training to a larger number of citizens than in the past (Kruss, 2004:673).

In one of his studies, Bhorat et al. (2012:116-117), using data on seven South African universities from the Human Sciences Research Council's (HSRC) Graduate Destination Study, discovered that graduates who attended historically disadvantaged institutions (HDI's) have significantly poorer labour market prospects than graduates from historically advantaged institutions (HAIs). This was both in terms of initial absorption into employment and the ultimate incidence of unemployment. In the same light, Branson, Leibbrandt Zuze (2009:18) use data from the Cape Area Panel Study (CAPS) and find that the type of HEI at which individuals in the Western Cape Province complete their tertiary studies has a significant impact on the labour market outcomes which they subsequently face. Universities have been called upon to look into the challenges of graduate unemployment in order to come up with ways which will encourage training of graduates for a broader economic, political, recreational and cultural development (Oloo cited in Ponge, 2013:2). Thus, HEIs have a major part to play in making sure that graduates are employable. Another insight into the graduate labour market in South Africa is discussed in the next section.

2.3.5. Skill Mismatch

The skill mismatch hypothesis was first proposed by Seers (1971), who theorised that the prolonged job search by educated youth was the root cause of the youth unemployment. When job searches were prolonged because the education system taught little relevance to the job market, this left youth with high job expectations but without the skills to acquire jobs that met those expectations (Gunatilake et al., 2010).

As mentioned above, the 'skill mismatch' hypothesizes that the ineffectiveness of the education system, whereas the educational system does not equip the population with the skills needed in the country. The theory suggests that the education system, in places such as Sri Lanka for example, do not produce the skills that are valued by the employers. At the same time, it raises the expectations of those who acquire them. This means that the unemployed are not interested in the available jobs. At the same time, the employers will not hire them since they lack the skills needed (Aggestam &Hallberg, 2004).

Referring to the prolonged educated youth unemployment in Sri Lanka, the ILO (in 1978) opined that *"the more a young person had been educated, the greater the likelihood that he or she may be unemployed"*. This axiom was greatly renowned by subsequent scholars such as Glewwe (1987), Dickens and Lang (1996) and Lakshman (1997) and statistically established by labour market information given in Labour Force Survey Reports. One could argue that a young person who continues with his/her studies, particularly postgraduate studies, is specialising in that particular field. For instance, studying an undergraduate degree in biological sciences then proceeding with an honours and masters in microbiology means specialization in microbiology, therefore narrowing one's chances of employment by limiting oneself to one field.

Even at the university level of education, the mismatch of skill demanded and supplied is obvious. For instance, a huge amount of graduates are in civil engineering rather than in disciplines that are appropriate for industrial technology. Textile engineers are the most relevant to the country's main export, but in 1996 less than one percept of the university graduates had these skills (Lallet at, 1996. Ref in Aggestam &Hallberg, 2004:39).

The worst case lies with the conventional taught courses, such as the arts subjects and so-called management/commerce subjects. The highest numbers of students are graduating from faculties of arts and management/commerce, which more often provide academic skills rather

than the 'employability skills' referred to above. According to the CBSL Annual Report (2010), 7,535 graduates entered into the labour market from these two faculties in 2009. However, the employment opportunities for these academic areas in the labour market are highly restrictive, and even the available positions require mostly the applicants' potential to meet the needs in such positions through past work experience.

2.3.6. Graduates' Attitudes and Job Queuing Behaviour

Aggestam and Hallberg (2004), state that the queuing behaviour for "good" jobs is another contributing factor to the unemployment problem in Sri Lanka. They further opine that, in Sri Lanka, the problem of unemployment is not that there is a shortage of jobs, rather that there is segmentation between jobs that are of greater demand ("good jobs") and those which are not in demand ("bad jobs"). "*The jobs supplied do not correspond to the preferences of the educated"* (Bell et al., 1991: Ref. Aggestam &Hallberg, 2004:40), meaning that the jobs available do not match the pool of graduates who academically qualify for those jobs

In the absence of industry-oriented or professional-focused education and a lack of proper 'employability skills' development, graduates seek more general, yet highly paid employment, such as senior official and managerial positions in public and private institutions. However, these positions are extremely limited, and represent only 1.6 per cent of total employment (ALFS Report, 2009).

Public sector was the conventional employer for the large majority of university graduates for many years. Since economic liberalization and subsequent structural adjustments, the sector's demand for graduates began to decline. Public service is experiencing resource constraints to generate employment due to lack of funding and lack of organizational planning while many government-owned business entities were privatized (Weligamage & Siengthai, 2003). As a result, the share of public sector employments out of total employments in Sri Lanka declined sharply from 21.5 per cent in 1990 to 13.0 per cent in 2004 (ALFS Report, 2009).

On the contrary, public sector jobs are still considered to be more attractive than other jobs, since they offer more stability, lower work effort, attractive benefits and higher pay than the private sector (Catterson, Lindahl, 1997: Ref. Aggestam &Hallberg, 2004: 27). The graduates seemed to prefer working in the public sector, where the pay was lower but job security and non-wage benefits were higher (Gunatilake et al., 2010: 9).

With the change of political regime by end of 2004 in South Africa, the proportion of public employments has begun to increase back. By 2009, it has become 15.2 per cent of the total employment. This regaining of public sector includes a massive intake of approximately 42,000 graduates who claimed themselves as 'unemployed' in 2005. However, the estimated unemployed graduates by 2003 were around 20,000 (Samarasinghe, 2003). Therefore, undoubtedly, a high proportion of the graduates recruited in 2005 should have been either working in the private sector or doing some self-employment by that time. This strategy, in one way, created a considerable imbalance within the public service, while on the other hand, raised the hope of future graduates for being in the public service, thus worsening the job queue for the public sector.

Gunatilake and Vodopivec (2010) have found that such civil service recruitment policies create perverse labour incentives and contribute to unemployment, particularly among educated workers in Sri Lanka. They further opine that the massive "recruitment campaigns" that sometimes take place in conjunction with pending elections, when all or most unemployed university graduates are given public sector jobs; results in jobless graduate students who tend to wait for another recruitment campaign to give them a secure job in the public sector rather than seek employment elsewhere. Even amongst the graduates who seek employments in private sector, there is a high gravitation to large firms, especially located in Colombo: the commercial capital. This phenomenon has been evidenced even in developed countries, as Hart and Barrat (2009) found in UK that 'graduates find jobs in larger enterprises and there is a steady increase in the proportion of graduates as firm size increases'. They further state that this gravitation to large firms is coupled with a bias towards the South of England: over a quarter of all graduates work in the South in large enterprises.

According to the ALFS Report (2009), about 78.4 per cent of the 'highly educated' individuals are in the formal sector that comprises of public sector and large private enterprises, which represents only 38.1 per cent of the total employments in Sri Lanka. Therefore, the queuing behaviour of graduates hinders the possibilities for them of being employed in the larger informal sector.

2.3.7. Employers' Perception

The increasing enrolment for the secondary education has led to a huge demand for tertiary education as well. However, the admissions to the national universities are extremely limited in comparison to the said demand. Still, unemployment among graduates is high, despite the

critical skill shortages in some key areas of the economy. The reason for this is that many employers are not satisfied with the competencies and skills of graduates (Aggestam &Hallberg, 2004).

Employers' perceptions about the 'quality' of graduates from certain universities or university departments still often influence graduate transition into employment, more than whether graduates have followed employability skills courses. Employers have also expressed concern about graduates' ability to cope with change and to add value by continuing to learn and develop in the workplace (Mason et al., 2001).

Apart from the graduates preference for public sector and larger private sector positions, as discussed above, the entrepreneurs of Small and Medium scale businesses are also ignorant of graduate job seekers due to weak relationships between the two parties. This is because such entrepreneurs lack higher education experience and are in doubt about employing graduate (Hart &Barrat, 2009).

In addition, some employers are suspicious of students who show too much 'enterprise', thus they are more concerned with recruiting people who will 'fit in' and conform to the organization's culture and mores (Pool & Sewell, 2009). Rae (2007) defines the term 'enterprise' as the skills, knowledge and attributes needed to apply creative ideas and innovations to practical solutions.

The aforesaid suspicion of employers has increased, especially in regard to the graduates, consequent to the massive graduate intake in 2005, since some of the graduates who had worked in private firms opted to move to public service causing a severe human resource crisis for private sector enterprises. As a result, some employers are still reluctant to recruit graduates, even for their higher positions, in fear of losing them after providing costly trainings and developments (Rae, 2007).

2.3.8. Labour Market Institutional Wedge

The (Labour Market) Institutional (Wedge) hypothesis promotes the view that existing labour market institutions raise the cost of formal job creation, thereby depressing job creation rates in the formal sector and forcing a large share of workers into informal employment. In particular, highly restrictive employment protection legislation raises labour costs and impedes job creation (Labour & Social Trends Report, 2009). A World Bank's publication on "*the Challenge of Youth Employment in Sri Lanka*" has also pointed out that the institutional hypothesis, also called "Slow Job Creation Hypothesis", postulates that labour market

institutions raise the costs of formal job creation, thereby creating a counterproductive duality by depressing job creation rates in the formal sector and forcing the majority of workers into informal employment.

As per the Labour and Social Trends Report (2009), the analyses by Arunathilake and Jayawardene (2010) using Jobs Net data found that the majority of jobseekers are educated but they are often new entrants to the labour market who lack the necessary experience. These observations clearly denote a lack of new employment creation for new entrants, whilst the employed are well secured with the prevailing employment protection legislations.

According to Aggestam and Hallberg (2004), the jobs covered by the Termination of Employment of Workmen Act (TEWA, 1971), which prevents employers from laying off employees, are seen as "good" private sector jobs by employees since it offers a high security in relation to the other jobs in the sector. However, for the employers, the situation is the opposite. It hinders the creation of new jobs and it has a negative impact on productivity. Workers do not have to be afraid of getting fired due to bad performance, incompetence or inadequate skills. In addition, the labour costs in the TEWA-regulated enterprises are expensive since the severance pay is generous and the wages are high in relation to the jobs outside of the protected sector. It thereby limits the creation of more firms and as a consequence, these laws harm a larger group than they benefit (Aggestam &Hallberg, 2004).

Aggestam and Hallberg (2004) further opine that the minimum-wage legislation can improve the wages and working conditions for the workers if it is effectively used, but at the same time, it limits the possibility for firms to hire more workers since the cost of labour is rising. This happens especially when the labour cost does not fully adjust, and thereby the firms may find it unprofitable to hire more workers, due to the decreasing marginal productivity of labour. It also limits the creation of more enterprises.

2.3.9. Information Asymmetry

Labour market functioning is deeply affected by different kinds of information imperfections and asymmetries. The education-to-work transition is particularly exposed to these imperfections: first-time job-seekers typically lack work experience and this negatively affects both their outlooks concerning employment opportunities and job characteristics, and employers' screening options (Bagues &Sylos Labini, 2009). Bagues and Sylos Labini (2009) give three reasons for high unemployment rate among Italian university graduates (which is quite uncommon in industrialised countries):

(i) The frictions on the supply side –

"the education provided by Italian universities is of such a poor standard that graduates are obliged to undertake further training, either formal or informal, before getting into work";
(ii) The slow transition rates due to labour demand characteristics -
"*the Italian industrial structure, compared to that of other developed countries, is biased in favour of small firms and low-tech industries that typically do not employ highly qualified workers";*
(iii) The inefficiencies in the matching mechanisms -
"Caused by information imperfections and, possibly, by lack of intermediaries".
As stated by Aggestam and Hallberg (2004), the amount of schooling desired is determined in the households by the prospects of future earnings, which are supposed to be higher than without education, and the likelihood of getting a modern sector job. The educational costs, both direct and indirect, are the other factors affecting the decision, and the derived benefits are then weighted against the costs in order to decide whether or not to send the children to school. In a developing country such as Sri Lanka, most people demand education because it is the only way to get high wage modern sector employment. The labour market is thus signalling to the households how much education is needed to get this type of employment (Aggestam &Hallberg, 2004). The issue is whether these market signals are timely and accurately received by all sectors of the society.
According to Gunatilake et al. (2010); to hedge against the risk of hiring bad workers, formal sector employers rely on their social networks to help make hiring decisions in an effort to overcome costs imposed by rigid employment protection laws. Other things equal, graduates who lack social networks thus have a lower probability of being hired.

According to a study on school-to-work transition in Sri Lanka, 64 per cent of young job holders were recruited through recommendations of their friends and relatives (Mayer &Salih, 2003: Ref. Gunatilake et al., 2010:Pg 203). The correct social connection and a shared cultural ideology were seen as essential for gaining jobs in the private sector. Job applicants who wanted work in the formal sector but who did not have the correct old-school or family-ties found themselves at a great disadvantage (Gunatilake et al., 2010).
Moreover, the Sri Lankan labour market is critically segmented as urban and rural, whereas the rural youths are rather deprived of labour mobility as well as the labour market information, including the employment opportunities and employability development

opportunities as well (Gunatilake et al., 2010). This phenomenon is common even for the university graduates from rural areas, who for most of the times receive university entrance by being "privileged" through the waved-off entry scores for "under-privileged" districts; as they would be graduated under the universally free education, even though they lack social networks and access to information about "favourable" employment (Gunatilake et al., 2010).

2.3.10. Language Constraints

Language has been and continues to be a source of social exclusion in Sri Lanka. During Sri Lanka's colonial history, English was the language of the elite and the upper classes, which controlled (and to a large extent continue to control) social, economic, and political power in the country (Mayer &Salih, 2003). The Presidential Commission on Youth referred to the English language as a *kaduwa*(sword) that gave the English-speaking elite the class power to cut down the Sinhala- and Tamil-speaking majority. Language discrimination affects all spheres of life, including employment and also impedes the social mobility of youth who speak only Sinhala or Tamil (Gunatilake et al., 2010:209).

The lack of competence in modern international languages such as English has led to only a limited participation, both domestically in the private sector employment and internationally (Aggestam &Hallberg, 2004). In surveys, young job applicants have revealed that in job interviews in the private sector, they have been humiliated by overt references to their lack of certain preferred personality traits that indicate a more cosmopolitan and urban life-style, self-confidence and English skills (Jayaweera &Shanmugam, 2002: Ref. Gunatilake *et al*., 2010:208).

Lack of proficiency in English is something that the youth have identified as a significant reason for not being able to get jobs, especially in the private sector. English literacy has also been identified by policy-makers, politicians and all others concerned with education reforms and youth unemployment as one of the most urgent issues that needs to be addressed (Gunatilake *et al.,* 2010:209).

In contrast, the public sector has been the traditional source of employment for those coming through the free education system. Here the cultural markers of modernization and privilege are less important. However, language issues are a factor, especially for those who are Tamil speaking. Unless one has Sinhala language skills, opportunities to work are extremely limited outside the north and east, where the majority of Tamils live (Gunatilake *et al*., 2010:210).

The policy segregating schools according to language streams has also contributed to the lack of mutual understanding of cultural similarities and diversities among communities (Aggestam &Hallberg, 2004).

Like Sri Lanka, South Africa also faces language constraints which were evident even during the apartheid regime, which had the black population being subjected to the Bantu Education system that forced them to use Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in schools. One of the problems that contemporary South Africa faces in its education system is that the national senior certificate is set in English (Mayer *et.,* 2003). Some schools in the township and rural areas do not have English as their first language. The English taught in a disadvantaged school in South Africa does not compare, in terms of quality, to the English taught at a multiracial school in the city/suburb (Gunatilake *et al.,* 2010). One could argue that English language competency impacts on the marks that learners from disadvantaged schools obtain at matric. English language competency also plays a role when seeking entrance into universities, during varsity and after graduating. The lack of a solid foundation in English does surface even when students reach university stage and graduation (Mayer *et al.*, 2003).

2.4 Core self-evaluation as a mediating factor

Evidence gathered from research findings shows that unemployment leads to psychological impairment (Darity& Goldsmith 1993). According to Seligman and Maier (1967), unemployment has an adverse effect on emotional well-being which results in depression, anxiety, and helplessness. According to Seligman (1975), such a state affects the motivational level required to initiate voluntary responses. Parnes and King (1977) and Tiffany et al. (1970) report that unemployment reduces an individual's core self-evaluation. This includes perception of the internal locus of control, as well as self-esteem, self-efficacy, and emotional stability (Darity &Goldsmith 1993).

Core self-evaluation is defined as *'fundamental premises that individuals hold about themselves and their functioning in the world*' (Judge, Erez&, Bono, 1998, p.161). It is the deep seated evaluations that individuals have of themselves and their self-worth which include their competences, performances, success and their ability to cope with situations. According to Judge et al. (1997), a core self-evaluation construct consist of four traits which include self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, emotional stability, and locus of control.

The first construct, **self-esteem**, refers to the overall value placed by individuals on themselves. It is an evaluative component of self-concept having broad ties to cognitive and behavioural processes of an individual (Judge *et al*., 1997).
Coetzee (2008:12) defines self-esteem as relating to the self-evaluations that make and maintain individuals, including the extent to which individuals feel worthy, capable, significant and effective, compared to other individuals in their social group. Individuals with high self-esteem possess attributes as optimism, open to criticism and are respectful of difference, while individuals with low self-esteem are more pessimistic, lack self -confidence, indecisive and apprehensive to change. Could self-esteem influence a graduate's search for employability? It has been shown that positive appraisal of oneself has a direct spill-over effect on work-related appraisals. The indirect effect means that unemployed graduates with high self-esteem are likely to choose jobs consistent with their interests, which in turn will lead to derived job satisfaction (Judge & Bono, 2001).

According to Locke, McClear and Knight (1996 p. 21), a person with high self-esteem would view the challenges of obtaining a job as a deserved opportunity which he can master and from which he may benefit. Such an individual is able to maintain optimism even when faced with failure, positive energy leading to future success.
Individuals having low self-esteem, on the other hand, would view this situation as an underserved experienced wherein there exists the likelihood of failure. People with low self-esteem have a very poor self-image; when exposed to the working world they have many psychological barriers to break down before meaningfully adapting to a rigours routine and a challenging job (Judge et al., 2001).

The second construct is **generalized self-efficacy**. This refers to an individual's ability to cope, perform, and to attain success in a given situation. People with high self-efficacy deal more effectively with difficulties and are able to persist when faced with failure (Gist & Mitchell 1992). They are able to attain valued outcomes at a reduced level of frustration (Johnson, Rosen & Levy 2008). This is because it is inevitable to come across challenges in a work environment. Having the ability to be able to swim against the tide by self- motivation and keeping in mind the goals of the company (or of the specific role in that particular place of employment) will be of great use.

The concept of generalized self-efficacy is normally based on social-cognitive theory (Bandura, 1998) and it refers to an individual's belief in his or her capabilities to cope with lots of challenging or stressful demands. On the other hand, specific self-efficacy is limited to a specific task (Lusczczynska, Scholz& Schwarz, 2005: 439).

The third construct is **emotional stability**, which refers to the tendency to be confident, secure, and steady. Individuals who are emotionally stable are less disposed to perceiving and recalling negative information and experiencing negative emotions (Johnson et al., 2008). In light of what has been stated by John et al. (2008), negativity obtained from emotional instability can affect the performance of an employee or of a team. Negativity can affect the team spirit and work against the optimism that the team (or individual needs) to successfully accomplish or finish the task at hand.

Emotional stability refers to the extent or limit to which people are able to accept and express a range of emotions. This is founded on the principle of emotional responses to assist career-adaptive behaviours in the career decision-making process (Emmerling &Chemiss, 2003; Coetzee, 2008). Emotional stability is also based on the concept of emotional intelligence (EI), the notion of which was first pioneered by Salovey and Meyer (1990) and described as a person's ability to identify, use, understand and manage their own, as well other people's emotions. This is meant to regulate behaviour and determine solutions to problems.

The fourth construct is **locus of control.** This is the belief in one's capacity to positively affect the environment and to produce desired results. This may relate to an internal or external environment. An internal locus of control involves the beliefs that one's environment and outcomes are controllable; they can master their environment through their own efforts, skills, capabilities and characteristics while an external locus of control may be applied in overcoming feelings of futility and helplessness (Johnson, et al. 2008 p. 393). People believe that they can overcome any setbacks. Locus of control has been linked to a variety of career success and adaptability measures, and internal locus of control was found to be strongly related to career satisfaction (Phillips &Bedeian, 1994).

According to Judge et al. (2005), individuals with a favourable core self-evaluation are able to cope well with external constraints, experiencing beneficial emotions and attitudes. In the same light, individuals with a poor core self-evaluation do not believe that their actions can

produce the desired success in the midst of challenges and negative circumstances, therefore these individuals experience negative effects and attitudes (Judge 2005, Locke et al., 1998).
In order to provide insight into graduate unemployment with regard to government policies, the next section presents the legislations which pertain to graduate employment in South Africa.

2.5 Legislations Governing Graduate Employment in South Africa

As mentioned earlier, an important question in South Africa's transition to a post-apartheid political economy is the paradox of high unemployment of more than 23% and skills shortages (Horwitz, 2013:2435). The post- apartheid state in the 1990's and 2000's instituted some of the most progressive legislative measures with the aim of redressing the legacy of apartheid labour market discrimination and distortion in skills development, access to training and equality of opportunity. These include; the Labour Relations Act (1995), Employment Equity Act (EEA) (1998), Skills Development Act (1998), Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act (BBBEE) (2003) and Promotion of Equality Act (Horwitz, 2013:2435). Moreover, the legacy of apartheid did not only affect the labour market but the future of the youth as well. Thus, several policies were adopted by the post-apartheid government to suit the needs of the youth of all categories (in this case, graduates). However, these policies have been revised and re-structured as times have evolved. Policies such as the National Youth Commission Act of 1996, the National Youth Development Policy Framework the National Youth Policy, the National Qualifications Framework, are amongst the policies underpinning youth development in South Africa.

2.5.1. The Skills Development Act (No 97 of 1998)

The main purpose of this act is to ensure that the skills in the workplace are developed and improved (Skills Development Act, 1998). The Act focuses on specific areas such as creating a framework for the growth of skills, and the development of employees at work, and also the unemployed. According to the Skills Development Act (1998),

"an employee could either be any person, excluding an independent contractor, who works for another person or for the state and who receives, or is entitled to receive any remuneration; or any other person who in any manner assists in carrying on or conducting the business of an employer."

One of the purposes of the Act is to encourage employers to use the workplace as an active learning environment, an opportunity to acquire new skills, an opportunity of new entrants to

the labour market to gain experience, and also to employ persons who find it difficult to be employed (Skills Development Act, 1998). All of these are geared towards an efficient delivery of services.

2.5.2 The National Youth Commission Act (No. 19 of 1996)

Since independence in 1994, the new democratic government identified the need to create opportunities for the enhancement of the South African youth. Various policy frameworks were drafted and adopted to meet the needs of the previously disadvantaged youth of South Africa. These policies include; the National Youth Commission Act 19 of 1996, the National Youth Policy 2000, the National Youth Development Policy Framework 2002-2007. Through processes by the National Youth Commission and other stakeholders, the National Youth Policy, 2000 and the National Youth Development Policy Framework, 2002-07 culminated in the National Youth Policy, 2009-2014.

The National Youth Commission (NYC) Act was therefore born out of such circumstances as a guiding tool to set prerogatives to meet the different needs of the youth. It is stated in the preamble of the National Youth Commission Act (1996) that,

"…it is imperative that South Africa recognizes the role that youth played and will still play in society, and since the youth in South Africa constitutes an energetic, creative and the largest sector of our population, and given the challenges this sector faced and continues to face; … it is necessary to redress the imbalances of the past and to create a national youth policy aimed at empowering the youth and allowing them to realize their full potential through optimal access to opportunities."

Thus, this Act lays out guidelines and principles for programmatic interventions to be adopted for youth development.

2.5.3. The National Youth Development Policy Framework (2002-2007)

The history of South Africa has been characterized by aspects of racial segregation which affected the youth in particular. Their rights and privileges were violated; in fact, the youth had an insignificant role in the affairs of the nation (NYDPF, 2007). The NYDPF therefore stated that it "*represents an important milestone towards an integrated and holistic approach to youth development for the advantage of the young women and men specifically and for South Africa as a whole*." This framework has been drafted to provide guidance and programme areas for the design and implementation of youth development programme.

Programmatic interventions therefore will serve as an integral part of the broader transformation project and challenges in South Africa. It also outlines the background, legislative and institutional framework for youth development in South Africa.

The main aim for drafting a policy framework of this nature is to serve as a guideline for incorporating youth development as part and parcel of the reconstruction and development plan of the nation. The significance of an integrated and holistic approach towards youth development is emphasized through the identification of strategic intervention areas put in place to address the specific needs, challenges and opportunities confronting young men and women in South Africa today (NYDPF, 2007). The framework establishes national and central goals as well as identifies intervention areas. The NYDPF resolves youth development issues across all sectors. Thus, it strives to ensure that all young women and men are given meaningful opportunities to reach their full potential, both as individuals and as active participants in society. The Policy Framework emphasizes the major concerns and issues critical to the youth and gives direction to youth programmes and services provided by government and non-governmental organisations (NYDPF, 2007).

2.5.4. The National Youth Policy (2009-2014)

It is a policy formulated as part of a global trend where governments are formulating youth policies that respond to the changing conditions of young people in the 21st Century. The National Youth Policy (NYP) is built on the foundation of both policy and programmatic interventions implemented for young people between 1994 and 2007. The NYP has the following as its aims and objectives; to identify gaps in the current policy and propose strategic policy interventions designed to fill them, thus speeding up further development of youth; defining the targets of the new interventions; addressing the continuous needs of the youth by focusing on areas where supplementary action is required; ensuring mainstreaming of youth development in programmes run by different key role players; positioning policy implementation in the context of institutional responsibilities and processes; mapping the process through which progress on policy implementation will be assessed; and specifying the monitoring and evaluation mechanism for the purposes of accountability and continuous improvement of interventions (NYP, 2009).

One of the main objectives as stated in the policy is to enhance the capacities of young people through addressing their needs, promoting positive outcomes, and providing integrated

coordinated package of services, opportunities, choices, relationship and support necessary for holistic development of all young people particularly those outside the social, political and economic mainstream (NYP, 2009). The policy targets youth of different categories including; young women, youth with disabilities, unemployed youth, school-aged youth (youth that is meant to be at school but is not), youth at risk and youth in rural areas. Programmes to suit the needs of these categories of youth have been rolled out by local government in the different provinces. Government has identified the need to invest in young people as the future leaders of the nation. This goal can only be attained by empowering the youth to realize their full potential, and understand their roles and responsibilities in making meaningful contribution to the development of the country (NYP, 2009).

2.5.5. White Paper on National Youth Service (NYS)

The youth service has been adopted by the South African government as part of its initiatives to get the youth involved in the reconstruction and development plan of the nation. The objectives of the policy are to facilitate the provision of work experience for young persons with a view to their employment; to encourage participants to develop a sense of responsibility and service to the country; and self-respect and respect for authority; to promote among participants, values of discipline, democracy, citizenship and corporation (National Youth Service Act, 1998)

In order for the activities to be effectively perpetuated, a board has been set up to carry out the following functions: to develop and monitor orientation, training, approved placement and employment programmes for participants; provide placement and employment opportunities for participants and assist in the development of approved employment projects; monitor and evaluate the implementation of the plans and programmes of the National Youth Service and to make to the Minister such recommendations as it thinks fit in respect thereof (National Youth Service Act, 1998).

The NYS cuts across targeted groups of youths which include unemployed youths, youths in conflict with the law, Higher Education students as well as Further Education and Training students. This programme will be incorporated into different government departments depending on the priority identified in that sector. Thus, the programme is one sure way to ensuring that youth development policies are implemented.

2.6 Graduate unemployment in South Africa

The challenge of graduate unemployment in the South African economy can be linked to the country's growth trajectory. Since democratisation in 1994, the trajectory has been characterized by significant, high levels of poverty and growing inequality (Development Bank of Southern Africa, 2011)). These socio-economic trends have also been impacted by the global economic recession in 2009, which resulted in the contraction of the economy (DBSA, 2011)) and massive retrenchment in both the public and private sectors. Thus, South Africa's economy is characterised by two aspects of exclusion from the labour market: first, low participation rates, which are largely the consequence of poverty and, second, high unemployment rates, which are concentrated among young people, especially graduates from HBUs (DBSA, 2011).

South Africa's labour market also faces critical challenges such as few employment opportunities in rural areas, an increasingly skill-intensive economy despite a scarcity of skills, and high unemployment among women (Centre for Development and Enterprise, 2013). Labour unrest has also impacted on the economy as it reduced South Africa's output in 2013/2014, especially in the agriculture and manufacturing sectors. In addition, the output potential is constrained by a skills shortage; hence, calls are being made for further investment and the reform of poorly performing education system (Kumo et al., 2014)

The problem of skills shortage in South Africa can be traced back to the legacy of apartheid (Horwitz, 2013:2435). In order to deal with graduate unemployment, a number of policies have been adopted by the democratic government. Policies such as; the National Youth Commission Act (1996) and the National Youth Policy (2009-2014), have laid out procedures in reshaping the affairs of the young graduates in South Africa (National Youth Policy, 2009). These procedures are rolled out in the form of skills programmes which have provided opportunities for young graduates to be trained as well as take part in the sustainable economic development of the country (National Youth Development Agency, 2009).

Simkins (2004:1) points out that employment and unemployment are politically sensitive issues in most labour market economies. Amongst other world nations, South Africa is counted as the highest in terms of unemployment (Kingdon& Knight, 2004:1). With an unemployment rate of 24.1% (down from 25.5% in 2012), youth unemployment remains high with 64.8% of those between the ages of 15 and 24 out of work (down from 66.3% in 2012)

(Kumo et al., 2014:2). Since the most affected group is the youth between 15-24 years age bracket, this group is likely to put more pressure on the labour market, because approximately 3.3 million (31.6%) of the 10.4 million in this age group are not in employment, education or training (Quarterly Labour Force Survey, 2012).

In a firm survey, conducted by Pauw et al. in 2006, among twenty of South Africa's largest firms, findings show there are skills shortages in occupations such as engineers, technicians and scientists. In addition, firms feel that graduates do not possess the necessary skills and experience to be considered for entry-level positions. Thus, poor education lies at the heart of the problem of graduate unemployment in South Africa (Pauw et al., 2006).

The phenomenon of rising graduate unemployment needs to be viewed in the context of skills shortages and vacancies that exist in the private sector (Pauw et al., 2006). This suggests graduate unemployment relates either to an oversupply of graduates in general or an oversupply of inappropriately qualified of poor quality graduates. Some firms in the survey conducted by Pauw et al. (2006) explicitly noted that the average new recruit's education is of a lower quality than the past, while others suggested that if they could find more quality graduates they would increase the intake of graduates (Pauw et al., 2006). In terms of soft skills and workplace readiness, firms in the survey expressed concern about students from HBUs. Firms cite poor soft skills, such as (English) communication skills, as a key shortcoming of students from HBUs. Many students who lack these skills did not have the privilege of developing these skills, or acquiring the necessary employability skills, hence they are unsuccessful in the recruitment phase.

As a result of the need to understand other possible constraints to graduate unemployment in South Africa, this current study examines the labour market for graduates. It also focuses on the relationship between contextual factors and graduate unemployment; employability factors and graduate unemployment; and employability and core-self-evaluation.

2.7 Conclusion

The discourse in this chapter has been directed at analysing the views of different researchers on graduate employability not only in South Africa but internationally. The legislations that govern graduate employment form part of the parameters within which HEIs, government, and organisations operate. These legislations act as regulations put in place by the government and other bodies to ensure that the needs of all categories of youth in society are

met. This is done mostly often through programmatic interventions which serve as an opportunity of skills development to ensure that they are employable. In as much as the government has policies in place to rectify the ‘damage’ done by apartheid, implementation is the most essential part of any policy. The main reason for this study is to look at graduate unemployment, meaning the policies for skills development and other policies put in place to empower the youth and or graduates, which are taking time to manifest. The government could reinforce or strengthen its relations with the public sector in order to develop partnerships that will equip and or employ graduates who need the skills to become employable.

The researcher further discussed the Skills Development Act, NYC, NYDPF and NYS. These policies set a baseline by which organizations are able to mould the youth as future leaders. Furthermore, the chapter examined the conceptual factors that underpin graduate unemployment in an attempt to provide useful information relevant for questionnaire designing. Lastly, the chapter examined graduate employment in South Africa. The next chapter provides the research methodology to be applied in this study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1Introduction

This chapter focuses on how the research problem is to be investigated in order to achieve the preset objectives of this study in chapter one. In conducting the analysis, the research methodology has been developed in such a manner that it encompasses the appropriate research design, target population and reasonably sufficient representative sample, data collection tool, pilot study, scale reliability and statistical validity of measurement items, as well as ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

There are two broad approaches that are widely recognised and used as research designs; namely qualitative research and quantitative research (Saunders, Lewis &Thorn hill; 2003:217). According to Saunders et al. (2003), qualitative research is conducted in a natural setting and involves a process of building a complex and holistic picture of the phenomenon of interest. As a tool of social science research, the qualitative approach allows the researcher to look at settings and the people located therein holistically, i.e. as a whole. This approach also gives room for everyone who is located in the research setting to air their opinions regardless of social status (Saunders et al., 2003).

On the other hand, quantitative research is an inquiry into an identified problem, based on testing a theory, measured with numbers and analysed using statistical techniques (Struwig& Stead, 2001). Qualitative research is commonly applied with the primary goal of understanding the functioning of social or human developments from multiple perspectives, while the goal of quantitative method is to determine whether the predictive generalisations of a theory hold true.

The quantitative approach is contrasted to the qualitative approach and that these two paradigms are not mutually exclusive (Fouché &Delport, 2002).

Table 3.1: A comparison of the quantitative and qualitative approaches in research methods.

Quantitative approach	Qualitative approach
Epistemological roots in positivism	Epistemological roots in phenomenology
Purpose is to test predictive and cause effect hypotheses about social reality	Purpose is to construct detailed descriptions of social reality

Methods utilise deductive logic	Methods utilise inductive logic
Suitable for a study of phenomena that are conceptually and theoretically well developed, seeks to control phenomena	Suitable for a study of a relatively unknown terrain, seeks to understand phenomena
Concepts are converted into operational definitions, results appear in numeric form and are eventually reported in statistical language	Participants natural language is used in order to come to a genuine understanding of their world
The research design is standardised according to a fixed procedure and can be replicated	The research design is flexible and unique and evolves throughout the research process, there are no fixed steps to be followed and the design cannot be exactly replicated
Data are obtained systematically and in a standardised manner	Data sources are determined by the information richness of settings, types of observations are modified to enrich understanding
The unit of analysis is variables that are atomistic (i.e. elements that form part of the whole)	The unit of analysis is holistic, concentrating on the relationship between elements, contexts etc., the whole is always more than the sum

Source: Fouché and Delport (2002).

In light of this background, the decision to apply a quantitative approach in this study is primarily based on the following underlying assumptions:

i. Development of generalisations that are in line with theory in order to predict, explain and understand the phenomenon at hand,
ii. Reliable estimations on the problem investigated can be obtained without bias, and
iii. The values of the researcher do not influence the results obtained from the analysis. (Struwig& Stead, 2001).

Against this background, this study will use both quantitative and survey design methods to gather data on issues under investigation (Creswell, 2003). The purpose of using this approach is to enhance reliability in investigation of the employability factors(Struwig&

Stead, 2001). The study is a descriptive quantitative research that adopted survey research designs which refers to a method of data collection that utilises questionnaire or interview techniques for recording the verbal behaviour of respondents (Ghauri &Gronhaug, 2010: 118).

3.3 Research paradigm and Philosophy

A research philosophy is a belief about the way in which data regarding a phenomenon should be gathered, analysed and used for inference (Neuman, 2006: 203). The research philosophy is a descriptive cross sectional design, which would consist of primary data and the quantitative statistical procedure. Research paradigm is seen as a set of fundamental beliefs based on faith that offer a framework for the research process (Schneker, 2006).

This research philosophy applied in this study is quite suitable for the kind of analysis of further analysis to be undertaken given that it is commonly applied in most similar research studies that are scientific and interpretive in nature (Neuman, 2006:203). This philosophy of science includes the following:

Ontology: This refers to the nature of reality

Epistemology: This refers to the relationship between the researcher and the respondents

Axiology: which is the role the researcher personal values play in the research

Rhetorical structure: This looks at the language and the presentation of the research study

Methodology: this involves the process and procedure of the research (Ponterotto 2002).

Table 3.2: Research paradigm and Philosophy

	Definition	Positivism
Ontology	The nature of reality	One true reality, either apprehendable or approximate
Epistemology	The relationship between the researcher and research participant	researcher and participant are independent of one another
Axiology	The role of values in the research process	Researcher values have no place in research; must be carefully controlled and kept in check so as not to pose biases in the research

Rhetorical structure	The language and the presentation of the research	Third person objective and scientific, detached and unemotional prose
Methodology	The process and procedure of the research	Experimental and quasi-experiment,

Source: Ponterotto (2002: 397)

Positivism is a philosophical point of view that is based on assumptions that all knowledge is contained within the boundaries of science and it focuses on those questions that can be answered by the application of the scientific method (Reber &Reber, 2001: 549).

3.4 Research Strategy

The questions on the data gathering tool were refined to completely address the objectives of this study. The amount of time that will be required by the research participants to complete the questionnaires will be an average of twenty five minutes.

Prior to launching the survey, the researcher will conduct a pilot test to assess the research instrument's clarity. The sample for the pilot test will comprise of twenty five unemployed graduates. Before collecting data, potential the respondents were requested to respond to questions raised on every construct specified in the questionnaire document.

3.5 Target Population

The target population for this research study comprises of unemployed graduates on data bases of the Department of Labour and other organisations that work with unemployed graduates in Gauteng province. As indicated by Bergmann and Close (2004), the target population respondents possess relevant knowledge to the field of study.

Cooper and Schindler (2005:179) cited that the target population is the total collection of elements from which reasonably sufficient elements are selected for use in the study. Williams, Tiffy and Grinnel (2005) view the population as an entire set or universe of subjects or events of concern to a research study from which a sample is selected.

Shargie and Lindtjorn (2007:2) however, recommend that the respondents should possess relevant knowledge to the field of study in order to produce reliable results. According to Cooper and Schindler (2003:179), the target population is the total collection of elements

from which a researcher wishes to determine and select a sample. As such, the criteria applied in selection of the participants for this study is based on the rationale that all participants received incubation services and can interpret the questionnaire correctly.

3.6 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The process of sampling is described as one that involves any procedure using a small number of items or parts of a whole population in order to make conclusions regarding the whole population (Sekaran, 2003; Mouton & Marais, 1996; Terre Blanche &Durrheim, 2004). The sample size of this study was determined in such a manner that it contained approximately 250 unemployed and 250 employed workers. In order to achieve the desired sample size, convenience sampling frame was used based on the lists provided by the department and the identification of working graduates via convenience sampling. The sampling technique was applied in order to avoid bias in selection of participants from the sampling frame. Following the sampling procedure applied by Kang'ahi et al. (2012). Saunders et al. (2003) indicates that large samples improve the degree to which results become reliable.

3.7 Data Collection Tool

Data collection tools in research studies involving exploration of some information from target participants are developed as part of the study's entire research design in order to systematise the collection of data, as well as to ensure that all respondents are asked the same questions in the same order (Saunders et al., 2003).

3.7.1 The Questionnaire

The research tool used in this study, as mentioned earlier, is the questionnaire. Besides being a very important research method, the questionnaire also serves as a measuring instrument (Terre Blanche &Durrheim, 2004).

Denscombe (2007: 153-154) insists that a questionnaire must:

(a) Be designed to collect information which can be used as data for analysis,

(b) Consist of a written list of questions, and

(c) Gather information by asking people directly.

The researcher used a combination of open and closed questions in the questionnaire applied. This was because open-type questions help to determine the respondents' level of reasoning

and intellect, while closed-type questions give the respondents a fixed answer to choose from. The primary aim behind the use of questionnaires was to increase the possibility that respondents would reveal their true feelings and opinions.

The questionnaire, which consisted of two sections, was developed along the patterns of Likert-type closed and open-ended questions. In agreement with Mouton and Marais (1992: 44), Likert-type questions are best suited to measure attitudes among people.

The reasons for using the electronic administered structured questionnaire are that the electronically-administered questionnaire is more cost effective to manage, relatively easy to analyse and also reduce the bias associated with interviews. Additionally, the electronically-administered questionnaire is also perceived to be less intrusive than face to face surveys (Dane, 2000).

3.8 Rationale for Use of Questionnaire

According to Dane (2000:23), the following are the primary merits for using questionnaires:

i. Affordability in the sense that they are the least expensive means of data collection,
ii. Questionnaires preclude possible interviewer bias,
iii. Questionnaires provide the respondent with sufficient time to consider answers before responding to questions, the participants do not feel pressurised to answer right there and then.
iv. Questionnaires can be given to many respondents simultaneously; hence a large sample of the target population can be reached. This also deals with the time constraint, using a method that will not use up a lot of time is considered better than one that takes up too much time.

Although using a questionnaire has its advantages, it is essential to note that it has limitations, which are; it is deemed inadequate in measuring some information such as the behaviour and emotions of the participant (Mouton, 2001). In a situation where the interviewer/researcher leaves the questionnaires with participant(s), the interviewer will not be there to answer any question that the participant(s) might have (regarding the questionnaire) to get clarity. This could influence the validity of the answers. The participant(s) may not be truthful in answering the questions, which also affects the validity of the answers (Mouton, 2001). The

questions may be interrupted differently by participants, but the pilot study is able to deal with that.

3.9 Literature Study

It was also important to consider and review all available literature and written material that would help in obtaining data towards the successful completion of the study. Marlow (1993: 34) suggests that it is always essential to consult the written material relevant to the research problem. Accordingly, all available literature was considered that helped the researcher gather more information about the constraints to graduate employment in South Africa.

3.10Pilot Study

Prior to conducting the pre-test, two senior research analysts/statisticians from a local based research organisation were requested to review the questionnaire in order to assess clarity of questions in the questionnaire (Sekaran, 2003; Saunders et al., 2003). The comments will be incorporated into the final analysis. Following statistical principles extensively applied in sample surveys.

Against this background, a pilot study was conducted with a small sample that reasonably represents the sampling frame under study. Following Sekaran (2003:34), a pilot study is particularly useful for uncovering inconsistencies that may be imbedded in the questionnaire document. Sekaran (2003:34) further underscores that no matter how many times a questionnaire can be redrafted, it can only be considered reliably usable if it has been tested successfully in the relevant field of study

Subsequent to questionnaire validation, twenty five questionnaires will be distributed to selected unemployed and employed graduates, and such participants will not take part in the final questionnaire survey. Saunders et al. (2003:34) suggest that carrying out a pilot study allows one to test the acceptability of the questionnaire to the target sample. Thus, the pilot Study for this research study will enhance testing whether the questionnaire will generate expected data, and tests whether participants will understand the questionnaire without difficulty.

3.11Administration of Questionnaires

A highly structured question format was electronically distributed via Survey Monkey to the relevant participants by the researcher for data collection purposes. The researcher explained to all research participants the structure of the questionnaire, the information contained

therein and the recommended expected time for completion and return of the questionnaires for data capturing and analysis. Based on the Likert-scale format, the respondents were requested to respond to questions raised on every construct specified in the questionnaire document. The rationale behind delivering the questionnaires physically to research participants was to ensure that the questionnaires are handed over to relevant participants to yield an effective response rate.

3.12Validity of Instrument

The validity of the measurement tools refers to the extent to which the research instrument measures what it is intended to measure (Fink, 2006). According to Cozby (2004:90), the major common types of validity examined in research are face validity, content and internal validity (Kerlinger& Lee, 2000).

3.12.1 Statistical Validity

Overall, the structural validity of the measurement tools was examined using factor analysis; through which total correlation analysis of items was evaluated. Prior to conducting factor analysis, the Keiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) analysis was undertaken to determine suitability of the size of sampling to factor analysis. The KMO value will be used to indicate whether the gathered questionnaire data will be suitable for factor analysis and principal component analysis. Furthermore, the Bartlett's test of sphericity of the research survey items will be examined to determine whether factor analysis could sufficiently be performed on the data. Additionally, the scale was examined to establish whether the items will not arise to an identity matrix. The total declared variance computed will also be analyzed to determine the cumulative total variance explained by selected components based on the initial eigenvalues.

3.13 Scale Reliability of Items

To determine the degree to which the chosen set of items was used to measure a single one-dimensional latent construct, internal consistency (scale reliability) of the questionnaire items was examined using the Cronbach's alpha; computed following the specification (Nunnally& Bernstein, 1994).

$$\alpha = \frac{K}{K-1}\left(1-\frac{\sum_{i=1}^{K}\sigma^2_{Y_i}}{\sigma^2_X}\right)$$

Where:

$K = \text{number of items}$

$\sigma^2_X = \text{variance of observed total scores}$.

$\sigma^2_{Y_i} = \text{variance of item i for the current sample}$

The methodological data triangulation approach will be undertaken to ensure reliability of data collected. Struwig and Stead (2001; Fink, 2006; Kerlinger& Lee, 2000) point out that reliability is the extent to which test scores are accurate, consistent and stable. As such, the Cronbach's alpha was used as the common suitable tool for interval-level measurement involving multi-item scales. The scale reliability of items was undertaken to examine homogeneity of internal consistency of the underlying constructs (Cooper & Schindler, 2006) of the study. This implies analyzing whether the questionnaire items was used in measuring the same latent variable; which should be the case if the survey was conducted in an unbiased manner.

3.14Data Analysis

Data analysis refers to the process of converting data into information (Saunders et al., 2003). The primary focus of data analysis in both qualitative and quantitative studies is to obtain relevant answers to specific questions and draw conclusion about certain hypotheses. In order to derive benefits associated with research triangulation, principal data integrity analytics will be undertaken by applying appropriate statistical techniques using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software for windows version 21.Cronbach's alpha coefficients were used to assess the reliability of the questionnaires that were developed for this study. An alpha coefficient of 0.70 and larger was deemed as acceptable compared to the guideline of Nunnally and Bernstein (1994). The Inter-item correlation coefficient was used to determine whether the internal consistencies of the constructs are not too high, so that they affect the validity. Clark and Watson (1995), who specified the inter-item correlations between 0.15 and 0.50 as acceptable.

In an effort to ensure data integrity, reliability and validity analytics was undertaken to check for errors, skewness and kurtosis.

i. Descriptive analysis was used to enable the researcher summaries and organise data effectively and meaningfully (Ghauri &Gronhaug, 2010). Scale reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha) and validity (KMO) of measurement items.

ii. Logistic regression was used because the dependent variable was measured as a categorical variable, that is, Graduate Employment status, with responses yes or no. Multiple regressions are not suitable when you have categorical dependent variables. Multiple regression is suitable when the dependent variable is continuous with scores that are reasonably normally distributed (Pallant, 2010). In logistic regression you can also identify outliers from the case wise list, which gives you information about cases in your sample for whom the model does not fit well (Pallant, 2010).

Every survey has some form of errors associated with it. Error can be observational or non-observational errors. In the case of observational errors, when data are collected it is important to check for answers entered in by respondents (Umbach, 2005), by checking for outliers. Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) define outliers as cases that have a standardized residual outside a given range of values e.g. +/-2.5. If you have a few outliers, it may not be necessary to take corrective action.

3.15Ethical Considerations

Apart from instrumentation and procedural concerns, collection of data from research participants raises ethical concerns that need to be observed with a high degree of diplomacy. Such concerns include avoidance of harm to participants, observing due respect for participants' privacy, respecting participants as individuals, and avoidance of subjecting participants to unnecessary research (Saunders et al., 2003: 145). According to Sekaran (2003:90), when people are involved as the key subjects, participants in a given study, the researcher should specify how participants' human and civil rights will be protected, with reference to obtaining informed voluntary consent, ensuring privacy, legal rights and cognitive competency.

Against this background, consent from all respondents and participants was obtained prior to commencement with the distribution of the questionnaires. All the targeted research participants were briefed clearly on the purpose of the research prior to conducting the actual data gathering in such a manner that no influence will be subjected to respondents. Thus was done to ensure reliability of data collected, and to enhance reporting of results in a truthful manner (Fink, 2006; Kerlinger& Lee, 2000).

Overall, the following ethical issues will be observed during the data collection process:

i. Right to privacy

Participants will be informed of their right to choose whether or not to participate in the study, and to complete the questionnaire.

i. Right to anonymity and confidentiality

Study informants will remain anonymous and the responses of all participants will be kept confidential. Codes will be used instead of participants' names and surnames (Mouton, 2003:243). To ensure safety and confidentiality, all collected information will be handled and stored privately in a lockable cabinet (Mouton, 2003:521).

ii. Right to full disclosure and informed consent

Participants will be given an informed consent form explaining the details of the study after adequate, truthful and accurate information about the study has been provided (Mouton 2003:244). For participants who cannot read or write, the consent form will be interpreted in their respective language which they understand.

iii. Right to fair treatment

All participants will be treated fairly without discrimination, and the researcher will be accountable for upholding the participants' rights (Burns & Grove 2005:189).

3.16 Limitations of the study

Although the study examines the pressing issue of graduate unemployment in the city of Johannesburg, it qualifies for a special mention that the study is not without its own limitations. The following limitations to this study were identified:

Firstly, the study is aimed at determining the perceived constraints to graduate employment in the various sectors within the city of Johannesburg.

Secondly, the other limitation is that the study focuses only on graduates in Johannesburg rather than all the provinces in the country. The result might not be nationally representative as the population is limited graduates in the Johannesburg.

Thirdly, during the process of data collection, there was the limitation of respondents' apathy to providing information through the completion of the questionnaires. A good number of the

respondents were not interested in accepting the questionnaires citing a busy schedule, lack of understanding of the research problem and general disinterest as their reason.

Fourthly, some respondents who accepted the questionnaires and asked the researcher to return to collect them failed to keep their promises. A small percentage of respondents also filled the questionnaires incorrectly and therefore rendered them inappropriate for the research purpose.

Another problem regularly encountered by the researcher was the issue of acceptability and announcing oneself. The majority of average men on the street are hugely sceptical and suspicious of the motive of strangers – which is what the researcher was to them.

Announcing oneself to respondents and gaining their trust is what is described by Gans and Burgess, (1986:88) as the entry process. He explains that "*the process is for me one of great anxiety and I often expect to be refused when the people I am studying have already accepted me. Until I feel I have been accepted, the research process is nerve-wracking*". Gans' observation is not dissimilar to the researcher's own experience. Actually it was even more acute as respondents often displayed attitudes ranging from mistrust to hostility. These negative tendencies were interestingly more apparent among female respondents who generally displayed open doubt and distrust as soon as the researcher approached.

Altogether, 1200 questionnaires were sent out and distributed amongst people of varying backgrounds and locations. Only 241 questionnaires were correctly filled and returned back to the researcher.

3.17Conclusion

This chapter provides an understanding of the approach in which the methodology was conducted. The chapter explains the research design, the sampling design, data collection, validity, reliability and analytical procedure. Data were collected using the structured questionnaire and subjected to validity and reliability tests using the Cronbach's alpha procedures. Frequencies, descriptive statistics and logistic regression approaches were used to test the hypotheses specified in the first chapter of this research study. The methodological approach discussed above is expected to yield valid and reliable results in respect of the view that appropriate statistical techniques have been selected to be applied to determine both scale reliability and sampling adequacy of the data to be used for the analysis.

Although, as mentioned, there are limitations to the method of using questionnaires, it was seen as the most suitable method to conduct this study as it deals with graduates. It would have been problematic if the participants were people who do not know how to read or write, as there are such populations in South Africa. Due to the group of participants being graduates, the question of being able to read and write does not pose a threat to the study. Given the time frame of this study, it would not be feasible to conduct the study nationwide, although it would give an overview of graduate unemployment in South Africa. Gauteng, according to the statistical release which looks at the national and youth labour market from 2008 – 2014, Gauteng is the province with the highest number of youth with higher education, thus, a sample of graduates from Gauteng within time frame is justified.

Against this background, the next chapter focuses on data analysis, presentation and interpretation of results from the research study.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 presented the methodology and design followed in order to obtain the findings which will be presented in this chapter. The purpose of this chapter is to analyse and interpret the results obtained from the empirical findings. Data analysis involves the analysis of the collected data and its translation into the results. When data analysis and interpretation are not well performed, the success of the research cannot be guaranteed (Vuuren, 2011). Both descriptive and multivariate statistics were used to analyse the data, which effectively show the relations and trends that were evident in the study. Variable numbers were assigned to each question and its components in the questionnaire to enable grouping of responses into categories. Cronbach's alpha will be used to illustrate the internal reliability of the questionnaires used. The findings, together with a detailed discussion explaining the results, are presented in this chapter.

4.2 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Table 4.1 Cronbach Alpha Coefficients for the Graduate Unemployment Questionnaire.

Section	**Cronbach's Alpha**	**No. of Items**
B:Choice of university and degree	0.714	10
C:Applications and Job search information	0.746	11
D: Application process	0.885	27
E: Skills issues	0.754	2
F: The core self-evaluations scale	0.721	10
Overall Employee Questionnaire	**0.780**	**73**

All the sections of the questionnaire had very consistent questions as indicated by the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients above 0.70 in Table 4.1. The overall Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of reliability for the employee questionnaire that was used for data collection is 0.78. This shows that the questionnaire is consistent and measure what it is supposed to measure adequately. Scientifically, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of a questionnaire should be at least 0.70 (DeVillis, 2003).The questionnaire with an alpha coefficient greater or equal to 0.70 would almost yield the same results in different occasions and produce similar observations when administered on different assertions. This means the graduate

unemployment questionnaire is 78% accurate and with only a 22% measurement error on the items. Thus, the questionnaire has very high internal consistency.

4.3 BACKGROUND VARIABLES

This section presents the results from the analysis of the data collected in the study by focusing on the background of the respondents of the study. Variables such as gender, age, marital status, employment status, race and length of unemployment are examined. As mentioned earlier, only 241 respondents participated in the study.

Fig 4.1 Gender of Respondent

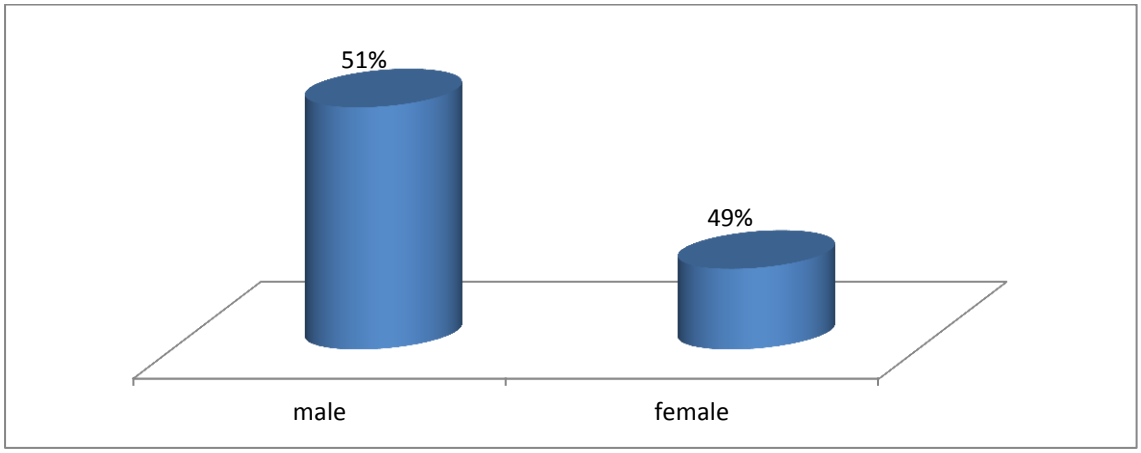
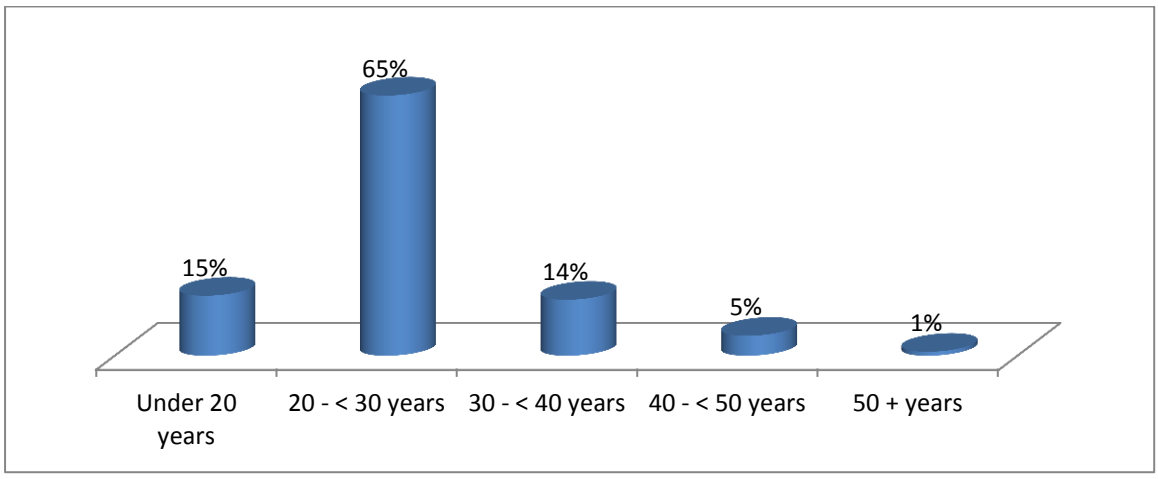


Fig 4.1 shows that the gender of the respondents. More than half of those who participated in the study are males.

Fig 4.2 Age of Respondent



As illustrated in Figure 4.2, the majority (65%) of the respondents are between 20 and 30 years, followed by 15% under age 20, and 14% in the 30-40 age groups. In addition, the majority of the respondents (80%) are aged below 30 years. This shows many of the respondents have just recently graduated from university or college. This is in line with previous studies which show that the labour force is becoming younger with labour market participants between 18 and 34 years accounting for 60% of the growth in the labour market (DPRU, 2006; Yu, 2013).

Fig 4.3 Marital Status of the Respondent

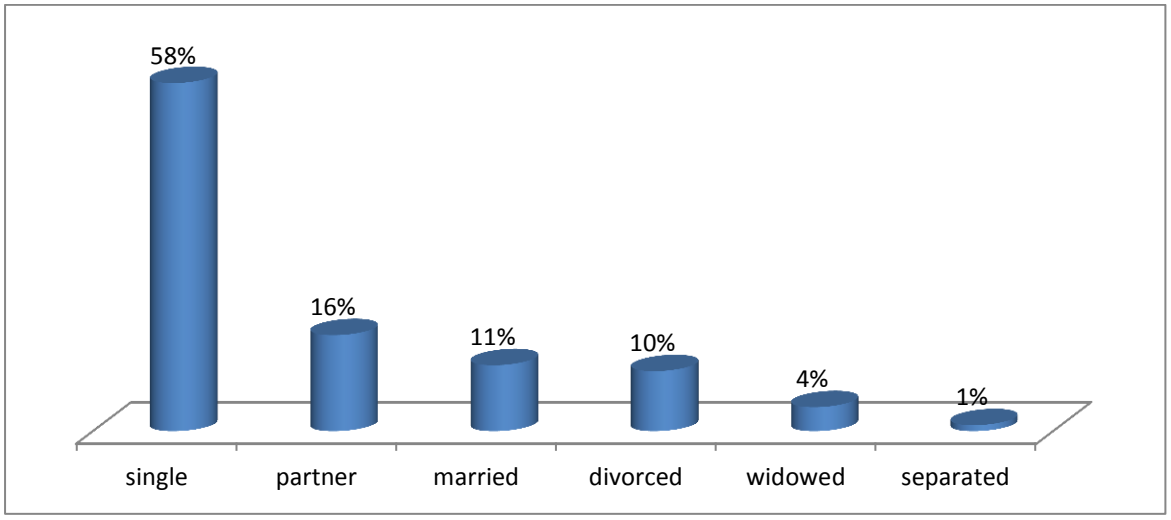
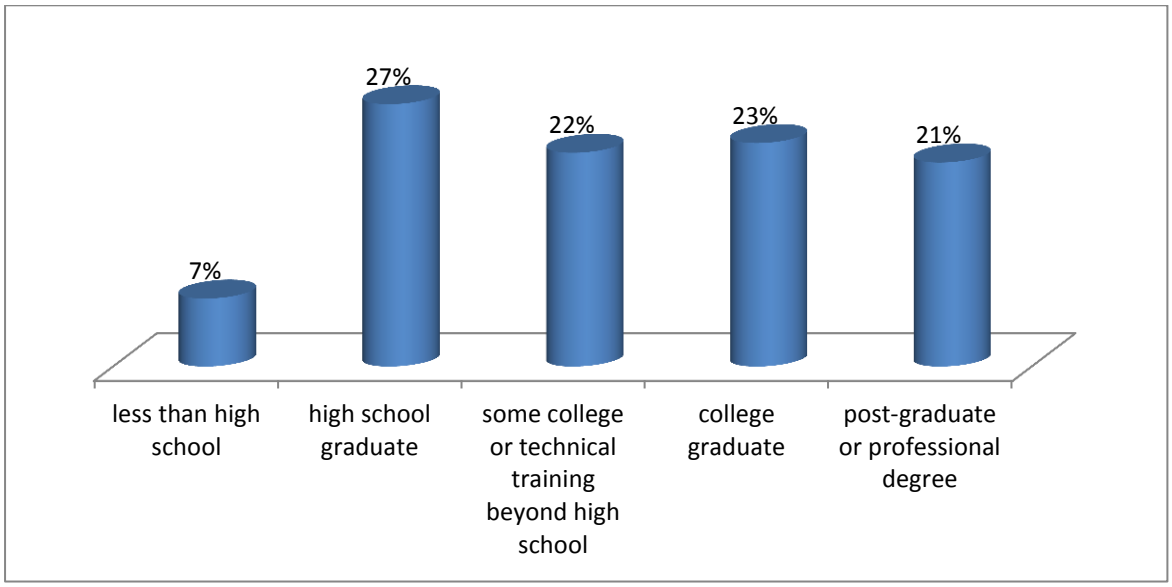


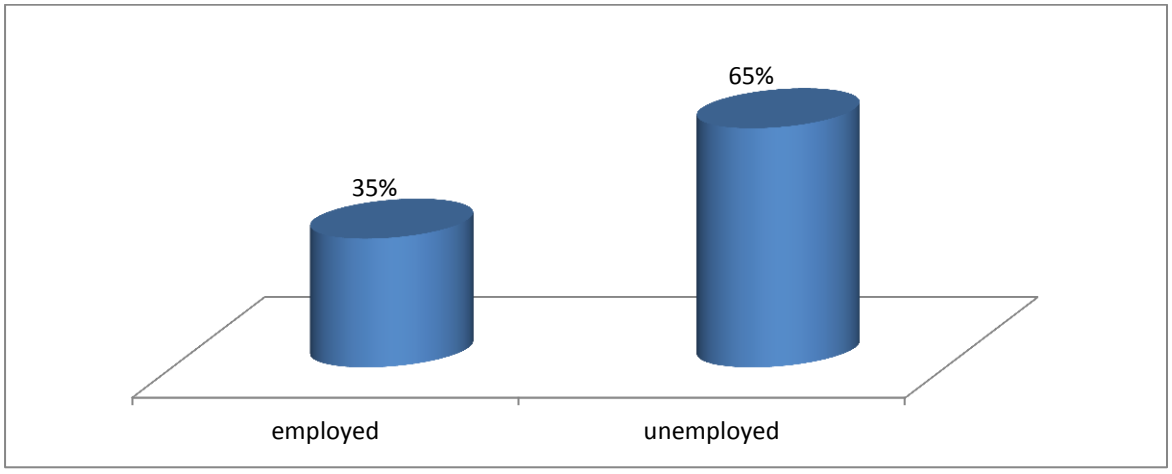
Fig 4.3 indicates the marital status of the respondents. A greater proportion of the respondents are single (58%). Only 16% have partners while 11% are married. The majority are single due to the young age groups which most of them belong to.

Fig 4.4 Level of Education



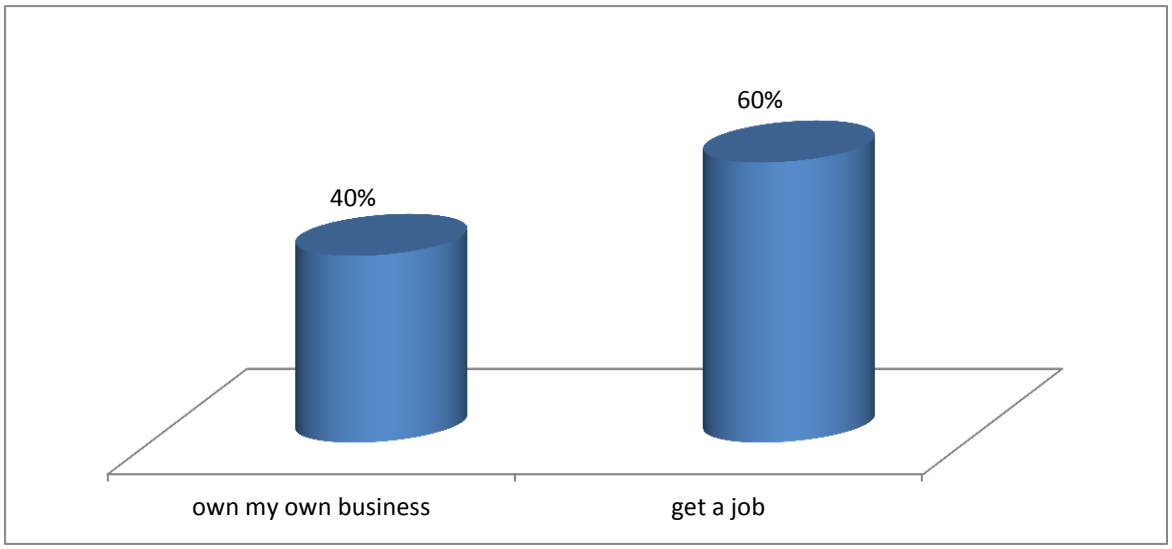
As shown in Figure 4.4, 27% of the respondents are high school graduates, followed by 23% college graduates and 22% with college or technical training beyond high school. Only 21% have post-graduate or professional degree. Further analysis shows that almost half (45%) of the respondents have some college or technical qualification.

Fig 4.5 Employment Status



Quite a significant percentage of the respondents (65%) were unemployed at the time of data collection. This is quite high and shows the extent of the challenge of unemployment in South Africa. As highlighted earlier on, South Africa has high unemployment rates, which are concentrated among young people, most especially graduates from HBUs (DBSA, 2011).

Fig 4.6 If you are unemployed what would you want to do?



When asked, if unemployed, what the respondents would want to do the majority of the respondents (60%) said they would get a job when they graduate from college or university. There is a need to shift the mentality of students towards entrepreneurship options in the economy. Naong (2011) also proposes the promotion of an entrepreneurial culture, which would bring about a paradigm shift among South Africa graduates, from being 'job-seekers' to job-creators'.

Fig 4.7 Race of Respondents

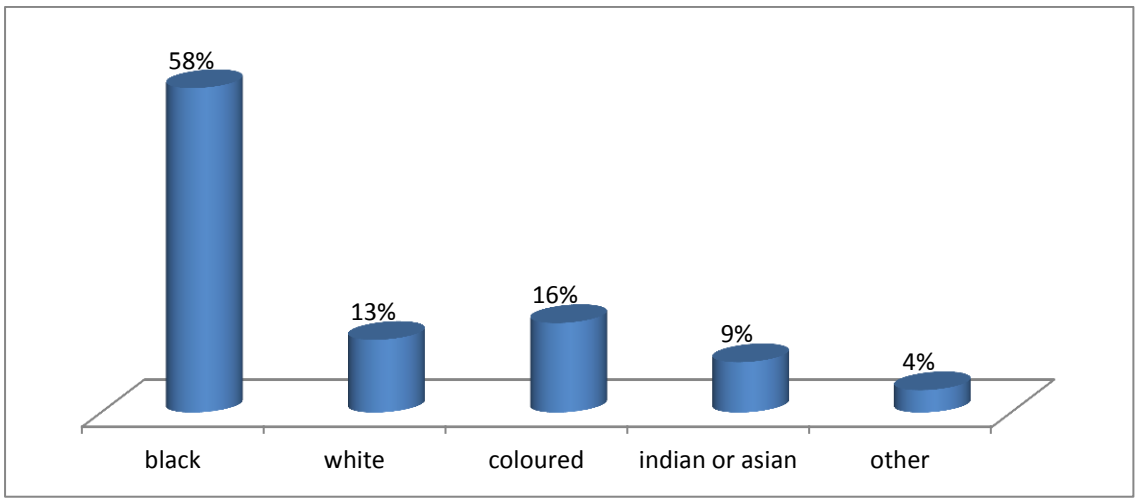
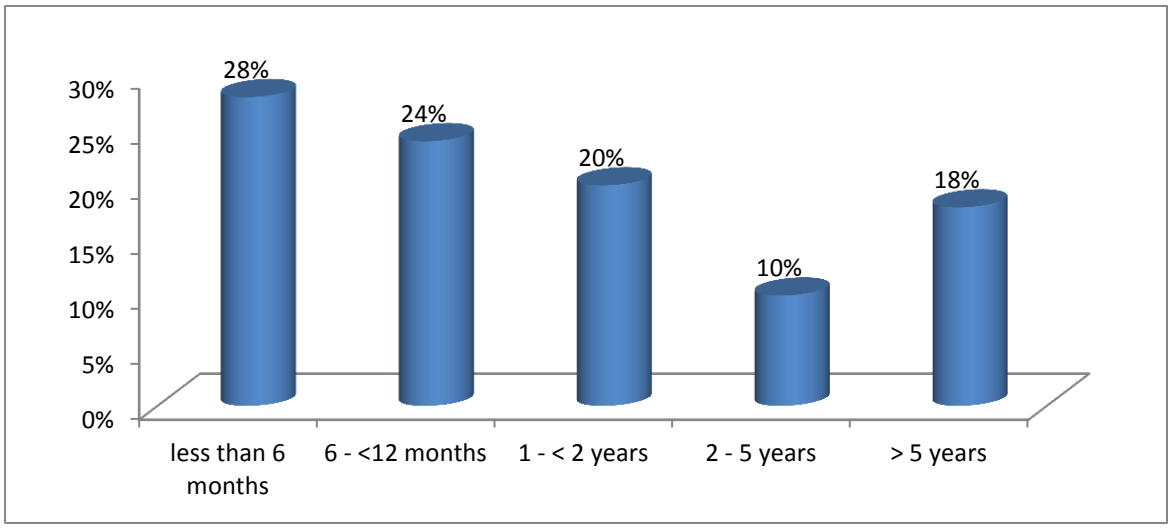


Fig 4.7 illustrates the race of respondents. More than half of the respondents were blacks (58%), followed by coloureds (16%) and whites (13%). The race of the respondents is an important aspect to look at, as studies have shown that the higher education landscape has

changed over the past 25 years, as more black graduates have enrolled into HEIs, despite the perception that those from historically disadvantaged (and often rural) backgrounds struggle to find jobs (Berg &Broekhuizen, 2012)

Fig 4.8 Length of Unemployment



In order to verify their length of unemployment respondents were asked to indicate how long they have been unemployed. About 52% of the respondents have been unemployed for less than 12 months, followed by 20% who have been unemployed for between 1-2 years, while only 18% have been have been unemployed for more than 5 years. Furthermore, analysis shows 30% have been unemployed for between 1 year and 5 years.

SECTION B: CHOICE OF UNIVERSITY AND DEGREE

This section describes the choice of university, degree and employability of the respondents.

Fig 4.9 Highest Education Attained

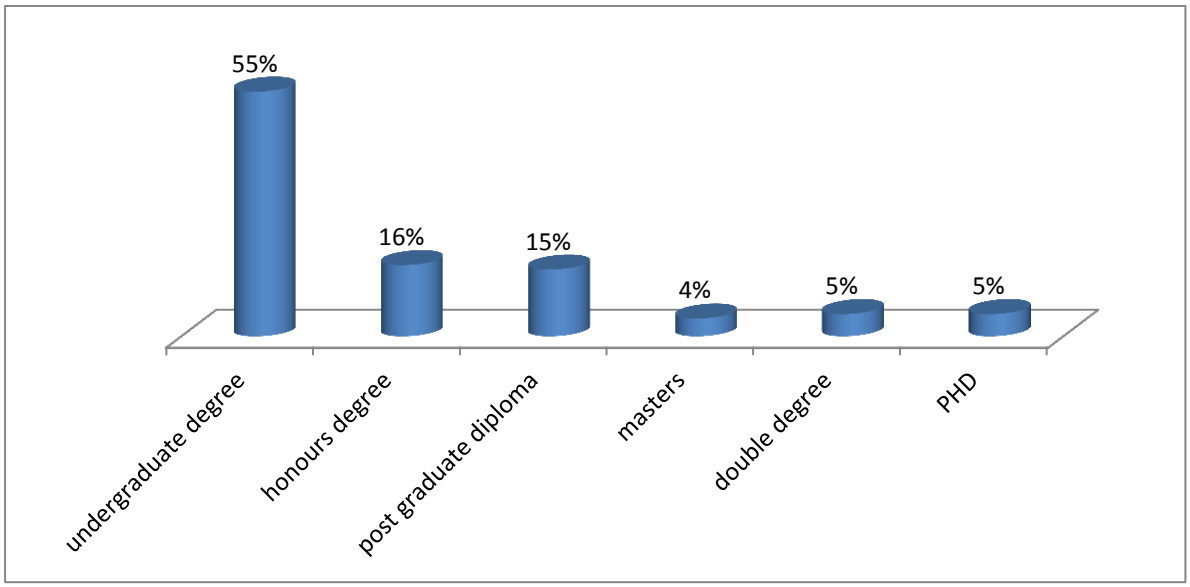
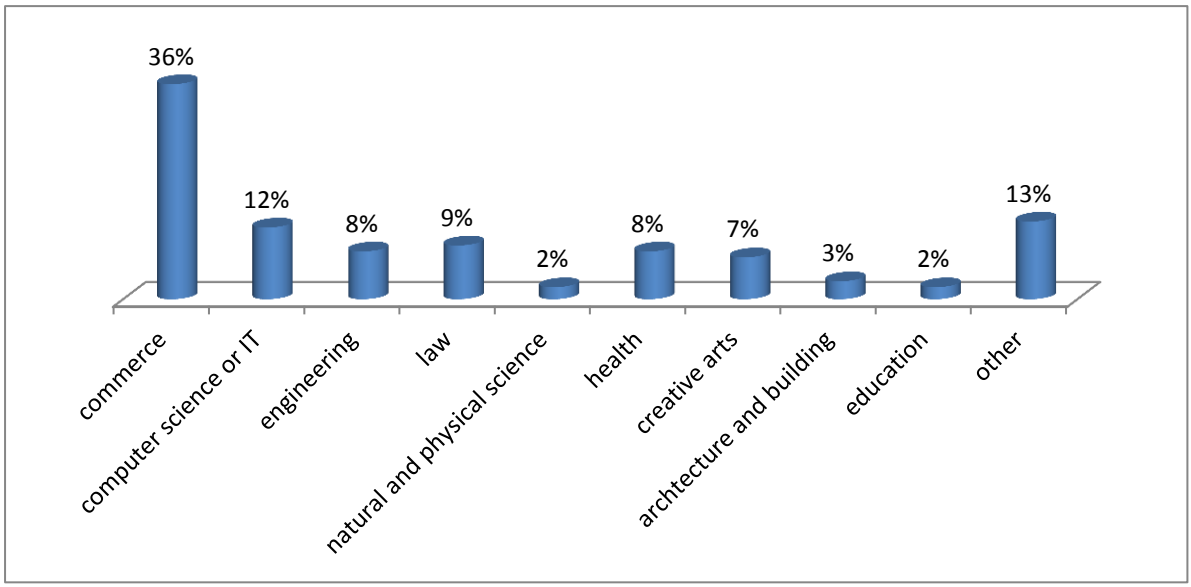


Figure 4.9 shows the highest level of education attained by the respondents. This level of education attained is one of the key achievements that make graduates more likely to gain employment and become successful in their occupation as "the more a young person had been educated, the greater the likelihood that he or she may be employed" (ILO, 1978). Most of the respondents (55%) have undergraduate degrees, 16% have honours degrees, 15% have post graduate diplomas, while only 5% have a PhD. Altogether, 14% had two or higher degrees.

Fig 4.10 Degree or discipline undertaken



Most respondents took a qualification in commerce (36%), followed by computer science or IT (12%), law (9%), engineering and health (8%) in that order. This means the types of jobs most of the respondents are looking for should be in the field of commerce. Studies have, however, shown that business, commerce and management qualifications are being subjected to significantly higher rates of unemployment than those from other fields of study, such as engineering and medical sciences (Berg &Broekhuizen, 2012; Yu, 2013). Thus, according to literature, the qualification obtained by graduates influences the chances of securing a job in the same field of study.

Fig 4.11 How was the degree undertaken?

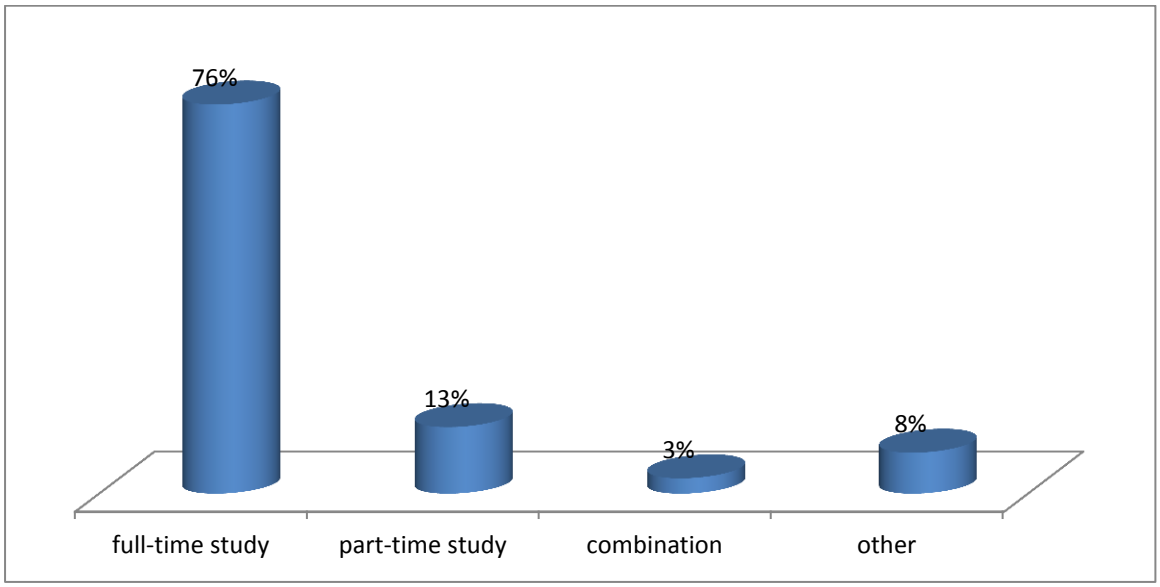


Fig 4.11 above shows how the respondents obtained their degrees. The majority of the respondents (76%) studied on a full-time basis, followed by only 13% studied part-time. Only 3% combined full-time with part-time study. This could have contributed to high unemployment levels for the respondents if they had all studied full-time.

Fig 4.12 When degree was completed

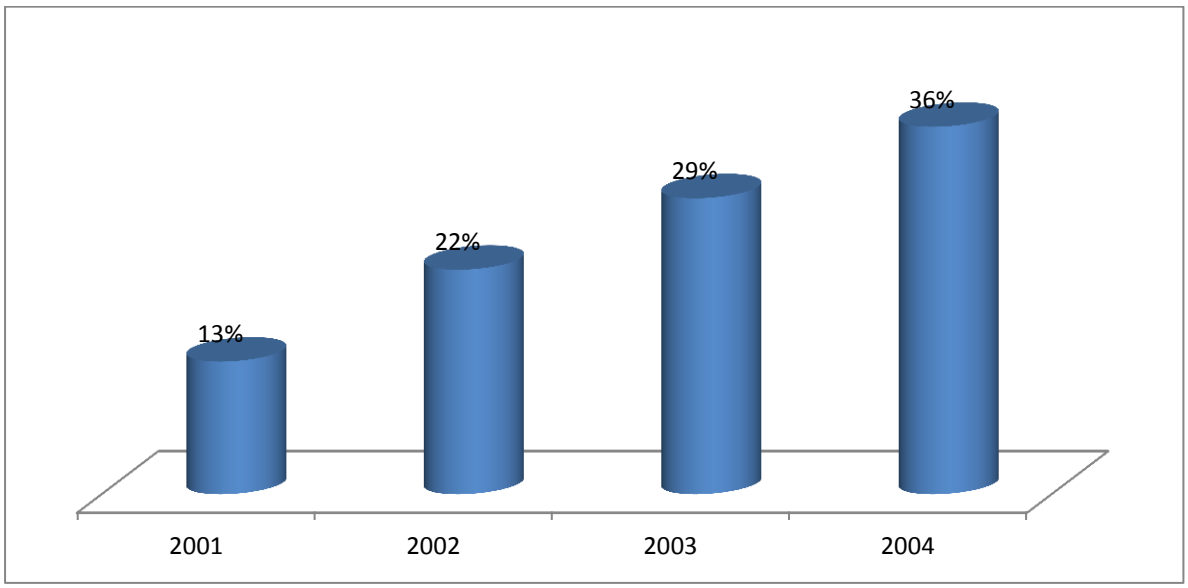


Figure 4.12 shows the year in which the respondents completed their degree. The majority (36%) completed their degree in 2004, followed by 29% who completed theirs in 2003. Only 13% completed their degree in 2001.

Fig 4.13 At university I did part-time or casual work

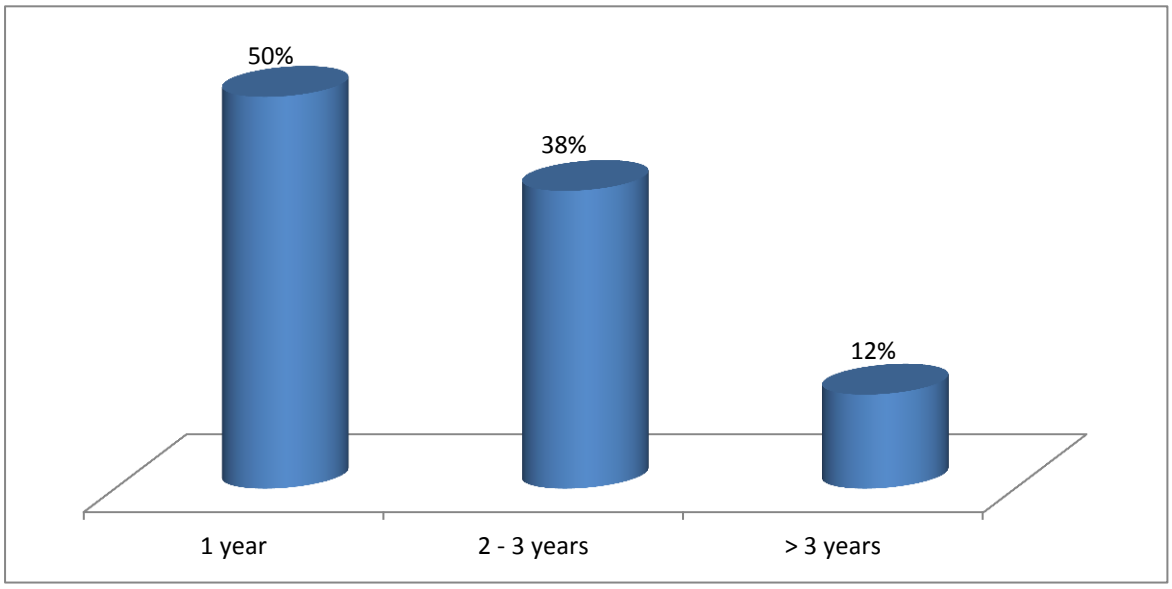
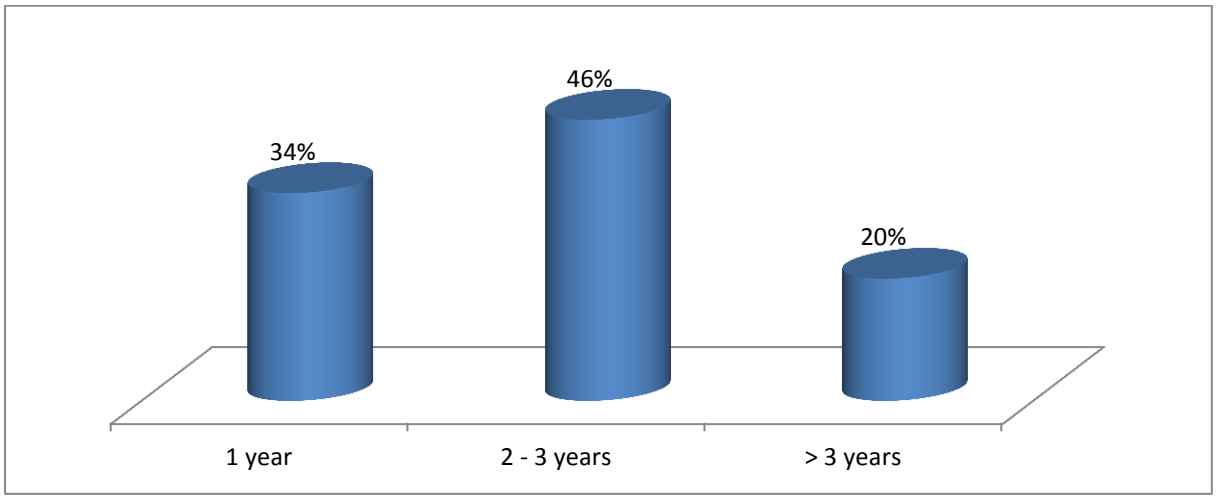


Fig 4.13 above indicates that all the respondents did part-time or casual work for between 1 and 3 years inclusive whilst studying at university. Half of the respondents (50%) did it for a year, while another 50% did it for 2 or more years.

Fig 4.14At University I did vacation program or internship



When asked whether they did vacation job or internship at varsity, 46% of the respondents said they did it for 2-3 year, followed by 34% who did it for 1 year, while 20% did it for more than 3 years. Further analysis shows that about 80% of the respondents did vacation programs or internship for at least one year. This is commendable as involvement in internship program at varsity will help graduates to acquire some workplace skills and prepare themselves for the

continuously altering nature of the workplace as well as meet their employers' needs (Cheng & Arnold, 2010).

Fig 4.15 At university I did voluntary or charity work

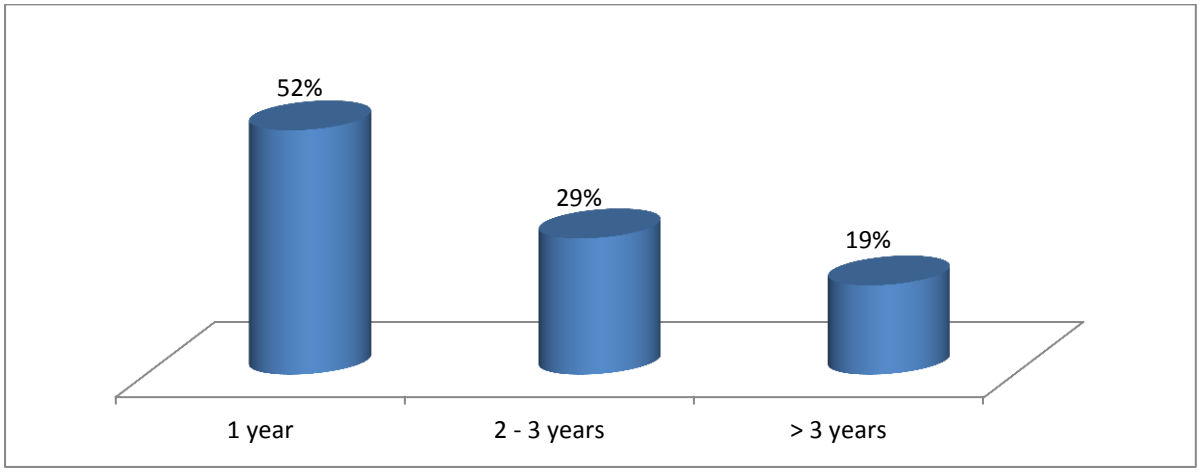
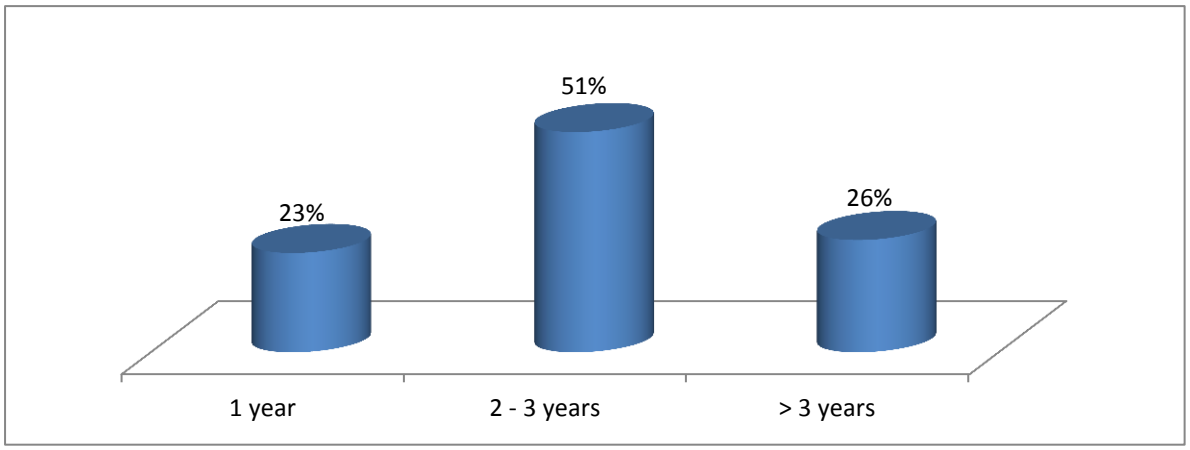


Fig 4.15 above indicates that all the respondents did voluntary or charity work for between 1 and 3 years inclusive whilst studying at university, 52% did it for a year and 48% did it for 2 or more years.

Fig 4.16At University I was a member of student society



Quite a significant percentage of the respondents were members of student societies at university for at least 2 years as Figure 4.16 shows that 51% were members for 2-3 years, followed by 26% who were members for 3 years. According to Pauw et al. (2006), graduates becoming members in student societies will enable them to develop soft skills, such as communication skills. Thus, it is also commendable that the majority of the respondents in this study are members of student societies.

Fig 4.17 At university I was office holder of a student society

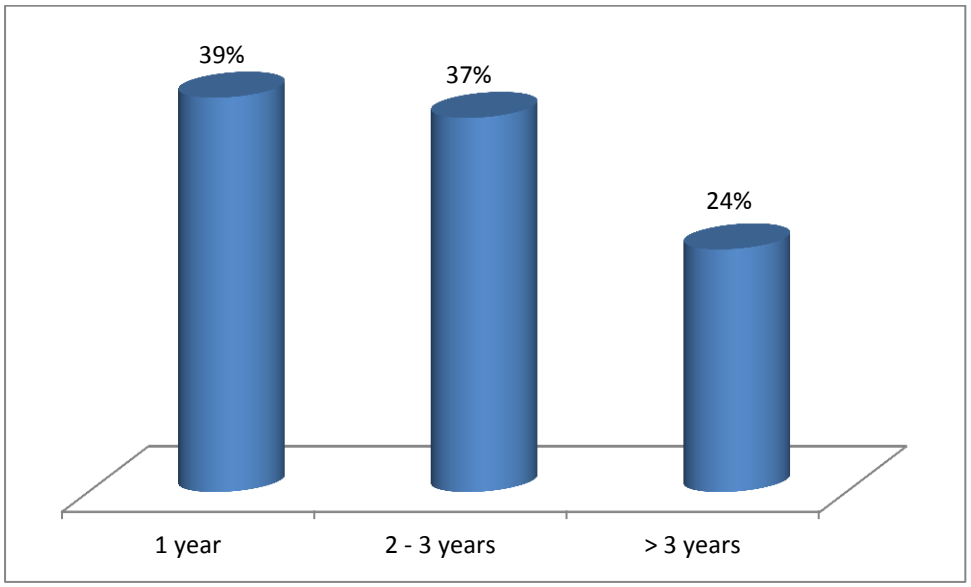


Fig 4.17 shows that 39% of the respondents are not only members of a student society but also held office for at least a year, followed by 37% who held office for at least 2 years,

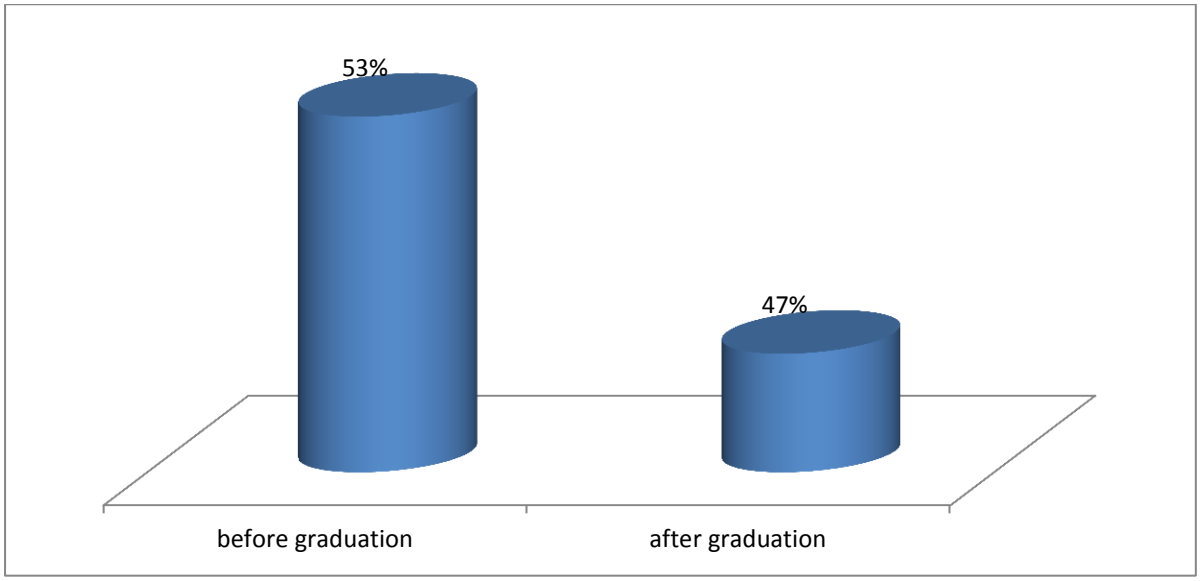
Further analysis shows 76% were office holders of student societies for an average of 2 years.

Overall, Figures 4.13 to 4.17 show that all the respondents did a number of activities whilst at university. In the process they gained some work experience before completing their studies. Lack of work experience is one of the most important factors that contribute to graduate unemployment as employers generally prefer to employ the most experienced workers who do not need to be trained any further.

SECTION C: APPLICATIONS AND JOB SEARCH INFORMATION

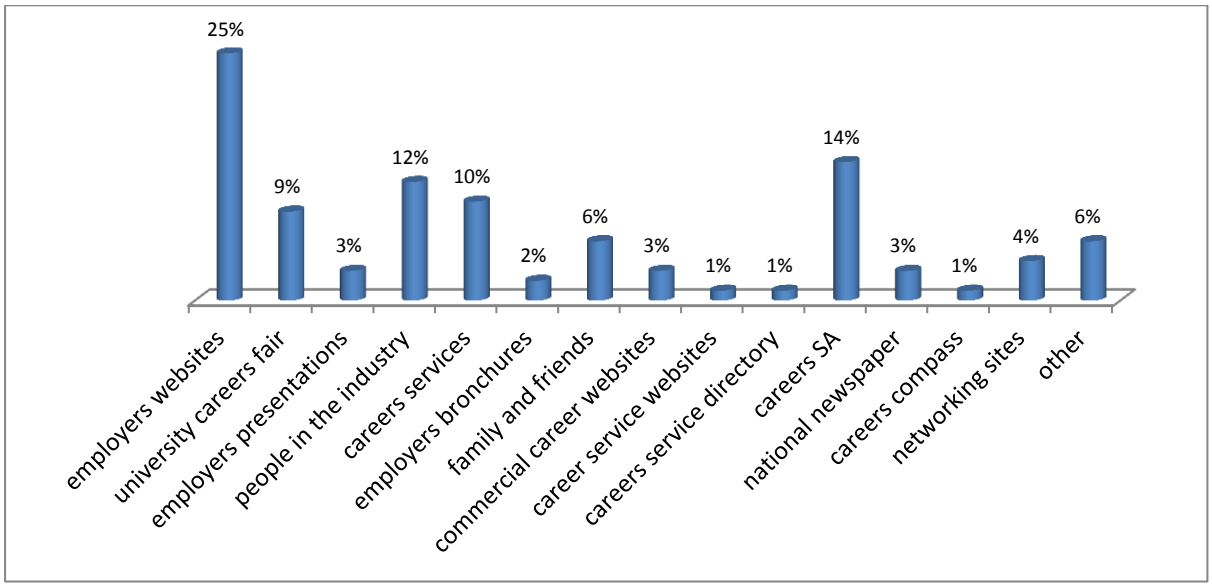
This section examines the information the respondents have on how to apply and search for jobs. The information includes issues such as when the respondent started looking for future employment, the information used to search for jobs, and job expectations.

Fig 4.18 When did you start looking for future employment?



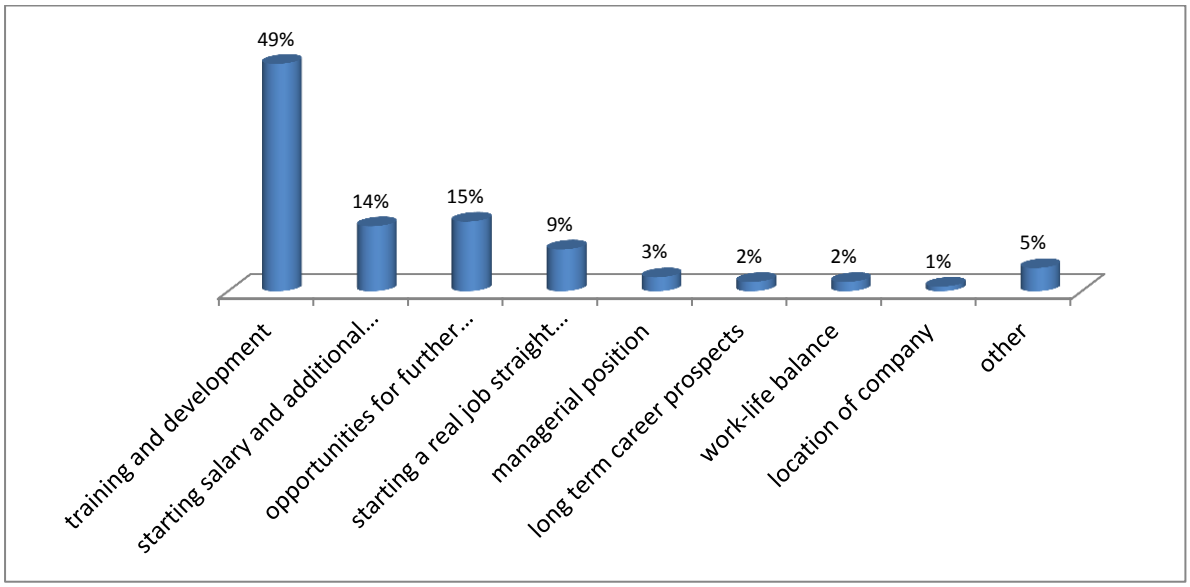
It is evident from Fig 4.18 that quite a significant number of respondents were enthusiastic about joining the labour force as 53% started looking for employment even before graduation, while 47% only started searching for jobs after graduation.

Fig 4.19What source of information did you use in your job search?



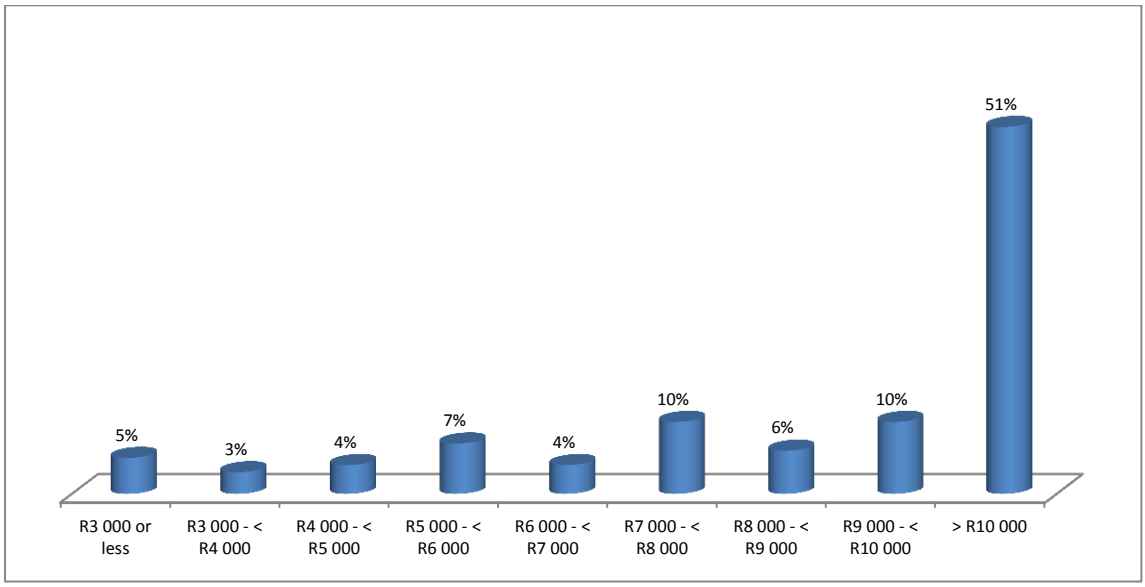
The most common sources of job search information were employers' websites (25%), careers SA (14%), people in the industry (12%) and careers services (10%). It is evident from empirical data that most of the sources of information are electronic.

Fig 4.20 Job expectations before joining an organisation



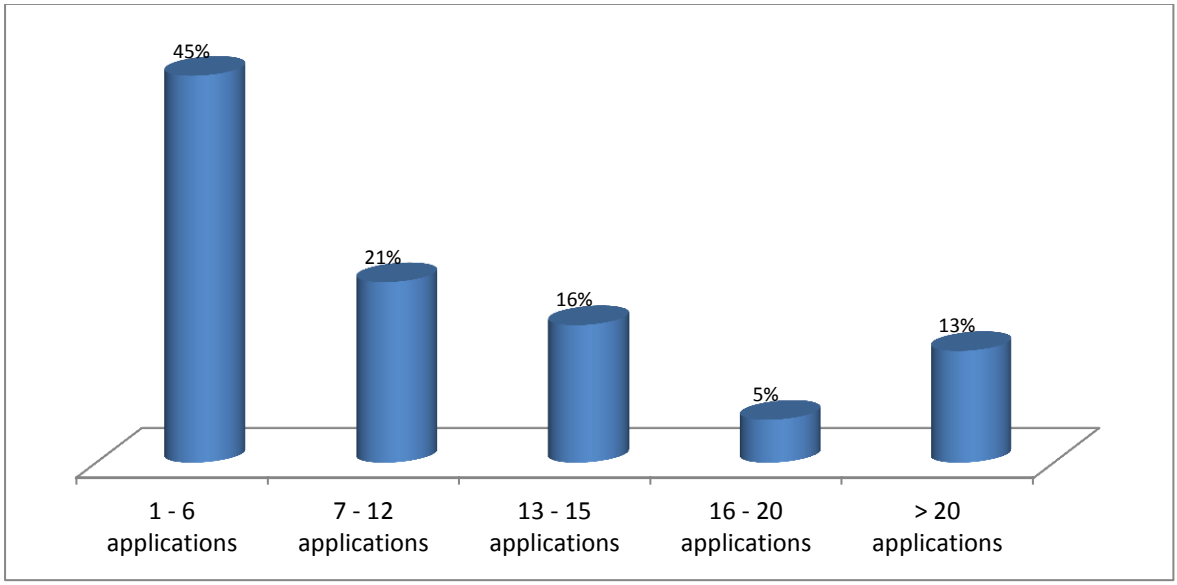
The main job expectations for the respondents before joining an organisation are training and development (49%), followed by opportunities for further studies (15%), starting salary and additional benefits (14%) and starting a real job straight away in that order (9%).

Fig 4.21 What is your monthly salary expectation?



The majority of the respondents expect a starting salary above R10 000 per month. Figures 4.20 and 4.21 support the notion that graduates have unrealistically high expectations which ignore labour-market realities. Graduates assume that their qualifications alone are sufficient to open doors to significantly high salaries and managerial positions (Luan, 2013). This to some extent has contributed to graduate unemployment being high.

Fig 4.22What number of applications did you make?



As shown in Figure 4.22, 45% of the respondents did up to 1-6 applications, followed by 21% who did up to 7-12 applications. Altogether, 66% of the respondents did up to a maximum of 12 applications and only 13% made up more than 20 applications.

SECTION D: APPLICATION PROCESS

The section below analysed the responses on the application process such as recruitment stage reached by respondents, feedback from employers, awareness of career opportunities, and career guidance help received from university.

Fig 4.23 What recruitment stage were you successful in after application?

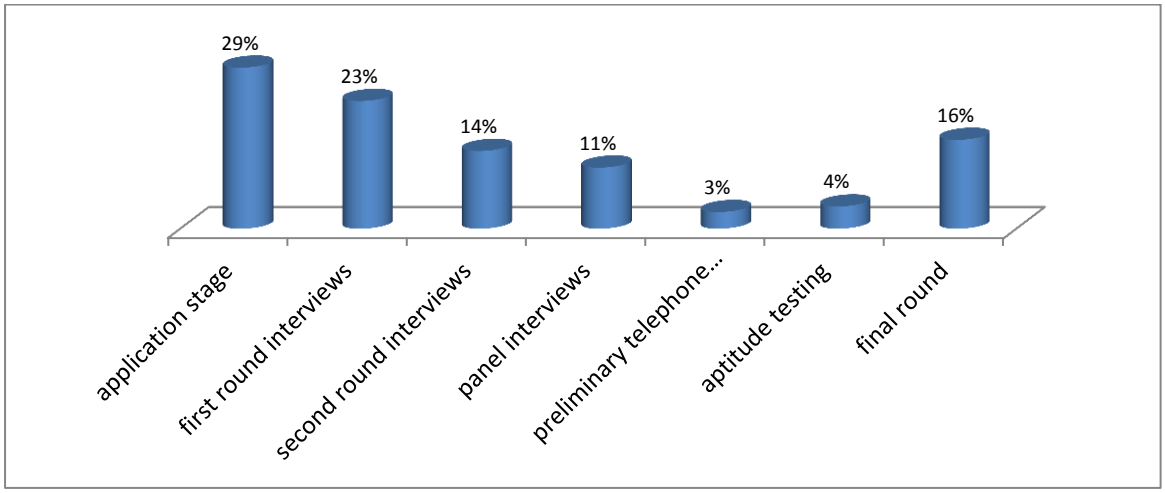


Figure 4.23 shows that 29% of the respondents were successful at the application stage, followed by 23% who were successful after the first round of interviews. Of all the respondents, only 16% made it successful to the final round in their application process.

Fig 4.24 What extent where you aware of career opportunities?

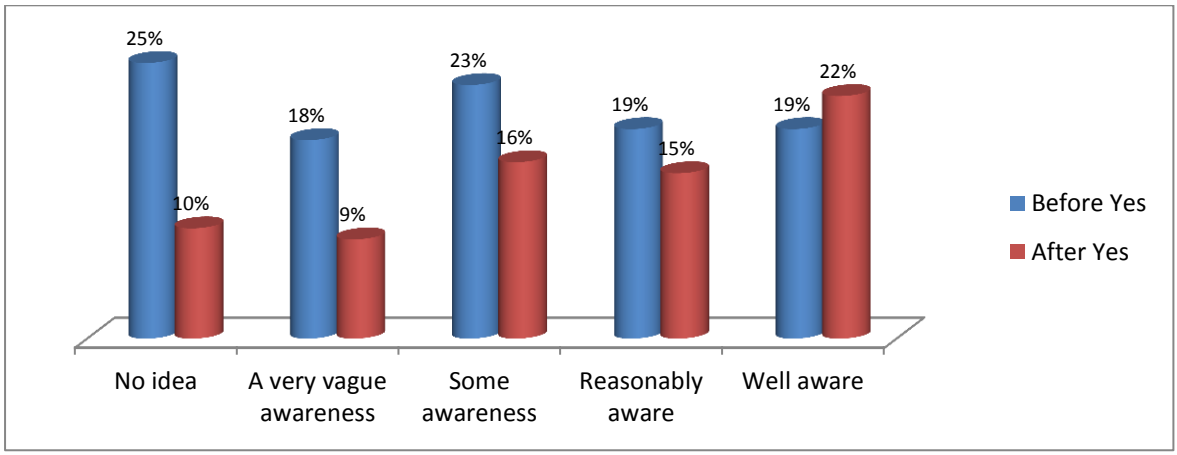


Figure 4.24 illustrates respondent awareness of career opportunities before and after graduation. Most respondents either had no idea (25%) or a very vague awareness (18%) and some awareness of career opportunities (23%) before graduation, but 22% were well aware after graduation. This could be as a result of the fact that before graduation students are mainly preoccupied with passing their exams.

Fig 4.25 Amount of help received from the University in your career plan and job search

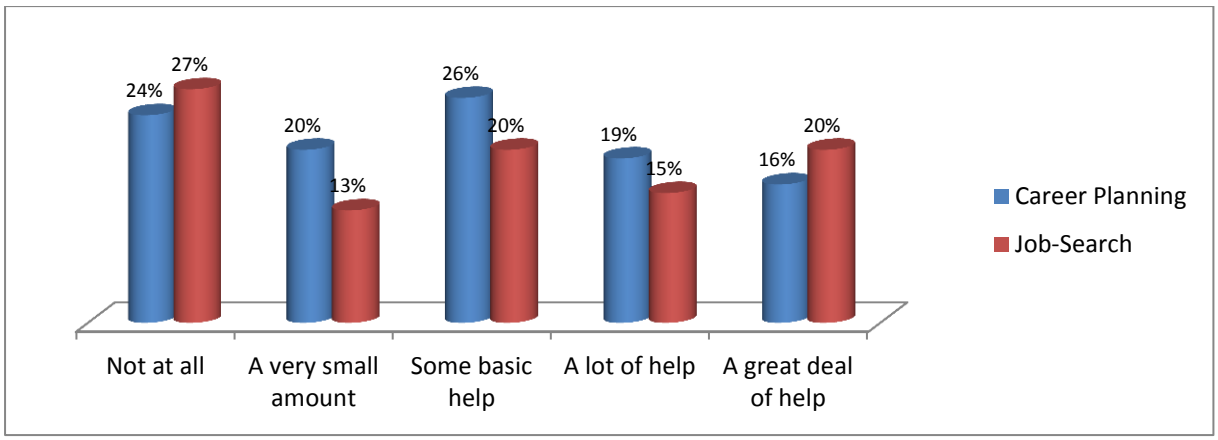
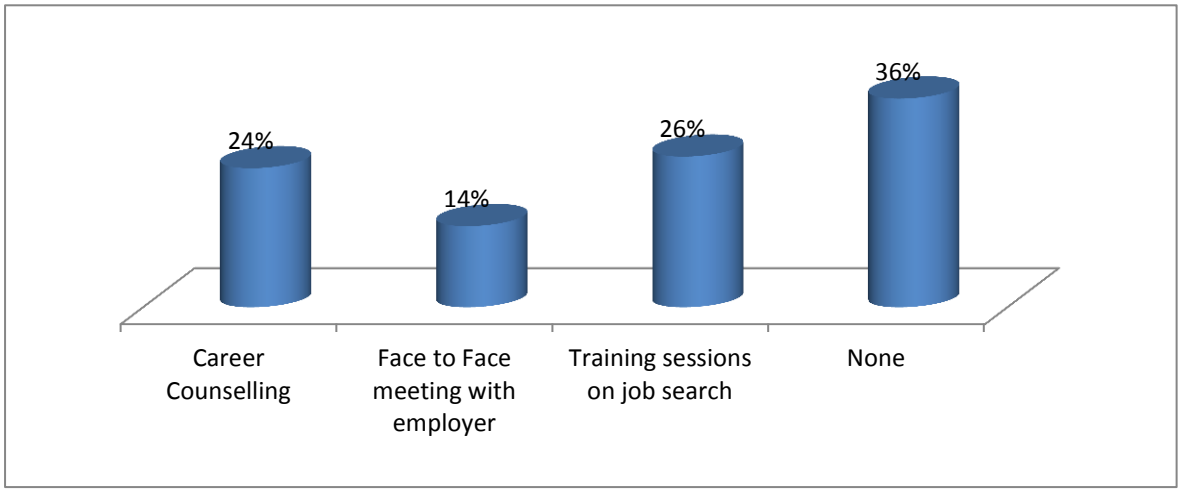


Figure 4.25 analysed the extent of information received from the university in career planning and job search. It is sad to note that 24% of the respondents did not receive any information about career planning and 27% did not receive any information on job search. About 46% of the respondents said they received very small amount to basic help on career planning and 33% on job search. Figure 4.24 and 4.25 show that universities are not doing much to assist students with career planning and job search information.

Fig 4.26 Kind of help did you receive from the University

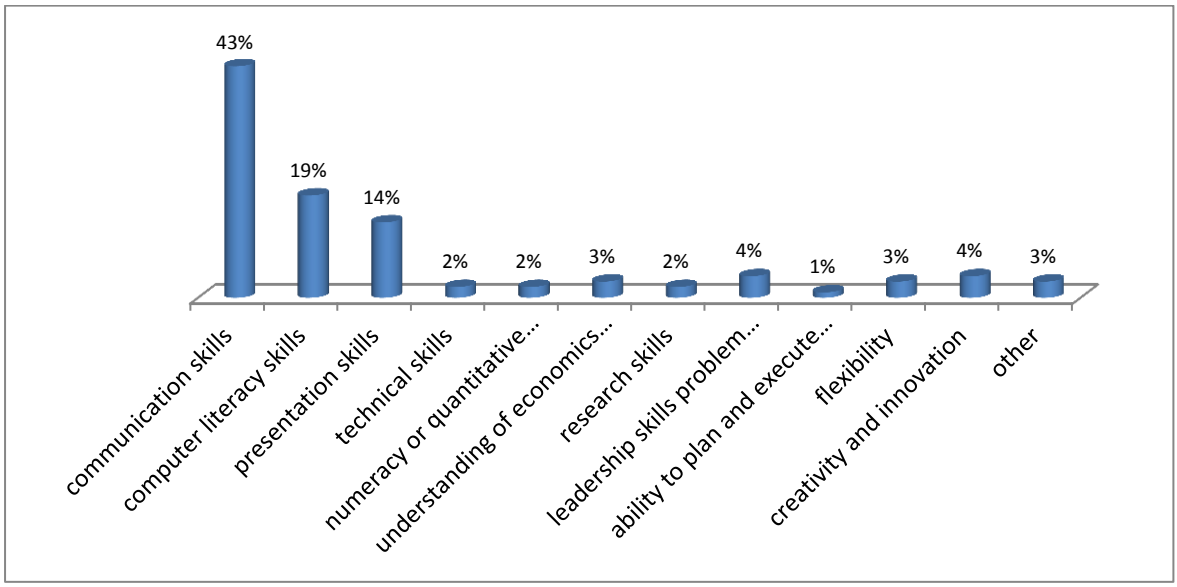


The empirical evidence in fig 4.26 indicates that some universities are giving their students help on career guidance. For those universities that do give help, 26% of the respondents reported that their universities assist with training sessions on job search, followed 24% respondents who said career counselling and 14% respondents who mentioned face to face meeting with employer.

SECTION E: SKILLS ISSUES

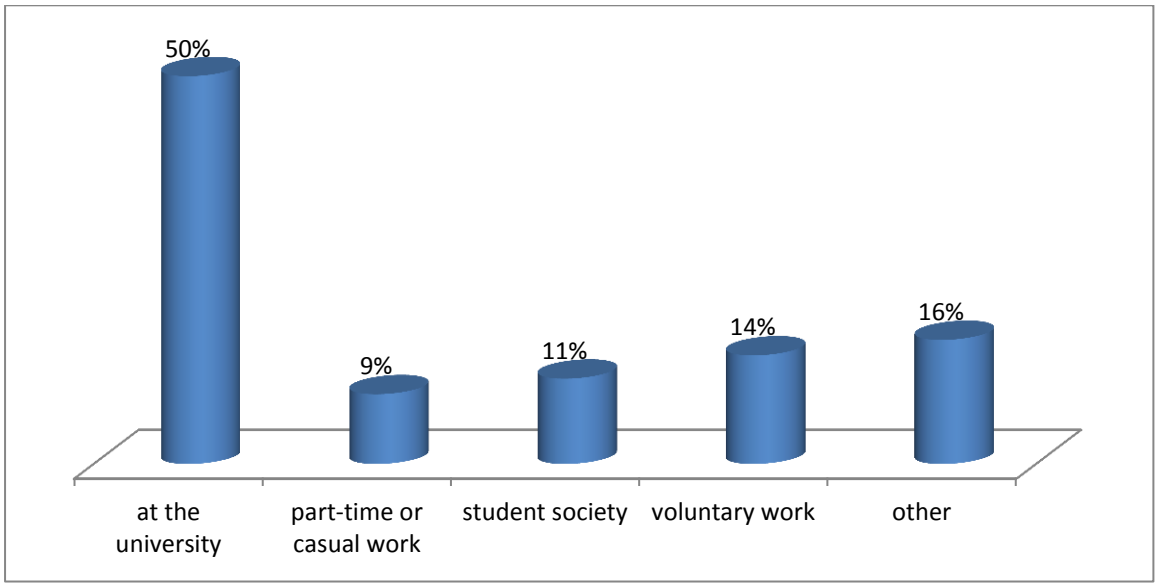
This section examines the respondents' skills issues, such as skills gained during the period of study and how respondents acquired their skills. This section is very important in understanding graduate unemployment because misalignment of skills to job requirements has been cited as one of the reasons for high graduate unemployment.

Fig 4.27 What do you feel you have to offer potential employers in terms of skills gained during your period of study



Studies (Pauw et al. 2006; DPRU, 2006) have shown that many graduates, especially those from HBUs, lack soft skills such as communication and writing skills and therefore they are not workplace ready when they are recruited by firms. The empirical data from Figure 4.27 shows that some of the respondents have some skills to offer potential employers as the majority of them said they have communication skills (43%), followed by 19% with computer literacy skills and 14% with presentation skills.

Fig 4.28 How did you acquire these skills?

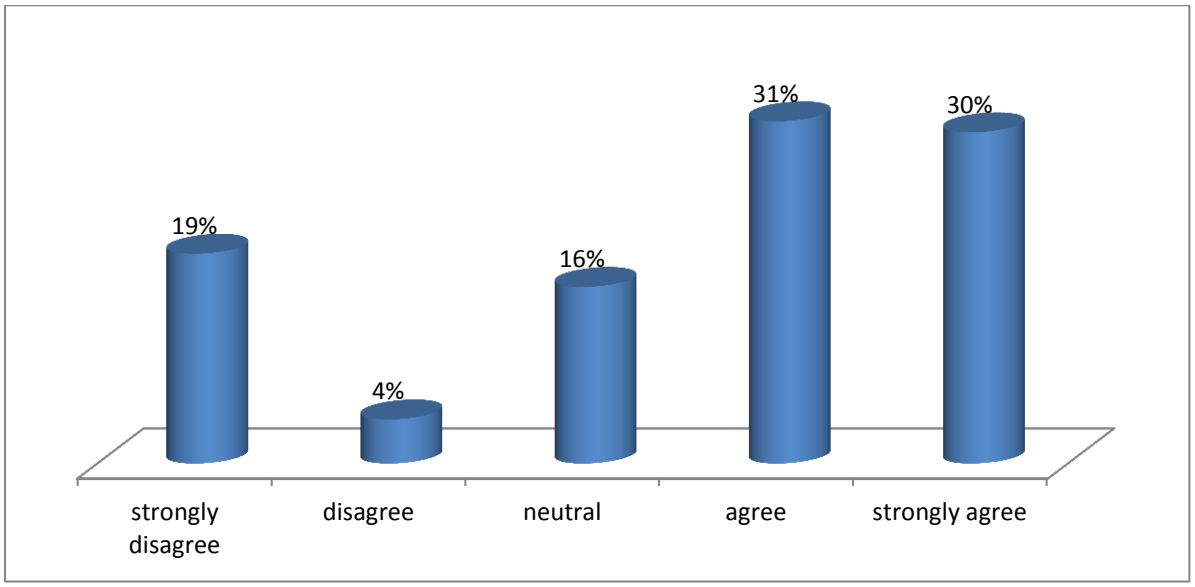


It is quite evident from Figure 4.28 above that most of the respondents (50%) acquired the skills from their institution. Only 14% acquired their skills while doing voluntary work, followed by 11% who did at their student society and 9% while doing part-time of casual work. It is encouraging to some extent that the universities are doing something about student skills development.

SECTION F: CORE SELF-EVALUATIONS

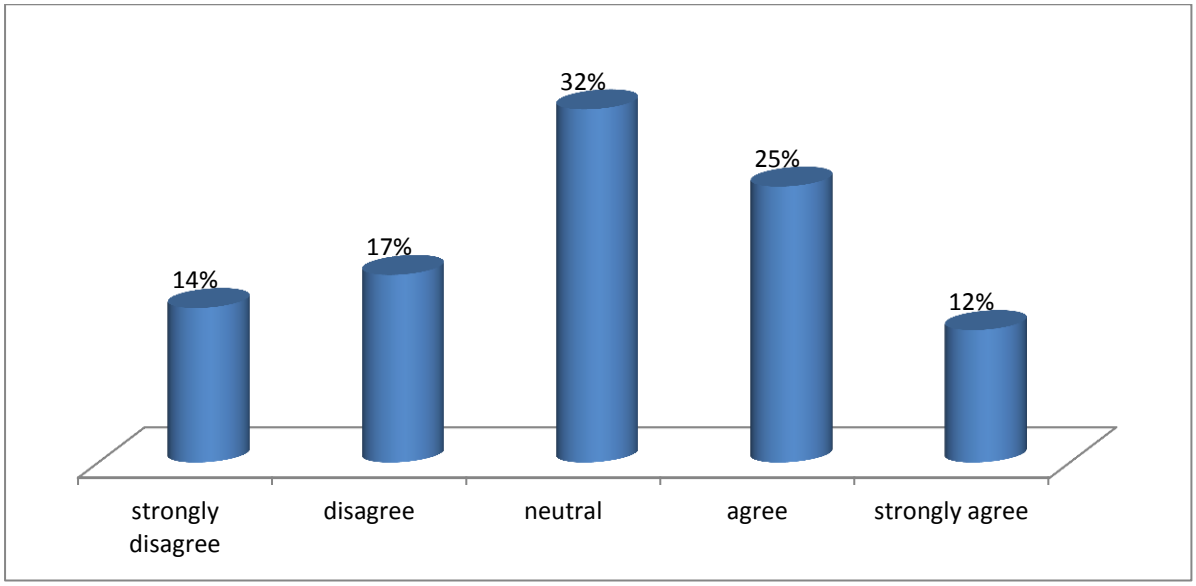
This section looks at the core self-evaluations as mediating factors. Core self-evaluation is defined as 'fundamental premises that individual hold about themselves and their functioning in the world' (Judge, Erez& Bono, 1998, p.161). A core self-evaluation construct consist of four traits which include self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, emotional stability, and locus of control (Judge et al., 1997). Parnes and King (1977), and Tiffany et al. (1970) report that unemployment reduces an individual's core self-evaluation. This includes perception of the internal locus of control, as well as self-esteem, self-efficacy, and emotional stability (Darity &Goldsmith, 1993). Thus, the respondents were asked questions relating to these four traits of core self-evaluation.

Fig 4.29 I am confident and I get the success I deserve



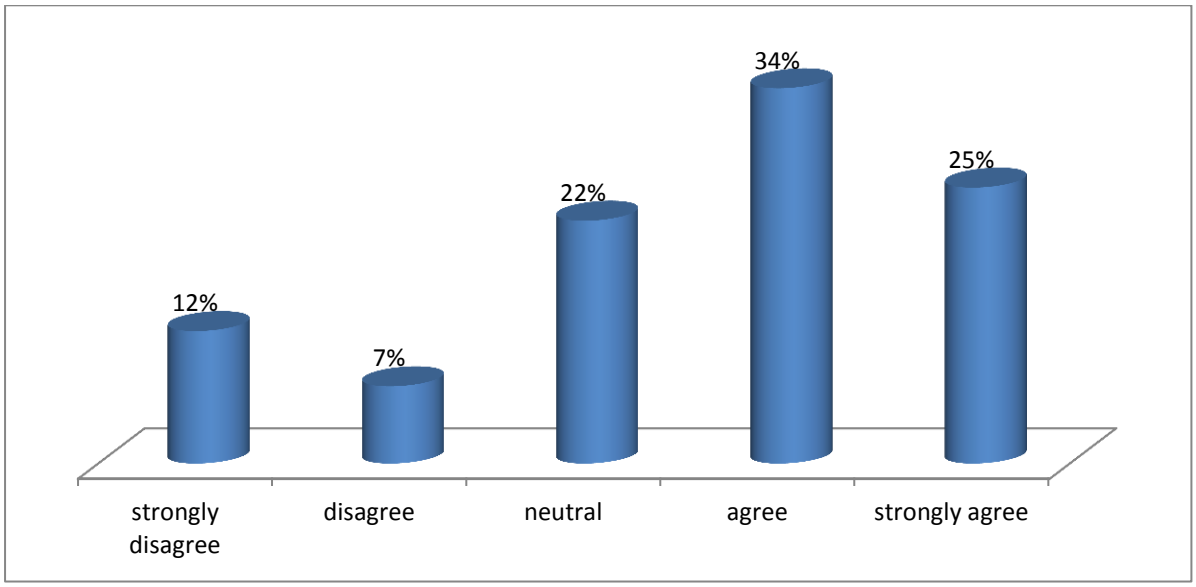
When asked whether they are confident and they get the success they deserve, about 61% agreed while about 20% disagreed with the statement. Only 16% were neutral.

Fig 4.30 Sometimes I feel depressed



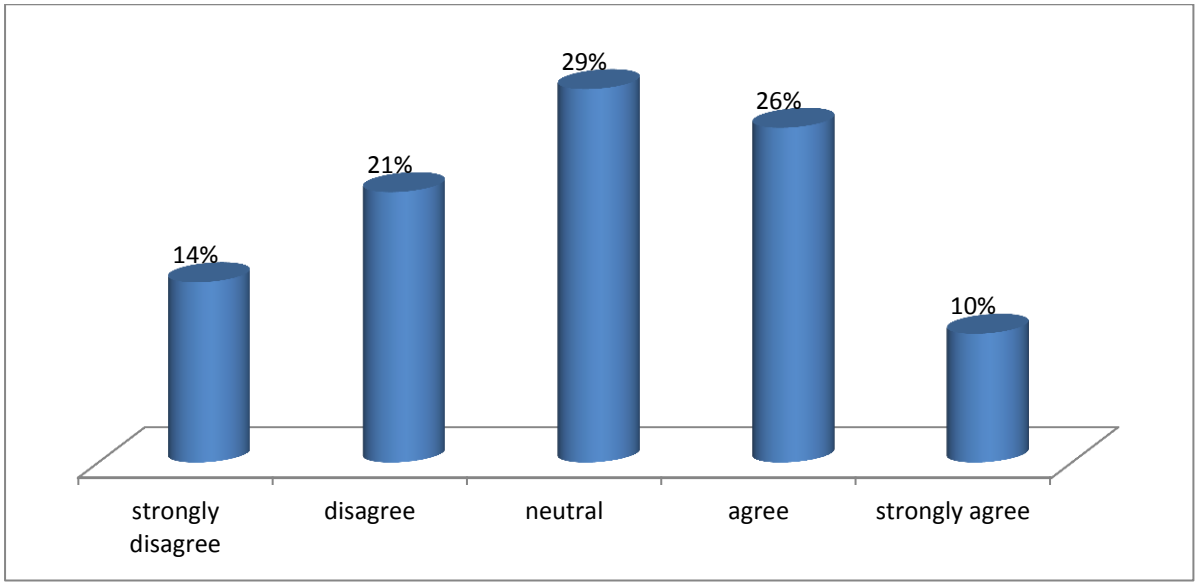
When asked whether they feel depressed, 32% were neutral about the statement, while about 37% of the respondents felt depressed, while 31% disagreed with the statement.

Fig 4.31 When I try, I generally succeed



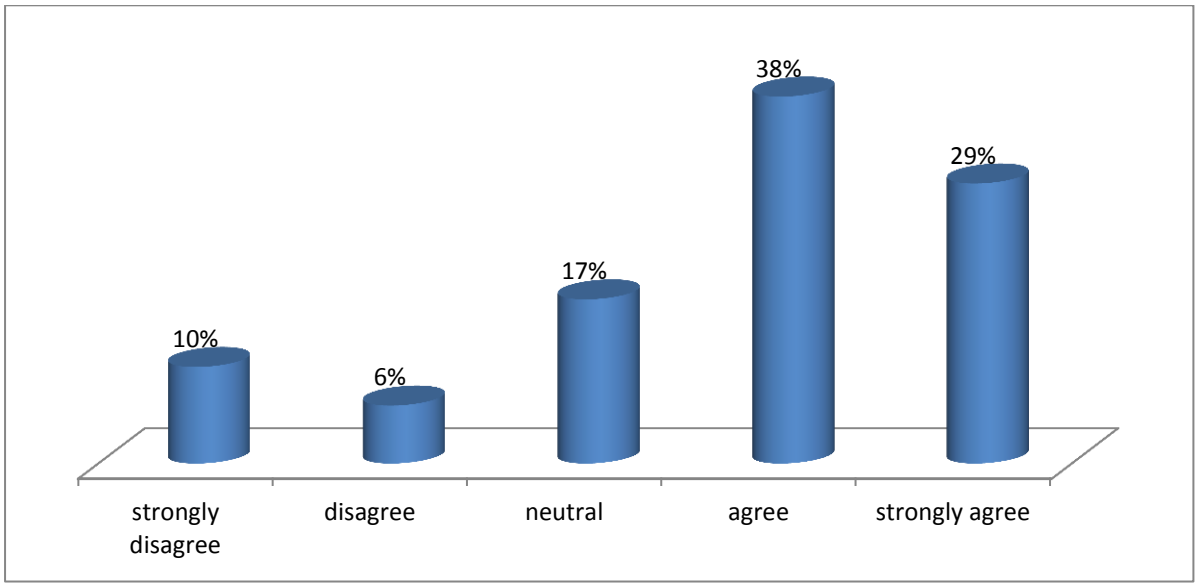
Most (59%) of the respondents agreed that when they try, they generally succeed, while 22% are neutral. Only 19% disagreed with the statement.

Fig 4.32 Sometimes when I fail, I feel worthless



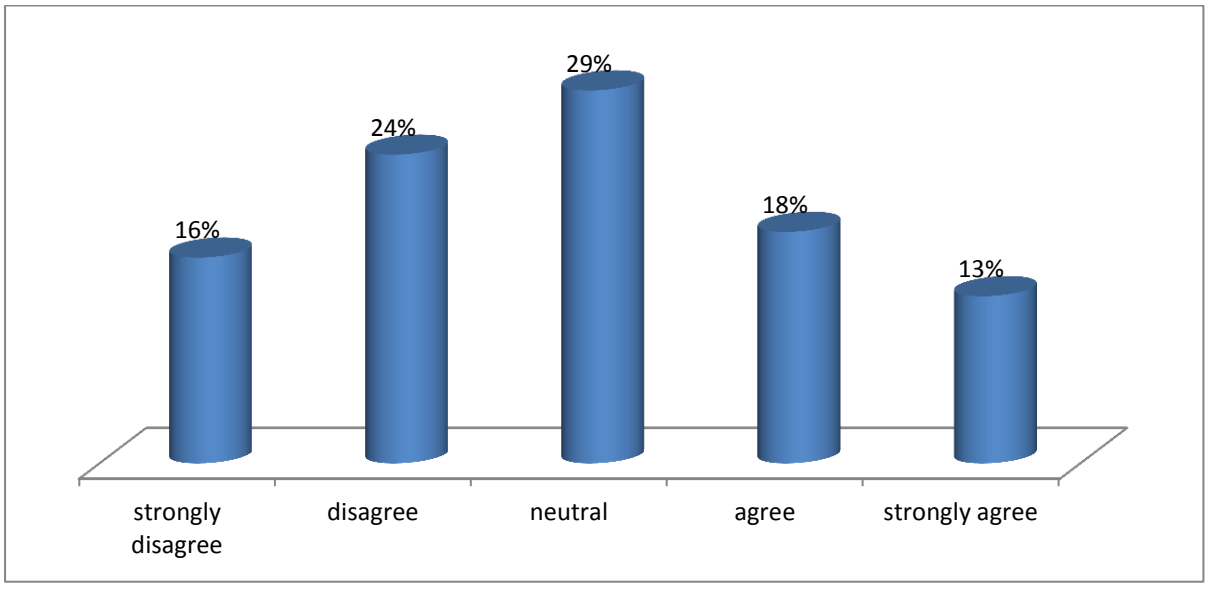
About 36% of the respondents said they feel worthless when they sometimes fail, while 35% disagreed with the statement. Only 29% were neutral. This shows that generally the respondents do not take failing lightly.

Fig 4.33 I complete tasks successfully



About 67% are confident that they complete their tasks successfully, while16% disagreed with the statement and 17% were neutral. This means the majority of the respondents would be able to complete work assigned by employers successfully.

Fig 4.34 Sometimes I do not feel in control of my work



About 40% of the respondents have the core self-evaluation of locus of control and 31% do not have. This is the belief in one's capacity to positively affect the environment and to produce desired results. This may relate to an internal or external environment. An internal locus of control involves the beliefs that one's environment and outcomes are controllable,

whereas an external locus of control may be applied in overcoming feelings of futility and helplessness (Johnson, et al 2008 p. 393).

Fig 4.35 Overall I am satisfied with myself

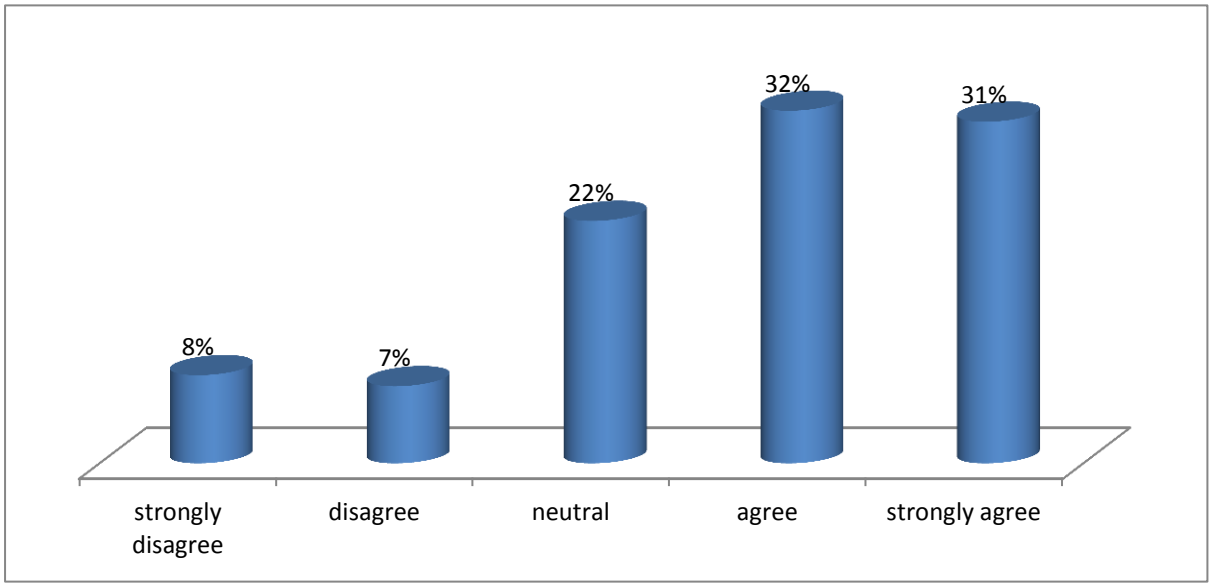
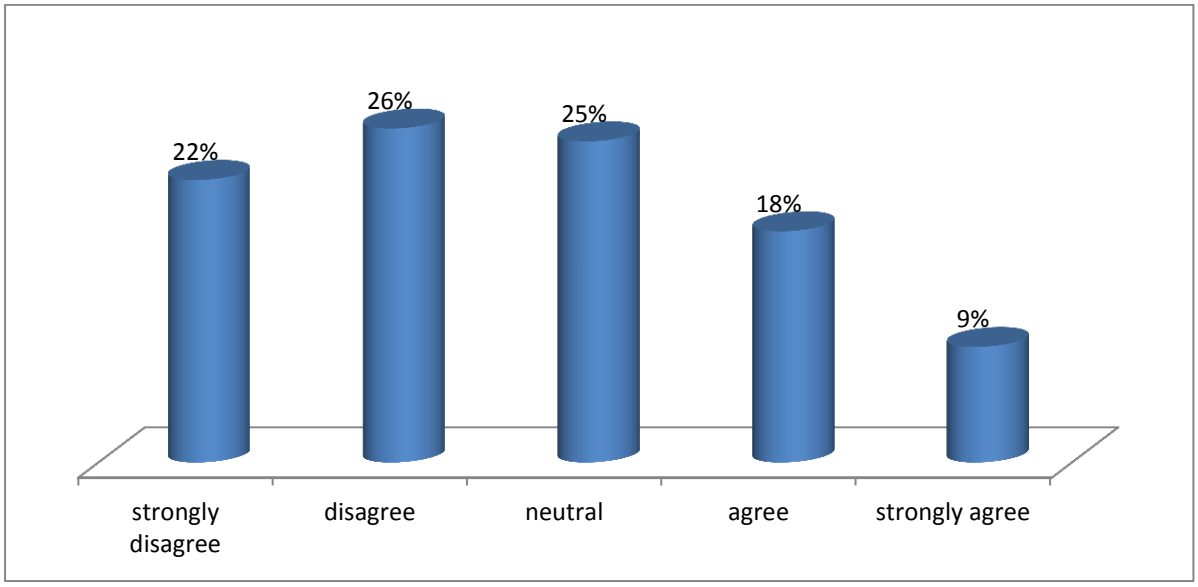


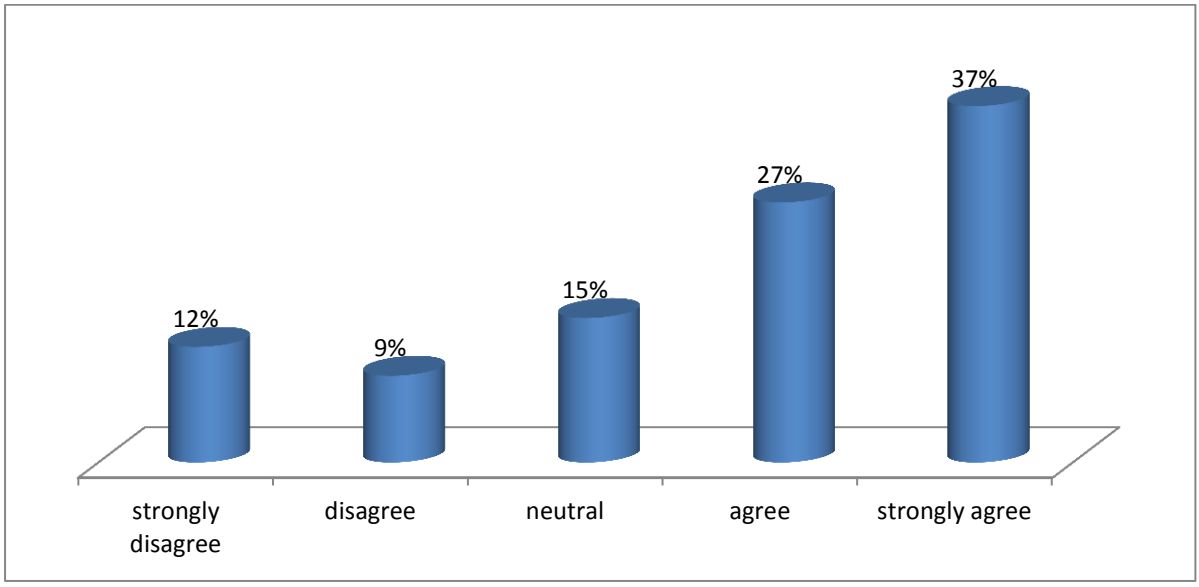
Fig 4.35 displays the overall satisfaction of the respondents with the core self-evaluation. Overall, 63% of the respondents are satisfied with themselves in terms of their skills issues, job application process, applications and job search information and employability. A paltry 15% were dissatisfied with their performance.

Fig 4.36 I am filled with doubts about my competence



Quite a significant percentage of the respondents (48%) are confident about their competence and about 27% have doubts about their competence.

Fig 4.37 I determine what will happen in my life



The respondents were also asked if they determine what will happen in their lives. About 64% said that they determine what happens in their lives, indicating strong locus of control. People with strong locus of control believe that they have the capacity to positively affect their environment and to produce desired result; therefore they are able to determine what happens in their lives. This may relate to an internal or external environment. An internal locus of control involves the beliefs that one's environment and outcomes are controllable, whereas an external locus of control may be applied in overcoming feelings of futility and helplessness (Johnson, et al 2008 p. 393). People believe that they can overcome any setbacks.

4.4 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTIC

Descriptive statistics enable the researcher to summarise and organise data in an effective and meaningful way (Ghauri &Gronhaug, 2010). According to Babi, Carr, Friffen and Zikmund (2010) calculating the averages, the frequency and the percentage distributions of the collected data are the most methods of summarising the data

Table 4.2: Frequency table for gender

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	120	49.8	50.6	50.6
	female	117	48.5	49.4	100.0
	Total	237	98.3	100.0	
Missing	System	4	1.7		
Total		241	100.0		

From the above table, it can be seen that male participant accounted for 50.6% of the respondents, while female participants accounted for 49.4% of the respondents.

Table 4.3: Frequency table for marital status

marital status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	single	138	57.3	58.2	58.2
	partner	38	15.8	16.0	74.3
	married	26	10.8	11.0	85.2
	divorced	24	10.0	10.1	95.4
	widowed	8	3.3	3.4	98.7
	separated	3	1.2	1.3	100.0
	Total	237	98.3	100.0	
Missing	System	4	1.7		
Total		241	100.0		

From the above most of the participants are singles which accounts for about 58.2% of the participants and the frequency amounts to 138.this shows that most of the unemployed or employed graduates are still very single.

Table 4.4: frequency table for Age

Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	17	1	.4	.4	.4
	18	2	.8	.9	1.3
	19	31	12.9	13.2	14.5
	20	35	14.5	15.0	29.5
	21	30	12.4	12.8	42.3
	22	14	5.8	6.0	48.3

	23	9	3.7	3.8	52.1
	24	17	7.1	7.3	59.4
	25	16	6.6	6.8	66.2
	26	8	3.3	3.4	69.7
	27	7	2.9	3.0	72.6
	28	4	1.7	1.7	74.4
	29	11	4.6	4.7	79.1
	30	8	3.3	3.4	82.5
	31	4	1.7	1.7	84.2
	32	5	2.1	2.1	86.3
	33	1	.4	.4	86.8
	34	1	.4	.4	87.2
	35	8	3.3	3.4	90.6
	36	2	.8	.9	91.5
	38	2	.8	.9	92.3
	39	1	.4	.4	92.7
	40	5	2.1	2.1	94.9
	41	1	.4	.4	95.3
	42	2	.8	.9	96.2
	43	1	.4	.4	96.6
	44	2	.8	.9	97.4
	45	2	.8	.9	98.3
	51	1	.4	.4	98.7
	54	1	.4	.4	99.1
	56	1	.4	.4	99.6
	65	1	.4	.4	100.0
	Total	234	97.1	100.0	
Missing	System	7	2.9		
Total		241	100.0		

From the above table, it can be seen that the dominant age group is between 19 to 21, where the percentage for ages 19 is 13.2% and the frequency is 31, and the ages 20 accounts for 15% and the frequency is 35 and the ages 21 accounts for 12.8% and the frequency is 30.

From the analysis of the above, it can be noted that most of the graduates who are either employed or unemployed are young people between the ages of 19 and 29.

4.5 HYPOTHESES

Several hypotheses were tested to determine relationships between contextual factors, employability factors, core self-evaluation and graduate unemployment.

Hypothesis 1

Alternate hypothesis H1**:**

There is a significant association between the contextual factors of unemployment and graduate unemployment.

Null hypothesis $H1_0$**:**

There is no significant association between contextual factors of unemployment and graduate unemployment.

Logistic regression was used to test this hypothesis because the dependent variable, that is, graduate unemployment has two categorical outcomes. Direct logistic regression was performed to assess the impact of contextual factors on the likelihood that respondents would be unemployed. The model contained 33 independent variables. The full model containing all predictors was statistically significant, chi-square (38, N = 102) = 57.274, P = 0.023 < 0.05, indicating that the model was able to distinguish between respondents' employment status based on contextual factors. The model as a whole explained between 43% (Cox and Snell R square) and 36.3% (Nagelkerke R squared) of the variance in employment status, and correctly classified 84.3% of cases. As shown in Table 4.2, only six of the independent variables made a unique statistically significant contribution to the model (monthly salary expectation, accessibility to desktop computer, the recruitment stage were the respondent was successful in after application, no idea of career opportunities before graduation, well aware of career opportunities before graduation, reasonably aware of career opportunities after graduation). The strongest predictor of reporting graduate unemployment was the stage of recruitment the respondent was successful in after application. This indicates that the stage of recruitment the respondent was successful as it determines his or her employment status, controlling for all other factors in the model.

Table 4.5 Logistic Regression Predicting likelihood of Unemployed Graduate from Contextual factors

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Odds Ratio Exp(B)	95% C.I.for EXP(B)	
								Lower	Upper
Step 1a	c19	1.411	.931	2.297	1	.130	4.102	.661	25.447
	c21	-.056	.208	.072	1	.788	.946	.629	1.421
	c22	-.814	.275	8.787	1	.003	.443	.259	.759

c23	.188	.264	.507	1	.476	1.207	.719	2.027
c24.1	-2.578	1.030	6.263	1	.012	.076	.010	.572
c24.2	-.541	.966	.314	1	.575	.582	.088	3.867
c24.3	.578	.961	.361	1	.548	1.782	.271	11.720
c24.4	.446	1.180	.143	1	.705	1.563	.155	15.771
c24.5	.689	.804	.735	1	.391	1.992	.412	9.624
c24.6	-.219	.739	.088	1	.767	.803	.189	3.416
d25	-.728	.269	7.349	1	.007	.483	.285	.817
d26	.773	.851	.826	1	.363	2.167	.409	11.479
d27.1.1	.022	1.072	.000	1	.983	1.022	.125	8.355
d27.1.2	1.991	1.441	1.909	1	.167	7.325	.435	123.479
d27.1.3	-2.573	1.364	3.560	1	.059	.076	.005	1.105
d27.1.4	-2.570	1.223	4.415	1	.036	.077	.007	.841
d27.1.5	-2.934	1.316	4.969	1	.026	.053	.004	.702
d27.2.1	-.514	1.586	.105	1	.746	.598	.027	13.390
d27.2.2	-.986	1.679	.345	1	.557	.373	.014	10.029
d27.2.3	2.213	1.343	2.717	1	.099	9.142	.658	127.009
d27.2.4	-3.620	1.821	3.954	1	.047	.027	.001	.950
d27.2.5	-1.941	1.386	1.961	1	.161	.144	.009	2.173
d28.1.1	1.350	1.207	1.251	1	.263	3.857	.362	41.071
d28.1.2	-1.087	1.389	.612	1	.434	.337	.022	5.130
d28.1.3	.507	.940	.291	1	.590	1.660	.263	10.473
d28.1.4	2.543	1.340	3.601	1	.058	12.720	.920	175.909
d28.1.5	-1.190	1.478	.649	1	.421	.304	.017	5.507
d28.2.1	.560	1.120	.250	1	.617	1.751	.195	15.716
d28.2.2	-.969	1.235	.616	1	.433	.379	.034	4.266
d28.2.3	1.439	1.203	1.431	1	.232	4.217	.399	44.566
d28.2.4	-.222	1.160	.037	1	.848	.801	.082	7.779
d28.2.5	1.931	1.077	3.214	1	.073	6.893	.835	56.879
d29.1	-.010	1.109	.000	1	.993	.990	.113	8.711
d29.2	1.062	1.243	.730	1	.393	2.892	.253	33.036
d29.3	-1.139	1.225	.863	1	.353	.320	.029	3.537
d29.4	-.320	1.593	.040	1	.841	.726	.032	16.493
d29.5	-.753	1.327	.322	1	.570	.471	.035	6.349
e30	.102	.117	.758	1	.384	1.108	.880	1.394
Constant	20.584	11.346	3.291	1	.070	869944484.886		

Therefore we reject $H1_0$ and conclude that there is a significant association between the contextual factors of unemployment and graduate unemployment at the 5% significance level. The contextual factors include skills mismatch, employer expectations, quality of graduate, employer perception, unrealistic expectations of graduates, job search and attitude

and work experience. The significant contextual factors are monthly salary expectation, accessibility to technology (desktop computer), recruitment stage where respondent is successful, extent of awareness of career opportunities and amount of help received from university in career planning and job search. The empirical evidence supports the literature, as according to Moleke (2005) and Naong (2011), whilst labour demand is usually low for students with qualifications in the humanities and social sciences, enrolment in these fields of study remains high (misalignment of skills).

Hypothesis 2

Alternate hypothesis H2**:**

There is a significant association between employability factors and graduate unemployment.

Null hypothesis $H2_0$**:**

There is no significant association between employability factors and graduate unemployment.

The logistic regression was used to test this hypothesis because the dependent variable, that is, graduate unemployment has two categorical outcomes. Direct logistic regression was performed to assess the impact of employment factors on the likelihood that respondents would be unemployed. The model contained 8 independent variables. The full model containing all predictors was statistically significant, chi-square (8, N = 126) = 18.329, P = 0.019< 0.05, indicating that the model was able to distinguish between respondents' employment status based on employability factors. The model as a whole explained between 13.5% (Cox and Snell R square) and 21.2% (Nagelkerke R squared) of the variance in employment status, and correctly classified 79.4% of cases. As shown in Table 4.2, only one of the independent variables made a unique statistically significant contribution to the model (the length of time the respondent has been employed). The strongest predictor of reporting graduate unemployment was the length of time the respondent has been employed. This indicates that the length of time the respondent has been employed does not determine his or her employment status, controlling for all other factors in the model.

Table 4.6 Logistic Regression Predicting likelihood of Unemployed Graduate from Employment factors

Variables in the Equation

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Odds Ratio Exp(B)	95% C.I.for EXP(B)	
							Lower	Upper
a7	-.164	.217	.572	1	.449	.848	.554	1.299
a8	.214	.303	.499	1	.480	1.239	.684	2.246
a9	.604	.233	6.741	1	.009	1.830	1.160	2.887
a12	-.202	.505	.160	1	.690	.817	.304	2.199
b13	-.065	.163	.159	1	.690	.937	.680	1.291
b15	.049	.083	.359	1	.549	1.051	.894	1.235
b16	-.464	.297	2.438	1	.118	.628	.351	1.126
b17	.301	.244	1.522	1	.217	1.351	.838	2.179
Constant	.023	1.602	.000	1	.989	1.023		

Therefore we reject $H1_0$ and conclude that there is a significant association between the employability factors and graduate unemployment. Employability factors include the race of the respondent, the type of unemployment experienced, length of unemployment period, the area the respondent grew up in, the respondent's highest qualification, the degree or discipline studied whether the qualification was done on full-time or part-time basis and when the respondent graduated, but the main significant factor is the length of unemployment period. The results of the hypothesis test support the evidence gathered through literature review, where all these factors influence the employment status of individuals in South Africa. As highlighted in a DPRU working paper of 2006 (DPRU, 2006:16), on average, a higher proportion of white graduates found a job immediately they graduate unlike other racial groups.

Hypothesis 3

Alternate hypothesis H3**:**

There is a significant association between the contextual factors of unemployment and core self-evaluation.

Null hypothesis $H3_0$**:**

There is no significant association between the contextual factors of unemployment and core self-evaluation.

The logistic regression was used to test this hypothesis because the dependent variable, that is, core-self-evaluation has two categorical outcomes (satisfied or dissatisfied).Direct logistic regression was performed to assess the impact of contextual factors on the likelihood that respondents would be satisfied with themselves. The model contained 7 independent variables. The full model containing all predictors was statistically significant, chi-square (7, N = 102) = 13.951, P = 0.022 < 0.05, indicating that the model was able to distinguish between respondents' satisfaction level based on contextual factors. The model as a whole explains between 12.8% (Cox and Snell R square) and 20.7% (Nagelkerke R squared) of the variance in satisfaction level, and correctly classified 79.4% of cases. As shown in Table 4.4 below, only 2 of the independent variables made a unique statistically significant contribution to the model (When graduate started looking for future employment and whether the graduate received any feedback from the employer as to why he or she was not successful in the other stages or final stage). The strongest predictor of reporting graduate satisfaction was the period the graduate started looking for future employment. This indicates that the time period the graduate started looking for future employment determines his or her satisfaction level with himself or herself, controlling for all other factors in the model.

Table 4.7 Logistic Regression Predicting likelihood of satisfied graduate from Contextual factors

Variables in the Equation

								95% C.I.for EXP(B)	
		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	Lower	Upper
Step 1a	b13	-.010	.131	.006	1	.936	.990	.765	1.280
	b16	.281	.304	.854	1	.355	1.325	.730	2.406
	c19(1)	-1.457	.634	5.273	1	.022	.233	.067	.808
	c20	-.031	.063	.237	1	.626	.970	.857	1.098
	c21	-.382	.230	2.752	1	.097	.682	.434	1.072
	d25	-.252	.150	2.814	1	.033	.777	.579	1.043
	d26(1)	.941	.699	1.812	1	.178	2.562	.651	10.083
	Constant	.266	.829	.103	1	.748	1.305		

Therefore we reject $H3_0$ and conclude that there is a significant association between the contextual factors of unemployment and core self-evaluation. The contextual factors include skills mismatch, employer expectations, quality of graduate, employer perception, unrealistic expectations of graduates, job search and attitude and work experience. The significant contextual factors are the time when the respondent started looking for future employment and the recruitment stage in which the respondent was successful in after application.

Hypothesis 4

Alternate hypothesis H4**:**

There is a significant association between employability factors and core self-evaluation.

Null hypothesis $H4_0$**:**

There is no significant association between employability factors and core self-evaluation.

The logistic regression was used to test this hypothesis because the dependent variable, that is, core self-evaluation has two categorical outcomes. Direct logistic regression was performed to assess the impact of employability factors on the likelihood that respondents would be satisfied. The model contained 8 independent variables. The full model containing all predictors was statistically not significant, chi-square (8, N = 91) = 1.814, P = 0.986 > 0.05, indicating that the model was not able to distinguish between respondents' satisfaction level based on employability factors.

The results of the hypothesis test shows that there is no relationship between employability factors and core self-evaluation. Core self-evaluation is defined as 'fundamental premises that individual hold about themselves and their functioning in the world' (Judge, Erez&, Bono, 1998:161). According to Judge et al. (1997), a core self-evaluation construct consist of four traits which include self-esteem, generalized self- efficacy, emotional stability, and locus of control. According to Weligamage (2009: 3), employability is defined as "a set of achievements which could be in the form of skills, understanding and personal attributes that make graduates more likely to gain employment and become successful in their occupation". The above two definitions seem to suggest that there is a relationship between employability factors and core self-evaluation although this relationship is not confirmed by empirical evidence.

Hypothesis 5

Alternate hypothesis H5**:**

There is a significant association between core self-evaluation traits and graduate unemployment.

Null hypothesis $H5_0$**:**

There is no significant association between core self-evaluation traits and graduate unemployment.

The logistic regression was used to test this hypothesis because the dependent variable, that is, graduate unemployment has two categorical outcomes. Direct logistic regression was performed to assess the impact of core self-evaluation on the likelihood that respondents would be employed. The model contained 9 independent variables. The full model containing all predictors was statistically significant, chi-square (10, N = 150) = 9.177, P = 0.515 < 0.05, indicating that the model was not able to distinguish between respondents' employment status based on core self-evaluation factors.

The results of the hypothesis test shows that there is no relationship between graduate unemployment and core self-evaluation. The empirical evidence gathered in this research shows that core self-evaluation such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, emotional stability and internal locus of control do not affect the employment status of a graduate.

Hypothesis 6

Alternate hypothesis H6**:**

Gender significantly moderates the relationship between core self-evaluation traits and graduate unemployment.

Null hypothesis $H6_0$**:**

There is no significant moderation between core self-evaluation traits and graduate unemployment.

The dependent variable is dichotomous (Graduate unemployment); therefore it is not possible to test for moderation, since both the dependent and independent variables must be continuous.

Hypothesis 7

Alternate hypothesis H7**:**

Core self- evaluation significantly mediates the relationship between contextual factors and graduate unemployment.

Null hypothesis $H7_0$**:**

Core self- evaluation does not significantly mediate the relationship between contextual factors and graduate unemployment.

In order to test for mediation the following assumptions were tested:

Descriptive statistics on predictor (X) variables were run and none of the predictor variables had limited cases. The predicators have low inter-correlation (multi-collinearity). The data had no outliers. The assumptions for mediation were all satisfied.

X = Contextual factors, Y = Graduate unemployment and M = Core self-evaluation

Testing for Mediation

Baron and Kenny (1986) proposed a four step approach in which several regression analyses are conducted and significance of the coefficients is examined at each step.

Step 1: A regression analyses was conducted with contextual factors (X) predicting graduate unemployment (Y). The full model containing all predictors was statistically significant, chi-square (38, N = 102) = 57.274, P = 0.023 < 0.05, indicating that the model was able to distinguish between respondents' employment status based on contextual factors.

Step 2: A regression analyses was conducted with contextual factors (X) predicting core self-evaluation (M). The full model containing all predictors was statistically significant, chi-square (7, N = 102) = 13.951, P = 0.022 < 0.05, indicating that the model was able to distinguish between respondents' satisfaction level based on contextual factors.

Step 3: A regression analyses was conducted with core self-evaluation (M) predicting graduate unemployment (Y). The full model containing all predictors was statistically not significant, chi-square (10, N = 150) = 9.177, P = 0.515 > 0.05, indicating that the model was not able to distinguish between respondents' employment status based on core self-evaluation factors.

Since there is no statistically significant relationship between graduate unemployment and core self-evaluation in step 3, we can conclude that mediation is not possible or is unlikely under these circumstances. In other words, core self-evaluation is not found to mediate the relationship between contextual factors and graduate unemployment.

Hypothesis 8

Alternate hypothesis H8**:**

Core self- evaluation significantly mediates the relationship between employability factors and graduate unemployment.

Null hypothesis $H8_0$**:**

Core self- evaluation does not significantly mediate the relationship between employability factors and graduate unemployment.

In order to test for mediation the following assumptions were tested:

Descriptive statistics on predictor (X) variables were run and none of the predictor variables had limited cases. The predicators have low intercorrelation (multicollinearity). The data had no outliers. The assumptions for mediation were all satisfied.

X = Employability factors, Y = Graduate unemployment and M = Core self-evaluation

Testing for Mediation

Baron and Kenny (1986) proposed a four step approach in which several regression analyses are conducted and significance of the coefficients is examined at each step.

Step 1: A regression analyses was conducted with employability factors (X) predicting graduate unemployment (Y). The full model containing all predictors was statistically significant, chi-square (8, N = 126) = 18.329, P = 0.019< 0.05, indicating that the model was able to distinguish between respondents' employment status based on employability factors.

Step 2: A regression analyses was conducted with employability factors (X) predicting core self-evaluation (M). The full model containing all predictors was statistically not significant, chi-square (8, N = 91) = 1.814, P = 0.986 > 0.05, indicating that the model was not able to distinguish between respondents' satisfaction level based on employment factors.

Since there is no statistically significant relationship between employability factors and core self-evaluation in step 2, we can conclude that mediation is not possible or is unlikely under these circumstances. In other words, core self-evaluation is not found to mediate the relationship between employability factors and graduate unemployment.

4.6 CONCLUSION

The primary objective of the study was to examine important factors that determine the high unemployment rate of graduates in Gauteng province, South Africa. In particular the study undertook to analyse a number of factors that influence graduate unemployment such as employability factors, contextual factors and core - self-evaluation.

The data from the survey shows only 241 respondents participated in the study. About 51% of the respondents are males while 65% are between ages of 20 and 30 years, which is line with previous studies that show younger people (15 -34 years) do account for the majority entering the labour force (DPRU, 2006; Yu, 2013). The data also shows that almost half of the respondents (45%) have some college or technical qualification. However, 65% of the respondents were unemployed at the time of their interview, thereby concurring with previous studies, which show that the unemployment rate is high among graduates (DBSA, 2011; DPRU, 2006; Yu, 2013). In addition, the study shows that more than half of the respondents are black (58%); thereby confirming the findings from the study conducted by Beg &Broekhuizen (2012) which shows that the higher education has changed as more blacks are enrolled into HEIs in recent years.

With regard to the highest level of education attained by the respondents, more than 50% have undergraduate degrees, while only 14% have two or higher degrees. However, the majority (36%) took a qualification in commerce, which is subjected to a higher rate of unemployment (Berg &Broekhuizen, 2012; Yu, 2013).

The data also shows that many of the respondents participated in many activities while at school, such as involvement in part-time or casual work (50%), vacation job or internship (34%) and voluntary work (52%) for at least year. The findings also show that most of the respondents have skills to offer potential employers, such as communication skills (43%), computer skills (19%) and presentation skills (14%). Half of the respondents (50%) indicated that the skills were acquired at their institution during their involvement in activities such as doing part-time work or joining a student society. This is commendable as involvement in

such activities enable students to develop soft skills such as communication and writing skills (Pauw et al., 2006), which are required by potential employers.

The findings from the study also show that most of the respondents have some job expectations before joining an organization such as acquiring more skills through training and development (49%) and getting the opportunities for further studies (15%). In addition, most of the respondents want to receive a starting salary of above R10 000 per month (51%). These findings therefore support the notion that graduates have high expectations which ignore labour-market realities as they assume that their qualifications alone will open doors to significantly high salaries and managerial positions (Luan, 2013).

With regard to testing the relationship between contextual factors, employability factors, core self-evaluation and graduate unemployment, the results from the analysis show that there is a significant relationship between contextual factors and graduate unemployment, employability factors and graduate unemployment and also between contextual factors and core self-evaluation. Therefore, H1, H2, and H3 were accepted, H4 and H5 were rejected. In other words, there is no significant relationship between employability factors and core self-evaluation (H4); thus, core self-evaluation cannot mediate the relationship between employability factors and core-self-evaluation. In addition, there is no statistically significant relationship between core self-evaluation traits and graduate unemployment (H5), hence, there is no mediation in the relationship between core-self-evaluation factors and graduate unemployment. The study, therefore, shows that core self-evaluation such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, emotional stability and internal locus of control do not affect the employment status of a graduate. Hence, the study does not confirm the relationship between employability factors and core self-evaluation, as suggested in the literature (Judge, 1997; Weligamage, 2009).

The next chapter will focus on the conclusions and implications of the study as well as recommendations to the Gauteng province.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Chapter five presents the findings of this research project in a summarised format with a full reflection of the contextual research problem, objectives of the study and research questions that were highlighted in chapter one. The findings are summarised in conjunction with literature reviewed in chapter two. In light of the findings, this chapter shall discuss implications of the findings, conclude on the findings and suggest a way forward through detailed recommendations.

5.2 Summary of findings

The research survey revealed that a significant number of recent graduates who were part of the respondents only considered hunting for a job after they had graduated from their universities. The delayed job application process was mainly conducted via the electronic system which includes browsing through adverts on the internet and dispatching of applications using emails or online recruitment agencies. Furthermore, the majority of graduates, despite lack of experience, were expecting to earn a higher salary in excess of R120 000 per annum. These findings were consistent with Luan (2013), who posits that graduates assume that their qualifications alone will suffice to open doors to significantly high salaries and managerial positions. Many firms indicated that graduate expectations are unjustified as graduates do not have sufficient experience to show that they have what it takes to increase productivity (Pauw, et al 2006). Despite the desire to acquire employment, a greater proportion of the respondents exhibited some reluctance in applying for or looking for gainful employment and in cases where one is invited for an interview, only a few of the graduates would make it to the final deciding round of the interview.

The respondents further highlighted that they failed to receive adequate information during their years of study at the university on career opportunities that are available in the labour market. The lack of information is not only limited to availability of career opportunities but also career planning and modalities required when one is hunting for a job. In terms of acquired and possessed work skills, students felt they had an upper hand in communication skills followed by computer skills, despite the fact that 36% (more than triple other fields) of the respondents had a qualification in commerce that would give them quantitative, project management or research skills.

Judge et al. (1997) posits that a core self-evaluation construct consist of four traits which include self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, emotional stability, and locus of control.

Despite the fact that more than sixty-five percentage of the respondents were unemployed, this research project established that most respondents had a positive perspective and were optimistic about being successful and believed that they are always successful on what they venture on despite huge threats of potential negative energy. This is in contrary to the status quo, Parnes and King (1977) and Tiffany et al. (1970) report that unemployment reduces an individual's core self-evaluation.

An internal locus of control involves the beliefs that one's environment and outcomes are controllable, whereas an external locus of control may be applied in overcoming feelings of futility and helplessness (Johnson, et al 2008 p. 393). Internal locus of control was evident in the bigger proportion of the responds and was content with the skills they had, the applications for employment they make and their levels of competence.

The empirical evidence supports the literature, according to Moleke (2005) and Naong (2011), whilst labour demand is usually low for students with qualifications in the humanities and social sciences, enrolment in these fields of study remains high (misalignment of skills). The contextual factors therefore have a direct relationship with the level of unemployment. These include skills mismatch, employer expectations, quality of graduate, employer perception, unrealistic expectations of graduates, job search and attitude and work experience. In addition, employability factors, such as race of the respondent, the type of unemployment experienced, length of unemployment period, the area the respondent grew up in, the respondent's highest qualification. These imperial findings blended well with DPRU, (2006:16), in which it was established that on average, a higher proportion of white graduates found jobs immediately after they graduate unlike all other racial groups. Graduates from Historically White Institutions (HWI) are found to have better employment prospects than those graduates from Historically Black Institutions (HBI), most graduates from HWI being more readily absorbed into the labour market after obtaining their degrees than students from HBI (Bhorat &Visser, 2010). This research could not gather enough evidence to confirm that there is a relationship between employability factors and core self-evaluation. The same position was arrived at on the relationship between graduate unemployment and core self-evaluation. The empirical evidence gathered in this research shows that core self-evaluation such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, emotional stability and internal locus of control do not affect the employment status of a graduate. Core self-evaluation might mediate the relationship between employability factors and graduate unemployment.

5.3 Implications of findings

Institutions of higher learning, universities in particular are not providing enough assistance to students with regards to career guidance and counselling prior to completion of their studies. The fact that many respondents use electronic modes of applying for a job comes in as a huge plus to graduate job seekers as they are up to date with technology, enhancing their chances of securing employment. According to Pauw et al., (2006), fresh graduates are in the habit of switching between jobs trying their luck for a higher salary or even staying unemployed until they settle for a high paying job. This implies that the higher level of unemployment among graduates could be a result of the lack of desire to start at the bottom of the organogram. Some applicants become discouraged, and are not able to persist in the process of job-search, and become hopeless from pursuing the search, which presumably leads to a sense of helplessness (Darity& Goldsmith, 1993). It was further revealed that students were not aware of career opportunities before their graduation suggesting that their choice programs of specialisation had nothing to do with swelling the fields with shortages in the labour market. In support of this, Sha (2006) argues that the reason for a choice of study in the general field is because it is easier to gain admission to these fields as it is within a family's ability to support the student and it is less stressful for the student to pass all the courses. Another important reason is that many students are interested in the course, or rather, they have a passion for it, and while other students believe that the course will help them to secure employment.

Core self-evaluation consists of four traits which include self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, emotional stability, and locus of control. Although there is a high level of unemployment among recent graduates, the fact that they hold a qualification gives them self-esteem, generalised self –efficacy, emotional stability and internal locus of control. Graduates seem to have a conviction that their fortunes can materialise any time. This state of affairs is reinforced by the fact that most of the respondents believe they determine what happens in their life, thus, are very upbeat about their competence levels and satisfied with themselves. Employability factors and graduate unemployment suggest that there is a significant association between them, and that sometimes graduates have very little in their power to influence their unemployment status as some employability factors (race of the respondent, the type of unemployment experienced, length of unemployment period, the area the respondent grew up in) are beyond their control.

5.4 Conclusion

In light of the findings of this research it can be concluded that university graduates are not getting enough career guidance and counselling from universities during their years of study. In addition, recent graduates are not informed on the necessity of acquiring work experience before anticipating a higher salary despite having academic qualifications. It also concludes that there is a significant association between the contextual factors of unemployment and graduate unemployment and that there is a significant association between the employability factors and graduate unemployment. This research investigation has further concluded that there is a significant association between the contextual factors of unemployment and core self-evaluation, however in this study, there was no sufficient evidence to support that there is a relationship between employability factors and core self-evaluation. Furthermore there is no relationship between graduate unemployment and core self-evaluation and since there is no statistically significant relationship between employability factors and core self-evaluation, it is concluded that mediation is not possible or is unlikely under these circumstances.

5.5 Recommendations

After establishing the findings, implications and conclusions on the constraints of graduate employment across South Africa, the following recommendations are suggested in this research paper:

- Universities should consider introducing a compulsory module on career guidance and counselling in all fields of study to assist graduates with the requirements for the labour market.
- University graduates are encouraged to acquire work experience before preoccupying themselves with the idea of earning a high salary. It will be a noble idea especially before graduating from the university to volunteer to work for companies (for no pay) that offer the kind of experience consistent with their dream careers.
- Since contextual factors have a direct relationship with the level of unemployment, it is of paramount importance for graduates to match their skills with industry requirements, suit employer's expectations, develop a good attitude towards work to ensure neutralisation of the contextual factors.
- The government should expedite the adoption of employment equity guidelines in the industry, that promote a non-racial, non-ethnic and no gender based discrimination as

a way of creating an even platform for all graduates looking for employment in the labour market.

5.6 Areas of Further Research

The following research areas have been identified in this research document as possible dimensions that can be explored further with regards to the challenges of unemployment among graduates in South Africa;

- Investment risk: future research can be done on arguments for and against acquiring a degree and not getting a job, straight after matric. Getting a university degree costs thousands of rands spent on books, stationary, school fees, transport and accommodation. Will this be worthwhile to consider when employers see fresh graduates as inexperienced and to see how to can assist these new graduates to be gainfully employed to s to gain some work experience.
- Structural Unemployment: The problem of skills mismatch requires further investigations to ascertain the magnitude of skills misalignment to prospective students.

APPENDIX

AND

REFERENCES

6. APPENDIX

6.1 The statistical analyses

This section briefly analysis some of the results obtained from the data collected. The data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS Access Pack Version 7.0).

The descriptive statistics show that most of the variables are not normally distributed, but are either skewed to the left or right. A descriptive study endeavours to define the subject by creating a profile of the involved parties through data collection and tabulation of the frequencies of the research variables (Cooper & Schindler, 2008). Descriptive statistics is utilised to present information related to some essential characteristics of the respondent sample, among others, this include age, gender, employment status and how long the respondent had been working or not been working.

Table 6.1 Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Employment status	1.65	.478	235
Monthly salary expectation	7.10	2.517	218
Access to technology during period of application: desktop computer	1.48	.733	210
What recruitment stage were you successful in after application?	3.10	2.119	206
To what	1.81	.396	237

extent where you aware of career opportunities? before graduation - reasonably aware			
To what extent where you aware of career opportunities? before graduation - well aware	1.81	.390	237
To what extent where you aware of career opportunities? before graduation - no idea	1.75	.436	237
I am confident and i get the success i deserve	3.53	1.485	219
Sometimes i feel depressed	3.04	1.207	215
When i try i generally succeed	3.54	1.264	213
Sometimes when i fail, i feel worthless	2.99	1.195	214
I complete tasks successfully	3.70	1.230	210
Sometimes i do not feel in	2.88	1.253	208

control of my work			
Overall i am satisfied with myself	3.70	1.208	206

Residuals Statistics

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	1.41	1.87	1.65	.107	193
Std. Predicted Value	-2.254	2.056	.000	1.000	193
Standard Error of Predicted Value	.051	.192	.100	.026	193
Adjusted Predicted Value	1.37	1.98	1.65	.111	193
Residual	-.866	.580	.000	.467	193
Std. Residual	-1.817	1.217	.000	.979	193
Stud. Residual	-1.928	1.264	.000	1.003	193
Deleted Residual	-.976	.627	.000	.490	193
Stud. Deleted Residual	-1.943	1.266	-.002	1.004	193
Mahal. Distance	1.162	30.227	7.959	4.904	193
Cook's Distance	.000	.052	.006	.006	193
Centered Leverage Value	.006	.157	.041	.026	193

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.138	.019	-.018	.483	.019	.513	7	185	.824
2	.224	.050	.009	.477	.031	6.060	1	184	.015

ANOVAc

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.838	7	.120	.513	.824
	Residual	43.203	185	.234		
	Total	44.041	192			
2	Regression	2.216	8	.277	1.218	.290
	Residual	41.826	184	.227		
	Total	44.041	192			

Logistic Regression

Notes

Output Created		09-Feb-2015 20:23:56
Comments		
Input	Data	E:\Documents\2014 Projects\Juliet\Graduate unemployment.sav
	Active Dataset	DataSet1
	Filter	<none>
	Weight	<none>
	Split File	<none>
	N of Rows in Working Data File	241
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User-defined missing values are treated as missing

Syntax		LOGISTIC REGRESSION VARIABLES a5 /METHOD=ENTER a7 a8 a9 a12 b13 b15 b16 b17 /CLASSPLOT /CASEWISE OUTLIER(2) /PRINT=GOODFIT CI(95) /CRITERIA=PIN(0.05) POUT(0.10) ITERATE(20) CUT(0.5).
Resources	Processor Time	00 00:00:00.015
	Elapsed Time	00 00:00:00.016

6.2 IDENTIFYING AND CLEANING OUTLIERS

The highlighted rows below contain outliers that are not supposed to be part of the data range. These were identified when the frequency tables was ran.One way of dealing with outliers is to delete them from the data file completely because they can easily distort your results. In SPSS this is done by sorting out the data file in descending order or ascending order. This makes it easier to identify the outliers (Pallant, 2010).

Table 6.2 When did you start looking for future employment?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	before graduation	107	44.4	52.7	52.7
	after graduation	94	39.0	46.3	99.0
	3	1	.4	.5	99.5
	7	1	.4	.5	100.0
	Total	203	84.2	100.0	
Missing	System	38	15.8		
Total		241	100.0		

Table 6.3 At university I was office holder of a student society

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 year	15	6.2	39.5	39.5
	2 - 3 years	14	5.8	36.8	76.3
	> 3 years	8	3.3	21.1	97.4
	5	1	.4	2.6	100.0
	Total	38	15.8	100.0	
Missing	System	203	84.2		
Total		241	100.0		

Table 6.4 How was the degree undertaken?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	full-time study	167	69.3	75.9	75.9
	part-time study	29	12.0	13.2	89.1
	combination	4	1.7	1.8	90.9
	Other	17	7.1	7.7	98.6
	5	1	.4	.5	99.1
	6	1	.4	.5	99.5
	9	1	.4	.5	100.0
	Total	220	91.3	100.0	
Missing	System	21	8.7		
Total		241	100.0		

6.3 CLEANED DATA

Table 6.5 When did you start looking for future employment?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	before graduation	108	44.8	53.2	53.2
	after graduation	95	39.4	46.8	100.0
	Total	203	84.2	100.0	

Table 6.6 At University I was office holder of a student society?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 year	15	6.2	39.5	39.5
	2 - 3 years	14	5.8	36.8	76.3
	> 3 years	9	3.7	23.7	91.8
Total		38	15.8	100.0	

Table 6.7 How was the degree undertaken?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	full-time study	167	69.3	75.9	75.9
	part-time study	30	12.4	13.2	89.5
	combination	5.0	2.1	2.3	91.8
	Other	18	7.5	8.2	100.0
	Total	220	8.7		

7. QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A- DEMOGRAPHICS

You are invited to participate in the Graduate Unemployment Survey 2014. In this survey, you will be asked to complete a survey that asks questions about your current unemployment situation in order to identify the causes of graduate unemployment. It will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Your survey responses will be strictly confidential and data from this research will be reported only in the aggregate. Your information will be coded and will remain confidential. If you have questions at any time about the survey or the procedures, you may contact Juliet julietedayi@ymail.com.

Thank you very much for your time and support.

Please indicate your response by placing a cross in the appropriate box below:

1. Gender(Please indicate your gender):

	Male	
	Female	

2. Age(Please indicate your age in years): _____

3. Marital Status *(please check one)*:
- ☐ Single (Never Married)
- ☐ Partner/ Common-Law
- ☐ Married (Not Separated)
- ☐ Divorced
- ☐Widowed
- ☐ Separated

4. What is your highest level of education *completed*:

- ☐ Less than High School (HS)

☐ HS graduate or equivalent
☐ Some College or technical training beyond HS
☐ College graduate (4 Years)
☐ Post-graduate or professional degree

5. What is your current status?

☐ Employed

☐ Unemployed

6. If you are unemployed what would you want to do

☐ Own my own business
☐ Get a job

7. What ***best*** describes your race?
☐ Black
☐ White
☐ Coloured
☐ Indian or Asian
☐ Other

8. What ***best*** describes your type of unemployment:
☐ I voluntarily stopped working
☐ I couldn't find a job- Involuntary
☐ I was dismissed
☐ My Company closed down

9. How long have you been unemployed?
☐ Less than 6 months
☐ 6-12 months
☐ 1-2 years
☐ 2-5 years
☐> 5 years

10. Do you currently have a part-time job?

☐Yes, *please describe*

☐ No

SECTION B: CHOICE OF UNIVERSITY AND DEGREE

11. Which University did you attend?

☐University of Johannesburg
☐University of Cape Town
☐University of Pretoria
☐University of the Witwatersrand
☐University of South Africa
☐University of KwaZulu- Natal
☐University of Stellenbosch
☐North-West University
☐Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University
☐Rhodes University
☐University of the Free State
☐University of the Western Cape
☐Tshwane University of Technology
☐Vaal University of Technology
☐Cape Peninsula University of Technology
☐University of Limpopo
☐Durban University of Technology
☐University of Fort Hare
☐Central University of Technology
☐Walter Sisulu University for Technology and Science
☐Varsity College
☐University of Venda
☐University of Zululand
☐Other

12. Degree or discipline undertaken at university

☐Commerce
☐Computer science or IT
☐Engineering

☐Law
☐Natural and Physical science
☐Health
☐Creative arts
☐Architecture & building
☐Education
☐Other

13. How was the degree undertaken?
☐Full-time study
☐Part-time study
☐Combination
☐Other

14. When degree was completed
☐2001
☐2002
☐2003
☐2004
☐2005
☐2006
☐2007
☐2008
☐ 2009
☐ 2010
☐ 2011
☐ 2012
☐ 2013
☐Other

15. What activities did you undertake while at the University

	1 year	2-3 years	More than 3 years
Part-time or casual work	❑	❑	❑
Vacation program or internship	❑	❑	❑
Voluntary or charity work	❑	❑	❑
Member of student society	❑	❑	❑
Office holder of a student society	❑	❑	❑
None	❑	❑	❑

SECTION C: APPLICATIONS AND JOB SEARCH INFORMATION

16. When did you start looking for future employment?

☐Before graduation
☐After graduation

17. What source of information did you use in your job search

☐Employers websites
☐University careers fair
☐Employers presentations
☐People in the industry
☐careers services
☐Employers brochures
☐Family and friends
☐Commercial career websites
☐Career service websites
☐Employers giveaways
☐Careers service directory
☐Careers SA
☐National newspaper
☐Careers compass
☐Networking sites
☐Other

18. Job expectations before joining an organisation

☐Training and development
☐Starting salary and additional benefits
☐Opportunities for further studies
☐Starting a real job straight away
☐Managerial position
☐Long term career prospects
☐Work-life balance
☐Location of Company
☐Other

19. What is your monthly salary expectation

☐R5, 000 or less
☐R5, 000 < R10, 000
☐R10, 000 < R15, 000

☐R15, 000 < R20, 000
☐More than R20, 000

20. What number of applications did you made
☐1-6 applications
☐7-12 applications
☐12-15 applications
☐15-20 applications
☐More than 20 applications

21. Access to technology during period of application

	Easily accessible	Partially accessible	Not accessible
Desktop computer	❑	❑	❑
Laptop	❑	❑	❑
Internet	❑	❑	❑
Mobile Phone	❑	❑	❑
Printing Machine	❑	❑	❑
Fax Machine	❑	❑	❑

SECTION D: APPLICATION PROCESS

22. What recruitment stage were you successful in after application
☐Application stage
☐First round interviews
☐Second round interviews
☐Panel interviews
☐Preliminary telephone screening
☐Aptitude testing
☐Final round

23. Did you receive any feedback from the employer as to why you were not successful in the other stages or the final stage?
☐Yes

If yes, what feedback did you receive?

☐No

24. To what extent where you aware of career opportunities?

	Before graduation	After graduation
No idea	❑	❑
A very vague awareness	❑	❑
Some awareness	❑	❑
Reasonably aware	❑	❑
Well aware	❑	❑

25. How much help did you receive from the university in your career plan and job search?

	Career planning	Job-search
Not at all	❑	❑
A very small amount	❑	❑
Some basic help	❑	❑
A lot of Help	❑	❑
A great deal of help	❑	❑

26. What kind of help did you receive from the university?

☐Career Counselling
☐Face to face meeting with employer
☐Training sessions on job search
☐None
☐Other

SECTION E: SKILLS ISSUES

27. What do you feel you have to offer potential employers in terms of skills gained during your period of study.

☐Communication skills
☐Computer literacy skills
☐Presentation skills
☐Technical skills
☐Numeracy or quantitative literacy
☐Understanding of economics and business realities
☐Research skills
☐Leadership skills problem solving skills
☐Ability to plan and execute tasks independently
☐Flexibility
☐Creativity and innovation

☐Other

28. How did you acquire these skills?

☐At the University
☐Part-time or casual work
☐Student society
☐Voluntary work
☐Other

SECTION F: THE CORE SELF-EVALUATIONS SCALE (CSES)

29. Below are several statements about you with which you may agree or disagree. Using the response scale below, indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item by placing the appropriate number on the line preceding that item.

Please indicate your response by placing [X] an in the appropriate box below:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I am confident and I get the success I deserve					
2. Sometimes I feel depressed					
3. When I try, I generally succeed					
4. Sometimes when I fail, I feel worthless					
5. I complete tasks successfully					
6. Sometimes I do not feel in control of my work					
7. Overall I am satisfied with myself					
8. I am filled with doubts about my competence					
9. I determine what will happen in my life					
10. I give up easily					
11. I do not believe in my self					

30. What are your suggestions on reducing graduate unemployment

Thank you for your co-operation in completing this survey. Kindly return the survey as soon as you complete it.

8. CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

I, _____, acknowledge that I understand the research and that the research has been fully explained to me. I also understand that the information which I give to the researcher will be used in the research report.

I further acknowledge that the researcher has promised me the following:

- That my participation in this research is voluntary
- That my personal details will remain anonymous throughout the research study as well as in the research dissertation
- That I can refuse to answer any questions which I feel uncomfortable with

_____ _____

Researcher's signature Respondent's signature

9. COVER LETTER

University of the Witwatersrand

School of Economic and Business Sciences

STUDENT RESEARCH

Good Day,

My name is Juliet Edayi and I am currently completing my Masters in Human resource management at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

My current research is entitled "CONSTRAINTS TO GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT IN THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA.

Through my research, I aim to explore some of the causes of graduate unemployment and ways in which this problem can be alleviated.

Your participation in this research is voluntary and I can guarantee that your personal details will remain anonymous throughout this research study as well as in the final research dissertation. You as the participant may refuse to answer any questions which you feel uncomfortable with and may also feel free to withdraw from this study at any time. By being a participant in this research you will not receive payment of any form and the information you disclose will be used in the research report.

This research will be written into a Masters Dissertation and will be available through the University's website. Should you require a summary of the research, I can make this available to you.

The study is for academic publication purposes only. The results of the study will be reported in academic journals and in the form of conference presentations. Confidentiality is ensured at all times, and details that might specifically identify an individual are not required at any stage. The results will be reported in an aggregate form, and there will be no way to see what an individual's responses are.

The questionnaires will be stored in our offices for further data analysis and will thereafter be destroyed after a period of five years.

Should you have any further questions or queries you are welcome to contact myself or my Supervisor at any time at contact details provided below.

Yours sincerely,

Researcher
Juliet Edayi
julietedayi@ymail.com
0730663535

Supervisor

Prof. Chris Callaghan

Chris.Callaghan@wits.ac.za

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10. **REFERENCE**

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